



**Managing Transitions:  
The Chinese Communist Party's United  
Front Work, Minor Parties and Groups,  
Hegemony and Corporatism**

By

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of  
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South Australia.

December 1997

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This work contains no material which has been accepted for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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Gerry Groot

December 1997

## Abstract

### **Managing Transitions: The Chinese Communist Party's United Front Work, Minor parties and Groups, Hegemony and Corporatism**

This dissertation examines the history and roles of China's minor parties and groups (MPGs) in the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) united front between the 1930s and 1990s using Antonio Gramsci's principles for the winning and maintaining of hegemony. Gramsci advocated a "war of position," the building of political alliances to isolate existing state powers and win consent for revolutionary rule and transform society. Intellectuals were particularly valuable allies and the MPGs were parties of intellectuals. Between 1935 and 1949, the CCP used the MPGs and their ideological influence to help isolate the Nationalists politically.

After 1949, the united front worked for China's socialist transformation of the means of production and ideology. To overcome recurrent crises caused by its methods, the CCP instituted concessionary "passive revolution" measures including united front and MPG work to win back the support of intellectuals. Yet the re-stating of some MPG third road political positions contributed to the anti-Rightist campaign of 1957. The failure of the subsequent Great Leap Forward forced the CCP to adopt passive revolutionary methods again and the MPGs were revived during the Second Hundred Flowers period. They officially dissolved in 1966.

The post-Mao, post-Cultural Revolution revival of the MPGs as part of a new united front was again part of a passive revolutionary strategy to rebuild CCP hegemony. The MPGs were needed initially for their connections to old society intellectuals with technical, managerial and other skills. The MPGs also acted to re-legitimise these groups and to represent them politically. The corporatist forms of the MPGs, have, however led repeatedly to internal problems and dysfunctions inherent in corporatist structures. The CCP has used these problems as a means of control. Economic reform is now creating new socio-economic groups and the CCP is adjusting the united front and the MPGs to co-opt their representatives and deliberately forestall the evolution of an autonomous civil society and middle class which could challenge CCP rule. This has resulted in a new and expanding role for the united front, the MPGs and organisations representing the new interest groups.

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The love, laughter, support and patience of my dear wife Allisa Xiaoyun Zhao  
has borne fruit.

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## Pinyin - Chinese Character Namelist

Bai Chongxi	白崇禧 (1893 - 1966)	Da Yijin	笄移今 (1909 - )
Bai Dahua	白大华 (1942 - )	Dai Jitao	戴季陶 (1890 - 1949)
Bao Tong	包同**	Dai Qing	戴晴 (1941 - )
Bo Gu	博古 (aka Qin Bangxian)	Deng Baoshan	邓宝珊 (1894 - 1968)
Bo Yibo	薄一波 (1908 - )	Deng Chumin	邓初民 (1889 - 1981)
Cai Tingkai	蔡廷锴 (1892 - 1968)	Deng Liqun	邓力群 (1915 - )
Cai Yuanpei	蔡元培 (1892 - 1940)	Deng Tuo	邓拓 (1912- 1966)
Cai Jiemin	蔡子民 (1920 - )	Deng Weizhi	邓伟志 (1938 - )
Cao Mengjun	曹孟君 (1903 - 1967)	Deng Xihou	邓锡候 (1889 - 1964)
Chen Cisheng	陈此生 (1900 - 1981)	Deng Xiaoping	邓小平 (1904 - 1997)
Chen Duxiu	陈独秀 (1880 - 1942)	Deng Yanda	邓演达 (1845 - 1931)
Chen Heqin	陈鹤琴 (1892 - 1982)	Deng Yingchao	邓颖超 (1904 - 1992)
Chen Lebo*		Deng Zihui	邓子恢 (1896 - 1972)
Chen Jiongming	陈炯明 (1887 - 1933)	Ding Guan'gen	丁关根 (1929 - )
Chen Mingshu	陈铭枢 (1889 - 1905)	Dong Biwu	董必武 (1896 - 1975)
Chen Qitian	陈其天 (1893 - )	Dong Chuncai	董纯才 (1905 - 1990)
Chen Qiyou	陈其尤 (1892 - 1970)	Dong Yinchu	董寅初 (1915 - )
Chen Renbing	陈仁炳 (1909 - 1990)	Du Yuesheng	杜月笙 (1888 - 1951)
Chen Shutong	陈叔通 (1876 - 1966)	Du Chongyuan	杜重远 (1897 - 1943)
Chen Wangdao	陈望道 (1891 - 1972)	Duan Muzheng	端木正 (1920 - )
Chen Yinsheng	陈寅生 (1875 - 1952)	Fan Hong	樊弘 (1900 - 1988)
Chen Yi	陈毅 (1901 - 1972)	Fan Puzhai	范扑斋**
Chen Yisheng	陈巳生 (1893 - 1953)	Fang Fang	方方 (1904 - 1971)
Chen Yun	陈云 (1905 - 1995)	Fang Lizhi	方励之 (1936 - )
Chen Yusheng	陈玉生 (1900 - )	Fang Yi	方毅 (1916 - )
Cheng Qian	程潜 (1882 - 1968)	Fei Xiaotong	费孝通 (1910 - )
Chu Anping	楚安平 (1909 - 1966)	Feng Jikai	冯骥才 (1942 - )
Chu Fucheng	褚辅成**	Feng Sutao	冯素陶 (1906 - )
Chu Tu'nan	楚图南 (1899 - 1994)	Feng Tiyun	冯梯云 (1925 - )
Chu Zhuang	楚庄 (1928 - )	Feng Youlan	冯友兰 (1895 - 1990)
		Feng Yuxiang	冯玉祥 (1882 - 1948)

Fu Dongju	傅冬菊**	Hua Guofeng	华国锋 (1921 - )
Fu Lei	傅雷 (1908 - 1966)	Hua Luogeng	华罗庚 (1910 - 1985)
Fu Sinian	傅斯年 (1896 - 1950)	Huang Dingchen	黄鼎臣 (1901 - )
Fu Zuoyi	傅作义 (1895 - 1974)	Huang Genyong	黄庚庸**
Gao Chongmin	高崇民 (1890 - 1971)	Huang Jingwu	黄竞武**
Gao Gang	高岗 (1905 - 1954)	Huang Qixiang	黄琪翔 (1898 - 1970)
Ge Zhicheng	葛志成 (1920 - )	Huang Yanpei	黄炎培 (1878 - 1965)
Gong Li	巩俐**	Huang Yaomian	黄药眠 (1903 - 1987)
Gu Gengyu	古耕虞 (1905 - )	Ji Fang	季方 (1890 - 1987)
Guan Mengjue	关梦觉 (1913 - 1990)	Jiang Guangnai	蒋光鼐 (1887 - 1967)
Guo Lihuo	郭隶活 (1904 - 1986)	Jiang Jieshi	蒋介石 (1887 - 1975)
Guo Moruo	郭沫若 (1892 - 1978)	Jiang Zemin	江泽民 (1926 - )
Guo Qiaoran	郭翹然 (1901 - )	Jin Kaicheng	金开诚 (1932 - )
Guo Zechen	郭则沉 (1906 - 1973)	Jing Shuping	经书平 (1913 - )
Han Zhao'e	韩兆鄂 (1890 - 1970)	Lei Jieqiong	雷洁琼 (1905 - )
He Gonggan	何公敢**	Leng Yu	冷遒 (1882 - 1959)
He Lin	贺麟 (1902 - 1992)	Li Boqiu	李伯球 (1904 - 1986)
He Xiangning	何香凝 (1879 - 1972)	Li Chunqin	李纯青 (1908 - 1990)
Hong Fuzeng	洪绂曾 (1932 - )	Li Dazhao	李大钊 (1889 - 1927)
Hou Xueyu	候学煜 (1912 - 1991)	Li Dequan	李德全 (1896 - 1972)
Hu Feng	胡风 (1902 - 1985)	Li Ding	李定 (1923 - )
Hu Hanmin	胡汉民 (1879 - 1936)	Li Fuchun	李富春 (1900 - 1975)
Hu Juewen	胡厥文 (1895 - 1989)	Li Gongpu	李公朴 (1900 - 1946)
Hu Lin	胡霖 (1893 - 1949)	Li Huang	李璜 (1895 - )
Hu Qili	胡启立 (1929 - )	Li Jishen	李济深 (1885 - 1959)
Hu Qiaomu	胡乔木 (1912 - )	Li Lisan	李立三 (1899 - 1967)
Hu Shi	胡适 (1891 - 1962)	Li Peiyao	李沛瑶 (1933 - 1996)
Hu Shiqing	胡世青**	Li Peng	李鹏 (1928 - )
Hu Yaobang	胡耀邦 (1915 - 1989)	Li Pingxin	李平心 (1907 - 1966)
Hu Yuzhi	胡愈之 (1896 - 1986)	Li Ruihuan	李瑞环 (1935 - )
Hu Zhengzhi	胡政之 (aka Hu Lin)	Li Shucheng	李书城 (1882 - 1965)
Hu Zi'ang	胡子昂 (1897 - 1991)	Li Tieying	李铁映 (1936 - )
Hu Ziying	胡子婴 (1907 - 1982)	Li Weihuan	李维汉 (1896 - 1984)
Hua Gang	华岗 (1903 - 1972)	Li Wenyi	李文宜 (1903 - )

Li Xiannian	李先念 (1909 - 1992)	Lu Dingyi	陆定一 (1906 - )
Li Xiaodi	李小弟**	Lu Jiayi	卢嘉锡 (1915 - )
Li Zhangda	李章达 (1890 - 1953)	Lu Xun	鲁迅 (1881 - 1936)
Li Zongren	李宗仁 (1890 - 1969)	Lu Yuwen	卢郁文 (1900 - 1969)
Liang Qichao	梁启超 (1873 - 1929)	Luo Hanxian	罗涵先 (1922 - )
Liang Shumin	梁漱溟 (1893 - 1988)	Luo Longji	罗隆基 (1898 - 1965)
Liang Xi	梁希 (1883 - 1958)	Luo Renyi	罗任一**
Liang Zhonghua	梁仲华**	Luo Wengan	罗文干 (1888 - 1941)
Liao Chengzhi	廖承志 (1908 - 1983)	Luo Ziwei	罗子为 (1910 - 1958)
Liao Gailong	廖盖隆 (1918 - )	Ma Dayou	马大猷 (1915 - )
Liao Mosha	廖沫沙 (1907 - 1990)	Ma Xulun	马叙伦 (1884 - 1970)
Liao Zhongkai	廖仲恺 (1877 - 1925)	Ma Yinchu	马寅初 (1882 - 1982)
Lin Boqu	林伯渠 (1886 - 1960)	Mao Dun	茅盾 (1896 - 1981)
Lin Biao	林彪 (1907 - 1971)	Mao Zedong	毛泽东 (1893 - 1976)
Lin Yutang	林语堂 (1895 - 1976)	Mei Dajun	梅达君 (1908 - )
Liu Binyan	刘宾雁 (1925 - )	Mei Gongbin	梅龚彬 (1900 - 1975)
Liu Bocheng	刘伯承 (1892 - 1986)	Meng Xianzhang	孟宪章 (1895 - 1953)
Liu Changsheng	刘长胜 (1903 - 1967)	Miao Yuntai	缪云台 (1894 - 1988)
Liu Fei	刘斐 (1898 - 1983)	Min Ganghou	闵刚候 (1904 - 1971)
Liu Heng	刘珩 (1936 - )	Mo Dehui	莫德惠 (1883 - 1968)
Liu Hezhang	刘鹤章 (1941 - )	Mu Ouchu	穆藕初**
Liu Houtong	刘厚同**	Pan Beilei	潘蓓蕾 (1941 - )
Liu Lantao	刘澜涛 (1910 - )	Pan Hannian	潘汉年 (1906 - 1977)
Liu Nianzhi	刘念智 (1912 - )	Pan Wenhua	潘文华**
Liu Shaoqi	刘少奇 (1898 - 1969)	Pei Changhui	裴昌会 (1897 - 1992)
Liu Xiao	刘晓 (1908 - 1988)	Peng Chong	彭冲 (1915 - )
Liu Yazhi	柳亚子 (1887 - 1958)	Peng Dixian	彭迪先 (1908 - 1991)
Liu-Wang Liming		Peng Wenying	彭文应**
	刘王立明(1896 - 1970)	Peng Zemin	彭泽民 (1877 - 1956)
Liu Wenhui	刘文辉 (1895 - 1976)	Peng Zexiang	彭泽湘**
Liu Wenjia	刘文甲 (1937 - )	Peng Zhen	彭真 (1902 - 1996)
Long Yun	龙云 (1887 - 1962)	Ping Jiesan	平杰三 (1906 - )
Lu Cunxue	卢存学**	Pu Xixiu	浦熙修 (1910 - 1970)
Lu Derun	吕德润 (1921 - )	Qian Duansheng	钱端升 (1901 - 1990)

Qian Jiaju	千家驹	(1909 - )	Su Xin	苏新	(1907 - 1981)
Qian Junrui	钱俊瑞	(1908 - 1985)	Sun Fo	孙佛	(1891 - 1973)
Qian Linzhao	钱临照	(1906 - )	Sun Ke	孙科	(aka Sun Fo)
Qian Qichen	钱其琛	(1928 - )	Sun Qimeng	孙起孟	(1911 - )
Qian Weichang	钱伟长	(1912 - )	Sun Xiaocun	孙晓村	(1906 - 1991)
Qiao Shi	乔石	(1924 - )	Sun Yatsen	(aka Sun Zhongshan)	
Qin Bangxian	秦邦宪	(1907 - 1946)	Sun Zhongshan	孙中山	(1866 - 1925)
Qin Benli	钦本立	(1918 - 1991)	Sun Yueqi	孙越崎	(1893 - )
Qiu Zhe	丘哲	(1885 - 1959)	Tan Pingshan	谭平山	(1886 - 1956)
Qu Wu	屈武	(1898 - 1992)	Tan Zhiqing	谭志清	(1907 - 1980)
Rao Shushi	饶漱石	(1903 - 1975)	Tang Jiyao	唐继尧	(1883 - 1927)
Rong Yiren	荣毅仁	(1916 - )	Tao Dayong	陶大镛	(1918 - )
Rui Xingwen	芮杏文	(1927 - )	Tao Xingzhi	陶行知	(1891 - 1946)
Sa Kongliao	萨空了	(1907 - 1988)	Tian Fuda	田富达	(1929 - )
Sha Qianli	沙千里	(1901 - 1982)	Tian Han	田汉	(1898 - 1968)
Shao Lizi	邵力子	(1882 - 1967)	Tian Jiyun	田纪云	(1929 - )
Shen Junru	沈钧儒	(1875 - 1963)	Tong Dizhou	童第周	(1902 - 1979)
Shen Qizhen	沈其震	(1906 - )	Wan Guoquan	万国权	(1919 - )
Shen Tong	沈彤	(1968 - )	Wan Li	万里	(1908 - 1986)
Shen Yanbing	沈雁冰	(1896 - 1981)	Wang Ganchang	王淦昌	(1907 - )
Shen Zhiyuan	沈志远	(1902 - 1965)	Wang Bingnan	王炳南	(1908 - 1988)
Sheng Pihua	盛丕华	(1882 - 1961)	Wang Guangqi	王光祈	(1892 - 1936)
Shi Fuliang	施复亮	(1899 - 1970)	Wang Guangying	王光英	(1919 - )
Shi Liang	史良	(1900 - 1985)	Wang Honghui*		
Shi Liangcai	史量才	(1880 - 1934)	Wang Jingwei	汪精卫	(1883 - 1944)
Situ Meitang	司徒美堂	(1868 - 1955)	Wang Kunlun	王昆仑	(1902 - 1985)
Song Kun	宋堃	(1929 - )	Wang Ming	王明	(1904 - 1974)
Song Ping	宋平	(1917 - )	Wang Quechen	王却尘**	
Song Qingling	宋庆龄	(1893 - 1981)	Wang Renzhong	王任重	(1917 - )
Song Renqiong	宋任穷	(1909 - )	Wang Ruofei	王若飞	(1896 - 1946)
Song Ziwen	宋子文	(1894 - 1971)	Wang Ruoshui	王若水	(1926 - )
	(aka T.V. Soong)		Wang Shao'ao	王绍鏊	(1888 - 1970)
Su Shaozhi	苏绍智	(1923 - )	Wang Shenlin	王深林	(1904 - 1978)
			Wang Tingjun	王廷俊**	

Wang Yifan	王一帆	(1909 - 1987)	Yan Jiaqi	严家其	(1942 - )
Wang Zaoshi	王造时	(1903 - 1971)	Yan Dongsheng	严东生	(1918 - )
Wang Zhaoguo	王兆国	(1941 - )	Yan Jici	严济慈	(1900 - 1996)
Wei Jingsheng	魏京生	(1950 - )	Yan Jingyao	严景耀	(1905 - 1976)
Wen Yiduo	闻一多	(1899 - 1946)	Yan Mingfu	阎明复	(1931 - )
Weng Wenhao	翁文灏	(1889 - 1971)	Yan Xixuan	严锡焯**	
Wu Chan	伍祥	(1904 - )	Yan Yangchu	晏阳初	(1893 - 1990)
Wu Guozhen	吴国祯	(1947 - )	Yang Hucheng	杨虎城	(1893 - 1949)
Wu Han	吴晗	(1909 - 1969)	Yang Jie	杨杰	(1889 - 1949)
Wu Jingchao	吴景超	(1901 - 1968)	Yang Jingren	杨静仁	(1918 - )
Wu Juetian	伍觉天	(1910 - )	Yang Kehuang	杨克煌	(1908 - 1978)
Wulanfu	乌兰夫	(1906 - 1988)	Yang Mingxuan	杨明轩	(1891 - 1967)
		(aka Ulanfu)	Yang Quan	杨銓	(1893 - 1933)
Wu Maosun	吴茂荪	(1911 - 1984)	Yang Shangkun	杨尚昆	(1907 - )
Wu Peifu	吴佩孚	(1873 - 1939)	Yang Weiyu	杨卫玉	(1888 - 1956)
Wu Qiansheng	吴黔生**		Yang Xingfo	杨杏佛	
Wu Xun	武训	(1838 - 1896)			(aka Yang Quan)
Wu Yunchu	吴蕴初	(1891 - 1953)	Yang Yitang	杨逸堂	(1902 - 1982)
Wu Zuguang	吴祖光**		Yang Ziheng	杨子恒	(1899 - 1961)
Xi Zhongxun	习仲勋	(1913 - 1992)	Yao Yilin	姚依林	(1917 - )
Xia Yan	夏衍	(1920 - )	Ye Jianying	叶剑英	(1897 - 1986)
Xiao Yaotang	肖耀堂	(1932 - )	Ye Shengtao	叶圣陶	(1894 - 1988)
Xie Xuehong	谢雪红	(1901 - 1970)	Yin Shizhong	尹时中**	
Xin Zhichao	辛志超**		Yu Haocheng	余浩成**	
Xu Bing	徐冰	(1903 - 1972)	Yu Yunbo	余云波	(1936 - )
Xu Boxin	徐伯昕	(1905 - 1984)	Yuan Hanqing	袁翰青	(1905 - )
Xu Deheng	徐德珩	(1890 - 1988)	Yuan Qitong	袁启彤**	
Xu Dixin	许涤新	(1906 - 1988)	Yun Yinglin	云应霖**	
Xu Fulin	徐傅霖	(1878 - 1958)	Zeng Qi	曾琦	(1892 - 1951)
Xu Guangping	许广平	(1898 - 1968)	Zeng Zhaolun	曾昭抡	(1899 - 1967)
Xu Mengshang	徐萌山	(1925 - )	Zhang Bojun	章伯钧	(1895 - 1969)
Xu Zhimo	徐志摩	(1896 - 1931)	Zhang Dongsun	张东荪	(1886 - 1973)
Xue Yu	薛愚	(1894 - 1988)	Zhang Junmai	张君勱	(1889 - 1969)
Yan Baohang	阎宝航	(1895 - 1968)			(aka 张嘉森 Carsun Chang)

Zhang Heyong	张鹤鏞	(1940 - )	Zhou Fohai	周佛海	(1897 - 1948)
Zhang Lan	张澜	(1872 - 1955)	Zhou Gucheng	周谷城	(1898 - 1997)
Zhang Mengxu	张孟旭	(1903 - )	Zhou Jianren	周建人	(1888 - 1984)
Zhang Naiqi	章乃器	(1896 - 1977)	Zhou Jingwen	周鲸文	(1901 - )
Zhang Shenfu	张申府	(1893 - )	Zhou Peiyuan	周培源	(1902 - )
Zhang Shiming	章师明	(1922 - )	Zhou Shutao	周叔韬	(1891 - 1984)
Zhang Shizhao	章士钊	(1882 - 1973)	Zhou Taixuan	周太玄	(1895 - 1968)
Zhang Wentian	张闻天	(1900 - 1976)	Zhou Tienong*		
Zhang Xiruo	张奚若	(1889 - 1973)	Zhou Xinmin	周新民	(1896 - 1979)
Zhang Xueliang	张学良	(1901 - )	Zhou Zhongyi*	(Chou Chong-i)	
Zhang Yilin	张一麟	(1865 - 1943)	Zhu De	朱德	(1886 - 1976)
Zhang Youyu	张友渔	(1899 - )	Zhu Houze	朱厚泽	(1931 - )
Zhang Yunchuan	张云川	(1903 - 1965)	Zhu Qinglai	诸青来**	
Zhang Zhizhong	张治中	(1890 - 1969)	Zhu Rongji	朱镕基	(1928 - )
Zhao Puchu	赵朴初	(1907 - )	Zhu Xuefan	朱学范	(1905 - )
Zhao Ziyang	赵紫阳	(1919 - )	Zhu Yunshan	朱蕴山	(1887 - 1981)
Zheng Zhenduo	郑振铎	(1898 - 1958)	Zhuang Mingli	庄明理	(1909 - )
Zhong Jiechen	钟杰臣**		Zhuang Xiquan	庄希泉	(1888 - 1988)
Zhou Chang*			Zuo Shunsheng	左舜生	(1893 - 1969)
Zhou Enlai	周恩来	(1898 - 1976)	Zou Taofen	邹韬奋	(1895 - 1944)

\* Sources available in English only;

\*\* Year of birth unknown.

## Abbreviations

- ACFIC : The All China Federation of Commerce and Industry (*Quan guo gongshang lianhe hui*).
- APD: Association for the Promotion of Democracy (*Zhongguo minzhu cujin hui*).
- CASS: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (*Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan*).
- CC : Central Committee (*zhongyang*).
- CCP: Chinese Communist Party (*Zhongguo gongchan dang*).
- CI: Communist International (Comintern) (*Gongchan guoji*).
- CITIC : China International Trust and Investment Corporation (*Zhongguo guoji xintuo touzi gongsi*)
- CPPCC: Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (*Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi*).
- CYL : Communist Youth League (*Gongchan zhuyi qingnian tuan*).
- CYP : China Youth Party (*Zhongguo qingnian dang*).
- DL : Chinese Democratic League (*Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng*).
- GMD : Guomindang (Chinese Nationalist Party).
- IoS : Institute of Socialism (*Shehui zhuyi xueyuan*).
- MPG: Minor Parties and Groups.
- NCA : Chinese Democratic National Construction Association (*Zhongguo minzhu jianguo hui*).
- NPC : National People's Congress (*Quanguo renmin daibiao da hui*).
- NPP: Non-Party Personage (*wu dangpai renshi*).
- NSA : National Salvation Association (*Jiuguo hui - Quanguo ge jie jiu guo lianhe hui*).
- NSP : National Socialist Party (*Zhongguo guojia shehui dang*).
- PC: People's Congress (*Renmin daibiao da hui*).
- PCC: Political Consultative Conference (*Zhengzhi xieshang hui*).
- PPC: People's Political Council (*Guomin canzheng hui*).
- PWP : Peasant's and Workers Party (*Zhongguo nonggong minzhu dang*).
- Revolutionary GMD : Revolutionary Committee of the Guomindang (*Zhongguo Guomindang geming weiyuan hui*).
- TSGL: Taiwan Self Government League (*Taiwan minzhu zizhi tongmeng*).
- UFD: United Front Department (*Tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu*).
- VES: Vocational Education Society (*Zhonghua zhiye jiaoyu she*).

## Publication Abbreviations

- JPRS: Joint Publication Research Service.
- NCNA : New China News Agency .
- SCMP: *Selections from Chinese Mainland Press* .
- STYZX: *Shanghai tongyi zhanxian* , [Shanghai united front].
- STZLY : *Shanghai tong zhan lilun yanjiu* , [Shanghai united front theoretical research].
- TJB : *Tuanjie bao* , [Unity].
- UFE : *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian quanshu* , [Chinese united front encyclopaedia].
- ZGTYZX : *Zhongguo Tongyi zhanxian* , [China united front].

*Introduction***United Fronts, Hegemony, Corporatism  
and  
China's Minor Parties and Groups**

In the late 1970s, at the same time as China began its process of economic reform, the Chinese Communist Party (*Zhongguo gongchan dang*, CCP) also revived its united front policies and its United Front Work Department (*Tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu*, UFD). This dissertation was sparked by an interest in discovering why the CCP felt the need to revive policies which had long seemed moribund or abandoned. In many Western accounts, Chinese united fronts have often been equated with the two periods, 1924-27 and 1936-45, during which the CCP cooperated with the nationalist party, the Guomindang (GMD). What was the connection between united front work, something Western minds often associate with war or revolution, and economic reform? The fundamental principle of a united front is simple: to rally as many allies as possible in order to achieve a common cause, usually to defeat a common enemy. Was there a common enemy in the late 1970s and what was the common cause behind which allies were rallied? Who, after thirty years of CCP rule and numerous political campaigns, remained as allies? Were there common threads between earlier united fronts and the post-1978 front? What was united front work's relation to the rapid socio-economic changes of the late 1980s and 90s unleashed by the economic reforms of 1978? To answer these questions requires a narrower focus and a critical examination of CCP united front policies. These policies, first imposed on the CCP in the 1920s and 1930s, have subsequently been assimilated and developed by the Party to become a defining characteristic of its 'socialism with Chinese characteristics.'

To chart this evolution, this dissertation traces the formation, history, and roles of China's minor political groups between 1930 and 1996. Some of the political parties formed in the 1930s, and other political groups formed subsequently, have continued to

exist in some form until the present day as so-called 'democratic parties and groups' (*minzhu dangpai*). These groups and their roles in the CCP's' united front work will be analysed. This dissertation uses the term minor parties and groups (MPGs) in order to qualify the status of these organisations as political parties. This term avoids the implication that these bodies are, or ever were, democratic in any accepted Western sense, *i.e.* that they advocated universal suffrage and free and fair elections of multiple candidates to allow an orderly change of ruling parties or, with one exception, that their internal structures and politics were democratic.<sup>1</sup>

Although the MPGs' attempts to mediate between the CCP and the Nationalists in 1945-1948 have been acknowledged, and their central part in the Hundred Flowers movement of 1956-57 is well known, the overall role of the MPGs in the CCP's united front work and the role of the united front itself in these cases has not been addressed systematically. This dissertation therefore traces the evolution of the CCP's united front work as it evolved along lines postulated by the Italian communist theorist, Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), and as a form of corporatism which enabled aspects of it to be formally institutionalised.

Gramsci argues that the building of extensive political alliances by a communist party in opposition can strategically isolate the existing state powers, and that after winning consent for its take-over of power, the party should continue to use these alliances to help transform the old order into a new, socialist society. This thesis demonstrates that CCP practice has followed Gramsci's theories closely. There is, however, no suggestion that the CCP was influenced by Gramsci. Rather, the development of the CCP's united front policies along Gramscian lines represents a case of Chinese communist practice evolving along lines which conform with many of Gramsci's ideas and principles. The CCP was forming its policies and theories when Gramsci was imprisoned. Gramsci's writings were only published in Italian between 1948 and 1951, and only later again translated into Chinese. This was too late for Gramsci to have had any influence on the CCP's basic policies. This thesis shows how,

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<sup>1</sup> In using the term MPGs, this work follows that of Edmund Fung's "Recent Scholarship on the Minor Parties and Groups in Republican China," *Modern China*, vol.20, no.2, 1994, pp.478-508.

in Chinese communist practice, these Gramscian-type alliances have, in the case of the MPGs, been institutionalised using corporatist structures. These structures have some inherent limitations, manifestations of which are revealed within the MPGs.

### **The Minor Parties and Groups**

Between 1930 and 1949, the CCP worked hard to win the support of the MPGs and to use them to help isolate the Nationalists politically. As part of its efforts to win over the MPGs, the CCP had to discredit attempts by important MPG elements to create a 'third road,' a party and an ideology between the extremes of the CCP and the GMD. After 1949, the united front worked for China's socialist transformation. The MPGs then participated in transforming the ideology of intellectuals involved in education, culture, administration, and business. The apparent success of this transformation should have eventually rendered the MPGs redundant.

During the Hundred Flowers period of 1956-57, the CCP gave the MPGs much greater freedom to air criticisms. Yet the re-stating of several earlier repudiated third road political positions by some MPG leaders contributed to the subsequent anti-Rightist campaign of 1957-58. This campaign targeted many MPG leaders, persecuted many of China's intellectuals, and has often been seen as effectively the end of the MPGs. Western interest in them was only revived the late 1980s.

The failure of Mao's Great Leap Forward, instituted in the wake of the anti-Rightist campaign, resulted in a crisis that forced the CCP to make concessions to the intellectuals it had so recently derided and repressed. During the Second Hundred Flowers period (1959-1962), the CCP was forced to rehabilitate the MPGs. The MPGs again acted as the Party's bridges, providing it with access to pools of rare expertise badly needed to carry out research, survey, and advisory work. Nevertheless, Mao Zedong, increasingly fearful of revisionism in the form of attempts to slow his pace of socialist transformation and moderate its radical form, maintained the goal of eventually eliminating the MPGs as the vestigial representatives of the abolished bourgeois classes they were held to represent. They were officially dissolved in 1966, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

The MPGs were revived in 1977 as part of a new united front. This new united front was itself an integral part of a new CCP strategy of economic reform to rebuild Party hegemony. To achieve its goals the CCP found it necessary to revive the MPGs. Initially, the MPGs were needed for their connections to old society intellectuals with scientific, technical, managerial and other skills, and relationships with overseas Chinese: connections which were once again recognised as valuable. The MPGs also acted to re-legitimise these groups and to represent them politically.

In the 1990s, the Party's economic reforms are creating new socio-economic groups. The CCP is adapting the united front to conform with these changes and it now allows the MPGs to recruit representatives of economically important new groups. The Party is using the united front to exchange political representation in return for acceptance of CCP authority. The united front and the MPGs now have new and expanding roles. These new roles are the opposite to those intended by the CCP when it re-organised the MPGs in the early 1950s: then the goal was the eventual transformation of their members and the constituencies they represented into part of one, proletarian, class. These changes have direct implications for the evolution of Chinese civil society.

### **The United Front**

Lyman P. van Slyke's *Enemies and Friends: The United Front in Chinese Communist History*, remains the basic text on the history of united front work.<sup>2</sup> Van Slyke traces how, after initially having co-operation with the GMD forced upon it by the Communist International, the CCP eventually took united front work to heart and successfully developed it to an extent achieved by no other communist party.<sup>3</sup> Van Slyke reveals that the CCP's post-1936 united front work was broad ranging and

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<sup>2</sup> Lyman P. van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends: The United Front in Chinese Communist History*, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1967).

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps the best known non-Chinese united front was created under the leadership of the Vietnamese revolutionary, Ho Chi-minh (himself once a Comintern agent in China). The Vietnamese communists implemented very successful united front policies, against the South Vietnamese government, the United States, and their allies. For an excellent overview of this work see Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong: The Organisation and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam*, (MIT Press, Cambridge Mass., 1966). The difference was that, in contrast to the CCP, the Vietnamese communists ceased using this united front immediately after they seized power.

complex. While co-operation with the GMD was the major component of this work, van Slyke also examines how the CCP co-operated with many other groups, including disaffected warlords, religious believers, ethnic minorities, Overseas Chinese and China's minor political parties and groups.

James D. Seymour's *China's Satellite Parties*, helped create a new interest in the MPGs by presenting a general history of their development and alerting Western scholars to their post-1978 revival. It was based on materials available outside of China and on interviews conducted surreptitiously in China in the early 1980s.<sup>4</sup> Seymour's work has become the basic text on these organisations and it has subsequently been complemented by a growing interest in historical aspects of the MPGs' development.<sup>5</sup> However, this research is very specific in focus, concentrating on one MPG, one period, or on individuals, and it lacks both a broader CCP united front work context and an overall theoretical perspective.

In his conclusion, Seymour speculated about the classification of the MPGs. When he noted that the MPGs "nearly fit Philippe Schmitter's definition of corporatism," Seymour pointed to an avenue of potential investigation.<sup>6</sup> Corporatism is essentially a method of interest intermediation in which a state accords some groups privileged status and access to itself while demanding in return compliance from, and some influence over, such groups. Seymour also noted Joseph Fewsmith's observation regarding the GMD's involvement with Shanghai merchants in the politics of the 1930s', that "authoritarian regimes, it seems, have a compelling interest in establishing hierarchical, non-competitive organisations that *do not work*" (emphasis in original).<sup>7</sup> Theories of corporatism as a form of class reconciliation were topics of debate in China in the 1920s and they had exerted a significant influence on both important nationalist

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<sup>4</sup> James D. Seymour, *China's Satellite Parties*, (East Gate Books/ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1987).

<sup>5</sup> For a summary see Fung, 1994. For some recent important background material on the MPGs see Roger B. Jeans (ed), *Roads Not Followed: The Struggle of Opposition Parties in Twentieth Century China*, (Westview Press, Boulder, 1992).

<sup>6</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.89.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Fewsmith, *Party, State and Local Elites in Republican China: Merchant Organisations and Politics in Shanghai 1890-1930*, (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1985), p.163. Quoted in Seymour, 1987, p.89.

figures, such as Dai Jitao,<sup>8</sup> and other theorists who later became prominent MPG leaders.<sup>9</sup> The observations of Fewsmith and Seymour presaged a new interest in the subject of corporatism in China. By the early 1990s, foreign scholars were using corporatism to explain the development of China's new state-society relations.<sup>10</sup> Seymour's observations of the MPGs themselves generate several questions: how corporatist are the MPGs and what are the implications and limitations of this political form?

Seymour's analysis of the MPGs' corporatism was about the *how*, or the form in which these organisations filled their place in the CCP's united front. It did not adequately address *why* the MPGs had been included in a united front, let alone why the MPGs remained in existence long after the CCP had seized power or why they were revived in 1978.

The evolution of the CCP's united front work grew out of a realisation within the Party of the need for a long-term strategy of alliance building in which intellectuals and minor political parties and political groups with great symbolic and ideological importance came to play a large role. The success of CCP united front work was contingent on political alliances: the Party mobilised support through the successful invocation of national popular appeals, particularly nationalist ones, and by granting concessions to strategically important groups, especially in the form of promises of political representation and a role in government.

Gramsci thought much about the importance of political alliances and his ideas provide a theoretical perspective to account for the GMD's actions as it attempted to stay in power, the methods used by the CCP to overthrow the GMD, how the CCP consolidated its power, and how it subsequently maintained its position as China's new

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<sup>8</sup> With the exception of a few cases where the Wade-Giles version is considered more appropriate, this dissertation generally uses the Pinyin system of romanisation. Refer to Glossary for the list of names in Chinese characters.

<sup>9</sup> Arif Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism*, (Oxford University Press, New York-Oxford, 1989), ch.7, "Corporatist Resolutions; Class Politics without Class struggle, Corporatist Socialism in China in 1920s," pp.121-142.

<sup>10</sup> One of the earliest was Jean Oi, "Fiscal Reform and the Economic Foundations of Local State Corporatism in China," *World Politics*, vol.45, no.1, October, 1992, pp.99-126. Gordon White, "Prospects for Civil Society in China: A Case Study of Xiaoshan City," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no.29, January 1993, pp.63-88. Jonathan Unger and Anita Chan, "China, Corporatism and the East Asian Model," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no.33, January 1995, pp.29-54.

state power. This perspective reveals a consistent pattern to the CCP's united front work, explains many united front policies and actions, and highlights the importance of China's MPGs. This examination also reveals that as state powers, the GMD and CCP exhibited many similarities in their attitudes to the MPGs. There were also, as we will see, many continuities in the attitudes of MPG leaders under both regimes. In demonstrating the perpetuation of some of these features, this thesis responds to Joseph Esherick's call to pay attention to continuities between the Republican and the post-1949 eras, and not to concentrate solely on the apparent discontinuities.<sup>11</sup>

### **Gramsci, Hegemony, and the Importance of Alliances**

In Gramsci's view, governments hold power not only because they possess powers of coercion in the form of the military and police forces (which Gramsci termed political society) but because they also have the consent of many different classes and groups to exercise power over them. This consent creates hegemony:

A hegemonic class, or part of a class is one which gains the consent of other classes and social forces through creating and maintaining a system of alliances by means of political and ideological struggle.<sup>12</sup>

The struggle for hegemony occurs in civil society; the realm occupied by trade unions, churches, social groups and the like. Hegemony is achieved when a state does not rely solely on its powers of coercion but is also supported by civil society's consent to its domination, accepting it as legitimate. Hegemony promotes the legitimacy of the state as 'common sense.' This combination of coercion and consent is summed up by Gramsci as: "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion."<sup>13</sup> This combination implies a close relationship between the two and blurs the division between the state and civil society.<sup>14</sup>

Gramsci conceives of common sense as the personal ideologies, the ideas, concepts and notions, both conscious and unconscious, and with all their inherent

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<sup>11</sup> Joseph W. Esherick, "Ten Theses on the Chinese Revolution," *Modern China*, vol.21, no.1, January 1995, pp.45-76.

<sup>12</sup> Roger Simon, *Gramsci's Political Thought: An Introduction*, (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1982), p.22.

<sup>13</sup> Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (eds), *Selections from Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971), 262. (Hereafter *SPN*)

<sup>14</sup> Simon, 1982, p.71.

vagueness and contradictions, which people use to make sense of reality and formulate their ethical, moral, and political decisions.<sup>15</sup> The positions held by groups in civil society are not fixed but fluid. Their perceptions, their common sense, and ideology, can be influenced to weaken or strengthen the state. Criticism and education based on moral leadership can be used to change perceptions and ideologies.<sup>16</sup> Gramsci's principles became the basis for his strategy to allow revolutionary parties to win hegemony. The CCP developed policies to win over as many groups as possible using these same principles. Criticism became a vital part of the CCP's united front work. The CCP learnt and refined techniques to make criticism and education a major part of alliance building. In their most extreme form, this criticism and education became programs of intensive thought reform, more commonly known as brainwashing. The CCP aimed to change the thinking of its allies to support its causes; common sense would be won over to create a new hegemony and become what Gramsci terms "good sense."<sup>17</sup>

To win allies, Gramsci advocates leadership based on appeals to both altruism and self-interest. Revolutionaries, and indeed any group, said Gramsci,

can, indeed must, exercise "leadership" before winning governmental power (this is indeed one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power); it subsequently becomes dominant when it exercises power but even if it holds it firmly in its grasp, it must continue to "lead" as well.<sup>18</sup>

Gramsci argues that this leadership has to be reflected in *national popular* appeals. Appeals incorporating intellectual, moral, and ethical values can be used to create a powerful political platform. Forcefully promoted, these appeals will encourage potential allies to subsume their narrow class and economic based interests and desert the capitalist state. Even if the people cannot understand all aspects of the party's policies, the moral leadership and the causes it promotes should lead them to have faith in it.<sup>19</sup> Gramsci maintains that these alliances will also be strong enough to support a

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<sup>15</sup> *SPN*, p.333.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p.195.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p.325-326.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, pp.57-58.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, pp.57-59, 133, 339-340.

communist party in undertaking revolutionary transformations of existing systems.<sup>20</sup> The utility of all tactics is determined only by how well they advance the revolutionary cause.<sup>21</sup> For Gramsci, the end justifies the means.

Gramsci recognises that the most potent national-popular rallying call is nationalism.<sup>22</sup> Because their moral and ethical basis makes it difficult to argue against them, opposition to these calls comes to seem unreasonable and unpatriotic and is therefore isolated. Once such isolation is achieved, the vastly diminished enemies can then be either subjugated or "liquidated."<sup>23</sup> This realisation of the power of nationalism was conspicuous in China where appeals of anti-imperialism, anti-warlordism, anti-feudalism, and building a strong prosperous and united China, became recurrent themes. Following Japan's invasion of China in 1931, the CCP seized on opposition to Japan as a crucial means for emphasising and comparing its leadership against the GMD's policies of apparent acquiescence.<sup>24</sup> Since then, patriotism has remained a constant theme in CCP appeals.

But even strong national popular appeals are insufficient in themselves. Alliances, Gramsci argues, have to be consolidated economically.<sup>25</sup> While still subordinate, revolutionary parties have to support their alliances by incorporating the economic concerns of allies. Gramsci scoffed at communists who opposed compromise on principle. Only a party's most basic interests have to be left untouched; to use force against those who might otherwise bear you goodwill is, Gramsci argues, irrational.<sup>26</sup> Unaware of Gramsci's theory, the CCP's eventual recognition of this principle led consequently to important changes of emphasis in its ideology and propaganda. In the

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<sup>20</sup> Norberto Bobbio, "Gramsci and the Conception of Civil Society," in Chantal Mouffe (ed), *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1979), p.39.

<sup>21</sup> *SPN*, p.133.

<sup>22</sup> Hence Gramsci's famous statement that "it is in hegemony that the exigencies of those questions which are national in character are knotted together." *SPN*, p.241.

<sup>23</sup> *SPN*, p.57.

<sup>24</sup> The best known account of the CCP's use of nationalism is Chalmers A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China 1937-1945*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1962).

<sup>25</sup> *SPN*, pp.181-182.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, pp.161, 167-168.

late 1930s, for example, the CCP sought to broaden its appeal by publicly dropping calls for class warfare and land seizures.

### **The Roles of Intellectuals and Political Parties**

Gramsci recognises that not all potential allies are equal. He regards intellectuals as particularly valuable because they are the agents who shape common sense. Gramsci sees intellectuals as representing their groups and classes, both to their own classes and to others, by articulating their class ideologies through cultural and social means.<sup>27</sup> This often involves representing their class interests as universal ones.

Intellectuals include not only the intelligentsia but also “the whole social mass that performs the functions of organisation in the broad sense: whether in the realm of production, culture or public administration,”<sup>28</sup> such as managers, entrepreneurs, technicians and specialists.<sup>29</sup> They are often influential as models for other groups,<sup>30</sup> and, as experts, they also carry considerable social authority.<sup>31</sup> Without these ‘technical’ intellectuals, the state will be isolated and its apparatus and supporting industry will be unable to function.<sup>32</sup> Gramsci’s broad definition of intellectuals conforms with Chinese uses of the term *zhishi fenzi* (elements with knowledge), which applies to many people with secondary and higher education and consequently includes many technical intellectuals as well as the intelligentsia.

Gramsci divides intellectuals into two types, “organic” and “traditional.” Traditional intellectuals are remnants of earlier economic relations such as the clergy whom Gramsci describes as external political forces subordinating their flocks to the ruling power.<sup>33</sup> In China, this group approximates the Confucian-steeped literati. Organic intellectuals are those strata which develop from a particular social group

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>28</sup> Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci and the State*, (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1980), p.28.

<sup>29</sup> *SPN*, p.5.

<sup>30</sup> Anne Showstack-Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics*, (Croon and Helm, London, 1980), p.145.

<sup>31</sup> *SPN*, pp.338-339.

<sup>32</sup> A review of revolutions around the world revealed that regimes which failed had failed to look after the interests of even their own supporters. See Jack A. Goldstone, "The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolutions," *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol.8, 1982, pp.189-190.

<sup>33</sup> *SPN*. p.420

based on production.<sup>34</sup> They therefore have a special relationship and function for that group. Organic intellectuals help provide their class with an identity, not only as an economic group but also in the wider society and politics.<sup>35</sup> In China, such new groups of intellectuals arose in the industrialising cities, particularly Shanghai. Some of their representatives, most notably Huang Yanpei, formed organisations to assist the new capitalists that subsequently became political organisations.

Intellectuals of both types are ideologists for their groups. In so far as the ideology created by intellectuals supports the state, they also act as “organisers and mediators of consent” and also as “direct agents of the class in power.”<sup>36</sup> Their social function therefore includes the transmission of ideas within civil society and between the state and civil society.<sup>37</sup> From Gramsci’s perspective, the state needs to maintain the loyalty of intellectuals in order to retain power. Conversely, as intellectuals are the ultimate “agents of hegemony,” any group seeking to gain power also needs to win their allegiance.<sup>38</sup>

In China, Gramsci’s thesis was borne out by the fact that the leaders and the members of the MPGs were disproportionately influential in Chinese academic and publishing circles. They were responsible for publishing numerous books, journals, and newspapers. The CCP was aware of Lenin’s dictum that newspapers in particular were invaluable collective propagandists, agitators, and organisers.<sup>39</sup> As Jack Goldstone has pointed out, it is precisely at times of crisis, as states seek to maintain the initiative and just after they lose this initiative or collapse, that the role of ideology is most important in influencing action.<sup>40</sup> This importance at these critical junctures helps explain why

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>35</sup> *E.g.* the capitalist entrepreneur, said Gramsci, “creates along side himself the industrial technician, the specialist in political economy, the organisers of a new culture, of a new legal system.” *ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>36</sup> Buci-Glucksman, 1980, p.35.

<sup>37</sup> Walter L. Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory*, (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1980), p.143.

<sup>38</sup> Simon, 1982, p.96.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted by Jeremy D. Popkin, “Media and Revolutionary Crisis.” In Jeremy D. Popkin (ed), *Media and Revolution: Comparative Perspectives*, (University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1995), p.13.

<sup>40</sup> Jack A. Goldstone, “Ideology, Cultural Frameworks, and the Process of Revolution,” *Theory and Society*, vol.20, no.4, 1991, pp.405-454.

the MPGs were such a focus of united front work between 1935 and the CCP's accession to power.

For Gramsci, political parties such as the MPGs, are a major means by which intellectuals exercise their ideological functions of helping weld their groups together,<sup>41</sup> as mediators of consent and participating in politics.<sup>42</sup> Political parties reflect more than merely class-based economic interests.<sup>43</sup> They represent their constituencies and, in addressing the broader issues confronting these constituencies, parties help interpret such issues and provide guidance on them. To win a party is to effectively win the group it represented. By gaining the support of other parties, revolutionaries gain access to their classes, access from which they might otherwise be excluded. In the CCP's words, intellectuals and the parties they create have a bridging function (*qiaoliang zuoyong*). This bridge can be used to translate revolutionary national popular appeals into forms which the parties' constituencies can understand and more easily accept, particularly as they emanate from their own representatives. Political parties then, even if small, can be of great symbolic and practical importance. In China, for example, they were conduits to the 'middle elements,' the intermediate constituencies and great mass of people in between the CCP and GMD.

To overcome the state's advantages in possessing forces of coercion and having the support of civil society, Gramsci advocates that communist parties pursue a *war of position* strategy. This strategy consists of building alliances with all manner of groups, but with intellectuals and political parties in particular, in order to build hegemony and to isolate the ruling power. The more intellectuals a revolutionary party wins over, the more it will influence the common sense of other groups to support the revolution.

This war of position was the essence of the CCP's united front strategies as it sought to win power from the GMD. The success of the CCP's ideological work and alliance-building, combined with its military force, eventually isolated a GMD racked by crises. The GMD had a zero-sum approach to sharing political influence and it was

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<sup>41</sup> *SPN*, p.16.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>43</sup> As Gramsci pointed out, trade and professional associations existed for pursuing narrow economic interests. *ibid.*, p.34.

unable to make any substantial concessions to other groups. The GMD's half-hearted and belated attempts to win over other groups such as the MPGs, came too late and failed to compete with the promise of the CCP's united front. The CCP struggled with the MPGs to convince them that, even though the GMD was the state power, it had become illegitimate and increasingly represented regression while the CCP, in contrast, embodied progress, unity, and democracy.

