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This thesis examines the relationship between the Kuo-mintang of China and the United States of America from 1921 to 1925. In 1921, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Kuo-mintang, tried to obtain American aid and recognition. His failure was due to the prejudice of American officials toward Sun, as well as the unwillingness of America to withdraw its recognition from the Peking Government. Sun was again frustrated in 1922 when his military subordinate, Chen Chiung-min, betrayed him. Records reveal that America was in favor of Chen's political overture and encouraged Chen's military insurrection. When Sun tried to grab the customs surplus in 1923, a policy that the western government had imposed on China, the United States dispatched more gunboats to prevent it.

Convinced that he could not obtain help from America after this episode, Sun was forced to link with Communist Russia in 1924. Influenced by Soviet advisers and Sun's sudden death in 1925, the Kuomintang adopted a pro-Russian policy to unify China. American worry about Bolshevism in China had come too late.

AMERICAN POLICY AND THE CANTON GOVERNMENT
1921-1925

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INTRODUCTION

Recent Chinese history is extremely complicated. In 1911, a group of revolutionaries established a new republic of China. Although intended to be democratic and free, it suffered from constant internal chaos and foreign intervention. China had never enjoyed order, peace, and democracy. The revolution of 1911 overthrew the Manchu Dynasty, but did not eliminate despotism. Yuan Shih-kai, an ambitious and militant politician, was elected President of the Republic of China in 1912, but he did not bring democracy to China. In an attempt to become emperor of the China Empire, Yuan ordered the dissolution of the Kuomintang in 1913, the termination of the Parliament in 1914, and the assignment of provincial military governors under his control. When Yuan died in 1916, China was plunged into chaos by militarists who had been his provincial military governors.

Because Peking was regarded as the traditional capital of China, three different groups of militarists or warlords struggled to control it. They were the Anfu Club, headed by Tuan Chi-jiu; the Fengtien Party led by Chang Tso-lin; and the Chihli Party loyal to Tsao Kun. The Peking Government was controlled from 1916 to 1920 by the Anfu Club, which was ousted by Chihli and Fengtien forces in the Anfu-Chihli War. Chang Tso-lin was the principal beneficiary from the war, as he acquired the highest position in Peking and exercised great power until 1922. When the Chihli-Fengtien War broke out in

April 1922, Chang was driven out from Peking by Wu Pei-fu, a military figure of the Chihli Party. The Chihli Party then controlled Peking. Despite China's need for order, peace, and democracy, the warlords fought with one another and seriously damaged the weak new Republic of China for at least ten years.

Foreign involvement in Chinese affairs further complicated the situation. Foreign domination imposed on China in the 1841 Opium War did not disappear with the abdication of the Manchu Dynasty. The consequences of imperialism included the unequal treaties which provided for spheres of interest, the stationing of foreign troops in China, foreign consular jurisdiction as well as extraterritoriality, and the loss of Chinese tariff autonomy. The Chinese hated the treaties and wanted them abolished, but the warlords had no intention of restoring Chinese sovereignty by nullifying them. The warlords were able to use the treaties to their own advantage. They even borrowed huge sums from a foreign consortium to finance their military operations during the civil war. This increased foreign influence in China, especially of Japan, Great Britain, and the United States.

Japan was the most aggressive violator of Chinese sovereignty through the Twenty-One Demands of 1915 and invasion of Shangtung Peninsula during World War I. Japanese exploitation of China was curbed by other powers after the First World War, and the Shangtung problem was finally discussed in the Versailles Conference of 1919. Although the Versailles

Conference did not resolve the Shangtung Crisis, it aroused nationalism throughout China, including the significant patriotic May Fourth Movement of 1919, which organized young intellectuals who advocated greater Chinese independence. This outburst of nationalism contributed to Chinese determination to curb foreign interference by abolishing the unequal treaties.

Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Kuomintang, was ready to join the national movement. He realized that a China divided by civil war could not oppose imperialism. His first step to unify China was to suppress the warlords. In 1920, he left Shanghai and arrived at Canton to begin preparations for a new government the next year.

The establishment of the Canton Government in 1921 was a new beginning for the Kuomintang and for its leader, Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Before this, Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang had experienced difficulties leading the Chinese people to democracy. Not until the establishment of the Canton Government in 1921 was the Kuomintang provided with a political and military base from which to fight for its ideals. The Kuomintang still needed foreign aid to defeat the warlords and unify China. Dr. Sun wanted American help for his "Northern Expedition" plan against the Northern warlords. American response to the Kuomintang's appeals from 1921 to 1925 became one of the most important factors in the Kuomintang's success.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the relationship between the United States and the Kuomintang when it was under

Sun Yat-sen's control from 1921 to 1925. This thesis has four chapters. The first considers the American policy toward the Kuomintang and its leader in 1921, when Dr. Sun established the Canton Government and asked for help from the United States. The second examines the American reaction to the political development inside the Canton Government in 1922, when Sun's military subordinate, General Chen Chiung-ming, betrayed him. American policy toward the Canton Government was also affected by the international situation. American diplomacy toward the Canton Government and the foreign powers during the 1923 Customs Surplus Crisis is considered in the third chapter. The final chapter discusses the cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Soviet Union which resulted from the former's unsuccessful relationship with the United States.

Chapter I

AMERICAN POLICY AND THE CANTON GOVERNMENT IN 1921

1921 was an important year in Sino-American history: America had a new administration led by President Warren G. Harding, and China was in the midst of civil war. The Peking Government was threatened by many factions, including the Kuomintang led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who organized Canton as a revolutionary base. The United States and the Kuomintang eventually developed close relations, but American policy was originally lukewarm toward Sun.

Divergent objectives were responsible for tension in the early relationship between the United States and Canton. Sun's solicitation of foreign aid was not only to overthrow the war-lords, it was also to be used to help him to build a strong Republic of China after the civil war. As one of the most powerful nations in the world, the United States was the country to which Sun first turned for assistance. Sun also tried to get help from Japan because of its geographical proximity and racial affinity with China. Ultimately, Sun wanted enough support either from the United States or Japan to help him to launch a war against his enemies.

However, the interests of the United States varied from Sun's. America wanted to maintain peace and prevent Japanese hegemony in China. The United States had to undertake some steps to fulfill its basic policy. The first step was to establish a system of commercial freedom for all nations to eliminate Japan's monopoly in China. The second step was to

offer the Peking Government loans through a banking consortium. America thought that its loans through the consortium would make China a huge market for foreign goods.¹ Trade would build China into a commercial nation and remove the possibility of chaos, which was always a threat to foreign investment. But these steps could be taken only after peace came to China. America, therefore, would not support Sun's Government, which was engaged in war against the Peking Government.

The second factor responsible for awkward relations between the United States and Canton was that Sun's high opinion of the former was not reciprocated. Sun's attitude toward the United States was basically friendly. He spoke highly of America, including its history, music, and political system. His friendly attitude stemmed from his admiration of both American economic power in the twentieth century and its tradition of democracy.² He had studied in the United States, had American advisers and friends, and his wife was American educated. Thus, the United States was his main hope for foreign support.³

The American Government, however, was unimpressed with Sun. Some American officials considered Sun "less of a revolutionary and nationalist than a megalomaniacal troublemaker."⁴ They had four specific complaints against Sun. American officials regarded Sun as a bellicose politician because he had waged war against Yuan Shih-kai in 1913. Second, Sun had opposed China's entrance into World War I against Germany, while the United States had regarded Chinese

entrance an opportunity to "extend its influence in China."⁵ Third, Americans thought that Sun was a prime contributor to China's failure to unify peacefully and reform politically.⁶ Last, Sun's interest in close relations with Japan aroused American suspicion. Sun was described by the officials in the State Department as an "unsavory opportunist," and also a "fuzzy-minded and impractical dreamer" who was not to be taken seriously.⁷

Sun, therefore, had had difficulties in getting American aid. For example, the State Department would not allow part of the \$50 million in bonds issued by Sun's Government for military purposes in 1917 to be sold in the United States and the Philippines.⁸ In April 1920, Sun asked Thomas W. Lamont of J.P. Morgan & Company for \$25,000,000 to equip a couple of army corps to obtain "peace in short order." The State Department intervened and Sun was rebuffed again.⁹

Sun and America had come into further conflict in October of 1920 over the issue of Chinese unification. The State Department was angry when Sun regained Canton and repudiated the proclamation of the unification of the South and North made by the Kwangsi leader, Tsun Chuan-shuan, who had been influential in the Canton Government. American officials blamed Sun for "being motivated by petty jealousies and personal ambition, rather than by larger nationalist or patriotic ends."¹⁰ Sun and the United States were walking different roads, and cooperation between the two was difficult.

American officials continued to be unimpressed with Sun even after he formed the Canton Government in 1921. Although America tried to maintain relations with Sun at the consular level, some American officials were unfriendly to him.¹¹ Sun's detractors included Dr. Charles R. Crane, American Minister in Peking in 1920, and J.V.A. MacMurray, head of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs in the State Department.¹² For instance, Minister Crane sent a report on Sun to the State Department in February, 1921, that described his schemes for war as "impracticable and grandiose," and indicated that "great personal vanity" was the main trait of Sun's personality. Crane dismissed him as an "unpractical idealist," and concluded that Sun's prestige was only great in his own province of Kwangtung.¹³

MacMurray discouraged Sun when he tried to officially contact the United States. In March 1921, Sun instructed his representative in America, Mr. Ma Soo, to send a telegram through the State Department to President Harding. The telegram congratulated Harding on his recent inauguration as the 29th President, and expressed Sun's wish that "hence forth Republican America and Republican China may be drawn still more closely to each other."¹⁴ MacMurray instructed the Division of Far Eastern Affairs not to acknowledge the telegram. MacMurray later asked Harding's secretary, George B. Christian, Jr., to refuse to receive Ma Soo when he sought an interview on the grounds that the United States recognized only the Peking Government. MacMurray insisted that no Chinese

officials except those representing Peking would be received by the U.S. Government.¹⁵

Ernest Price, U.S. Vice Consul in Charge at Canton, was the only American official who was favorable toward Sun Yat-sen. He was optimistic about the Canton Government, and predicted its energies would be devoted "to building up an efficient and upright administration and to prompting the economic development of the people of Kwangtung."¹⁶ When Sun was inaugurated on May 5, 1921, as the President of the Republic of China at Canton, Price was deeply impressed with the ceremony. He again wrote the Secretary of State on May 7 to describe Sun's extreme popularity in South China.¹⁷

Although Sun was popular in South China, he needed foreign support. Despite the conflicts with the United States before the Canton Government was organized, Sun tried to improve relations with America as soon as he returned to Canton at the end of 1920. Realizing that the old Canton Military Government, formed in 1917, would be unable to make contact with foreign nations because it had no diplomatic function, Sun proposed to establish a new "formal government" that would be suited to conduct diplomacy.¹⁸ The proposal was originally opposed in the Kuomintang. Chiang Kai-shek, a young officer and one of the important members in the Kuomintang, led the opposition on the grounds it would make no difference. Chiang wrote Sun on March 5, 1921, that "diplomatic effort was unfruitful, especially from America."¹⁹ However, Sun persisted and organized the Canton Government in April 1921.

After Sun was inaugurated as President of the Canton Government, he turned his attention to the United States. He appointed Ma Soo as a special representative in Washington to seek assistance from America.²⁰ On May 5, the day of his inauguration, he delivered a public statement on foreign recognition. In the statement to foreign countries, including the United States, Sun proclaimed the new Government at Canton to be the only legal, qualified, and democratic government in China. Sun appealed to the foreign governments to withdraw recognition from Peking, a government of militarism, and recognize the Canton Government. If they did so, Sun promised he would respect the existing treaties which China had with them.²¹ On the same day, Sun wrote a special appeal to President Harding. He reiterated the statement which was sent to foreign countries and praised the United States as "the mother of Democracy," who should logically befriend his government and thereby help to defeat the militaristic warlords.²² He also played on American apprehension toward Japan, and urged that America enforce the Open Door Policy to oust the greedy Japanese from China.²³ The State Department not only refused to accept Sun's letter transmitted by Price, but rebuked him for cooperation with "an organization in revolt against a government with which the United States is in friendly relations."²⁴ The State Department instructed the Consul General at Canton to return the letter.²⁵

Because the State Department refused to communicate with his Government, Sun had his private foreign secretary, Eugene

Chen, try to deliver a second letter to Harding. The letter of September 20, 1921, asked that the Canton Government be recognized and predicted the dangerous consequences from American and Japanese economic competition in China.²⁶ The State Department again intervened and Harding never received the letter.

