

## Recapturing an Urban Identity: Chinese Communists and the Commune at Shantou, 1927

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Since the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in June-July 1928, the short-lived August 1927 military uprising by Communist Party members and rebel Guomindang (Chinese Nationalist Party, or GMD) troops at Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, has been officially viewed by the Party itself as a ‘correct’ military action against the ‘Left’ GMD, which itself had split from the ‘Right’ GMD under Jiang Jieshi after the ‘White Terror’ of April 1927.<sup>1</sup> The first full day of the revolt, 1 August 1927, has been faithfully recalled since 1933 as the date of the founding of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army, later re-designated the People’s Liberation Army (PLA).<sup>2</sup> After the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was established in 1949, official CCP and PLA sources frequently recounted and extolled the revolutionary heroism of those who participated in the “Nanchang

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<sup>1</sup> ”Political Resolution of the 6<sup>th</sup> CCP Congress,” September 1928, in Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz, and John K. Fairbank, eds., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952), p.138.

<sup>2</sup> Su Wenming, ed., *Journey into Revolutionary China* (Beijing: Beijing Review, 1984), p. 21. The date on which the Uprising was recognized as the founding of the People’s Liberation Army has been given as 30 June 1934; see Li Tien-min, *Chou En-lai* (Taipei: Institute of International relations, 1970), pp.108-09. Both dates are from a period when Mao’s influence within the Party was in eclipse relative to that of Zhou Enlai.

Uprising.”<sup>3</sup> This record of official commemoration leaves little doubt that the Party has attached crucial significance to the Nanchang Uprising. Nonetheless, in both official histories and scholarly accounts, there has been relatively little detailed attention given to the ensuing “Southern Expedition.” This march began as Uprising participants retreated southward from Nanchang on 5 August 1927 and ended two months later in the formation of a short-lived revolutionary urban commune in Shantou (Swatow), the principal port city of the turbulent East River district of eastern Guangdong. Although understudied, the insurgent aftermath of the celebrated Nanchang Uprising was of singular importance for the Party’s attempt, confirmed at its November 1927 Central Committee Plenum, to reassert its character as an urban-based, orthodox proletarian communist party.<sup>4</sup> This was to occur with the support of a politically

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<sup>3</sup> A description of the Uprising, compiled largely from Chinese accounts, is available in Jacques Guillermez, “The Nanchang Uprising,” *China Quarterly*, 11 (July-September 1962). The Uprising has been recalled in the Party’s restyled post-Mao official history: Sixth Plenum, Eleventh Central Committee, Chinese Communist party, Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China (Beijing: 1981). See also, for example, Liu Congli and Zhu Yuanyuan, “Caring for the Men – A PLA Tradition,” *Beijing Review* 33(31) [30 July -5 Aug 1990], p. 20. A recent scholarly study of the Nanchang Uprising and the communes founded afterward which focuses on Nanchang, Canton, and the Bargu revolt in Inner Mongolia, giving little attention to the Southern Expedition or to the Shantou Commune, is Bruce A. Elleman, *Moscow and the Emergence of Communist Power in China, 1925-30: The Nanchang Uprising and the Birth of the Red Army* (London: Routledge, 2009), p.156.

<sup>4</sup> The 9-10 November 1927 CCP Ninth Plenum resolved that “to secure political power, the urban centers had to be seized first by the workers, the peasants giving support in the countryside. The worker’s insurrection was important in itself – in fact, it was to be the center and guideline of the peasant uprising.” Fernando Galbiati, *P’eng P’ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 268. One of the plenum’s main resolutions is reproduced in Tony Saich, ed., *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party: Documents and Analysis* (Armonk NY and London: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp.331-41.

mobilized peasantry, despite the near-complete “destruction of [CCP] party cells and mass organizations in the cities” of southern and central China.<sup>5</sup>

Maoist histories covering the events of 1927 have consistently concurred that the focus of analysis moves from the military revolt at Nanchang on 1 August to the CCP’s “Emergency Conference,” convened in Hankow in chaotic circumstances on 7 August by a rump Central Committee under the oversight of German Comintern agent Heinz Neumann.<sup>6</sup> This Conference endorsed the Stalinist position that the primary revolutionary emphasis must continue to be pursued in the cities, in collaboration with progressive GMD elements, although it did also encourage peasant mobilization and criticize CCP General Secretary Chen Duxiu for “restraining the peasantry.”<sup>7</sup> From this time, concepts of agrarian-based revolution advocated by CCP revolutionists Peng Pai and Mao Zedong began to have a substantial impact upon Party policy, albeit as a minority viewpoint.<sup>8</sup> The official trope then moves on to the “Autumn

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<sup>5</sup> John E. Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition, 1927-1935* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press/Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, 1966), p. 66.

<sup>6</sup> Robert C. North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1953), pp 110-11. On Neumann, a Stalinist member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Germany, see Branko Lazitch (in collaboration with Milorad M. Drachkovitch), *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern, New, Revised and Expanded Version* (Stanford CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), pp. 337-38.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>8</sup> Mao’s own outline of the events of late 1927, put forward in 1938, established the general pattern followed by later official Party histories; see Mao Zedong, “Problems of War and Strategy,” 6 November 1938, in *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), pp. 275-77. In 1951 Chen Boda wrote that it was Mao who had discovered “the possibility of establishing permanent revolutionary bases” and that Mao’s ideas “became increasingly important after the failure of the revolution in 1927;” that is, Mao’s position took hold after the final

Harvest Uprisings” of early September and October, the series of small insurrections in Guangdong and Hunan led by Peng Pai and by Mao himself.<sup>9</sup> Mao’s failures here, and in subsequent attempts to organize peasant uprisings in the first command position he had ever held, as Secretary of a Front Committee appointed by the Hunan CCP Provisional Committee, helped provoke his dismissal not only from the Hunan Front Committee but also from the Politburo of the CCP Central Committee.<sup>10</sup> After the founding of the PRC, only in parenthetical notations to Mao’s own writings did descriptions of the Southern Expedition, led by such key personnel as Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Lin Biao, and Chen Yi, rate official mention, and then apparently only because these Southern Expedition survivors united with Mao’s own forces in the Jinggangshan area of Jiangxi province in April 1928.<sup>11</sup> Thus detailed consideration of the Southern Expedition, in which Mao took no part, has been largely left aside.

A further explanation for reticence about the Expedition, aside from Mao’s absence, lies in the activities of its leadership, the “Front Committee,” following its withdrawal from Nanchang.<sup>12</sup> This

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dissolution of the united front with the Guomindang in July 1927. See Chen Boda, “Mao Tse-tung’s Theory of the Chinese Revolution in the Combination of Marxism-Leninism with the Chinese revolution,” 28 June 1951, *Current Background*, No. 126, pp. 21-22.

<sup>9</sup> This precise sequence was repeated, for example, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the CCP in the PRC’s most popular official news magazine produced for the international market: see “Great and Glorious Course: Marking the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Communist Party of China,” *Beijing Review* 34(26) [1-7 July 1991], p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> Mao Zedong, “The Struggle in the Chinggang Mountains,” 25 November 1928, in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol 1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p 75; and *North Moscow and Chinese Communists*, p. 116, citing Mao’s own statement to Edgar Snow.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102, n 4.

<sup>12</sup> The name of the Committee has also been given in English as the “Frontline Committee:” see Percy Jucheng Fang and Lucy Guimong J. Fang, *Zhou Enlai – A Profile* (Beijing: Foreign Languages press, 1986), p. 31.

Front Committee was created by the provisional CCP Central Committee in late July 1927, first briefly under Communist commander Liu Bocheng and then under Politburo member Zhou Enlai, to direct the uprising at Nanchang.<sup>13</sup> From the time it left Nanchang at the head of some 20,000 rebel troops on 5 August until after it occupied and imposed a new form of political administration in the port city of Shantou on the Guangdong coast in late September, the Front Committee had no direct contact with the Party's Central Committee.<sup>14</sup> Its leaders appear to have had no detailed knowledge of the decisions of the hurried 7 August Emergency Conference, and Front Committee policies were formulated and implemented without specific Central Committee knowledge or sanction.<sup>15</sup> In acting alone this Front Committee, with a single Comintern advisor, Michael Kumanine ( alias "Zigon") in tow, tried to reestablish the proletarian credentials of a Party whose principal urban networks had been crushed by Jiang Jieshi's brutal break-up of the GMD-CCP "United Front" policy in April 1927. An examination of the history of this period reveals that during this

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<sup>13</sup> Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition*, p. 68.