After taking power, the CCP continued to use united front work to achieve the transition to a socialist state. The CCP made use of the united front to help maintain hegemony while it trained its own new communist intellectuals and began the transformation, through thought reform based on criticism, of the intellectuals trained under the old society. A vital part of this ideological re-education aimed at eliminating remaining traces of what the CCP saw as bourgeois and idealistic political beliefs. These beliefs included a desire to avoid violent struggle in favour of gradual reform, and for political programs which fell between those of the GMD and the CCP: so-called third road positions. Instead, the CCP wanted to instil a belief and faith in its ideology of class struggle and revolutionary change.

By 1956-1957, Mao Zedong considered the transitional period all but completed. Yet this transition had resulted in many intellectuals becoming alienated from the new regime. To overcome this problem, Mao relaxed his political controls and instituted the Hundred Flowers campaign. However, this campaign generated criticisms of himself and CCP rule that Mao found unacceptable. Mao's retaliatory anger at criticism, his impatience with the speed of socialist transformation, and his need to constantly invoke class enemies as part of his political education process, resulted in the Anti-Rightist Campaign. Yet during the Hundred Flowers campaign, the UFD, which was closely linked to intellectuals and the MPGs, supported their criticisms of the CCP in an apparent bid to slow the transformation process. This was a pattern to be repeated in the late 1980s.

### The State and Passive Revolution

Gramsci argues that whenever a severe crisis occurs, a state must often adjust its structures and relations. It is during major crises that states become vulnerable and what Gramsci termed a “terrain” is created where an opposition can launch a “war of position.”<sup>44</sup> To maintain its power, a state can resort to a strategy of *passive revolution*. This response often involves the state shoring up its position by imposing modifications to the political, social and economic structures from above without first winning broad support for them. Passive revolution also involves the co-optation of oppositional elements, the elites of which can effectively be absorbed into the state’s hegemonic structures to ultimately “decapitate” and destroy them.<sup>45</sup> Thus, the GMD, when faced by the crisis of Japan’s invasion in 1931, was forced, reluctantly, to adopt passive revolutionary methods including the legalisation of minor parties and their inclusion in consultative political forums. It is also during crises, such as periods of transition, that the role of corporatism, as a means of bringing about social peace, can prove useful. Corporatist organisations can be created to allow potential opposition elements to be co-opted and integrated into the state.

Both the GMD and CCP used passive revolutionary methods, but with varying degrees of success. The GMD’s strong ‘all or nothing’ inclination compromised the success of these methods. The CCP, by contrast, eventually learnt to use them well. Mao’s Hundred Flowers campaign was also a mild form of passive revolution and an attempt to win back the support of the intellectuals. However, the resultant backlash, Mao’s Anti-Rightist campaign, destroyed much of what remained of the transitional united front. Like Jiang Jieshi before him, Mao set out to rule alone. Yet his post-New Democracy experiment, the radical Great Leap Forward, failed and resulted in an organic crisis. The CCP adopted extensive passive revolutionary methods to cope with its self-induced crises. It increased support for united front work and rehabilitated the MPGs in what became known as the Second Hundred Flowers period. However, Mao only accepted these concessions as a temporary measure and in 1964 he began to

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, p.178.

<sup>45</sup> *SPN*, pp.58-59.

develop the policies that eventually led to the Cultural Revolution and effectively reversed the Party's policies of reconciliation.

Mao's Cultural Revolution produced another organic crisis and, after his death, the Party found it necessary to institute passive revolutionary measures again. The Party re-established its united front work, rehabilitated its former allies, made more concessions in the form of economic reforms and again revived and rehabilitated the MPGs. The CCP sought to use their expertise, knowledge and contacts.

This time, what were initially temporary passive revolutionary concessions gradually became permanent. The CCP developed ideological and theoretical formulations to justify its policy changes. To accommodate the CCP's changing needs, it adjusted the structures, memberships, and ideological requirements of the MPGs. The rehabilitation of the MPGs was a means to win back the support of China's intellectuals while providing the CCP with valuable expertise and access. The MPGs' revival and subsequent development provided the CCP with a basis upon which it could promote itself as rational, scientific, and democratic.

In the summer of 1989, the problems unleashed by the CCP's economic reform came to a head in the form of student protests and the subsequent killings in Beijing. The MPGs participated in the student movement, but apart from an initial backlash they escaped lightly, especially by comparison with 1957. By this stage, the CCP had learnt its lessons from past periods of repression. In the wake of 1989, the CCP gave the MPGs more resources and eventually allowed them to expand.

In the 1990s, the CCP made the MPGs increasingly inclusive. Through the UFD, the Party expanded the boundaries of the MPGs and incorporated some of the new groups emerging as a result of economic reform. The CCP used the MPGs as evidence that it had the consent of the groups it held them to represent. At the same time, an increasing availability of information about the MPGs revealed often recurrent internal problems, many of which can be traced to their corporatist structures. Some of the limits of the MPGs' organisational form were indicated by their roles in the decision process and debate surrounding the Three Gorges Dam Project.

## Corporatism

State corporatism occurs when authoritarian states impose corporatist structures on society. It is strongly associated with underdeveloped nations attempting to transform their economies: the situation facing China since the 1940s. Through the integration of state and interest groups, corporatism can be a useful method of negotiating to ameliorate or avoid the conflicts that such change may entail.<sup>46</sup> Corporatism has often been attributed to attempts by states to support capitalism by aiding the accumulation of capital.<sup>47</sup> Communism posited something similar; it envisaged a 'bourgeois democratic' revolutionary stage of transition to socialism during which capital would be accumulated and the productive forces of the state built up to prepare the material basis of socialism. In China, this transitional period became "New Democracy," during which elements of capitalism were to co-exist with newly established socialist ones until the basis for the full transition to socialism had been created.<sup>48</sup>

What then of corporatism and its problems? Phillippe Schmitter's classic ideal-type defines corporatism as:

a system of interest intermediation in which the constituent units are organised into singular compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain control on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports.<sup>49</sup>

Claus Offe sets down four dimensions by which state influence could be measured,<sup>50</sup> but Schmitter's specific corporatist model for communist regimes assumes that the state

<sup>46</sup> See Fredrick B. Pike and Thomas Stritch (eds), *The New Corporatism: Social-Political Structures in the Iberian World*, (University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame/London, 1974). James M Malloy (ed), *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America*, (University of Pittsburg Press, London, 1977). Alfred Stepan, *The State and Society: Peru in Comparative Perspective*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978). Harmon Zeigler, *Pluralism, Corporatism and Confucianism: Political Association and Conflict Regulation in the United States, Europe and Taiwan*, (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1988). Howard J. Wiarda, "Towards a Framework for the Study of Political Change in the Iberic-Latin Tradition," *World Politics*, Vol. XXV, no. 2, January 1973, pp.206-235.

<sup>47</sup> Leo Panitch, "Recent Theorizations of Corporatism; Reflections on a Growth Industry," *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 31, no. 2, June 1980, pp.159-187.

<sup>48</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1967) (SW), vol.2, pp.339-384.

<sup>49</sup> Phillippe C. Schmitter, "Interest Intermediation," in Phillippe C. Schmitter and Gerhard Lehbruch (eds), *Trends towards Corporatist Intermediation*, (Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, 1979), p.65.

<sup>50</sup> Claus Offe, "The Attribution of Public Status to Interest Groups: Observations on the West German Case," in Suzanne Berger (ed), *Organising Interests in Western Europe: Pluralism, Corporatism and the*

determines all such factors. Schmitter's model of monist corporatism, designed specifically for communist states, qualifies his general definition in some important respects:

a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into a fixed number of singular, **ideologically selective**, non-competitive, functionally differentiated and hierarchically ordered, **created, subsidised and licensed by a single party and granted a representational role within the party and vis a vis the state** in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders, articulation of demands and mobilisation of support.<sup>51</sup> (Emphasis added)

This monist model became most relevant to the MPGs after the CCP won power in 1949.

The goals of corporatism, summarised as "*Order, Unity, Nationalism and Success*,"<sup>52</sup> constitute powerful national-popular appeals. Corporatism has the potential to integrate disparate civil society groups with the state through the institutionalisation of hegemonic alliances. The Gramscian ideals of self-governing and self-disciplining civil society groups became relevant to the CCP's corporatism in the late 1980s, after the CCP's emphasis on rapid and radical transformation had failed.

One of the major benefits of corporatism is believed to be social peace. This goal is of major importance in China where fear of chaos (*luan*) has traditionally been a recurrent theme and one that has led to a denial of individual rights in favour of a stable political environment and an orderly social life.<sup>53</sup> Corporatism seeks to achieve this by avoiding the conflict inherent in pluralism and enforcing non-competitiveness between a limited number of organisations.<sup>54</sup> Ideally, the hierarchy of corporatism facilitates this peace by integrating subordinates with their superiors to represent accurately the interests of the whole group.<sup>55</sup> But this same organisational form contains inherent problems and it was

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*Transformation of Politics*, (Cambridge Studies in Modern Political Economies, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981), Ch.5.

<sup>51</sup> Phillippe C. Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" in Pike, *et al*, 1974, p.97.

<sup>52</sup> R. E. Pahl and J. T. Winkler, "The Coming Corporatism," *European Journal of Sociology*, vol.17, 1976, p.100-136.

<sup>53</sup> Lucian W. Pye, *The Spirit of Chinese Politics*, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. 1992), pp.198-199.

<sup>54</sup> Group members do not have an exit option and cannot establish new organisations. This limitation maintains the authority of corporatist groups, both to their members and the state, and supports their ability to deliver their memberships to the state. Colin Crouch "Pluralism and the New Corporatism: A Rejoinder," *Political Studies*, 1983, vol.XXXI, p.455.

<sup>55</sup> Daniel Chirot, "The Corporatist Model and Socialism," *Theory and Society*, vol.9, no.2, March 1980, p.367.

these problems which had been noted by Fewsmith. Such features are often reflected in the MPGs.

In 1979, Schmitter adjusted his models and altered his description of corporatism as a system of interest representation to describe it as system of *interest intermediation*.<sup>56</sup> This change has important implications. "Representation," Schmitter concluded, wrongly implies that corporatist groups "accurately and faithfully transmit the demands and preferences of their members, or worse, are 'representative' in some statistical sense of the term"; it wrongly implies that representation is their main or sole task.<sup>57</sup> Intermediation implicitly denies the possibility of a neutral 'transmission belt,' the neutral transmission of information up and down a corporatist hierarchy. Transmissions are always influenced by organisational structures and operations and the state's influence on them. In the case of the MPGs, intermediation involved a large degree of political education. They were never intended to be neutral organisations but were always to promote a particular political line.

A state has the authority to exclude or include the organisations of its choice; its corporatism is either inclusionary, exclusionary, or a combination of both. A state can use these forms to create a new balance of state and social forces. Exclusionary corporatism seeks to exclude autonomous groups and structures from the political arena *then* re-integrate them in organisations and structures of the state's own making and control.<sup>58</sup> Inclusion seems to occur when modernisation leads to an erosion of oligarchic domination. Among the most likely new partners are the national bourgeoisie.<sup>59</sup> The Chinese national bourgeoisie, with its political and economic influence, was a particular target of the CCP's alliance building in the late 1930s. This pattern is now being repeated with China's emerging *nouveaux riche* classes being co-opted as the Party's degree of dominance decreases.

Inclusion can occur by creating new organisations and structures for co-opting emerging groups before they become autonomous. Alternatively, the internal

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<sup>56</sup> Schmitter, *et al*, 1979, p.65.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p.93.

<sup>58</sup> Stepan, 1978, pp.78-79.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, p.79, especially Table 3.1.

boundaries of existing organisations and political structures can be expanded to include them.<sup>60</sup> This expansion modernises the organisation while simultaneously providing a legitimating history. By using inclusionary corporatism and integrating more fully those groups identified as economically and politically strategic, a widely accepted pattern of carefully structured participation can be constructed.<sup>61</sup> As this pattern can also signify consent or be used to present it as such, hegemony is also expanded simultaneously.

The limited number of corporatist 'constituent units' distinguishes corporatism from pluralism, a system in which numerous groups can freely establish themselves and vie with each other for members and influence on the state. The restricted character of corporatism reinforces a lack of competition to ensure social peace. Limiting numbers reduces the need for bargaining as fewer groups have to be satisfied;<sup>62</sup> it means "there is effectively no alternative representative organisation open to the individual and other groups within the category."<sup>63</sup> This limitation adds an element of compulsion; to avail oneself of any benefits, one has to join the group available.

Although corporatism is strongly associated with compulsory membership, MPG membership is very selective and they were, and have remained, relatively small organisations.<sup>64</sup> Monist corporatism stipulates that its organisations be ideologically selective. In China's case, the CCP, as soon as it had the power, applied this selectivity to create the MPGs it needed. This selectivity resulted from the special representative role that the MPGs played in the CCP's war of position and subsequently in its political system. By the 1990s, China's changing socio-economic circumstances resulted in membership of some new and re-organised organisations associated with the united front becoming *de facto* compulsory. This development reflected a major change in power relations between the CCP and Chinese society.

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<sup>60</sup> Kenneth Jowitt, "Inclusion and Mobilisation in European Leninist Regimes," *World Politics*, no.1, October 1975, p.73.

<sup>61</sup> Stepan, 1978, p.79.

<sup>62</sup> Crouch, 1983, p.455.

<sup>63</sup> Peter J. Williamson, *Corporatism in Perspective*, (Sage Publications, London, 1989), p.77.

<sup>64</sup> For the breakdown of available membership figures and their sources please refer to Appendix A: *Table of MPG Membership figures*.

In contrast to Schmitter's model, MPG membership is selective rather than compulsory because the CCP selects members for influence and uses them as models for the groups it holds them to represent. These symbolic roles are important in the building of hegemony. The strong tendency under corporatism to present the interests of corporatist groups "simply as sociological 'givens,'"<sup>65</sup> a prominent feature of the CCP's MPG work, assists this. Elitist organisations, such as the MPGs, can provide access to "epistemic communities": networks of experts in given fields whose professional self-definition is partially entwined with some conception of the public interest and whose members re-inforce one another in this.<sup>66</sup> In authoritarian states where arenas for public debate on areas of interest to these communities are limited or non-existent, corporatist groups can provide a forum for discussion. Through the use of the members' networks a lot of expertise can be reached, well beyond the organisation itself. As notables in their fields if not in the wider community, they can also act as important organisational spokespersons and mobilisers.<sup>67</sup> Mobilisation and modelling are all important aspects of enlisting support for regimes in the struggle for hegemony. They are constant factors in the CCP's MPG work.

In practice, strict hierarchy intensifies the tendency of organisations, even democratic political parties, to become oligarchies.<sup>68</sup> This tendency is further exacerbated by the development of many modern corporatist organisations along increasingly specialised and bureaucratic lines, a feature of the MPGs.<sup>69</sup> Instead of hierarchies consisting of grassroots members who have worked their way up an organisation's bureaucratic ladder (and therefore having an organic connection with the broader membership), they become increasingly staffed by specialists able to negotiate more effectively with the state.<sup>70</sup> It is also common under state corporatism for state

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<sup>65</sup> Dennis McNamara, "Corporatism and Co-operation Among Japanese Labour," *Comparative Politics*, vol.28, no.4 July 1996, p.380.

<sup>66</sup> Jane Mansbridge, "A Deliberative Perspective on Neo-Corporatism," *Politics and Society*, vol.20, 1992, no.4, December, 1992, p.498.

<sup>67</sup> Mark P. Petracca, "Tilling the Field of Interest Group Research: An Overview of New Insights," *Perspectives on Political Science*, vol.22, no.2, 1993, pp.61-69.

<sup>68</sup> Robert Michels, *Political Parties: Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*, (The Free Press, Glencoe, 1958).

<sup>69</sup> A. Grant Jordan, "Iron Triangles, Corporatism and Elastic Nets," *Journal of Public Policy*, vol.1, no.1, 1981, p.114.

<sup>70</sup> Williamson, 1989, p.80.

officials to move into corporatist organisations,<sup>71</sup> and in China this tendency is pronounced. This personnel transfer ostensibly allows closer relations with the state and enhances the effectiveness of a group's representations to the state. In addition, the state is able effectively to colonise corporatist groups which, in turn, increasingly come to resemble the state's internal organisational structure and hierarchy.<sup>72</sup> This transformation compromises the ability of organisations to represent their members. In the MPGs, these processes have consolidated Party-state control over them. The state's interests and the MPGs' interests have grown to coincide. State influence or 'controls' on the "selection of leaders and the articulation of demands and supports," as the *quid pro quo* of corporatist recognition also encourages oligarchic tendencies. The more a state attributes positive public status a group (entirely in the case of monist corporatism), the less dependent on their memberships the leaderships of such organisations become.<sup>73</sup> Without free internal elections to balance state influence, a leadership's need to be accountable to the membership disappears. The occurrence of these problems within the MPGs became public during the Hundred Flowers period and they have persisted since.

The 'bargain' struck between the state and corporatist organisations, even in the most open liberal democracies, has also led to an assimilation of interests between the two sides.<sup>74</sup> In a system such as China's where MPG membership is not compulsory but based on selective criteria, those whose views are close or at least acceptable to the state are allowed or invited to join. In extreme cases, the goals of the state tend to become those of corporatist organisations. In the case of the MPGs, it will become clear that this assimilation was and remains an explicit CCP aim. If the structures of the organisations also reflect those of the state, and state personnel staff the organisation, then the degree of assimilation will be very high. This occurred in

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<sup>71</sup> Streek, 1983, pp.265-284.

<sup>72</sup> Williamson, 1989, p.80.

<sup>73</sup> Offe, in Berger, 1981, p.137-138.

<sup>74</sup> Williamson, 1989, p.88.

corporatist organisations in the former Soviet Union where the state set agendas and took an active role in their decision making.<sup>75</sup> China is no different.

Schmitter's model specifies that the constituent units of corporatist organisations should be functionally based and linked closely to occupation and economic production, such as organisations representing labour and producers. The production and distribution of goods is seen as a fundamental and determinative political force<sup>76</sup> and functional groups have generally been deemed more important to making political and economic systems work than attitudinal groups.<sup>77</sup> This qualification, however, has been disputed.<sup>78</sup> In liberal democracies, even groups based on moral-ethical issues have become corporatised.<sup>79</sup> The deciding factor in the co-option and corporatisation of groups based on issues not related directly to production is the salience of such issues to the state.<sup>80</sup> In the context of building hegemony, the salience of intellectuals who have a strong influence on their groups and classes is very relevant and can be used to explain their importance in united front work. They can also have indirect links to production by influencing technical intellectuals and their ideological and mediating roles can prove invaluable to both states and revolutionaries.

This function of corporatist organisations as experts and authorities, generally overlooked, has been noted and explored to some extent by Wolfgang Streeck.<sup>81</sup> These experts have "positional authority," because of their perceived skills, expertise, status, and/or competence as individuals or groups. This expertise gives them the ability to provide implementational capacity, necessary know-how, informed outputs and a perceived legitimacy.<sup>82</sup> As government itself becomes increasingly the domain of experts and

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<sup>75</sup> Valerie Bunce and John M. Echols, "Soviet Politics in the Brezhnev Era: Pluralism or Corporatism?" in Donald R. Kelly (ed), *Soviet Politics in the Brezhnev Era*, (Praeger, New York, 1980), p.4.

<sup>76</sup> Schmitter, *et al*, 1979, p.77.

<sup>77</sup> Bunce, *et al*, in Kelly, 1980, p.5.

<sup>78</sup> Brigitta Nedelmann and Kurt G. Meier, "Theories of Contemporary Corporatism: Static or Dynamic?" *Comparative Political Studies*, vol.10, no.1, April 1977, p.43.

<sup>79</sup> Alan Cawson, *Corporatism and Political Theory*, (Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1986), p.12.

<sup>80</sup> Micheal Saward, "Co-option and Power: Who gets What From Formal Incorporation?" *Political Studies*, 1990, vol.38, p.595.

<sup>81</sup> Wolfgang Streeck, "Between Pluralism and Corporatism: German Business Associations and the State," *Journal of Public Policy*, vol. 3, no. 3, 1983, pp.265-84. It has also been noted elsewhere, see for example O. Ruin, "Participatory Democracy and Corporatism: The case of Sweden," *Scandinavian Political Studies*, vol.9, 1974, p.174.

<sup>82</sup> Saward, 1990, pp.591-597.

technocrats, it can use the authority derived from experts to develop another ethical base for claiming encompassing authority.<sup>83</sup> The CCP itself contains numerous experts but, as it is itself an exclusive organisation and because of its past ideological hostility to bourgeois intellectuals, many more remain outside it. Corporatist organisations can be used to liaise with such non-Party experts.

There are disadvantages to being an expert. Elites of experts lack the inherent solidarity of, say, workers who have a direct influence on production and the withdrawal of whose labour has immediate economic consequences for their employers. A state has the power to decide which experts it will select. This power makes experts more dependent on the state than *vice versa* and encourages their assimilation of the state's positions. Experts are only strong when they are united and only then may the state need to address their consensus.<sup>84</sup> In the case of the MPGs, this problem has been reflected in the CCP either suppressing or ignoring advice contrary to that it wished to hear. Power then, remains in the hands of the state.

This dissertation charts the evolution of the CCP's united front work involving the MPGs. It argues that this work evolved along lines postulated by Gramsci and it traces how the Party used corporatism to institutionalise aspects of its united front. It shows how the CCP came to realise the necessity of a long-term war of position united front strategy and how intellectuals and minor political parties with great symbolic and ideological importance came to be an important part of this. The success of this work was based on the invocation of national-popular appeals, particularly nationalist ones, and concessions to strategically important groups such as intellectuals, particularly through powerful promises of political representation.

As in Gramsci's writings and theories, the CCP's concern has been to win over both the intelligentsia and the technical-managerial intellectuals because it regarded these groups as vital shapers and influential agents of ideology. Gramsci saw political parties as the embodiment of particular types of intellectuals and representing different classes and groups. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, the CCP supported

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<sup>83</sup> Ziegler, 1988. pp.23-24.

<sup>84</sup> Saward, 1990, pp.597-598.

established political groups and nurtured new ones in order to reach and influence particular groups based on common interests and occupations. After seizing power in 1949, the CCP formalised and institutionalised an already inherent corporatist tendency in its united front work. The problems associated with corporatist forms have been exposed several times.

The CCP's hegemony was and is still, well served by the existence of the MPGs. Individually they provide a link to particular interest groups and collectively they form a cartel representing non-Party intellectuals, especially those associated with the old order and the capitalist classes which evolved in China's major cities. Their participation symbolically 'proves' the state's representativeness and inclusiveness, and is used to demonstrate that the vast majority of the population support the CCP state.

Yet, while the united front provides the CCP with a sound basis for increasing non-communist participation in politics, this dissertation reveals repeatedly the unwillingness of the CCP, like its GMD predecessor, to make meaningful concessions to outside groups, including those that support them and over which they exercise control. The CCP's pattern of concessions to the MPGs in many respects mirrors that of the GMD in the 1930s and 1940s: concede only when forced to. Moreover, MPG elitism prevented the groups from developing into mass political parties before 1949. The persistence of this elitism still has the potential to prevent the MPGs from successfully becoming broadly based parties even if circumstances should change to allow it.

This research shows that, despite often advocating the adoption of some features of Western political systems, the MPGs have maintained the Chinese intellectual tradition of seeking to build a strong and wealthy (*fu qiang*) state. They wanted increased political representation and participation but only for elites, such as themselves. They have not generally sought to create a liberal polity based on universal suffrage, individual rights, and popular participation in national politics. This dissertation demonstrates that the existence of the MPGs and their activities has remained dependent on reluctant concessions sporadically made by the state. The establishment intellectuals in the MPGs have maintained the role of loyal remonstrators

and have only opposed the state reluctantly and when forced to do so by their perception that it was in the national interest. Even when they have spoken out, especially in 1957, it was with the perceived support of the Party and the leaders of the UFD.

The dissertation concludes that although the MPGs contain some relatively independent minded leaders and offer the constant promise of a more active and broader political role, they are not, and are unlikely to become, real opposition parties. Moreover, the MPGs' corporatist structure inhibits their ability to respond to rapid socio-economic change. Without major concessions by the CCP, the MPGs are likely to become more and more irrelevant to the groups they seek to represent and therefore less and less useful to the CCP.

The revival of united front work in the late 1970s and its subsequent expansion has led to a proliferation of Chinese publications on the subject, including collections of primary documents, secondary sources, journals and newspapers. This supply of information was encouraged by the CCP's desire to give its united front work increased legitimacy by establishing it in a clear historical framework. There was also a growing openness on the part of the UFD and united front organisations which permitted interviews with MPG leaders, CCP members and UFD Officials, including some responsible for MPG political education.<sup>85</sup>

Using both Chinese and non-Chinese sources, this dissertation follows the origins and development of the CCP's united front policies and shows how these have contributed to the CCP's success in winning and maintaining hegemony, and the effect of its corporatist organisations on this process. The chapters dealing with the pre-1949 era provide a historical background for understanding the post-1949 situation. This reveals much continuity between CCP attitudes and those exhibited earlier by the GMD. This research highlights greater CCP involvement in the formation of the MPGs than was previously assumed. This dissertation also illuminates post-1949 united front

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<sup>85</sup> This increased openness even included permitting the publication of this researcher's views on the differing perceptions of united front work between Mainland China, Taiwan and English speaking Western nations in an internally circulated united front research journal. Gerry Groot (Gu Zouluo), "Waiguo dui Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian de kanfa," [How foreigners see China's united front], *Shanghai Tongyi zhanxian lilun yanjiu*, [Shanghai united front theoretical research], no.3, 1993, pp.34-36.

work and reveals UFD encouragement for the MPGs' outspokenness of 1957. It shows why united front work and then later, in 1977, the MPGs were revived. It traces how the 1980s' political liberalisation proposals made in the name of Zhao Ziyang were largely within a united front context. These proposals sought to increase the representation of important groups while minimising the CCP's loss of power and maximising its control as China moves towards a market-based economy. It explains why, especially after 1992, united front work and the MPGs have continued to develop as part of the CCP's struggle to maintain hegemony in the face of a rapidly changing society.



## Chapter 1

# The Development, Characteristics and Roles of China's MPGs: 1930-1945

In 1937, China's nationalist government established the *Supreme National Defence Advisory Council*. This council was a major symbol of inclusion and political unity for a formerly authoritarian one party government. It was established as a result of the crisis created by the invasion of China by Japan, an attack which threatened to turn China into a colonial vassal. In March 1938, the National Conference of the Council issued its *Program of Armed Resistance and National Reconstruction (Kang zhan lingdao jianguo gangling)*, Article 12 of which called for:

a People's Political Council shall be set up for the people to participate in the affairs of state, thereby unifying the national strength and collecting the best minds and views for facilitating the formulation and execution of national policies.<sup>1</sup>

The formation of the People's Political Council (*Guomin canzheng hui*, PPC), together with greater freedom of speech, assembly and association,<sup>2</sup> marked a dramatic revival of political debate in China.<sup>3</sup> It was a powerful symbol of "a Chinese national unity unprecedented in modern history," and resurrected the possibility of democracy in China.<sup>4</sup> The PPC became a major forum for pursuing issues and pressing the nationalists to reform. It was also an opportunity for the GMD to win over its critics.

This increased degree of political representation was forced on the ruling nationalists as the result of a cumulative process which had begun in the early 1930s. This increase in nominal 'democracy' was intended as a temporary measure to cope with the crisis caused by Japan's invasion.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Chinese Yearbook 1938-39*, (Chinese Yearbook Publishing Co., The Commercial Press, Shanghai) p.337.

<sup>2</sup> Dong Biwu, *Dong Biwu tongyi zhanxian wenji*, [Dong Biwu: collected works on the united front] (Falu chubanshe, Tianjin, 1990), p.96, Fn.2.

<sup>3</sup> For a useful contemporary description of the PCC and China's wartime politics, see Paul M. A. Linebarger, *The China of Chiang Kaishek: A Political Study*, (World Peace Foundation, Boston, 1941), Ch.3.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p.79.

### The GMD in the early 1930s

In the 1930s, the GMD was a narrowly based party backed by substantial military force but it lacked an organic basis. It did not represent particular classes such as rural landlords and urban bourgeoisie, although their interests sometimes coincided.<sup>5</sup> It was more a party of military factions, each looking after their own interests, and it was indifferent to native enterprise and commerce. Rather than serving bourgeois interests the GMD was antagonistic towards them.<sup>6</sup> The GMD's forerunner, Sun Yatsen's (Sun Zhongshan) Tongmenghui, had received funds from business people but it never expanded to include them. In 1923, Sun had relied on coercion to raise funds from Guangzhou businesses.<sup>7</sup> The situation in Shanghai in 1927 was slightly different. In 1927, a Shanghai bourgeoisie disturbed by communist organised labour unrest, funded nationalist and Green Gang criminals to massacre the city's suspected communists and trade unionists when the nationalists took over the city. The GMD's leader, Generalissimo Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) received this money on condition that he break the GMD-CCP alliance (the First United Front) in existence since 1924. However, the nationalists needed still more funds for its wars against warlords, the communists and the rival Left-Wing GMD in Wuhan. The GMD and Green Gang kidnapped, blackmailed and terrorised Shanghai's capitalists to raise more funds.<sup>8</sup>

The nationalist's fundraising methods were not conducive to building legitimacy and political support for Jiang's regime. Nor did the party's huge nominal membership automatically equate with deeply rooted political strength.<sup>9</sup> Besides financial problems, the GMD faced many other difficulties. The party was faction ridden. Warlords controlled many areas and between 1927 and 1937, there were numerous revolts and

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<sup>5</sup> Lloyd E. Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution: China Under Nationalist Rule, 1927-1937*, (Harvard East Asian Monograph Series, Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. (1974), 1990 edition), p.243.

<sup>6</sup> Parks M. Coble, *The Shanghai Capitalists and the Nationalist Government: 1927-1937*, (Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1980), pp.11-10.

<sup>7</sup> Marie Bergere, "The Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911-1937," in John K. Fairbank (ed), *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 12, Republican China 1912-1949*, Part 1, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983), p.795 and p.739.

<sup>8</sup> Coble, 1980, pp.30-38.

<sup>9</sup> In 1932, GMD membership totalled 670,000, 780,000 in 1933, 870,000 in 1934, 1,000,000 in 1935 and over 1,500,000 by 1938 but many people such as soldiers and civil servants were included automatically. The vast majority were passive members. Cheng Wang, *The Kuomintang, A Sociological Study in Demoralisation*, (Garland Publishing, Inc. New York, 1982), p.27.

small uprisings. Disaffected members often aligned themselves with warlords, exacerbating China's political factionalism and regionalism.<sup>10</sup> The years 1930-31 were particularly bad. There was serious fighting in Northern China where an Anti-Jiang Jieshi "Northern Coalition" of warlords proclaimed a popular *Provisional Constitution*. In early 1931, Jiang Jieshi placed the nationalist's elder statesman, Hu Hanmin, under house arrest for his objections to Jiang's own proposed *Provisional Constitution*.<sup>11</sup> To compound the GMD's problems, on September 18 1931, China was attacked by a militarist Japan intent on imperialist expansion. The Japanese first took Mukden (Shenyang) and by January 1932, they had attacked the outskirts of Shanghai.

Having risen to power on the basis of anti-imperialism and anti-warlordism, the GMD was being threatened by those very forces. Students organised anti-Japanese demonstrations and boycotts. Many people were already disillusioned because of the party's corruption, its administrative shortcomings, its use of suppression and terror to stifle complaint and its failure to stand up to Japan.<sup>12</sup> Compounding these problems, the Yangzi river flooded and the effects of the Great Depression began to be felt.

In Shanghai, independent papers such as Shi Liangcai's *Shenbao* (Shanghai daily) began agitating against Jiang's policies of appeasement towards Japanese aggression. *Shenbao* used its editorials to call for a "last-ditch war of national defence."<sup>13</sup> Shi joined a National Salvation Association, an association which called on the GMD to actively resist the Japanese. On September 26 1931, some 200,000 people assembled to demand that the nationalist government send troops to Manchuria. Shi Liangcai and the prominent educators, Huang Yanpei and Tao Xingzhi, used *Shenbao* to pressure the nationalists into active resistance.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Tien Wei-Wu, "Contending Political Forces During the War of Resistance," in James C. Hsiung and Steven I. Levine (eds), *China's Bitter Victory: The War With Japan 1937-45*, (Eastgate Books, ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1992), p.64. Eastman, 1990, p.85.

<sup>11</sup> Lloyd E. Eastman, "Nationalist China During the Nanjing Decade 1927-1937," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol.12, pp.127-128.

<sup>12</sup> Eastman, 1990, Ch.1.

<sup>13</sup> *Shenbao* editorial of September 23 1931. Quoted in Terry Narramore, "The Nationalists and the Daily Press: The Case of *Shenbao* 1927-1934." In John Fitzgerald (ed), *The Nationalists and Chinese Society 1923-1937 - A Symposium*, (History Department, University of Melbourne, 1989), p.113.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, pp.113-116.

Plainly, it was in the GMD's interest to win more political support. Its first concession to potential allies, which came after the Northern Coalition's *Provisional Constitution* declaration propaganda coup, was the promulgation in June 1931 of its own *Provisional Constitution for the Period of Political Tutelage*. This constitution was a half-step towards fulfilling long-standing demands for constitutional government. It neither legitimised opposition nor legalised political parties. The nationalist proposal also failed to appease its critics. In late 1931, the GMD was therefore forced to call a National Emergency Conference (*Guo nan huiyi*) for April 1932, a move that clearly reflected the dramatic increase in popular anti-Japanese feelings.

The nationalist leader Cai Yuanpei presented the proposal for the emergency conference to the party, stating that many men of ability and experience were being excluded from both the GMD and the government. A National Emergency Conference could enlist their help and support.<sup>15</sup> Shi Liangcai and other critics were dissatisfied with the nationalist's response and instead, called for the recovery of Manchuria, an end to GMD one-party rule, and the establishment of a constitutional government within six months. They also demanded the freedom to organise political parties and a National Emergency Government. The nationalist leader, Wang Jingwei, rejected their proposals and limited the conference to discussion on how to cope with the national humiliation, natural disasters and communist banditry. Shi Liangcai's response was to use *Shenbao* to mount a campaign to boycott the conference.<sup>16</sup>

The effectiveness of *Shenbao's* campaign was reflected by the fact that few delegates responded to the GMD's invitation. Only one third of potential delegates eventually attended the Emergency Conference and even this group demanded that a Peoples Assembly be convened by October 10, 1932.<sup>17</sup> Eighty percent of the 189 conference delegates were not nationalist members. These results were, in part, the consequence of delegates having been chosen by a nationalist executive headed by Sun Fo (Sun Ke), the son of Sun Yatsen and an anti-Jiang leader. <sup>18</sup> Seven delegates were

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<sup>15</sup> Eastman, 1990, p.160.

<sup>16</sup> Narramore, in Fitzgerald, 1989, p.118.

<sup>17</sup> Chien Tuan-sheng, *The Government and Politics of China*, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. 1950), p.279.

<sup>18</sup> Eastman, 1990, p.161.

even members of the Anti-Jiang Chinese Youth Party.<sup>19</sup> Wang Jingwei rejected the demands for constitutional government. While Wang claimed he was not opposed to constitutional government on principle, he was concerned that any such constitutionalism might be subverted, as had occurred in 1924.<sup>20</sup> The nationalists instead proposed gradually establishing popularly elected advisory councils, a move in accord with its concept of instituting a long period of tutelage in order to prepare China for eventual full democracy.<sup>21</sup>

The GMD's Sun Fo was sympathetic to the calls for constitutional government even if it was only, as Eastman argued, an expediency to increase his popularity.<sup>22</sup> Sun's hand picked conference delegates had called for a National Representative Congress (*Guomin daibiao da hui*) with authority over the budget, national debts and important treaties. They had also called for the safeguarding of civil liberties, the fostering of democracy, and preparations for constitutional rule.<sup>23</sup> Yet by the time its constitutional document was finally promulgated in 1937, the GMD's conservatives had revised it so much that it supported rather than constrained the concentration of power in the office the president, *i.e.* in Jiang Jieshi.

The continued calls for a national assembly, both within and outside its own ranks, eventually forced the GMD to announce its intention to call a People's Political Conference (*Renmin zhengzhi huiyi*). But the convening of the conference was repeatedly postponed. Only in 1933, when an anti-GMD rebellion in the Southern province of Fujian threatened his party, did Jiang again offer a degree of political liberalisation. Jiang's crisis management approach to political reform offered little hope to Chinese groups seeking greater political participation, either for themselves or to aid the struggle against Japan. Acting against the tide of vocal public opinion, Jiang continued his policies of appeasement towards Japan. He wanted to first unite the rest

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<sup>19</sup> Edmund S. K. Fung, "The Alternative of Loyal Opposition: The Chinese Youth Party and Chinese Democracy 1937-1949." In Jeans, 1992, p.246.

<sup>20</sup> Chien, 1950, Ch.5, describes the destruction of China's first constitutional movement.

<sup>21</sup> It was to be first instituted in six major cities and then expanded to provincial and county level. Eastman, 1990, p.163.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, p.164.

<sup>23</sup> The members selected by Sun included Hu Hanmin, Li Zongren, Yan Xishan, and Feng Yushan, men out of favour or opposed to Jiang. *ibid.*, pp.162-165.

of China and eliminate the CCP.<sup>24</sup> Jiang used military means to defeat warlord enemies where necessary, co-opted them where possible, and played other groups off against each other. He also remained consistent in his hostility towards any opposition political groups.

By 1935-36 it became clear that another crisis was imminent. Appeasement of Japan had failed. Japan's aggression and interference in Chinese society was increasing and China was in mortal danger.<sup>25</sup> One consequence of this increasing threat was the formation in May 1936 of the (All China) National Salvation Association (*Quanguo ge jie jiuguo lianhe hui*, NSA). Local National Salvation Associations (*Jiuguo hui*) had begun forming in late 1931 to call for an end to the GMD-CCP civil war and a united front to fight Japan. The formation of the NSA marked a new stage in criticism of the GMD.

The left-wing leadership of the NSA, its support for a GMD-CCP alliance and its call for a united front of all groups against Japan, led Jiang to conclude that the Association was a CCP front. In November 1936, the nationalists arrested the NSA's "Seven Gentlemen": Shen Junru, Zou Taofen, Zhang Naiqi, Sha Qianli, Li Gongpu, Wang Zaoshi, and (with honorary male status) Mme Shi Liang. Only Song Qingling, He Xiangning and Tao Xingzhi escaped arrest, the first two almost certainly because of the respect accorded to them as widows of famous GMD leaders, Song as Sun Yatsen's wife and He as the wife of the assassinated Liao Zhongkai. Such social status not only allowed them a chance to speak publicly and attract attention, it also provided vital protection not extended to others.<sup>26</sup>

The arrest of the "gentlemen," strengthened rather than suppressed the NSA. Popular support to have them released was considerable. The loser was the Guomindang, seen arresting "patriots" defending the nation from barbaric foreign

<sup>24</sup> Jiang's position on appeasement was not without sound logic. See Parks M. Coble, *Facing Japan: Chinese Politics and Japanese Imperialism, 1931-1937*, (Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1991).

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.* Coble notes numerous examples of the Japanese forcing policies and decisions on the GMD.

<sup>26</sup> Terry Narramore quotes one source which maintained that Shi Liangcai's assassination in 1934 was a result of Shi's publication of Song Qingling's condemnation of Jiang's policies on December 20, 1931. Song had denounced Jiang's "personal dictatorship" and called on all who believed in the Chinese revolution not to be intimidated by terror. Narramore, 1989, p.115.

aggression. Reflecting the popularity of the anti-Japanese cause, the “gentlemen” were visited in prison by Du Yuesheng, the leader of the Green Gang and an ally of Jiang, as well as many prominent Shanghai capitalists.<sup>27</sup> Support for the NSA was so great that it eventually became China’s third largest party after the GMD and CCP.<sup>28</sup>

There were important nationalist factions that wished to see their party actively resist Japan. Song Ziwen (T. V. Soong), for example, wanted active resistance to Japan and he passed funds on to the Salvationists through his sister Song Qingling despite her being a left-wing radical.<sup>29</sup> Yet, while Jiang sought to destroy the communists, since late 1935 he had also been conducting secret negotiations with both them and the Soviet Union regarding the establishment of a united front.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, he also organised what was intended to be the final encirclement and extermination campaign against the CCP. However, the generals responsible for carrying out this final anti CCP initiative, Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, seized Jiang and held him hostage in the Xi’an Incident of December 1936. The final encirclement campaign was abandoned.

By September 1937, after the peaceful resolution of the Xi’an Incident, Jiang was compelled to form an alliance with the CCP and other political parties. There was an overwhelming force of popular pressure for this alliance from Salvationists, GMD factions, the press, and political groups and encouragement from the Soviet Union. Several months after the outbreak of full-scale war with Japan on July 7 1937, the second period of GMD-CCP cooperation officially began (*Di er ci Guo-Gong hezuo*). The GMD’s attempt to rally popular support behind itself and the war effort specified political concessions including the legalisation of all political parties and public political activities.

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<sup>27</sup> Parks M. Coble, "The National Salvation Association as a Political Party," in Jeans, 1992, p.141.

<sup>28</sup> Chien, 1950, p.357. Linebarger, 1941, p.175.

<sup>29</sup> Hitoshi Tanaka and Zhang Xiaofeng, "Cong 'yi er jiu' dao 'ba yi san' shiqi de Shanghai dixia dang," [The Shanghai Underground Party from the September 12 to the August 13 Incidents], *Zhonggong dangshi ziliao*, no.45, 1993, p.216.

<sup>30</sup> J. W. Garver, "The Origins of the Second United Front: The Comintern, and the Chinese Communist Party," *China Quarterly*, no.113, 1988, pp.43-46.

### The Legalisation of the MPGs

The Advisory Council which brought the People's Political Council into being, had itself been created to advise the Nationalist government on the conduct of the war against Japan and ministers had used it to air ideas and seek the counsel of its members.<sup>31</sup> In a major step forward for representation of groups and parties outside the ruling GMD, the Council had included some MPG members together with representatives of the GMD's hitherto enemy, the CCP. The National Socialist Party (*Zhongguo guojia shehui dang* NSP)<sup>32</sup> and the China Youth Party (*Zhongguo qingnian dang*, sometimes also known as *La Jeunesse* (CYP)) were the first minor parties given official representative status.<sup>33</sup> Yet although a major advance, representation of non-GMD voices was limited and its members agitated to have it expanded.<sup>34</sup> This agitation and the increasing danger facing the nationalists resulted in the creation of a far more formal and authoritative Peoples Political Council in which representation of non-GMD voices was much broader than that of its Council predecessor.

The two hundred members of the first PPC were divided into four categories:

- 1) 88 were elected from the 28 provinces
- 2) 16 were from Mongolia and Tibet
- 3) 6 were Overseas Chinese
- 4) 100 were individual members

The individual members were MPG members or prominent non-party personages (NPPs). There were no elections for this group and its members were chosen by the nationalists from people active in political, economic, cultural and educational fields. Until 1941, the GMD "conscientiously" chose suitable PPC members from all circles regardless of their political leanings.<sup>35</sup> The CCP was allocated seven seats in the first PPC but the majority were GMD representatives.

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<sup>31</sup> Chien, 1950, p.280.

<sup>32</sup> The use of the word "socialist to describe the NSP is not particularly appropriate as "shehui" is more accurately translated as 'social,' rather than socialist but it has generally been translated as the latter, a custom retained here despite its tendency to confuse the nature of the organisation. It was also sometimes more accurately called the State Socialist Party.

<sup>33</sup> *The Chinese Yearbook 1938-39*, (Council of International Affairs, Chungking, a Kraus Reprint, Kraus-Thomson Organisation Limited, Nendeln-Lichtenstein, 1968), pp.341-345.

<sup>34</sup> Lawrence Shyu, "China's Minor Parties in the People's Political Council 1937-1945," in Jeans, 1992, p.153.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, p.153-154.

The PPC functioned as an advisory, not a policy making body. Its purpose was to collect views for the “facilitation and execution” of policy, to hear government reports and interpellate ministers.<sup>36</sup> While the Second PPC was given additional powers of investigation and women’s representation increased to fifteen delegates, there was no increase in real power.<sup>37</sup>

The PPC symbolised national unity by representing all of China’s major political groups. It was a legal forum in which delegates could comment on government affairs, support the war effort, and express their concerns and criticisms. Perhaps most importantly, the Conference was an important means by which the MPGs and the government could address and attempt to influence the public. Government ministers were exposed to an unprecedented degree of public scrutiny which increasingly became unwelcome. Much of the nationalist’s growing displeasure came to be directed at the MPGs and non-party personages as the foremost of its critics.

The PPC was not a parliament but effectively an inclusive corporatist body of intellectuals which the nationalists could use to symbolise national unity and social peace. This was done under a banner of nationalism to mobilise the population behind the GMD and against the Japanese. The MPGs became the GMD’s legitimate representatives of China’s intelligentsia. It was not surprising that the GMD’s response to the crisis facing it should have taken this corporatist form. In the 1920s, influential GMD theorists, such as Dai Jitao, had been philosophically inclined to corporatism as a means of class reconciliation.<sup>38</sup> Jiang Jieshi was personally enthusiastic about fascism, an inherently corporatist ideology.<sup>39</sup> The GMD had already organised corporatist associations for businessmen.<sup>40</sup> Even the gangster leader Du Yuesheng and his Green Gang have been described as having been “corporatised” by the nationalists. Du was

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<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, p.154.

<sup>37</sup> Robert E. Bedeski, "China's Wartime State," in Hsiung, *et al*, 1992, p.42.

<sup>38</sup> Dirlik, 1989, ch.7, *passim*.

<sup>39</sup> Jiang Jieshi sent officers to train in Germany and Italy, sought information about Nazi organisational methods and established the Blueshirts (*Fuxing she*), an organisation modelled on Nazi Brownshirts. Eastman, 1990, p.38-54.

<sup>40</sup> Fewsmith, 1985, esp. pp.159-166. Brian G. Martin, "The Green Gang and the Guomindang Polity in Shanghai 1927-1937," *Papers on Far Eastern History*, no.42, September 1990, p.73-74.

given official status, power, and later, even named as a delegate to the National Assembly.<sup>41</sup>

### The Six Minor Parties and Groups in the PPC

Six MPGs were represented in the PPC: The China Youth Party, the National Socialist Party, the National Salvation Association, The Third Party, the Vocational Education Society and the Rural Reconstruction Association.<sup>42</sup> In the PPC's early stage, these groups were not seen as fixed and distinct but were described more in terms of alignment with any one of the four parties (*si dang*) and four factions (*si pai*).<sup>43</sup> Until the late 1930s, the GMD upheld a "No party outside the Party" policy (*Dang wai mei dang*). Any opposition groups, whether left or right-wing, were suppressed.

Some groups had attempted to play a public political role in the early 1930s. The League for the Protection of Civil Rights (*Minquan baozhang tongmenghui*) had been formed in 1932-33, as a result of growing disquiet over the GMD's quick resort to violence to quell dissent. It consisted of notables from the left and right. Sun Yatsen's left-wing widow Song Qingling became chair and the GMD's Cai Yuanpei, vice-chair. Other famous members included writers Lu Xun, Zou Taofen, Hu Shi, and Lin Yutang, as well as staff from *Shenbao*. The League was an active champion of the rights of political prisoners but the group collapsed after the assassination of its secretary, Yang Quan (Yang Xingfo), in June 1933.<sup>44</sup> The murder of *Shenbao*'s Shi Liangcai by GMD secret police in 1934 again highlighted the danger of dissent.<sup>45</sup> It was only Japan's invasion which forced the GMD to relax its hostility towards almost any opposition or criticism. Nevertheless, some political groups had emerged.