As the United States had no intention of supporting Canton as the only government of China, difficulties arose during the preparation for the Washington Conference in 1921. The American Government refused to allow an independent delegation of the Canton Government at the Washington Conference, but suggested that the Chinese delegation include representatives from both Peking and Canton. This would appear to be a significant change in American policy. Sun, however, insisted that Canton be seated separately at the Conference.²⁷ Secretary of State Hughes refused to accede to Sun's request on the grounds that he "represents but two provinces in South China, while the Peking Government represents twenty."²⁸ According to Lennox Simpson, a political adviser to the Chinese Government delegation at the Conference, "if Dr. Sun Yat-sen's two provinces were separately represented . . . this would bring a Chinese provincial congress to Washington, mixing up purely internal questions with the international problems of the Pacific."²⁹ An invitation was, therefore, not issued to the Canton Government.

Sun's attempt to get American political and diplomatic support had been in vain. American officials were prejudiced

against him and the State Department refused to let a separate delegation participate in the Washington Conference. In addition to his failure to obtain recognition, Sun was unable to get American financial aid, and the State Department used its influence with prospective creditors against the Canton Government.

The United States neglected the Canton Government's financial crisis and refused to offer any kind of aid because of political considerations. Ernest Price noticed the serious financial situation at Canton in May of 1921. He notified the State Department that the Government was making a desperate attempt to get credit from Japan, France, and the United States.³⁰ Price's viewpoint was that the United States should offer aid to Canton as soon as possible. The State Department was unreceptive to the suggestion, despite the fact that Japan could use loans to the Canton Government to increase its economic penetration of China.

Facing serious financial problems, the Canton Government negotiated with George H. Shank of Chicago for a \$100,000,000 loan.³¹ The loan plan was that the Canton Government would issue \$100,000,000 of 8 per cent, twenty-year bonds, payable in gold. The Canton Government would invest the money in industries in South China. The industries would become the property of the Government after twenty years. Sun and Shank sought U.S. Government approval in February, 1921, but "the State Department turned down the deal," according to Ma Soo's statement in the New York Times of January 29, 1922.³² Yet,

the Canton Government did not give up the possibility of financial help from the United States and publicly encouraged American businesses to invest in the South China market.

The State Department blocked Canton's efforts to obtain aid to avoid problems with those foreign governments that recognized the Peking Government. Peking had been recognized as the capital of China since 1911 because it dealt with most international affairs. As long as most nations maintained their diplomatic relations with Peking, the United States was compelled to do the same. Unless the United States followed their recognition policy it would lead to diplomatic problems and perhaps isolation on Chinese policy. Even had the United States wanted to be friendly with Canton, America had no choice but to keep in harmony with other nations and thereby to sacrifice the possible advantages of an independent policy toward China.

The gulf was widened between the United States and Canton over the Customs Surplus Crisis of 1921. Background is needed to understand the Crisis. Since the 1840s, China had been an unequal party in treaties imposed by foreign powers. The 1858 Tientsin Agreement of Maritime Customs was one of these treaties which seriously damaged the sovereignty of China. The Tientsin Agreement stipulated that Chinese duties on foreign goods would be low, which caused deficits in the Chinese Government's budget.³³ Further, the use of foreign maritime officials in Chinese ports nullified the independent rights of the Chinese Maritime Customs Administration. The

Chinese Maritime Customs Administration had been largely comprised of a foreign staff under a foreign director. During the revolution of 1911, foreign customs commissioners took over customs revenues, which included collecting, banking, and remitting items. Not long after the revolution, an agreement signed at Peking declared any surplus would be released to the Peking Government. However, the Diplomatic Corps at Peking was still the trustee of the revenue which was used by the Peking Government.³⁴

The problem was that the Diplomatic Corps at Peking could dispose of the customs surplus without regard to the wishes of the Peking Government. As China struggled for unification through civil war from 1911 to 1920, the Diplomatic Corps acquired more power to handle the customs surplus. For example, when Canton demanded a pro rata share of 13.7 per cent of the total revenue collection, which Canton was entitled to because of the area under its control, only the Diplomatic Corps could decide whether to meet the demand. The Diplomatic Corps had a good impression of the Canton Government in 1918, which had excluded Sun Yat-sen from leadership in May, and therefore granted the percentage.³⁵

This policy remained in force until the spring of 1920, when political disruption in Canton caused payments to be suspended. When the crisis was resolved at the end of 1920 and Sun returned to Canton from Shanghai, the Canton Government requested that the Diplomatic Corps resume payment of the surplus. However, the U.S. State Department opposed this

request and the funds were paid to the Peking Government.³⁶ Failure to obtain the customs surplus made Canton unhappy with the foreign powers. The first Customs Surplus Crisis of 1921 was the consequence.

The Diplomatic Corps decision to pay the entire surplus to the Peking Government stemmed from Canton's cancellation of the Cassells Mining Contract. The contract was signed between Great Britain and the Kwangsi warlords who were in control of the Canton Government. The contract, which granted the British mining rights in southern China, gave the British special political and economic benefits over their foreign competition. When Sun returned to Canton, he ordered the repudiation of the contract to prevent another development of imperialism.

The United States was at first pleased with Sun's action. Ernest Price, American Vice Consul in Charge at Canton, reported to the State Department that if the Canton Government did not cancel the contract, "all Americans are agreed [it] would close the door to us in South China."³⁷ Price believed that the United States should aid Sun if he experienced difficulty with Great Britain over nullification of the Cassells Agreement. The repudiation of the contract generated the Customs Surplus Crisis.

Facing the repudiation of the Cassells Mining Contract, Sir Beilby Alston, Great Britain's Minister at Peking, proposed that Sun and the Canton Government be punished. At a meeting of the Diplomatic Corps, he suggested that the 13.7

per cent of the Customs Surplus that had been authorized for Canton should continue to be diverted to Peking.

The United States' attitude on the proposal drew concern from the foreign powers. America faced two choices. It could support Sun and try to replace Great Britain as a power in South China, or support Great Britain to maintain good relations with that nation and Peking. After careful deliberation, the U.S. chose the latter course. America had decided not to support Canton because "reinforcing Peking financially would weaken Sun and aid the possibility of reunification of this country."³⁹ The State Department, therefore, instructed the Minister at Peking, Charles R. Crane, to support the British proposal.

Sun Yat-sen was undoubtedly irritated by Canton's loss of the surplus to Peking. On February 1, 1921, Sun threatened to seize the maritime customs in Kwangtung Province, and instructed his Foreign Minister, Wu Ting-fang, to protest the Diplomatic Corps' decision in a note to the United States. Sun argued in the note that the Peking Government did not represent the Chinese people, and it should not receive the total surplus. He also criticized the Diplomatic Corps for interfering in Chinese internal affairs.⁴⁰ Meanwhile, Price had disagreed with the American support of Great Britain, and urged the State Department to pay more attention to the nationalism that Canton had aroused. He also pointed out that American accord with the British worked against its economic interests. Thomas Lamont of J.P. Morgan & Company which had

interests in southern China had been pleased when the Cassells Mining Contract was abrogated.⁴¹

The American Government, nevertheless, firmly supported the decision of the Diplomatic Corps. With respect to Sun's threat to seize the Customs House in Kwangtung Province, the State Department finally adopted Minister Crane's proposal to prevent it with force if necessary.⁴²

Sun did not attempt to seize the Customs House. He was too weak as he had just returned to Canton and was mired in building a government. He also wanted to gain American support and thereby chose to avoid confrontation in 1921. The first Customs Surplus Crisis was temporarily resolved, but a second crisis of Customs Surplus occurred at the end of 1923.

Another serious problem between the United States and Canton was the military relationship which entailed the latter's purchase of military supplies and equipment from the former. These purchases, however, did not represent American Government aid, but were strictly commercial transactions between the Canton Government and American businessmen, who were allowed to sell military items on a limited basis by the permission of the U.S. Government. But the sale of U.S. military items became a sensitive diplomatic topic in 1921 and caused conflicts between the powers.

On May 5, 1919, a "China Arms Embargo Agreement" was signed by the Diplomatic Corps at Peking. The agreement was to prevent the enlargement of the civil war in China through the embargo of "arms and munitions of war and material destined

exclusively for their manufacture."⁴³ The items to be embargoed, however, were not clearly defined. Confusion about the specific items on the embargo list resulted in arguments among the powers. For example, the State Department objected on November 17, 1919, to the British Vickers Contract to sell airplanes to Peking on the grounds it was an arms purchase contract, but the British Government insisted that it was non-military contract.⁴⁴

Disagreements also arose over the 1920 American contract to sell machinery for manufacturing rifles, a number of airplanes, and iron material for the construction of an arsenal.⁴⁵ This agreement was not made with Sun but with the earlier Canton regime headed by Mo Ying-hsin, ex-Governor of Canton, and Ma Chi, Superintendent-General of the Canton Arsenal. They were in charge when the iron arrived. A change in the Canton Government resulted in the delivery of the machinery and airplanes in December, 1920, to Chen Chiung-ming, Sun's military subordinate. Chen tried to install the machinery in the Shih Ching Arsenal of Canton, but it was too large for the building. The Canton Government then asked an American company, the Rabbitt Engineering Corporation, for help in enlarging the arsenal. When the Rabbitt engineers were ready to reconstruct the Canton arsenal, the Canton authorities purchased more than a dozen amphibious military planes from America through merchants at Macao.⁴⁶ These purchases, together with the machinery importation, led to diplomatic conflicts between America and other powers.

Great Britain and Japan were irritated and both claimed that the American machinery would be put to military use. They also insisted that Davis & Company, an American owned company, had cooperated with Rabbitt Engineering Corporation to try to complete the Canton Arsenal. The United States denied the charge. Offended by the American criticism of the 1919 Vickers Contract, the British Government now condemned the American supply of military items to Canton as an "obstacle to peace between North and South."⁴⁸

The American Government dismissed these accusations. The State Department continued to deny that the shipments of machinery to Canton had other than commercial uses, and also rebuked the British for Vickers and Handley-Page Airplane contracts, and the Japanese for constructing an ammunition power factory at Liutaokou, an industrial city in Manchuria.⁴⁹

The State Department also pointed up the American difficulty in enforcement of the arms embargo. According to the State Department, the repeal of the provisions of the 1917 Espionage Act on March 3, 1921, had deprived the government of the power to prevent arms shipments to China.⁵⁰

The Canton Government regarded the American defense for the shipment of machinery to Canton as an excellent chance to obtain American friendship. Ma Soo delivered a cablegram to America on July 8 from Wu Ting-fang, the Foreign Minister of the Canton Government. It charged that Japan had already taken part in the civil war in South China between Kwangtung

and Kwangsi. As Japan had provided Kwangsi troops, the enemy of the Canton Government, with arms and ammunition, Ma stated that the Chinese "cry for justice" should be heard "by the liberty loving people of America."⁵¹

American repudiation of British and Japanese charges on the machinery shipments, however, was not a friendly signal to Sun and his Government. America was simply interested in the protection of its commerce and upholding the Open Door Policy. The United States had gone along with the China Arms Embargo in 1919 to prevent the Japanese from becoming monopolistic suppliers of arms from Japan.⁵² The United States had to take action to protect some covert shipments such as the sale of machinery in 1921 to Canton. These shipments were used to break Japan's monopoly in the arms market and to restrict the Japanese political and military spheres of influence in China.