<sup>14</sup> "Li Li-san's Report: The Experience and Lessons of the August 1<sup>st</sup> Revolution," Central Newsletter No. 7 (30 October 1927), in C. Martin Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat," *China Quarterly* 18 (April-June 1964), p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> This assertion is contested by the work of Fernando Galbiati, who claims that Peng Pai attended the 7 August Emergency Conference and then accompanied the Southern Expedition to the south. If so, Peng could have conveyed the thrust of Conference decisions to the retreating Front Committee, but the Front Committee leaders including Zhou Enlai were not directly in contact with the Central Committee: Galbiati *P'eng P'ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet*, pp. 264-66. Zhou Enlai outranked Peng Pai during the Southern Expedition, and Peng, knowing that peasant mobilization was underway in the rural Hai-Lu-feng area of the East River District, would not have directly challenged either Zhou's leadership or his focus on occupying the city of Shantou; see Donald W. Klein and Anne B. Clarke, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism 1921-1965, Volume II* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 723.

period of independent decision-making, Zhou's Front Committee not only maintained the declaratory Party commitment to establish a Communist-led urban government, or commune, initially endorsed before the Nanchang Uprising.<sup>16</sup> Further, it also experienced significant success in taking the initial steps to that goal. Crucially, its successes came weeks before the founding of the famous "Canton Commune" in December 1927.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Isolated Front Committee**

In late 1925 Zhou Enlai had remarked that there were only three important ports in South China, Hong Kong and Shantou (Swatow) in Guangdong, and Xiamen (Amoy) in Fujian province, and that the most important point in Guangdong, outside of Hong Kong, was Shantou.<sup>18</sup> Two years later when the Nanchang Uprising's Front Committee pulled insurgent forces out of that city, Zhou, as Secretary of the Front Committee, applied the logic of his earlier thinking.<sup>19</sup> In his role as Secretary, Zhou dominated much of the

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<sup>16</sup> Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition*, p. 68.

<sup>17</sup> In October 1928 Mao wrote that "the existence of a regular Red Army of adequate strength is a necessary condition for the existence of Red political power," which was the general line being pursued by the commanders of the rebel Nanchang Uprising troops as they made their way to Guangdong during the Southern Expedition. See Mao Zedong, "Why is it that Red Political Power Can Exist in China?" 5 October 1928, in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol 1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p. 66.

<sup>18</sup> On the 12 November 1925 speech by Zhou Enlai to the Shantou labour union leaders, see Great Britain. National Archives. Papers of the Foreign Office (FO) 371/11620.

<sup>19</sup> In 1955 Nie Rongzhen was identified as having been the "secretary of the Nanchang Front Committee," but contemporary evidence indicates that Zhou Enlai held the principal political leadership position during the Southern Expedition. Nie may have acted as the chief political commissar with the rebel troops. *New China News Agency* (Beijing), 27 September 1955, in US Foreign Broadcast Information Service (US FBIS), *Daily Report*, No. 189 (1955), p. AAA 22.

political debate among its members, who included Nie Rongzhen, Lin Boqu (also known as Lin Zuhan), Zhang Guotao, Guo Moruo, Peng Pai, and Tan Pingshan; military questions were managed by Generals He Long and Ye Ting and officers Zhu De, Liu Bocheng, Lin Biao, Chen Yi, Xu Guangda, and Ye Jianying.<sup>20</sup> The Front Committee's military leaders, who included the Soviet advisor attached to the Front Committee, Michael Kumanin, concurred in Zhou Enlai's recommendation to march toward Shantou.<sup>21</sup> Kumanin had been a senior Soviet attaché at the Central Military Political School of the GMD Whampoa Academy since 1926, and had been among the first Soviet advisors to depart Guangzhou on Jiang Jieshi's "Northern Expedition" to unite China.<sup>22</sup> After the Nanchang Uprising he accompanied the Communist forces retreating to the south, working particularly closely with General He Long.<sup>23</sup>

As the Communist-led rebel forces fled Nanchang, they were pursued by the remaining forces of the pro-GMD southern warlord Zhang Fakui, under whom He Long and Ye Ting had previously served. Two weeks later the Front Committee and its rag-tag forces reached Ruijin in southern Jiangxi, the future capital of Mao's rural 'Jiangxi Soviet' (1931-34). Here they overcame defections, supply

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<sup>20</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 12; "Chou I-ch'un's Report," *Central Newsletter*, No. 7 (30 October 1927), in Wilbur "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 26. In 1955 Liu Bocheng was identified as the Revolutionary Committee's Chief of Staff: *New China News Agency* (Beijing), 27 September 1955, US FBIS *Daily Report*, No. 189 (1955), p. AAA 18.

<sup>21</sup> Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition*, p. 70; and Donald W. Klein and Anne B. Clarke, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism 1921-1965, Volume I* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 298.

<sup>22</sup> C. Martin Wilbur and Julie Lien-ying How, *Missionaries of Revolution: Soviet Advisers and Nationalist China, 1920-1927* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 777. See also A.G. Yurkevich, "The Huangpu Military School and the Chinese Revolution," *Far Eastern Affairs* (Moscow) 4 (Oct-Dec 1985), in JPRS-UFE-86-002, 3 April 1986, p. 97.

<sup>23</sup> Wilbur and How, *Missionaries of Revolution*, p. 433, n. 12. See also Klein and Clark, Vol I, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism 1921-1965*, p. 298.

difficulties, and fatigue to win clear battlefield victories over the armies of Gen. Qian Dajun, one of Jiang Jieshi's closest allies, and the troops of Gen. Huang Shaoxiong, part of Li Jishen's so-called 'Guangzhou GMD' or 'New Guangxi,' Clique.<sup>24</sup> Also at Ruijin the Front Committee, apparently believing that CCP leadership cells at Wuhan and elsewhere had been destroyed in the post-Nanchang crackdown against Communists, took a bold step beyond the political boundaries thus far sanctioned by the CCP Central Committee. It adopted as its policy goal the creation of a Communist-led, semi-permanent, urban-based government, which it called "a worker and peasant political authority under the leadership of the proletarian class."<sup>25</sup>

The Committee was less farsighted with regard to its financial policies. Almost from the beginning of what it began calling the "Southern Expedition" toward Shantou, the Front Committee was under intense pressure to secure funds for the purchase of supplies. Before the Nanchang Uprising, on 26 July, Zhou Enlai had learned from senior Comintern representative Besso Lominadze, that the Soviet Union would not supply funds to support either the Uprising or the maintenance of pro-Communist rebel forces.<sup>26</sup> Without cash, the Communists risked arousing hostility rather than support among the workers and peasants of southern Jiangxi and Guangdong, by seizing provisions instead of paying for them. Although the Front Committee had been able to take 800,000 Chinese dollars from the banks at Nanchang during the Uprising, most of this money was in bank notes that were virtually worthless outside northern Jiangxi.<sup>27</sup> On the march southwards, "the problem of financial policy was discussed daily" in meetings of the Front Committee.<sup>28</sup> Leaving

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<sup>24</sup> Diana Lary, *The Kwangsi Clique in Chinese Politics 1925-1937* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 53-53, 83-84.

<sup>25</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 15.

<sup>26</sup> Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>27</sup> "Chang Kuo-Tao's Report," *Central Newsletter* No. 7 (30 October 1927), in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", pp. 32-33.

<sup>28</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 17.



Ruijin, the Front Committee found that its original force had been reduced by half through defections and battle losses. This helped alleviate the need, but did not solve the problem of how to acquire supplies. Crossing the provincial border into Fujian, the Communists occupied the large commercial city of Tingzhou (now known as Changting) on 3 September. According to a British eyewitness, the Communist-led troops were very orderly, paying for most of the supplies they took, although some money and rice was seized from very rich merchants, and four Chinese, probably uncooperative landowners or merchants, were executed.<sup>29</sup>

This foreigner's report, while acknowledging that there was some violence, does not convey the turmoil fomented in Tingzhou by the Communists' arrival, nor does it reveal the heated leadership debates that continued over finances and policies toward rich peasants and merchants. In fact, upon reaching the city the cash-starved Communists had chosen to employ "the old method" of obtaining money, familiar from years of experience with campaigning warlords, which "in practice, was just to make use of some of the evil gentry and local bullies to arrange for funds."<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, when the Tingzhou Merchants Association offered to pay the Front Committee 60,000 Chinese dollars within three days in return for a guarantee of the safety of their businesses and property, the Front Committee accepted. Merchants Association members immediately began to extort protection payments from small shop owners, local traders and peasants. When the Association raised only 20,000 dollars after three days, Front Committee members Zhang Guotao and Li Lisan, who had opposed the arrangement, successfully argued that the Front Committee should change its policy, to embrace a "new method" of fundraising in which the Communists themselves confiscated money and property directly from the rich merchants and imposed fines upon the wealthy gentry, instead of allowing these

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<sup>29</sup> H. Marsden, "Letter to the Editor," 18 September 1927, in *The North-China Herald*, 8 October 1927, p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 18-19.

groups to collect money from the poor.<sup>31</sup> The Front Committee resolved that its future financial operations would be conducted exclusively according to the 'new method' of attacking the wealthiest people. A new wing of the Front Committee, called the "Wartime Economic Committee," was created to implement this policy.<sup>32</sup>

As the Southern Expedition moved downriver and briefly occupied the city of Shanghang in Fujian province, on 11 September, the Wartime Economic Committee's policies were put into practice. A Chinese doctor working at a mission hospital in Shanghang wrote a detailed report on the occupation, emphasizing that the Communist troops immediately confiscated the grain supplies of the wealthy gentry, kidnapped and held for ransom several rich people, and looted the houses of both foreigners and Chinese Christian converts. The Communists' medical unit took the hospital's entire inventory of pharmaceuticals, and a total of 100,000 Chinese dollars were seized.<sup>33</sup> Another physician reported that nine people had been executed by the Communists, and that the handful of people who assisted the occupiers did so largely because of personal vendettas. The local population, he claimed, was devastated by the Communists' arrival, destruction of private property, and forcible acquisition of food stocks from local granaries.<sup>34</sup>

The experiences in Tingzhou and Shanghang demonstrated the general confusion which marred the Front Committee's initial

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<sup>31</sup> The British eyewitness at Tingzhou reported that a total of 100,000 dollars was taken from the wealthy residents of that city: *The North China Herald*, 8 October 1927, p. 71.