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<sup>41</sup> Du was first made a member of the Standing Committee of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce. This recognition was on the basis of his relationship with Jiang Jieshi, the CC Clique, secret service operations, strike breaking, etc., as well as the legitimate business interests Du Yuesheng managed to acquire. In 1937, Du was "elected" as one of 20 Shanghai delegates to the immediately postponed National Assembly. *ibid.*, pp.80-86.

<sup>42</sup> According to Paul Linebarger, the Social Democratic Party was represented by Yang Gengtao but there is very little information on this group. Linebarger, 1941, p.181.

<sup>43</sup> The parties were the GMD, the CCP, the CYP and the National Socialist Party. The four cliques were the Central China "Clique" (*Hua-Zhong pai*) based on the NSA, the North East Clique (*Dong bei pai*), the Vocational Education Clique (*Zhiye jiaoyu pai*), the Professors Clique (*Jiaoshou pai*). *ibid.*, pp.76-79.

<sup>44</sup> For a summary of the League's activities see Narramore, in Fitzgerald, 1989, pp.122-123.

<sup>45</sup> Martin, 1990, p.85.

## The China Youth Party

The China Youth Party was a right-wing party which developed from a core of Chinese students who studied in France after the First World War. It was an outgrowth of the China Youth Association founded in 1918 by, among others, Zeng Qi, a Jesuit educated intellectual from Sichuan. The Young China Association was part of the New Culture Movement and associated with its core of Sichuan intellectuals were Wang Guangqi, Li Huang, Chen Yusheng, and Zhou Taixuan. Other members included future luminaries in the CCP such as Li Dazhao, Mao Zedong, Zhou Fohai and Tian Han.<sup>46</sup>

In 1923, during protests in France against foreign attempts to control China's railways, the China Youth Association allied itself with other Chinese groups, including the communists. This alliance soon soured and the subsequent formation of the China Youth Party in December 1923, was strongly influenced by Zeng's dislike of the communists and of Zhou Enlai in particular.<sup>47</sup>

The Youth Party's program was strongly nationalist and anti-communist and the party had criticised the GMD when it cooperated with the CCP between 1924-1927. Accused of being fascist and of having warlord connections, the CYP operated underground between 1923 and 1929, its public face being a youth league. The party declared itself as standing for nationalism and democracy.<sup>48</sup> Its platform called for mass mobilisation, control of public opinion, and the use of violence against communists and in defence of China.<sup>49</sup> Its calls for democracy led the Youth Party to demand an end to GMD one-party rule. In 1928, as result of this demand, the GMD formally banned it.<sup>50</sup> In 1929, CYP slogans denounced China's enemies, declaring: "Warlords sell-out the nation, the communists brings chaos to it, and the GMD harms the nation."<sup>51</sup> The party's organisation was marked by a strong group ethos and strong personal loyalties. While these features reflected the influence of French fascist

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<sup>46</sup> Marilyn A. Levine, "Zeng Qi and the Frozen Revolution." In Jeans, 1992, p.226. Wing-Tsit Chan, *Religious Trends in China*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1953), pp.222-223.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, pp.230-231.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, p.232.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Fung, in Jeans, 1992, p.244.

<sup>51</sup> "Junfa mai guo, Gongchandang luan guo, Guomindang wu guo." Quoted in Zhang Kui, *Zhongguo minzhu dangpai shi gang*, [An Outline history of China's Democratic Political Parties], (Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, Shanghai, 1992), p.20.

thinkers, such as Maurice Barres, the Youth Party never argued for dictatorship or racial superiority.<sup>52</sup>

The CYP's democratic government was not for democracy as a worthy end in itself, but as a means of strengthening the nation. Dictatorship, the party believed, resulted in corruption.<sup>53</sup> Zeng Qi's democracy consisted of a constitutional government with an institutionalised opposition. The CYP's main democratic theorist, Chen Qitian, argued that unpopular governments should be replaced with elected ones. Although Chen argued for the existence of political parties these should operate on the basis of *co-existence, co-prosperity* and *mutual supervision* under a rule of law.<sup>54</sup> Basic civil liberties were required for this, such as freedom of association, speech, and publication.<sup>55</sup> Freely elected governments would work for the greatest good of the greatest number.<sup>56</sup> When the first PPC was convened in Hankou (Wuhan) in July 1938, the Youth Party was allocated seven seats.<sup>57</sup>

### **The National Socialist Party**

The National Socialist Party was also not a fascist party. It had grown out of the Renaissance Society (*Zaisheng she*) formed by Zhang Junmai (Carsun Chang), Zhang Dongsun and others in 1931. The Society was well known for its journal *Renaissance* (*Zaisheng*).<sup>58</sup> In April 1933, the Renaissance Society changed its name to the National Socialist Party and its three hundred members elected Zhang Junmai, Zhang Dongsun, Luo Longji, Hu Shiqing and Zhu Qinglai to its standing committee.<sup>59</sup> Many of these members, like Zhang Junmai, were former CYP members but other well known

<sup>52</sup> Levine, in Jeans, 1992, pp.232-237.

<sup>53</sup> Fung, in Jeans, 1992, p.244.

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, p.249. (Emphasis added)

<sup>55</sup> These liberties formed a basic demand of the CYP in an exchange of letters with the GMD in 1938 in anticipation of entering the PPC. Zuo Shunsheng welcomed the decision to convene the council, "both as a preliminary step to the establishment of a constitutional regime, as envisaged by Dr. Sun Yatsen, and as a satisfactory fulfilment of our demand for a democratic government which we have been advocating for a number of years." *The China Year Book, 1938-39*, pp.54-55.

<sup>56</sup> Chester C. Tan, *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century*, (Davids and Charles, Newton Abbot, 1972), p.292.

<sup>57</sup> Shyu, in Jeans, 1992, p.154.

<sup>58</sup> Frederick Spar, "Human right and political engagement: Luo Longji in the 1930s," in Jeans, 1992, p.80, fn. 46.

<sup>59</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.22-23.

founding members included Luo Longji, the editor of the Tianjin daily *Yi shibao*, and Zuo Shunsheng.<sup>60</sup>

Like Luo Longji, Zhang Junmai had been an opponent of the GMD. While still a CYP member, Zhang and Li Huang had published the CYP journal *Xin lu* (New road), a publication soon banned because of Zhang's attacks on the GMD's one party dictatorship and the concept of political tutelage.<sup>61</sup> In 1923 Zhang, as a CYP member and with the backing of Shi Liangcai, established a National Institute of Self Government (*Guoli zizhi xueyuan*) in Shanghai. Zhang criticised the Guomindang's reliance on coercion over persuasion and its attempts to turn schools into centres for GMD indoctrination.<sup>62</sup> When the GMD took over Shanghai in 1927, it closed Zhang's institute.<sup>63</sup>

The NSP's three main principles were nationalism, a reformed 'democratic' government and socialist economics. Nationalism outweighed class interests, especially when the nation was endangered. Democratic reform and liberty were also important:

Liberty in the forms of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, the right of local self-government and the right of suffrage, has to be increased in order to cultivate in the individual citizens both the power to take the initiative and a sense of responsibility.<sup>64</sup>

Civil liberties increased active participation in politics. This would aid the nation in times of crisis by encouraging the people to rally their energies behind the government. The NSP advocated a socialism in which private property would continue to benefit individuals while state enterprises and state planning would develop the national economy.<sup>65</sup> Yet, after witnessing a communist uprising while in Germany in 1921,

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<sup>60</sup> Terry Narramore, "Luo Longji and Chinese Liberalism," *Papers on Far Eastern History*, no.32, September, 1985, p.167.

<sup>61</sup> Roger Jeans, "The Trials of a Third Force Intellectual: Zhang Junmai During the Nanjing Decade, 1927-1931." In Jeans, 1992, pp.45-46.

<sup>62</sup> This indoctrination was termed "partyisation" (*danghua*).

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, 1992, pp.39-40.

<sup>64</sup> Taken from Zuo Shunsheng's letter to Jiang Jieshi accepting a place in the PPC on behalf of the NSP. *The Chinese Yearbook 1938-39*, p.53.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*, pp.52-53.

Zhang concluded that communism was “not suitable for China,” and strongly opposed the idea of proletarian dictatorship.<sup>66</sup>

Zhang Junmai wanted a government which could combine the benefits of dictatorship and democracy. Zhang drew up a plan in which a popularly elected National Assembly would elect an executive to carry out the Assembly’s five year administrative plans. The executive would be subjected to periodic reviews by the Assembly. Despite calling for popular elections, Zhang had little faith in the ability of ordinary people to handle political decisions. He believed government would inevitably be by an elite. The masses, he believed, were uninterested in administration and unwilling to participate in it. Moreover, Zhang regarded them as unable to understand the relationships between different interests.<sup>67</sup>

Befitting its elitism, the NSP remained small with only about one thousand members by 1938. In 1943, when Luo Longji proposed that the NSP’s membership be expanded, his plans were apparently opposed by Zhang.<sup>68</sup> Despite the small size of the NSP, it was allocated eleven seats, four more than the CCP when the first PPC was convened.<sup>69</sup>

### **The All China National Salvation Association**

Founded in May 1936, the National Salvation Association was an umbrella group for the numerous National Salvation Associations which had begun forming in December 1935. Established in the wake of the “December Ninth Movement” student demonstrations against Japan in Beijing, the Salvation Associations demanded all out resistance to Japan. To bring about this resistance, the NSA called for a halt to the GMD’s war against the CCP and the establishment of a GMD-CCP alliance. The NSA’s nationalist message cut across many class and interest group lines and won the Association broad support, from women’s groups to government offices, business, and industry. Reflecting Gellner’s thesis that nationalism emerges in industrialising urban

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<sup>66</sup> Jeans, 1992, p.41.

<sup>67</sup> Tan, 1972, pp.259-264.

<sup>68</sup> Spar, in Jeans, 1992, p.80, fn. 46.

<sup>69</sup> Shyu, in Jeans, 1992, p.154.

centres and the new, highly educated elites,<sup>70</sup> the Professional's NSA became the section with the largest membership and the strongest appeal.<sup>71</sup>

In December 1935, the first Salvation group, the Shanghai National Salvation Association, published a manifesto signed by over two hundred prominent individuals.<sup>72</sup> Its founding members were a group of ten left-wing Shanghai activists, including Shen Junru, Zou Taofen, Tao Xingzhi, Li Gongpu, and Zhang Naiqi.<sup>73</sup> With their public declarations of support for the Beiping students protesting Japan's invasion, the Salvationists attacked GMD appeasement policies. These actions undermined the GMD's anti-imperialist credentials and showed the CCP's anti-Japanese efforts in a positive light. The left-wing leadership and the nationalist appeals of the NSA greatly worried the GMD. It charged the NSA with being a communist front and many of its behind the scenes leaders, such as Qian Junrui and Zhou Xinmin, were indeed underground CCP members exercising considerable organisational power.<sup>74</sup>

Nevertheless, CCP influence alone could not explain the NSA's success in mass mobilisation. In Shanghai, the focus of early NSA efforts, the CCP had been effectively destroyed by 1935, leaving only about one hundred active members.<sup>75</sup> Rather, it was Japanese aggression which outraged millions of urban Chinese. The CCP sensibly, sought to take advantage of this outrage. Resistance to Japan and any measures which supported resistance were common sense propositions to many Chinese and the NSA therefore attracted numerous luminaries. Reflecting the power of the nationalist appeals, support of the NSA and its aims also allowed relatively conservative groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to engage in legitimate

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<sup>70</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1983).

<sup>71</sup> The Professional NSA (*Zhi Jiu*), directed by Sha Qianli, began with 600 members, grew rapidly to almost 1000, and would attract 3000 people to demonstrations. Tanaka, *et al*, 1993, pp.212.

<sup>72</sup> Parks M. Coble, "Chiang Kaishek and the Anti-Japanese Movement in China: Zou Taofen and the National Salvation Association, 1931-1937, *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol.44, no.2, February 1985, p.301.

<sup>73</sup> The other people present probably included the underground CCP leaders Wang Jihua, Wang Han, Sun Keding, and Yong Wentao. See Tanaka, *et al*, 1993, pp.210-211.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.*, pp.210-215. The official history of united front work credits direction of the NSA to Zhou Xinmin and Qian Junrui. See Wang Bangzuo (ed), *Gongchandang tongyi zhanxian shi*, [The history of the Communist Party's united front], (Renmin chubanshe, Shanghai, 1991), p.186.

<sup>75</sup> Patricia Stranahan, "Strange Bedfellows: The Communist Party and Shanghai's Elite in the National Salvation Association," *China Quarterly*, no.129, March 1992, p.33 and p.36. Tanaka gives a higher figure of 200 Party and 300 Youth League members but the quality of these members seems to have been high. Tanaka, *et al*, 1993, p.206.

protests without any loss of respectability.<sup>76</sup> The widespread nature of support for the NSA's aims meant that the GMD, despite its misgivings and suspicions, was forced to recognise the Association and to allocate it eight seats in the PPC.

### **The Third Party**

When formed in 1927, the Third Party was called the Chinese Revolutionary Party (*Zhonghua geming dang*). It later changed its name to the Provisional Action Committee of the GMD (*Zhongguo guomin dang linshi xingdong weiyuanhui*) but the "Third Party" label, given to it by a Japanese newspaper in Shanghai, stuck. The group consisted of former GMD members who accepted the Marxist concept of historical materialism and disillusioned or expelled communists. This division resulted in two factions, one CCP-inclined led by Tan Pingshan, and one GMD-inclined which was led by Song Qingling and Deng Yanda.<sup>77</sup> In November 1927, after consulting with Tan and Song, Deng Yanda proposed "using left-GMD and CCP members as the core, to reform the GMD, to adopt the CCP's program (*gangling*) and to continue to lead the Chinese revolution."<sup>78</sup> Despite differences then, both factions stayed close to the CCP and opposed the GMD.

The Third Party's ideology was based on a rejection of metaphysical interpretations of Sun Yatsen's thought in favour of a reliance on materialist and scientific principles. This ideology developed to incorporate a belief that society could be built on the active participation of the masses, with the eventual disappearance of classes. Educated youths and young intellectuals were to be the driving force, organising and motivating the masses to play their historical role. A selfless leadership would be integrated with the common people. But for the revolution to succeed, the obstacle of old elites, represented by the GMD, had to be removed. At the same time, Deng also rejected communist dogmatism with its claims to absolute truth.

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<sup>76</sup> Stranahan, 1992, p.36.

<sup>77</sup> J. Kenneth Olenik, "Deng Yanda and the Third Party," in Jeans, 1992, pp.111-113.

<sup>78</sup> He Dayue and Zhongguo Nonggong minzhu dang Zhongyang lishi ziliao yanjiu weiyuan hui (eds), *Zhongguo Nonggong minzhu dang douzheng licheng*, [The course of the struggle of the Chinese Democratic Peasants and Workers Party], (Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, Beijing, 1990), p.6.

Communism, Deng believed, was a problem which would disappear when a popular government addressed the real needs of the masses.<sup>79</sup>

To achieve its goals the party had a two part program. One called for dedicated, altruistic youth to organise, and propagate the revolutionary cause and to recruit among the masses. This mass mobilisation had to be combined with a military uprising to overthrow the GMD. If the uprising failed, guerilla warfare would replace it.<sup>80</sup>

In 1930, Deng returned from a period in Germany, and after a leadership struggle with Tan Pingshan, he assumed full leadership of the party. The Third Party was nominally democratic centralist but Olenik has argued that the party's structure was extremely loose because of its reliance on *guanxi*, its efforts to instil a truly democratic spirit and practice, and strong opposition to bureaucratic and dictatorial practice. Branches, and even individuals, could act autonomously. The party was held together by a faith in Sun Yatsenism and opposition to the GMD. It saw itself as the true heir to Sun Yatsen and its intention to regain control of the GMD was reflected in the "Provisional" part of its name.<sup>81</sup> Even after Deng's capture and execution by the GMD in November 1931, the party's 2000 members continued an underground existence.<sup>82</sup>

The Third Party actively continued to secretly undermine the GMD until the late 1930s. In 1932, members, Zhang Bojun and Peng Zexiang twice consulted with Feng Yuxiang on resisting Japan. Most notably, more than 100 Third Party members took part in the Fujian rebellion of 1933. Two of these members, Zhang Bojun and Huang Qixiang, served on several of the Fujian government's committees.<sup>83</sup> Both, but particularly Zhang, later became important MPG leaders.

An attempt by Chen Mingshu and others to dissolve the party and integrate it into Chen's Production People's Party (*Shengchan renmin dang*) failed when opposed by Peng Zemin in Hong Kong. But the party's organisation was further weakened. On November 10 1935, a party meeting revived Sun Yatsen's policies of allying with the

<sup>79</sup> Olenik, in Jeans, 1992, pp.111-113.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*, p.113-115.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, pp.117-123.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, pp.132. Fn.16.

<sup>83</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.15.

Soviet Union and the CCP.<sup>84</sup> The party also raised a guerilla force of about 3,000 men to fight the Japanese and in 1937, these fighters took part in the defence of Shanghai.<sup>85</sup> In calling for unity with the Soviets and the CCP, the Third Party revealed its closeness to the CCP and perhaps the direct influence of the Comintern. The CCP had published united front appeals in Paris in October 1935, following a resolution of the Comintern's seventh congress calling for an anti-fascist united front.<sup>86</sup> The increasing influence of the CCP-inclined faction in the Third Party was reflected in its policies towards the GMD. Like the CCP, the Third Party changed from an "oppose Japan, oppose Jiang" position to eventually promote a "force Jiang to oppose Japan" policy.<sup>87</sup> In June 1937, re-inforcing the degree of cooperation, Peng Zemin visited Mao Zedong in Yan'an and discussed united front issues.<sup>88</sup> In July, the Third Party adopted a policy of cooperation with the GMD, recognising it as the resistance government and Jiang as the resistance leader.<sup>89</sup>

The GMD's Jiang Jieshi and Wang Jingwei were loath to acknowledge the Third Party. At the National Defence Conference (*Guofang canyi hui*) of July-August 1937, Jiang denied that the party still existed. He later demanded it be dissolved and become part of a Three People's Principles Party. In early 1938, Jiang met several times with Zhang Bojun and Peng Zemin. Zhang Bojun proposed that Peng Zemin, Peng Zexiang and himself be made PPC councillors. Wang Jingwei opposed this and only Zhang was appointed.<sup>90</sup>

### **The Chinese Vocational Education Society**

The Chinese Vocational Education Society (*Zhonghua zhiye jiaoyu she*, VES), which continues to exist in the 1990s, was not formed as a party. Founded by the educator, Huang Yanpei, the Society grew from efforts to promote education and

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*, pp.15-16.

<sup>85</sup> He Dayue, 1990, p.104.

<sup>86</sup> John W. Garver, "The Origins of the Second United Front; The Comintern and the Chinese Communist Party," *China Quarterly*, No.113, 1988, pp.32-35.

<sup>87</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, Ch.4 describes the evolution of these changes in CCP policy.

<sup>88</sup> Lin Xianggeng, "Contributions of Chinese Democratic Parties to the Establishment of the National United Front against Japan," *Shanghai Shehui kexue*, no.7, 1995, p.11.

<sup>89</sup> He Dayue, 1990, p.102.

<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*, pp.103-108.

reform in the provinces of Jiangsu and Zhejiang in the early 1920s.<sup>91</sup> It was one of several groups striving to improve China's lot through a focus on rural issues.<sup>92</sup> Huang was a very influential figure. He had been a member of Sun Yatsen's Tongmenghui, the Constitutional Preparation Association, and the Jiangsu Provincial Assembly. Huang had been closely associated with Liang Qichao's *Shibao* newspaper,<sup>93</sup> and with *Shenbao* and early Salvationist activities. Huang and the VES had close connections to some of China's newly emerging entrepreneurial classes. The VES was co-founded and supported by entrepreneurs, such as the cotton magnate Mu Ouchu.<sup>94</sup> By 1931, the Society had 9,884 members active in setting up vocational schools and, later, Salvation Associations.<sup>95</sup>

Huang Yanpei possessed no desire to become a political figure but in 1926, he concluded that in order to promote educational reform he had no choice but to become politically active. Moreover, Huang urged the VES membership to do likewise.<sup>96</sup> As a result of its activities, and its calls for "realising people's livelihoodism" (*shixian minsheng zhuyi*), the Society and its book stores became subjected to government harassment. In 1927, when the GMD took over Shanghai, Huang fled to escape being assassinated.<sup>97</sup>

When the political situation improved, Huang travelled to Japan. While in Japan, Huang became alarmed at Japanese plans to invade China. On his return to China in April 1931, Huang submitted proof of Japanese invasion plans to Jiang Jieshi and the GMD's foreign minister, only to have his evidence dismissed.<sup>98</sup> From 1933

<sup>91</sup> Wen-Hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and Politics in Republican China 1919-1937*, (Council on East Asian Studies and Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1990), pp.119-120.

<sup>92</sup> For a summary of these groups see Leo Douw, "Chinese Rural Society in the 1930s: On the Acculturation of Social Scientist's Political Attitudes." In Kurt W. Radtke and Tony Saich (eds), *China's Modernisation; Westernisation and Acculturation*, (Munchener Ostasiatische Studien, band 67, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 1993), pp.83-109.

<sup>93</sup> Joan Judge, "The Factional Function of Print: *Shibao* and the Fissures in the Late Qing Reform Movement," *Late Imperial China*, vol.16, no.1, June 1995, p.128.

<sup>94</sup> Wen-Hsin Yeh, "Progressive Journalism and Shanghai's Petty Urbanites: Zou Taofen and the Shenghuo Weekly, 1926-1945." In Frederick Wakeman, Jr. and Wen-Hsin Yeh (eds), *Shanghai Sojourners*, (Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, China Research Monograph 40, 1992), p.193.

<sup>95</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.29-30.

<sup>96</sup> "Xu fen yi bufen jingshen, canjia quan shehui de yundong," [Use some spirit to participate in movements across the whole of society], *ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Thomas D. Curran, "From Educator to Politician: Huang Yanpei and the Third Force," in Jeans, 1992, p.89.

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*, p.90.

onwards, Huang, together with Shi Liangcai, Zhang Naiqi, Zhang Yilin, Zou Taofen and Shen Junru, threw themselves into national salvation work.<sup>99</sup> Among Huang's early initiatives was the establishment of the Resist Japan-Save the Nation Research Association (*Kang Ri jiuguo yanjiu hui*) and his newspaper connections assisted in the creation of the *Salvation Dispatch* (*Jiuguo tongxun*).<sup>100</sup> Huang established four vocational schools in Shanghai and these promoted the national salvation message as a core subject.<sup>101</sup> With the outbreak of full-scale war with Japan in 1937, Huang became a leader in the Shanghai Municipal Government. In 1938, escaping the Japanese advance, Huang fled to Chongqing where he became committed to reconciling the GMD and CCP in order to promote the war effort.<sup>102</sup>

Initially, the war effort was Huang's dominant concern. For Huang, democracy was a long-term goal for which China was not yet ready. China needed, he believed, "a "nursery style democratic government" within which people could learn the habits of democracy while practicing it on a limited scale."<sup>103</sup> Huang therefore accepted the GMD's concept of a period of tutelage. He was also unwilling to promote policies which could harm his relationship with Jiang Jieshi and therefore reduce his ability to act as a mediator between the GMD and CCP.<sup>104</sup>

### **The Rural Reconstruction Association**

The Rural Reconstruction Association was a similar organisation to the VES. It also centred around several central figures, notably Liang Shuming, Yan Yangchu (James Yen) and Liang Zhonghua.<sup>105</sup> The Rural Reconstructionists believed China's rural problems were the nation's most pressing issues. They established schools and

<sup>99</sup> Until 1929, Huang had been a co-director of planning of Shi Liangcai's *Shenbao*.

<sup>100</sup> Dou Aizhi, *Zhongguo minzhu dangpai shi*, [The history of China's democratic parties and groups] (Nankai daxue chubanshe, Tianjin, 1992), p.168.

<sup>101</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.30.

<sup>102</sup> Curran, in Jeans, 1992, p.90.

<sup>103</sup> In using this expression Huang echoed Hu Shi, perhaps the best known to the West of China's liberals. Curran, in Jeans, 1992, p.91. For information on Hu Shi see Jerome B. Grieder, *Hu Shih and the Chinese Renaissance: Liberalism in the Chinese revolution, 1917-1937*, (Harvard University, Press, Cambridge, 1970).

<sup>104</sup> Curran, in Jeans, 1992, p.91.

<sup>105</sup> Communist Chinese histories use Liang as the prime representative of the rural reconstructionists. See, for example, Zhang Kui, 1992, p.24.

experimental farms to motivate and mobilise the peasantry. By 1936, there were some 4000 people involved in the Association's activities.<sup>106</sup>

The most important political figure among the reconstructionists was Liang Shuming. Although educated in China, Liang's schooling was not a traditional one and he was already an adult when he first read the Chinese classics.<sup>107</sup> He read many Western works in translation and wanted to integrate aspects of Western thought and practice with positive Chinese traditions. This integration involved a concept of democracy as mass participation to unite rural communities into collective organisations, organisations which would take as their goal "the advancement of human morality."<sup>108</sup> This synthesis, Liang believed, would assist China's modernisation without introducing Western defects.<sup>109</sup> The practical form of this democracy is unclear, although by 1945 Liang was expressing strong doubts about the applicability of Western systems to China.<sup>110</sup>

Liang's ideas on political participation were initially formulated for the peasantry and local issues, but over time they were increasingly redirected towards achieving national goals. He believed that a mass participatory democracy would increase the population's enthusiasm for achieving national goals.<sup>111</sup> However, the masses were not to decide national goals; this was to be left to the educated elite. Nor did Liang's concept of democracy mean institutional checks on government or direct elections. Informal advice could be offered but the government was not obliged to accept it. In effect, Liang's participatory democracy meant rallying the masses to follow elite prescriptions. Its implementation was vital for the anti-Japanese war effort.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*, p.25.

<sup>107</sup> Tan, 1972, p.277.

<sup>108</sup> Liang Shuming, quoted in Hong-Yok Ip, "Liang Shuming and the Idea of Democracy in Modern China," *Modern China*, vol.17, no.4, October, 1991, pp.472-473.

<sup>109</sup> *ibid.*, p.472-473, p.476..

<sup>110</sup> Dai Qing, *Liang Shu-ming, Wang Shi-wei, Chu An-ping*, (Jiangsu Wenyi chubanshe, Nanjing, 1989), p.11.

<sup>111</sup> Ip, 1991, p.489.

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, p.489-491.

### General MPG Characteristics

The MPGs had a number of common features, ideological characteristics, and problems which are relevant to an understanding of their historical roles. These included small and limited memberships, the centrality of leadership over organisation, and elitism. Politically, the MPGs were relatively liberal and generally sympathetic to the West. Nevertheless, they also shared features with the CCP and GMD.

The MPG leaders were generally elite intellectuals trained overseas or at Western universities in China. They were prominent academics and social activists. They were examples of very high educational attainment in a nation where education was both revered and relatively rare. They were much respected and accorded high social status, features which could be used for political purposes.

The MPG leaders' high status and public prominence were important. These features not only attract followers but also accorded the leaders some protection from political repression. Personal relations or *guanxi*, based on teacher-student relations, school and regional affiliations, were all very important. The Youth Party, for example, was very much restricted to Zeng Qi's fellow Sichuanese.<sup>113</sup> The National Socialists were based on a core of CYP followers who had been won over by Zhang Junmai when he had been a CYP member.<sup>114</sup> The leaders of the NSA had long-standing personal and occupational ties. *Guanxi* was so important to the MPGs that there is little evidence to suggest that membership was based on much else.<sup>115</sup>

The potential of *guanxi* as a political weapon was recognised by the Third Party in its plan to overthrow Jiang Jieshi in 1931. Relying on the assumption that Jiang's power base consisted of Huangpu Military Academy graduates, Deng Yanda and others set out to use their connections with these officers to win them over to the Third Party, as the true GMD. Deng's *guanxi* was particularly extensive. He had taught or worked in some capacity at almost every GMD military school. Deng was widely admired and

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<sup>113</sup> Levine, in Jeans, 1992, p.226.

<sup>114</sup> Jeans, in Jeans, 1992, p.47.

<sup>115</sup> The membership of the MPGs is as yet unexplored area of research but one which could provide valuable insights into the motivations of those who chose not to ally themselves with the two big parties.

he had worked with most GMD leaders, warlords and with CCP leaders such as Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong.<sup>116</sup>

Warlord connections were common among the MPG leaders. The CYP had been associated with Wu Peifu.<sup>117</sup> The National Socialist Party leader, Luo Wengan, had worked for General Zhang Xueliang. The general had, in turn, supported the NSP.<sup>118</sup> The Third Party had extensive contact with Southern warlords while in October 1936, it had sent Luo Renyi North to Xi'an to liaise with Yang Hucheng.<sup>119</sup> Likewise, Huang Yanpei had built up connections with warlords in order to promote vocational education.<sup>120</sup> Like Deng Yanda, all MPG leaders had extensive *guanxi* via work, education and home town links to leaders of the GMD, the CCP and to each other.<sup>121</sup> These connections sometimes compromised the MPGs but they also made the MPGs very valuable as intermediaries.

While *guanxi* was extremely useful to the MPGs, it was a weakness when used as a basis of organisation. MPG followers were motivated more by personal loyalties than agreement on political philosophies or platforms; therefore they were likely to be less principled than their leaders. Personal loyalties also encouraged particularism and factionalism which were the destroyers of unity and purpose. Personality and ego clashes, rather than philosophical differences, hindered the consolidation of organisational unity.<sup>122</sup> Lacking a clear commitment to their MPG's political platform, membership could more easily be tempted by short-term self interest. When the MPGs had little power their organisational weakness were not very important. But when public office became a possibility there was an inherent tendency by leaders and members to see official appointments as a reward for faithful service. Official positions

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<sup>116</sup> Olenik, in Jeans, 1992, pp.116, 124-126.

<sup>117</sup> Chien, 1950, p.357.

<sup>118</sup> Jeans, in Jeans, 1992, p.49.

<sup>119</sup> He Dayue, 1990, pp.101-102.

<sup>120</sup> Chien, 1950, p.357.

<sup>121</sup> For an indication of some (inter) connections acquired through academic work see Yeh, 1990, pp.119-128.

<sup>122</sup> Jeans, in Jeans, 1992, p.15.

provided a time honoured opportunity to *sheng guan facai*, that is, to use official offices to get rich and dispense patronage.<sup>123</sup>

As a result of their education and training as Chinese intellectuals, the MPG leaders suffered from an ambivalence about political involvement and political parties which was not satisfactorily resolved. Leaders saw themselves as intellectuals first; being politicians came a reluctant second.<sup>124</sup> Many would have preferred to exercise influence through the press.

The pro-GMD liberal Fu Sinian summed up this attitude of resignation towards direct political involvement and preference for indirect influence when he remarked to Hu Shi, "We are stuck if we join the [GMD] government; in my view, to launch a party is better than to join the Party [i.e. the GMD] and to publish a newspaper is even better."<sup>125</sup> The attraction of publishing to MPG leaders, such as Zhang Junmai and Huang Yanpei, reflected the influence of the turn of the century reformer Liang Qichao. Liang had regarded newspapers as proto-political opposition parties which educated the public and laid the basis for parties and political change.<sup>126</sup> China's liberal intellectuals were unwilling to concede that political parties were important and as a result they accorded organisation a low priority.<sup>127</sup> The MPG's financial difficulties were undoubtedly both caused by this inattention and compounded by it.<sup>128</sup>

Not only did the MPGs ignore organisation, they also neglected expanding their memberships. Their reliance on *guanxi* discouraged membership outside of particular cliques. The CYP for example, never extended far beyond its Sichuan base. The

<sup>123</sup> This is precisely what happened to the CYP and NSP in 1946 when Jiang Jieshi offered the parties ministries in return for their political support. See Lloyd E Eastman, "China's Democratic parties and the Temptations of Political Power, 1946-1947," in Jeans, 1992, pp.194-197.

<sup>124</sup> Huang Yanpei was a classic example of a Chinese intellectual who entered the political struggle reluctantly and who would have preferred a public life through his profession as educator and administrator. Frederick Spar, in Jeans, 1992, p.62. Zhang Dongsun, the NSP leader decried having to be a politician. In 1947 he lamented that "We must concern ourselves with politics (*ganzheng*) even though we have no interest in politics (*zhi zheng*)." Quoted in Young Tsu-Wong, "The Fate of Liberalism in Revolutionary China: Chu An-ping and His Circle 1946-1950," *Modern China*, vol.4, no.19, 1993, p.467.

<sup>125</sup> *ibid.*, p.459.

<sup>126</sup> Judge, 1995, p.123.

<sup>127</sup> Herman Halbeisen found this true of the independent liberals but included Luo Longji in this category. Herman Halbeisen, "Liberal Constitutionalism and Politics in Early Republican China," in King-yu Chang (ed), *Ideology and Politics in Twentieth Century China*, (Institute of International Relations, National Cheng-chi University, Taipei, 1988), pp.2, 9, & 16.

<sup>128</sup> Roger B. Jeans, "Introduction," in Jeans, 1992, p.14.

MPG's elitism and condescension likewise limited their potential appeal to high and mid-level intellectuals. Although the Third Party recognised the need for a mass base it was unable to create one. With the exception of the NSA, most MPGs neither recognised the need to expand nor attempted to do so. A broader membership would have contradicted their faith in the educated elite of which they were a part.

### **MPG Political Thought**

Exposure to Western education and political ideas resulted in many MPG leaders becoming familiar with Western concepts such as liberalism. However, even in the West these ideas were subject to a wide range of interpretations and in China not all aspects of liberalism were necessarily accepted. In many instances, MPG "liberalism" did not extend, for example, to a tolerance of religion, particularly Christianity.<sup>129</sup> The MPGs' philosophies were blends of Chinese and Western thought rather than the complete substitution of Chinese political philosophy by a Western variety.<sup>130</sup> Leaders such as Zhang Junmai and Liang Shuming expressly advocated such blending to maximise the benefits of both sets of philosophy. Liang's 1921 book on the subject, *Eastern and Western Cultures*, became very influential.<sup>131</sup> Western concepts of nationalism, democracy and civil rights were of critical concern to the MPGs but this did not mean that the MPG's understanding of these concepts or their emphasis on them was the same as those of Western liberals.

Nationalism was the key driving feature of all the MPGs. They were vitally concerned with China's place in the world and especially with its relative backwardness. Because of their extensive education the MPGs were also very aware of China's past glories. Their experience and knowledge enabled them to compare China with the West and the unfavourable comparison radicalised them to the cause of China as a nation-state. Many MPG leaders and members either came from, or operated in, the cities most affected by industrialisation and by foreign influence, such as Shanghai

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<sup>129</sup> The leadership of the CYP's predecessor, the Young China Association, was hostile to all religion as were liberals such as Hu Shi although this tendency declined in the 1930s. Chan, 1953, pp.222-238.

<sup>130</sup> Narramore, 1985, p.169.

<sup>131</sup> Guy S. Alitto, *The Last Confucian: Liang Shu-ming and the Chinese Dilemma of Modernity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp.77-81.

and Tianjin. It is precisely in such centres where nationalism develops and becomes a vital interest to the newly emerging classes.<sup>132</sup>

For MPG leaders, democracy was a means of strengthening the nation rather than an end in itself but the form that this democracy should take was unclear. Not only was Liang Shuming sceptical of the masses' ability to act responsibly, other MPG figures, such as Luo Longji, also believed that administration was best entrusted to experts.<sup>133</sup> Luo's beliefs were little different from those of Sun Yatsen who, in a very similar vein, had declared that "the people are the owners, they must be sovereign. The government are specialists, they must be men of ability and skill."<sup>134</sup> Zhang Junmai likewise felt that peoples' freedoms should be restricted to social and cultural affairs.<sup>135</sup>

Yet, increasing civil liberties was seen as vital by all the MPGs, despite their concerns about the democratic capacities of those for whom they claimed to speak. Without civil liberties the people's opinions could not be aired, the problems of the state could not be addressed, and despotism could neither be controlled nor eliminated. The state would be the weaker for it. Nevertheless, the MPGs' elitist inclinations were pronounced and their lack of faith in the capacity of ordinary Chinese encouraged an acceptance of the GMD's 'Period of Tutelage.' This elitism also encouraged the MPGs' acceptance of corporatist forms of representation. For the GMD state to give parties of the educated elites privileged representation in return for their cooperation and support was entirely reasonable and proper in the light of this emphasis on expertise. Their elitism also encouraged the tendency, among even the most liberal Chinese, to look to 'great leaders' to guide and save the nation rather than to the larger problem of how to build an efficient system of government.<sup>136</sup>

The MPGs' belief in government by experts partially reflected their belief in themselves as such experts. In accordance with the Confucian tradition in which they

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<sup>132</sup> Gellner, 1983, *passim*.

<sup>133</sup> Narramore, 1985, pp.18-190. Halbeisen, in Chang, 1988, p.10.

<sup>134</sup> Quoted in Narramore, 1985, p.188.

<sup>135</sup> Tan, 1972, p. 259.

<sup>136</sup> Not even most Western liberals such as Hu Shi and Ding Wenjiang avoided this temptation. For example Ding Wenjiang's (1924) belief that: "We need a few men of unbending resolution, with the courage to climb mountains and leap over oceans, with ability as well as knowledge, and with a desire to work in addition to virtue. When their influence is abroad, then the spirit of the times will change ... " Quoted in Grieder, 1970, pp.196-197.

had been raised, they saw themselves as tools for the service of the state. In 1944, the Democratic League was still bemoaning the Government's failure to use their expertise.<sup>137</sup> When they spoke of the need to heed public opinion as a part of a democratic process it is difficult not to conclude that the MPGs were referring to themselves. That the MPGs would invoke themselves as the voice of the people was understandable. Such speaking on behalf of the people was well within China's *qingyi* (righteous elite opinion) tradition which had allowed the elite mandarin to remonstrate with the emperor on the people's behalf.<sup>138</sup> In the twentieth century, the mantle of this tradition fell naturally on the shoulders of the China's elite intellectuals. This *qingyi* tradition allowed the Youth League and the MPGs to conceive of themselves, not as competitors for power but as a form of loyal opposition to the state power.<sup>139</sup> It was a tradition which has continued to inform MPG actions.

The strength of the Chinese state was a major MPG concern. The state was seen in a utilitarian way as existing to provide the greatest good to the greatest number. It did not exist to protect individuals as it is generally conceived in the West.<sup>140</sup> Under Confucianism, individuals existed for the service of the state. Intellectuals saw themselves as tools or "instruments of a moral cause common to master and servant alike."<sup>141</sup> It was a view the MPGs perpetuated.

Although a single concept of democracy for China was not agreed on, the MPGs did agree that the GMD's despotism was unacceptable because it weakened the state. The MPGs wanted to be able to restrain despotism. Lacking both broad political support and the protection provided by their own armies, the MPGs were very vulnerable. The assassinations of political activists had shown that despotism directly threatened the MPGs. Even MPG criticism intended to strengthen the government was

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<sup>137</sup> "We must realise that others can also have our own desire to do good and to devote themselves to the service of the nation. The danger to China today is the failure to use ability." From "Views and policies of the Federation of Democratic Parties regarding the Present Situation," in "China's Small Parties Appeal for Democracy," *Pacific Affairs*, vol.XVII, no.3, September 1944, pp.333.

<sup>138</sup> Joan Judge, "Public Opinion and the New Politics of Contestation in the Late Qing, 1904-1911," *Modern China*, vol.20, no.1, January 1994, p.73.

<sup>139</sup> Fung, in Jeans, 1992, *passim*.

<sup>140</sup> Narramore, 1985, p. 185. Herman Halbeisen, 1988, p.7. Tan 1972, p.272.

<sup>141</sup> Jerome B. Grieder, *Intellectuals and the State in Modern China: A Narrative History*, (The Free Press, London, 1981), p.15.

often met with violent GMD responses. Nevertheless, the rights the MPGs demanded were to allow the state to become stronger, to overcome crisis and improve the lot of all. Measures like establishing the rule of law were therefore vital in the eyes of MPG leaders such as the CYP's Chen Qitian.<sup>142</sup> A proper legal system would not only strengthen the state, it would also protect the MPGs.

The MPGs' faith in the state as an agent was accompanied by a desire for strong state involvement in economics rather than laissez-faire capitalism. Many saw variations of socialism as providing both the solution to China's existing problems and a means of avoiding social revolution. While many, including Zhang Junmai, dismissed communism because it advocated class struggle and single party dictatorship, they believed that a form of state socialism was still desirable.<sup>143</sup> Zhang postulated private ownership of small businesses, public overview of others and complete state ownership of natural resources and heavy industries.<sup>144</sup> Liang Shuming promoted co-operative associations.<sup>145</sup> The Third Party advocated state ownership of enterprises. The CYP also advocated using state assistance to promote industrialisation but with controls to prevent the emergence of bureaucratic capitalism.<sup>146</sup>

The MPGs had three means by which they promoted their causes and attempted to convince others of their common sense; personal influence, the PPC, and the influence of their many publications. Their disproportionate influence in publishing made them a major role in the battle for Chinese public opinion. They were therefore, crucial players in the battle for hegemony.

### **The MPGs, the Press, and the Dissemination of Ideology**

The critical factor behind the importance of the MPGs was their substantial influence in the most important areas of ideological production, those of education, journalism, literature, and the arts. They published numerous journals, pamphlets, and contributed to newspapers and other publications. The total Chinese audience for the

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<sup>142</sup> Fung, in Jeans, 1992, p.250.

<sup>143</sup> Jeans, in Jeans, 1992, p.41. Tan, 1972, pp.253-263. Fung, 1992, p.244.

<sup>144</sup> Tan, 1972, p.261.

<sup>145</sup> *ibid.*, p.287.

<sup>146</sup> *ibid.*, p.292.

printed word was only small. Only 5-7 percent of the population regularly read newspapers and journals and, even if newsreels and radio were considered, only some ten percent of the population were relatively well informed about China's national situation and politics.<sup>147</sup> Nevertheless, their audiences were the educated urban administrators of the economic and the state systems and the educated working class. *Shenbao's* boycott of the National Emergency Conference demonstrated that the direct, let alone indirect, influence of the press when harnessed against the GMD state, could be substantial.

Many in the MPG's urban audiences, the educated elites, and progressive emerging entrepreneurs, such as the VES supporter Mu Ouchu, were not directly linked to the state. The GMD was in fact hostile towards groups such as the emergent bourgeoisie and such groups had good reason to be suspicious if not hostile towards the GMD. After taking over Shanghai, for example, the GMD acted to extort money from its businesses in order to cover its military costs.<sup>148</sup> The production of ideology by those represented by the MPGs and by MPG members did not therefore automatically benefit the GMD. The MPGs had a choice of whether or not to support the GMD. If the GMD failed to live up to their expectations this would be reflected in MPG writings and actions which would act to de-legitimise and undermine support for the GMD. This lack of automatic support provided an opportunity for the CCP in its battle for hegemony.

The views of MPG leaders and members were disseminated in various forms of publications. There were broadly based popular publications exemplified by those of the Salvation Associations. There were contributions to mainstream journals and papers such as *Dagong bao* (Impartial daily) and *Shenbao*.<sup>149</sup> There were also numerous more MPG specific journals with limited distributions.

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<sup>147</sup> Lin Yutang, *A History of the Press and Public Opinion in China*, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1936, pp.148-149). Quoted in Coble, 1991, p.3.

<sup>148</sup> Joseph Fewsmith provides a good overview of the GMD's hostility towards groups such as as China's emergent bourgeoisie. Fewsmith, 1985, Introduction. For the ideological basis of the GMD's hostility see Dirlik, 1989, Ch.7.

<sup>149</sup> For example, Huang Yanpei and Tao Xingzhi's contributions. *Dagong bao* editor Zhang Jiluan saw circulation climb from 3000 in 1926 to 30,000 in 1930, 50,000 in 1931 and 150,000 in 1937. The circulation of *Shenbao* and *Xinwen bao* both exceeded 150,000 in Shanghai in 1922. Of the three, only *Shenbao* tried to assume a political leadership role. See I. Sophia Wang, "The Independent Press and

MPG literature can be roughly divided into left and right. On the Left, the Third Party published, among others: *Revolutionary Action*, (*Geming xingdong*), *Action Daily* (*Xingdong ribao*), *Lighthouse* (*Dengta*), *Attack* (*Tuji*) and *The Star* (*Xing*). The VES published *Education and Vocation* (*Jiaoyu yu zhiye*), *Life Weekly* (*Shenghuo zhoukan*) as well as the later *Salvation Newsletter* (*Jiuguo tongxun*). In 1934, the *Salvation Newsletter* became the *National Newsletter* (*Guoxun*). To support its work the VES also established a chain of bookshops to promote, distribute and sell its literature while Liang Shuming's Rural Reconstructionists published *Rural Construction* (*Xiangcun jianshe*).

On the MPG right, the Chinese Youth Party had begun its first publication, *Awakened Lion* (*Xing shi*) in 1924 and later published the *China Youth Party* (*Zhongguo qingnian dang*). Zhang Dongsun published the *China Times* (*Shi shi xin bao*) which was closely linked to Shanghai's new elites.<sup>150</sup> Zhang Junmai's National Socialists published *Renaissance* (*Zai sheng*), was one of the most famous MPG journals.<sup>151</sup> An early attempt at a journal by Zhang Junmai and Li Huang, *New Road* (*Xin lu*), was soon forced to close because of its discussions of democracy and human rights. Luo Longji propagated his views in the *Tianjin Daily* (*Yi shibao*). Among other important mouthpieces for the non-aligned middle elements, including the MPGs, was the overtly liberal *Crescent*, (*Xinyue*) founded by Hu Shi, Xu Zhimo and Wen Yiduo in 1928 (to which Luo also contributed).

The most famous and the most successful MPG publications in terms of circulation, were those of Zou Taofen and the NSA. Zou had been an editor of the VES Journal *Education and Vocation* in 1922. In October 1926, he became editor of the VES's *Life Weekly*. Zou increased circulation from 3,000 to well over 100,000 in 1933. *Life Weekly* addressed a wide audience of "literate clerks, apprentices in trade and manufacturing, the professions, the public and private service sectors."<sup>152</sup> *Life Weekly*

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Authoritarian Regimes; The Case of *Dagong bao* in Republican China," *Pacific Affairs*, 1994, vol.67, no.2, pp.216-241.

<sup>150</sup> Marie-Claire Bergere, 1983 p.764. Bergere apparently used the paper's self-given English name. In other works it is sometimes translated as *Current affairs Paper*.

<sup>151</sup> It is still published in Taiwan.

<sup>152</sup> Yeh, 1992, p.191.

aimed to raise the consciousness of vocational workers. Significantly, the *Weekly* also attempted to provide readers with new rationales and frameworks to help them cope with their new and strange industrial and urban social environment. It gave advice and justifications for a new society.<sup>153</sup> The *Weekly* initially supported the GMD. It was only after the GMD reached Shanghai and began to extort money from those behind the VES, the bourgeoisie, that the *Weekly* became critical of the nationalists.<sup>154</sup>

It was the 1931 invasion of Manchuria by the Japanese which radicalised Zou and the *Life Weekly*. The *Weekly* became fiercely anti-Japanese and its circulation climbed. Through lending libraries and other means its peak circulation of 150,000 reached a literate urban audience, estimated at 1.5 million in Shanghai, Tianjin, and Wuhan.<sup>155</sup> In 1933, the *Weekly* was closed by the GMD for offending the Japanese. Zou and Du Zhongyuan therefore established the *New Life Weekly* (*Xin sheng zhoukan*) and pursued the same line.