The widespread violation of the arms embargo led to a compromise between the powers. At the Washington Conference, representatives of the various nations agreed to enforce strictly the embargo.⁵³ As a result, the United States began its embargo of Canton. When the American Oriental Trading Company requested authority to ship 3,000 rifles and 1,500,000 rounds of ammunition from the Philippine Islands to China, the State Department ordered the Acting Government of the Islands to stop shipment.⁵⁴ The Administration's authority on the matter was strengthened by a House resolution giving President Harding power to impose an arms embargo to nations where

the U.S. exercised extraterritorial jurisdiction, and China was in that category.⁵⁵ On March 4, 1922, President Harding formally declared that the exportation of arms or munitions to China would be unlawful.⁵⁶ The problem of the arms embargo was settled, so far as the United States was concerned, and the Canton Government was required to wage war independently without any foreign military help.

By 1921, relations between America and the Canton Government had become decidedly unfriendly. This situation was due to the prejudice of some American officials against Sun, and the desire of the United States to maintain diplomatic relations with Peking, the Canton Government's rival. Consequently, Sun failed to obtain support from America. America declined to recognize Canton, never considered offering Sun economic aid, and embargoed arms to Canton. Under these circumstances, Sun's Canton Government experienced severe difficulties.

Endnotes

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⁴George, 389.

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⁵⁰Ibid., 555.

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Chapter II

AMERICAN POLICY AND CHEN CHIUNG-MING'S INSURRECTION AGAINST
SUN YAT-SEN, 1922

China again plunged into civil war in 1922. Chang Tso-lin, the warlord of Manchuria, and Wu Pei-fu, the warlord of Central China, both wanted to seize Peking, the capital of China, as a political base to gain the diplomatic recognition from foreign countries. Chang Tso-lin controlled the city at first, but in April of 1922, he was attacked by Wu Pei-fu, which resulted in the Chihli-Fengtien War.

The Canton Government played an important role in the conflict between Chang and Wu. As President of the Canton Government, Sun Yat-sen regarded the clash between Chang and Wu as a chance for him to strengthen his Government. The tactic which Sun adopted was to link his Southern forces with Chang Tso-lin's Northern forces and envelope Wu Pei-fu. Termed the Northern Expedition, the Southern attack was designed by Sun in the belief that he could unify the country through a successful campaign.

Sun's Northern Expedition was intended to unify the nation. A fierce nationalist, Sun had long struggled to eliminate imperialism in China. He mistakenly thought that the revolution of 1911, which overthrew the despotic Manchu Dynasty and established the Republic of China, would oust the foreign powers then in firm control of many parts of China. Sun desperately began to encourage nationalism to eliminate foreign influence. The Northern Expedition was perceived as

a way to both unify the country and end foreign domination, as foreign powers backed the warlords.

Although Sun tried to persuade the Canton Government to adopt the Northern Expedition plan, he could not win the support of General Chen Chiung-ming, the military leader who helped him regain Canton in 1920. Chen had contributed greatly to Sun's revolution and was loyal to him until 1920. However, they diverged politically after 1920, especially on the issue of the Northern Expedition, because Chen advocated Provincial Autonomy.

Provincial Autonomy was a political group that favored adoption of the system of United States federalism.¹ This idea was first introduced to the China Provisional Government in 1911. Because Yuan Shih-kai was a dictator and favored a system of central authority during the 1910s, the progressive members of the Republic Government of China advocated Provincial Autonomy to prevent dictatorship. The progressives suggested that political power be divided between the provinces and a central government. Each Chinese province would write a constitution to govern itself internally, and every province would dispatch representatives to participate in the national assembly held in the capital that would legislate on national issues.²

But Provincial Autonomy was easily abused by ambitious soldiers who became the warlords and fragmented the country into many military sections under their authority. General Chen Chiung-ming was one of these ambitious military figures,

and he was in charge of the Kwangtung Province. He helped Sun take over Kwangtung in 1920 and establish the Canton Government in 1921.

Sun strongly opposed Provincial Autonomy, but Chen Chiung-ming favored it. When Chen returned to Canton, he planned to establish an independent regional government in Kwangtung under his own leadership.³ Chen not only opposed Sun as the President of the Canton Government, but he also opposed Sun's intention to ally with Chang Tso-lin. In April of 1921, Sun and Chen argued over Provincial Autonomy. Chen insisted that only Provincial Autonomy in Kwangtung could end civil war and build a peaceful and prosperous province for the people. But Sun disputed Chen, and argued that an autonomous Kwangtung Province could not protect itself, and if it imposed a high tax on the people to raise an army, it would result in an oppressive situation.⁴ However, Chen still insisted on Provincial Autonomy and opposed Sun's Northern Expedition.

Chen Chiung-ming's reputation with some Americans was that of able leader who wanted peace. As early as 1912, American officials in China praised Chen's radical policies of outlawing gambling casinos and brothels when he governed Canton. It was also reported that other foreigners at Canton spoke highly of him.⁵ When Chen was at the military base of Changchow in 1919, the U.S. officials reported that Chen was successfully developing Changchow. American citizens were proud of Chen's contributions to the city in education, road

construction, and culture, and considered him a gifted individual.⁶ They were deeply impressed with his educational achievements, and especially the fact he had sent many students to the United States. All this strengthened American confidence in Chen.

Although Chen's reputation did not equal Sun's inside the Canton Government, he had more American support. When the Canton Government was formed in 1921, American officials looked closely at the political developments within the Government including the rise of opposition to Sun's leadership. The U.S. Minister, Charles R. Crane, reported to the State Department that Sun was losing the support of his followers, one of whom was Chen Chiung-ming. Another U.S. official in China reported that Chen was willing to build "a clean government truly representative of the people of the province," and thought that Chen was preferable to Sun, who was a dreamer and an ambitious leader. Crane concluded that the people respected and would not forget General Chen Chiung-ming.⁸

Not only did the diplomats praise Chen Chiung-ming in their dispatches to the State Department, but the United States publicly praised him. On September 11, 1921, Paul S. Reinsch, former United States Minister to China, said that "the so-called Government of Dr. Sun Yat-sen does not govern anywhere. The real government is the Provincial Government under Chen Chiung-ming, a very superior man of great ability . . . one who would achieve a sound future."⁹ American praise encouraged Chen Chiung-ming to oppose Sun Yat-sen's military

plan and to challenge his leadership throughout the year of 1922.

Despite American encouragement, Chen was a nationalist who was unwilling to invoke foreign assistance against Sun. Russia was willing to send him aid in order to unify the country in 1920, but he refused.¹⁰ Although recognized by the U.S. as the only qualified political figure in the Canton Government, Chen had no intention of collaborating with a foreign power to overthrow Sun.¹¹

On October 8, 1921, Sun Yat-sen introduced the "Northern Expedition" resolution in the Canton Parliament. It finally passed, but Chen Chiung-ming refused to cooperate with the military plan.¹² Chen not only controlled the finances in Kwangtung, but he attempted to draft a provincial constitution for the province. Although Sun was willing to compromise with Chen and granted him a higher rank in the Government to gain his support, Chen refused to cooperate.¹³ When this effort failed, Sun arrived at Kwelin, a military base for the Northern Expedition, on December 4, 1921, and prepared for the offensive without sufficient men, supplies, and equipment. Meanwhile, the United States correctly predicted the termination of the Sun-Chen alliance.¹⁴

The end of their alliance was clearly illustrated by several events in 1922. When the army of the Northern Expedition marched into southern Hunan Province, Chen refused it aid. Furthermore, Chen communicated with the warlord of Hunan, Chao Hen-ti, and asked him to attack Sun's military

task forces.¹⁵ On March 21, 1922, Sun's close friend, Teng Kong, who was in charge of the expenditures of the Northern Expedition, was assassinated in Canton. It was rumored that Chen ordered the murder,¹⁶ and this brought the Sun and Chen relationship close to the breaking point.¹⁷ Sun returned to Canton on March 26, 1922. Chen Chiung-ming forced him to withdraw his army from Canton and the relationship was ruptured.

Meanwhile, on January 26, 1922, Sun had again instructed Wu Ting-fang to ask the U.S. to recognize the Canton Government, but the United States did not reply.¹⁸ This made it obvious that Sun could not win America's trust during this hard time. Threatened by Chen and rebuffed by the United States, Sun's only choice seemed to be an alliance with Chang Tso-lin, the biggest warlord in Manchuria. Chang, who relied on Japan to maintain his position, was willing to cooperate with Sun in attacking Wu Pei-fu.

Sun was pursuing two policies that heightened the wariness of American officials toward him. The first was his recourse to war to unify China. The policy of the United States was to maintain peace in China. America was opposed to any war in China and, consequently, objected to Sun's preparations to attack Wu Pei-fu. The second reason for American wariness was Sun's coalition with Chang Tso-lin. The United States could not ignore the possibility that Japan would take advantage of China once the Sun-Chang coalition attacked Wu. This was a situation America absolutely could not condone.

When Sun Yat-sen started to work with Chang Tso-lin, U.S. officials closely scrutinized the development. The Sun-Chang coalition had once been part of a triple alliance among Sun Yat-sen, Chang Tso-lin, and Tuan Chi-jui, another pro-Japanese political leader in Northern China.¹⁹ Both Chang and Tuan had sent special emissaries to Kwelin to initiate an alliance with Sun, who later reciprocated by dispatching representatives to talk with his future allies.²⁰ When Tuan lost his power in 1920, however, the triple alliance became a dual coalition. On March 2, 1922, the New York Times reported that U.S. diplomatic observers in China were very concerned about the coalition.²¹

The first step toward the Sun-Chang coalition was C.C. Wu's visit to Manchuria. Wu was the son of Wu Ting-fang, the Foreign Minister of the Canton Government. His ten-day sojourn in Mukden, according to an American official's report, was believed to be for the purpose of obtaining money from Chang Tso-lin to finance the alliance.²²

The U.S. had an uneasy reaction to C.C. Wu's Mukden visit. The new American Minister to China, Jacob G. Schurman, was dispatched to Canton on March 18, 1922.²³ The purpose of his trip was apparently to gain information about C.C. Wu's visit to Mukden. Sun was at Kwelin for the Northern Expedition during Schurman's trip, but the American avoided Kwelin. He visited only Canton, where Wu Ting-fang gave a banquet in his behalf. Schurman seemed eager to understand the consequences of the coalition on the imminent civil war.

C.C. Wu himself informed Schurman on April 1, 1922, that the decision at Mukden was to make Sun President and Tuan Vice President of the new united government that would result from a successful war against the Chihli Party.²⁴ The United States continued to worry about the proposed political arrangement. A month after his visit at Canton, Schurman went to Mukden to search for more answers to his questions. He listened to General Chang Tso-lin's explanation of events. Schurman was apprehensive about Japanese support of the Sun and Chang coalition, which could increase Japanese influence in China at the expense of the West should the coalition succeed.²⁵ These concerns made it impossible for the United States to help Sun's Northern Expedition.

The bitter outcome of Sun's Northern Expedition came when the Chihli-Fengtien War broke out on April 26, 1922. Sun, following dual coalition strategy, began attacks from South to North to enable Chang to check Wu Pei-fu from the North. But Chen Chiun-ming already had collaborated with Wu to disrupt Sun's supply lines and divulged his military plans to Wu.²⁶ Chen's collaboration led Sun to dismiss Chen as Governor of Kwangtung. After this formal break, hostilities accelerated between the two.

Chen's dismissal caused grave concern among American officials. On April 26, 1922, the Secretary of State cabled Schurman and asked, "What significance is there in the resignation of Chen?"²⁷ Schurman indicated that "Sun would march straight to Peking with a poor army that is regarded as

hopeless." The certain defeat of Sun Yat-sen would increase Chen's power in the Canton Government and he "would establish a good democratic government."²⁸ Schurman concluded that Sun and Chen might have armed conflicts in the near future.