<sup>32</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> Chhin Hou Yin, Letter dated 1 October 1927 at Shanghang Hospital, in Archives of the Presbyterian Church of England, Foreign Missions Committee, Box 28, File 8, at The School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

<sup>34</sup> Liu Sen Min, Letter dated 1 October 1927 at Shanghang Hospital, in Archives of the Presbyterian Church of England, Foreign Missions Committee, Box 28, File 8, at The School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

efforts to administer affairs in urban centers. The ‘old method’ of allowing merchant elites to function as financial intermediaries between occupying troops and local communities, familiar from years of successive intrusions by warlords, had been understood by the population at Tingzhou as a routine feature of life, while at Shanghai the Communists’ direct attacks on landlords, gentry, and merchants were completely unexpected and thus more disruptive. The Front Committee failed to disseminate propaganda to explain the political rationale behind the ‘new method,’ and thus failed to develop public support for the policies of the Wartime Economic Committee. Ironically, by the time that the Front Committee did develop this kind of political program, during the occupation of Shantou, the ‘new method’ of fining and confiscating goods from the wealthy had to be quickly discarded in the name of political expedience.

There was also dissension within the Front Committee over the fraught issue of agrarian reform. Although this was largely a theoretical question because the Communist force was moving so quickly, the Front Committee did have a “Committee on the Peasants and Workers” which was responsible for land reform policies. Initially this Committee ruled that only lands held by those landowners who owned more than 200 *mou* (one *mou* was about 15% of an acre) should be confiscated and redistributed. As the Southern Expedition continued, however, its leaders recognized that setting the standard for confiscation at that level would have no revolutionary impact, especially in Guangdong where population density and different patterns of land ownership meant that very few landholders owned as much as 200 *mou*. After two days of debate at Shanghai, the Front Committee endorsed another proposal from Zhang Guotao to reduce the seizure threshold to holdings of 50 *mou*.<sup>35</sup> In the end land reform never took on practical importance, as the Front Committee focused its attention on urban management. Even so, its initial conservatism about land reform became one of the chief

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<sup>35</sup> “Li Li-san’s Report,” in Wilbur, “The Ashes of Defeat”, p. 16-17. See also Appendix.

targets for later CCP Central Committee criticism of the Front Committee.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Advance on and Occupation of Shantou**

In the second week of September 1927 the Communists moved again, down the Han River from Shanghang into northeastern Guangdong. They set up a temporary base at the river crossing town of Sanheba.<sup>37</sup> Li Lisan's later recollection was that "on the way from Shanghang to... Swatow [Shantou] there were no battles," but a Right GMD newspaper in Shantou reported that GMD troops sustained heavy casualties during skirmishes with Communist forces near Sanheba.<sup>38</sup> These engagements were probably fought by a small Communist garrison of about 1000 troops under Zhu De that stayed behind while the main body, with which the Front Committee was traveling, began to advance further along the Han River, which flows into the sea at Shantou. Zhu, assisted by Lin Biao and Chen Yi, remained in the Sanheba area for several weeks, taking no further part in the Southern Expedition, and eventually moving back north to join Mao's rural forces in Jiangxi in early 1928.<sup>39</sup> We do not know if a

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<sup>36</sup> "Central's Announcement, Number 13: On the Matter of the Defeat of Yeh and Ho," *Central Newsletter*, No. 7 (30 October 1927), in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", pp. 40-41.

<sup>37</sup> The Communists occupied a village upriver from Sanheba on 19 September: *South China Morning Post*, 24 September, 1927, p. 12. The Communists arrived at Sanheba the following day: *Min Kuo Jih Bao (Republic Daily)*, 7 October 1927, in Enclosure to Berger to US State Department, No. 17, 13 October 1927: US National Archives and Records Administration [NARA] Record Group [RG] 59 decimal file: 893.00/9578.

<sup>38</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 14; *Min Kuo Jih Bao, (Republic Daily)*, 7 October 1927, in Enclosure to Berger to US State Department, No. 17, 13 October 1927: US National Archives and Records Administration [NARA] Record Group [RG] 59 decimal file: 893.00/9578.

<sup>39</sup> "Chou I-ch'in's Report," in Wilbur "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 29. See also Qin Yun and Dai Wei, "Visiting Places of Revolutionary Significance (III): Nanchang, Jinggang Mountains, and Zunyi," *Beijing Review* 36 (7

policy disagreement about the relative importance of urban insurrections versus rural revolutionary development lies behind this split, but it is a possibility that cannot be ignored, given the later close ties between Mao, Zhu De and Lin Biao. The main body of the Communists, by now numbering perhaps 4000 men, advanced south toward Chaochou, the rail and road gateway north of Shantou. These troops, still commanded by He Long and Ye Ting, occupied Chaochou without resistance on 23 September 1927.<sup>40</sup>

Meanwhile in Shantou, the Communists' advance toward the coast was being viewed with alarm. As early as 3 September, when the rebel army was still outside Tingzhou, panic erupted in Shantou as rumours of the Communists' approach spread throughout the city. Eminent merchants and gentry families began fleeing by steamer to Hong Kong. The value of paper bank notes plummeted; to underpin currency values, the local pro-GMD government introduced emergency regulations making it a criminal offence for shop owners to refuse the notes. Rather than comply, many shops simply closed their doors, and a run on the Shantou branch of the Chinese Central Bank led it to suspend business on 5 September.<sup>41</sup> Violence soon followed. Random bombings, apparently the work of Communist cells within the city's labor unions, threw local police into

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September 1979), p. 11; and Mao Zedong, "The Struggle in the Ching Kang Mountains," 25 November 1928, in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol 1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), p. 102, n. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Circular telegram on the Southern Expedition, *Revolutionary Daily News* (Swatow), 27 September 1927, in Enclosure to Berger to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927: NARA RG 59: 893.00/9541.

<sup>41</sup> HBM Consul Cecil Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 40, 12 September 1927, in UK National Archives, Records of the Foreign Office [FO] 228/3580; and *South China Morning Post*, 8 September 1927, p. 12. On 6 September the Swatow Central Bank's silver reserve was shipped to Hong Kong for safekeeping, with an escort of British marines: see Ernest B. Price, "Observations on Political Conditions in South China," 7 September 1927, as Enclosure to Shantz, Hong Kong to US State Department, No. 519, 12 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9503.

confusion.<sup>42</sup> Martial law was declared on 6 September.<sup>43</sup> GMD-allied union executive committees were authorized to arrest pro-Communist union members and those thought to be engaged in “counter-revolutionary activities.”<sup>44</sup> Many arrests were made, and at least three people, including the leader of the Shantou Rickshaw Union, were executed for radical activities and alleged complicity in the bombings.<sup>45</sup>

Eastern Guangdong, which was dominated by Shantou, was already the site of a struggle between the principal factions of the GMD in south China. The pro-Left GMD Governor of Guangdong, Li Jishen, had dispatched troops to pursue the Communists, while Right GMD Generalissimo Jiang Jieshi appointed General Wang Zhun to replace He Chiwu as Shantou’s “Commissioner of Public Safety.”<sup>46</sup> Wang arrived in Shantou on 17 September accompanied by General Qian Dajun, whose troops had already been defeated by He Long and Ye Ting in Ruijin. Li Jishen’s commanders were content to allow Wang and Qian, who immediately left Shantou in hopes of creating a defensive perimeter north of the city, to absorb the brunt of the Communists’ advance, while conserving Li’s own forces for any Communist attack upon Guangzhou itself.<sup>47</sup> The

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<sup>42</sup> *The North-China Herald*, 17 September 1927. See also Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 6, 31 August 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9465.

<sup>43</sup> Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 10, 14 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9504.

<sup>44</sup> “Report on business of (Swatow) Municipal Council Meeting of 9 September,” Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 10, 14 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9504.

<sup>45</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 22 September 1927, p. 10.

<sup>46</sup> He Chiwu was the younger brother of General He Yingqing, Commander of the GMD First Army, who had been responsible for the East River District of Guangdong from late 1925 to mid-1927.