In November 1935, after the *New Life Weekly* was also closed down for offending the Japanese, Zou began *Life of the Masses* (*Da zhong shenghuo*). Zou continued to promote the anti-Japanese struggle and the central themes of “unity,” “democracy,” and “resistance.”<sup>156</sup> Only 16 issues of *Life of the Masses* were published before it too was banned. It reappeared again between May and December 6, 1941, as the *Life Daily* (*Shenghuo ribao*) in Hong Kong. When Japan took over the colony *Life Daily* was also extinguished.

Japan’s invasion had resulted in Zou’s publications changing dramatically in tone. Zou’s writers began criticising the GMD explicitly with “strident statements about the honour and shame of the nation.”<sup>157</sup> The influence of *Life of the Masses* was demonstrated when its coverage of the 1935 December Ninth Student Movement helped spread the anti-Japanese student movement from Beijing to Central and South

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<sup>153</sup> For example, on instilling a work ethic in workers and providing advice on how they could cope with marriages arranged by their parents in their home villages far from the city. *ibid.*, p.192, pp.198-200 and pp.205-214.

<sup>154</sup> *ibid.*, pp.217-218. Coble, 1985, p.295.

<sup>155</sup> Even in the late 1920s Zou received 20-30,000 Letters to the Editor annually. Parks M. Coble, quotes sources giving the readership as 10 readers per copy. *ibid.*, pp. 296-297.

<sup>156</sup> *New Life*’s crime was declaring that the Japanese emperor was only a biologist and that “The Japanese War Office and the capitalistic class are the real rulers of Japan.” Yeh, 1992, p.225.

<sup>157</sup> *ibid.*, p.221.

China.<sup>158</sup> The radicalisation of Zou's publications and his use of CCP writers to write for them resulted in the GMD placing increasing restrictions on them.<sup>159</sup>

To overcome the GMD's controls on salvationist publications, the Shenghuo Bookstore chain was established in 1938. These bookstores then formed part of an underground distribution network linked to the CCP and complementing the activities of the Dushu and Xinzhi chains of stores.<sup>160</sup> The Shenghuo stores also came to form centres of radicalisation and agitation through which CCP leaders such as Zhou Enlai and Dong Biwu could address a wider public.<sup>161</sup>

Like the CCP, the Japanese also realised the importance of Chinese intellectuals for creating appropriate ideological justifications supporting their invasion and occupation of China. The Japanese went to considerable but ultimately unsuccessful efforts to convince, coerce and bribe intellectuals, such as writers, to work for them. Most of the intellectuals who supported Japan were of poor quality and even the Japanese themselves ultimately condemned them as hacks, as pro-China, or as "world citizens."<sup>162</sup> Japan's efforts at self-justification included creating a Chinese political party, the *Xinmin hui* (New peoples association) to represent and inculcate pro-Japanese views but its success appears to have been limited.<sup>163</sup>

### **The MPGs and the PPC After 1937**

The full-scale invasion of China by Japan on July 7, 1937 was a major event in MPG the history. Jiang Jieshi and the GMD found new resolve to resist the Japanese and save China. As a result, the government, and Jiang as national leader, received a

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<sup>158</sup> Coble, 1985, p.301.

<sup>159</sup>For example, Hu Qiaomu, Qian Junrui, Xia Yan, Mao Dun, and Zhang Youyu. Yeh, 1992, pp.226.

<sup>160</sup> This chain became the most extensive wartime distribution network and an institution in its own right. It was supported by an underground network of mainly students who distributed NSA and other publications to avoid GMD restrictions. In 1943 these three chains were re-organised by the CCP's Huang Luofeng as parts of the Sanlian chain. *ibid.*, pp.224-228 and pp.232-233.

<sup>161</sup> *ibid.*, 1992, pp.229.

<sup>162</sup> Meaning that even these intellectuals refused to accept the Japanese world view of Japan as the liberator of Asia. See Poshek Fu, *Passivity, Resistance and Collaboration: Intellectual Choices in Occupied Shanghai, 1937-1945*, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1993), pp.59, 64, 151.

<sup>163</sup> For detail on the *Xinmin hui* and its propagation of a "rule of virtue." See George E. Taylor, *Japanese Sponsored Regime in North China*, (Garland Publishing, Inc. New York, 1980), pp.66-79 and Akira Iriye, "Toward a New Cultural Order: the *Xin-min hui*," in Akira Iriye (ed), *The Chinese and the Japanese: Essays and Political Cultural Interactions*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1980) pt.13, pp.254-74.

tremendous degree of public support. Jiang and the GMD were seen as the only forces having the strength and capability to achieve and maintain the degree of unity China required. The CCP and all the MPGs rallied behind them. Differences were forgotten or temporarily glossed over. By incorporating China's most important political groups into the PPC, the GMD helped symbolise China's new found unity and broad support for its efforts.

The convening of the PPC was a vital step in consolidating the MPGs behind the GMD government and Jiang as the national leader. All the MPGs were represented in the PPC and this inclusion of the substantially increased China's degree of political representation. With this measure, the Conference went far towards meeting the desire for increased democracy, as called for by MPG leaders such as Huang Yanpei, Liang Shuming and Zhang Junmai. More importantly, the PPC symbolised support for the government by all major groups and implied that the members of these groups and any who looked to them for guidance should also rally behind it. It was because the MPGs were recognised and incorporated into the Guomindang's state system, albeit in consultative capacity, that the MPGs muted their criticisms of the nationalist government and instead devoted themselves to supporting it. The MPGs considerable ability to influence public opinion was directed towards maximising national unity and promoting resistance to Japan. The MPGs came to stand solidly behind Jiang, repeatedly expressing support for the GMD, especially after Wang Jingwei defected to Japan in 1938.<sup>164</sup>

The PPC was also a valuable public forum for subjecting the GMD's government to an unprecedented degree of public scrutiny. Another important role was that it allowed the MPGs to help maintain GMD-CCP cooperation in the face of the two armed parties' mutual distrust. The PPC provided the MPGs with a platform from which they could press their calls for more democracy, and increased and guaranteed civil liberties.

In 1939, Liang Shuming undertook an inspection of the front line and discovered for himself the rivalry between the GMD and CCP and the consequent

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<sup>164</sup> Shyu, in Jeans, 1992, p.156.

danger to the CCP-GMD alliance. Together with Huang Yanpei, Li Huang (CYP) and fellow reconstructionist, Yan Yangchu, Liang Shuming agreed to begin co-ordinating their actions in the PPC more closely.<sup>165</sup> In November 1939, this group formed the Association of Comrades for National Unity and Reconstruction (*Tongyi jianguo tongzhi hui*). The Association had three main demands: unequivocal commitment to the war of resistance, the combining and nationalisation of GMD and CCP armies, and the institution of genuine democracy.<sup>166</sup> Reflecting the MPGs' inherent elitism, the Association called for the unity of the "upper strata" (*shang ceng ren shi*) involved in national affairs. It called on this strata to help investigate national policies, seek unanimity of opinions and promote solidarity. The Association accepted the *Three People's Principles* as the best program of resistance against Japan and it upheld Jiang's leadership. In addition to demands for constitutional government, the Association's platform called for the full legalisation, and respect and equality for all political parties. The Association also maintained that the national army should not be used as a political force nor to promote GMD or other party-political aims.<sup>167</sup> The Association of Comrades' demands were all consistent with MPG principles but they were implicitly critical of the GMD. These demands also became recurrent themes in MPG demands of the GMD.

The formation of the Association of Comrades was not welcomed by Jiang Jieshi. He permitted it an informal existence but only after he was re-assured by Liang Shuming that the inclusion into the Association of Shen Junru and Zou Taofen, regarded by Jiang as communists, was less dangerous than their exclusion.<sup>168</sup> Again highlighting the importance of personal connections in Chinese society, Huang Yanpei

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<sup>165</sup> Allito, 1979, p.305.

<sup>166</sup> See "Tongyi jianguo tongzhi xinyue," [Agreement of the Association of Comrades for National Unity and Reconstruction] (November 1939), in Chen Zhujun and Chen Qicheng, *Zhongguo minzhu dangpai lishi ziliao xuanji*, [Selected materials on the history of China's democratic parties], (Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, Shanghai, 1985) vol.1, pp.213-214.

<sup>167</sup> Li Yong and Zhang Zhongtian (eds), *Tongyi zhanxian da shiji: Kang Ri minzu tongyi zhanxian*, [Chronology of great events in the National Anti-Japanese United Front] (Zhongguo Jingji chubanshe, Beijing, 1988A), p.239.

<sup>168</sup> *ibid.*, pp.239-240.

worked hard to build a good personal relationship with Jiang to help protect the Association.<sup>169</sup>

The New Fourth Army Incident of January 1941 shattered the apparent GMD-CCP-MPGs unity. The GMD attacked a CCP army claiming to be en-route to fight the Japanese and this incident became a major propaganda victory for the CCP.<sup>170</sup> Left-wing figures, such as Song Qingling, He Xiangning, Liu Yazhi, and Peng Zemin, immediately demanded that the GMD stop its encirclement of CCP forces, develop its anti-Japanese forces, guarantee protection to all anti-Japanese MPGs and resolve its program towards the CCP.<sup>171</sup>

The Guomindang's attack was seen as evidence of a lack of GMD commitment to resistance and national unity. After the incident the CCP reported that the MPGs "sympathise completely with us."<sup>172</sup> Jiang, however, quickly succeeded in undermining this sympathy by conceding to the MPGs the right to form their own party committees within the PPC.<sup>173</sup> The MPG's outrage at the Guomindang's actions had been quickly tempered by Jiang's concession to their self interest. Moreover, the MPGs then demanded that the CCP make concessions.<sup>174</sup> Principle was important, but so too was political advantage. Despite the MPGs' disappointment in the GMD, it was the latter which held almost all power in its hands and the MPGs were very much reliant on it.

The GMD-CCP alliance changed greatly after January 1941 but it continued nevertheless. The Guomindang stopped contributing towards the communist's war effort and many other forms of cooperation also ceased. The problem for the GMD was that it could not be seen to openly attack the CCP without ample cause. Such actions would be seen as undermining the nationalist's commitment to the anti-Japanese war effort and would destroy its own legitimacy. It had been the need for legitimacy that

<sup>169</sup> Curran, in Jeans, 1992, p.91.

<sup>170</sup> For a thorough appraisal of this event see Gregor Benton, "The South Anhui Incident," *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol.XLV, no.4, August 1985, pp.681-719.

<sup>171</sup> Zhu Qitai (ed), *Tongyi zhanxian da shi ji*, [Chronology of great united front events] (Zhonggong dang shi chubanshe, Beijing, 1991), p.83, p.144.

<sup>172</sup> "Zhongyang yi jiu si yi nian san yue zhengzhi qingbao, [CCP Central Committee political report, March 3, 1941], Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, vol.1, p.5.

<sup>173</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>174</sup> *ibid*.

had forced the GMD to concede the creation of the PPC and cooperation with the CCP. For the CCP, it was vital to keep the GMD in the war, even if passively, in order to prevent it from focussing its military resources against the Party.<sup>175</sup> The nominal maintenance of GMD-CCP cooperation also allowed CCP leaders to address groups in GMD areas and it permitted the continued publication of Party propaganda and instructions via CCP publications such as the *Xinhua ribao* (New China daily).<sup>176</sup> In addition, even nominal cooperation kept alive the possibility of a political solution to GMD-CCP rivalry. United front work continued with the MPGs and the PPC as an important focus of the Party's efforts.

The MPG's had personal connections on both sides through leaders such as Huang Yanpei, Shen Junru, Zou Taofen, and Zhang Bojun. These contacts gave the MPGs a mediating role between the GMD and CCP during periods of friction after January 1941.<sup>177</sup> The increased GMD-CCP tension had resulted in many CCP representatives in Chongqing returning to Yan'an. Mediation efforts by MPG leaders, were partially responsible for the CCP representatives, Dong Biwu and Deng Yingchao, resuming their places in the second PPC.<sup>178</sup>

In their attempts to resolve the GMD-CCP impasse, support resistance, and increase democracy, the MPGs offended the GMD. The optimism of the late 1930s gradually faded as the GMD stepped up its suppression of criticism in the wake of the New Fourth Army Incident. In 1940, the GMD had begun formulating new censorship restrictions and in 1942, it substantially increased restrictions on freedom of speech, assembly, and correspondence.<sup>179</sup> Zou Taofen's Shenghuo bookstores were closed

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<sup>175</sup> This was Kataoka's central thesis. Tetsuya Kataoka, *Resistance and Revolution in China: The Communists and the Second United Front*, (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1974).

<sup>176</sup> The importance of these papers to promoting united front work was great. See Huang Shujun and Yang Shuxiu (eds), *Kang Ri Minzu tongyi zhanxian de hao iao: Zhandou zai Guo tong qu de Xinhua ribao*, [The bugle of the national united front: *Xinhua ribao's* battle in GMD dominated areas] (Chongqing chubanshe, Chongqing, 1995).

<sup>177</sup> For example meeting with Zhou Enlai in February 1941. Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.144. Huang met with Jiang several times to try to heal the rift. Curran, in Jeans, 1992, p.92.

<sup>178</sup> Shyu, in Jeans, 1992, p.158.

<sup>179</sup> "Measures of Censorship of Pre-Published Books and Periodicals" 1939 was passed despite strong opposition in the PPC. The *National General Mobilisation Act* of May 1942 was promulgated after China formally declared war on the Axis powers. Shyu, in Jeans, 1992, p.160.

down and taken over by the VES's Guoxun stores. Zou Taofen fled to Hong Kong in February 1941.<sup>180</sup>

As conditions deteriorated, the MPGs again moved to increase cooperation. In March 1941, seventeen members of the Association of Comrades secretly reorganised their parties as the League of Chinese Democratic Political Groups (*Zhongguo minzhu zhengtuan tongmeng* or Democratic League). Huang Yanpei was elected chairman.<sup>181</sup> The League's political program was similar to that of the Comrades Association. The new organisation remained secret while members waited to see what the response to a public announcement of its existence would bring. An earlier attempt to win Jiang's approval for such a league had been rejected soon after the New Fourth Army Incident.<sup>182</sup>

On "Double Ten Day," October 10, 1941, the Democratic League went public.<sup>183</sup> A new Hong Kong-based mouthpiece for the League, the *Guangming bao*, carried the declaration of the League's founding. Chongqing was considered too dangerous for such a venture and Liang Shuming was dispatched to Hong Kong to establish it.<sup>184</sup> The League's existence was twice exposed prematurely. Youth Party members informed Jiang Jieshi of MPG intentions to re-organise. The establishment of *Guangming bao* was part of an effort to overcome Jiang's objections by first winning support for the League and its objectives from Overseas Chinese.<sup>185</sup> When the GMD leader Sun Fo heard of Liang's efforts to organise a paper he announced that there was

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<sup>180</sup> Curran, in Jeans, 1992, p.92.

<sup>181</sup> Li Yong, *et al*, 1988A, p.304.

<sup>182</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.171.

<sup>183</sup> See "Zhongguo minzhu zhengtuan tongmeng chengli xuanchuan," [Declaration of the establishment of The League of Chinese Democratic Political Groups], Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, pp.214-216, and Yu Gang (ed), *Zhongguo ge minzhu dangpai*, [All China's democratic parties], (Zhongguo wenyi chubanshe, Beijing 1987), pp.458-460. Not entirely coincidentally, the first *Guangming ribao*, also appeared the same day CCP general Zhu De told readers of *Jiefang ribao* (Liberation daily) that the revolution required continuing with the united front including continued co-operation with the GMD. See Zhu De, "The May Fourth Movement remembered," (*Qinhai huiyi*), *Jiefang ribao*, October 10, 1941. In Li Yong, *et al*, 1988A, p.319.

<sup>184</sup> The paper actually began publication on September 20, 1941. Ju Guang, "Zhongguo minzhu zhengtuan tongmeng de jianli yu zhongjian shili de lianhe," [The establishment of the Chinese League of Democratic Political Groups and the joining of the middle forces], in Zhang Tienan, Song Chun and Zhu Jianhua (eds), *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian da shi jishi benmou*, [Great Fundamental and incidental events in China's united front], (Jilin Chubanshe, Changchun, 1990), p.282. Huang Yanpei personally contributed 1,000 yuan towards its establishment. Curran in Jeans, 1992, p.91.

<sup>185</sup> According to van Slyke there was also resistance to the radical nature the League's manifesto and some wanted it watered down. This probably accounts for the CYP informing Jiang of MPG intentions. Van Slyke, 1967, p.176.

no such League. Liang was forced to telegram Chongqing directing members there to make an immediate public announcement about the League.<sup>186</sup>

The League's establishment was formalised on November 16 1941 when the GMD and CCP attended a formal meeting at which the CYP, NSP, the Third Party, the Rural Reconstructionists and the VES announced the establishment of the League. The NSA was not officially represented because it was perceived to be too close politically with the CCP and its inclusion would therefore have been provocative.<sup>187</sup> Nevertheless, the GMD still denounced the League as a fifth column.<sup>188</sup>

The Democratic League's political demands were the now familiar ones of national unity, a united national army, constitutional government and democratic politics.<sup>189</sup> The League used the second PPC to campaign for political liberalisation and an early end to GMD tutelage by establishing a system of indirect democracy in the form of official organs reflecting public opinion (*minyi jiguan*). It demanded that the GMD cease using public funds and forcing individuals to join the GMD; to stop using state cultural organisations (*Wenhua jiguan*) for party political purposes; to guarantee basic freedoms and end stop secret service activities; to abolish the examination system for officials; and to cease organising GMD Party groups in the army.<sup>190</sup>

The League's calls directly undermined the sources of GMD power and were unacceptable. The GMD's response was to cut MPG representation in the PPC from 100 to 60 while doubling its own from 88 to 164.<sup>191</sup> At the same time, the entry of America into the war against Japan eased the pressure on the GMD armies and Jiang stepped up efforts against the CCP.

In 1943, the MPG's predicament improved as the GMD's deteriorated. The GMD was criticised by the Democratic League, the CCP and its American allies, for its authoritarianism and its increasing military attacks on the CCP. It once again began to

<sup>186</sup> Luo Longji, in Yu Gang, 1987, pp.125-126.

<sup>187</sup> Li Yong, *et al*, 1988A, p.322.

<sup>188</sup> *ibid.*, p.283.

<sup>189</sup> See "Zhongguo minzhu zhengtuan tongmeng chengli xuanchuan," [Declaration of the establishment of the Chinese League of democratic groups], in Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, pp.214-216.

<sup>190</sup> "Shixian minzhu yi jia qiang kangzhan liliang shuli jianguo jichu an," [Basic plan for realising democracy, strengthening the focus of resistance and establishing reconstruction] (November 25 1941), Li Yong, *et al*, 1988A, p.323.

<sup>191</sup> Shyu, in Jeans, 1992, p.153-154.

make concessions. To pacify its critics, the GMD promised increased democracy; brought forward the date for ending the Period of Tutelage; and relaxed many restrictions on political activity. This relaxation allowed the Democratic League to expand in places such as Kunming, where it benefited from the added protection of the warlord Long Yun. Despite this relaxation, by July 1943, most of the remaining CCP representatives in Chongqing had returned to Yan'an to protest against what the Party called "the third anti-communist high tide" of nationalist attacks on communist forces. The CCP warned the MPGs not to be deceived by Jiang's promises of democracy and constitutionalism.<sup>192</sup>

The GMD conceded to some of the MPG's demands and in November 1943, it allowed the establishment of the Association to Assist in the Inauguration of Constitutionalism (*Xianzheng shishi xiejin hui*). League leaders, such as Huang Yanpei and Zhang Junmai, worked assiduously to promote the constitutionalist cause they had long espoused.<sup>193</sup> Huang not only organised seminars to publicise constitutionalism, he also defended the GMD's record.<sup>194</sup> The Association also published a journal, *Constitutional Government* (*Xuanzheng yuekan*), to help promote their new movement.

By April 1944, Huang and other MPG leaders in the Democratic League began preparing the League's re-organisation.<sup>195</sup> Meeting in Chongqing on September 19 1944, the League decided to abolish group membership and allow membership by individuals. The League's name was shortened to the Chinese Democratic League (*Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng*), a platform was drawn up and a Standing Committee chosen. All leaders were given important committee posts.<sup>196</sup> These changes had far reaching consequences.

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<sup>192</sup> "Mao Zedong tongyi Zhou Enlai guanyu jiepo Guomindang canzheng hui de yinmou wenti gei Mao zhuxi de xin," [Mao Zedong approves Zhou Enlai's letter regarding exposing the GMD's political consultative meeting plot] (August 19, 1943), in Zhongyang Tongzhan bu & Zhongyang dangan guan (eds), *Kang Ri minzu tongyi zhanxian wenjian xuan bian*, [The National Anti-Japanese United Front: selected documents] (Dangan chubanshe, Beijing 1986) vols.1-3., vol.3, p.363.

<sup>193</sup> Huang had been involved in efforts to promote a Chinese constitution since 1908 and Zhang was also vitally concerned with constitutional issues.

<sup>194</sup> Curran, in Jeans, 1992 p.293.

<sup>195</sup> Li Yong, *et al*, 1988, p.356.

<sup>196</sup> Zhang Lan was elected as League Chairman with Zuo Shunsheng as secretary, Zhang Bojun as head of Organisation Committee, Luo Longji as Propaganda Committee head, Liang Shuming as Internal Relations Committee head with Zhang Junmai as head of the International Relations Committee. *ibid.*, p.372. See also Van Slyke, 1967, p.178.

According to Luo Longji, the initiative for these changes came from the League's Kunming branch and they were designed to reduce manipulation of the League by some parties.<sup>197</sup> The target of these changes was the League's right-wing, particularly the China Youth Party. The CYP was the largest MPG; it was anti-communist and it controlled both the Leagues' finances and its administration.<sup>198</sup> Membership of the League began to grow but there was a qualitative change in its status *vis a vis* its constituent groups. The new rules allowed new members to join the League directly rather than through one of its constituent MPGs. The League's growth was therefore at the expense of the other MPGs. League branches were set up in Guangdong where they published *First light (Shu guang)*. The new Kunming branch soon had 200 members, Chengdu 2,000, Chongqing 330, and the North East branch 150 members. By October 1945, the League membership totalled 3,000.<sup>199</sup> Branches for overseas students were also established in Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, Vietnam, London and New York.<sup>200</sup> Ideologically, the aims remained the same.

The changes to the League remained secret and undisclosed until after the war against Japan ended in October 1945 when the general political situation improved markedly.<sup>201</sup> Part of the explanation for this secrecy was the increasing degree of GMD intimidation. In October 1944, a Democratic League meeting was bombed during a speech by Luo Longji. Arrests of members and disruptions of meetings by GMD organised mobs occurred often and there were frequent forced closures and censorship of League related publications.<sup>202</sup>

### **The Chinese Communist Party and the MPGs**

The MPGs were involved in much more than a simple two way relationship with the GMD. The actions and policies of the CCP were also vitally important to them, both directly and indirectly. In the mid 1930s, the remnant CCP came very close to

<sup>197</sup> Luo Longji, in Yu Gang, 1987, p.123.

<sup>198</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.180.

<sup>199</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.105.

<sup>200</sup> Luo Longji, in Yu Gang, 1987, p.124.

<sup>201</sup> For the League's program see, "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng gangling," Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, pp.224-229.

<sup>202</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.178.

being destroyed. The Party's almost 10,000 kilometres forced retreat, the Long March between October 1934 and October 1935 and the CCP's eventual settlement in Yan'an in Shaanxi province, reduced communist numbers dramatically. Only some eight to nine thousand of the 80,000 who started the march completed it. In October 1935, the combined CCP forces totalled some 30,000, which was only 10 percent of the previous year's total of 300,000.<sup>203</sup> By the time the Party settled in Yan'an, it was isolated geographically and politically. The Japanese invasion had, however, provided it with a basis for appealing to all groups including warlords, bourgeoisie, MPGs and elements in the GMD. From 1935, the CCP consciously set about winning over allies in the form of the National Anti-Japanese United Front.

While the first GMD-CCP united front had culminated in the 1927 massacres of numerous Party members and the destruction the CCP's urban base, it had not been without valuable long-term benefits. The CCP was formed in 1920-21 as a handful of tiny cells of which the five member Shanghai cell led by Chen Duxiu became most famous. In August 1922, Sun Yatsen had agreed to allow CCP and Communist Youth League members to enter the GMD as individuals. Sun had only turned to the Soviet Union and the Comintern for help after his army had been defeated by the warlord, Chen Jiongmeng.<sup>204</sup> The Comintern over-ruled objections within the CCP from those who were afraid of being subsumed by the GMD.<sup>205</sup> The 'bloc within' united front was subsequently ratified by the GMD in January 1924.

Once admitted to the GMD, the CCP grew rapidly. In 1923, the Party had totalled a mere 150-200 members against the GMD's 27,600. By June 1926, the CCP had grown to 10,000 (the GMD reached 187,000) and by April 1927, total membership

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<sup>203</sup> Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1965) p.199.

<sup>204</sup> Dov Bing, "Sneevliet and the Early Years of the CCP," *Journal of Oriental studies*, vol.12, 1975, p.91.

<sup>205</sup> Hans van den Ven, *From Friends to Comrades: The Founding of the Chinese Communist Party 1920-1927*, (University of California Press, Berkely, 1991), p.107. As late as July 1924, CCP leaders Cheng Duxiu, Mao Zedong, and Cai Hesen again voted to terminate co-operation. R.A. Ulanovsky (ed), *The Comintern and the East*, (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979), pp.315-316.

The CCP opposed the united front for the same reason that Gramsci had initially opposed them, fear of being subsumed by a larger ally. Gramsci attended the CI debates in Moscow which called for united or popular fronts but he was in jail when Dimitrov called for a broad anti-fascist peoples front in 1935. Buci-Glucksmann, 1980, p.186.

reached 58,000.<sup>206</sup> The cover afforded by the alliance with the GMD also allowed the CCP to rapidly expand the workers and peasants movements. Between May 1924 and May 1925, some 800,00 workers took part in political strikes.<sup>207</sup> The protection afforded by the GMD military allowed the CCP to organise in rural areas and win over peasants usually rendered passive by their fear of landlord retribution.<sup>208</sup> The support for the GMD in urban areas also underscored the power of nationalism to urban residents and the CCP thus prospered on the back of the GMD's nationalist credentials.<sup>209</sup> Other benefits of alliance included the direct practical lessons on organisation the CCP learnt from the Comintern advisers. Just as importantly, the alliance allowed Party members to establish or develop personal relationships with GMD members, particularly among officers at the GMD's military academies where many prominent CCP leaders, such as Zhou Enlai, lectured. These relationships were to later prove invaluable.<sup>210</sup> Thus, even though the CCP was struck a major blow by the GMD's attacks in 1927, it was still far stronger and more experienced than it had been before the alliance and than it would have been if no alliance had been entered into. It had also established many connections and left many sympathisers and members within the GMD's party and mass organisations.

While the CCP's 1935 united front policy was, in part, imposed by the Comintern, it was soon assimilated by the Party and became an integral part of its overall strategy for the next two decades.<sup>211</sup> By 1934, all provinces were cooperating in

<sup>206</sup> Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928*, (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1976).

<sup>207</sup> Harold Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, (2nd Ed. Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1961), p.104.

<sup>208</sup> Van den Ven, 1991, pp.164-169, pp.195-196.

<sup>209</sup> *ibid.*, p.204.

<sup>210</sup> In 1926, 75 percent of the Huangpu Military Academy instructors were CCP members. See C Martin Wilbur, "The Nationalist Revolution: From Canton to Nanking, 1923-1928," *Cambridge History of China*, vol.12, p.528.

<sup>211</sup> The most recent writings on CI involvement include: Anthony Coogan "North East China and the Origins of the Anti-Japanese United Front," *Modern China*, vol. 20, no. 3, July 1994, pp.282-314. Michael M. Sheng, "Mao, Stalin, and the Formation of the Anti-Japanese United Front," *China Quarterly*, no.129, March 1992, pp.149-170. John W. Garver, "Mao, The Comintern and the Second United Front," A response to Michael M. Sheng, "Mao, Stalin, and the Formation of the Anti-Japanese United Front," *China Quarterly*, no.129, March 1992, pp.171-179. This includes Michael M. Sheng's reply, "Mao and Stalin: Adversaries or Comrades?" pp.180-183. Garver, 1988, pp.29-59. Gregor Benton, "The Second Wang Ming Line" *China Quarterly*, no.61, March 1975, pp.61-94. A Russian perspective is offered by K.V. Kukushkin, "The CI and the United National Anti-Japanese Front in China, 1935-43," in Ulanovsky 1979. Kui-Kwong Shum, *The Chinese Communist's Road to Power: the Anti-Japanese United Front 1935-1945*, (HK University Press, HK, 1988). The role of individuals such as Zhang

achieving its extermination. The CCP could not rely on peasants alone to ensure its survival. It had no choice but to both broaden its base of support, find new allies, and to somehow force the GMD to cease its attacks.

The failures of the CCP's Soviets demonstrated the vulnerability of a party which created enemies before it had a chance to consolidate power. Killing or scaring away landlords and local educated elements had resulted in the disappearance of those who carried out much of the day-to-day administration of these areas. Replacement administrative expertise had then to be found from within depleted Party ranks just when the Party needed all its members to defend the areas. Nor did the CCP have time to train peasants as administrators. The CCP was thus deprived of vital skills of local intellectuals before it had time to create substitutes for them. Moreover, those gentry who fled to the cities fulminated, in the press and in person, against the CCP and its policies. Just as crucially, despite having earlier opposed GMD attempts to impose more control over their areas, they now began to co-operate with it in order to plan military campaigns against the communists.<sup>212</sup> This situation illustrated some of Gramsci's points. The rural elite had first to become allies and assist the consolidation of CCP power and the creation of new intellectuals from among the peasantry. In the interim, while the revolutionary forces were still very weak, the landlord classes had to be prevented from their active opponents. The rural intellectuals were needed to make the transition to communist rule and not to become alienated. These principles learnt at the micro-level were just as valid at the national level.

From the mid 1930s, the CCP sought to complement its military strategy by winning over as many classes and segments of society as possible. It moderated or abandoned many of its radical 'left' policies, such as class struggle which antagonised or intimidated potential allies, and developed new policies to win over friends. The passive neutrality of those who could not be convinced to become allies was just as

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Wentian in the CCP's united front work during this period are particularly deserving of investigation and are likely to reveal that they were crucial to its success.

<sup>212</sup> Some of the factors driving the need for a CCP united front with other classes as a result of the setbacks in the CCP Soviets are discussed in K. Hartford and Steven M. Goldstein, *Single Sparks: China's Rural Revolutions*, (Studies of the East Asian Institute, Columbia University, ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1989).

important. Even if such people did not actively support the Party or its causes, the withdrawal of their active support for the GMD would effectively isolate and delegitimise it and thus help the CCP.<sup>213</sup> The basis of the CCP's appeals was patriotism supported by political liberalisation. Patriotism was the only call powerful enough to persuade many Chinese to put aside their sectarian and personal interests and support the anti-Japanese cause. In June 1937, the CCP leader Bo Gu, (Qin Bangxian) put the Party's predicament and its response succinctly when he declared:

For nine years we have struggled under the Soviet slogan and have had no success in the whole of China. The petty bourgeois masses and others did not support the Soviet slogan but they can support the nationalist and democratic slogans.<sup>214</sup>

Patriotism and broader political appeals for 'democracy' allowed the CCP's Anti-Japanese United Front to consist of much more than GMD-CCP cooperation:

... it should be united front of the whole nation with the two parties only forming a part of it. It should be a united front of all parties and groups, people in all walks of life and all armed forces, a united front of all patriots - the workers, the peasants, soldiers intellectuals and urban petty bourgeoisie and a large number of patriots.<sup>215</sup>

While the MPGs were only one group of allies among many, they were to play a valuable role in this front. In the short term they were to be used to help keep the GMD within the greater united front.<sup>216</sup> In the long term they were to be used to isolate the GMD.<sup>217</sup> The CCP sought to broaden the front to include "all parties and groups" throughout the war.<sup>218</sup> The Party's united front policies evolved from the "recruit large forces for the purpose of surrounding and annihilating the enemy" principle to consolidate the left-wing, win over the middle elements, and isolate the right-wing.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>213</sup> This was the plan outlined by Liu Shaoqi, i.e., to win over the middle forces as much as possible, push the GMD to the left and isolate the diehard anti-CCP faction. See Liu Shaoqi, "Xian shibian de yiyi ji yihou xingshi," (The Xi'an Incident: its significance and the subsequent situation) January 14, 1937, in Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.101.

<sup>214</sup> Nym Wales, *My Yennan Notebooks*, quoted by Chalmers Johnson in "Communist Leadership and Mass Response: The Yenan Period and the Socialist Education Campaign," in Ping-ti Ho and Tang Tsou (eds), *China in Crisis*, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968), vo.1, p.410.

<sup>215</sup> Mao Zedong, "Urgent Tasks Following the Establishment of the KMT-CCP Co-operation," (Sept. 29, 1937) in *SW*, vol.2, pp.35-46.

<sup>216</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "On Protracted War," (May -June 1938), *SW*, vol.2, pp.113-194.

<sup>217</sup> The MPGs and other organisations in "white areas were to be infiltrated and radicalised to put pressure on GMD in a variation of the 'bloc within' tactic of the First Period of GMD-CCP Cooperation (1924-1927) was articulated by Liu Shaoqi. See Liu Shaoqi, "Xian shibian de yiyi ji yihou xingshi," [The Xian Incident: its significance and the subsequent situation] (January 14, 1937), in Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.101.

<sup>218</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.2, pp.51, 68, 130.

<sup>219</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "On Tactics against Japanese Imperialism," (December 27, 1935) *SW*, vol.1, p.163.

Mao's "On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism" (December 27, 1935), provided the theoretical justification for allowing the Party to cooperate with other classes under the banner of nationalism. The petty bourgeoisie, said Mao, were demanding resistance to Japan and they had been injured by the imperialist and counter-revolutionary predations which had forced them into bankruptcy and unemployment. Even China's national bourgeoisie was becoming insolvent and while Mao regarded this group as vacillating and indecisive, he believed that segments of it would come over to the revolutionary side. Mao declared that some of these allies would be unmasked as fake revolutionaries, but this only reinforced the need for the CCP to gain and maintain leadership, to exercise vigilance over them and to criticise and "unmask" allies if they opposed the revolution.<sup>220</sup>

In October 1935, the CCP issued secret instructions to win over any parties, including "social democrat and nationalist factions" which wanted to oppose Jiang and Japan.<sup>221</sup> The Party immediately began investigating "friendly parties" and other groups. The August One Declaration, issued in the CCP's name, nominated as target groups, peasant, student, commerce, and home-town associations, Salvation Associations, trade and teacher unions, semi-secret societies, such as the Hongmen, prominent individuals, political experts, and any others who opposed Jiang.<sup>222</sup>

In late November 1935, Zhang Wentian, a Soviet-trained CCP leader, clarified the need for united front policies to concentrate on Japan. Even allies of the GMD were to be included, if they opposed the Japanese. Old enmities were to be forgotten and leftist "closed-doorism," a dogmatic insistence on proletarian class purity which opposed co-operation with non-proletarians, let alone ostensible class enemies, was to be resisted fiercely.<sup>223</sup> However, the Party's secret instructions of October 1935, made

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<sup>220</sup> *ibid.*, pp.154-157.

<sup>221</sup> Secret Party instructions on opposing Japan and denouncing Jiang, October 1935, quoted in Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.83.

<sup>222</sup> While Zhu Qitai places the "August One Declaration" ("Wei kang Ri jiuguo gao quanti tongbao shu") in August 1935. It was actually drafted in Moscow by the CCP Comintern representative Wang Ming (Chen Shaoyu) in conjunction with the Comintern and published first in Paris in the Comintern sponsored *Jiuguo shibao* (National Salvation Daily) in October and subsequently relayed to the CCP. For more detail on this chronology see, Garver, 1988, p.23 and p.36.

<sup>223</sup> Zhang Wentian, "Yonghu Suweite yu Nonggong jun de kang Ri xuanchuan," [Protect the Soviet and Peasant-worker Army], in Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.85. Zhang was one of the "twenty eight bolsheviks."

it very clear that rallying allies to repel Japanese imperialism was only one aim; it went hand in hand with the goal of eventually eliminating (*xiaomie*) Jiang.<sup>224</sup> Reports from investigations of potential allies formed a basis of this urban united front work, especially after the CCP was legalised in 1938.<sup>225</sup> But until 1938, the CCP had to rely on the initiative of an isolated few remaining urban activists.

By the time of the CCP's legalisation, many of the CCP's united front plans were in place and many of the issues surrounding the united front had been settled. In October 1938, the Party adopted *The General Program for United Front Work*. In addition to the popular nationalist call of resistance to Japan, the Party planned to promote the "struggle for democracy and freedom" as much as possible.<sup>226</sup> This struggle was aimed directly at GMD controlled urban areas where such calls had real appeal. As part of this struggle, the CCP promoted the raising of the general status of the MPGs' and their role in the PPC in particular. Complementing this, the CCP supported the related principles of constitutionalism. The full legalisation of the MPGs therefore became a CCP demand during its negotiations with the GMD. The CCP's "struggle for democracy and freedom" and its active anti-Japanese national popular appeals were clear bids to establish its leadership over the GMD. The CCP had set out clearly the basis on which it sought to win broad support and the support of the MPGs. Although the GMD realised that its power was being challenged, it failed to understand how to respond adequately.

To minimise negative perceptions of the gap between itself and the GMD, the CCP stressed, not the differences, but the similarities between the GMD's Three People's Principles and communism.<sup>227</sup> The CCP's appropriation of Sun Yatsen's

<sup>224</sup> Secret Party instructions on opposing Japan and denouncing Jiang, October, 1935. *ibid.*, p.83.

<sup>225</sup> See "The expansion of united front work" (Party directive of August 5 1940). This stressed the need for thorough research into all potential allies including MPGs as a basis for united front work. In Appendix 3 of Van Slyke, 1967, pp.263-265. Van Slyke gives the author as Zhang Zhiyi, a later director of the UFD. *ibid.*, pp.181, p.293, fn.69.

<sup>226</sup> Mao Tse-tung,, "The tasks of the CCP in the Period of Resistance to Japan," (Delivered in Yan'an, May 3, 1937), *SW*, vol.1, pp.263-283.

<sup>227</sup> Mao had stressed the role of Sun Yatsen in his interview with James Bertram in October 1937. Mao Zedong, *SW*, vol.2, pp.47-59. Zhou Enlai did likewise when he laid down an important series of principles for united front work in August 1939. See, "Guanyu tongyi zhanxian de celue, fangfa, he shouze," [United front tactics, methods and principles] (August 4, 1939), in *Zhou Enlai tongyi zhanxian wenxuan* [Zhou Enlai's united front selected works] (Zhonggong zhongyang tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu & Zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi, Renmin chubanshe, Beijing, 1984), p.43.

Three People's Principles ideology was another attempt to convince potential supporters that the CCP was not only not a threat to them, it also merely wished to implement popular policies.<sup>228</sup> To help win over "fair minded" (*gong zheng*) people, the CCP constantly emphasised the successful implementation of united front policies and the role of Party members and CCP areas as models: of upright behaviour, political moderation, and personal honesty.<sup>229</sup> This united front work included economic work because, said Liu Shaoqi, improving economic conditions was one way of demonstrating the difference between the CCP and GMD.<sup>230</sup>

In CCP controlled areas, the Party practised united front work by implementing the 'democratic' "three thirds system." Based on experience gained in CCP base areas after January 1938,<sup>231</sup> this system was an election based institutionalisation of cross-class political representation and a manifestation of "New Democracy." Representative bodies were established in which one third of places were allocated to CCP members, one third to non-Party left progressives and one third for persons neither left nor right.<sup>232</sup> Respected local figures, especially teachers, were nominated to such bodies as important symbols, explicitly to win over non-Party and "middle elements."<sup>233</sup> Encouraging political participation by almost all groups, from landlords to poor peasants, was seen by the CCP as a way to avoid the alienation and passivity common

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<sup>228</sup> By 1940, the CCP's version of Sun Yatsen's thought was united front work's number one propaganda appeal. Resistance was the second appeal, democracy the third, the principle of the people's livelihood fourth and encouraging the able bodied to defend the homeland was fifth. The fact that all were part of the GMD program was explicitly noted. See Mao's, "Problems of Tactics in the United Front," (March 11, 1940), *SW*, vol.2, p.429.

<sup>229</sup> Zhou Enlai, 1984, pp.43-44. In December 1936, Zhou also stated that the North-West Anti-Japanese Base had to be turned into a model of united front work. In Zhou Enlai, *The Selected Works of Zhou Enlai*, (Foreign Language Press, Beijing, 1981), vol.1, p.91. Mao Zedong, "Communists should set an example in the national war" in "The Role of the CCP in the National War, (October 1938) *SW*, vol.2, pp.197-198. Liu Shaoqi also stressed that this had an, "important exemplary role to play in promoting nationwide democratisation, and so their performance, good or bad, will exert a significant influence on other parts of the country." In "On Anti-Japanese Political Power," Liu Shaoqi, *The Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1984), vol.1, p.178.

<sup>230</sup> Liu Shaoqi, "Overcome Difficulties, Prepare for a Counter Offensive and Create Conditions for Building a New China After the War," (July 20 1942). *ibid.*, pp.223-224.

<sup>231</sup> Zhu Guangyi, "'San san zhi' yu Kang Ri genju di tongyi zhanxian zhengquan," [The three-thirds system and Anti-Japanese base united front political power], in Zhang Tienan, 1990, pp.223-228.

<sup>232</sup> See Mao's, "On the Question of Political Power in the Anti-Japanese Base Areas," (March 6, 1940), *SW*, vol.2, pp.417-419, and, "Current Problems of Tactics in the Anti-Japanese United Front," (March 11, 1940), *SW*, vol.2, pp.421-430.

<sup>233</sup> Li Weihan, *Huiyi yu yanjiu*, [Reminiscences and research], (Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, Beijing, 1986), vol.2, pp.521-522.

to dictatorship.<sup>234</sup> The system also overcame another feature which the CCP's Li Weihan also regarded as a problem: that of "avoiding a tendency towards homogeneity." This homogeneity resulted from the proclivity of Party cadres to choose a group of very similar people rather than a representative mix; this was regarded as counter-productive to encouraging people to govern themselves.<sup>235</sup> By involving local people as much as possible in self-government, the CCP reduced the number of Party cadres it needed to ensure its control. This system thus overcame many of the problems experienced in the earlier Soviets. Significantly, the essentially corporatist three thirds system, with its selective institutionalised representation from different groups, was the sort of participatory democracy advocated by MPG leaders, such as Liang Shuming and Huang Yanpei. Yet, while the CCP highlighted the three thirds system as a major manifestation of its democratic credentials, the Party never regarded it as an end in itself. However, a three thirds principle has remained a recurring underlying theme in the CCP's united front work and concepts of democracy.

In late 1939, the publication of Mao's "On New Democracy" provided the CCP's united front work with a full theoretical framework, for not only the duration of the war against Japan, but also for the struggle with GMD and the subsequent transition to socialism.<sup>236</sup> The CCP's New Democracy promised an unspecified period of co-existence of different classes and different forms of ownership, rather than the immediate overthrow of bourgeois and feudal classes and abolition of private property. All groups not hostile to the CCP would be accorded political representation in a formal united front system.

The united front operated at several levels including the politically symbolic. The CCP wanted to demonstrate that it could win support from almost every group because it was seen as superior to the GMD. By actively promoting the struggle against Japan, the CCP sought to highlight its nationalist credentials and with its calls for 'democracy,' calls supported by the three thirds system, the CCP sought to prove that it would deliver democratic and administrative reform. When the CCP could win

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<sup>234</sup> Van Slyke quoting Xie Xuezai. In Van Slyke, 1967, p.151.

<sup>235</sup> Li Weihan, 1986, p.126.

<sup>236</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.2, pp.339-384.

enough support from representatives of other groups it would have legitimacy and achieve hegemony. At the same time, the Party sought to reduce GMD hegemony by discrediting it. This struggle was not a zero sum game. The GMD's loss of support did not automatically equate with support for the CCP but it did reduce the power of the GMD to oppose the CCP.

The CCP's united front served the Comintern's purposes by allying the Party with the GMD to fight Japan and thereby forestall a Japanese attack on the Soviet Union. At the same time, the alliance benefited the CCP by preventing attacks on it by the GMD. The CCP's main priority after 1935 was to protect its remaining strength and rebuild its forces.<sup>237</sup> In GMD areas, the CCP's calls for 'democracy,' the right to conduct political activities, and for resistance to Japan, re-inforced each other:

Resistance and democracy are interdependent, just as are resistance and internal peace, democracy and internal peace. Democracy is the guarantee of resistance while resistance can provide favourable conditions for developing the movement for democracy.<sup>238</sup>

By democratic movements, the CCP meant any political effort which maintained the political pressure on the GMD to continue to resist Japan and not turn against the CCP.

At the local level, the CCP's experiences in establishing rural soviets had indicated the difficulties of insistence on class purity and revolutionary elitism. Alienating local gentry, landlords and traders forced them to flee to the towns and deprived the CCP of their skills and administrative expertise and economic influence. Once ensconced in the towns and cities, these same groups mobilised their resources to support the GMD's anti-CCP actions. The CCP was thus forced to devote more of its precious resources to administering the areas it occupied, to compensate for the loss of these groups. At the same time it became more susceptible to GMD attack.<sup>239</sup> The CCP needed to amass allies until it could defeat its major enemies and then progressively do away with its allies by replacing them with its own ranks.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Sheng, 1992, p.167.

<sup>238</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Win the Masses in Their Millions for the Anti-Japanese United Front," (May 7, 1937), *SW*, vol.1, p.288.

<sup>239</sup> Hartford, *et al*, 1989, *passim*.

<sup>240</sup> In December 1936, when discussing the GMD's tactic of encirclement to destroy CCP bases, Mao had declared that: "Distinction must be made between the landlords, merchants and the rich peasants, and the main point is to explain things to them politically and win their neutrality." See Mao's "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," *SW*, vol.1, p.211.

United front work was, and remains, inextricably linked with personal friendship.<sup>241</sup> In addition to the use of popular causes such as anti-Japanese patriotism and political concessions, united front work included turning individuals into friends and utilising *guanxi* in the manner attempted by Deng Yanda and the Third Party. Covert action was also important. By late 1938, subversion of the GMD (so-called white-anting) was dismissed as unfeasible but infiltrating groups like the MPGs and using them to promote CCP causes was possible.<sup>242</sup> The principles behind this covert work were to keep a clear head, unite the public and the secret struggle, unite the legal and illegal, unite struggles over livelihood with the political struggle and unite upper and lower level work.<sup>243</sup> Despite joining other organisations, CCP members were to uphold at all times, the principle of maintaining the independence of the CCP.<sup>244</sup>

The principle of "unity with struggle," struggle within alliances which consisted of anything from gentle persuasion to coercion, was also adopted as integral to united front work.<sup>245</sup> Zhang Wentian made it clear that the mass revolutionary struggle in GMD areas should be led by the CCP. Yet Party members had to be indistinguishable

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<sup>241</sup> Mao linked the two directly in his instruction on expanding united front work in his 1940 directive, "our members should... develop extensive united front work, ie make friends." which, in addition to GMD soldiers, included the seven categories of "middle elements" of which the MPGs were one. See "Freely Expand the Anti-Japanese Forces and Resist the Onslaughts of the Anti-Communist Diehards," *SW*, vol.2, p.435.

<sup>242</sup> According to Van Slyke, Zhang Wentian's recommendations on infiltrating the GMD were rejected by the CCP Central Committee in September 1938. The Committee recommended instead that Party members join representative bodies and use them as forums for promoting CCP views. Fn. 5 of Mao's "After the fall of Shanghai and Taiyuan" includes these injunctions as part of "Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Concerning the Communist Party's Participation in the Government," sections 2 and 5. *SW*, vol.2, pp.72-73.