Jay C. Huston, the American Consul General in Canton, interviewed Sun on April 29, 1922, and made a report to Frank P. Lockhart of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs. Based on Huston's report, Lockhart wrote to William Phillips, Under Secretary of State, that "Sun is a serious obstacle in the way of the unification of China . . . I doubt it would be possible to suggest any solution of the trouble in China which would be satisfactory to Sun."²⁹

Perhaps Huston's judgment of Sun as a stubborn leader unwilling to unify peacefully was correct. He refused Wu Pei-fu's proposal to unify the country in May, 1922, which displeased Huston and led him to suggest that Sun might be "mentally unbalanced."³⁰ Despite failure of the Northern Expedition in April, Sun resurrected it at Shao Kuan on May 9.³¹ Interviewed by Isaac F. Marcossou, a writer for the Saturday Evening Post, Sun denounced the Washington Conference and defended his alliance with Chang Tso-lin.³² He argued that he was not pro-Japanese, but domestic problems allowed him no choice except an alliance with Chang, in spite of his pro-Japanese tendencies. The United States, however, kept criticizing Sun's Northern Expedition plan. On May 20, 1922, Schurman predicted again, "Sun would march straight to Peking

with his small and miserable army having sublime confidence in his own ability to establish a unified and perfect republic." ³³ Schurman thought Sun should discard the Northern Expedition and use peace talks to unify China. On that date, China had "a better prospect of unification than heretofore." ³⁴

Still, Sun persisted in his Northern Expedition. On June 3, 1922, he won a victory in Kanchow, an important city in Kiangsi Province. The American Minister, however, predicted that Sun "should be checked by Wu Pei-fu." ³⁵ Sun realized that the United States and other nations would not assist him. On June 6, 1922, he asked the foreign powers not to interfere in Chinese internal affairs. He also accused the foreign powers of backing the warlords, for he knew that Wu Pei-fu was being supported by the British. ³⁶ The relationship between Sun and the United States worsened in June.

After Chen Chiung-ming's dismissal as Governor in April, and the failure of Sun's attempt to compromise with Chen by offering him a position to direct the military affairs in Kwangtung and Kwangsi, the tension between Sun and Chen reached its climax in armed conflict. ³⁷

The immediate cause was Sun's refusal to negotiate with the new president at Peking, Li Yuan-hung. Li's new position was due to the defeat and exile of Chang Tso-lin after the Chihli-Fengtien War. Trying to be a peacemaker, Li invited Sun to Peking to plan for a reunited China. Sun's refusal incurred criticism. Chen realized that a serious financial

crisis in Canton was an expected outcome of Sun's projected campaign against the North. Chen, therefore, was anxious to have peace at that moment.³⁸ Sun's refusal to negotiate enraged Chen, and led him to attack the Canton presidential residence and drive out Sun on June 16, 1922.³⁹

Although the United States did not enter the conflict between Sun and Chen, it was delighted at the news of Chen Chiung-ming's coup d'etat in Canton.⁴⁰ Sun withdrew his three gunboats to Whampoa, a harbor and small island close to Canton. The gunboats opened fire on the city and hit two American buildings. U.S. Consul, Jay C. Huston, issued a protest.⁴¹

Still the United States did not want to be drawn into this conflict. Although Sun's American adviser, Robert S. Norman, arranged to have an American ship save the life of Sun's guard, Chen Suan, the United States maintained its policy of non-interference.⁴² On June 23, 1922, Huston cabled the State Department that he had visited Sun on the gunboat, Yung Feng, and promised him a "dignified retreat" from Whampoa through foreign mediation.⁴³ The State Department refused to honor the promise as Schurman thought the foreign mediation would only "dignify and magnify Sun Yat-sen and assure him of prestige in the future."⁴⁴ Thus, the State Department announced on June 26, 1922, that the United States Consul at Canton would not participate in mediation.⁴⁵

Sun experienced frustration aboard his gunboat. His navy was small and was not always loyal. He faced the

dilemma of retreating from Whampoa or fighting his way back to Canton. The United States informed him that "strong action would be taken by the U.S. Navy" if he opened fire on Canton.⁴⁶

On August 9, 1922, Sun tried to leave for Shanghai. He instructed his son-in-law, Dai En-sai, to inquire of the American commander about the possibility of leaving the war area on a U.S. gunboat. The American commander replied that this would require the permission of the U.S. Minister at Peking.⁴⁷ Before Minister Schurman could reply, Sun obtained assistance from the British. On that same day, Sun left Canton on a British warship for Hong Kong, where he planned to transfer to the Empress of Russia for Shanghai.⁴⁸

Sun Yat-sen arrived at Shanghai on August 14, 1922. Still determined to gain U.S. support, he never reproached American diplomatic policy toward him, and even found reason to praise it. On August 10, 1922, when Sun was on the British gunboat, he indicated that U.S. diplomacy was humane, in spite of American inactivity when Chen Chiung-ming threatened his life.⁴⁹ Also, to flatter and attract American friendship, Sun outlined a plan on August 25, 1922, to rehabilitate China's finances by having America take over China's debts to European countries on a refunding basis, as part payment on European debts to the United States.⁵⁰

The United States was unmoved by Sun's overtures. While at Shanghai, Sun regrouped the defeated forces of the Northern Expedition and, to the consternation of the United States,

invaded Fukien. On October 17, 1922, when the Southern troops took over Foochow, the capital of Fukien Province, the United States and other foreign powers dispatched warships and marines to guard their interests.⁵¹ However, the real purpose was to discourage Sun from using Fukien as the base for his return to Canton.

The United States also could not forget Sun's opponent, General Chen Chiung-ming. In October, 1922, Schurman delivered a speech at Tsinanfu, the capital of Shangtung Province, that supported "good government" and a "United States of China."⁵² These same ideas were contained in a speech by Chen on Provincial Autonomy given months earlier.⁵³

The Sun-Chen conflict of 1922 was a tragedy. The United States played a supporting role by encouraging Chen and opposing Sun. Historian James E. Sheridan described Chen as "a reformist warlord."⁵⁴ It was a fair description because he was both a reformer and a warlord. Unfortunately, the United States saw only the reformer and not the warlord who instigated war in Canton.

The American Government also, unfortunately, refused to appreciate that Sun Yat-sen's nationalism might have maintained a republic in China had the Northern Expedition been successful. F. Gilbert Chan's judgment was that the difference between Sun and Chen was that Chen was more interested in local reforms than in the movement of national reunification.⁵⁵ Yet, American policy was pro-Chen.

Endnotes

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⁵Timothy Kao, Reviled Revolutionist: Chen Chiung-ming (Hong Kong: Culture Book House, 1978), 8.

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⁷Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1921, Vol. I (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936), 325. (Hereafter cited as FRUS, 1921, I.)

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¹⁰Kao, 16.

¹¹FRUS, 1921, I, 316.

¹²Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao, 512.

¹³Ibid., 514.

¹⁴FRUS, 1921, I, 325.

¹⁵Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao, 524.

¹⁶Ibid., 525.

¹⁷Chan, 23.

¹⁸Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao, 523.

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²² Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, Vol. I (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), 687-689. (Hereafter cited as FRUS, 1922, I.)

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²⁴ FRUS, 1922, I, 690.

²⁵ New York Times, April 18, 1922, 13.

²⁶ Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao, 530-534.

²⁷ FRUS, 1922, I, 694.

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²⁹ C. Martin Wilbur, Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 340-341, note 102.

³⁰ Brian T. George, "The State Department and Sun Yat-sen: American Policy and the Revolutionary Disintegration of China, 1920-1924," Pacific Historical Review, XLVI (August, 1977), 397.

³¹ Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao, 531.

³² Wilbur, 108.

³³ George, 396.

³⁴ FRUS, 1922, I, 707.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 712

³⁶ Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao, 534-535.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 532.

³⁸ New York Times, May 11, 1922, 12; May 30, 1922, 19.

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⁴⁰ George, 397.

⁴¹ FRUS, 1922, I, 723.

⁴² Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao, 541

⁴³ FRUS, 1922, I, 724.

⁴⁴ Chan, 25.

⁴⁵ FRUS, 1922, I, 725.

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⁴⁷Huang Hui-lung, "Chung-Shan Hsien Sheng Chin Cheng Shih Lu," Ko-ming Wen Hsien, ed. Lo Chia-lun, Vol. 52 (Taipei: Central Executive Committee of the Chung-Kuo Kuomintang, 1970), 18.

⁴⁸FRUS, 1922, I, 725.

⁴⁹Chiang Kai-shek, "Sun Ta Tsung Tung Kwang Chow Mon Nan Chi," Ko-ming Wen Hsien, ed. Lo Chia-lun, Vol. 52, 155.

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⁵¹Ibid., October 18, 1922, 30.

⁵²Wang Yi-chun, "An Exploratory Study on the Diplomatic Activities of Dr. Jacob Gould Schurman, American Minister to China, 1921-1925," Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Vol. I (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1969), 262.

⁵³Ibid.

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Chapter III

AMERICAN GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY AND THE CANTON GOVERNMENT

1923 was a turning point for the relations between Sun Yat-sen's Canton Government and the United States. After his defeat by Chen Chiung-ming in 1922, Sun Yat-sen tried his best to improve relations with the United States in spite of its past attitude toward him.

Defeated by Chen Chiung-ming and exiled to Shanghai in 1922, Sun never gave up hope of winning American and other foreign support. To first gain American trust and then support, Sun made efforts through political, military, and diplomatic channels in early 1923.

One of Sun Yat-sen's efforts to impress the United States was his political philosophy for China of "San-Min-Chu-I," or the "Three Principles of the People," publicly enunciated on January 1, 1923. These were the principles of Nationalism, Democracy, and National Livelihood.¹ It was said that the Three Principles were of American origin because they were similar to President Abraham Lincoln's statement "of the people, by the people, and for the people" at Gettysburg.² Although the Three Principles were not political rhetoric for Americans, Sun thought that they would be impressed by his political ideology and, therefore, willing to aid him.

Sun also sought a military victory over Chen Chiung-ming to strengthen his reputation with foreign countries. Sun, through the intermediary of Tsou Lu, asked the Yunnan-

Kwangsi troops coalition to attack Chen Chiung-ming and restore Sun as head of the Canton Government.³ On January 16, 1923, the Yunnan-Kwangsi army led by Generals Yang Hsi-min and Liu Chen-huan captured Canton, and Chen was deposed. This victory increased Sun's possibilities of regaining leadership by the Canton Government. Furthermore, foreign countries also paid attention to Sun's military success and now conceded he was a very important leader in Southern China.

Sun's military victory did not encourage him to become more aggressive toward the Canton Government's enemies. In other words, Sun did not resurrect the Northern Expedition once Chen had been ousted. Sun played the role of peacemaker for the moment and proposed peace negotiations between the South and the North. His purpose was to attract foreign attention to himself and encourage the foreign perception that he was a peacemaker. So, after January of 1923, Sun's internal policy and international diplomacy focused on peace negotiations.

Sun issued a "Statement of Peaceful Unification" on January 26, 1923, proposing disarmament among all factions in China.⁴ This would free thousands of soldiers controlled by warlords to work for the construction of China with tools, not weapons. Sun thought peaceful negotiations would lead the warlords to relinquish their armies.

American help was next on Sun's agenda. On February 15, 1923, Sun sailed from Shanghai for Hong Kong enroute to Canton.

On the steamship President Jefferson, he coincidentally met Nelson T. Johnson, an official of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs of the State Department. Sun, through his secretary, Eugene Chen, described his new scheme of peaceful unification to Johnson. It had three points. First, Sun hoped that foreign governments would apply pressure to force the Peking Government to hold another peace conference. Next, if the Peking Government refused to participate in a peace conference, Sun proposed that the foreign powers withhold its Customs Surpluses. Last, Sun wanted the United States to mediate between the Chinese leaders with the objective of unifying the country. Sun thought the best nominee for the role of mediator was the Secretary of State, Charles E. Hughes.⁵ In short, Sun wanted the United States to sponsor his peace plan.

Sun reached Canton on February 21, 1923.⁶ A military victor, peace advocate, and powerful leader, Sun still had to work to maintain his reputation. Sun was eager to impress Americans that he was a friendly leader whose policies the United States would welcome, including peace talks with Peking and encouraging American investments in China.