<sup>47</sup> The British Consul at Shantou made this assessment, although he confused the allegiances of the commanders involved: Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 44, 20 September 1927, in FO 228/3580.

complex maneuvering between the forces of Li Jishen and Jiang Jieshi reflected their own internecine competition, leaving Chaozhou and even Shantou virtually undefended against the Front Committee's bedraggled army.

As they reached Chaozhou on 23 September, Communist forces fanned out into the small towns and rural areas upriver from Shantou, occupying stations on the Chaozhou-to-Guangzhou rail line. A few hundred soldiers were sent to repair the 39 km-long Chaozhou-Shantou Railway, which had opened in 1906 but had recently been sabotaged by GMD troops.<sup>48</sup> Communist reconnaissance units were able to reach Shantou on the evening of 23 September. Among their tasks was contacting and reviving pro-Communist networks in the city and issuing public announcements about the imminent arrival of the Front Committee.<sup>49</sup> Communist troops in larger numbers began arriving that night, arresting looters and occupying Shantou's police stations; they met no organized opposition. A search began immediately to locate those who had carried out the anti-Communist purges earlier in the month.<sup>50</sup> By the morning of 24 September, Communist forces were in full control of most of the city, except a small section of the wharf area that had been occupied by a detachment of Japanese marines.<sup>51</sup>

Foreign diplomats and military officers, having monitored the advance of He and Ye's army, had taken precautions. Several foreign gunboats were already positioned in the harbor at Shantou, and others arrived over succeeding days. One French gunboat arrived in port during the occupation, while the US South China Patrol sent

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<sup>48</sup> *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 26 September 1927, p. 5.

<sup>49</sup> "Despatch from the Swatow General Labour Union to All Workers in the City of Swatow," 23 September 1927, in Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9451.

<sup>50</sup> Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 46, 26 September 1927, in FO 228/3581.

<sup>51</sup> The Front Committee claimed that its "coup d'etat" was carried out at 5:00 AM, 24 September 1927: *Revolutionary Daily News*, 25 September 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541.

both the *USS Asheville* and the *USS Sacramento*.<sup>52</sup> The Japanese took more direct action. With the *HIJMS Kiku* and *Uji* already in port, on 23 September the warship *HIJMS Aoi* also arrived.<sup>53</sup> On the morning of 24 September, as the Communists consolidated their control over the city, these warships landed a party of about 60 naval ratings armed with machine guns to take up positions around the Customs House, the Japanese-run Bank of Taiwan, and the Japanese Consulate.<sup>54</sup> According to British intelligence sources, in May 1927 the local GMD administration and Japanese naval authorities had reached a secret agreement “that in the event of the port being seriously threatened by armed reds [sic] from the interior, the [Japanese men-of-war in port] will land an armed force from the vessels to cope with the menace.”<sup>55</sup> However, Japanese maneuvers were essentially defensive, and there was little operational cooperation with the GMD, as we shall see.

The British, with considerable investments and a large number of nationals in the city, also responded to the Communists’ arrival. At no time were there fewer than three British naval vessels

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<sup>52</sup> Ship’s Log, *HMS Wishart*, 29 September 1927, in UK National Archives, Records of the Admiralty (ADM) 53/93212, and Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9451.

<sup>53</sup> Ship’s Log, *HMS Bluebell*, 23-24 September 1927, in ADM 53/71532.

<sup>54</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 27 September 1927, p. 10, and Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 46, 26 September 1927, in FO 228/3581. The Japanese force remained onshore throughout the Communists’ occupation of Shantou. The Communists claimed that a meeting with the Japanese Consul resulted in the ‘withdrawal’ of the marines, but it seems that the troops were only redeployed from the unprotected streets of the wharf area to occupy the Bank of Taiwan building: *Revolutionary Daily News*, 27 September 1927, Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9451.

<sup>55</sup> “Intelligence Diary for May 1927,” 27 May 1927, pp. 81-82, in FO 228/3689.



in the harbor.<sup>56</sup> On 28 September one vessel briefly landed a section of marines to protect the English Presbyterian Mission, which sheltered British and other civilians from clashes between Communist and GMD forces.<sup>57</sup> The British Consul requested that marines be posted on the wharf for the duration of the Communist occupation, but the senior British naval commander on the scene refused. By the time this disagreement reached the British Commander-in-Chief for resolution on 1 October, the crisis caused by the Communists' occupation had passed.<sup>58</sup>

### **The Shantou Commune**

The Front Committee, having taken control of Shantou with little difficulty, now confirmed that the city would become the interim seat of a new revolutionary political authority. Shantou would serve as the Communist capital until the planned occupation of Guangzhou itself, some 539 km (330 miles) to the west, could be organized. Anticipating an indefinite occupation, and having learned some valuable administrative lessons since the revolt at Nanchang, the Front Committee developed a complex structure for governing Shantou and the surrounding countryside. This structure was probably an amplification of one drafted earlier to administer the city of Nanchang. There, the Communist Front Committee had briefly operated behind the façade of a broad, almost fictional "Revolutionary Committee;" similarly, in Shantou, the Front Committee announced not its own arrival, but that of a "Temporary

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<sup>56</sup> Ship's Log, *HMS Bluebell*, September 1927, in ADM 53/71532; Ship's Log, *HMS Seraph*, September 1927, in ADM 53/84602; Ship's Log, *HMS Serapis*, September 1927, in ADM 53/84685; Ship's Log, *HMS Wishart*, September 1927, in ADM 53/93212.

<sup>57</sup> The GMD landings are discussed below. The British marines returned to their ship after just thirty minutes ashore: see Ship's Log, *HMS Bluebell*, September 1927, in ADM 53/71532.

<sup>58</sup> Enclosure to Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 47, 3 October 1927, in FO 228/3678.

Peace Preservation Commission.”<sup>59</sup> The Front Committee was still publicly calling itself “the Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang,” probably because the Comintern advisor, Kumanin, was still pressing for the CCP’s adherence to Stalin’s late-July prescription that the Party continue to work with progressive elements of the Guomindang.<sup>60</sup> The Communist leaders established the Front Committee’s headquarters and those of one of its chief working arms, the “Central Political Department,” in Shantou’s Industrial Normal School building, located near the US Consulate.<sup>61</sup>

Evidently with the aid of Soviet advisers, discussed below, the Front Committee leaders articulated their plan for governing the city of Shantou in a written political program.<sup>62</sup> This document (See Appendix) drew upon ideas developed by the international labour movement, the Comintern, and China’s own post-World War I era of radical political ferment, known as the ‘May Fourth Movement.’ The Communists’ plan for Shantou makes apparent both their intention to stabilize the city under Communist control and to found a self-governing ‘commune’ at the city. According to the plan, the “superior organ of revolutionary government” would be the Communist-led “Revolutionary Committee,” probably the Front

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<sup>59</sup> *Revolutionary Daily News*, 25 September 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541. Plans for developing governing structures in the rural countryside around Shantou also reserved political and financial power for the Communist core organization; see Appendix.

<sup>60</sup> Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition*, p. 65.

<sup>61</sup> *Min Kuo Jih Pao (Republic Daily)*, 7 October 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 17, 13 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9578.

<sup>62</sup> A similar document, the “Plan of Work at County and City Level,” was developed by the Kwangtung CCP Committee for the takeover of the Hailufeng districts; it was approved by the CCP Central Committee on 23 September, just days before the Communist captors of Lufeng town were routed by GMD forces; “this became the blueprint for later action in Hailufeng.” See Galbiati *P’eng P’ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet*, p. 267.

Committee. With the cooperation of representatives of workers and peasants this “Revolutionary Committee” would seize and redistribute land, collect taxes, oversee social welfare, communications and commerce, impose gender equality in marriage, pay, and working conditions, regulate wages and hours as well as property rentals, and create both a militia and a conscript army. Slogans put forward by the Communists included “Let all workers and peasants be armed...,” “Confiscate the property of all big landlords...,” and “Long Live the Administrative Rights of the Revolutionists!”<sup>63</sup>

Two key administrative appointments were made immediately. Xu Guangda, a commissar with Ye Ting’s troops, was named chief of a new “Bureau of Public Safety,” which was charged with overseeing internal security and assisting with the implementation of financial policy.<sup>64</sup> Propagandist Guo Moruo was appointed Commissioner of Foreign Affairs and Superintendent of Customs for the busy port of Shantou, from which post he presumably would also be involved

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<sup>63</sup> *Revolutionary Daily News*, 25 September 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541.