<sup>243</sup> Guo Xiaoping, "Lun Zhongguo gongchandang Baiqu gongzuo fangzhen celue de xingshi," [A discussion of the form of the CCP's strategic policies in White areas] *Zhonggong dang shi yanjiu*, no.2, 1992, pp.52-58., p.58. See also Liu Shaoqi, "Party and Mass Work in White Areas," (May 1937), Liu Shaoqi, *SW*, vol.1, pp.65-81.

<sup>244</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "The Question of Independence and Initiative within the United Front," (November 5, 1938), *SW*, vol.2, pp.213-217.

<sup>245</sup> See Mao's "Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Concerning the Communist Party's Participation in the Government," sections 2 and 5, *SW* vol.2, pp.72-73. Mao explained the importance of this concept for the Party in October 1939 stating:

One important component of the the political line of the of the Chinese Communist Party is the policy of both uniting with the bourgeoisie and struggling against it. In fact, the development and tempering of the Party through its unity and struggle with the bourgeoisie are an important component of Party building. Unity here means the united front with the bourgeoisie. Struggle here means the "peaceful" and "bloodless struggle" ideological, political, and organisational which goes on when we are united with the bourgeoisie and which turns into armed struggle when we are forced to break with it.

In "Introducing the Communist," (October 4, 1939). *ibid.*, pp.290-291.

from the public; they had to be inconspicuous, and they had to promote non-Party activists as leaders.<sup>246</sup>

The second GMD-CCP alliance allowed the CCP to re-establish itself in GMD controlled cities, to restore links with urban groups, such as the MPGs, and therefore to extend the wider united front.<sup>247</sup> Legalisation of the CCP allowed the building of links with groups of ostensible class enemies, such as Shanghai's capitalists and warlords. Because of their links and influence within these important urban groups and their influence in the press, the MPGs were singled out for special consideration and their members and leadership were to be won over. In Mao's words, "Wherever there are democratic parties or individuals willing to cooperate with us, the proper attitude is to talk things over with them and to work with them. "Good communists," Mao said, "had to be good at working with allies."<sup>248</sup>

### **The CCP's Southern Region Office and the MPGs**

Personal relations were so important in united front work that the CCP sent some of its best people to promote it. Zhou Enlai was certainly such a person. Zhou went to the GMD's wartime capital Chongqing, both as the head of the CCP delegation and of the CCP's Southern Region Office (*Nanfang ju*). Amongst those accompanying Zhou were his wife Deng Yingchao, Dong Biwu, and Ye Jianying, all members of the Southern Region United Front Committee. Their united front tasks were to expose the GMD and to win over the MPGs, regional forces, intellectuals and capitalists.<sup>249</sup> Mao supported their work directed at the MPGs by writing personal letters to MPG leaders and inviting them to visit Yan'an.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, pp.161-162.

<sup>247</sup> In his March 1944 discussion of the CCP's Sixth Party Congress held in Moscow in 1928, Zhou Enlai criticised the lack of attention paid to developing the revolution in the cities and failure to differentiate among enemies. This had caused the CCP to neglect potential allies such as the Third Party and failures to exploit splits in the GMD and its factions. Zhou Enlai, "On the Sixth Congress of the Party," *SW*, vol.1, p.205.

<sup>248</sup> Mao Zedong, "The Role of the Communist Party in the National War," (October 1938), *SW*, vol.2, p.201.

<sup>249</sup> Pu Yuhuo and Xu Shuangmi, *Dangde bai qu douzheng shihua*, [Talk and history of the Party's struggle in the white areas], (Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, Beijing, 1991), p.200.

<sup>250</sup> For example, Peng Zemin visited Mao in June 1936 and discussed co-operation on the basis of the Anti-Japanese United Front. Lin Xiangeng, 1995, p.11. Liang Shuming visited Yan'an in 1938 for the first time. Dai Qing, 1989, p.16. On Mao's correspondence with MPGs see Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.97.

To win the support of the MPGs, communist representatives met regularly with them and with independent politicians. They discussed national affairs, the conduct of the war against Japan and political manoeuvring's within the PPC. When the PPC was in session, Party representatives met with MPG leaders each evening to discuss the day's events.<sup>251</sup> The CCP informed the MPGs of Party policy and opinions; it sought to convince the MPGs of the justness of the communists' cause and to drive a wedge between the MPGs and the GMD. The CCP used what it termed "timely criticism and concrete suggestions" to foster the MPGs 'progress' towards an acceptance of its views.<sup>252</sup>

To underscore its friendship building work, the CCP also attended to MPG leader's personal problems and built up a degree of personal indebtedness.<sup>253</sup> For example, Zeng Qi was provided with money for his wife's funeral expenses after she was killed by a Japanese bomb. The CCP provided a car to rush Zuo Shunsheng's daughter to hospital during a medical emergency.<sup>254</sup> Funerals and birthdays were often used for political purposes by Zhou.<sup>255</sup> Zhou's office also "gave as much help as possible in difficult circumstances," providing money, goods, housing, and transport etc.<sup>256</sup> Zhou and other CCP representatives thus helped to cement bonds of personal friendship and obligation which often lasted for decades.

The CCP aided the League substantively by supplying financial aid to support the League's operations, particularly in Hong Kong. In 1944, the CCP used Zhang Bojun to funnel one million yuan and a monthly subsidy of sixty thousand yuan to the League. Van Slyke believed that these funds were to reduce China Youth Party

<sup>251</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.117.

<sup>252</sup> Zhou Enlai, *Zhonggong zhongyang tongyi zhanxian gongzuobu & Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi* (eds), *Zhou Enlai tongyi zhanxian wenxuan*, [Zhou Enlai: Selected documents on the united front] (Renmin chubanshe, Beijing, 1984), p.43.

<sup>253</sup> This aspect of personal relations is a deeply embedded part of Chinese culture. "The art in guanxi exchange lies in the skilfull mobilisation of moral and cultural imperatives such as obligation and reciprocity in pursuit of both diffuse social ends and calculated instrumental ends." Mayfair Mei-hui Yang, "The Gift economy and State Power in China," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol.31, no.1, January, 1989, p.35.

<sup>254</sup> Pu Yuhuo, *et al.*, 1991, p.207.

<sup>255</sup> Gao Wenhua, "Huiyi Nanfang ju chengli qianhou Hunan dixia dangde gongzuo," [Reminiscences of Underground (Party) work in Hunan after the establishment of the Southern Region Office], *Zhonggong dangshi ziliao*, no.12, 1984, p.179.

<sup>256</sup> Zhang Junmin, "Zhongguo Gongchandang de tongyi zhanxian yu minzhu dangpai de lishi fazhan," [The CCP's policy for the united front and the historical development of the democratic parties], *Zhonggong dang shi yanjiu*, no. 5, 1992, p.44.

influence within the League, an influence gained through the CYP's control of the League's finance committee.<sup>257</sup> Later events were to support this conclusion. Zhou Enlai rejected an October 1941 proposal by Shen Junru and Zhang Bojun for close CCP-League cooperation. Zhou realised that direct CCP assistance to the League would compromise it. He did, however, offer indirect help, such as publishing League material in *Xinhua ribao*.<sup>258</sup> While the CCP wanted to be able to sway if not control the League and the MPGs, the influence of these groups amongst the broader population would only be ensured if they appeared to be independent of both the GMD and CCP. It was important that any sympathy for CCP positions be seen as emanating from within the MPGs themselves and did not originate from without.

To consolidate its influence over the MPG's, the Party also sought to influence the groups from within. The CCP already had party members in MPGs, particularly the NSA in which Sha Qianli played a prominent role.<sup>259</sup> Many underground Party members had earlier joined MPGs, not only in response to the calls for a united front, but also to seek cover from the GMD's secret police.<sup>260</sup> In the summer of 1941, the CCP's covert united front work was institutionalised with the establishment of the Chinese Democratic Revolutionary League (*Zhongguo minzhu geming tongmeng*, shortened as *Xiao mingge* or the Little Revolutionary League). While the main targets of the Revolutionary League were those groups and individuals within the GMD who were susceptible to CCP appeals, its work extended to the MPGs.<sup>261</sup> In September 1944, several Little Revolutionary League members, Wang Bingnan, Zhou Xinmin, Qian Junrui, Zhang Youyu, and Chu Tu'nian were ordered to help organise the Democratic League.<sup>262</sup> This communist infiltration explains why the GMD felt justified in stepping up its attacks against the League.

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<sup>257</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.183, 180.

<sup>258</sup> *ibid.*, pp.176-177.

<sup>259</sup> Sha officially joined the CCP in 1938. Tan Fangzhi (ed), *Tongyi zhanxian gongzuo cidian*, [Dictionary of united front work] (Zhongguo zhanwang chubanshe, Beijing, 1988), p.362.

<sup>260</sup> See both Stranahan, 1992, and Tanaka, 1993.

<sup>261</sup> Members of the Revolutionary Alliance included Wang Kunlun, Wang Bingnan, Zhou Xinmin, Xu Yuju, Deng Chumin and others. Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.149.

<sup>262</sup> Pu Yuhuo, *et al*, 1991, p.205-206. Masur gives the date as the spring of 1943. Mary G. Masur, "Intellectual Activism in China During the 1940s: Wuhan in the United Front and the Democratic League," *The China Quarterly*, March 1993, no.133, p.32.

The operations of the Little Revolutionary League were a major factor behind the 1944 re-organisation of the Democratic League, particularly the change to allow individual membership. This measure allowed the League to more easily absorb many leftists and isolate the organisation's right-wing especially the China Youth Party. The dispatch of Zhou Xinmin to Kunming in 1943 explains the rise and radicalisation of the League's Yunnan branch and the establishment of the League's radical left-wing Youth League. *Guanxi* was used extensively to build up the Kunming League branch.<sup>263</sup> The flourishing of the branch was made possible because it had the protection of the GMD aligned warlord, Long Yun. Long not only acted as patron to the League, he also secretly joined it. Long employed League leaders, protected publications such as *The Student (Xuesheng bao)* and *Democracy (Minzhu)*, while his own paper, the *Yunnan Daily*, was often vitriolic in condemning Jiang.<sup>264</sup>

Posing as a GMD member, Zhou Xinmin and fellow underground Party member Hua Gang (Yunnan united front work head), recruited academics such as Wu Han into the Democratic League. With the support of League leaders, Hua Gang organised seminars for academics which Hua would then use to discuss CCP policy, international and national events, and to read and discuss works by Mao and articles in CCP publications such as *Xinhua ribao* and *The Masses (Qunzhong)*.<sup>265</sup> It was a pattern to be repeated in the formation of later MPGs. Hua and Zhou's CCP affiliations were known to League members but these were ignored by a membership more interested in discussion.<sup>266</sup>

The creation of a more radical wing of the League was an attempt by the CCP and its sympathisers within the League to push the organisation as a whole to the left. Both the League and its youth wing provided the CCP with opportunities to recruit and radicalise the politically minded. Wu Han and others like him became valuable conduits, persuading students to go to CCP areas and passing on information.<sup>267</sup> The

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<sup>263</sup> *ibid.*, pp.27-55.

<sup>264</sup> Lloyd E. Eastman, *Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in War and Revolution*, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1984), p.25.

<sup>265</sup> Masur, 1993, p.33-34.

<sup>266</sup> *ibid.*, pp.32 and 34

<sup>267</sup> *ibid.*, p.49.

League also gave the CCP access to presses on which underground CCP and Democratic Youth League members printed Party propaganda material such as Mao's "On New Democracy."<sup>268</sup> Such access, vital to the CCP's battle for hearts and minds, was of great and constant concern to the CCP and immense efforts were expended to gain and maintain it. Until 1949, any access to presses was invaluable.

With the end of the war against Japan in August 1945, political tensions again eased and the Americans pressured Jiang to make some accommodation with his opponents. Jiang Jieshi therefore called a new session of the PPC for January 1946 to discuss China's transition to constitutional rule. Jiang legalised all political parties and declared them all equal. He released political prisoners, guaranteed political freedoms and called for general elections. Although Jiang was not convinced of the desirability of greater democracy, American pressure required that he make concessions.

### **Conclusion**

The GMD's response to crises between 1930 and late 1945 reflected the principles outlined by Gramsci and were aspects of a political culture repeated by the CCP when it replaced the GMD as the state power. The GMD, an armed political party dominated by one person, sought as much as possible to rule in its own right with minimal reference to outside forces. Only when faced with a major crisis, Japan's invasion of China, did the GMD seek to win broad support and from the restive and most nationalistic urban population in particular. The GMD reluctantly allowed other voices, such as those of the MPGs, a degree of legal existence and legitimacy. To show the support, that is, the consent, of these groups for its rule, the GMD coopted its critics in a corporatist fashion into a symbolically important but essentially powerless representative body, the People's Political Council. The aim was clearly to bring about social peace and rally the influence of the coopted representatives behind GMD rule. It was a pattern later repeated by the CCP. Even the names remained similar.

The MPGs and the groups from which they had sprung, the new urban educated capitalists, were not integrated into the GMD state but their demands for 'democracy'

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<sup>268</sup> *ibid.*, pp.39-40.

were part of their attempts to bring about integration. Although the MPGs were more 'liberal' than either the CCP or GMD in their demands for political freedoms and rights, this liberalism did not extend to a faith in the people to be able to responsibly participate in direct elections or to take up roles in government or administration. The MPGs were elitist in both their memberships and their attitudes to the common people, even though they believed that they were acting in the people's interests. In this sense they stayed within the imperial tradition of loyal remonstrators.

It was because the MPGs held state power in awe that they supported it when the GMD, albeit reluctantly, used corporatist arrangements to formally recognise them and to co-opt them in an official representative but powerless body like the PPC. The MPGs regarded the inclusion of experts such as themselves as only reasonable. The importance of the MPGs was that they were effectively the organic intellectuals of China's new urban social groups. As many MPG leaders were prominent teachers and academics, they automatically had the status of experts in a society in which these qualifications were both rare and highly regarded. Moreover, their ideological role was not confined to direct pedagogy but was magnified by their important role in publishing, writing and journalism. Yet it was because the MPGs were not integrated in the state that they did not automatically function to "manufacture consent."<sup>269</sup> The MPGs supported the GMD state as long as they believed it was in the national interest and because there was no alternative. As a result of their Confucian inheritance, the MPGs were strongly inclined to support the GMD because it was the state power, despite their differences and disappointments with it. Hegemony was the GMD's to lose.

The MPGs ideological influence was reinforced by their extensive personal connections, to each other, to their original constituencies and to both CCP and GMD leaders. In *toto*, the MPGs had a disproportionate political influence despite their small size and organisational weaknesses. They were very much vital agents of hegemony as postulated by Gramsci.

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<sup>269</sup> Noam Chomsky's pithy summarisation of the essential meaning of hegemony as the production of ideology producing consent to domination. See "The Manufacture of Consent," in Noam Chomsky and James Peck (ed), *The Chomsky Reader* (Pantheon Books, New York, 1987), pp.121-136).

The GMD had recognised, in a vague way, the importance of the MPGs during times of crisis but not the importance of maintaining their allegiance. The GMD's record on delivering the reforms and actions the MPGs desired was not encouraging. Jiang Jieshi's commitment to national resistance was open to doubt. He only conceded a small degree of representation and allowed the MPGs a role and official existence because of the pressing requirements of China's political and military situation. The GMD had repeatedly attacked the MPGs when they opposed GMD policies. Yet, each time the GMD found itself in a crisis it cynically manipulated causes espoused by MPGs to ensure their support. The GMD then undermined its legitimacy by failing to deliver on its promises, even those included in its own platform, such as constitutional rule. By attacking the CCP instead of the Japanese, the GMD further undermined its nationalist credentials and therefore its implicit claims to moral superiority over the CCP. After 1945, when the GMD lost the advantage of an external enemy as an excuse for its failings and tried to rely solely on its own resources, the limits of its passive revolutionary tactics became apparent.

The GMD's short-sighted actions played into CCP hands. The CCP could portray itself as more truly nationalist than the GMD. The Party advocated national unity in the face of Japanese aggression while the GMD undermined it by attacking those patriotic Chinese who happened to be communists. The CCP called for democracy and the implementation of principles borrowed from the GMD's own program. The CCP instituted the three-thirds system, while the GMD attacked advocates of democracy. The GMD's loss of credibility was exacerbated by its increasingly obvious military and administrative failings and corruption. By April 1944, the GMD's military collapse in the face of Japan's "Operation Ichago" saw blame for these failings even being placed, for the first time, on Jiang Jieshi personally.<sup>270</sup> At the same time, the material conditions of those under GMD rule also worsened. Inflation increased and the economy deteriorated with the GMD seemingly unable to alter the situation. The GMD's obvious and counter-productive response was to continue to attack its critics such as those in the Democratic League and the

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<sup>270</sup> Eastman, 1984, p.29.

constitutional movement. The MPGs' growing alienation from the government was reflected by Huang Yanpei when, in July 1944, he began publicly distancing himself from the GMD. In September, in the business and banker sponsored journal, *Constitution and Government*, Huang attacked the GMD for corruption and violations of human rights directly. By 1945 he was condemning the GMD for treating China as its private possession.<sup>271</sup>

In contrast to the GMD, the CCP moderated many of its policies which had given rise to apprehension on the part of many of its potential allies and it continuously promoted national popular appeals which gave it the moral high ground *vis a vis* the GMD. The CCP condemned the GMD remorselessly when the GMD's commitment to national unity and resistance was in doubt. This emphasis on national salvation was a major concern to the MPGs, but the CCP also appealed to them with specific policies and the promotion of MPG causes, particularly 'democracy' and constitutional government.

As the war against Japan drew to a conclusion, the CCP promoted themes which complemented the desire of many for peace and economic rebuilding after more than a decade of war. In early 1945, the Party made a proposition vital to maintaining its initiative in the battle for popular support and designed to convince the nation that it represented the interests of the people. The CCP proposed to the MPGs that a tri-partite government be formed incorporating the MPGs, the GMD and itself.<sup>272</sup> This proposal was formalised in Mao's "On Coalition Government" and adopted by the CCP's Seventh Party Congress of April 1945.<sup>273</sup>

The CCP's proposal of a coalition government, its building up of important relationships with MPG leaders and providing the MPGs with moral, material, political, and personal support, combined to allow the development of a considerable degree of MPG goodwill for the Party. The CCP sought to win the trust of the MPGs as actively as the GMD seemed bent on destroying it. The CCP had also steadily built up a covert

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<sup>271</sup> Curran, in Jeans, 1992, p.94.

<sup>272</sup> *ibid.*, p.95.

<sup>273</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.3, pp.205-270.

influence in the MPGs which would only become apparent when the external enemy was defeated and open struggle between the CCP and GMD resumed.

Nevertheless, in 1945, the GMD still had the potential to reverse the MPGs' alienation from it. Despite their many negative experiences, the leaders of the MPGs were not ready to completely abandon their hopes that the GMD, as China's state power, would deliver some of their demands. Yet by 1945, the basis for the final stage of the CCP's battle for hegemony had been set in place. The CCP's war of position united front strategies had laid the foundations for the eventual successful isolation of the nationalists, to leave them bereft of allies and unable to function and thus to win consent for the CCP.

*Chapter 2***Winning Hegemony:  
The MPGs, the United Front, and the Isolation of the GMD, 1945-1948**

This chapter examines how the CCP used its united front work in a major effort to win over the MPGs, particularly the Democratic League. The Party sought the explicit support of the League and other MPGs in order to become the hegemonic party and supplant the GMD. The support of the MPGs would greatly assist in symbolising the consent of China's non-proletarian urban classes to CCP rule. The Party claimed to represent the workers and the peasants while it held the MPGs to symbolise those groups it defined as bourgeois. With the support of the MPGs, the Party would be able to claim that it represented, not only the majority of the population, but also the majority of classes. Its hegemony would be achieved.

To win this consent, the Party used a combination of strategies to win the support of the Democratic League including appeals, subversion and coercion. It appealed to the MPGs' desire for a peaceful, strong, independent, prosperous and democratic China. The Party also encouraged the League's leftist inclinations; it placed more Party members within the League and it actively encouraged the isolation and removal of the League's most right-wing elements. It also went to considerable efforts to foster new MPGs. These new MPGs pointed towards the future direction of united front work as they were established along corporatist occupational lines.

A major CCP concern in its struggle to win over the MPGs was to force them to choose between itself and the nationalists. The Party wanted the MPGs to abandon any idea that there could be a middle road between it and the GMD. Some important MPG members and non-party figures did attempt to create a middle-of-the-road "third force" in Chinese politics. This group was to act as a mediator between the two warring parties. Ideologically, these efforts were underpinned by theoretical writings advocating an independent middle road based on social-democratic and Western liberal positions. The Party's MPG work aimed to demonstrate that a middle-of-the-road position was untenable; any who opposed the GMD should align with the CCP.

The Party's leadership continued to be explicitly based on its national popular calls for democracy, constitutional government, national unity, and a peaceful settlement with the GMD in the form a coalition government. The Party maintained that the MPGs would be well represented in any such coalition. To continue harnessing the appeal of patriotism, the Party launched vigorous anti-American campaigns. These strategies aimed to destroy the middle elements' pro-Western inclinations, to minimise American intervention on behalf of the nationalists, and isolate the GMD both at home and abroad. The CCP's campaigns also linked its national popular appeals with the day-to-day concerns of urban residents, their desires for peace, fear of inflation and unemployment etc.

The MPG's growing disillusionment with the nationalists was reflected ideologically as their writings increasingly expressed anti-GMD sentiments. By passing on their disillusionment through their writings, examples and urgings, the MPGs helped to encourage and justify the withdrawal of support from the GMD by China's middle elements. Included in these middle elements were the many intellectuals who ran the GMD armies, the state apparatus, and its party machine. The CCP would score a major victory in its struggle for hegemony if it became 'common sense' for these intellectuals to cease supporting the GMD. By convincing the MPGs, particularly the Democratic League, to boycott nationalist initiatives, to publicly criticise them and, ultimately, to publicly declare allegiance to the CCP, the Party sought to symbolise the successful isolation of the GMD: the key objective of its united front work.

The changing form of the Party's united front work with the MPGs between 1945 and 1949 reflected changes in its strength relative to that of the GMD. When it was in a weak position *vis a vis* the nationalists, the Party made concessions and sought to use the MPGs to maximise political pressure on the GMD. As it gained strength, the CCP made more demands. The Party was always confident of its long-term ability to defeat the nationalists but it used the MPGs to pressure them and buy the time it needed to build its military strength. Thus, until military ascendancy was assured, the CCP stressed its own desire for peace; it played the part of the victim of unreasonable GMD

aggression and sought to gain the political initiative and the support of public opinion, as embodied by the MPGs, by showing the GMD as the aggressor.

As the Party gained military ascendancy towards the end of 1947, it found it necessary to justify its own use of military power while discrediting the GMD's attempts to sue for peace. The Party also needed to discredit any alternative which might compromise its ability to gain power in its own right, such as the MPG's alternative proposals. These propositions had the potential to damage the Party's efforts to seem justified in using force to destroy the GMD, make it difficult to win over the middle elements, give succour to the GMD, and encourage the United States to increase its aid to the nationalists.

### **The CCP's Post-War United Front Strategies**

The Party's goal of defeating the GMD and establishing a socialist state had been postponed rather than abandoned for the duration of the anti-Japanese war. "But it goes without saying," Zhou Enlai stated in 1944, "that in the course of the New Democratic Revolution, the GMD Government must be overthrown if our victory is to be complete": the anti-Japanese war had only been one stage of the revolution.<sup>1</sup> Any concessions which fell short of a CCP victory and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship were therefore only a tactical means to a revolutionary end. Preparations for the post-war stage began with the anticipation of the defeat of the Axis powers in 1944. Mao declared that without rallying the urban population, the Party's bases would face numerous difficulties. The Party's urban work had to be raised to the same importance as rural work.<sup>2</sup> To achieve this, united front work among the MPGs and GMD factions was intensified and cadres were dispatched to the cities to implement the new policies.<sup>3</sup> This work aimed at the overthrow of the GMD. The MPGs were to have

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<sup>1</sup> Zhou Enlai, "On the Sixth Congress of the Party," (An address to CCP cadres at the Yan'an Central Party School) (March 3/4, 1944) in, *Zhou Enlai SW*, vol.1, p.181. Zhou re-iterated this when in 1948 he stated that "the decision to overthrow the GMD had been made long ago and we fought ten years civil war with this in mind." See, "Launch a massive nation wide counter-offensive to overthrow Chiang Kaishek," (September 28, 1947), *ibid.*, p.310.

<sup>2</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Our study and the current situation," (April 12, 1944), *SW*, vol.3, p.171.

<sup>3</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu chengshi gongzuo de zhishi," [The CCP Central Committee instructions on work in the cities]. Quoted in Guo Xiaoping, 1992, p.56.

a role in this and any concessions accorded them would be steps towards a proletarian dictatorship.

The Seventh Party Congress of 1945 formalised the CCP's post-war united front policies for equalising urban-rural work. These policies included instigating urban mass movements to distract and undermine an over-stretched GMD as it regained control of Japanese held areas.<sup>4</sup> The CCP's MPG work was a vital component of this effort. Dong Biwu's report, *On the question of each party in the Great Rear Area* laid the basis for the CCP's MPG work. Dong analysed the organisational form, membership, political leadership, cadres and propaganda organs of ten MPGs: the National Socialist Party, China Youth Party, the Third Party, National Salvation Association, Vocational Education Society, Rural Reconstructionists, the Democratic League, Overseas Chinese Association, the 'Friday Banquet Association' (*Xing wu jucan hui*) and the Heng Society (*Heng she*).<sup>5</sup> On the basis of this report and existing united front policies, the CCP re-emphasised its 1939 MPG/urban work policies.<sup>6</sup> Anti-communist MPGs were encouraged to moderate their hostility and move towards the democratic movement. Small progressive groups such as the VES were encouraged to become political parties. The CCP would help loosely organised groups such as the NSA to become formal political groups. Leftist and progressive non-aligned activists were encouraged to form new political organisations.<sup>7</sup> Should there be political liberalisation after the war against Japan ended then the Party wanted to maximise its ability to utilise it.

The general direction of the Party's united front policies was set out in Zhou Enlai's "On the United Front" report. This New Democratic anti-imperialist, anti-feudal

<sup>4</sup> "Fang shou fadong qunzhong, zhuangda renmin liliang, zai women dang lingdao xia, dabai Riben qinlue zhe, jiefang quanguo renmin, jianli yi ge xinminzhu zhuyi de Zhongguo," [Unleash the masses, expand the people's strength, under the leadership of our Party defeat the Japanese invaders, liberate the people of the whole nation and establish a New Democratic China], "Zhongguo Gongchandang di qi ci quanguo daibiao dahui," [The seventh national congress of the CCP], *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian quanshu* (eds), *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian quanshu*, [Chinese united front encyclopedia] (Guoji wenhua chubanshe gongsi, Beijing, 1993), pp.350-351. (Hereafter *UFE*).

<sup>5</sup> "Guanyu Da houfang ge dangpai wenti." See summary in *UFE*, pp.178-179. The 'Friday Banquet Association' may refer to a group of business people sympathetic to the CCP which invited Ma Yinchu to address them. Ronald Hsia, "The Intellectual and Public Life of Ma Yin-ch'u," *China Quarterly*, no.6, April-June 1961. The author has no information on the Heng she.

<sup>6</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu zuzhi jinbu liliang zhengqu shiju hao zhuan de zhishi." [The CCP Central Committee instructions on organising progressive forces to struggle for a good change in the current situation] (December 1, 1939). Quoted in Zhang Junmin, "The CCP's Policy for the United Front and the Historical Development of the Democratic Parties," *ZDY*, no.5 1992, p.42.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, pp.42-43.

united front was to consist of the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty, and even “at times,” the national bourgeoisie and big landlords.<sup>8</sup> Zhou's report reiterated Mao's promise of the long-term co-existence of different classes and forms of ownership during a long transition to socialism. The Party's years of promoting New Democracy since 1940 also gave the Party veracity.

New Democracy, with its claims to incorporate Sun Yatsen's principles, appealed to MPG leaders. It promised an important role for the petty and national bourgeoisie from which the MPGs drew their membership. New Democracy also promoted the intelligentsia, of which the MPGs were prime examples, as “basic forces determining China's fate.”<sup>9</sup> This certainly conformed with the MPG leaders' self-image. The CCP's policy also promised democratic institutions in the form of a system of people's congresses from the national to the local level, with each level electing their own governments. New Democracy called for universal suffrage “regardless of sex, creed, property or education.”<sup>10</sup> By subsequently terming his policy a “New-democratic *constitutional* government of the joint dictatorship of several revolutionary groups over traitors and reactionaries,” and by invoking Sun Yatsen's name, Mao sought to reduce potential objections while maximising New Democracy's appeal.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, New Democracy still contained an authoritarian insistence on democratic centralism and an insistence that it only express the will of the “revolutionary people.” It promised land to the tiller but allowed for a rich peasant economy. It promised to nationalise banks, big industry and the like but would allow the development of capitalist production which would not “dominate the livelihood of the people,” a position justified by China's backward economy.<sup>12</sup> In places then, the Party's policies coincided with some important MPG positions. However, New Democracy's authoritarianism and its position that China's old culture had to be swept away and a

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<sup>8</sup> Zhou Enlai, "On the United Front," (April 30, 1945) *SW*, vol.1, p.239. *Zhou Enlai Xuanji*, [Selected works of Zhou Enlai], (Renmin chubanshe, Beijing 1980), vol.1 p.211.

<sup>9</sup> Mao Zedong, *SW*, vol.2, p.350.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p.352.

<sup>11</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "New Democratic Constitutional Government," (February 1940), *SW*, vol.2, p.409. (Emphasis added)

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.353.

new culture created did not coincide.<sup>13</sup> The MPGs were after all the heirs to the intellectual tradition of the old society. The Party's authoritarianism also contradicted the MPGs' desire for enough democracy to prevent despotism and corruption.

Mao's "On Coalition Government" proposal, which was also delivered at the congress, reinforced the promises of New Democracy. "On Coalition Government's" demands and proposals included:

- Mobilisation of all forces to defeat and expel the Japanese.
- Abolition of the GMD's one-party dictatorship.
- Punishment for collaborators
- Punishment for "reactionaries" creating a danger of civil war.
- "Liquidation" of the GMD's secret police and the abolition of GMD concentration camps.
- Revocation of all "reactionary" laws and decrees aimed at suppressing the people's freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, political conviction, and religious belief and freedom of the person and guarantee full civil rights to the people.
- Recognition of the legal status of all democratic parties and groups.
- Release of all patriotic political prisoners.
- Abolition of bureaucratic capital.
- Assistance for private industry.
- Abolition of GMD indoctrination in education and promotion of a national, scientific and mass culture education.
- Guarantees of a livelihood and academic freedom for teachers and other staff members of educational institutions.<sup>14</sup>

These demands had numerous attractions. Many appealed to the MPGs on general principle and out of personal interest. Moreover, Mao highlighted the MPG's importance by calling for their participation in establishing a "provisional democratic coalition government, for the purpose of instituting democratic reforms, surmounting the present crisis."<sup>15</sup> This government would devise procedures for convening a national assembly after free elections were held.

To bring about these changes and convene the Assembly, political freedoms were required.<sup>16</sup> The Party advocated giving the MPGs a political prominence; it supported MPG calls for political freedoms and put its own political strength behind their proposals. Using these measures, the Party increased the chances of successfully forcing the GMD to make political concessions, while simultaneously asserting its democratic credentials and winning the sympathy of the MPGs.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p.369.

<sup>14</sup> Mao Tse-tung, (April 24, 1945) *SW*, vol.3, pp.236-237.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, pp.205.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, pp.242-243.

The Party's Coalition Government proposals, like those of New Democracy, promised peace and unity for China and concessions to all China's major groups. The CCP claimed the banner of Sun Yatsen's Three People's Principles,<sup>17</sup> and that its 'democracy' was reflected in its coalition proposals. The Party's 'land to the tiller' proposal appealed to the peasantry but while still labelling landlords as feudal exploiters, the Party stressed its policies of rent and interest reductions. It avoided direct talk of violent land confiscation. The Party instead stressed that its land reform policies would benefit the petty bourgeoisie and called for urban intellectuals to be educated about the reality of rural problems.<sup>18</sup> Mao reassured China's landed and urban classes, declaring that the Party was not opposed to individual initiative, private property or private capital. Rather, Mao claimed that New Democracy would free individual initiative and encourage the development of private enterprise. The forces of feudalism and imperialism, Mao said, had fettered capitalism. In fact, he declared, China did not have enough capitalism.<sup>19</sup>

"On Coalition Government" did not directly raise the possibility of the GMD as an equal partner with the Party and others. Mao did, however, call for "the destruction of the dictatorship of the anti-popular GMD clique." This clause left open the possibility for "democratic" elements of the GMD to take part. Mao called on:

All oppressed strata, political parties and social groups in GMD areas to extend their democratic movement on a broad scale and gradually weld scattered forces together in order to fight for national unity, the establishment of a coalition government, defeat of Japanese aggression and the building of a New China. *The CCP and the people of the liberated areas should give them every possible help.*<sup>20</sup>

In practice the Party's 'help' meant rebuilding and re-activating the CCP's underground urban networks, including working both with and within the MPGs.

The CCP's promise of a CCP-GMD-MPG coalition government resembled the three-thirds system writ large and seemed to invalidate charges that the CCP wanted a

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p.211.

<sup>18</sup> "Part 6, The Land Problem," *ibid.*, pp.247-252. For an explanation of how Mao, using the public declarations of Song Qingling, successfully appropriated Sun's principles see, Piero Corradini, "Mao Tse-tung and the Three Principles of the People," in Yu-ming Shaw (ed), *Reform and Revolution in Twentieth Century China*, (Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, Taipei, 1987), pp.187-195.

<sup>19</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "On Coalition Government," *SW*, vol.3, pp.231-233.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, p.259. (Emphasis added)

class-based dictatorship.<sup>21</sup> The Party's offer was very attractive to the MPGs. With a representation equal to that of the CCP or the GMD, the MPGs would potentially have an influence quite disproportionate to their size, or their organisational or military power.<sup>22</sup> The Party's proposals appealed to the MPGs whose long-standing complaint had been of the GMD's neglect of their talents.

The CCP made its coalition government proposals the centre-piece of its efforts to gain the political initiative and therefore leadership over the GMD.<sup>23</sup> Lin Boqu first discussed the proposals with the MPGs. In September 1945, Lin formally called for the convening of a National Affairs Conference (*Guo shi huiyi*) which included all groups in order to discuss national affairs and organise precisely such a coalition.<sup>24</sup> The Democratic League's subsequent document, "Political proposals for the final stage of the War of Resistance," made proposals similar to those of the CCP. The Party criticised it nevertheless, declaring that the League's proposal was for a bourgeois democratic coalition. The Party wanted a 'new democratic' coalition, that is, one it controlled.<sup>25</sup>

The Party believed the time was ripe for promoting a coalition because it saw the GMD as weak and suffering from numerous serious internal problems and external pressures. The Party believed that these problems had the potential to force the GMD to legalise it and bring about useful GMD-CCP co-operation.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, recognising that its own position was still militarily and politically weak, the CCP sought to

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, pp.240-241. Zhou Enlai characterised the idea of the CCP as one of three parties as representing a three-thirds system. Zhou Enlai, "The Past Years's Negotiations and the Prospects" (December 18, 1946), *SW*, 1981, p.282. Two Chinese scholars have linked the three-thirds system and the coalition government proposals and claimed a direct connection between the two, especially after the CCP and MPGs began advocating an end to GMD one-party rule in the PPC in 1939. Zhang Mingchu and Gao Ping, "The Chinese Communist Party's Political Proposition of Coalition Government: Its origin and development," *Zhongguo dang shi yanjiu*, 1993, no.3, p.52.

<sup>22</sup> Even if, as one CCP source claims, Democratic League membership grew from 5,000 to 15,000 over the course of the struggles in the PPC, this was still tiny in comparison to the millions in the GMD and CCP. Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.118.

<sup>23</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu gaizu Guomin zhengfu chengli lianhe zhengfu wenti gei Lin Boqu, Dong Biwu, Wang Ruofei de zhishi," [The CCP Central Committee to Lin Boqu, Dong Biwu and Wang Ruofei on the question of the reform of the GMD government and the establishment of a coalition government] (September 4, 1944), *Kang Ri minzu tongyi zhanxian: wenjian xuanbian*, [The National Anti-Japanese United Front: selected documents] (Dangan chubanshe, Beijing, 1986) vol.3, pp.738-739.

<sup>24</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.57.

<sup>25</sup> "Dui Kangzhan zuihou jieduan de zhengzhi zhuzhang," [Political proposals for the final stage of the War of Resistance] (October 10, 1945), *ibid.*, p.57.

<sup>26</sup> Mao Zedong, "On Peace Negotiations with the Kuomintang" (August 26, 1945), *SW*, vol.4, pp.48-49.

minimise GMD military attacks on itself. The Party therefore planned to use legal methods to intensify its work in the GMD's armies and in GMD held cities, to re-build its urban organisations and to consolidate its gains in the countryside.<sup>27</sup>

To realise its plans, the CCP made concessions, to buy time, to win national and international sympathy, and to force the GMD to legalise the Party. Just as importantly, it explicitly recognised, if not counted upon the fact, that should the GMD launch a civil war after it made concessions then the GMD would be seen to be in the wrong. The CCP would then be seen to have morally sound reasons to act in self defence.<sup>28</sup> The Party's ethical superiority and leadership would be publicly demonstrated.

For the GMD, the CCP's coalition proposals represented a lose-lose proposition. If it implemented its enemy's proposals they would effectively end GMD domination. Rejecting them would confirm the critics' label of GMD rule as a dictatorship. Yet pressures on the GMD did force it to make concessions.

#### **1945-46: The Appearance of Democracy**

The Americans in particular, worked to bring about CCP-GMD co-operation. In November 1944, General Patrick Hurley and Mao Zedong concluded an agreement for forming a coalition government. The conditions included CCP representation on a United National Military Council, legal recognition of the CCP, and civil and political freedoms.<sup>29</sup> In return, the Party agreed to the unprecedented concession of handing the command of its armies to a "Coalition National Government." The CCP was reportedly ecstatic with this agreement.<sup>30</sup> If the GMD agreed to it, the Party's political strength

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<sup>27</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Riben touxiang de xingshi, renwu he fangzhen de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the tasks and policies regarding the Japanese surrender situation] (August 26, 1945). In Zhongyang tongzhan bu & Zhongyang dangguan guan (eds) *Zhonggong zhongyang jiefang shiqi tongyi zhanxian wenjian xuanbian*, [Selected Chinese Communist Party Central Committee documents on the liberation period united front], (Dangan chubanshe, Beijing, 1988), p.8. (Hereafter *Liberation Period Documents*)

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p.9. Mao Tse-tung, "On Peace Negotiations with the Kuomintang" *SW*, vol.4, p.49.

<sup>29</sup> Coalition proposals were not the sole preserve of the CCP. In 1944, the then American Ambassador Gauss, proposed a "United Council of All Chinese Parties" coalition government and this was followed up by others. Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China, 1941-50*, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963), p.409.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p.290. According to one source, "The communists were wildly enthusiastic: this was even more than they had hoped for. They agreed that they would give up their armies to a true coalition government." Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby, *Thunder Out of China*, (William Sloane Associates, Inc., New York, 1946), p.254.

would allow it to mount a strong campaign in any sort of elections. If the GMD rejected the agreement, the CCP would nevertheless have demonstrated its 'democratic' credentials and its leadership.

Hurley, however, was unaware of the implications of the agreement and regarded the inclusion of political rights as "innocuous." In contrast, Jiang Jieshi recognised the danger of these conditions for GMD power. He declared that the document represented "an acknowledgment of total defeat" and rejected it.<sup>31</sup>

Jiang's actions worked in favour of the CCP. To capitalise on its advantage the Party continued to make concessions. It agreed to give up some of the areas it held, but it continued to call for democracy, peace, and freedom. Communist representatives reported that in the face of GMD intransigence and insincerity the minor parties increasingly sympathised with the Party's positions, and it continued to push for the MPGs to be included in negotiations.<sup>32</sup>

By October 1945, the GMD military had been greatly strengthened by its takeover of Japanese and puppet forces and Jiang invited Mao to Chongqing for talks. Because its relative strength had declined further, the CCP made significant concessions. It temporarily dropped demands for a coalition government and a joint military high-command and it agreed to hold a Political Consultative Conference (*Zhengzhi xieshang huiyi* PCC). This Conference would discuss the preparations for re-convening the National Assembly but not a coalition government.<sup>33</sup> The Conference would also consider the re-organisation of the government and approve a new constitution. In return the GMD, in a major concession, agreed to abandon one-party rule.<sup>34</sup>

In December 1945, General George C. Marshall replaced Hurley. Marshall's task was to persuade the GMD to convene a meeting of representatives of all major

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<sup>31</sup> Tsou, 1963, *ibid.*, p.291.

<sup>32</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu he Goumindang tanpan de di er ci mimi tongzhi," [The CC's second secret message regarding negotiations with the GMD] (September 26, 1945), *Liberation Period United Front Documents*, p.13.

<sup>33</sup> Tang Tsou writes that the GMD passively accepted or rejected CCP proposals in a manner which reflected the relative strengths of the two sides and notes that this was the first time since 1937 that the CCP moderated, not increased its demands. Tang Tsou, 1963, p.317-318.

<sup>34</sup> Suzanne Pepper, "The KMT-CCP Conflict, 1945-49," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol.12, p.724.

political groups to further GMD-CCP negotiations. America's objectives were to promote the development of a "strong, united and democratic China."<sup>35</sup> Part of this plan was to incorporate the CCP into a formal political system and then to neutralise it.<sup>36</sup> In Gramscian terms, the United States sought to decapitate the CCP.

The practical result of Marshall's mediation was that on January 10 1946, Jiang declared an armistice between the CCP and GMD. On the same day Jiang opened the Political Consultative Conference, pledging to:

- 1) Guarantee the freedom of person, conscience, speech, assembly and publication.
- 2) Recognise the equality and the legal status of all political parties.
- 3) Promote local self-government by conducting popular elections from the lowest level upwards.
- 4) Release all political prisoners with the exception of traitors and those guilty of treason against the state.<sup>37</sup>

Jiang's pledges produced an unprecedented degree of political freedom and a profusion of new political parties and groups in GMD controlled area although few of these became important.<sup>38</sup> The established MPGs had the advantage of experience in the People's Political Council and a high degree of public recognition. They, and not the new groups, were permitted to discuss "problems of national import"<sup>39</sup> with nationalists and communists. This privileged recognition encouraged competition between the MPGs. The China Youth Party sought to maximise its influence in the conference and to increase its representation at the expense of the Democratic League. To overcome the subsequent trouble, the number of Conference delegates was increased from 36 to 38.<sup>40</sup> Conference membership consisted of 8 GMD, 7 CCP, 5 Youth Party, 4 Democratic League, 2 National Socialists, and 1 representative each from the

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<sup>35</sup> "Statement by President Truman on United States Policy Toward China, December 15, 1945," *The China White Paper, August 1949, (United States Relations with China)* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1967), pp.607-609.

<sup>36</sup> Tsou, 1963, p.373.

<sup>37</sup> "China Moves Toward Unity and Democracy," *Contemporary China*, vol.V, no.18, January 21, 1946, p.1.

<sup>38</sup> Van Slyke believes there were more than one hundred such parties. Van Slyke, 1967 p.190, fn.a. For a more detailed account of some of these see, Peter Ivanov, "The Miscellany of China's Political Spectrum," in Jeans, 1992, pp.171-188.

<sup>39</sup> Jiang Jieshi, *Contemporary China*, vol.V, no.18, (January 21, 1946), pp.2-3.

<sup>40</sup> Luo Longji, "Canjia jiu Zhengxie canjia Nanjing hetan de yixie huiyi," [Some reminiscences of participation in the old Consultative Conference and the Nanjing peace talks], in Yu Gang, 1987, pp.130-133.

Vocational Education Society, Rural Reconstructionists and the Third Party.<sup>41</sup> The nine independents included the nominally “non-party” Hu Lin (Hu Zhengzhi) (From *Dagong bao*) and Guo Moruo.<sup>42</sup> The CCP initially felt that the GMD was not taking the Conference seriously.<sup>43</sup> However, the Party recognised that the growing pressure on the GMD from America, England and the Soviet Union was increasing the probability that it would make more concessions.

To take advantage of the foreign pressure on the GMD, the Party ordered its PCC delegates to consult with Zhang Dongsun and Liang Shuming, two of the most influential moderate MPG leaders. The Party’s delegates were to take note of Liang and Zhang’s opinions to prepare a simple and realistic CCP program.<sup>44</sup> That the Party’s explicit aim was to again highlight its ethical leadership was made clear when, in January 1946, it told its delegates that the CCP would still gain a legitimate basis for resisting the GMD even if the nationalists rejected their proposals. The Party also pointed out that the very act of participating in the PCC had already constrained the GMD’s ability to use civil war against it. In addition, the nationalist’s procrastination within the Conference both allowed the GMD’s problems to grow and confirmed its insincerity. To take advantage of these conditions and expand the united front, the CCP therefore instructed its representatives to intensify co-operation with the MPGs and win their support for the Party’s policies.<sup>45</sup>

Despite problems,<sup>46</sup> the PCC concluded agreements on many pressing issues including ending GMD tutelage, revision of the constitution, membership of a future National Assembly, reform of the government, and the unification of the rival armies.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> In fact there were a total of nine Democratic League members represented; Zhang Lan, Luo Longji, Zhang Junmai, Zhang Dongsun, Shen Junru, Zhang Shenfu, Huang Yanpei, Liang Shuming and Zhang Bojun. Zhao Xihua, *Minmeng shihua 1941-49*, [Discussions on the history of the Democratic League, 1941-1949], (Shehui kexue chubanshe, Beijing, 1992), p.43.

<sup>42</sup> The others were Fu Sinian, Shao Zhong’en, Wang Yunwu, Miao Jiamin and Li Chuzhen.

<sup>43</sup> “Zhonggong Zhongyang guanyu Zhengxie keneng jie jue moxie wenti, wofang gangling yinggai bufen xiugai de zhishi,” [CCP CC instructions on the possibility of the the PCC solving certain questions, our platform must be partly revised] (January 5, 1946), *Liberation period united front*, p.39.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, p.39. This platform was presented on January 16 1946 as, “Heping jianguo gangling cao’an,” [Draft program for peaceful national reconstruction], *ibid.*, pp.44-49.

<sup>45</sup> “Zhongyang guanyu wo zai Zhengxie douzheng zhong zhi fangzhen yuanze de zhishi,” [CC instructions on our policy principles in the struggle in the PCC], *ibid.*, pp.43-44.

<sup>46</sup> Discussion in the small groups was reported often to be very heated. See Luo Longji’s account in Yu Gang, 1987, p.129-153.

<sup>47</sup> *The China White Paper*, pp.139.140 and pp.610-621.

In February, the parties agreed on the re-organisation of the military and in March, on a truce in China's North East (Manchuria). Yet, although Jiang publicly supported the agreements, the GMD's influential CC-clique did not and it set about undermining them.<sup>48</sup> The CCP had anticipated resistance to its proposals by what it termed "big capitalists" seeking to turn China into "an anti-Soviet base." Nevertheless, the legalisation of political activity allowed the Party to promote a 'democratic' protest movement to pressure the GMD to deliver on its promises. The CCP also wanted to prepare its troops for what it believed was an almost inevitable civil war. It therefore needed to prevent attacks on its forces for as long as possible.<sup>49</sup>

The CCP's opportunity to demonstrate its leadership over the GMD came quickly. To become law, the PCC agreements had to be accepted by the GMD. Yet, after first ratifying them "unanimously," the GMD Central Committee then qualified its approval by calling for the National Army to remain as it was. The Committee wanted a presidential and not a parliamentary system and it rejected the moves towards federalism embodied in allowing separate provincial constitutions.<sup>50</sup> These amendments ensured that both the CCP and the MPGs would reject the agreements.