To confirm his intention to hold peace talks with the Peking Government, on February 28, 1923, Sun appointed Hu Hanmin and Sun Hung-yi as negotiators for the Canton Government in unification talks with the North.⁷ Furthermore, Sun supplanted the original Canton Government of 1921 with the Canton Military Government on March 2, 1923. Sun became the

Generalissimo rather than President of this government. This was a concession by Sun to eliminate the obstacles to peace talks and avoid embarrassment to Peking since only Peking was recognized by foreign countries, and Sun knew that fact could not be changed easily. By negotiating as Generalissimo and not as President, Sun symbolically conceded Peking's status as the only government in China.

Sun tried to please the United States with this concession to begin peace talks, and thought it would enable him to attract American capital. Even though Sun had just arrived at Canton, he soon negotiated for a loan from the Government of Hong Kong with the help of Liang Shih-i, the influential Cantonese financier and former Peking official under Chang-Tso-lin's patronage.⁸ Sun proclaimed that he still needed more foreign capital. Therefore, Sun announced on April 1, 1923, the new Canton policy of welcoming all nations willing to invest in government enterprises. Sun emphasized that "American and British capital will be preferred."⁹

The U.S. officials looked at Chinese domestic issues carefully. By late April, 1923, they thought Sun Yat-sen's willingness to talk with Peking an optimistic sign of the peaceful reunification of China. However, two incidents obliterated the hopes for peace.

The first incident was the Lincheng Outrage. In the early morning of May 6, the train "Blue Express", bound from Pukow to Tientsin, was raided near Lincheng in Shangtung

Province. Thirty-five foreigners were on board. Mr. Rothman, a British subject, was shot to death and 26 people, including several women, were captured. Most of the women were released within a day or two, but the men were carried off into the neighboring hills, and the last batch of foreign captives was not released until June 12.¹⁰ Interestingly enough, Sun Mai-yao, the leader of the bandits, was given the rank of Brigadier General by the Peking Government after the outrage. This reprehensible action provoked angry foreign countries, including the United States, to protest to the Peking Government, which failed to resolve the incident quickly.

Sun Yat-sen used the crisis to increase his access to the foreign powers. On May 24, the Canton Military Government cabled the Diplomatic Corps and urged them to withdraw recognition from the Peking Government.¹¹ Sun Yat-sen reasoned that the Peking Government had to lose credit with foreign countries from the Lincheng Outrage. He thought they would have to withdraw support from the Peking Government, which had also been inefficient in the peace negotiations with the Canton Government. Knowing that he had the opportunity to gain strong support from foreign powers, Sun gradually lost interest in a peace conference with the increasingly isolated Peking Government. He imagined that the severe damage to the Peking Government from the Lincheng Outrage could enable the Canton Government to replace it.

The second incident was a coup d'etat in Peking. On

June 13, 1923, General Feng Yu-hsiang, a military figure in the North, ordered his troops to oust Peking President Li Yuan-hung. Sun was pleased with Li's resignation and thought that it only proved the Peking regime was weak and unqualified. Sun, therefore, issued a manifesto on June 29, 1923, in which he demanded that the foreign powers withhold recognition of Peking "until a government has been established which can claim fairly to be representative of the country and can command the respect and support of the provinces."¹²

Jacob G. Schurman, the U.S. Minister in China, warned the State Department on July 13, 1923, that if his delegation were withdrawn from Peking or it was no longer recognized by foreign powers, "the peace, foreign interests, and foreign lives as well as property would be in an intolerable risk."¹³ The main reason the United States would not withdraw recognition from Peking was that the Chihli Party, which controlled the Government, was pro-American and anti-Japanese.¹⁴

Sun clearly knew his call for America to withdraw recognition from the Peking Government was in vain. Nevertheless, he incessantly fought for U.S. support of the Canton Military Government. In a July interview with Fletcher S. Brockman, an American reporter, Sun explained the four points of his recent policy:

1. The Canton Government still wanted the foreign powers to withdraw their support from Peking.
2. Canton would be devoted to nullification of the unequal treaties which implied the Chinese people could not

decide the duties by themselves.

3. Canton would fight for Chinese democracy by itself if the United States was "unwilling to throw her influence on the side of democracy in China." If America was unwilling to support democracy, it could at least take its hands "off our affairs."
4. Since the Chinese had lost hope of help from America and other Western powers, Canton might ask the Soviet Union for help because Russia was the only power that "shows any signs of helping us in the South."¹⁵

Still no foreign power would take Sun seriously. Brockman wrote that "prevailing foreign estimate of Dr. Sun has been that he is a dreamer, and therefore dangerous if put in charge of the affairs of the nation . . . Sun seemed to be seen as a promoter of revolutionary social doctrines, a suspicious great executive, and a frustrated politician whose military career had not been a brilliant one."¹⁶

Convinced that the United States would not support him and that the new chief of Peking, Tsao Kun, had no intention of genuine peace negotiations, Sun withdrew from the peace talks in July, 1923.¹⁷ The civil war between the North and the South was renewed.

American naval forces were dispatched once more to observe the civil war. While Sun's forces fought with the Northern troops near Amoy, a coastal harbor in eastern China, the American gunboat Asheville arrived there for "the purpose of protecting American residents."¹⁸ The arrival of the gunboat placed American forces in front of Sun's troops and

psychologically hindered them from attacking northward.

The United States rapidly increased its support of Tsao Kun, the new Peking leader. In October, 1923, under the sponsorship of the American Banking Consortium, Tsao received a large sum of money from them and was unfairly elected as the President of the Peking Government.¹⁹ Although the United States knew that Tsao was unpopular in China, it had no choice except to support him. The American policy makers thought that only a politician who was pro-American and committed to peace could be allowed to head the Peking Government. When Tsao was inaugurated at Peking on October 5, 1923, Schurman was the only foreign minister present at the ceremony and he saw "no enthusiasm, no crowds, only police, soldiers and rickshaw men in [the] streets."²⁰

Sun was angry with the American support of Tsao. When Tsao was elected President, Sun railed, "He is illiterate, he looted Peking in 1912, he is mainly responsible for the Lincheng Outrage and especially . . . he was illegally and corruptly elected."²¹ The United States could not tolerate Sun's condemnation of Tsao, and the Sun-American relationship deteriorated to its lowest point.

Schurman struck back at Sun quickly. He said that Sun was controlled by mercenaries from Yunnan and was "unpopular" in Canton due to his oppressive tariff laws and levies and inability to defeat Chen Chiung-ming.²² Schurman predicted that Sun would soon collapse and asked the State Department to prevent Sun Yat-sen and Chang Tso-lin's coalition.

Schurman thought on November 10, 1923, that Sun's "fortunes were near their lowest ebb again." When Chen Chiung-ming rebelled again in Kwangtung Province, Schurman believed that Sun would flee and Chen would return to Canton.²³

Sun and America soon collided again in the Second Customs Crisis. Unable to obtain American support, Sun foresaw that the Canton Government would become weaker than the Peking Government, unless he acted quickly and decisively to resolve the problems. One of his actions was to seize the customs surplus to help resolve the financial difficulty of the Canton Government.

Before this action, the Diplomatic Corps in Peking had adopted the view that any surplus would be turned over to the Peking Government.²⁴ Sun was outraged at this decision. On September 5, 1923, C.C. Wu, the Foreign Minister of the Canton Military Government, presented a note to the Diplomatic Corps through James W. Jamieson, British Consul General at Canton. Wu informed the Corps that the southwestern provinces could no longer accept its practice of providing money to the Peking Government.²⁵ Wu later again protested to the foreign powers that the Government in Peking did not represent the Chinese people, and therefore had no right to obtain the customs surplus.²⁶ Wu complained that if the customs surplus went to Peking, it would be used to buy arms to use against the South.

On September 22, 1923, Minister Schurman had a conversation with Major Olivecrona, Engineer in the Chief Kwangtung

Conservancy Works and Acting Swedish Consul in Canton. Olivecrona had talked with C.C. Wu on September 5th, so he knew that Canton was going to make itself a free port, which means no duties would be collected on imported goods. Schurman was shocked when Olivecrona told him of Canton's intended action. He reported to the State Department, asking for instructions should Canton become a free port and local Canton authorities attempt to collect customs duties in the face of passive resistance and smuggling.²⁷

Schurman had some ideas of his own to prevent Canton from becoming a free port. He suggested that the State Department prevent the Canton Government's action through two steps. First, the United States should pretend to talk with the Canton Government about the customs surplus which Schurman thought would lead the Government in Peking to believe that America was willing to establish diplomatic ties with Canton. The Peking Government would accept the demands of the Diplomatic Corps regarding the Lincheng Outrage as soon as possible to maintain ties with America. Second, America should await Sun's eclipse and the possible return to power of Chen Chiungming in Canton. If Sun was exiled again, the Customs Surplus Crisis would be peacefully resolved by General Chen.²⁸

The State Department did not accept Schurman's proposal of forcing Peking to satisfy the demands of foreign powers on the Lincheng Outrage. America had to maintain good relations with Peking and reliance upon President Tsao Kun. Therefore

the State Department adopted a tough policy on Canton's intention to establish a free port. On October 20, 1923, the State Department instructed Schurman to reassert the American position that only the Peking Government could keep the customs surplus. The State Department said Canton seizure of the customs houses would be "a subversion of the treaty basis of foreign trade with China."²⁹ Following instructions, Schurman promised Wellington Koo, the Foreign Minister of the Peking Government, that the United States would not divert the surplus to Canton.³⁰

Originally, the United States had hoped that Chen Chi-ung-ming's victory over Sun Yat-sen would resolve the surplus problem, and American diplomats closely followed the war between the two.³¹ However, Chen's advance was halted by Sun on November 27, 1923. Robert S. Norman, Sun's American adviser, informed Schurman at that time that Sun was seriously considering the seizure of the Canton Maritime Customs.³² Sun had at last provoked a "showdown" with the United States and other foreign powers.

By November 30, 1923, the State Department was ready to act, but seemed more interested in unified than independent steps against Sun. The State Department inquired of Schurman the action the powers proposed to take.³³ Schurman replied on December 1st that he and other ministers of powers strongly favored "some kind of demonstration with the vessels now at Canton or ones to be sent there at once."³⁴ But Schurman emphasized that the dispatch of warships was only a

demonstration to "prevent the seizure of the customs surplus without war."³⁵ The demonstration was the use of a kind of gunboat diplomacy to scare Canton. On December 3rd, the Diplomatic Corps, including the United States Minister, warned the Canton Government it would be punished if it forcibly seized the customs surplus.³⁶

On December 4, 1923, Schurman informed the United States Government that the failure to use warships at Canton would "cause complications and strengthen Sun's position." Moreover, he suggested that if the United States did not participate in the naval demonstration held by other powers, "it may encourage Sun Yat-sen to believe that our government sympathizes with his claims."³⁷ On December 5th, the President of the United States, Calvin Coolidge, agreed that "the naval unit should be sent."³⁸

Upon hearing that the foreign powers would send warships to Canton, Sun's intractable attitude suddenly softened. On December 5th, the same day that Coolidge ordered the warships on duty, Sun said that "the Canton Government would delay two weeks the takeover of the customs surplus."³⁹ But it was too late. The United States had ordered "a concentration at Canton of the available American naval units."⁴⁰

The United States had originally dispatched warships to Canton only to force Sun to give up his scheme of taking over the customs houses at Canton. On December 6th, Secretary Hughes indicated that the warships would "take necessary

measures short of actual warfare."⁴¹ But the attitude of other powers was becoming more harsh. When he heard that the United States would join the other powers to protect the customs houses and that American destroyers had been ordered to Canton, Sun flew into a rage.⁴² Although Sun knew that Canton's force was too weak to defeat the foreign fleets, he insisted that he would seize the customs houses at Canton on December 6th.⁴³ Sun also considered non-military methods to use against the foreign powers. The United States Consul General at Canton, Douglas Jenkins, predicted on December 10th that Sun "might use propaganda, boycotts and strikes if he did not use force."⁴⁴ On December 14th, the Canton Government started anti-foreign agitation.⁴⁵ The first anti-foreign movement was a meeting of labor unions on December 16th.