<sup>64</sup> Zhang Guotao later claimed that Li Lisan had been appointed to head the “Public Security Bureau” at Shantou; see Chang Kuo-t’ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party 1928-1938, Volume Two of the Autobiography of Chang Kuo-t’ao* (Lawrence KS: University Press of Kansas), 1972, p. 28. However, contemporary evidence indicates that it was Xu Guangda who held this post: “Li Li-san’s Report,” in Wilbur “The Ashes of Defeat”, p. 19; and *Revolutionary Daily News*, 25 September 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541. Xu’s importance in security affairs in this period was reaffirmed during the brief Commune period in Guangzhou, where he was reportedly the ‘Chief of Staff of the Red Army;’ see Huston, Canton, to US State Department, No. 1018, 30 December 1927, p. 27, NARA RG 59 893.00/9749.

with revenue policies.<sup>65</sup> It was also announced that ‘Mr. Lai,’ very likely Zhou Enlai, had been appointed Mayor and Chairman of the Front Committee’s new ‘City Government Commission.’<sup>66</sup> It is worth noting that the Front Committee’s approach was clearly to create durable civic offices that could administer the city over the long term, with a minimum of direct military participation by the troops still commanded by He Long and Ye Ting.<sup>67</sup>

Once again, as at Tingzhou and Shanghang, financial policy questions were central to the Front Committee’s political calculus of power in Shantou. Its Wartime Economic Committee had been created to oversee the policy of seizures and the imposition of fines targeted at the wealthiest sections of urban society. At Shantou, however, this approach was judged imprudent, given the military presence of foreign powers and the level of commercial activity at the port which, if permitted to continue, could generate needed revenue. Zhou Enlai further argued that any significant disruption of trading at the port held the potential for damaging anti-Communist propaganda, especially in other key port cities.<sup>68</sup> With these circumstances in mind,

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<sup>65</sup> “Notice from Kuo Mo-jo,” 25 September, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541.

<sup>66</sup> *Revolutionary Daily News*, 27 September 1927, Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9451.

<sup>67</sup> He Long was probably in Shantou for only two days, and available sources do not indicate whether Ye Ting even entered the city. On He, see *The North-China Herald*, 8 October 1927, p. 51.

<sup>68</sup> Tan Pingshan and Zhang Guotao also endorsed Zhou’s position; see “Li Li-san’s Report,” in Wilbur “The Ashes of Defeat”, p. 19. Zhou’s concerns were reflected in the regulations issued by the Bureau of Public Safety: “Those who create false rumors for misleading the public with the intention of disturbing market conditions shall be punished also with Summary Execution upon arrest [sic].” See *Revolutionary Daily News*, 27 September 1927, Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9451.

the Front Committee again changed its policies, and as in Tingzhou, it began bargaining with wealthy local elites.<sup>69</sup>

On the first full day of the Communist occupation, 24 September, police chief Xu Guangda ordered the Shantou Chamber of Commerce to pay the Front Committee 20,000 Chinese dollars “for peace maintenance expenses.” Those few Chamber members who had not fled to Hong Kong paid the quota immediately, and further consultations about greater ‘contributions’ were set for the following day.<sup>70</sup> On 25 September Xu demanded that the Chamber pay an additional 200,000 Chinese dollars, of which 50,000 was delivered the next day.<sup>71</sup> In Chaochou and nearby Chaoyang, both under Communist occupation, similar demands for cash were made. In Chaoyang the local Communist commander both bargained with merchants and kidnapped members of their families in order to collect ransom payments.<sup>72</sup> The British Consul at Shantou reported that a total of 70,000 Chinese dollars was collected in Shantou, while businessmen in Chaochou were believed to have paid Communist leaders there some 110,000 dollars.<sup>73</sup> The Communist administration never implemented its vision for a transition to a different financial

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<sup>69</sup> In November 1925 Zhou Enlai, as Director of the GMD Eastern Expeditionary Force’s Political Department, ordered the Shantou Chamber of Commerce to contribute funds to support the military campaigns of Jiang Jieshi; see Enclosure to Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 66, 15 November 1925, in FO 228/3151.

<sup>70</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 29 September 1927, p. 10.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* The payment of 50,000 dollars was also reported in Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541.

<sup>72</sup> *Min Kuo Jih Pao (Republic Daily)*, 6 October 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 17, 13 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9578.

<sup>73</sup> Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 49, 6 October 1927, in FO 228/3581.

footing by selling bonds, but 1.5 million dollars' worth were printed in preparation for sale by November 1927.<sup>74</sup>

That the Communists intended to create and maintain a stable urban base in Guangdong is apparent from the efforts devoted to cultivating popular support through propaganda. Communist publicists used a variety of methods to make announcements and issue directives to the city's population, including issuing broadsheets and notices under the aegis of local pro-Communist organizations.<sup>75</sup> The Front Committee created another working branch, the 'Propaganda Committee,' to organize this activity.<sup>76</sup> Its most ambitious enterprise involved the takeover of an existing Shantou newspaper whose Right GMD staff had fled. Using its presses Communist propagandists were able to publish two issues of their own newspaper, the *Revolutionary Daily News*, which appeared on the streets of Shantou on 25 and 27 September.<sup>77</sup>

One authoritative Western historian of this period concluded that the Front Committee "found no mass support" for its takeover and management of the towns and cities in the East River district of Guangdong.<sup>78</sup> While this may be true, those expressions of public support that did emerge should not be overlooked. The city's skeletal system of pro-Communist networks was revitalized when the Front Committee took control of the city. Most important were the pro-CCP 'shadow unions' operating within the GMD-recognized official

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<sup>74</sup> *Min Kuo Jih Pao (Republic Daily)* n.d., In Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to Peking, 9 November 1927, in NARA RG 59 893.00/9675.

<sup>75</sup> "Despatch from the Swatow General Labor Union," 23 September 1927, in Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541.

<sup>76</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 20.

<sup>77</sup> *Revolutionary Daily News*, 25 September 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9541.

<sup>78</sup> C. Martin Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China 1923-1928* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 149.

union structures. Pro-Communist underground unions in Shantou included the rickshaw pullers' and carpenters' organizations, as well as a 'Red Farmers' and Peasants' League' and the Communist shadow of the GMD's Central Labor Union, known as the 'Red Central Labor Union of Shantou.'<sup>79</sup> Activists and members associated with these organizations certainly welcomed the Front Committee, but could not prevent the rapid development of security threats to the new regime.

Xu Guangda's Bureau of Public Safety was tasked with maintaining Communist control and managing potentially disruptive elements in the city. The Bureau of Public Safety took a hard line against looting, presumably to forestall thievery and to cultivate support from small shop owners. On 24 September seven offenders accused of looting were arrested and paraded through the main streets where they committed their crimes; they were then summarily "shot to death as a warning to other persons of lawless inclinations."<sup>80</sup> Pro-GMD unions claimed to represent Shantou's proletariat, and their leaders pressed for the release from Communist custody of those members who had been peremptorily arrested during the Communist takeover. Not all such appeals met with success. On 24 September, the first day of the occupation, four

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<sup>79</sup> The leader of the "Farmers' and Peasants' League," 'Yeung Shek-wan,' organized his members' participation in the Communist takeover: *South China Morning Post*, 28 September 1927, p. 10. He narrowly escaped capture by the police at Hong Kong after pro-GMD troops reoccupied Shantou; see *South China Morning Post*, 3 October 1927, p. 12; and *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 4 October 1927, p. 5. The Secretary-General of the city's pro-Communist General Labor Union was reportedly killed in Shantou in the anti-CCP crackdown that followed the Communists' withdrawal: *Min Kuo Jih Pao (Republic Daily)* 8 October 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 17, 13 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9578.

<sup>80</sup> *Revolutionary Daily News*, 27 September 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 15, 28 September 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9451. According to Li Lisan, three people were executed: "Li Lisan's Report," p. 19.

officials of the pro-GMD “Guangzhou Seaman’s Union” arrived by boat in Shantou, and were reportedly immediately arrested by the Communists and executed the following day.<sup>81</sup>

The Bureau of Public Safety also undertook city-wide searches for members of the deposed GMD municipal administration. Four former police officers were reportedly shot on 29 September, and martial law was declared, allowing Bureau operatives to conduct house-to-house searches for arms, ammunition, and GMD members.<sup>82</sup> These operations rather recklessly relied upon politically suspect informers. Popular cynicism was fueled by such familiar tactics, and one Shantou worker reportedly commented that the Communists were acting like the followers of ‘another Chiang Kai-shek.’<sup>83</sup> His words were particularly apt, since the Communists employed former GMD officials in their security apparatus. One former GMD police detective, for example, was appointed Detective Inspector in the Communists’ Bureau of Public Safety; he was later arrested by the GMD and accused of “leading the red troops to round up officers connected with the present and former” police of the city’s GMD administration.<sup>84</sup>

### **The Search for Assistance**

Aiding the Chinese Communists at Shantou were several Soviet advisors. Michael Kumanin, the Comintern military representative present during the Nanchang Uprising, had accompanied the Front

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<sup>81</sup> *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 28 September 1927, p. 5.

<sup>82</sup> *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 28 September 1927, p. 5; and *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 3 October 1927, p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> “Li Li-san’s Report,” in Wilbur “The Ashes of Defeat”, p. 19.

<sup>84</sup> *Min Kuo Jih Pao (Republic Daily)* 7 October 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 17, 13 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9578; and *Min Kuo Jih Pao (Republic Daily)* 13 October 1927, in Enclosure to Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 18, 19 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9608.