To highlight its democratic credentials and play for time, the CCP told its representatives to vigorously oppose any GMD revisions of the PCC agreements. However, if the agreements collapsed then blame for this failure had to be clearly borne by "GMD reactionaries," not the CCP.<sup>51</sup> In the interim, the CCP representatives were to do all they could to prevent or delay the civil war.<sup>52</sup> To achieve these aims, the CCP Central Committee instructed Zhou Enlai to intensify efforts to unite with the

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<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, p.138.

<sup>49</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu muqian xingshi yu renwu de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the current situation and tasks] (February 1, 1946), *Liberation period united front*, pp.71-73. See also Chen Jian, "The Myth of America's 'Lost Chance' in China," *Diplomatic History*, vol.21, no.1, winter 1997, p.107.

<sup>50</sup> "Ratification by the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang of Resolutions Adopted by the Political Consultative Conference, March 16, 1946," *The China White Paper*, p.634-635.

<sup>51</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu jianchi shixian Zhengxie jueyi fandui xiugai gei Chongqing daibiaotuan de zhishi," [Instructions to the Chongqing delegation on upholding the realisation of PCC agreements and opposing revisions] (March 16, 1946), *Liberation period united front*, 1988, p.87.

<sup>52</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu shiju ji duice de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the current political situation and counter-measures] (May 15, 1946), *ibid.*, p.104.

Democratic League and 'democratic' elements in the GMD such as Sun Fo.<sup>53</sup> It also issued a general Party directive to go all out to win over MPGs and middle elements.<sup>54</sup> The MPGs had to be mobilised to support the PCC agreements which they had helped negotiate and which promised them a role in the political system. The GMD's amendments thus allowed the CCP to gain both the political initiative and public sympathy at the expense of its own prestige and legitimacy.

### **The Appearance of New MPGs**

Many small political parties and groups appeared after Jiang increased political rights in January 1946. Many of these had relations with secret societies and criminals; their political influence was generally insignificant, and they were subsequently suppressed by the CCP.<sup>55</sup> In contrast, most new MPGs with connections to united front work actively contributed to the Party's eventual victory and continued to operate after 1949. These organisations were nurtured by the CCP following its 1945 decision to provide "concrete help" towards developing existing MPGs and establishing new ones.<sup>56</sup> Shanghai became the focus for much of this united front work.<sup>57</sup> Seven new MPGs eventually emerged which, together with the Democratic League, assisted the CCP efforts to establish its leadership and demonstrate that the Party had the support of almost all of China's socio-economic groups.

### **The China National Construction Association**

The National Construction Association (NCA) was an early result of this united front work by CCP activists like Liu Xiao.<sup>58</sup> It was a direct consequence of united front policies aimed at increasing contact and improving relations with industrialists, businessmen, and capitalists.<sup>59</sup> The Party's underground liaison work with capitalist

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<sup>53</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu tanpan zhongdian ji dui Guomindang yu Meiguo de taidu wenti gei Zhou Enlai de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions to Zhou Enlai on the negotiations in Chongqing and attitudes towards the GMD and United States] (April 20, 1946), *ibid.*, 1988, p.97.

<sup>54</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu shiju ji duice de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the current political situation and countermeasures] (May 15, 1946), *ibid.*, p.105.

<sup>55</sup> See Peter Ivanov, in Jeans, 1992, *passim*.

<sup>56</sup> Zhang Junmin, 1992, p.43.

<sup>57</sup> Li Weihang, 1986, vol.2, p.646.

groups had proved invaluable for securing vital supplies for its armies during the Anti-Japanese war. The Party decision needed these groups to sustain its struggle with the GMD.<sup>60</sup> The CCP's New Democracy promised them long-term cross-class collaboration and a positive future. The NCA was to symbolise this.

In January 1945, CCP leaders Wang Ruofei and Xu Dixin, together with Peng Zemin, met with eight prominent Shanghai capitalists to form a political organisation.<sup>61</sup> Similar meetings followed in Tianjin, Chongqing and Yunnan. These steps towards widening the gap between the GMD and China's capitalists were actively supported by Zhou Enlai, who in October 1945, reaffirmed the CCP's commitment to co-existence with capitalists, not their immediate elimination.<sup>62</sup>

The CCP's liaison efforts with business were complemented by those of the Vocational Education Society. Huang Yanpei, together with VES members, Hu Juewen (who attended the January meeting with Wang Ruofei) and Yang Weiyu, set about forming a new party. In August 1945, they began sounding out potential members for a new business association. In December 1945, 136 people founded the NCA in Chongqing.<sup>63</sup> These founders included some who had also attended the CCP's January meeting, such as Wu Yunchu, Zhang Naiqi, Ma Yinchu, Hu Juewen, and Hu Ziyang.<sup>64</sup> Also present was one-time Socialist Youth League member and Democratic League leader in Chongqing, Sun Qimeng,<sup>65</sup> and united front activists Chen Yisheng and Xu Boxin.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>58</sup> See the special edition of *Zhonggong dang shi ziliao*, on the CCP's Southern Region Office. *Zhonggong dang shi ziliao*, 1984, no.12.

<sup>59</sup> On December 23, 1945 the CCP established the *Zhongguo jingji shiye xiejin hui* [Chinese Association for the co-operative advancement of economics] as a support group for businessmen. Li Yong, *et al*, 1988, p.70.

<sup>60</sup> For details of this extensive CCP liaison work with capitalists see: Caizheng bu Caizheng kexue yanjiusou and Xin si jun yanjiou hui Shanghai gaoxiao zhuanzi zu (eds), *Shanghai dixia dang zhihuan Hua zhong Kang Ri genju di*, [The Shanghai underground Party's support of China's base areas in the War of Resistance against Japan] (Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, Shanghai, 1987), pp.446-447.

<sup>61</sup> Peng, was a former Third Party and Democratic League leader, and publisher of Hong Kong based anti-Japanese journals such as *Over-Seas Chinese Resistance (Kangzhan Huaqiao)*. *UFE*, p.935.

<sup>62</sup> Pu Yuhuo, *et al*, 1991, p.206-209.

<sup>63</sup> Curran, in *Jeans*, 1992, p.99. Van Slyke, 1967, p.190.

<sup>64</sup> Pu Yuhuo, *et al*, 1991, p.207.

<sup>65</sup> Sun only officially joined the CCP in 1950, *UFE*, p.791. He had been VES General Secretary after graduating from Suzhou Wuda University in 1930. Jiang Yingyuan (ed), *Zhongguo minzhu dangpai renwu lu*, [A register of personages in China's democratic parties and groups] (Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, Shanghai 1991), p.162. Sun had a very long association with the Party having been member of Socialist Youth League and he taught in Yan'an during the war against Japan. The latter is sometimes referred to as "working inland." Yu Gang, 1987, p.174. Sun joined the Democratic League



Huang Yanpei was apparently unaware of the political background of some NCA members. He “boasted that this organisation was composed of producers and educators, that is, of persons with ‘legitimate social positions,’ rather than politicians with a professional interest in politics.” Huang claimed that because the NCA did not contain active soldiers or politicians it could represent and act objectively in the interests of the common people.<sup>67</sup> In practice, the NCA became a bridge between the CCP and its ostensible bourgeois class enemies.

The NCA's manifesto strongly condemned the GMD without naming it directly. It called for freedom of speech, belief, publishing, and association. In its internal organisation, however, the Association instituted a form of democratic centralism.<sup>68</sup> Yet while the NCA sought to represent China's capitalists, it did not advocate laissez-faire capitalism. Instead, it called for centralised economic planning co-existent with free enterprise and it supported trade unions. The Association advocated the implementation of the Three People's Principles and constitutionalism, including the separation of the legislature, judiciary and administration.<sup>69</sup>

To promote its views, NCA established the paper *Pingmin* (The Common People). However, this publication was soon closed by the nationalists for its anti-GMD positions. The Association subsequently deemed it safer to use the Vocational Education Society's *Guoxun* (National dispatch) and Huang Yanpei's *Zhanwang* (Prospect) to promote its causes.<sup>70</sup>

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through the Chongqing branch in September 1945, at the time of the influx of CCP members. A few months later he took part in the establishment of the NCA. Zhao Xihua, 1992, p.35.

<sup>66</sup> Xu Boxin joined the CCP in 1944. *UFE*, p.906. Chen Yisheng had long been involved in groups such as the NSA, the APD, and the NCA but apparently never joined the CCP. *ibid.*, p.851.

<sup>67</sup> Thomas Curran, in *Jeans*, 1992, pp.99-100.

<sup>68</sup> Lin Maosheng, Wang Weili, Wang Guilin (eds), *Zhongguo xiandai zhengzhi sixiang shi: 1919-1949*, [A history of modern Chinese political thought: 1919-1949], (Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, Ha'erbin, 1984), p.539.

<sup>69</sup> "Minzhu jianguo hui zheng gang" [The political platform of the National Democratic Construction Association] (December 1945), and, "Minzhu jianguo hui chengli xuanyan," [Declaration of establishment of the Democratic Construction Association]. Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, vol.1, pp.413-427.

<sup>70</sup> *Zhanwang*, published May 1948-March 1949, was protected by its connection with Huang Yanpei. The CCP revived it in June 1949. *UFE*, p.619.

### The Evolution of the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD

In the context of an impending civil war with the GMD, a renegade nationalist faction was an invaluable propaganda tool for the CCP. The Revolutionary Committee of the GMD (*Zhongguo Guomindang geming weiyuan hui*) arose from a complex interaction among different groups of GMD officers, GMD government officials, provincial warlords, CCP agents and communist sympathisers. Wang Kunlun's Chinese Democratic Revolutionary League played an important role as a catalyst in the organisation of these groups. The Little Revolutionary League attracted disaffected GMD members (*eg.* those disappointed by the GMD's war efforts), objectors to civil war, and former members of the Left-wing GMD and Deng Yanda's Third Party. In 1943, Wang Kunlun's efforts were rewarded by the formation of the China GMD Democratic Comrades Association (*Zhongguo Guomindang minzhu tongzhi lianhe hui*) which evolved from meetings and conferences organised by Wang's Revolutionary League. In early 1944, the Democratic Comrades became the Sanmin Zhuyi Comrades Association (*Sanminzhuyi tongzhi lianhe hui* or Three People's Principles Comrades Association). It expanded its activities and membership and went public in early 1946.

In 1941, Li Jishen, Chen Mingshu (a Third Party Leader), Jiang Guangnai, Cai Tingkai and Mei Gongbin had secretly formed the China National Revolutionary League (*Zhonghua minzu geming tongmeng*) in Hong Kong. This group infiltrated and spied on the GMD, printed anti-Japanese and pro-CCP publications such as *Minzhu zhanxian* (National front-line), *Dazhong bao* (The masses), and *Dazhong dongxiang* (Mass trends). With the Japanese capture of Hong Kong in 1941, Li Jishen's group moved to Guilin where Li worked for both the GMD and CCP.<sup>71</sup>

Aided by He Xiangning and under Zhou Enlai's direction, Li Jishen worked at winning over warlords such as Feng Yuxiang and Long Yun. In 1944, Li, He and Cai Tingkai began to organise a Democratic GMD group which existed separately from Wang's Comrades Association. Li Jishen's group went public as the Chinese Association for Promotion of Democracy (*Zhongguo minzhu cujin hui*) but it was soon

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<sup>71</sup> Xu Rihui and the *Zhongguo Guomindang geming weiyuan hui Zhongyang xuanchuanbu*, *Zhongguo Guomindang geming weiyuanhui de lishi daolu*, [The historical road of the Chinese Revolutionary Committee of the GMD] (Hunan chubanshe, Changsha, 1987), p.10.

banned for launching anti-Jiang activities. Its leaders fled to Hong Kong and in May 1947, Li was finally expelled from the GMD.<sup>72</sup> Wang's Sanmin Zhuyi Comrades Association and Li's Association for the Promotion of Democracy began working together more closely. They asked Song Qingling to be their nominal leader but she declined, claiming that her status as an independent was more useful to the revolution.<sup>73</sup> In November 1947, the two groups merged.<sup>74</sup> On January 1 1948, they formed the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD although they maintained separate organisations and activities. Only in November 1949, were the Sanmin Zhuyi Comrades Association, Wang Kunlun's (Little) Revolutionary League, and various GMD defectors fully integrated into the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD.<sup>75</sup> Thus after 1949 the CCP maintained a basis on which it could claim that the GMD would continue to be represented in the Peoples' Republic.

### **The Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy**

The Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy (*Zhongguo minzhu cujin hui*, APD) formed in 1945, was quite different from Li Jishen's organisation.<sup>76</sup> The APD's creation reflected two important features of united front policies and practices. The public face and symbolic head of the APD was Ma Xulun (1884-1970), a long-time activist, progressive, editor, academic, and linguist who had taught at Shanghai, Qinghua and Beijing universities. He had also been an important national salvationist and a GMD official. Ma's broad connections were complemented by those of the APD's prime organiser, the labour activist Wang Shao'ao who had extensive

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<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>73</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, pp.66-67.

<sup>74</sup> Shang Mingxuan, "Minge chou jian shishi bian'e," [Erroneous facts about the preparations for the establishment of the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD], *Jindai shi yanjiu*, 1996, no.2, pp.291-295.

<sup>75</sup> Xu Rihui, 1987, p.19, p.27.

<sup>76</sup> According to James Seymour, Ma Xulun, the leader of the 1945 APD, used the name Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy because he refused any association with Sanminzhuyi or to be subservient to Cai Tingkai. Seymour, 1987, p.21.

connections with industry and commerce.<sup>77</sup> Wang was also a long-time underground CCP member involved in organisations such as the NSA.<sup>78</sup>

The APD was officially established by twenty six people in Shanghai on December 12, 1945. Its founders included Xu Boxin who, in addition to his involvement with the National Construction Association, had long been associated with Zou Taofen.<sup>79</sup> Xu was also a Democratic League leader involved with the League's journal *Democracy*.<sup>80</sup> Also present was the experienced CCP activist Mei Dajun.<sup>81</sup> The APD included many prominent left-wingers, notably author Zhou Jianren (Lu Xun's brother) and Chen Yisheng, the latter also being involved in establishing the NCA.<sup>82</sup> The APD also contained many politically active academics and literary figures, such as Fu Lei and Zheng Zhenduo. The APD's organisation was controlled by Wang Shao'ao, Yan Jingyao and Chen Yisheng.<sup>83</sup> While CCP members did not dominate numerically, they were disproportionately important as organisers.<sup>84</sup>

Members of the Association for Promotion of Democracy had extensive involvement in publishing and writing. Ma Xulun had been involved in publishing since he first went to Shanghai in 1901.<sup>85</sup> Xu Guangping (Lu Xun's wife) became an editor for the *Wenhui bao* women's supplement.<sup>86</sup> Both Zhou Jianren and Zheng Zhenduo were successful writers with numerous useful connections.

<sup>77</sup> Jiao Xiangying (ed), *Zhongguo minzhu cujin hui sishi nian*, [Forty years of the Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy] (Kaiming chubanshe, Beijing, 1990), p.5.

<sup>78</sup> Jia Pingan and Hao Shuliang (eds), *Tongzhan xue cidian* [Dictionary of United Front Study] (Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, Beijing, 1993), p.238. Zhang Fangzhi (ed) *Dang de tongzhan gongzuo cidian* [Dictionary of Party United Front Work] (Zhongguo zhanwang chubanshe, Beijing, 1988), p.312.

<sup>79</sup> Xu's association with the APD and its connections with the literary and publishing world was therefore very appropriate. Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian cidian bianwei hui (eds), *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian cidian*, [Chinese united front dictionary] (Zhonggong, dang shi chubanshe, Beijing, 1992), p.296

<sup>80</sup> *UFE*, p.906

<sup>81</sup> Mei, a CCP member since 1939, later became the head of the CCP's East China United Front Department Central Committee. *ibid.*, p.917.

<sup>82</sup> *UFE*, p.906.

<sup>83</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.7.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>85</sup> Qin Guosheng and Hu Zhi'an (eds), *Zhongguo minzhu dangpai; renwu, zhenggang, lishi*, [China's Democratic parties and groups; history, political platforms and personages], (Shandong Renmin chubanshe, 1990), pp.510-511. Ma had edited several news papers. Luo Guangwu (ed), *Minzhu dangpai jiben zhishi*, [Democratic parties and groups: Basic knowledge], (Xueyuan chubanshe, Beijing, 1995), p.162.

<sup>86</sup> Qin Guosheng, *et al*, 1990, p.522.

## The Jiusan Study Society

The evolution of the Jiusan Study Society (*Jiusan xue she*) also involved prominent public figures creating a public profile for the group, and extensive CCP organisational help. According to Jiusan's official history, the society grew out of "Democratic Science Conferences" held in Chongqing in late 1944. In addition to science, these meetings discussed democracy, the war against Japan, and other matters, and "they gradually evolved to become an academic political group."<sup>87</sup>

Jiusan's initial leadership was provided by Pan Hannian who, together with Zhou Enlai, had initiated "Natural Sciences Conferences" in Chongqing in 1939.<sup>88</sup> Many participants at these meetings later joined Jiusan. Six years later, on September 3 1945, the Jiusan Conference (*Jiusan zuotan hui*) was held. A Jiusan Preparatory Association was organised and named itself after the date it was convened.<sup>89</sup> Jiusan's establishment was officially revealed on January 23 1946, in a letter to the CCP's *Xinhua ribao* stating Jiusan's views on the PCC.<sup>90</sup> Mao Zedong had personally encouraged the Society to become a formal political group when he met Xu Deheng and others in Chongqing in 1945.<sup>91</sup> In keeping with its origins, Jiusan aimed at influencing a target group of scientists and academics.

Shanghai Jiusan published letters, petitions and articles in *Dagong bao*, *Shidai ribao* (Times Daily) and *Wenhui bao*.<sup>92</sup> As a result of working at the government's Shanghai journalist school, several Jiusan members, including Da Yijin, had excellent newspaper contacts. They subsequently used these to promote anti-American protests.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Yin Chongwen, *Jiusan xue she lishi ziliao xuanji*, [Selected historical materials of the Jiusan Study Society], (Xueyuan chubanshe, Beijing, 1991), p.1. Fn.1.

<sup>88</sup> Pu Yuhuo, *et al*, 1991, p.209.

<sup>89</sup> Yin Chongwen, 1991, p.1.

<sup>90</sup> "Jiusan she choubei hui dui zhengzhi xieshang huiyi zhi yijian," (The Jiusan Society Preparatory Committee's opinions on the PCC), *ibid.*, pp.3-6.

<sup>91</sup> Zhang Junmin, 1992, p.430.

<sup>92</sup> From Da Yijin's use of "comrades" it is not clear whether he meant that Lu Yi at *Shidai ribao* and Qin Liulao at *Wenhui bao* were CCP or Jiusan members. Da Yijin, "Jiusan xueshan jiefang qian zai Shanghai de douzheng," [The Jiusan Society's struggle in Shanghai before liberation], *Tongzhan shi liao* [United front historical materials], no.4, 1985, p.78.

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*, p.79.

### **The Peasants and Workers Party**

The Chinese Democratic Peasants and Workers Party (*Zhongguo minzhu nong gong dang*) evolved, with its CCP and GMD connections, from Deng Yanda's Third Party. After Deng's execution, the Third Party was scattered between the two big parties and the Democratic League. In February 1947, Zhang Bojun and forty others held the Third Party's Fourth National Congress of in Shanghai. Zhang delivered a report, proposed a new constitution and suggested changing the party's name to Peasant and Workers Party (PWP).<sup>94</sup> Zhang Bojun and Peng Zemin became the party leaders.<sup>95</sup> Temporarily legal, the PWP was again able to attract followers of the old Third Party. The declaration issued by the party at the end of the 1947 congress complimented the CCP's "On New Democracy" declaration and left little doubt about where its sympathies lay.<sup>96</sup>

The PWP could still draw on its extensive connections with both CCP, GMD and other MPGs established during its Third Party days. Relations with the CCP were often close. Communist Party history dates CCP-PWP co-operation to a Third Party decision to establish close relations with the CCP following the CCP's 1935, August 1 Declaration. In October 1935, this decision was ratified by the Third Party in Hong Kong.<sup>97</sup> In June 1936, Peng Zemin visited Mao in Yan'an to discuss the united front. Close relations with the CCP were confirmed in 1938 after Zhang Bojun and others met with Wang Ming (then head of CCP united front work) and Zhou Enlai.<sup>98</sup>

### **Zhigong Dang**

The Zhigong Party was aimed at winning support from among Overseas Chinese.<sup>99</sup> The potential importance of this group to the success of political work in China support could be vital for any Chinese party, as the history of the GMD and its

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<sup>94</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.71-72.

<sup>95</sup> He Dayue, 1990, p.36.

<sup>96</sup> Qin Guosheng, *et al*, 1990, pp.617-619.

<sup>97</sup> He Dayue, 1990, p.95.

<sup>98</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.41.

<sup>99</sup> Zhigong Dang is sometimes translated into English as the Public Interest Party.

predecessor, the Tongmenghui, had shown.<sup>100</sup> Zhigong was based on the Hongmen Society, a semi-secret organisation active among overseas Chinese. In 1925, Hongmen chapters from all over the world had gathered in San Francisco and established Zhigong as a political party for Overseas Chinese. The former Guangdong warlords, Chen Jiongming and Tang Jiyao, were elected leaders. Between 1931 and 1941, Zhigong actively promoted resistance to Japan from Hong Kong. Until Hong Kong fell in 1941, the party raised money, published newspapers and magazines, organised anti-Japanese propaganda teams, associations and boycotts.<sup>101</sup>

In 1946, the Zhigong dang was revived in Chongqing by a number of its former leaders, Chen Qiyou, Huang Dingchen, and Wu Juetian. These leaders, in conjunction with Chen Yansheng, Yan Xixuan, Zhong Jiechen and others, then revived Zhigong activities in Hong Kong.<sup>102</sup> The Overseas Chinese could not be ignored as potential allies. Secret society connections had been utilised by both Jiang (with Du Yuesheng's Green Gang) and Mao (*Gelao hui*).<sup>103</sup> Zhigong's political platform consisted of calls for national liberation; opposition to Jiang's dictatorship; a coalition government; and a planned economy.<sup>104</sup> Zhigong relied on the patriotism of Overseas Chinese which the GMD had successfully promoted.<sup>105</sup>

### Taiwan Self Government League

The Taiwan Self Government League (*Taiwan minzhu zizhi tongmeng*, TSGL), was the youngest MPG. The TSGL was formed in Hong Kong in November 1947 from a core of communist cadres who had earlier fled Taiwan to escape the GMD.

<sup>100</sup> The O/S Chinese were, until 1923, the GMD's largest constituency and it was their membership and funds which had kept the GMD solvent. This reliance weakened after Sun Yatsen adopted a revolutionary program and a united front with the CCP. John Fitzgerald, "The Irony of the Chinese Revolution," in Fitzgerald, 1989, pp.27-28. In a recent overview, one Chinese scholar has traced the large amounts of money raised among overseas Chinese by the Fujian Provincial Government. This experience was then utilised by the GMD to tap Overseas Chinese resources more systematically in order to support the war effort and social infrastructure development. Lin Zheng, "The job of Overseas Chinese Affairs in Fujian Province and its character during the Anti-Japanese War," *Historical Archives* No.4, 1995, pp.125-130.

<sup>101</sup> Lin Xianggeng, 1995, pp.11-15.

<sup>102</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.73.

<sup>103</sup> Stuart R. Schram, "Mao Tse-tung and Secret Societies," *China Quarterly*, No.27, July-September 1966, pp.1-13

<sup>104</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.73.

<sup>105</sup> Stephen Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese: A Study of Peking's Changing Policy, 1949-1970*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1972), p.6-11.

Attempts by these communists, led by the female revolutionary Xie Xuehong, to take advantage of Taiwan's anti-GMD uprising of February 27 and to establish a People's Government on March 2, were suppressed by the GMD.<sup>106</sup>

On November 11 1947, the League officially announced its formation in the Hong Kong CCP front publication, *Huashang bao* (China trade paper).<sup>107</sup> Like many of the earlier new MPGs, the TSGL's draft platform called for a coalition government, independence, peace, democracy, and a strong and prosperous new China. In addition to its demands for civil rights, the TSGL also called for the establishment of social welfare services.<sup>108</sup> It is notable that the TSGL called explicitly for the direct election for leaders of all levels of government, from village to provincial.<sup>109</sup> The League's ostensible overall goal was "to struggle to unite the people of Taiwan, to win self-government for Taiwan and to encourage the Chinese people to establish a coalition government."<sup>110</sup>

The TSGL's emphasis on self-government was reflected in the party's name and indicated the strong appeal that autonomy had for many Taiwanese. Taiwan had long been isolated from Mainland Chinese control by distance, neglect and colonisation by Japan. The CCP had itself supported Taiwanese independence until 1943 and, emphasising this independence, the communist organisation in Taiwan had been a sub-branch of the Japanese Communist Party, not the CCP.<sup>111</sup> The most prominent of the TSGL's leaders had been members of the Japanese Communist Party. Although Xie Xuehong had joined the CCP in 1925, she studied in Japan and in 1928 she had established a branch of the Japanese Party in Shanghai and rejoined the CCP in 1947.<sup>112</sup> Su Xin had joined the Japanese Communist Party in 1928, and while he apparently had some connection with the CCP that same year, he is only acknowledged as having

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<sup>106</sup> Yu Yunbo, Wu Yunxiang, and Zhao Shoulong, *Zhongguo minzhu dangpai shi lue shu*, [A brief description of the history of China's democratic parties] (Shanghai renmin chubanshe, Shanghai, 1989), p.313.

<sup>107</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.74-75

<sup>108</sup> "Taiwan minzhu zi zhi tongmeng gangling cao'an" [Draft platform of the TSGL], Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, vol.1, pp.478-479.

<sup>109</sup> Yu Yunbo, *et al*, 1989, p.314.

<sup>110</sup> *Huashang bao*, November 18, 1947. Quoted in ZhangKui, 1992, p.75.

<sup>111</sup> Frank S. T. Hsiao and Lawrence R. Sullivan, "The Chinese Communist Party and the Status of Taiwan 1928-1943," *Pacific Affairs*, vol.52, no.3, 1979, pp.432-447.

<sup>112</sup> *UFE*, p.951.

joined the CCP in 1947.<sup>113</sup> Likewise, Yang Kehuang had joined the Japanese Party in 1929.<sup>114</sup> It was a tiny organisation with only 30 members in Hong Kong in 1948.<sup>115</sup>

Thus, it was highly probable that there were many important differences between Mainland and the Taiwanese communists, particularly over issues such as the degree of autonomy for Taiwan, differences which made it desirable to represent Taiwanese aspirations in a separate organisation.<sup>116</sup>

### **The National Salvation Association after 1945**

The National Salvation Association had played a major role in the CCP's united front work for a decade but with the defeat of Japan, its political purpose had been served. The NSA attempted to establish a new role as the Chinese People's National Salvation Association (*Zhongguo renmin jiu guo hui*) and, without an external enemy, criticised the GMD to undermine its authority and win sympathy for the CCP.

The revised Association aimed to “unite the Chinese people to build an independent, free, and prosperous democratic New China” and to “eliminate civil war and strengthen national unity.” The Association supported the PCC and demanded the establishment of a coalition government. The Association's leaders included many prominent Left-wing Democratic League figures, such as Shen Junru (chairman), Shi Liang (secretary), Tao Xingzhi, Cao Mengjun, and Li Gongpu.<sup>117</sup> However, attempts by Salvationists to publish anti-GMD views were usually short-lived. Their paper, *Jianguo ribao* (Re-construction daily),<sup>118</sup> and its *Minzhu shenghuo* (Democratic life) appeared only briefly between January and April 1946. Its noted left-wing contributors

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<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*, p.800.

<sup>114</sup> Qin Guosheng, *et al*, 1990, p.898.

<sup>115</sup> Yu Gang, 1989, p.316.

<sup>116</sup> The history of the TSGL and the relations of its leaders and members with the CCP is obscure and deserving of a thorough investigation.

<sup>117</sup> Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.36. The ‘Save the Nation’ name was only used publicly for a short period after May 1947.

<sup>118</sup> This paper was based on the Salvationist's *Jiuwang ribao* (National Salvation Daily). Sa Chaoran, Liang Gui, and Wang Qilai (eds), *Zhonggong dangshi jianming cidian*, [A concise dictionary of the Chinese Communist Party's history] (Jiefangjun chubanshe Beijing, 1987), p.972. *Jianguo ribao* was edited by the famous writer and CCP member, Xia Yan. Xia had been explicitly directed into united front work in publishing by Zhou Enlai in 1937 when Xia became involved with *Jiuwang ribao*, the NSA organ. Xiao Xiaoruan, Zhong Xingjin (eds), *Kang Ri zhanzheng wenhua shi (1937-1945)*, [The history of culture during the War of Resistance Against Japan, 1937-45] (Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, Beijing, 1992), p.48.

included Li Gongpu, Ma Yinchu, Guo Moruo, and Mao Dun. In April 1946, Xia Yan, Zhou Jianren and others tried to launch *Xiaoxi* (News) (which again featured Guo Moruo, Mao Dun and others) but the GMD closed it by July.<sup>119</sup>

Apart from CCP involvement, these new MPGs joined with other anti-GMD organisations to express rapidly increasing discontent and disillusionment with the GMD and its policies. These new groups had the potential to attract those people disenchanted with the GMD but not necessarily prepared to support the CCP. If, in the unlikely event, the GMD held open elections for a National Assembly, then any support for the disenchanted might translate into votes for the new MPGs. The MPGs' sympathy, debts and allegiances to the CCP meant that they would support the Party in any National Assembly. The CCP would then be able to claim the democratic support of all important and groups and classes. Even if no elections were held, the Party could still use these MPGs to undermine the GMD.

### **The CCP and the Democratic League**

In its attempts to have the Conference agreements enforced, the communists had established a strong basis for co-operating with the Democratic League. Meetings held in July 1945 between itself and the League had been instrumental in bringing this about. To promote the GMD-CCP peace negotiations, the League leaders Chu Fucheng, Zhang Bojun, Fu Sinian, Zuo Shunsheng, Leng Yu and Huang Yanpei had, with Hurley's assistance, flown to Yan'an to negotiate with the CCP.

The League leaders' talks included three formal meetings with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. One important CCP-League agreement was to stop the GMD convening the National Assembly and to hold instead a Political Conference (*Zhengzhi huiyi*). The attraction of this proposal for the League was that, in line with the CCP's coalition government proposals, the League would be represented as an equal with the CCP and GMD. Each party would also be able to nominate independent delegates. The

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<sup>119</sup> Sa Chaoran, *et al*, 1987, pp.952 & p.978.

conference would be public, equal, free, unanimous (*yizhi*) and have the power to make decisions on measures for creating a democratic government.<sup>120</sup>

The CCP and the League agreed to support each other politically, by mutually discussing national affairs and by co-ordinating their political activities. Significantly, this agreement included preparing common agendas before meetings with the GMD.<sup>121</sup> These arrangements were further supported by deals struck by the CCP with League members and factions. In November 1945, for example, Zhang Bojun and Zhang Shenfu agreed to work closely with the CCP to overthrow the GMD. They, too, agreed to discuss in advance with the CCP, any proposals to be put to the GMD. This tactic further reduced the chances of the CCP being embarrassed by sudden MPG proposals. In October, Deng Chumin had agreed to provide the CCP's *Xinhua ribao* with military and political intelligence, articles, cultural and general information in return for *Xinhua* material to be published in the League's *Minzhu zhoukan* (Democratic weekly).<sup>122</sup> As both the CCP and the League claimed to be fighting for the common goals of democracy, many League leaders, it seems, did not realise that they were sacrificing their party's independence.

Many League leaders took the CCP's "On New Democracy" and "On Coalition Government" seriously. Individuals such as the League's Zeng Chaolun were willing to accept the Party's promises that it was not planning to introduce communism for a long time.<sup>123</sup> League members, like Luo Longji, regularly met with CCP representatives such as Wang Ruofei, to discuss and analyse political affairs, and often became friends in the process.<sup>124</sup> These relationships, built up between the CCP and the MPGs and their leaders stood the Party in good stead, as it sought to delay the onset of the almost inevitable civil war with the GMD.

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<sup>120</sup> Li Yong, *et al*, 1988, p.404.

<sup>121</sup> "Zhongguo gongchandang guanyu tingzhi Guomin da hui congsu zhaokai zhengzhi huiyi de jianyi (Zhonggong daibiao yu Chu Fucheng, Huang Yanpei deng liu canzhengyuan Yan'an hui tan jilu," [The CCP's suggestion on stopping the National Assembly and convening a political conference as soon as possible (July 4, 1945), (CCP CC representative's record of conversations with Chu Fucheng, Huang Yanpei, *etc.* six members of the PCC at meetings in Yan'an)], *Kang Ri minzu tongyi zhanxian wenjian xuanbian*, 1986, pp.814-815.

<sup>122</sup> Which Deng edited. Van Slyke, 1967, p.192-193.

<sup>123</sup> Zeng Chaolun, for example, stated that, "they have no intention of introducing communism ... into China at the present stage, or for a generation to come." *ibid.*, p.196.

<sup>124</sup> Zhao Xihua, 1992, pp.45-46.

### The Threat of Civil War

The renegeing on the PCC agreements by the GMD's Central Committee was followed by an upsurge in military activity. Many of the Government's troops, were now equipped with American and Japanese arms, and they began retaking areas held by the CCP. The CCP's April takeover of Changchun as the Soviets evacuated the city strengthened the hand of those in the GMD hostile to any GMD-CCP settlement and who had never believed that the communists had intended to abide by their agreements.<sup>125</sup> The GMD-CCP peace negotiations subsequently became bogged down in disputes over Manchuria, a stronghold critical to the CCP but over which Jiang demanded complete National Government sovereignty. The GMD's initial military successes encouraged its commanders to believe that an easy victory over the CCP was imminent and that any compromise was unnecessary. General Marshall, however, realised that the nationalists would soon become over-extended, their supply lines vulnerable and their political position weakened.<sup>126</sup>

The CCP had foreseen this course of events and encouraged GMD over-optimism. The Party's strategy had been "to lure the enemy troops in deep, wait for them to disperse and then destroy them one by one by superior force." At the same time, the CCP strengthened its own bases.<sup>127</sup> The Party had never renounced military means to gain power but, in the wake of the Anti-Japanese war, it recognised the need to address the Chinese people's intense wish for peace. As Zhu De made clear, this need to appear to be working for peace rather than for war was important for the Party's legitimacy and winning of consent. All blame for the war had to fall on the GMD:

Under these circumstances, the CCP on the one hand, raised the banners for peace, democracy, and unity and endeavoured with the utmost efforts to lead the Chinese people in seeking a way to avoid war and to realise peace. On the other hand, it mobilised the Party and all the people and armies in the liberated areas and the people of the whole nation to make full preparations so that it could be in readiness to defeat Jiang Jieshi's anti-popular and anti-revolutionary military attacks when he resolutely destroyed the peace.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> *China White Paper*, p.149.

<sup>126</sup> *ibid.*, pp.153-156.

<sup>127</sup> Chen Yun, "The current situation and our tasks in North East China," (July 7, 1946). In *Chen Yun Selected Works*, (Foreign languages Press, Beijing, 1988), p.225.

<sup>128</sup> Tsou, 1963, pp.413-414.

The promotion of these banners provided the CCP with a means to at least delay a civil war if the alternative, an advantageous political settlement, was impossible. Nevertheless, Party policy was to increase military strength when and wherever possible. As Chen Yun's statement showed, an integral part of the CCP's talk-fight policy was to represent the GMD as the instigator of the civil war and the saboteur of the peace negotiations. Symbolic of nationalist intransigence and unreasonableness was the failure of the MPGs' representations to them to resume the peace negotiations. Even in October 1949, Mao confided to the Russians his fears that the Americans were trying to undermine the Party by supporting a "liberal" alternative to the two big parties. Mao therefore strongly opposed any move by Stalin to mediate between the CCP-GMD and the Americans.<sup>129</sup>

### **The Middle-of-the-Road, "Third Force," and the "Third Road"**

The initial success of the PCC, the abandonment of its agreements by the GMD and the subsequent drift towards civil war were all factors which combined to encourage among many MPG members, the idea an independent "third force" (*di san mian*) in Chinese politics.<sup>130</sup> This third force would mediate between the CCP and GMD, moderate their extremism and force both to act in the national interest. This group emerged as a consequence of the MPGs' precarious status between the two big armed parties during a time of stalemate; it was not conceived of as likely to govern in its own right. To support the third force position, a body of "third road" (*di san tiao lu*) political theory was developed based on long held MPG philosophical positions. The controversy over the viability and desirability of a third road position which explicitly and implicitly criticised both the GMD and CCP, was an important part of a broader debate over how to create a more democratic Chinese political system. This debate included argument over whether there was any legitimate role for independent political groups in any Chinese political system.

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<sup>129</sup> Chen, 1997, pp.120-112.

<sup>130</sup> This "force" is called the "Third Party Group" in the *The China White Paper* but this term risks confusing it with the Third Party.

The third force consisted of a loose coalition of MPG and independent politicians rather than an organised party. Formed in early to mid-1946,<sup>131</sup> the third force included leaders of the Democratic League, China Youth Party leaders, and various independents, not all of whom held third road positions.<sup>132</sup> Despite the CYP's earlier withdrawal from the League and differences between them, the leaders had continued to co-operate. They now hoped to reconcile the GMD and CCP. Their objectives were to prevent a civil war and to secure the implementation of PCC agreements that guaranteed the MPGs a political role. Much of the apparent strength of the third road position was premised on a GMD-CCP stale-mate and the consequent need for both to reach a compromise.<sup>133</sup> Well intentioned and expert, the MPGs saw themselves as being able to help achieve this.

There were other factors that contributed to belief in a middle way. The CCP had long encouraged the MPGs to act in concert and to develop a sense of internal unity. Both the Party and the Americans had promoted the MPGs' political importance with the latter believing that the MPGs could play a valuable role.<sup>134</sup> General Marshall, and later Ambassador Leighton Stuart, approved of the MPGs as a third force and felt they had the potential to help democratise the GMD. To assist this democratisation and moderate the GMD's authoritarianism, the Americans wanted Jiang to incorporate MPG 'liberals' into his government. This incorporation would help build the GMD's legitimacy. American policy, however, did little if anything to help the third force to develop into a strong and independent political party.<sup>135</sup>

Confronted with American pressure to moderate its authoritarianism, the GMD saw an opportunity to use the third force to both pressure the CCP and to appease

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<sup>131</sup> Li and Zhang described a meeting of League leaders, Shen Junru, Huang Yanpei, Luo Longji, Zhang Bojun, the CYP's Li Huang and Chen Qitian and the independent Mo Dehui with Hurley on January 8, 1945 as a meeting of third force representatives. The date at which the name came into use is still unclear. It is also unclear whether they called themselves the "third force." Li Yong, *et al*, 1988, p.175.

<sup>132</sup> Guo Moruo, for example, was a member of the third force group but there is no evidence he held any third road positions. His intimacy with the CCP precluded this.

<sup>133</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.646. Suzanne Pepper, *Civil War in China*, (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978), p.181.

<sup>134</sup> For a Chinese explanation of America's role in encouraging the third force see, Deng Zehong, "Meiguo dui Hua tiaochu zhengce he di san tiao lu de xingshuai," [America's mediation in China and the rise and decline of the third road] *ZDY* no. 3, 1992, pp.44-49.

<sup>135</sup> According to Tang T'sou, a policy to build up a third force may have succeeded if it had been pursued from soon after Hurley's arrival. Tsou, 1963, p.376.

Marshall. Mediation by the third force would work to the GMD's advantage if the peace talks then failed because of CCP intransigence. Were this to occur, the third force might be persuaded to join the GMD in the National Assembly and to condemn the CCP. The possibility of the third force acting constructively as an objective group independent of either major party disappeared when it became a focal point of the GMD-CCP struggle.

### The Third Road Program

In June 1946, two leaders of the Democratic League, Shi Fuliang and Zhang Dongsun, began to articulate an extensive theoretical basis for a third road position. They advocated the establishment of a political party between the extremes of the GMD and CCP.<sup>136</sup> Their views were disseminated widely through the influential publications *Wenhui bao*, *Zhou bao* and *Guancha*. In March 1947, Zhang and Shi used *Shi yu wen* (Times and Culture) to popularise their ideas of cultivating a non-party political stance.<sup>137</sup> Shi Fuliang's writings of mid-1946 to late-1947 were the most comprehensive and influential.<sup>138</sup> His political philosophy was based on his social analysis and his belief in the need for individuals to be politically and economically equal. Shi argued that progress towards the former was the pre-requisite for the latter and he maintained that efforts had to be made to achieve both. Political struggle was a necessary process to realise this equality. Equality could not be brought about by violent revolution, which Shi eschewed, but only by gradual, reformist and peaceful means. Successful democracy would only be achieved when the common people (*pingmin*) ruled the nation in common. This democratic rule, Shi argued, was best

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<sup>136</sup> Luo Longji and Huang Yanpei had maintained such a position for the Democratic League since 1941. See Luo Longji in Yu Gang, 1987, pp.125-127. Ye Mayi, "Luetan Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng lishi," [A brief discussion of the history of the Chinese Democratic League], *ibid.*, p.111. Shi Fuliang had been a founding member of the CCP and became a leader and editor for the Socialist Youth League in Shanghai but he quit the Party after being criticised in 1928. Shi subsequently joined forces with the Third Party's Deng Yanda as part of the GMD Reform Faction, along with Tan Pingshan and Xu Deheng. Peng Qingxia, and Liu Weishu (eds), *Zhongguo minzhu dangpai lishi renwu*, [Historical personages in China's democratic parties and groups] (Yanshan chubanshe, Beijing, 1992) pp.371-378.

<sup>137</sup> This journal survived until late 1948. Sa Chaoran, *et al*, 1987, p.966. Zhang had been involved with since his relationship with Liang Qichao and *Yu lun ribao* [Public opinion daily] and *Shishi xinbao* in 1910. *ibid.*, p.965.

<sup>138</sup> Lin Maosheng, *et al*, 1984, pp.555-559.

achieved through American or British parliamentary forms which allowed for the establishment of democratic politics for the whole people (*quanguo renmin*).

Shi Fuliang believed that such political democracy could not be achieved while there were vast disparities in wealth. Economic democracy was therefore vital. Economic democracy took the form of land reform and the encouragement of industry by a “new capitalism”, to promote rapid industrialisation and to vastly expand China's productive capacity. Land reform would enrich the peasantry and create a growing market for the new industries. A strong state would regulate this capitalism to prevent malpractice and implement progressive reforms to protect workers. Instead of class conflict, the middle elements would co-operate with poor peasants and workers. Together, these groups would oppose the negative forces of bureaucratic capitalism and landlord exploitation. Shi's ultimate goal was a form of socialism but before this goal could be realised, objective conditions, such as sufficient productive capacity, had to be met.

Shi regarded the GMD as representing the vested interests of bureaucratic capital and the CCP, as the representative of poor peasants and proletariat. These groups, he claimed, were all minority groups. Shi advocated a party between these extremes. Shi's ideal party would include national industrialists, artisans, those involved in industry and commerce, intellectuals such as teachers and professionals, small landlords, and prosperous peasants. These groups were not represented by the big parties; yet taken together, they constituted the majority of the population. These groups therefore formed the potential basis of a vast middle party. Shi saw the Democratic League as the key to such a party. The League could absorb some of the new MPGs and the large number of people's groups. If it maintained its independence, it would become the organisational vehicle for the third force and act as the “engine of the people.”<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> *ibid.*, p.558. Shi Fuliang's arguments were published in articles including “He wei zhong jian pai?” [What are the middle parties?], *Wenhui bao*, July 14, 1946, “Liang tiao daolu , yi ge dongji” [Two roads, one motive power] *Zhou bao*, no.48, August 3, 1946, and “Zhong jian pai de zhengzhi luxian,” [The political line of the middle groups], *Shi yu wen*, March 14, 1947.

Zhang Dongsun's position shared common features with those of Shi Fuliang. In articles such as "A middle-of-the-road political line" of June 1946, Zhang called for a political system between those of the GMD and CCP. He advocated a similar parliamentary system. Zhang also argued for economic democracy but of the sort he believed was practiced in the Soviet Union. In summary, his principles were: democracy without capitalism, socialism without proletarian dictatorship, freedom rather than interference, and co-operation rather than violence. Economic monopolies were to be prevented to thwart for their potential for economic interference. Zhang's interest in avoiding violence meant the rejection of class struggle. Economic inequality could be overcome using a Soviet-style planned economy to assist the development of industry and commerce. However, Zhang's scheme stressed the importance of individual effort rather than emphasising that of the state alone.<sup>140</sup>

Many of Shi's and Zhang's third road principles were already reflected in the Democratic League's 1945 platform. The League continued to call for guarantees of political and civil rights supported by a legal system and a national constitution. The constitution would legalise all political parties. The League wanted a federalist system of regional governments and provincial parliaments. Parliament would consist of a directly elected house of representatives with the president and vice-president also being elected directly. The senate would consist of representatives from the provinces. The civil service would be independent of the government, based on merit and free of political party involvement.

The League's objective was to bring about economic democracy by abolishing the extremes of poverty and wealth. To achieve this goal, the League wanted to vastly increase production while simultaneously protecting both labour and property rights. The integration of private enterprise into a unified and planned, national economy was seen as vital. The peasantry was to be protected by rent reductions while the poorer peasants were to be granted rights to land. The League's plan called for the state to buy out excessive private land holdings and gradually implement land reform. The industrialisation and modernisation of rural production would be encouraged; the banks,

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<sup>140</sup> "Yi ge zhongjianxing de zhengzhi luxian," *Zaisheng*, no.118, June 1946. In *ibid.*, pp.554-555.

mines, forest, and water resources were to be nationalised. The League's far-sighted program also called for a population policy, a social welfare system, and protection of women's rights.<sup>141</sup>

The National Construction Association, which provided a base for Huang Yanpei, Zhang Naiqi, Shi Fuliang and others, also incorporated many third road positions into its platform. The Association defended the right, and indeed the need, for national capitalism while maintaining a concern for workers. It advocated gradual reform and opposed violent change. Like the League, the Association also advocated a federalist parliamentary system, an economy based on a combination of private enterprise and centralised state planning, and it endorsed welfare measures and factory councils.<sup>142</sup> While the NCA fell well short of advocating *laissez faire* capitalism, the Association was also opposed to class warfare and complete state ownership of the means of production.

Both the League and the National Construction Association integrated socialist ideals into their political platforms. This integration not only drew upon, but also reflected, the prevalent contemporary enthusiasm for socialism. Third roader advocates, such as the editor Chu Anping, acknowledged this interest explicitly, particularly in his influential magazine *Guancha* (The Observer).<sup>143</sup> Chu's journal provided an invaluable forum for the airing of China's more liberal views, such as those of Democratic League writers including Fei Xiaotong, Liang Shuming, and Zhang Dongsun.<sup>144</sup> Their political philosophy was summed up in the slogan, "in politics implement the English and American system, in economics develop national capitalism."<sup>145</sup> Such ideas were promoted in the League publication *Minzhu bao* (Democracy) which began publishing in Chongqing in February 1946 and closed in March 1947. *Democracy* provided a forum not only for the third road views of its founders, Zhang Lan and Luo Longji, but also for the far more radical left-wing League

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141 "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng gangling," [The program of the Chinese Democratic League] (October, 1945) Chen, et al, 1985, pp.224-229.

142 *ibid.*, pp.419-425.

143 Pepper, 1978, p.181.

144 Young-Tsu Wong, "The Fate of Liberalism in Revolutionary China; Chu Anping and his Circle, 1946-1950," *Modern China*, vol.19, no.4, October 1993, pp.460, & 465-467.