On December 10th, the other powers notified Sun that if he attempted to occupy forcibly the customs building, they "should land marines and occupy the building in spite of an armed clash."⁴⁷ The United States again agreed with this suggestion, and on December 14th, President Coolidge authorized a plan to land marines armed with machine guns.⁴⁸ According to New York Times reports, the number of American warships was the largest among all foreign contingents, including the warships Asheville, Pampang, Peary, Pope, Pillsbury, Preston, and Sicard.⁴⁹

As the State Department reported, Sun's anti-American propaganda included three points. First, Sun expressed disappointment that the largest naval force was American. Second,

he accused American Minister Schurman of favoring the corrupt election of Tsao Kun. Third, Sun asked for sympathy from the American people and for them to modify their hostile policy toward Canton.⁵⁰ It was obvious that America was the principal object of anti-foreign propaganda, a fact confirmed in the anti-American rally at Canton. In the middle of December, the Cantonese shouted, "The strongest man opposing our retention of the Customs Surplus is the American Minister at Peking. We never expected this, as we always considered America a justice-loving country."⁵¹ The Cantonese warned "if the American Minister does not change his attitude and continues to interfere with our internal affairs by a demonstration of force, he assumes the entire responsibility . . . and we will employ our own methods in dealing with America."⁵²

While Sun initiated propaganda against United States policy, he also tried to obtain sympathy from the American people. On December 18, 1923, Sun issued an appeal in a letter to his American "friends." Sun wrote that Canton must get the revenue back, because "we must stop that money from going to Peking to buy arms to kill us, just as your forefathers stopped taxation going to the English coffers by throwing English tea into the Boston Harbor."⁵³

Sun also said that he appealed for American aid, but "now the aid which came from the U.S. was not a Lafayette, but more warships than other powers against the Canton Government."⁵⁴ If the Americans wished to help the Chinese people, Sun continued, then "ask the officers and men of

the American warships to ponder this before they shoot us."⁵⁵ Sun's letter elicited scores of supporting telegrams from Chinese groups in the United States and Canada.⁵⁶

After Sun's letter to the American people, he kept anti-America sentiments high and the deadlock remained. On December 21st, the Chinese newspapers began to demand the recall of Schurman.⁵⁷ Furthermore, numerous placards appeared on the streets of Canton urging boycott against American and British goods.⁵⁸ Sun had undoubtedly gained great support from the patriotic Chinese, many of whom held anti-foreign demonstrations and regarded Sun as a real hero against the foreign powers. Even though the American delegation at Peking predicted that Sun might collapse within a few weeks if he failed to get the customs surplus, a development at the end of December proved Sun would win the crisis.⁵⁹

Some foreign powers, including the French, Portuguese and British, withdrew their gunboats before December 22nd to quiet Canton's anti-foreign sentiments. Although the United States was disappointed with the departure of other powers, it had to follow other powers' action to maintain the same diplomatic position.⁶⁰ As a result, American Minister Schurman, at the end of 1923, changed his attitude and expressed his willingness to act as a mediator between foreign powers and the Canton Government.⁶¹

In January, 1924, Schurman went to Canton and tried to resolve the crisis peacefully.⁶² After discussions with C.C.

Wu, the Canton Foreign Minister, Schurman indicated the United States would yield to the Canton Government. He promised that if the Canton Government guaranteed the customs surplus would not be used for military expenditures, the United States would suggest that the Diplomatic Corps return the surplus for river usage in South China. On January 6, 1924, Schurman met with Sun and discussed the issue of the return of the surplus to Canton. Sun accepted the American offer.⁶³ The crisis was finally resolved on June 19, 1924, when the Canton Government obtained the money which was used to regulate the West River in Kwangtung Province.

War had been avoided between the foreign powers and the Canton Government, but the consequence of this crisis was tremendous as it caused the Canton Government to ally with the Soviet Union against so-called Western imperialism. The rebuff of Sun Yat-sen's goodwill policy by the United States and its use of gunboat diplomacy in the Customs Surplus Crisis caused Sun to lose his confidence in the United States by the end of 1923.

Endnotes

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⁴⁰ FRUS, 1923, I, 573.

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⁴³ New York Times, December 6, 1923, 16.

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⁴⁷ Ibid., 569-571.

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Chapter IV

THE SOVIET INFLUENCE ON THE KUOMINTANG

In 1924, the Canton Government became affiliated with the Soviet Union. Cooperation between Canton and the Soviet Union, as a matter of fact, came about from Sun's failure to obtain aid from the Western countries. Of these countries, the United States above all caused Sun to turn to the Soviet Union. He had long hoped for aid from America, which he often said would give the Chinese Revolution its Lafayette. America, however, disappointed him.¹

The United States humiliated him by encouraging Chen Chiung-ming's insurrection in 1922 as well as dispatching gunboats to Canton during the 1923 Customs Surplus Crisis. Sun, therefore, decided to adopt a pro-Russian policy to save China from the control of warlords.

Relations between Sun Yat-sen and the Soviet Union progressed rapidly from August, 1918, to January, 1924. The Canton Government was not strong enough to defend itself until Sun established the Whampoa Academy at Canton in June, 1924. It was a milestone in the evolution of a strong Canton Government, which was accomplished with Russian help. It is important to review the Sun-Russo relations from 1918, when Sun first established contact with a Russian, G.V. Chicherin. This meeting was the prelude of the relationship between Canton and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union built a Communist regime after the

Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. The vulnerable new regime needed friends among the nations of the world. Thus, the heads of the Kremlin tried desperately to find leaders who would cooperate, and Sun was one of the Chinese leaders that the Soviet Union wanted to cultivate. It was for this reason that G.V. Chicherin contacted Sun on August 1, 1918.

Chicherin wrote Sun to praise his democratic struggle against militarism and imperialism. Chicherin also asked Sun and his Chinese brothers to join with the Soviet Union in the struggle against imperialism.² As a nationalist opposed to foreign influence in China, Sun was happy about Chicherin's letter and praise. Sun sent a telegram the same month to congratulate the Soviets on their successful revolution. Lenin was encouraged when he received the telegram, and decided to contact Canton.³ By the end of 1918, both sides were convinced of the other's goodwill.

The second event in 1919 which impressed Sun was the Soviet "Manifesto to the Chinese Republic." In July, 1919, the Soviet Government issued a "Manifesto" that offered to return all territory wrongfully taken from China by the Russian Imperial Government, restore the control of the Chinese Eastern Railway to China, renounce its claim to any share in the Boxer Indemnity, give up extraterritorial rights enjoyed by Russians on Chinese soil, and abandon all other special privileges inconsistent with the equality of nations.⁴ Sun thought the Manifesto stood for the real friendship of the Soviet Union toward China, and he naturally gained more

respect for the Communist regime.

This led Sun to his direct contact with a Soviet representative in November, 1920. At a polite meeting, Sun told Gregory Voitinsky, head of the Eastern Department of the Comintern, about his Northern Expedition Plan, but he did not ask for assistance.⁵ Sun's hope for foreign aid did not include the Soviet Union. However, the Soviet Union intended to seize control by the Kuomintang to help the growth of the Chinese Communist Party. The Comintern dispatched G. Maring to China to execute this plan.

G. Maring was Dutch. His original name was H.J.F.M. Sneeveldt. In 1921, he was dispatched to China to help establish the Chinese Communist Party.⁶ After the Chinese Communist Party was organized in July, 1921, at Shanghai, Maring was instructed to extend its functions and activities. On December 23, 1921, he arrived at Kwelin, the military base of Sun's Northern Expedition, to ask for the cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party.⁷

Maring had a three-day visit with Sun. He tried to persuade Sun to cooperate with the Chinese Communist Party. He hinted that if the Kuomintang hoped to be strong and to unify China, the best way was for Sun to learn from the experiences of the Communists. As the Chinese Communist Party had been formed by the help of the Soviet Union, a Kuomintang with Chinese Communist members would easily get help from the Soviet Union. In addition, Maring gave Sun several suggestions for reforming the Kuomintang political structure, absorbing

the agricultural and working classes to fight for the unification of China, promoting cooperation with the Chinese Communist Party, and establishing a Kuomintang military academy, which could build a strong and faithful army similar to the Soviet Red Army.⁸ All of Maring's suggestions seemed to be conducive to the Kuomintang's objective to increase its strength and unify China. Maring emphasized that the Chinese Communist Party's participation in the Kuomintang would not threaten its leadership.

Nevertheless, Sun did not trust Maring. Although Sun was a socialist whose blueprint was to make China prosperous and independent, he was suspicious of the Russian Revolution.⁹ He had no confidence in the Russians, and the only country from which Sun hoped for assistance was the United States.¹⁰ Sun told Maring only that "the Kuomintang might work with the Soviet Union from the moral aspect."¹¹

Although Sun had no immediate intention to cooperate with the Communists, he was deeply impressed by Maring's suggestion to build a military academy at Canton. The arduous time Sun had in summoning General Chen Chiung-ming's military support for his Northern Expedition against the North Government in 1921 made him feel a revolutionary army was important for the Canton Government's success.

It would be impossible to build an army without foreign aid. Sun realized that the United States would not aid him militarily, so he kept in touch with the Soviet Union in the hope it might offer him the necessary assistance. In April,

1922, S.A. Dalin, a Comintern representative, visited Sun.¹² Dalin's visit was to complete Maring's mission and gain admission of the Chinese Communists into the Kuomintang. Knowing that Sun was threatened by Chen Chiung-ming and wanted Russian assistance, Dalin started political negotiations with the Chinese leader. Sun at first rejected the proposal for an alliance between the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang, but he finally expressed a willingness to allow the Communists to enter the Kuomintang as individuals.¹³ Negotiations between Sun and Dalin were interrupted by the Chen Chiung-ming's coup d'etat on June 16, 1922, and Sun's exile in Shanghai.

Sun tried to obtain help from various foreign governments, but from Russia "only was he able to obtain any satisfaction."¹⁴ With Eugene Chen, Sun's private secretary, as a contact, Sun once more improved his relations with the Soviet Union. In August, 1922, Maring visited Sun a second time.¹⁵ Sun now permitted Maring to reform the Kuomintang and permitted Chinese Communist Party members to individually join the Kuomintang. The purpose of the Russians was to use party members to increase their power in the Kuomintang and to promote the Communist Revolution in China. However, Sun's immediate interest was only to obtain Soviet aid against Chen Chiung-ming. Thereafter, Sun cooperated with the Soviet Union. Perhaps this decision was painful for Sun, but he thought there was no choice.

When Sun adopted the policy of KMT-CCP cooperation, one

of the most important Russians in China was Adolf A. Joffe, a special envoy of the Soviet Union, whose task was to seek diplomatic recognition from China in 1922. Joffe's original interest was to stay at Peking, but his activities were extended in the autumn of 1922 into South China, where the Chinese Communist Party had just held their Second National Congress in August, and decided to form a "united front" with the Kuomintang.¹⁶ Joffe had to get in touch with Sun at Shanghai to help the Chinese Communists unite with the Kuomintang. Before face to face contact with Sun, Joffe instructed his personal representative on September 25, 1922, to visit Sun and prepare for the direct negotiations, which began between Sun and Joffe in early 1923.¹⁷

In January, 1923, Sun had several meetings with Joffe at Shanghai, but the details of the discussions were kept secret by both sides. However, it was understood that Sun informed Joffe that the Kuomintang needed the Russian's financial and advisory aid for an expedition against its foes.¹⁸

Joffe responded favorably. He knew that if Sun requests were accepted only on a conditional basis and only in return for Chinese economic and political concessions, Sun would be skeptical of the Soviets. For that reason, Joffe offered help to Sun and the Kuomintang without any demands. In a report to Russia, Joffe spoke highly of Sun and indicated that he "was the symbol of the Chinese Revolution and the Kuomintang would be the party of the people against imperialism."¹⁹ The outcome of the Sun-Joffe meetings produced the famous

Declaration of January 26, 1923, in which the Soviet Union was totally sympathetic to the Kuomintang and recognized it as the only party to conduct Chinese foreign policy.