Committee from Nanchang to Shantou.<sup>85</sup> Kumanin was joined there by a member of Soviet General Vassili Blucher's (alias "Galen") military advisory mission to the GMD named 'Josef Socal,' also known as 'Zilbert;' he had been an assistant to key regional GMD leaders including Li Jishen, and had long experience of South China's port cities, including Shantou.<sup>86</sup> It appears that he had been dispatched to Shantou to provide military direction for Communist-led troops.<sup>87</sup> However, in late 1927 in a statement to GMD authorities he claimed that he had been sent merely to give Kumanin "funds and clothes to get out of China."<sup>88</sup> Also in Shantou was M.S Berg, who was later found to be carrying letters from the Main Eastern Service of the Soviet Fleet at Vladivostok which identified him as an "Inspector of the Eastern Service of the Soviet Fleet" on a tour of Japanese and Chinese ports; a naval intelligence officer, Berg's passport was issued at Vladivostok on 30 August 1927, perhaps indicating that he had been sent to South China to observe the progress of the Southern Expedition.<sup>89</sup> During the Communists' occupation of Shantou, Berg communicated frequently with Shanghai by telegraph. Because the Consulate was next to the Front Committee's headquarters and near the Soviet advisers' hotel, the US

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<sup>85</sup> Two accounts of the Expedition noted the presence of a Soviet advisor with the Chinese Communists, "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 14, and Liu Sen Min, letter dated 1 October 1927. In late 1927 Kumanin was imprisoned by the GMD, as were the other Soviets at Shantou: see George E. Sokolsky, *The Tinder Box of Asia* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1932), p. 340.

<sup>86</sup> "List of Bolshevik Agents Taken From Pik's Report," Enclosure No. 2 to Blackburn, Shanghai, to Peking, 5 August 1927, in FO 228/3701. See also Wilbur and How *Missionaries of Revolution*, p. 433, n. 12.

<sup>87</sup> Cunningham, Shanghai, to Peking, 12 May 1928, NARA RG 59 893.00 PR Shanghai/5).

<sup>88</sup> Sokolsky, *The Tinder Box of Asia*, p. 340.

<sup>89</sup> 'Report by Bass' (n.d.), Enclosure to Putnam, Amoy, to Peking, No. 40, 11 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00B/420.

Consul saw some of Berg's telegrams and guessed that the coded messages "had to do with arrangements for a shipment of munitions from Vladivostock [sic] to Swatow [Shantou] for the 'reds.'" <sup>90</sup> Information that a Soviet arms shipment was en route first to Shantou, then to Guangzhou, was promulgated by GMD sources, eventually reaching the Reuter's News Service and even *The Times* of London. <sup>91</sup>

A married Soviet couple, Michael and Janika Veger, also travelled to Shantou from Guangzhou by steamer during the Communist occupation, arriving by 28 September. <sup>92</sup> When they were arrested later in Xiamen (Amoy) the Vegers were found to be carrying a certificate issued by the USSR Trade Mission in Shanghai identifying Michael Veger as the South China representative of the Soviet state chemicals trading company, a convenient cover for Soviet political advisers. <sup>93</sup> Most important, however, was a second document, written in Russian, which proved to be a detailed political program for the "Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang," the public title under which the Communist Front Committee at Shantou was operating. <sup>94</sup> As noted above, this document (see Appendix) demonstrates the extent of Communist planning for the exercise of semi-permanent power at Shantou.

However, the military position of the Communists remained tenuous, as was demonstrated by one of the most extraordinary

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<sup>90</sup> Berger, Swatow, to Peking, 7 November 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00B/460.

<sup>91</sup> *The Times* (London), Royal Edition, 10 December 1927, p. 12.

<sup>92</sup> They could have traveled with Zhang Dailei who also arrived about this time from Guangzhou, with news of the 7 August Emergency Conference; see North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists*, p. 114.

<sup>93</sup> The five Soviet advisors were searched on 3 October 1927 by G.R. Bass, Chief of Police of the Kulangsu International Settlement; see 'Report by Bass' (n.d.), Enclosure to Putnam, Amoy, to Peking, No. 40, 11 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00B/420.

<sup>94</sup> See Appendix.

incidents during the Communists' occupation of Shantou. On 28 September, the GMD gunboat *Feiyang*, having fled the port four days earlier and sailed to Guangzhou, no doubt carrying refugees, returned to Shantou and entered the harbor, along with two steamers and a second gunboat. This group issued an ultimatum that the Communists leave the city within four hours; the demand was ignored.<sup>95</sup> The *Feiyang* then sailed to the wharf and, under covering fire from its guns, discharged a party of armed GMD marines onto the bund, and then sailed to the other end of the wharf where a second party of ratings was put ashore.<sup>96</sup> The Japanese pickets already ashore found themselves positioned between the two GMD parties, but do not seem to have cooperated directly with them. Instead, a fracas of obscure origins broke out between the GMD and Japanese marines.<sup>97</sup> The GMD squads tried to advance into Shantou's business district, but came under Communist fire. It was at this point that a handful of British marines were landed to guard the Presbyterian Mission and those seeking refuge there from the crossfire.<sup>98</sup> During the ensuing hours of confused street fighting, two Communist officers were reportedly shot and two or three Communist commanders were captured and sent back to the

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<sup>95</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 30 September 1927, p. 10.

<sup>96</sup> Estimates of the number of troops involved vary from 30 to 400. One detailed eyewitness account put the number of the first landing party at 60 men: *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 3 October 1927, p. 5.

<sup>97</sup> A firearm taken from a Japanese marine by GMD soldiers became the pretext for extraordinary action by the Japanese forces. After the Communists had fled Shantou, the Japanese destroyers chased the small GMD fleet from Shantou harbor to the nearby port of Swabue (Shanwei), and blocked them into the harbor there until the firearm was returned. See Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 18, 19 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9608.

<sup>98</sup> On the panic at the Mission, see *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 3 October 1927, p. 5.

*Feiyang*.<sup>99</sup> Some former GMD police who had cooperated with the Communists now defected back to the GMD and gave help to the landing parties.<sup>100</sup> The GMD marines were able to capture a quantity of gold bullion, money which the US Consul reported had only just been secured by the Communists from the Shantou Chamber of Commerce.<sup>101</sup> Communist troops, perhaps receiving reinforcement by units arriving by train from Chaozhou and other stations on the rail line into Shantou, regrouped and were able to drive the GMD marines back to the wharf.<sup>102</sup> The retreat was chaotic, and reports say that only 20 men were seen returning to their ship.<sup>103</sup> Although the Communists prevailed, the incident was an ominous indication of the vulnerability of the new administration to military attack from the port. With both GMD and foreign naval vessels crowding the harbor, and with fresh GMD troops reportedly organizing to march through the coastal districts to Shantou, Communist leaders were forced to recognize the futility of attempting an unaided defense of their position at Shantou.

The military pressure on the Communists forced the Front Committee to redirect its attention away from governance, propaganda, and even internal security considerations, and towards measures for securing its military position at Shantou. Although General Zhang Fakui had conducted anti-Communist purges as a GMD General earlier in the year, the Front Committee did not rule

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<sup>99</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 4 October 1927, p. 11; and *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 3 October 1927, p. 5.

<sup>100</sup> “Chang Tai-lei’s Report: The Experiences of the ‘August 1<sup>st</sup> Incident,’ the Cause of Defeat, and the Future,” *Central Newsletter* No. 7, 30 October 1927, in Wilbur, “The Ashes of Defeat”, p. 36.

<sup>101</sup> The US Consul reported the amount seized as 28,500 dollars: see Berger, Swatow, to US State Department, No. 16, 5 October 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00/9564. Four boxes containing 5000 dollars each were taken: *South China Morning Post*, 4 October 1927, p. 11.

<sup>102</sup> *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 29 September 1927, p. 5.

<sup>103</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 30 September 1927, p. 10.

out the possibility of striking up a new alliance with Zhang, the leader against whom He Long and Ye Ting originally rebelled in the Nanchang Uprising. Zhang was reported to have arrived in Hong Kong in early September, and his remaining forces were regrouping in northwestern Guangdong province.<sup>104</sup> British diplomats learned that Zhang was holding conversations with his local rival, provincial Governor Li Jishen, about the situation at Shantou.<sup>105</sup> But Zhang was also secretly entertaining at least three envoys from the Communist Front Committee at Shantou, who were tasked with the job of “again [making] connections” with Zhang, in hopes of gaining his support against the GMD, and if necessary, against Li Jishen himself.<sup>106</sup> The Front Committee was later censured by the CCP Central Committee for negotiating with Zhang Fakui, and “fool[ing] around with various tricky maneuvers.”<sup>107</sup> In the end Zhang rejected the Communists’ overture, forcing the Front Committee to a critical juncture.<sup>108</sup> In view of the Zhang-CCP talks, however, it is perhaps ironic that Zhang became a principal figure in the brutal suppression

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<sup>104</sup> Minute of Conversation with Luk Wan-chau, Representative of Li Jishen, 3 October 1927, in Enclosure to Clementi, Hong Kong, to London, 3 October 1927, pp. 165-75, in UK National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office (CO) 129/500.