145 Deng Zehong, 1992, p.44.

members and others such as Ma Yinchu, Zhang Shenfu, Tao Xingzhi and Guo Moruo.<sup>146</sup>

Nevertheless, among many MPG leaders there existed a strong technocratic inclination and faith in experts, together with an ambivalence towards democracy as mass-participation. Zhou Zhongyi, writing in *Guancha*, claimed that a third party consisting of intellectuals could save China because they had intelligence, faith, and expertise.<sup>147</sup> The League leader, Liang Shuming, continued to call for experts to devise a constitution which entailed neither elections or a Western-style constitution.<sup>148</sup>

Third road writers disapproved of numerous aspects of GMD rule. They opposed the GMD's one-party state, its repression and corruption, and its disregard of their talents. At the same time, the third road intellectuals also had many criticisms and reservations about the CCP. While generally advocating forms of socialism, third roaders nevertheless upheld the right to private property and supported the existence of capitalism. They also stressed individualism, independence and idealism rather than conformism, collectivism, class and Marxist materialist dogma. Third roaders particularly eschewed the CCP's espousal of violent revolution and favoured gradual reform.

The CCP recognised that its radical land reform measures terrified many landlords who then fled to the cities. The presence of these landlords in urban areas greatly heightened the fears of the communists held by such groups as capitalists.<sup>149</sup> Nevertheless, the Party needed to intensify land reform in order to strengthen its rural militias. This recruitment would, in turn, release more soldiers to defend against the increasing number of GMD attacks and prepare for the Party's counter-offensive. In the

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<sup>146</sup> Sa Chaoran, *et al*, 1987, p.952.

<sup>147</sup> Chou Chung-i, (Zhou Zhongyi) in *Guancha*, January 25, 1947. Quoted in Pepper, 1978, pp.190-191.

<sup>148</sup> Liang in *Guancha*, September 20, 1947, *ibid.*, p.187.

<sup>149</sup> For example, "Zhonggong guanyu yaoqiu ge di dafu zhiding tudi zhengce de ji ge zhongyao wenti de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on requiring each area to respond to several important questions on implementing land policy] (July 19, 1946), *Liberation Period Documents*, p.118. This was restated in August when the CCP directed that the land reform of rich peasant in some areas be moderated to avoid harming the united front policies of isolating the GMD in Shanghai, Beijing and other cities. See "Zhonggong guanyu funong tudi by yi tui ping gei Huazhong ju de zhishi," [CCP CC Instructions to the Central China Department on the policy of rich peasant land reform being inappropriate to promoting peace] (August 8, 1946), *ibid.*, pp.124-125. Liu Shaoqi, "Directive on the Land Question," *SW*, pp.372-378.

interim, the CCP planned to preserve the peace as long as possible and to use united front work to gain the political initiative.

The CCP recognised that fears of its land reform policies increased the chance that national capitalists and other middle elements would support the GMD. To minimise this response, the CCP informed League leaders, particularly Huang Yanpei, that it was merely implementing Sun Yatsen's 'land to the tiller' policy; it was responding to peasant demands and laying the foundations for subsequent democratisation and industrialisation. To further allay their fears and co-opt them, the CCP invited League leaders to jointly investigate the issue.<sup>150</sup> The Party's tactics successfully neutralised Huang and many potential critics of land reform, particularly from within the League and NCA. Failure to do so would have alienated many and enhanced support for the GMD's attacks on the CCP while the latter was still weak. This neutralisation was a good example of the CCP's successful co-ordination of urban united front work with its military and political needs.

The Democratic League advocated an independent and sovereign China. It was opposed to the Far East becoming a battle ground for other nations. As a result, many League members were suspicious of the CCP's relationship with the Soviet Union.<sup>151</sup> Many League members suspected the Party to be less patriotic than it claimed. How, *Dagong bao* asked, could the CCP enter Manchuria so easily? Many critics suggested that the CCP was too close to the Soviet Union and that Sun Yatsen's principle of nationalism was being forgotten.<sup>152</sup>

The third road proponents wanted civil and political rights and they were concerned about CCP authoritarianism. The liberal magazine *Shidai piping* (The Times Critic) declared:

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<sup>150</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu xiang Minmeng renshi shuoming wo dang tudi zhengce gei Zhou Enlai, Dong Biwu de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions to Zhou Enlai and Dong Biwu on explaining our Party's land policies to the Democratic League] (July 19, 1946), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.121-122. Li Weihai and others took several days to persuade Huang to accept the CCP's position. Li Weihai, 1986, p.645.

<sup>151</sup>"Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng linshi quanguo daibiao da hui xuanchuan," [Declaration of the Provisional National Congress of the Democratic League] (October 16, 1945), Chen Zhujun, 1985, p.234.

<sup>152</sup> Pepper, 1978, pp.212-216.

If they see someone criticising the GMD they applaud. But no matter what the CCP says or does, it is evaluated as being good and those who disagree are subject to 'liquidation' and attacked as reactionaries, accomplices, running dogs, GMD secret agents, and the like ...<sup>153</sup>

One writer pointed out that Mao had become the arbiter of literature and art as well and that all writers in Yan'an had to follow the Party line.<sup>154</sup> Like the GMD, the CCP also advocated a system of one-party rule and both parties sought to "control the popular will through strict organisation."<sup>155</sup> In early 1948, Chu Anping wrote that there could be no democracy without freedom of thought. Under the GMD the struggle for freedom translated into a question of "more or less," but under the CCP, Chu declared, it would become a question of "having and not having."<sup>156</sup>

The third road program and its criticisms of both major parties did not go unchallenged. Attacks on third road ideas also emanated from the MPGs in which the CCP had strong influence, if not control. Organisations, such as the Association for the Promotion of Democracy, which Shi Fuliang had seen as potential allies in a third force, attacked his ideas vehemently. In 1948 Mao wrote of the mistaken belief in a third road by those with illusions about America and Jiang Jieshi. Third roaders, said Mao, had to be proven wrong and criticised but the party was, nevertheless, to unite with them.<sup>157</sup>

The APD's Ma Xulun bitterly attacked Shi Fuliang's articles. There could be no middle road, wrote Ma, there was only a democratic road as opposed to an anti-democratic road; supporters of democracy had to side with democracy: with the CCP. Fellow APD member, the radical historian Li Pingxin, supported Ma's attack. Li maintained that the contradictions between the GMD and CCP were irreconcilable and choices had to be made.<sup>158</sup> The APD's criticisms were supported by Beijing University professor and Jiusan member, Fan Hong. Fan attacked Shi and Zhang's propositions in *Guancha* and instead advocated a violent and revolutionary road. The third road, Fan wrote scathingly, "is advocated by Jesus Christ, Confucius and contemporary

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<sup>153</sup> August 1947, *ibid.*, p.217.

<sup>154</sup> *ibid.*, p.218.

<sup>155</sup> Chu Anping, *Guancha*, March 8, 1947. *ibid.*, p.200.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid.*, p.218.

<sup>157</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "A circular on the Situation," (March 20, 1948) *SW*, vol.4, p.220.

<sup>158</sup> Ma's article "Lun di san fangmian yu minzhu chenxian," [On the third force and the democratic battle front], *The Masses*, December 22, 1946. In Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.38-39.

professors.”<sup>159</sup> In part, the attacks on Shi and Zhang by their peers reflected a growing polarisation in China’s political debate, as well as an attempt to push them and third road advocates to the side of revolution. These attacks also highlighted the difficulty of creating a substantive third force when the proposal was being rejected outright by some of the very groups that Shi argued should be included in it.

Third road advocates faced another acute contradiction. On the one hand they envisaged a third force gaining power and implementing reforms rather than being constrained to the role of mediators and advisers as they had in the past. On the other hand, because third roaders eschewed violence and lacked military power, they had no choice but to rely on concessions from the GMD and CCP in order to gain power. Proposals for coalition governments and the PCC agreements were their only means of achieving third road ideals. Zhang Dongsun therefore justified a coalition government as being ‘democratic,’ claiming that the GMD, CCP and Democratic League represented all the interests in China. Hence, he charged, “when such parties consult together, on the surface it may only seem to be a matter among parties, but in fact it can mean genuine democracy.”<sup>160</sup> Zhang called on both the GMD and CCP to move away from the extremes of right and left and move towards the centre.<sup>161</sup>

Shi Fuliang saw the Political Consultative Conference as conforming with the interests of the nation and the interests of the middle elements in particular. He called for the awakening of the people to force the GMD to return to the PCC.<sup>162</sup> Yet why the GMD should assist any third force, which ultimately hoped to replace it, was unclear.

It was the threat of a full-scale GMD-CCP civil war which provided Shi Fuliang with some hope. Shi believed that both big parties faced a military stalemate. Therefore, the only way to extract China from its predicament was to create a middle road.<sup>163</sup> If, however, China descended into civil war, then there would be no middle ground to move towards. It was therefore imperative that the CCP and GMD make peace, to save China from chaos and violence and to also preserve a space in which a

<sup>159</sup> "There are only two roads," April 10, 1948, Pepper, 1978, p.185.

<sup>160</sup> Zhang Dongsun, *Guancha*, April 5, 1947. *ibid.*, p.187, p.189.

<sup>161</sup> Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.38.

<sup>162</sup> Lin Maosheng, et al, 1984, p.557.

<sup>163</sup> *ibid.*, p.558.

third force could develop. Between May and June the MPGs met often with General Marshall and put forward numerous proposals, all of which were rejected by either or both the CCP and GMD.<sup>164</sup> The increasing anxiety and calls for peace by the third force complicated the CCP's united front policies. Li Weihai and Xu Dixin had been investigating the third roaders' attitudes since August and were aware of their mood.<sup>165</sup>

### The Third Force as Mediators

In October 1946, after a string of military victories, Jiang Jieshi felt he would have the upper hand in ceasefire negotiations. In a conciliatory gesture, in response to Marshall's pleas for a political settlement, Jiang invited the third force to act as mediators in the arrangement of a permanent cease-fire. Third force Democratic League members were asked to convince the CCP to participate in cease-fire talks.

Initially the Party rejected the proposal and this response convinced many third force leaders that peace was already dead. Nevertheless, the China Youth Party's Li Huang argued strenuously that flogging even a dead horse might produce some sort of a miracle.<sup>166</sup> As a sign of good faith, Jiang sent the GMD's much respected Shao Lizi to pass on his peace proposals to the third force and convince them to take part. Marshall also encouraged them to act as mediators.<sup>167</sup> Hopeful of even a possibility of success, the third force eventually prevailed on the CCP and both groups went to Nanjing on October 21.<sup>168</sup>

Zhou Enlai had told fellow CCP leaders that accompanying the third force to Nanjing would give its members "face" and avoid them developing "misunderstandings" about the Party.<sup>169</sup> This latter consideration was vital to CCP

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<sup>164</sup> See Carsun Chang (Zhang Junmai), *The Third Force in China*, (Bookman Associates, New York, 1952), pp.174-178.

<sup>165</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, pp.644-645.

<sup>166</sup> "Si ma dangzuo huo ma yi," [to treat even a dead horse in the hope of possibly reviving it.] Lou Longji, in Yu Gang, 1987, p.155.

<sup>167</sup> *The China White Paper*, p.199, p.202.

<sup>168</sup> The Third Force delegation consisted of CYP, NSP, Democratic League and non-party personages; Mo Dehui, (Manchuria) Liang Shuming, Huang Yanpei, Chen Qitian, Zhang Junmai, Zhang Bojun, Zuo Shunsheng, Xu Jiaju, Miao Jiaming, Luo Longji, and Li Huang.

<sup>169</sup> Sun Qiming, *Hetan, neizhan jiaoxiangqu: Mao Zedong he Jiang Jieshi zai Kang zhan shengli chuqi* [The peace talks and civil war symphony: Mao Zedong and Jiang Jieshi in the initial period of victory after the War of Resistance], (Shanghai renmin chubanshe, Shanghai, 1992), p.416.

concerns about maintaining its leadership of the MPGs. If the third force became disillusioned with the CCP it could ally with the GMD and support its forth-coming National Assembly. Such an alliance would strengthen the GMD politically; moreover, it would substantiate GMD requests for more American military and financial aid which would drag out the civil war and raise its cost to the CCP. Thus, although the CCP saw no chance of a peaceful resolution, it nevertheless acquiesced to peace talks largely because the third force placed so much importance on them. Failure to have done so would have been politically and militarily costly. More positively, if blame for any break-down could be attributed to the GMD, then its chances of securing American aid would be reduced. Moreover, any GMD rejection of peace would, the head of the CCP's united front work, Li Wei-han stated, "expose the GMD's plot" and prove the futility of the third force's position.<sup>170</sup> The GMD would be seen by the general public as choosing war and third force members and the MPGs would have to choose between the GMD or CCP. When this occurred, the CCP would already have a strong foundation for winning over the bulk of the MPGs to its side, a foundation based on its leadership, political promises, years of close co-operation, personal relationships and obligations, and infiltration.

If the Party refused to attend the talks its claims to desire avoiding a civil war and using military force only in self-defence would be severely undermined and its united front work harmed. To justify Party claims to support, indeed embody, peace, unity, and democracy, the CCP needed to demonstrate that it had exhausted all avenues of possible reconciliation. Going to Nanjing, was as Zhou Enlai stated, "the last act in the play"; without American involvement, the third force "had not yet acted as mediator all by itself. In order to enable it to learn something and to realise that mediation would be fruitless, we agreed to let it try."<sup>171</sup> By demonstrating GMD insincerity, the CCP hoped to win over the Democratic League or to at least convince a majority of its members to boycott the National Assembly. This in itself would "be a victory,"<sup>172</sup> as

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<sup>170</sup> Li Wei-han, 1986, p.647.

<sup>171</sup> Zhou Enlai, *SW*, vol.1, p.289.

<sup>172</sup> Sun Qiming, 1992, p.416.

the GMD would be seen to be a reactionary, dictatorial minority without moderate allies.

Third force disillusionment with the GMD was immediate. Jiang Jieshi spoke only briefly with its members before flying to Taiwan for six days. He left the talks in the hands of sub-ordinates who were powerless to make decisions.<sup>173</sup> Negotiations focussed on Jiang's eight conditions:

- 1) Immediate restoration of communications based on June 1945 agreements.
- 2) Disagreements to be settled using June 1945's Committees of Three.
- 3) Redeployment of troops in North-East China according to June 1945 agreements.
- 4) Both sides to occupy their current positions until other agreements were reached.
- 5) Five Man Committee agreements to be confirmed by PCC Steering Committee.
- 6) Local government questions to be settled by new State Council.
- 7) Immediate convening of Constitutional Draft Committee and the agreed draft to be submitted to National Assembly through the national government.
- 8) The CCP, on agreeing to the ceasefire, announce its intention of participating in the National Assembly by publishing its list of Assembly delegates.<sup>174</sup>

The CCP demanded two conditions: that there be no time limit to the ceasefire; and that the Three and Five-Man Committees re-convene. The Party also maintained that talks should extend beyond areas determined by Jiang.<sup>175</sup> Neither side planned to concede and there was limited space left for a middle way.

To overcome the stalemate, some of the third force leaders developed a compromise proposal. Because of his long association with Zhou Enlai, the proposal's acceptability was guaranteed by Liang Shuming.<sup>176</sup> The compromise entailed three main conditions: there was to be an immediate ceasefire; local administration was to be arranged by a State Council organised in accordance with the PCC agreements; and lastly, the PCC Steering Committee would plan the immediate re-organisation of the Government. All parties were to be included in a re-convened National Assembly and Constitutional Drafting Committee. However, this proposal also required the CCP to surrender to GMD police, some of the areas it occupied in North East China, particularly counties along the Changchun railway, the trunkline serving Manchuria.<sup>177</sup> Although these areas were small, they were strategically vital. To compound the Party's

<sup>173</sup> Some accounts claim the meeting only lasted eight minutes. *ibid.*, p.418.

<sup>174</sup> *The China White Paper*, pp.674-675.

<sup>175</sup> *ibid.*, p.665.

<sup>176</sup> Carsun Chang 1952, p.182.

<sup>177</sup> *China White Paper*, pp.675-676.

problems with this proposal, Huang Yanpei, Liang Shuming, Mo Dehui and others decided on a strategy to force an agreement; if only one side supported their proposal, then they would support that side.<sup>178</sup>

The CCP delegates were outraged by the unilateral nature of the proposals and the third force attitude. In tears, Zhou Enlai berated Liang Shuming, Mo Dehui, and Li Huang for acting in bad faith and "hitting the CCP when it was down." Zhou argued that the CCP represented the people and that this was a life and death struggle. If necessary, the Party could retreat and conduct guerrilla warfare.<sup>179</sup> He labelled Liang Shuming a "hypocrite" guilty of betraying a friendship of twenty years<sup>180</sup> and Dong Biwu accused the third force of acting for the GMD.<sup>181</sup>

Their compromise proposals had seemed reasonable ones to the third force even though Jiang would gain some military advantage at the CCP's expense. The third force was unaware of what was at stake for the CCP's long-term political strategies, and it had no reason to expect its proposals to be rejected, nor for such a rejection to be so melodramatic. Indeed, Zhou's response seems to have been based as much on a perceived breach of trust as on the proposals themselves.

There were indeed CCP agreements with Democratic League leaders. On October 25, Liang Shuming and Huang Yanpei had promised to first consult with the CCP before putting any proposals to the GMD.<sup>182</sup> Luo Longji also had a similar "gentleman's agreement" with Wang Ruofei.<sup>183</sup> Moreover, these agreements had long been backed up with the CCP's policies of political, moral and material support for the MPGs and their leaders, policies that Zhou Enlai had restated in July 1946.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.648.

<sup>179</sup> *ibid.*, p.648.

<sup>180</sup> Carsun Chang, 1952, p.182.

<sup>181</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.648.

<sup>182</sup> The CCP delegation had threatened to withdraw from the talks as a result of the GMD taking CCP held Dong'an on October 25. Luo Longji in Yu Gang, 1987, p.158. Zhao Xihua, 1992, p.258.

<sup>183</sup> *ibid.*, p.136. This statement has recently been given more coverage as a "gentleman's agreement" (*junzi xieding*). Luo Guangwu (ed), *Tongyi zhanxian gongzuo 100 lie*, [100 examples of United front work] (Beijing Yanshan chubanshe, Beijing, 1994), pp.16-19. Luo Longji's steadfastness had been in question. He had earlier been reported as wavering in his commitment to a boycott. John Robinson Beal, *Marshall In China*, (Doubleday Canada Ltd, Toronto, 1970), p.196.

<sup>184</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Take Better Care of our Progressive Friends," *SW*, vol.1, pp.264-265.

Zhou's invocation of the obligations of personal relationships and emotional blackmail succeeded in getting Liang and the third force to acquiesce to Zhou's demands. The third force's confidence in their proposal and their resolve melted. Liang, Li, and Mo moved to make amends while Huang Yanpei, Luo Longji and Zhang Bojun were roundly chastised. Using the excuse that the proposal had to be amended, Huang retrieved it from the offices of both the GMD and General Marshall.<sup>185</sup>

The third force's compromise proposal was an example of what the CCP termed the 'problem' of bourgeoisie independence: failing to listen to the CCP and choosing instead to assert its independence.<sup>186</sup> Zhou Enlai later explained to Li Weihai that middle elements "generally required education and persuasion," but when, as in this case, their wavering was serious, then resolute struggle with them was required.<sup>187</sup> Successful united front techniques of unity-struggle included using accumulated personal, professional, and political relationships. In this instance, the CCP successfully invoked these methods to avoid appearing to be unreasonable. The CCP could not afford to alienate public opinion by rejecting the third force brokered compromise. Instead, the CCP's struggle with the third force brought it closer to the Party. The third force came to accept that it was the GMD, not the CCP which had chosen civil war by imposing unreasonable demands.<sup>188</sup> Zhou's outburst helped commit the third force to putting forward proposals which did not harm the CCP.

As if to confirm the GMD's unreasonableness and underscore Jiang Jieshi's lack of interest in a settlement, Jiang told the third force that it had saved him the trouble of rejecting their proposal.<sup>189</sup> Jiang criticised the force for submitting proposals to him and demanded instead that they get the CCP to accept his proposals.<sup>190</sup> Nevertheless, Jiang still tried to convince, cajole, and coerce as many of the third force and MPGs as possible to participate in the forthcoming National Assembly to increase its legitimacy

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<sup>185</sup> Hence its inclusion in *China White Paper*. Sun Fou passed it on to Jiang and Zhou Enlai, both of whom rejected it. John F. Melby, *The Mandate of Heaven: Record of a Civil War, China, 1945-49*, (Chatto and Windus, London, 1969), p.163.

<sup>186</sup> Zhou Enlai, "On the United Front," *SW*, vol.1, p.241.

<sup>187</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.649.

<sup>188</sup> Zhao Xihua, 1992, p.262.

<sup>189</sup> *ibid.*, p.262.

<sup>190</sup> Melby, 1969, pp.162-163.

and appease the Americans. *Da Gongbao's* Hu Lin conveyed to the CCP, Jiang's promise of a cease-fire if the Party would name their delegates to the National Assembly.<sup>191</sup> Sun Fo told the third force that the submission of National Assembly delegate lists was the most important of Jiang's demands. Reforms would happen later.

### **The Debate Over the Boycott of the National Assembly**

At a third force discussion of the delegate list issue, the Democratic League reaffirmed its refusal to participate in the Assembly before the PCC agreements had been implemented. Luo Longji and Huang Yanpei declared that if the CCP refused to endorse the Assembly and refused to submit a delegate list, then they would do likewise. The League had overcome its doubts about the consequences of boycotting the Assembly and it maintained solidarity with the CCP. The League's decision, in turn, increased pressure on other third force members to stand by their earlier commitments to the PCC.

On November 12, Zhou Enlai attended a third force discussion on participation in the Assembly. A heated argument occurred between the boycott supporters and the more conservative grouping of Youth Party members and followers of Zhang Junmai.<sup>192</sup> Zhou Enlai argued that all present wanted the PCC and cease-fire agreements implemented. This implementation could only occur if the CCP and GMD negotiated. The third force could only develop when there was a PCC. Zhou dismissed Jiang's proposals as efforts to divide the third force.<sup>193</sup> Zhou stressed that anyone who participated in the Assembly would violate the very PCC agreements that the CCP and MPGs had struggled for. As a result, those who joined the Assembly would become Jiang's accomplices in the civil war.<sup>194</sup>

Zhou had effectively summed up the contradiction in the third force position: their only strength was in unity. If the third force succumbed to Jiang's threats and

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<sup>191</sup> (October 30) *ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> The CYP's Zuo Shunsheng said it was better to be a chicken's head than a cow's arse, i.e. to be a leader, however small, than a follower. Zhou Enlai retorted that a cow produced milk and chickens merely fought over bits of grain. Li Weihai, 1986, pp.650-651.

<sup>193</sup> *ibid.*, pp.650-651.

<sup>194</sup> Zhou Enlai discussing the tactics used against Zhang Junmai in 1946. See "Opinions on Our Present Work among the Democratic Parties," (January 1948), *SW*, vol.1, 1981, p.319

inducements it would eventually be destroyed. Yet a third force boycott of the Assembly would effectively support the CCP and could also result in its destruction by the GMD. In late 1946, the CCP itself seemed to be under threat of imminent destruction by a re-armed and resurgent GMD. The third force required that the GMD and CCP agree to allow or create a space for itself. Without such a space the third force delegates had to choose between the CCP and GMD. While the GMD, seemed to promise immediate political and material rewards, the CCP appeared more committed to its stated political promises even though the consequences of supporting the Party would entail hardship and uncertainty. Either way, the space for a third road appeared to be disappearing. Some of the third force, long suspicious of the CCP and attracted by Jiang's promises, decided to participate in the Assembly. At a stormy meeting on November 14, Zuo Shunsheng announced the China Youth Party's decision to attend the National Assembly. Only the Democratic League members, led by Huang Yanpei, continued to reject such participation.

No Chinese newspapers were willing to publish the League's boycott declaration on the same day as the opening of the Assembly. The decision was therefore announced in the foreign press. The boycott received international coverage and the GMD's authoritarianism was again highlighted.

The fate of Zhang Junmai's new Chinese Democratic Socialist Party and the China Youth Party after they decided to participate in the National Assembly had implications for all MPGs including those that subsequently sided with the CCP.<sup>195</sup> Jiang Jieshi had pledged that the GMD would accept "sound improvements" to the constitution if Zhang's party joined the Assembly.<sup>196</sup> In addition to a large number of seats, Jiang also offered ministries to both parties. The League's decision to boycott Assembly resulted in it moving closer to the CCP than the two long-time anti-communist right-wing groups found acceptable. When Jiang then made tempting offers

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<sup>195</sup> In September 1946, Zhang's National Socialists held a congress attended by 72 members at which they merged with the overseas based Constitutionalist Party (*Min xuan dang*) to form the Chinese Democratic Socialist Party (*Zhongguo minzhu shehui zhuyi dang*). Li Yong, *et al*, 1988, p.237.

<sup>196</sup> Beal, 1970, p.158, p.253. For Zhang's account see, Carsun Chang, 1952, Ch.10.

to entice them, Zhang and the CYP found participation in the Assembly irresistible.<sup>197</sup> Nevertheless, neither the CYP nor the NSP were present at the November 15 opening of the Assembly. They only began attending later.<sup>198</sup> Even at the last minute they retained doubts about supporting the GMD.

The doubts of the two parties were well founded. The participation of the Chinese Youth Party and the Democratic Socialists in Jiang's "liberal multi-party government" in April 1947, only meant the end of their relevance. Jiang's promises to recognise the importance of the two groups and provide 300 National Assembly seats for the CYP and 260 for the Democratic Socialists, were never fulfilled.<sup>199</sup> Out of a total 2,800, the CYP won only seventy seats and the Democratic Socialists only sixty eight. These results in part reflected the organisational disintegration of the GMD. In defiance of Jiang's orders, dissident nationalists used party resources to stand as independents against MPG candidates.<sup>200</sup>

The two MPGs felt betrayed. Their threat to boycott the Assembly was only averted when the GMD forcibly replaced some GMD independents with MPG members. This action provided the Youth Party with 230 seats and the democratic socialists with 202.<sup>201</sup> An attempt by the democratic socialist, Xu Fulin, to run for vice-president also failed.<sup>202</sup> By allying with the GMD, the two parties had essentially served their purpose. The third force had been destroyed and the Democratic League was much reduced. The CCP's claim that a middle road was impossible was borne out and the promises of the GMD were discredited even further.

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<sup>197</sup> The Democratic League condemned them both and expelled the Democratic Socialist Party in December 1946.

<sup>198</sup> Beal, 1970, p.280. Zhang claims to have been embarrassed to also when asked to join the government after having been so long treated as an enemy. Moreover, his party was unprepared and lacked members with prestige and experience. Realising that all power was effectively in Jiang's hands he equivocated. While he was afraid for his own personal safety if he did not participate, he also claimed that there would be no reform or constitutional government if he did not appease Jiang. Carsun Chang, 1952, Ch.11, especially pp.223-224.

<sup>199</sup> Nevertheless, there were other Assembly delegates who exhibited considerable hostility towards the democratic socialists in the National Assembly. The democratic socialists were said to be, "making more noise than the whole Assembly." Beal, 1970, p.301.

<sup>200</sup> Wang, 1982, p.97.

<sup>201</sup> Chien, 1950, p.333.

<sup>202</sup> A. Doak Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, (Thames and Hudson, London, 1963) p.63.

The most direct consequence of this 'lesson,' for both the CYP and the Democratic Socialists, was internal disintegration as their members fought for office.<sup>203</sup> The problems inherent in the parties' lack of proper organisational structure and particularly their reliance on *guanxi* became all too apparent. Despite Zhang Junmai's claim that he would participate in the National Assembly "to feed his members," his unilateral decision split his party.<sup>204</sup> His belief that more could be achieved from within the Assembly than outside failed to convince many.<sup>205</sup> Zhang Dongsun led a break-away Beijing based faction. In line with Democratic League decisions and Zhang Dongsun's own philosophical positions, they refused to join the Assembly and rejoined the Democratic League. Zhang Junmai subsequently told remaining party members not to take up government office. The dissent over this decision by those who insisted on taking up official jobs split the party still further.<sup>206</sup> The performance of the two MPGs was disappointing. The American ambassador, Leighton Stuart, concluded that they contributed little to the government and that both were more interested in securing offices.<sup>207</sup>

Jiang Jieshi had hoped that without the CYP and the Democratic Socialists, the Democratic League would be discredited by its support of CCP positions. Yet Jiang did not seize the opportunity provided by the CYP and Zhang's group's support to rebuild GMD legitimacy. Jiang proved unable to deliver them the promised seats and positions. Nor did he make any efforts to institute genuine reforms which might have won Democratic League and broader popular support. Jiang continued to rely on a military solution to China's problems.

General Marshall's plan had been for Jiang to foster and include in his government those MPG figures the Americans regarded as 'liberals.' This incorporation would contribute to GMD legitimacy and reduce the influence of the

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<sup>203</sup> For an account of the process see, Lloyd E. Eastman, "China's Democratic Parties and the Temptations of Political Power, 1946-1947," in Jeans, 1992, pp.189-202.

<sup>204</sup> Dou Aizhi, *ibid.*, p.122

<sup>205</sup> Barnett, 1963, p.23.

<sup>206</sup> Eastman, in Roger Jeans, 1992, pp.192-193.

<sup>207</sup> *The China White Paper*, p.833.

GMD's extreme right-wing.<sup>208</sup> However, Jiang failed to do either. After the CYP and the democratic socialists joined the Assembly the GMD had no further use for them. The third force disintegrated and its members reverted to their original MPG groupings.

On his return to Yan'an in January 1947, Li Wei-han wrote of the Nanjing peace talks: "The GMD-CCP talks have broken down. However, our Party returns bearing the will of the people (*manzai renxin gui qu*). This is the greatest victory for the Party's united front work."<sup>209</sup> The CCP had prevented a major section of the Democratic League from supporting the GMD's National Assembly. League members who boycotted the Assembly were generally more prominent and respected than those who had joined it. The CCP therefore again made important progress in its struggle to convince the middle elements, who looked to the MPGs for some guidance, that their future did not lie with the GMD.

Despite the failure of the third force the debate about a third road, its political form, economic basis and other manifestations continued. The Democratic League re-asserted its role as an intermediary. Yet, while declaring the third force exhausted by the failed peace negotiations, the League said that it would continue to play a neutral, "third person" (*di san zhe*) role between the CCP and GMD.<sup>210</sup> The League continued to articulate the increasingly pressing concerns of China's middle elements and voice their demands. In doing so it continued to help the CCP's attempts to undermine the GMD.

## The Second Front

The GMD's failure to address the concerns of so many people and the threat of an imminent GMD-CCP civil war, were factors that made many groups susceptible to the CCP's united front appeals. The Party actively encouraged and supported demonstrations, boycotts, anti-government agitation, petitions, and writings by students,

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<sup>208</sup> "Personal Statement by the Special Representative of the President, (Marshall) January 7, 1947," *ibid.*, pp.686-688.

<sup>209</sup> Li Wei-han, 1986, p.652.

<sup>210</sup> Luo Longji, Zhang Bojun and Zhang Shenfu at a Beijing press conference (November 25, 1946). "Minmeng zai Jing zhaodai jizhe shengming jue baochi di san zhe diwei," [The Democratic League hosts a press conference in Beijing at which it announces it is maintaining its third person role], in Chen Zhujun, *et al.*, 1985, pp.259-262.

workers, MPGs and others as part of an extensive “second front” (*di er zhanxian*) within GMD areas. These activities were described as aspects of a popular anti-GMD “democratic movement.” This movement, in which the MPGs played an important part, was a vital part of CCP united front work. The intention was to use many forms of popular protest to demonstrate that the CCP, not the GMD, had the support of the Chinese populace.<sup>211</sup> For, while Zhou Enlai had declared military means to be the CCP’s primary method of winning peace, (a method Gramsci described as a war of movement) the secondary and complementary strategy was to win people's hearts, i.e. their consent for CCP rule.<sup>212</sup>

The GMD's post-war resumption of national government was tainted by corruption, mismanagement, maladministration and continued attacks on the CCP. Returning GMD officials rushed to secure personal advantage from Japan's surrender. *Dagong bao* lamented, “We lost the hearts of the people in Shanghai and Nanjing within a short space of twenty days.”<sup>213</sup> The GMD returned, not as liberators, “but like conquerors bent on looting a fallen enemy.”<sup>214</sup> Many officials appropriated Japanese firms through dubious means or outright theft and then often stripped and sold off their assets. Those patriotic businessmen who had accompanied the GMD inland were not only not rewarded for their sacrifices, they were also severely disadvantaged by this GMD carpet bagging.<sup>215</sup> Businessmen who had remained in Japanese occupied areas suffered from the unfair competition and corruption. An economy already debilitated by the war, continued to deteriorate. In Jiangsu, for example, peasants were heavily taxed and high food prices were only controlled by imports.<sup>216</sup> Economic mismanagement, particularly the huge war-induced deficits, led to a hyper-inflation that all measures failed to control including the 1948 introduction of the gold yuan. Urban intellectuals, such as teachers and anyone on fixed incomes, were severely affected. In

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<sup>211</sup> Guo Xiaoping, 1992, p.57. Hu Sheng (ed), *A Concise History of the Communist Party of China*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1994), pp.339-346.

<sup>212</sup> Zhu Dali, Wang Guangda and Xu Hongying, "A Brief Discussion on the Historical Contributions of the CPC Central Committee's Nanjing Bureau in the Liberation War," (sic) *Zhonggong dang shi yanjiu*, 1989, no. 5, p.71.

<sup>213</sup> *Dagong bao*, September 27, 1945, in Pepper, 1978, p.16.

<sup>214</sup> Wang, 1982, pp.93-95.

<sup>215</sup> Pepper, 1978, p.29.

<sup>216</sup> Eastman, 1984, pp.75-77.

Shanghai, the imposition of price controls resulted in produce supplies drying up. Shanghai's unemployed reached an estimated 500,000.<sup>217</sup>

Government officials quickly alienated many urban residents who had lived under Japanese occupation by treating them, *ipso facto*, as collaborators. Students, in particular, were discriminated against and forced to undergo political screening and re-education.<sup>218</sup> The press demanded that collaborators be punished.<sup>219</sup> The GMD, however, made use of Japanese troops to attack the communists, fellow Chinese who had also fought against the Japanese. Conspicuously absent were any kind of immediate and effective measures against administrators and bureaucrats who had actively collaborated with the Japanese.<sup>220</sup>

Immediately the war concluded then, many groups had or quickly developed grievances for which they held the GMD government responsible. Most importantly, Jiang's political liberalisations now allowed the discontented (and those claiming to speak for them) to air their grievances. The CCP regarded the first six months of 1946 as critical to its future political and military success. The Party instructed its members in GMD-held cities to take action, especially in Chongqing, Shanghai, and Beiping. They were to use demands for democracy, punishment of traitors, unemployment relief, economic reforms, the return of displaced people to their villages and support for the peace talks, as the basis of a radical activism which would build political support and undermine the GMD.<sup>221</sup>

The CCP regarded the new MPGs as a vital part of this second front. The CCP's Xu Dixin described them as "the guerillas of the GMD controlled areas, doing ideological work among the masses and raising their (the masses') political consciousness."<sup>222</sup> These inherently corporatist MPGs represented strategically important groups. The Association for the Promotion of Democracy represented

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<sup>217</sup> Pepper, 1978, p.33.

<sup>218</sup> *ibid.*, p.37-38.

<sup>219</sup> *ibid.*, p.12.

<sup>220</sup> Lloyde E. Eastman, "Facets of an Ambivalent Relationship: Smuggling, Puppets and Atrocities During the War, 1937-45," in, Iriye 1980, pp.275-303.

<sup>221</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu heping jianshe guodu jieduan de xingshi he renwu de zhishi," [The CCP Central Committee instructions on the situation and tasks in the transition period to peaceful reconstruction] (December 20, 1945), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.20-22.

<sup>222</sup> Da Yijin, 1985, p.76.

established intellectuals, especially those in publishing. The National Construction Association spoke for business people. The Zhigong dang was active among Overseas Chinese. The Sanmin Zhuyi Comrades Association infiltrated the GMD and its armies and recruited GMD officers and officials. The Jiusan Study Society represented scientists and academics.

The first attempts by these MPGs to influence public opinion were actions in support of the PCC. This approach reflected the appeal of the PCC and fear of civil war. The National Construction Association and others organised meetings in support of the PCC and called for peace and economic re-construction. On January 8 1946, in Chongqing, the NCA demanded political and civil rights, the termination of GMD one-party rule, and de-politicisation of the army. The Association wanted military command to be given to "educated people with no connection to the governing party" and it called for both the re-drafting of the constitution and reform of the National Assembly. The NCA's Zhang Naiqi, also demanded an expansion of the PCC in order to increase its ability to "reflect the people's opinions."<sup>223</sup> To help implement such reforms, the NCA offered to provide experts, apparently from the ranks of its members.<sup>224</sup> The Association also wanted to use outside expertise, from Overseas Chinese and other MPGs, to assist the government to dissolve monopolies, control inflation, and reform the Bank of China.<sup>225</sup> However, the NCA's attempts to publicise its causes by launching *Pingmin* failed when the paper was quickly closed.<sup>226</sup>

On January 17, a similar PCC support meeting was held but disrupted by GMD secret police. While Huang Yanpei had sought to have the NCA act as an independent organisation, this incident was used by its pro-CCP elements to justify working closely with more radical groups.<sup>227</sup> As a result, Zhang Naiqi helped organise 23 organisations

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<sup>223</sup> Also present were Shao Lizhi for the GMD, Wang Ruofei, Dong Biwu, and Lu Dingyi for the CCP. League members, Liang Shiming, Luo Longji, Zhang Bojun, Zhang Shenfu, the CYP's Chen Qitian, Yang Yongjun, and Chang Renghui, as well as Guo Moruo, Wang Yunwu, Hu Lin, Liao Jiaming, Li Zhurui, Chu Fucheng, Chen Fosheng, Ma Huangchu, Hu Zijin, Yan Baoban, Tao Xingzhi, Wang kunlun, and Pan Zinian, among more than 100. "Minzhu jianguo hui zhaodai zhengzhi xieshang huiyi daibiao jiyao," [The NCA hosts PCC representatives, a summary], in Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, pp.433-439.

<sup>224</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> "Minzhu jianguo hui xiang Zhengxie tigong di er ci yijian," [The second set of suggestions offered to the PCC by the NCA] (January 30, 1946), *ibid.*, pp.446-449.

<sup>226</sup> *ibid.*, pp.439-441.

<sup>227</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.183.

to form the Peidu (Chongqing) All Circles PCC Promotion Association (*Peidu ge jie zhengzhi xieshang huiyi xiejin hui*). This group held eight meetings, ostensibly to promote the PCC but they were also implicitly anti-GMD.<sup>228</sup> Their meetings were often interrupted by secret police who tried to turn them instead into anti-CCP meetings.<sup>229</sup>

An infamous example of GMD disruption was the Jiaochangkou incident of February 10. The PCC Promotion Association, together with representatives from the NCA, the National Salvation Association and the Sanmin zhuyi Comrades Association, held a meeting in Chongqing which was attended by up to 10,000 people. Guomintang agents attacked many of the speakers and guests including Guo Moruo, Li Gongpu, Zhang Naiqi, and Shi Fuliang.<sup>230</sup> This incident was widely reported in the press and was followed by a GMD call for the NCA to be dissolved.<sup>231</sup>

The NCA's action complemented those of the Association for the Promotion of Democracy. On January 23, the APD organised a demonstration at Shanghai's Jade Buddha Temple where 10,000 people protested against the anti-democratic actions of the GMD.<sup>232</sup> In March, the APD asserted its support for the PCC and members Ma Xulun, Xu Boxin, Ge Zhicheng, and Mei Dajun joined a committee representing unions, women's groups, students associations, and academics groups to organise a broad alliance.<sup>233</sup> The Shanghai Federation of People's Groups (*Shanghai renmin tuanti lianhehui*), was launched in May. It eventually included some 68 groups and was strongly influenced by anti-GMD radicals and underground CCP members.<sup>234</sup> Its platform was summarised in the slogans:

*Oppose civil war; demand peace!*  
*Oppose dictatorship; demand democracy!*  
*Oppose splits; demand unity!*  
*Long live a democratic, united New China!*<sup>235</sup>

<sup>228</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>229</sup> Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.31.

<sup>230</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.181. Melby describes the methods most graphically. Melby, 1968, p.89.

<sup>231</sup> Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.31.

<sup>232</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.213.

<sup>233</sup> In addition to Xu Boxin and Wang Shao'ao, Min Dajun joined the CCP in 1939 and he also became a united front work activist. *UFE*, 1993, p.917. The radical school teacher, Ge Zhicheng, had joined the CCP in 1940. *ibid.*, p.937.

<sup>234</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, p 219.

<sup>235</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.642-645.

These demands were all inherently anti-GMD and reflected the slogans of CCP propaganda and united front work. Out of the Federation's committee of 29, the APD had 10 members, of whom four were underground CCP activists.<sup>236</sup>

The Federation's greatest success occurred on June 23 1946, when up to 100,000 people rallied at the North Shanghai station. The rally demanded peace and an end to American interference in Chinese affairs and it marked the departure of a group of Federation leaders for Nanjing to call for peace.<sup>237</sup> The rally was a manifestation of a directives orders by CCP leaders Liu Xiao and Liu Changsheng, to take advantage of the great anti-civil war feeling.<sup>238</sup> The demonstration was a concrete example of the CCP's directive of May 1946 which called for Party members and sympathisers to intensify united front work amongst the middle elements and MPGs in order to compel the GMD to maintain its ceasefire.<sup>239</sup> The success of this rally was also a graphic illustration of Liu Shaoqi's 1936 injunction to use the upper-level united front (that is, elite groups such as MPGs) to organise the lower-level masses (such as workers and students) to persuade more of the elites to support united front causes.<sup>240</sup>

At Xiaguan Station, just outside of Nanjing, the delegation was attacked by secret service agents posing as refugees. A number of the delegates were injured, including Ma Xulun, Lei Jieqiong, and Yan Baohang.<sup>241</sup> The GMD's actions were a propaganda victory for the Federation and its organisers. In the eyes of many, the GMD had again demonstrated that it was not ammenable to reason and relied instead on

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<sup>236</sup> They included Ma Xulun, Xu Guangping, Zhou Jianren, Feng Shaoshan, Ge Zhicheng, Wang Shao'ao, Lin Handa, Cheng Yisheng, Xu Boxin. See Jiao Xiangying and the Zhongguo minzhu cujin hui zhongyang xuanchuanbu (eds), *Zhongguo minzhu cujin hui sishi nian*, [Forty years of the Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy] (Kaiming chubanshe, Beijing 1990), 1990, p.11. The last four were all CCP members.

<sup>237</sup> This crowd estimate is at the upper end of estimates. Da Yijin, (a participant) put the number at 50,000. Da Yijin, 1985, p.72.

<sup>238</sup> Wang Shao'ao is credited for the meeting's success. Wang was assisted in his organisational efforts by Tao Xingzhi and Lin Handa. Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.12. The demonstration also raised ten million yuan in donations. Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.224.

<sup>239</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu shiju ji duice de zhishi," [CCP CC Instructions on the current situation and on countermeasures] (May 15, 1946), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.104-105.

<sup>240</sup> Liu Shaoqi, "Leadership is the Crucial Issue of the National United Front," *SW*, vol.1, p.63-64.

<sup>241</sup> Yan was also a long time CCP activist having joined the CCP in 1937. Yan, together with Gao Chongmin, had been a secretary for Zhang Xueliang in 1935. *UFE*, 1993, p.930. He was also a Chinese Revolutionary League member. He became an activist in the NCA.

violence.<sup>242</sup> To emphasise its support for the Federation, Communist leaders in Nanjing immediately made a show of visiting the injured and condemning the GMD.<sup>243</sup> Telegrams of condolences, by MPGs such as Jiusan, became another means of promoting struggle and re-stating political demands.<sup>244</sup>

Funerals, memorials and birthdays were regularly used as political forums by the CCP and the MPGs. The murders of the prominent left-wing Democratic League leaders Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo in Kunming in July 1946, graphically illustrated the dangers of proposing what many people felt were reasonable demands for peace and democracy. The murders dramatically reinforced the idea that the GMD was inimical to the interests of many. These murders were subsequently often mentioned in the press and became symbols of GMD oppression of intellectuals, liberal and progressive elements. The Federation of People's Groups took up the cause of condemning the assassinations. Ma Xulun used *Weekly* to attack the GMD and Zhou Jianren did likewise in the CCP controlled *Qunzhong*.<sup>245</sup> A memorial service held for Li and Wen on October 4, drew some 5,000 people and was attended by the Federation, the APD, the People's Salvation Association, and the NCA.<sup>246</sup> Zhou Enlai made a moving and simple tribute, declaring them martyrs.<sup>247</sup> When Democratic League Leader, Tao Xingzhi, died of a cerebral haemorrhage in July, the Shanghai's Jiusan branch organised a memorial service. This too became a forum to attack the GMD, with Jiusan attributing Tao's death to GMD terror.<sup>248</sup>

Promoting anti-Americanism was another very important part of the CCP's second front work. As the political and military situation deteriorated, the CCP called for anti-American demonstrations. The Party encouraged the Democratic League and

<sup>242</sup> For Example the NCA's, "Minzhu jianguohui Xiaguan baoxing fabiao tanhua," [The NCA's statement on the Xiaguan violence], Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, p.450. Originally published in the NCA's *Minxun*.

<sup>243</sup> Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.32.

<sup>244</sup> "Jiusan xueshe zhi Nanjing shounan renshi weiwen dian," The telegram was accompanied by a Jiusan statement on the current situation ("Jiusan xueshe fabiao dui shiju yijian") which called for a ceasefire etc. Jiusan Xueshe lishi bangongshi (eds), *Jiusan Xueshe lishi ziliao xuanji*, [Jiusan Study Society; selected historical materials], (Xueyuan chubanshe, Beijing 1991), pp.14-15. Originally published in *Xinhua ribao* June 27, 1946)

<sup>245</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, pp.225-226. *Qunzhong's* Chief editor was Xu Dixin, Pan Zinian was the publisher. Sa Chaoran, 1987, pp.990-991.

<sup>246</sup> Da Yijing, 1985, p.73.

<sup>247</sup> "In Memory of Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo," *SW*, vol.1, p.266.

<sup>248</sup> Da Yijing, 1985, p73.

other MPGs to send the American government protest letters and it provided materials to write them.<sup>249</sup> America was decried as an imperialist power worse than the Japanese.<sup>250</sup> The CCP's strategy maximised nationalistic appeal. It sent a signal to pro-Western middle elements that American support for the GMD constituted unacceptable interference in Chinese affairs and supported a corrupt regime.

The signing of the Sino-American Treaty of Friendship and Commerce and Navigation on November 4 1946, gave the anti-American campaign a fillip. The Shanghai Federation of People's Groups joined with groups such as the Association for the Promotion of Democracy, to denounce the treaty as both unfair and as yet another example of the GMD dictatorship working against the interests of the nation and the people.<sup>251</sup> In 1947, the Zhigong Party also attacked the stationing of American troops in China.<sup>252</sup>

Late 1946, provided an even more valuable opportunity to intensify attacks on America and 'educate' those Chinese who still retained some faith in it. The Christmas Eve rape of a Beijing university student by two American marines led to massive anti-American rallies in GMD-held cities.<sup>253</sup> The CCP instructed its activists in Tianjin, Shanghai, Chongqing, Hong Kong, Kunming, Hangzhou and Chengdu to use the rape as a catalyst to raise such related issues as American troop withdrawals, interference in China's internal affairs, loans to the GMD, the Sino-American treaty, and a boycott of American goods. The CCP called for its underground activists to motivate and push the

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<sup>249</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu faqi yaoqiu Meiguo xingzheng Mosike jueyi yundong gei Chongqing daibiao de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions to the representatives in Chongqing on launching a movement to demand the United States implement the Moscow Declaration] (April 28, 1946), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.105-107.