The four major points of the Joint Sun-Joffe Declaration were the following:

1. "Dr. Sun Yat-sen holds that the Communistic order or even the Soviet system cannot actually be introduced into China."
2. "The Soviet Government was ready to enter into negotiations with China on the issue of giving up the unequal treaties . . . which the Tsardom imposed on China."
3. "The Soviet Government was willing to settle the Chinese Eastern Railway question at a Russo-Chinese conference."
4. "The Soviet Government has no intention of imposing imperialistic policy in Outer Mongolia."²⁰

Sun was encouraged by this declaration, because it "symbolized that a European power treated a Chinese regime on equal terms for the first time."²¹ However, he had not yet given up hope of obtaining help from the United States.

Joffe's activities in Peking since 1922 had caused uneasiness among the foreign diplomats.²² On September 13, 1922, American Minister Jacob C. Schurman, worried about Soviet propaganda, visited Wellington Koo, the Peking Foreign Minister, and stated American concerns.²³ American fear of Joffe's sojourn in China was strangely enough limited to Peking. The Joint Sun-Joffe Declaration was overlooked by the United States.

Sun regarded the Declaration as a signal to the United States that if his party did not obtain American help he would turn to the Soviet Union.²⁴ But the United States totally missed this signal, and perhaps did not think Sun could gain any power in any part of China. A New York Times editorial, which ridiculed Sun and may have represented the American attitude toward the Declaration, stated:

Mr. Joffe further assured Dr. Sun that Russia would do all it could to further the reunion and independence of China. That is Dr. Sun's ideal, though, whenever there are signs that China is about to become reunited and independent under somebody other than Dr. Sun she starts a fight. He has been accused very plausibly of being a more or less innocent tool of those Japanese interests which want anything rather than the reunion or independence of China. He works with General Chang Tso-lin, according to the well known liberal doctrine that a militaristic reactionary who will help an orthodox liberal is a better man than a well-intentioned, middle-of-the-road statesman who keeps a liberal out of office. There isn't much mystery about the relations between Chang Tso-lin and Japan. If Mr. Joffe is genuinely enthusiastic for the reunion and independence of China, he is in strange company.²⁵

Sun did not reply. Instead he speeded up his cooperation with Soviet Union when he regained power in Canton in February, 1923.

The height of cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Soviet Union was from 1923 to 1925. During these two years, Sun led the Kuomintang into a close partnership with the Soviet Union. After the Sun-Joffe Declaration, Sun had his assistant, Liao Chung-kai, accompany Joffe to Japan. Their trip was regarded as the first step of the cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Soviet Union. It was also believed that Joffe imparted Communist theory to Liao and

discussed Soviet aid to the Kuomintang.²⁶ Liao and Joffe's sojourn in Japan lasted about one month. When Liao returned to China, Sun had already regained the power in Canton and was ready to accept Soviet aid.

Sun's desperate need for Soviet aid was due to military considerations. Once he regained power in 1923, he was determined to keep it, and that could be done only with foreign help. Unfortunately, the Western powers were reluctant to respond to Sun's appeal in 1923, which caused Sun to ally himself with Russia. Eugene Chen complained that "Sun had tried to secure international development of China from the British, but failed." As "Sun knew that the British attitude would dictate American policy regarding the Kuomintang," Chen concluded, "Sun was forced to look elsewhere."²⁷ The "elsewhere" was the Soviet Union.

In March of 1923, the leaders of the Soviet Union decided to "render assistance to Sun Yat-sen and to send . . . advisers to him." Soviet financial aid amounted to about two million Mexican dollars.²⁸ Meanwhile, the Communists gradually increased their power in the Canton Government. For example, Chen Tu-hsiu, the founder of the Chinese Communist Party, was appointed as head of Sun's Information Bureau.²⁹ However, in Sun's mind, the Soviet aid was more important at that time than the potential threat of a Communist controlled Canton Government.

Not only did Sun need Soviet financial aid, but he also needed a strong Kuomintang army, which was the paramount

interest of his talks with Maring in late 1921. That goal was foremost in Sun's mind in 1923. When he was assured of Soviet help, he decided to establish a military academy to build an army. With that objective in mind, Sun dispatched a delegation to the Soviet Union to study the Soviet military system. The group remained in the Soviet Union from August to December of 1923.

The delegation was headed by General Chiang Kai-shek, Sun's Chief-of-Staff. Chiang wrote that its purpose was to study the Soviet Party machinery and its political and military structures.³⁰ The visit was also a preliminary contact with the view of establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.³¹ Because Chiang was a military figure and trusted by Sun, his mission was to emphasize military aspects. Chiang's delegation inspected the Soviet army, navy, and military schools. He was especially impressed by the well-organized military schools in Moscow.³² What Chiang learned was used to organize the Whampoa Academy in 1924.

While Chiang was in Russia, a Soviet emissary, Leo Karakhan, went to Peking to rebuild the diplomatic relations with that government. Sun feared this would undermine his cooperation with the Soviet Union. On September 17, 1923, Sun told Karakhan that he thought the Peking Government would recognize the Soviet Communist Government, but Sun warned "this recognition must be dependent upon stipulations set by America and the other capitalist powers to inflict another diplomatic defeat on Soviet Russia."³³ Therefore,

Sun told Karakhan that this recognition would not be significant. Instead, Sun asked Karakhan for a union between the Canton Government and the Soviet Union.

Sun's statements to Karakhan made obvious his disappointment with American policy. 1923 was the turning point of Sun-American relations. Despite Sun's close connection with Soviet Russia, after that year the United States ignored Sun. Because the Chinese Communist centered their anti-imperialist attacks on Great Britain and America, Robert G. Boville, President of the World Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, predicted that China would be a volcano erupting Bolshevism for fifty years if the Chinese illiterates were not educated. He, therefore, appealed for American help to China.³⁵ Nevertheless, the United States was at first indifferent to the spread of Bolshevism in South China through Sun-Soviet cooperation.

A Sovietized Canton Government, however, was a crisis to the United States. Bolshevism was spread rapidly in South China by Communist demagogues. By 1924 the Canton Government's future seemed dependent upon cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Soviet Union.

In late 1923 and early 1924, Sun vainly used threats of Canton cooperation with the Soviet Union against the United States. These threats were actually appeals for American reconsideration of its treatment of the Canton Government. At the end of 1923, Sun had asked his American

legal adviser, Robert S. Norman, to appeal to the United States for support of his plan for a national unity conference. However, the State Department was not interested. Also, when Sun proposed a plan for international development of China which offered Chinese raw materials in exchange for construction aid, the State Department ignored this plan.³⁶

Sun's second appeal was cloaked as a strong warning to the United States. Invited to speak before the Canton Y.M. C.A. on December 31, 1923, Sun stated, "We no longer look to the Western Powers. Our faces are turned toward Russia."³⁷ But the United States still did not respond.

The third appeal was made by Sun to Minister Schurman and was meshed in the Surplus Crisis negotiations of January 6, 1924. Sun asked repeatedly for American support to hold a peace conference in China. Schurman had to make some concessions to the Canton Government to resolve the Surplus Crisis and was determined not to let Sun obtain another victory. Schurman reported the meeting to the State Department and dismissed Sun's appeal "as entirely impractical at the time because Dr. Sun controlled only an infinitesimal part of the country and had no means of inducing powerful military leaders of the north to accept any measure fathered by him."³⁸ He also relayed Sun's charge that the United States was a capitalist oppressor of China, and concluded that Sun "talked to me like a man really insane."³⁹ Apparently, Sun's appeal was lost on Schurman.

Before Sovietizing his Government, Sun made a final appeal to the United States to call a peace conference in Shanghai to limit arms shipments to China as a means of stopping civil war.⁴⁰ His appeal was made in an interview with an American reporter, a Mr. Ford, on January 13, 1924. He indicated that the Canton Government wanted help from the United States as a mediator between Canton and Peking. As the British dictated American policy, Sun sighed, the Canton Government probably would suffer another disappointment.⁴¹ When his proposal reached America, Secretary Hughes refused to make any comment.⁴² When this last appeal failed, Sun Sovietized the Canton Government.

With Soviet instruction and help, the Canton Government was transformed in 1924. The transformation began with the mission of Michael Borodin to Canton in the Autumn of 1923. An excellent propagandist and organizer, he first persuaded Sun to admit Chinese Communists to the Kuomintang.⁴³ Borodin next persuaded Sun to join the so-called national revolutionary movement of the whole world, which meant that the Kuomintang must not ask the imperialistic United States for support.⁴⁴ Then, under Borodin's prodding, the Kuomintang's anti-imperialistic rhetoric intensified. At the Kuomintang's First National Convention in 1924, Communists were admitted to the Kuomintang,⁴⁵ and the party was reorganized along the lines of the Chinese Communist Party.⁴⁶

Although the admission of Communists to the Kuomintang

worried Chiang Kai-shek, the Sovietization of the Canton Government proceeded. On March 14, 1924, Chiang sent a letter to Liao Chung-kai, a Kuomintang leader who favored KMT-CCP cooperation, that stated his apprehensions about the Communists. Chiang wrote "according to my observation, the Russian Communist Party is not to be trusted The Russian Communist Party, in its dealings with China, has only one aim, namely, to make the Chinese Communist Party its chosen instrument."⁴⁷ However, the Kuomintang needed the Soviet Union and cooperation continued.

On the advice of Borodin, and with the financial aid of Russia (to the amount of three million rubles), Sun established the Whampoa Military Academy on June 16, 1924.⁴⁸ The Russian Command Schools were a model for Whampoa training. The dual leadership system, for example, in the Whampoa administration was similar to the Soviet director-commissar system.⁴⁹ Many Communists acted as political commissars in the Student Army, and politics consequently determined military policy at Whampoa Academy. The president of the Whampoa Academy was Chiang Kai-shek, who built the first revolutionary Kuomintang army. Nonetheless, he was dependent on Soviet financial assistance and advice. For example, on August 4, 1924, the Whampoa Academy had a memorial meeting to mourn a drowned Soviet adviser.⁵⁰

On October 8, 1924, a Soviet fleet headed by the cruiser, Vorowsky, visited Whampoa. Its mission was to send the Kuomintang "valuable furs which could be inconspicuously turned

into money."⁵¹ Sun Yat-sen warmly welcomed the fleet with the statement: "The relationship between the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Republic of China is of the most intimate kind Now that you have come a long way with your fleet, the friendship between the two countries will thereby be rendered more intimate."⁵²

By October of 1924, the cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Soviet Union reached its climax. But the alliance with the Russians caused misgivings among many of Canton's stable citizens. When they saw Sun develop his so-called "Red Army" in Kwangtung, they formed a militia called the Merchants' Volunteer Corps. In October, a bloody clash occurred between the two sides.⁵³ The "Red Army" (Whampoa Academy Force) won the victory. With Soviet help, the Whampoa Academy began to win a reputation for bravery.

When the Whampoa Academy became a strong instrument of Kuomintang and the Sun-Soviet cooperation reached its high point, the United States started to worry about the situation in South China. In October of 1924, Douglas Jenkins, the Consul General at Canton, reported to the State Department that Sun's Government was "completely under domination of Soviet agents."⁵⁴ American worry heightened during the next months.

On November 5, 1924, a critical incident occurred in Peking. After a coup d'etat, Wu Pei-fu, the Chief-of-Staff of the Chihli Party, was exiled by his subordinate, General Feng Yu-hsiang, on October 23, 1924. Feng, who was regarded

as the Christian General and who thought himself a revolution-ary, then expelled Pu-i, the Manchu emperor, from the Peking palace on November 5th.⁵⁵ The United States was shocked as Peking sources reported that "the expelling of the ex-Emperor in November was Bolshevik inspired, working through Kuomintang for the purpose of finally eliminating monarchical restoration and further inciting anti-imperialist feeling and anti-foreign feeling."⁵⁶ Although the coup d'etat of October 1924, had been supported by American bankers, American officials thought the Koumintang was one of the factions that deposed the ex-Emperor at Peking, and adopted a containment policy to exclude the Bolshevik Kuomintang from going to North China.