<sup>105</sup> Minute of Conversation with Luk Wan-chau, Representative of Li Jishen, 3 October 1927, in Enclosure to Clementi, Hong Kong, to London, 3 October 1927, pp. 165-75, in CO 129/500. On the Li-Zhang negotiations, see also *The North China Herald*, 1 October 1927, p. 1.

<sup>106</sup> “Li Li-san’s Report,” in Wilbur, “The Ashes of Defeat”, p. 22.

<sup>107</sup> “Central’s [CCP Central Standing Committee] Announcement [Number 13]: On the Matter of the Defeat of Yeh and Ho,” 14 October 1927, *Central Newsletter* No. 7, 30 October 1927, in Wilbur, “The Ashes of Defeat”, p. 41.

<sup>108</sup> For Zhang Fakui’s speech to the Cadet Recruits Regiments of the Fourth Army, see *Mon Kwok Yat Po (Republic Daily)*, 1 October 1927, in Enclosure to Clementi, Hong Kong, to London, 30 December 1927, in FO 371/13199.

of the Communists' 'commune' at Guangzhou only a few weeks later, in early December 1927.<sup>109</sup>

With no substantive Soviet aid and no Chinese ally, the Front Committee was driven to seek a temporary *modus vivendi* with the British representatives at Shantou, by trying to establish conventional diplomatic contacts. On 29 September Guo Moruo, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, held a formal meeting with the British Consul, Cecil Kirke. In his demarche, Guo "denied that his party was a communist party," and portrayed the Front Committee as still cooperating with the GMD, despite the arrival in Shantou the day before of a Party operative, Zhang Dailei, who carried news that the CCP Central Committee had met and decided to end the policy of continuing cooperation with the GMD.<sup>110</sup> The Front Committee may have hoped that Guo would be able to convince the British to permit safe passage to Hong Kong for its members and the Soviet advisors, but the conversation did not advance that far. Kirke warned Guo not to permit any attacks upon British subjects or their property, and Guo assured Kirke that such actions would not take place.<sup>111</sup> The meeting then broke up.

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<sup>109</sup> Of the Communists present at Shantou, the following also held important positions in the 'Canton Commune' leadership: Zhang Dailei, Chairman and Commissioner of the Army and Navy; Peng Pai (who may not have been in Shantou but was in the East River districts just west of the city), Commissioner of Land; Yun Taiying, Chief Secretary; Ye Ting, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army; Xu Guangda, Chief of Staff of the Red Army. See Huston, Canton, to US State Department, No. 1018, 30 December, 1927, p. 28, NARA FO 59 893.00/9749. Ye Jianying also participated at Guangzhou: for a comprehensive if perhaps incomplete list of participants, see David W. Klein and Anne B. Clark, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism 1921-1965, Volume II* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 1067.

<sup>110</sup> Zhang Dailei, who carried news of the Central Committee's recent decisions, was in Shantou by 28 September; see "Chang Tai-lei's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 36.

<sup>111</sup> In fact the Communists had already occupied the Anglo-Chinese College, which the English Presbyterian Mission claimed to own; see *The North-*

Guo's talks with Kirke may have been one of the last important political actions that the Front Committee was able to plan. GMD troops overran a Communist perimeter security unit at Tanggeng, near Shantou, on 28 September, and two fresh GMD divisions were reportedly approaching Chaochou; the Communist leadership concluded that their positions north of Shantou were "indefensible."<sup>112</sup> Over the next two days, some 2000 Communist troops were killed in disastrous battles near Tenggeng and Jieyang.<sup>113</sup> No substantial Communist force remained to block a GMD overland advance on Chaochou, which was abandoned on 30 September. An emergency reassessment of the situation at Shantou was undertaken by senior Communist leaders. At 2:00 AM on 1 October, exactly two months after the Nanchang Uprising, the Front Committee formally decided to pull all forces out of both Chaochou and Shantou. Surviving troops were ordered to retreat westward to the rural Hailufeng district of Guangdong, where pro-Communist peasant communities cultivated since 1925 by CCP rural organizer and Front Committee member Peng Pai remained in place, despite the loss of the town of Lufeng to pro-GMD forces in late September.<sup>114</sup>

The most senior Communist leaders decided that they would rendezvous in Hong Kong.<sup>115</sup> A few leaders briefly remained

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*China Herald*, 1 October 1927, p. 11. Zhou Enlai had been familiar with the long-running dispute over the College when he was in Shantou in 1925: Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 76, 9 December 1925, in FO 228/3151.

<sup>112</sup> "Chou I-ch'un's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", pp. 29-30.

<sup>113</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 3 October 1927, p. 12.

<sup>114</sup> "Li Li-san's Report," in Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat", p. 14. See also Galbiati, *P'eng P'ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet*, p. 261.

<sup>115</sup> According to one analysis, the purpose of the Hong Kong meeting was to "review with the CCP Kwangtung Committee the newly emerging situation" concerning peasant mobilization, especially in the Hailufeng districts, but it would be surprising if plans for the capture of Guangzhou (Canton) were not also discussed; see Galbiati, *P'eng P'ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet*, p. 266.

‘underground’ in Shantou. For example, on 2 October 11 Communists arrived in Hong Kong from Shantou on the British-registered *S.S.Haibong*; and one of the arrivals was reported to be Zhou Enlai, who seems to have escaped while the others were arrested.<sup>116</sup> Also trying to flee Shantou was the team of Soviet military and political advisors who had participated in the occupation of the city.<sup>117</sup> The Soviets too wanted to travel to Hong Kong, and on 1 October they also sought passage to the Colony on the *S.S. Haibong*.<sup>118</sup> Entry to Hong Kong required British visas. When the five Russians, who gave their names as Socal, Berg, Kumanin, and Mr. and Mrs. Veger, approached the British Consulate in Shantou for visas, they were told that there would be some “delay” in granting the necessary papers.<sup>119</sup> Desperate to escape the city before GMD troops arrived, the five boarded another steamer bound for Xiamen, where no entry visa was required.

The group was arrested in Xiamen on 3 October and tried by civil authorities there.<sup>120</sup> But their presence in Shantou, and the fact that Berg and perhaps others were in contact with outside agencies makes it likely that they were aware of a new Soviet policy on the seizure of power. On 19 September the Comintern, following Stalin’s direction, officially sanctioned the creation of urban

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<sup>116</sup> *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 4 October 1927, p. 5; and *Hong Kong Daily Press*, 6 October 1927, p. 5. This report contradicts the story of Zhou’s perseverance in the face of severe illness to make the overland journey to Hong Kong: Dick Wilson, *Chou: The Story of Zhou Enlai 1898-1976* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1984), pp. 95-96.

<sup>117</sup> The Soviets stayed at Shantou’s Astor Hotel, near both the US Consulate and the Front Committee’s General Political Department headquarters: Berger, Swatow, to Peking, 7 November 1927, NARA RG 59 893.00B/460.

<sup>118</sup> *South China Morning Post*, 6 October 1927, p. 10. As noted above, the *S.S. Haibong* was carrying several Chinese Communists, perhaps including Zhou Enlai.

<sup>119</sup> Kirke, Swatow, to Peking, No. 49, 6 October 1927, in FO 228/3581.

<sup>120</sup> Wilbur and How, *Missionaries of Revolution*, p. 433, n. 12.



communes in China, even though considerable circumlocution has been required to prevent this new policy from appearing to be an endorsement of Trotsky's call for the founding of workers', peasants' and soldiers' soviets, issued in April 1927.<sup>121</sup> The Soviet advisors at Shantou found that the Front Committee decision to establish a Communist-led political authority had been made independently in early August, when it had been, in fact, a deviation from the Comintern line. Only with the Comintern policy change, and the reemergence of the Party's Central Committee in November 1927, could authorized planning for a soviet be undertaken within the Chinese Communist movement. The result, devised and then quickly overthrown in December, was the famous 'Commune' at Guangzhou (Canton).<sup>122</sup> We have no record of the discussions between the Soviet advisors and the Front Committee members at Shantou, but the outline 'political program' taken from one of the Soviet advisors on 3 October indicates that a sustained Communist-led political administration was contemplated and initial steps were taken toward the organization of this authority well before the CCP Central Committee finally authorized such actions in November 1927.

### Conclusion

The exalted status of the urban 'commune' in Communist thinking was first established in Marx's analyses of the 1871 Paris Commune, in which workers and citizens had taken control of most of the French capital, creating conditions that inspired Marx to reconsider the potential of popular revolution and rule by a self-governing

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<sup>121</sup> Benjamin I. Schwarz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 81-83, 109-12. For Stalin's comments of the formation of soviets in July, see "Comments on Current Affairs in China," Pravda, 28 July 1927, in Josef Stalin, *Stalin on China* (Westport CT: Hyperion Press, 1977), pp. 76-79.

<sup>122</sup> Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China 1923-1928*, pp. 164ff.

proletariat.<sup>123</sup> The situation created by the Communists' occupation of Shantou held tremendous political and military potential for the Chinese Communist Party, had it met with greater popular support and possessed better military support. The seizure and administration of a wealthy urban center, the plans for creating a Communist-led government, the possibility of receiving direct Soviet military assistance – all suggested that the Southern Expedition only narrowly missed becoming a major turning point in the development of the urban-based Chinese Communist revolution. Had the Front Committee's military position been more secure the East River districts of Guangdong, with Shantou as their metropolitan center, might have played a catalytic historical role for urban-based revolutionary development comparable to that which was eventually filled by rural 'base areas' like the Jiangxi Soviet. Indeed, the November 1927 Ninth Plenum of the CCP called for precisely the kind of uprising that Shantou's Front Committee had hoped and planned for, with the result that in early December, a handful of Communist leaders succeeded in briefly seizing Guangzhou, site of the famous 'Canton Commune.'

The failure of the contemplated Shantou Commune may also have been particularly salient for the factional alliances within the CCP leadership as they developed in later years. The personal political positions of the Front Committee members, many of whom later held senior Party and PLA leadership positions, could have been bolstered had official recognition been given in Party historiography to the events of the Southern Expedition and the occupation of Shantou. Indeed these leaders -- notably Zhou Enlai -- had, because of the events at Shantou, experienced success in creating the

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<sup>123</sup> Marx wrote that the Paris Communards had "started out from the viewpoint that a relatively small number of resolute, well-organized men would be able, at a given favorable moment, not only to seize the helm of state, but also... maintain power until they succeeded in sweeping the mass of people into the revolution and ranging them round the small band of leaders. This involved, above all, the strictest, dictatorial centralization of all power in the hands of the new revolutionary government." Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France," Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader, Second Edition* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), p. 627.

preliminary steps toward Communist government that predated that of Mao himself. At the same time, these leaders were also compromised, by having cooperated with merchants' associations and having courted GMD General Zhang Fakui and British diplomats. Mao's absence, the political complexities of the Southern Expedition and Shantou Commune, and the fact that these initiatives were overseen by a set of key Communist leaders who were out of touch with the Party's Central Committee, explains much about the virtual exclusion of these events from later official Party historiography. That historiography has been molded to communicate Mao's unique theoretical and leadership qualities and his political indispensability, none of which gains any testimony from the events at Shantou. The leader who benefitted most in the short term was Front Committee leader Zhou Enlai, who retained his seat on the Politburo at the November 1927 CCP Central Committee meeting in Shanghai; the same meeting unseated Mao for his failures in the Autumn Harvest Uprisings. Zhou, after being mildly censured for the Shantou affair, was "then put... in charge of military and secret service affairs" and ordered to "direct the Party's underground struggle" that would continue in China's cities.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Gao Wenqian. *Zhou Enlai: The Last Perfect Revolutionary* (trans. By Peter Rand and Lawrence R. Sullivan) (New York: Public Affairs, 2007), p. 68. See also Fang and Fang (1986), p. 58.

Appendix<sup>125</sup>

The Proximate Political Program For The Revolutionary Committee  
Of The Chinese Kuomintang

I.

1. GENERAL POLICY & LEGISLATION

a) Before opening the National legislative Assembly & Chinese Kuomintang meetings the Revolutionary Committee should take a hand at organizing the Government of the Chinese Republic. To struggle against Imperialism and to abolish all unequal treaties. To establish ministries: for Foreign Affairs, Financial, Peasants, Workmen, Education, Commerce, Republic's Court-martial, Committee of the National Economy, Management of the Political Safety, Statistical for emigrants, etc.

b) National Government should approximately manage provincial affairs.

c) Everyone who is over twenty years of age, workmen, peasants, common people who quite agree with passing land resolutions both male and female should have the right to elect or to be elected as a deputy. All rich land-owners, compradores, speculators, bribe-takers, bureaucrats, militarists' remainders, bishops, monks and all contre-revolutioners should have no right to elect or to be elected as a deputy.

4. The authority in villages should be in the hands of peasants' unions. The committee of peasants' unions in villages should organize the power.

The committees ought to convoke peasants' conferences.

The conference chooses & organizes an official executive committee. In the places where there is not peasants' unions, district's governments may authorize persons to organize the temporary

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<sup>125</sup> The original of this document was found in the possession of Janika Veger, one of five Russians who had fled Shantou, by the Police of the International Settlement at Amoy on 3 October 1927. The original document, "a pencil draft in Russian," was hurriedly translated into English and was included as it appears here in an Enclosure to Putnam, Amoy, to Peking, No. 40, 11 October 1927, in NARA RG 59 893.00B/420.

administrative committee. The temporary committee have to convoke peasants conference to elect an official executive committee.

5. The executive committee in district-towns.

The superior organ of revolutionary government authorizes from 5 to 13 men for organization an executive committees in districts. In district executive committees the following sub-committees might be created: Land, Financial, ( ) ( ) trading, coherency, education, agriculture, supply of provisions and political guard. In conformity with the population the National Assembly might consist of 200 to 300 deputies the 80-90% of which should be composed of peasants representatives.

6. District-town executive committee organizes militia which ought to consist of peasants and workmen who must be subordinated to the district committee.

7. Before convocation of the National Assembly the Revolutionary Committee authorizes a person to organize Revolutionary Court of Justice Committee to strengthen the existing periodical system and to abolish the laws guarding bourgeois interest.

All Chinese citizen without sex distinction are equal in juridical domain and entirely free with respect to their marriage.

## II.

### 1. VILLAGE REFORM.

All private properties belonging to the bribe-takers, bureaucrats, compradores, militarists, rich land-owners, contre-revolutioners & church-lands should be confiscated and leases handed over to ex-soldiers, families of the officers and soldiers in military service, and landless peasants.

2. The Government collects taxes in properties of 10% land's profit. In periods of revolutionary war and organization of workmen's and peasants authority the Government has the right to collect extra-taxes not more than 25% of the land's profits. The small land-owners who possess an estate not more than 50 *mou* of land should reduce lessee-rent and after this the lessee-rent should not exceed more than 40% of revenue. It is not allowed to collect lessee-rent in advance.

3. The purchase, sale and mortgage of any estate is prohibited.

4. The lessee-holder has constant right on his cultivated land and if the lease-holder does not want to give his share up then the land owner had no right to tent the land to any other person.

5. It is prohibited to make any land speculation.

6. All property belonging to gentry. Bribe-takers, bureaucrats and all contra-revolutioners should be confiscated. The district authority takes charge of this property and gives information to the economical committee of war-time for supplement of military resources and for supplying those families whose family members lost their life or been wounded in the arm.

#### DEBTS

7. Loans borrowed under interest more than 40% a year are subject to cancellation. The proportion of interest should not surpass 20%. The creditors have no right to force poor debtors' parents or their relatives to pay debts.

8. The village executive committees should look after the development of public education in villages. In particular they must draw their attention to the political education of the people and increase the knowledge of reading & writing among adults.

9. The villages executive committees are obliged to help all cripples, orphans, unemployed and elderly men.

10. The villages committee should look after the improvement of communications.

#### III.

#### WORKMENS' & PEASANTS' ARMING.

1. To disarm all contre-revolutioners, all workmen and peasants should be organized, trained up and armed. These van-guards are stationery troops in all towns and villages.

2. The professionals' & peasants' unions should draw out workmen and peasants for military service in the Revolutionary Army.

#### IV.

#### INDUSTRY AND TRADE.

1. All important industrial and trading undertakings and means of communications should be managed by committee of domestic economy.

2. a) The condition of workmen should be improved. The eight hours working day should be passed for laborers while merchant's clerks should not work more than 10 hours a day.

b) The children and women should not work more than 8 hours a day and not to be admitted on night work.

c) Unemployed should be supported by the Government & capitalists.

d) The law of workmen life-insurance should be passed.

e) The salary for labor ought to be increased correspondingly with the cost of living.

f) Men, women and children working at the same labor should be paying at similar rates.

3. The new Customs-houses statute for national industry and trade should be worked out.

4. To take measures in development of the water & land transport.

5. Emigrants who want to deposit their capital in National industry and trade should obtain protection and privileges.

6. To protect medium and small businesses, factories, and workshops except in cases of military necessity, if the owners are not connected with the contra revolutioners.

#### V.

##### FINANCE.

1. To improve income taxes. To establish: assessed taxes, land-tax, capital levy and income-tax.

2. Government Banks should be established. The issuance of banknotes by foreigners and private banks should be prohibited.

To establish the peasants & workmen's banks for the economical support to all peasants, workmen and small merchants.

#### VI.

1. The Anti-Imperialism struggle should be continued. The struggle against Imperialistic military intervention should be continued. The withdrawal of foreigners naval and land forces from China should be obtained. All Concessions and Customs-houses should be handed back to China.

The privileged rights of foreign banks in China and the right of foreigners in shipping in the territorial water of China should be abolished. All unequal treaties should be abolished.

2. To keep up the friendship with the Governments who have interest in the Anti-Imperialistic struggle who wish to make an alliance with China on the basis of equality. To keep up the friendship with those who assist China in her revolutionary movement.