Political power in North China fell into the hands of Feng Yu-hsiang and Chang Tso-lin, both of whom sympathized with the Kuomintang. American officials concluded:

In the present Peking Government the Soviet influence is very strong if not dominant. It is working chiefly through the Kuomintang Party. And it may be possible that at any time the foreign powers may have to face a demand for the revision or cancellation of all of the so-called special-privilege treaties which they have with China.⁵⁷

This fear led the United States to criticize Sun when he was invited by Feng-Chang to visit Peking and to share key positions in the new Peking Government.

America encouraged discord between Sun and Chang Tso-lin, the Manchurian warlord. Although Chang invited Sun to share power in the new Peking Government, he worried about Sun's Soviet advisers. In late 1924, Chang told American

officials in Peking about his fear, and stated the most serious concern in China was the "Bolshevik question." Soviet activities in China greatly imperiled the lives and property of foreigners, and he considered Sun's close association with the Soviets dangerous.⁵⁸ American officials at Peking logically concluded that Chang did not like Bolsheviks. As soon as Sun and his Soviet advisers went to Peking, Chang worried that the Russians would generate an anti-imperialist movement. Chang thought that would isolate him in Manchuria and undermine his position as he was regarded as a pro-Japanese warlord.⁵⁹ Consequently, America persuaded Chang to a firm "conservative" attitude against the Soviet-influenced Sun and Feng.⁶⁰

At the end of 1924, Sun arrived at Tientsin, a harbor east of Peking. He was warned by Chang to give up his pro-Russian policy.⁶¹ Realizing Chang was under American control, Sun instructed his secretary, Eugene Chen, to call at the American delegation to explain away "Bolshevik activities" at Canton.⁶² However, Chen was not believed.

Tuan Chi-jui, another North China warlord, who was temporarily supported by Chang and Feng after the 1924 coup, and a provisional president in the Peking Government, was also used by America to frustrate Sun. The United States recognized Tuan's provisional government to turn him against Sun. In a report to the State Department, an American official stated, "If and when Tuan or some other conservative government would replace Sun's regime, we would be in a

greatly superior position."⁶³

Sun died of liver cancer on March 12, 1925. His death lessened the possibility for the Kuomintang to reunite China through peace negotiations with the Northern warlords. The Kuomintang finally united China by force in another Northern Expedition from 1926 to 1928. Not until Chiang Kai-shek's victory in the Northern Expedition did the United States respect and aid the Kuomintang.

Endnotes

¹Arthur N. Holcombe, The Chinese Revolution (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1930), 159.

²George T. Yu, Party Politics in Republican China: The Kuomintang, 1912-1924 (California: University of California Press, 1966), 160.

³Lo Chia-lun, Kuo Fu Nien Pu Chu Kao (Taipei: Central Executive Committee of the Chung-Kuo Kuomintang, 1959), 456.

⁴Holcombe, 156.

⁵Yu, 161-162.

⁶Shen Yun-long, Chung Kuo Kung Chan Tang Chih Lai Yuan (Taipei: Wen Hai Publisher, 1971), 21.

⁷Lo Chia-lun, 518-519.

⁸Ibid., 519.

⁹Ibid., 520.

¹⁰F. Gilbert Chan, "Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Kuomintang Reorganization," China in the 1920s, eds. F. Gilbert Chan and Thomas Etzold (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), 30.

¹¹Lo Chia-lun, 520.

¹²Chan, 31.

¹³Shao Chuan Leng and Norman D. Palmer, Sun Yat-sen and Communism (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1960), 60.

¹⁴Harley F. MacNair, China in Revolution (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931), 70-71.

¹⁵Shen Yun-long, 27.

¹⁶Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China (Taipei: China Publishing Company, 1969), 19.

¹⁷Lo Chia-lun, 557.

¹⁸C. Martin Wilbur, "Problems of Starting a Revolutionary Base: Sun Yat-sen and Canton, 1923," Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Vol. IV, Part II (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1974), 688.

¹⁹Wang Yi-chun, Chung Su Wai Chiao Te Shiu Mue (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1963), 451.

²⁰Leng and Palmer, 63.

²¹Ibid., 64.

²²Wang Yi-chun, Chung Su Wai Chiao Te Shiu Mue, 343.

²³Wang Yi-chun, "An Exploratory Study on the Diplomatic Activities of Dr. Jacob Gould Schurman, American Minister to China, 1912-1925," Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Vol. I (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1969), 261.

²⁴Leng and Palmer, 64.

²⁵New York Times, January 29, 1923, 14.

²⁶Lo Chia-lun, 582.

²⁷Lyon Sharman, Sun Yat-sen: His Life and Its Meaning (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1965), 252-253.

²⁸C. Martin Wilbur, "Problems of Starting a Revolutionary Base," 688-689.

²⁹Brian T. George, "The State Department and Sun Yat-sen: American Policy and the Revolutionary Disintegration of China, 1920-1924," Pacific Historical Review, Vol. XLVI (August, 1977), 399-400.

³⁰Chiang Kai-shek, 21.

³¹Orient Lee, Chiang Kung Kai-shek Shi Chuan (Taipei: Lien Chin Press, 1976), 110.

³²Chiang Kai-shek, 23.

³³C. Martin Wilbur, Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 156.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵New York Times, October 14, 1923, Section II, 5.

³⁶C. Martin Wilbur, Sun Yat-sen, 156-157.

³⁷Sharman, 253.

³⁸C. Martin Wilbur, Sun Yat-sen, 188-189.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Leng and Palmer, 139.

⁴¹Lo Chia-lun, 643-644.

⁴²New York Times, January 14, 1924, 3.

⁴³Holcombe, 162.

⁴⁴C. Martin Wilbur, Sun Yat-sen, 193.

⁴⁵James E. Sheridan, China in Disintegration: The Republican Era in Chinese History, 1912-1949 (New York: The Free Press, Inc., 1975), 144.

⁴⁶Victor A. Yakhontoff, The Chinese Soviets (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1972), 58.

⁴⁷Chiang Kai-shek, 26.

⁴⁸MacNair, 72.

⁴⁹Richard B. Landis, "Training and Indoctrination at the Whampoa Academy," China in the 1920s, 74-77.

⁵⁰Mao Szu-cheng, Ming Kuo Shih Wu Nien I Chien Chih Chiang Kai-shek Hsien Sheng (Hong Kong: Lung Men Book Store, 1965), 292.

⁵¹Sharman, 300.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., 301.

⁵⁴Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1924, Vol. I (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), 412. (Hereafter cited as FRUS, 1924, I.)

⁵⁵James E. Sheridan, Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), 146.

⁵⁶FRUS, 1924, I, 390-391.

⁵⁷Ibid., 394.

⁵⁸Ibid., 403.

⁵⁹Ibid., 404.

⁶⁰George, 405.

⁶¹C. Martin Wilbur, Sun Yat-sen, 275.

⁶²Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1925, Vol. I (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), 724.

⁶³FRUS, 1924, I, 432.

CONCLUSION

Some historians regard the cooperation between the Kuo-mintang and the U.S.S.R. as the consequence of American failure to aid Sun Yat-sen. F. Gilbert Chan writes, "The refusal to treat Sun on his own terms was one of the factors that drove him into the arms of the Soviet Union in 1923. In this way, the United States and its allies lost an opportunity to patronize the Chinese revolutionary movement."¹ James E. Sheridan states, "By late 1922 Sun was receptive of Russian overtures not only because of vague sympathy with the Russian Revolution and frustration over lack of support from Western nations, but primarily because he needed some reliable aid . . . to consolidate his base in Kwangtung and march from there to unify China."² C. Martin Wilbur also comments that Sun "continually sought support from the U.S. especially in the 1920s. As soon as he failed to do so, he moved into the alliance with the Soviet Union."³

The conclusions of these historians are valid. Sun Yat-sen continually asked for help from the United States from 1921 to 1925, but America was indifferent to Sun and his party. Not only did the United States refuse to grant Canton political, diplomatic, or economic aid, but resorted to "Gunboat Diplomacy" in the 1923 Customs Surplus Crisis. As a result, Sun was forced to seek help from Communist Russia.

A difficult question for those who are interested in Sino-American history is why the United States was indifferent

to Sun Yat-sen and the Canton Government.

Three answers are probably needed to this single question. First, the prejudice of some American officials against Sun Yat-sen caused American tepidness toward his Government. Second, Peking was the only legal government recognized by foreign powers, and the United States had no intention of unilaterally recognizing Canton. Finally, the ability of the Canton Government to control only small parts of South China caused the United States to regard it with skepticism.

The United States, however, underestimated the "revolutionary power" of the Canton Government of Sun. This underestimation was probably due to an insufficient and uninformed State Department staff. In 1925, the Department listed only five foreign service officers, an acting chief and five clerks in the entire Division of Far Eastern Affairs.⁴ This situation made it difficult at best to appropriately apprise both the Peking and the Canton Governments. Their predictions about the Kuomintang were often wrong. For example, Professor Dorothy Borg, who researched the primary American analysts on the Kuomintang, found that its author, Nelson Johnson, badly misjudged the Southern revolutionaries as "dreamers of that type that cannot make their dreams come true."⁵ Considering that China was unified in 1928 from Canton, Johnson was mistaken.

Endnotes

¹F. Gilbert Chan, "Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Kuomintang Reorganization," China in the 1920s, eds. F. Gilbert Chan and Thomas Etzold (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), 27.

²James E. Sheridan, China in Disintegration: The Republican Era in Chinese History, 1912-1949 (New York: The Free Press, Inc., 1975), 143.

³C. Martin Wilbur, Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 287.

⁴Stanley D. Bachrack, The Committee of One Million (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 13.

⁵C. Martin Wilbur, 336, note 55.

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GLOSSARY

Anfu Club: 安福俱樂部.

Canton: 廣州.

Chang Tso-lin: 張作霖.

Changchow: 漳州.

Chao Hen-ti: 趙恒惕.

Chen Chiung-ming: 陳炯明.

Chen Eugene: 陳友仁.

Chen Suan: 陳暄.

Chen Tu-hsiu: 陳獨秀.

Chiang Kai-shek: 蔣中正 (介石).

Chihli Party: 直系.

Dai En-sai: 戴恩賽.

Feng Yu-hsiang: 馮玉祥.

Fengtien Party: 奉系.

Foochow: 福州.

Fukien: 福建.

Hu Han-min: 胡漢民.

Hunan: 湖南.

Kanchow: 贛州.

Kiangsi: 江西.

Koo Wellington: 顧維鈞.

- Kuomintang: 國民黨.
- Kwangsi: 廣西.
- Kwangtung: 廣東.
- Kwelin: 桂林.
- Li Huan-hung: 黎元洪.
- Liang Shih-i: 梁士詒.
- Liao Chung-kai: 廖仲愷.
- Lincheng: 臨城.
- Liu Chen-huan: 劉震寰.
- Liutaokou: 柳條溝.
- Ma Chi: 馬濟.
- Ma Soo: 馬素.
- May Fourth Movement: 五四運動.
- Mo Ying-hsin: 莫榮新.
- Mukden: 瀋陽.
- Peking: 北京.
- Provincial Autonomy: 聯省自治.
- Pu-i: 溥儀.
- Pukow: 浦口.
- San-Min-Chu-I: 三民主義.
- Shanghai: 上海.
- Shangtung: 山東.

Sun Hung-yi: 孫洪伊.

Sun Mai-yao: 孫美瑤.

Sun Yat-sen: 孫逸仙(中山).

Teng Kong: 鄧鏗.

Tientsin: 天津.

Tsao Kun: 曹錕.

Tsun Chuan-shuan: 岑春煊.

Tuan Chi-ju: 段祺瑞.

Whampoa Military Academy: 黃埔軍官學校.

Wu C.C.: 伍朝樞.

Wu Pei-fu: 吳佩孚.

Wu Ting-fang: 伍廷芳.

Yang Hsi-min: 楊希閔.

Yuan Shih-kai: 袁世凱.

Yung Feng: 永豐.

Yunnan: 雲南.