<sup>250</sup> *ibid.*, p.111.

<sup>251</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.21.

<sup>252</sup> "Zhongguo Zhigong Dang fan dui Mei jun jixu zhua Hua shengming," (Declaration of the Zhi Gong Party opposing the continued stationing of troops in China) *Huashang bao* April 4, 1947, in Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, pp.405-406.

<sup>253</sup> See Lincoln Li, *Student Nationalism in China, 1924-1949*, (State University of New York Press, Albany, 1994), pp.132-135. For a partial explanation on the success of the CCP in recruiting on university campuses see Raymond J. De Jaegher and Irene Corbally Kuhn, *The Enemy Within: An Eyewitness Account of the Communist Conquest of China*, (Saint Paul Publications, Homebush (Sydney), 1952), Ch.12.

middle elements to the fore of the struggle, as this would radicalise them while simultaneously preventing the GMD from suppressing the movement.<sup>254</sup>

On December 29 1946, eleven Shanghai organisations including the National Construction Association, the Association for the Promotion of Democracy, the Society for Promotion of World Peace, the International Human Rights protection Association, the Association for Promotion of Industry and Commerce, the Shanghai Federation of People's Groups, along with groups purporting to represent artists, finance, women etc., held a meeting chaired by Wang Shao'ao. The agenda was a continuation of the struggle for democracy and opposition to the GMD's National Assembly. The issues discussed included protesting against American involvement in China, forwarding demands for democracy to the American Far East Office, the National Assembly issue, future military conscription and increased taxes to pay for the war. But it was the rape in Beijing which evoked the most indignation.<sup>255</sup> The crime had become a major symbol, a "highly emotional issue magnified onto the highly emotional plane of national dignity."<sup>256</sup>

Beijing's Jiusan branch telegraphed Ambassador Leighton Stuart demanding a speedy resolution and compensation, swift justice to the offenders, and guarantees that such incidents would not re-occur. The rape mobilised and united members of all sorts of groups, from intellectuals, students, workers, and shopkeepers to the urban poor, in anti-American demonstrations. In Beijing, the protests involved up to 500,000 people. These demonstrations were major success in CCP attempts to undermine the GMD and the authority and legitimacy of its American ally. The demonstrators, the CCP was pleased to note, included many of the middle elements such as capitalists and liberal academics, many of whom had hitherto been pro-American and fearful of the CCP.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> "Zhongyang guanyu zai ge da chengshi zuzhi qunzhong xiangying Beiping xuesheng yundong de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on organising the masses in all major cities to respond to the student movement in Beiping] (December 31, 1946), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.139-140.

<sup>255</sup> Da Yijin, 1985, p.76.

<sup>256</sup> Li, 1994, p.133.

<sup>257</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu liyong Ping, Jin, Jing, Hu, xuesheng yundong chengji guangda wo dang huodong de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on using the results of the Beijing, Tianjin, Nanjing, and Shanghai, student movements to expand our party] (January 6, 1947), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.142-143.

Yet while the CCP encouraged and instigated urban unrest to subvert the GMD, the party was resolutely opposed to any movements over which it had no influence. In early 1947, for example, some prominent Shanghai merchants and industrialists launched an independent peace movement. This possible re-assertion of a third road and independence on the part of the middle elements, was inimical to the CCP's aims of winning influence over this sector. The businessmen's initiative was therefore strongly condemned by united front activists, such as Wang Zaoshi, Tan Pingshan, Hua Gang and Ma Xulun.<sup>258</sup> Capitalists who felt that peace could be achieved by the CCP desisting from "defending itself" against GMD attacks had to be persuaded that they were wrong.<sup>259</sup>

Another manifestation of 'bourgeois independence' was the decision by prominent Jiusan Society leaders, Chu Fucheng and Meng Xianzhang, to participate in the National Assembly. The pair had gone to Nanjing in November 1946, after publishing articles in *Dagong bao* advocating that the Assembly be postponed. On hearing of the departure to Nanjing, the Shanghai Jiusan immediately demanded that they return. They did return early and were said to have expressed disappointment with their Nanjing experience. Jiusan attributed their actions to their old age and frail faculties which allowed them to be taken in by false promises.<sup>260</sup> Despite a strong degree of CCP influence, MPG leaders were more than puppets; they retained the will to act independently when this was regarded as necessary. The CCP had to struggle to maintain their support. Such manifestations of independence could have been useful to the GMD. Yet, the GMD's simplistic labelling of all MPGs and their members as CCP agents only forced them to move closer to the CCP.

### **The Outlawing of the Democratic League**

Although the Democratic League was increasingly influenced by the CCP, it was finally forced to side openly with the Party by the actions of the nationalists. After the League boycotted the National Assembly and participated in anti-GMD and anti-

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<sup>258</sup> Da Yijin, 1985, p.76.

<sup>259</sup> *ibid.*, p.76.

<sup>260</sup> *ibid.*, p.75.

American demonstrations, it became increasingly associated with the CCP. As the GMD felt itself growing stronger politically, for example in March 1947, when it succeeded in taking the CCP stronghold of Yan'an, it also felt able to act more strongly against the League. Nevertheless, the GMD recognised that the civil war was politically damaging. In a half-hearted conciliatory gesture, the GMD recalled the wartime advisory body, the People's Political Council, of which the League's Huang Yanpei was a prominent member.<sup>261</sup> But, rather than support the GMD, the Council voiced its displeasure with the descent into civil war and called on the GMD to invite the CCP to Nanjing for new peace talks. American ambassador Stuart saw in these acts an opportunity to form "a nucleus of enlightened, non-partisan leaders" who, in the face of the "threatening catastrophe," might unite with GMD democrats as the third roaders had once hoped. Nevertheless, Stuart was pessimistic about their chances of success.<sup>262</sup>

Huang Yanpei's presence in the People's Political Council was one of the last times that League leaders were free to voice their concerns. In March 1947, the League journal *Democracy* was closed down. In May, as a preparatory tactic to justify its subsequent prohibition of the League, the GMD published *The CCP Central Committee's Program of Underground Struggle*. Although denounced as a forgery by the CCP, this document correctly designated the League as a special target of CCP united front work.<sup>263</sup> On May 31, the GMD secret police raided the League's offices in Chengdu and Chongqing, arresting leaders and severely damaging its organisation.<sup>264</sup> In July, the GMD passed laws "suppressing the communist bandits." In October, fearful for his safety, Luo Longji sought refuge in the American embassy, claiming the GMD had a blacklist of 600 League members to be arrested.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Tsou, 1963, p.451.

<sup>262</sup> *The China White Paper*, pp.240-241.

<sup>263</sup> "Zhonggong di xia douzheng gangling," issued by the CCP in March. Yu Wenzao, "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng de xin sheng yu renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian de Guangda," [The Rebirth of the Chinese Democratic League and the expansion of the People's Democratic United Front]. In Zhang Tienan, 1990, p.355.

<sup>264</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1990, p.195.

<sup>265</sup> The Americans certainly gave his fears credence. *The China White Paper*, pp.836-838.

In October 1947, the League was officially banned, despite strong opposition from elements within the GMD and the fears of Leighton Stuart.<sup>266</sup> Huang Yanpei and others interceded with Jiang. The League's moderate leaders voluntarily agreed to dissolve the League and promised that its members would cease political activity. This concession was seen by some observers as "the end of any third party or middle-of-the-road activity."<sup>267</sup> The dissolution was effectively another victory for the CCP as it sought to prove, in Mao's words, that "to sit on the fence is impossible."<sup>268</sup> Without the space created for it by GMD there was no longer any place for a third road and the prohibition of the League was a graphic example of this. It forced League leaders to choose between supporting the GMD, retreating into passivity or throwing in their lot with the CCP.

The CCP did not take the new MPGs for granted. In January 1947, the Party called on its activists to ensure that the MPGs continue to uphold the PCC agreements and stand by the CCP. Waverers, particularly in the Democratic League, had to be convinced that the people, in the form of the CCP, would ultimately triumph. The "strength of public opinion," the popular anti-American demonstrations, demands for peace, food and employment *etc.* "had to be used to educate and force some of the third force to move forward," towards the CCP.<sup>269</sup>

Even before the GMD published the *Program for Underground Struggle*, the CCP had told its activists to pay more attention to the Association for Promotion of Democracy, the National Construction Association, the Sanmin Zhuyi Comrades Association, and the Democratic League. The CCP expected to be attacked and anti-GMD demonstrators could therefore expect likewise, especially the MPGs the GMD

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<sup>266</sup> See "Announcement by the Chinese Government Declaring the Democratic League Illegal," (annex 148) and "Memorandum of Conversation." On October 29, Stuart had expressed disappointment in the League's "communistic proclivities" but he was more concerned that the GMD government would further discredit itself by "ill-advised persecution" of it. This would result in the League winning sympathy from advocates of constitutional reform and the driving of the League leftwards and underground. "The Ambassador in China (Stuart) to Secretary Marshall, Nanjing, October, 29, 1947, *The China White Paper*, pp.833-840.

<sup>267</sup> Melby, 1969, p.243.

<sup>268</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," (June 30, 1949), *SW*, vol. 4, p.415.

<sup>269</sup> "Zhongggong guanyu jiechuan Mei-Jiang hetan zhen xiang xuanchuan de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on propaganda exposing the real facts about the American-Jiang peace talks] (January 20, 1947), *Liberation Period Documents*, p.145.

identified as CCP supporters. This increased danger forced a change in the CCP's second front tactics. Ostensibly apolitical local, economically-based appeals, replaced broad national protests. Temporarily, united front work had to proceed more carefully. The CCP instructed that the democratic movement should go on the defensive and protect its existence. Guo Moruo and Ma Xulun were told to protect themselves while democratic personages were instructed to maintain their boycott of the National Assembly.<sup>270</sup> The GMD's severe responses to undisguised anti-GMD appeals, such as calls for democracy, had succeeded in frightening away many potential protesters. For the interim, the CCP directed, legal measures were to be used to win over the middle elements and prevent them becoming alienated.<sup>271</sup>

The strength of GMD repression made it even more important for the CCP to push non-Party people to the forefront of demonstrations and protests. The explicit objective of this tactic was to use such persons in these actions in order to demonstrate just how broadly the calls for peace, opposition to America, and from 1947 onwards, against hunger and other causes, appealed. At the same time, it minimised risks to MPGs.<sup>272</sup> The deteriorating economy played into the CCP's hands. It made mass mobilisation on the basis of economic grievances very easy. The middle elements, the groups in control of the economy, business, and the bureaucracy, were severely affected by growing corruption, unemployment, and especially by hyper-inflation. The CCP realised that these growing problems were making it increasingly difficult for the GMD to suppress protests based on them. By encouraging the middle elements to demand an end to the civil war, to which Jiang was committed, the CCP aimed to prove to these

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<sup>270</sup> "Zhonggong guanyu muqian Jiang guan qu minzhu aiguo yundong fangzhen de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on policies for the current democratic and patriotic movement in Jiang controlled areas] (March 1, 1947), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.145-146. Zhou Enlai's "Work and Struggle in Chiang controlled areas," repeated many of these points. "Two documents on the guidelines for work and the tactics for struggle in areas controlled by Chiang Kai-shek," conflates the February 28 and a May 5, 1947 directives. See *SW*, pp.300-303.

<sup>271</sup> "Zai Baiqu dui Guomindang duice," [Counter-measures against the GMD in White areas] quoted in "Zhongguo gongchandang de Baiqu tong-zhan gongzuo yu di er zhanxian," [The CCP's united front work in White areas and the second front] in Zhang Tienan, 1990, p.338.

<sup>272</sup> However, as Zhou Enlai's 1947, "Work and Struggle" directive makes clear, it was vital for the CCP to maintain control of such people: "As for the Party's relations with democratic bodies, mass organisations and leading progressives, we should recruit more well-hidden Party members and sympathisers to work among them under single contact leadership." Zhou Enlai, *SW*, p.303.

groups that “Jiang cannot provide peace.”<sup>273</sup> Economic based demands were then used to invoke anti-American demands thereby increasing the political pressure on the GMD from several directions.<sup>274</sup>

The GMD's publication of the *Program for Underground Struggle*, was a vital part of its attempts to convince the middle elements that the demands of the MPGs were actually those of the CCP. By implication, the MPGs were not speaking for the middle elements but for revolution. Linking the League and other MPGs directly to the CCP justified their suppression. The Association for the Promotion of Democracy defended itself by claiming it stood for democracy. Nevertheless, after the GMD promulgated anti-CCP laws in July, it went underground. Its publications were suppressed and, in August their editor was spirited away by the CCP. The APD adopted a small cell structure and in December, with CCP assistance, Ma Xulun, Wang Shao'ao and Xu Boxin slipped away to Hong Kong. Others, such as Zhou Jianren went to CCP held areas.<sup>275</sup> Likewise, prominent members of the Peasant and Workers Party, such as Zhang Bojun, fled to join the Hong Kong branch of the party.<sup>276</sup> As GMD repression increased during 1947, the National Construction Association used Hu Juewen's, Chinese Industry Monthly Magazine Society (*Zhongguo gongye yuekan she*) as a cover for both its propaganda work and its party activities.<sup>277</sup> Eventually, however, the NCA also adopted a small cell structure, dispersed, and went underground.<sup>278</sup> In early 1948, those who fled to the safety of Hong Kong re-appeared in public and began to openly attack the GMD.

The MPGs became vociferous opponents of the GMD, including the more moderate, formerly middle-of-the-road Democratic League and the National Construction Association. This ideological shift reflected several important factors. The GMD had forced these MPGs into exile and martyred them. Secondly, by early

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<sup>273</sup> Zhonggong guanyu Jiang guan qu dang de dou zheng fanzhen de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the Party's struggle policies in Jiang controlled areas] (May 32, 1947), *Liberation Period Documents*, pp.157-158.

<sup>274</sup> *ibid.*, p.159.

<sup>275</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, pp.232-233.

<sup>276</sup> *ibid.*, p.301.

<sup>277</sup> *ibid.*, pp.178-179.

<sup>278</sup> *ibid.*, p.197.

1948, the CCP was in military ascendancy. Illusions of a GMD-CCP stale-mate had largely disappeared and with them any possibility of a third road.<sup>279</sup> Many of the MPG leaders in Hong Kong were those ideologically closest to the CCP or held dual CCP-MPG membership. Moreover, those who went to Hong Kong immediately became more reliant on the CCP. In 1947, in order to establish a basis for post-war united front work, the CCP had dispatched experienced united front workers such as Fang Fang to Hong Kong.<sup>280</sup>

On arrival, MPG members often stayed in Peng Zemin's (Third Party) guest house.<sup>281</sup> Just as the CCP had promised Democratic League members work in 1946,<sup>282</sup> it now helped them find work such, as teaching at the Dade College (*Dade xueyuan*).<sup>283</sup> Yet Party resources were limited. When Shen Junru sought to revive *Guangming bao*, ostensibly on behalf of the Democratic League, he was obliged to go searching for donations. When the paper was published on March 1, 1948, it was as the mouthpiece for all the MPGs.<sup>284</sup>

The more moderate leaders of the Democratic League, such as Huang Yanpei, Zhang Lan, Luo Longji, and Liang Shuming, remained on the Chinese mainland under house arrest or close GMD supervision. Nevertheless, they stayed in contact with the organisation through Shi Liang.<sup>285</sup> The most important MPG leaders in Hong Kong were Zhou Xinmin, who held dual League-CCP membership, and Shen Zhiyuan who was a lapsed Party member.<sup>286</sup> Because of their Third Party/Worker's and Peasant's Party connections, Li Boqiu and Zhang Bojun had long co-operated closely with the

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<sup>279</sup> See Mao's December 1947, declaration that the revolution had reached a turning point and the GMD was on the way to its destruction. "The present situation and tasks" *SW*, vol.4, pp.157-173.

<sup>280</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.201.

<sup>281</sup> *ibid.*, p.199. Peng was "an intimate friend" of the CCP as a result of long time anti-Jiang Jieshi activities, his association with Song Qingling, and the Nanchang uprising. Peng Qingjia, *et al*, 1992, pp.480-483.

<sup>282</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.197.

<sup>283</sup> Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.37.

<sup>284</sup> Dou Aizhi, 1992, pp.153-154..

<sup>285</sup> Zhao Xihua, 1992, p.286.

<sup>286</sup> Shen, an English teacher had joined the CCP in 1925 and he edited the Chinese edition of *Communist International* in 1931. Due to illness, he officially left the CCP in 1933 but this was an expediency. His subsequent publications included *Dazhong shenghuo*. Shen also managed the CCP's Shenghuo bookstore in Chongqing and published *Daxue* [University] and *Lilun yu xianshi* [Theory and practice]. He entered the League in 1944 and became a member of the Central, Propaganda, and Executive committees as well as a leader of the Shanghai Municipal Democratic League. Qin Guosheng, *et al*, 1990, p.229.

CCP. Shen Junru was an "intimate friend of the CCP"; Deng Chumin's association with the CCP was extensive;<sup>287</sup> and Li Wenyi was also a long-time CCP member.<sup>288</sup> Between January 5-19 1948, Democratic League members in Hong Kong held a congress which included delegates from the Hong Kong and Malaysia.<sup>289</sup> The congress reflected the recent upheavals in the League and the general change in the balance of power. Of the twenty nine delegates present, at least seven were also communists. Many of the remaining delegates were almost unknown.<sup>290</sup>

On January 5, the Third Plenum of the League released its "Emergency Appeal." This appeal denounced the GMD's order to dissolve the League and announced the League's refusal to accept its dissolution. Yet, while calling on its members to unite in the struggle for freedom, this League faction did not yet openly ally itself with the CCP.<sup>291</sup> Nevertheless, the final declaration of the Congress attributed direct responsibility for China's civil war to the GMD and, in contrast, stated that the CCP had proven its democratic credentials. As a result, the Hong Kong League members declared that henceforth they would work "hand in hand" with both the CCP and the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD. They would work together for the realisation of a democratic, peaceful, free and independent, democratic New China. Not surprisingly, the League's new slogans closely resembled those of the CCP:

- 1) Completely eliminate the dictatorial, treacherous GMD reactionary clique!
- 2) Join with every democratic party and group, establish a democratic coalition government!
- 3) Guarantee completely the people's rights of assembly, expression, belief, and personal safety!
- 4) Completely eliminate remnants of feudal exploitation and implement "land to the tiller!"
- 5) Guarantee commercial freedom to the national capitalists and their legal profits!
- 6) Abolish economic domination of the GMD's bureaucratic capitalists and all harmful taxes!
- 7) Confiscate without compensation the property of the rich and powerful capitalist families, reform the financial system, save our brothers in economic distress!

<sup>287</sup> Deng Chumin had been an NSA in 1941. He joined the League in 1944/45 and the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD in 1948 and he held dual positions in both until he officially joined the CCP in 1962. *ibid.*, p.193. He is said to have entered "the patriotic and democratic struggle" in the 1930s with "the help of Zhou Enlai and Dong Biwu." Peng Qingjia, *et al*, 1992, pp.286-287.

<sup>288</sup> Li Wenyi, joined the CCP in 1926. She edited Hubei's *Funu qianshao* (Women's sentry). Li became a League activist in Shanghai after 1943. *UFE*, 1993, p.268.

<sup>289</sup> Zhao Xihua, 1992, pp.286-287.

<sup>290</sup> For example, Li Xiangfu, a university lecture from Anhui seems to have had little political involvement and was not a CCP member. Qin Guosheng, *et al*, 1990, p.238.

<sup>291</sup> Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, "Minmeng san zhong quan hui jinji shengming," [Urgent announcement by the third plenum of the Democratic League] (January 5, 1948), *ibid.*, pp.295-296.

- 8) Improve workers lives, guarantee every citizen the right to work!
- 9) Guarantee complete academic freedom!
- 10) Determine a policy to protect Overseas Chinese, protect the interests of all Overseas Chinese!
- 11) Oppose the Policy of the United States to invade China!
- 12) Every person who truly loves a democratic peaceful nation and the people, unite!
- 13) All oppressed minorities, join together and struggle to win national liberation!

The election of Zhou Xinmin as League general secretary, supported by Shen Junru as chairman, effectively marked the CCP's domination of the party. Henceforth, power was weighted in favour of the CCP and, as with their previous relations with the GMD, their existence and activities would be dependent on the space allowed them by the Party. The League was henceforth committed to supporting the CCP. Ignoring those League leaders who remained in Shanghai, Shen claimed that the whole of the League's General Headquarters had moved to Hong Kong and by implication claimed full legitimacy for the organisation he now officially led. Shen used a press conference to again attack the idea of a third road. "There was," Shen declared, "no middle course or means to transcend politics between democracy and anti-democracy."<sup>293</sup> The choice that League members, and those middle elements who looked to them had to make was to side with democracy and therefore with the CCP.

The MPG which escaped having its leaders exiled was Jiusan. The Society had not been mentioned directly in the *Program*. This was despite the Beijing section of the party actively supporting the student demonstrations of 1946-47. Members from Beijing University, such as Yuan Hanqing, Fan Hong, and Xue Yu, issued joint statements in support of the students.<sup>294</sup> In March 1948, Xu Deheng, Yuan Hanqing and Fan Hong were still denouncing the National Assembly in the press and protesting the banning of the Democratic League.<sup>295</sup> Rather than using the Jiusan name, they often invoked their academic status. On another occasion, they invoked the name of the

<sup>292</sup> "Minmeng san zhong quanhuì xuányán" [The declaration by the third plenum of the Democratic League] (January 19, 1948), *ibid.*, pp.297-301.

<sup>293</sup> "Minmeng san zhong quanhuì bimu hou zhaodai jizhe tan hua," [A discussion with reporters after the closing of the Third Plenum of the Democratic League], *ibid.*, pp.322-325.

<sup>294</sup> "Beijing Daxue jiaoshou xuanchuan," [A declaration by Beijing University lecturers]. Printed in *Guancha*, May 31, 1946. *ibid.*, pp.322-323.

<sup>295</sup> "Fandui wei Guo da jianghua," [Speech opposing the fake national Assembly] Printed in *Guancha*, April 10, 1948. *ibid.*, pp.326-327. "Women dui yu zhengfu yapo Minmeng de kanfa," [Our views on the governments' oppression of the Democratic League] published in *Xinmin bao* November 4, 1948. *ibid.*, pp.323-324.

Association of Chinese Scientific Workers to protest against the treatment of three academics by the GMD.<sup>296</sup> Jiusan members also made use of a Nanjing Central University conference to agitate amongst its students.<sup>297</sup> It was an innovative use of Jiusans' "using science to save the nation" (*kexue jiu guo*) slogan.

The Jiusan's *Da Yijin* possessed close connections to Chu Anping. Chu's *Guancha*, which had a circulation of 60,000 in 1948, was an invaluable asset for agitating against the GMD.<sup>298</sup> *Guancha's* readership consisted of the intellectuals, students teachers, government employees, military officers, industrial, business and banking circles. In late 1946, Chu reflected a growing disillusionment with the GMD when he questioned what the GMD had achieved after twenty years of tutelage.<sup>299</sup> Chu supported the League's decision not to take part in the National Assembly and he compared Jiang Jieshi to Hitler after the GMD violently suppressed demonstrators in May 1947.<sup>300</sup> However, Chu's influence was such that the GMD only dared to try to close *Guancha* using indirect, administrative measures.<sup>301</sup> In late 1948, at Shi Fuliang's suggestion, the CCP sent agents to Shanghai in a failed attempt to take Chu to Hong Kong to join the anti-GMD united front. Shi Fuliang, having lost faith in a middle road, and *Da Yijin*, were worried about *Guancha's* "inclination." They felt that its stories inadequately reflected the fact that the CCP was now on the offensive. Shi and Da wanted *Guancha* to take a stronger anti-GMD line and "to reflect public (*minyi*) demands" for peace. The opportunity to effect this came in late 1948 when Chu became stranded in Beiping by CCP military advances. *Da Yijin* became *Guancha's* editor and as a result the journal came to "basically reflect" the CCP's line.<sup>302</sup> This was a major victory in the CCP's efforts to influence the middle elements.

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<sup>296</sup> (*Zhongguo kexue gongzuo zhe xiehui*) Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.351.

<sup>297</sup> Yu Gang, 1987, p.375.

<sup>298</sup> *Da Yijin* put it at 120,000. *Da Yijin*, 1985, p.96.

<sup>299</sup> Pepper, 1978, p.137.

<sup>300</sup> Wong, 1993, p.474.

<sup>301</sup> *ibid.*, p.479.

<sup>302</sup> *Da Yijin*, 1985, P.80, p.97.

### The isolation of the GMD

The GMD could not contradict the CCP's claims. As a direct result of its mismanagement and moral bankruptcy, by late 1948 the GMD's legitimacy was almost totally destroyed. Jiang Jieshi himself admitted:

To tell the truth, never, in the history of China, or abroad, has there been a revolutionary party as decrepit and degenerate as we are today; nor has there been one as lacking in spirit, in discipline, and even more in standards of right and wrong as we are today. This kind of party should have long ago been destroyed and swept away.<sup>303</sup>

Years later on his deathbed, the GMD's secretary general of the time, attributed the party's collapse directly to its inability to attract any outside talent: such people had become unwilling to serve the nationalists.<sup>304</sup> The severe shortage of talent had resulted in poor army officers; the GMD party organisation had failed to attract new blood; and the party lacked any organic connection with wider society. Jiang himself pointed out that: "The existence of the entire party depends almost completely upon visible military strength. This is our true crisis."<sup>305</sup>

### Conclusion

By the admission of its own leaders then, even before its final military defeat, the GMD was already mortally isolated. It was alienated from the intellectuals it needed to operate the state, party, and military apparatus. It was no longer 'common sense' to support the GMD. The GMD had lost the consent it required to govern. The party could not attract the intellectuals it needed to run its own apparatus nor that of the state. It had no national-popular cause and had failed to demonstrate leadership. The party was instead widely perceived by the educated urban public as corrupt and bankrupt of ideals. The GMD was left reliant on its powers of coercion. But by the end of 1948 even this was in decline as the CCP increasingly experienced military success. In the event, force could not redress the GMD's inherent faults.

The nationalist's alienation from China's intellectuals was symbolised by their persecution of the MPGs and the fate of the Democratic League in particular. It

<sup>303</sup> Jiang Jieshi in January 1948, quoted in Eastman, 1984, p.203.

<sup>304</sup> Eastman quoting from Wu Tiejeng's memoirs published in 1969. *ibid.*, p.214.

<sup>305</sup> *ibid.*, 204-206.

mattered not that there was a sound basis to GMD claims of CCP involvement with, and manipulation of, the MPGs. The credibility of the GMD had declined to such a low level that its claims were either disbelieved or, if a degree of communist involvement was known or suspected, accepted as natural and understandable in the face of GMD persecution. The late 1947 banning of the League can be seen as the culmination of this process of alienation. Despite the League's constant hopes of a rapprochement with the GMD it was repeatedly rebuffed. The nationalists refused to make any concessions to the aspirations of the MPGs and China's intellectuals in general. To compound this alienation, the GMD failed to create ranks of intellectuals of its own. The GMD's policies and actions alienated precisely those it needed and increased the perceptions of its GMD's illegitimacy.

When the nationalists removed the space for political legal activity it had created, the possibility of any middle way between the GMD and CCP disappeared. The MPGs were confronted with the choice between the GMD or CCP or retreating into passivity, thereby with the latter action also effectively aiding the communists. Although the possibility of the MPGs siding with the GMD had existed right up to the convening of the National Assembly, the GMD had forfeited these opportunities. Had the GMD succeeded then the cost of the CCP's final victory would have been much higher.

In contrast, the CCP continued to build on its 'war of position' efforts to win over the MPGs. The Party asserted its political and moral leadership in its negotiations with the GMD for peace and its policy of building a new and united 'democratic' China. The CCP aired demands that conformed with the aspirations of the middle elements and with many of the principles advocated by the MPGs. Moreover, the personal relations the CCP leaders and activists established proved invaluable, particularly at crucial times such as the 1946 peace negotiations. The CCP successfully persuaded much of the Democratic League to boycott the National Assembly. To both the Chinese and international public, this action symbolised the isolation of the GMD. In very practical terms, this measure also helped undermine the possibility of increased American assistance for the GMD. The banning of the League became identified as

another indication of GMD illegitimacy rather than the successful neutralisation of the left-wing inclinations and communist fellow travelling of the MPGs.

On May 1 1948, the CCP issued its famous appeal for allies, its symbol of having achieved the consent of the majority of the people:

Labouring people of the entire country, unite, ally with the intelligentsia, liberal bourgeoisie, all democratic parties and groups, social luminaries and other patriotic elements; consolidate and expand the united front against imperialists, feudal and bureaucratic capitalist forces; fight together to destroy the Guomintang reactionaries and build a new China. All democratic parties and groups, people's organisations and social luminaries speedily convene a Political Consultative Conference, discuss and carry out the convoking of a People's Representative Assembly to establish a Democratic Coalition Government.<sup>306</sup>

The representatives of the MPGs exiled in Hong Kong naturally responded positively. The Democratic League (Shen Junru and Zhang Bojun), the Association for the Promotion of Democracy (Ma Xulun and Wang Shao'ao), the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD (Li Jishen and He Xiangning), the Sanmin Zhuyi Comrades Association (Tan Pingshan), the GMD Association for the Promotion of Democracy (Cai Tingkai), the Peasants and Workers Party (Peng Zemin), and the Chinese Peoples' Salvation Association (Li Zhangda), together with Guo Moruo as an independent, all lent their names in support of the CCP's invitation. In the name of the of the Chinese people these representatives affirmed support for the CCP's plans to hold a political consultative conference; they agreed to prepare for a People's Congress and work towards the establishment of a coalition government.<sup>307</sup> In September 1949, the CCP's convening of a Chinese Peoples' Political Consultative Conference would mark the culmination of these MPGs aspirations.

The CCP's May 1 Appeal was a call for an endorsement by the MPGs and others to symbolise that the CCP now had the consent, not only of China's workers and peasant's, on whose behalf the CCP claimed to speak, but also almost every important group of educated Chinese. The MPG's endorsement of the appeal supported the Party's claim that as China's legitimate state power and as the representative of ninety percent of the population it had the mandate of heaven. The CCP had become the

<sup>306</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.201.

<sup>307</sup> Jiusan was absent from this group. Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, vol.2, pp.524-525. This telegram first appeared in the CCP's *Hua shang bao*, May 6, 1948.

hegemonic power and had obtained consent for its take over. All that remained was for the final military victories (a 'war of movement' in Gramscian terms) so that this consent could be supported by coercion.

The ideological influence and personal connections which made the MPGs so important, could now be utilised to help convince the MPG constituencies to accept and facilitate the CCP's accession to power. For the MPGs, the task now was to manage the practical transfer of power, from the discredited GMD to a New Democratic CCP state and, eventually, to a socialist one.

Yet, despite this vital victory of united front work, the MPG's support was not entirely unconditional. It was predicated on the Party's promises made in "On New Democracy," to allow long-term co-existence of classes and forms of ownership and to give the MPGs a role in government befitting their talents. The support of MPGs did not necessarily mean unqualified endorsement for all CCP policies or its ultimate program. However, the MPGs did not fully realise that the CCP was also going to transform them to suit its new agenda.

*Chapter 3***Co-operation with the CCP: 1948-1949**

The minor parties' response to the CCP's May 1 call for allies was a crucial symbolic victory in the Party's efforts to build hegemony. The final military defeat of the Guomindang was close at hand and even the mainstays of its regime, the administrative servants and soldiers joined many intellectuals and business people in deserting it. The nationalists had failed to secure the loyalty of the very groups they needed to survive. As Gramsci had argued, every state depends on its thousands of civil servants and soldiers: "If this crucial nucleus of sincere and loyally devoted people did not exist, the bourgeois state would collapse in an instant, like a house of cards."<sup>1</sup> By mid-1948 the GMD was indeed collapsing.

While the CCP benefited when intellectuals of all sorts withdrew their support from the GMD, it preferred these groups to become active in support of the Party or its causes. The Party needed their consent for its final seizure of power and, once it achieved power, it would need the help of the intellectuals, managers, administrators, soldiers, teachers, journalists and others to govern. The united front and the MPGs continued to play a critical role as bridges to these vital groups. Mao reassured those who sided with the Party or who passively accepted its dominance that the new democratic period would last for a considerable time, some twenty to thirty years, and that their interests would be protected.<sup>2</sup> Yet, in "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" (June 30, 1949), Mao clearly reiterated the Party's goal of bringing about the conditions required to ultimately eliminate classes, state power, and political parties.<sup>3</sup> Within the Party leaders were informed by Mao, Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai that the transition period would only take a minimum of ten, and at most, fifteen to twenty years to complete.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Antonio Gramsci, "The Mainstay of the State," *L'Ordine Nuovo* November 13, 1921. Quoted in Richard Bellamy (ed), *Gramsci: Pre-Prison Writings*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994), p.238.

<sup>2</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.436.

<sup>3</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.4, pp.411-423.

<sup>4</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.436.

Once the CCP was clearly militarily dominant it no longer felt obliged to include the GMD in its coalition government proposals. The new coalition government would instead be a four-class joint-dictatorship led by the CCP as the representative of the proletariat and the united front remained relevant. All the ingredients necessary to establish Gramsci's integral state were embodied in Mao's democratic dictatorship program. Mao called for the strengthening of the powers of coercion: of the police and the courts, and he warned that revolutionary benevolence would only be applied to the ranks of the people, "not beyond them to the reactionaries or to reactionary activities of reactionary classes."<sup>5</sup> The price of benevolence was to undertake "self education":

This could only be accomplished by a state of the people's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the CCP. When it is well done, China's major exploiting classes will be eliminated for good. There remain the national bourgeoisie; at the present stage, we can already do a great deal of suitable education work with many of them. When the time comes to realise socialism, that is to nationalise private enterprise, we shall carry the work of educating and remoulding them a step further.<sup>6</sup>

The future path of united front work was laid out with a program of increasingly demanding political education at each step. The continued political education of the MPGs, already inherent in the Party's principle of unity and struggle, was gradually intensified after the MPGs sided with the Party. The intellectuals in the MPGs were among the first non-Party people to undergo indoctrination as the basis for transforming the whole of the classes from which they sprang. Such transformation work became a dominant theme of MPG work even before the final victory over the nationalists was achieved and is an overlooked aspect of their history.

The MPGs' task was to convince their ostensible constituencies by example and persuasion, that the CCP was the legitimate power whose policies should be followed. The most potent symbol of this was the convening of the CCP's alternative to the GMD's People's Consultative Conference. More prosaically, the MPGs threw their weight behind the CCP's propaganda work. They invoked their connections to help minimise the cost of a CCP victory over the GMD. This even included direct, albeit small-scale, military support.

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.418.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.421.

### The Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress

The GMD had made use of national representative bodies to signify that it had the support of the whole nation but the CCP recognised the importance of symbols of hegemony even more clearly. The Party had discussed convening a national political consultative conference when MPG leaders had visited Yan'an in 1945. By 1948, the CCP had valuable practical experience of the benefits of creating consultative organs using the three-thirds principles of cross-class collaboration representation. On capturing areas from the GMD, one of the Party's first acts was to establish All Circle Representative Conferences (*Ge jie daibiao hui*). These included representatives from all influential local groups and most classes and they were given responsibilities for transmitting Party directives, asking advice, and soliciting opinions.

In May 1948, Mao reiterated the necessity of the three-thirds system.<sup>7</sup> Mao had earlier criticised local Party organisations, such as that in the Hebei city of Handan, for excluding petty bourgeoisie, middle peasants, independent business people, professionals and intellectuals from its representative congresses. Such congresses, said Mao, required all these groups.<sup>8</sup> This problem of exclusion on the basis of class was repeated in other captured cities. According to the Party's own analysis, this problem resulted from having long been underground and therefore lacking contact with the general populace. The Party insisted that it was vital to overcome this problem and extend its contacts beyond trade unions and student associations.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the CCP's councils had to differ clearly from those of the GMD.

Representatives from all groups were to be selected to form a People's Congress (*Renmin daibiao huiyi*) which could be informed of CCP policies. These councils or congresses had to include groups, such as MPGs, in addition to trade unions, student associations, and Party representatives. Only those deemed reactionaries were barred.

<sup>7</sup> Mao Zedong, "Zhongyang guanyu san-san zhi zhengquan wenti de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the question of three-thirds system political power] (May 31, 1948), *Liberation period documents*, pp.199-200.

<sup>8</sup> Mao Zedong, "Zhongyang guanyu bianqu zhengquan xingzhi gei Handan ju de zhishi," [CCP CC instruction to Handan Region on the nature of political power in the border regions] (January 16, 1948), *ibid.*, pp.184-185.

<sup>9</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu xin jiefang chengshi zhong zuzhi ge jie daibiao hui de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the organisation of Congresses of All Circle in newly liberated cities] (November 30, 1948), *ibid.*, pp.233-236.

Nevertheless, all potential representatives had to be carefully investigated and the majority had to consist of workers and revolutionary intellectuals. Representatives were responsible for informing their schools, factories, relevant organisations and contacts of congress resolutions. However, all final decisions were in the hands of the CCP's municipal or military governors. While the Congresses had no direct means of restraining the CCP's decisions, the Party did intend that they assist the implementation of its policies. Like the nationalist's People's Consultative Conferences, the CCP's congresses were of great symbolic importance but they also acted as advisory bodies through which the Party could seek opinions, raise and discuss proposals. The Party stressed the roles of the congresses in winning respect and support and in helping to overcome pressing practical problems, such as food and fuel shortages. In the eyes of the Party, these Congresses were an "organisational weapon" and the embryonic form (*chuxing*) of the subsequent Peoples' Congresses.<sup>10</sup>

The CCP allowed an obvious diversity in its representative councils but it did not want them falling into the control of independently minded non-Party elements. In September 1949, Mao personally stressed that such representative bodies had to be constituted carefully. Representatives from red armies, peasants and workers, revolutionary intellectuals, businessmen, and enlightened gentry were all to be included. Right-wing middle elements could make up a third of conference representatives but more than fifty percent of the members had to be communists and reliable left-wing elements.<sup>11</sup> Mao stipulated that these bodies meet at least once per month and wherever possible, these meetings should be publicised over the radio. His expectations of their efficacy were not high, believing that even solving only one or two problems would be enough. However, Mao warned that the tendency of Party cadres to rely on small cliques of representatives had to be resisted.<sup>12</sup> Later preparations for establishing a National People's Congress (NPC), the CCP's response to the GMD's National Assembly, were based on the same principles.

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang dui Hua zhong ju guanyu zhaokai xian de ge jie daibiao huiyi de fushi," [CCP CC reply to Central China Department on the convening of County All Circle Representative Conferences] (September 7, 1949), *ibid.*, pp.277-278.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

In January 1948, the Party's preparations for a New Political Consultative Conference (*Xin zhengzhi xieshang hui*), the NPC's predecessor, began in earnest. In May, the Party informed its Shanghai branch that it was time to invite MPG representatives to CCP held areas to discuss issues, such as the National People's Congress and a coalition government. Highlighting its united front nature, this CCP invitation for the conference was called in the joint names of the CCP, the Democratic League and the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD. Party cadres were told to publicise the issues involved and to seek the responses of those invited.<sup>13</sup>

By August 1948, MPG and other non-Party delegates were, with Party assistance, making their way from Hong Kong and GMD-controlled areas to CCP held Ha'erbin in North East China. The Party instructed that the delegates be warmly welcomed and that the Party's Zhang Youyu expedite their arrangements. Cadres were to talk with the delegates, note any valid criticisms of the Party and dispel erroneous views with explanation and persuasion.<sup>14</sup> Many of the details of the forthcoming conference, such as its name, time and place, composition of the delegates, and topics of discussion, were planned well in advance during meetings between CCP representatives and the most trusted MPG leaders, such as Zhou Jianren and Shen Junru. The results of these meetings were then relayed to the exiled MPG leaders in Hong Kong via Pan Hannian and Fang Fang. The MPGs in Hong Kong then met and discussed the proposals with some of their suggestions said to have been adopted in the final document drawn up by the CCP's Gao Gang and Li Fuchun on October 25.<sup>15</sup> Li and Gao first consulted closely with progressive and dual membership MPG leaders, such as Shen Junru, Tan Pingshan, Cai Tingkai, Wang Shao'ao and others, but they recognised the need for the involvement of moderates and even those who could be considered right-wing. Without the latter groups, liaison with and influence over

<sup>13</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu yaoqing ge minzhu dangpai daibiao lai Jiefang qu xieshang zhaokai, Xin zhengzhi xieshang hui wenti gei Hu de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions to Shanghai on inviting representatives of every MPG to the Liberated Areas to negotiate questions on the convening of the New PCC] (May, 2, 1948), *ibid.*, pp.197-198.

<sup>14</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu huanying minzhu renshi Bei shang gei Dongbei ju de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions to the North-east Bureau on welcoming democratic personages to the North] (September 18, 1948), *ibid.*, pp.205-206.

<sup>15</sup> Yu Wenzao, "Xin zhengxie yundong yu Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi de zhaokai," [The New PCC movement and the convening of the CPPCC], in Zhang Tienan, 1990, pp.383-384.

China's more conservative elements would be much more difficult. This involvement was endorsed on the condition that such individuals were not actually "reactionaries" and as long as the CCP and its progressive allies maintained an "absolute superiority" (*zhan juegui youshi*).<sup>16</sup>

The most trusted MPG leaders, dual CCP-MPG members and progressives, returned to China first. They were later followed by moderates and relatively right-wing MPG leaders the Party considered less reliable.<sup>17</sup> Thus Pan Hannian and others organised the travel of several batches of delegates to go to China by boat. Huang Yanpei and Sheng Pihua travelled to Manchuria by land via Beijing and Tianjin.<sup>18</sup> The majority of invited delegates were safely in Ha'erbin by October 1948, just as the CCP was consolidating its military superiority over the GMD.<sup>19</sup> These representatives took part in the establishment of a Preparatory New Political Consultative Conference which discussed proposals for the first formal meeting of June 1949. This conference consisted of representatives from thirty nine very diverse groups, including the CCP, the MPGs, democratic personages, trade unions, Red Armies, student associations, women's associations, "democratic producers," religious groups, ethnic minorities, "democratic" media representatives, professionals and Overseas Chinese. Preparations were also made to include Zhang Dongsun's break-away faction of Zhang Junmai's Democratic Socialist Party, should it declare its opposition to the United States and the GMD and approve the CCP's land reform measures.<sup>20</sup> The Party required that all

<sup>16</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang xiang ge minzhu dangpai daibiao zhengxun canjia Xin zhengxie ming dan de yijian ji you guan yuanze gei Gao Gang, Li Fuchun de zhishi," [Instructions to Gao Gang and Li Fuchun on principles for seeking the opinions of minor party representatives regarding the name list for the New PCC] (October 15, 1948), *Liberation period documents*, pp.214-216.

<sup>17</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu yaoqing canjia Xin zhengxie zhe de ming-dan gei Gang fenju de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions to the Hong Kong Bureau branch on the invitation name list for participants to the New PCC] (September 20, 1948), *ibid.*, pp.207-208.

<sup>18</sup> The first batch, consisting of Shen Junru, Tan Pingshan, Cai Dingkai and Zhang Bojun, and others, arrived in Dalian on September 26. The second group which included Guo Moruo, Ma Xulun, Xu Guangping, Chen Qiyu, Huan Xiang, Sha Qianli, Feng Rongfang and Zao Mengjun, soon followed. The third batch consisted of thirty people including Li Jishen, Mao Dun, Zhu Wenshan, Zhang Naiqi, Peng Zemin, Deng Chumin, Liu Yazhi, Sun Qimeng, Ma Yinchu, Shi Fuliang, and Wu Maosun. This group was welcomed to Dalian by Zhang Wentian and Li Fuchun on January 7. Yu Wenzao, in Zhang Tianan, 1990, p.383.

<sup>19</sup> This was superiority was becoming clear by November 14 1948, when Mao penned, "The Momentous Change in China's military Situation," *SW*, vol.4, pp.287-288.

<sup>20</sup> Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zhengqiu minzhu renshi dui "guanyu zhaokai Xin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi zhu wenti" de yijian gei Gao Gang, Li Fuchun de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions to Gao Gang and Li Fuchun concerning opinions on soliciting democratic personage's opinions on "On various questions concerning the convening the New PCC"] (October 8, 1948), *Liberation period documents*, pp.210-213.

conference delegates accept three conditions: that the CCP would exercise leadership; that the revolution had to pursued to the end, (*i.e.* there would be no peace except on the CCP's conditions); and that the Party was to build a people's democratic dictatorship which did not include counter-revolutionaries and denied the possibility of a third road.<sup>21</sup>

The Party went out of its way to impress the Conference delegates and convince them of CCP sincerity. Party members were instructed to maximise the positive impression on the Conference delegates. They had to be open, honest and sincere. With the exception of certain "concrete" and secret policies, they were to discuss everything with delegates, problems as well as CCP successes. Any criticisms by delegates were to be reported to appropriate Party authorities. Delegates were also be permitted to discuss issues with those Party members responsible for particular policy areas. Daily meetings were held and trips were organised to enable delegates to make inspections and see problems and policy implementation first hand. Careful consideration was paid to delegates' living conditions and they were to be treated well. The corollary of this preferential treatment was that the Party called on its members to patiently convert non-Party delegates to the Party's line and philosophy. As part of this initial political education, all delegates were given CCP policy documents and works by Mao, Lenin and Marx to study.<sup>22</sup> Dong Biwu, a leading united front worker, also stressed this unity-struggle educational aspect of the Conference.<sup>23</sup>

In June 1949, the Preparatory Committee, chaired by Mao Zedong, Li Jishen, Shen Junru and others, met in the recently captured Beiping. In September 1949, the second full session of the Preparatory Committee decided to change the conference's name to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). On September 21 1949, 662 people attended the first meeting of the new conference and in

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<sup>21</sup> Li Weiham on the results of the CCP Party meeting in Lijiazhuang of January 7, 1949. Li Weiham, 1986, p.656.

<sup>22</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu duidai minzhu renshi de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the treatment of democratic personages] (January 22, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, pp.240-241.

<sup>23</sup> "Guanyu Renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi ji tuanjie minzhu renshi wenti," [On the question of the People's Political Consultative Conference and uniting with democratic personages], (August 25, 1949), Dong Biwu, 1990, p.335.

doing so, immediately began laying the basis for its eventual successor, the National People's Congress.<sup>24</sup>

In his opening speech to the conference, Mao deliberately contrasted it with the GMD's Political Consultative Conference to show that, unlike the nationalists' conference, the CPPCC was a democratic institution that would lay the legal basis for a rapid convening of a national government. Comparing his party with the now very isolated and disintegrating GMD, Mao declared, the CPPCC "is the representative of the people of the whole country and enjoys their trust and support."<sup>25</sup> The presence of numerous MPGs in the conference supported Mao's claim.<sup>26</sup> The conference of representatives from almost every class and group in Chinese society actively endorsed the CCP as the new state power. The occasion symbolised the approval of the vast majority to CCP rule. The Party had created an important expression of its hegemony.

Zhou Enlai presented his draft of the Common Program of the CPPCC to the conference on September 22. As the organisational form of the united front, the CPPCC was to:

realise New Democracy, oppose imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic-capitalism and establish an independent, democratic peaceful, united, prosperous, and strong new China. To this end we unite with the democratic classes and nationalities in the country and Overseas Chinese as well and form the great people's united front. It is not only the Chinese Communist Party which has been struggling for the last twenty-eight years to achieve this goal; the democratic parties, people's organisations, regions, troops and minority nationalities, Overseas Chinese and democratic personages likewise favour and support it.<sup>27</sup>

Zhou clarified many issues surrounding the future of the conference and the practical form of New Democracy. The CPPCC would be the official manifestation of the united front. It would exist for the duration of the new democratic period and, after the election of the NPC, it would act as a consultative body. Yet, at the same time, Zhou

<sup>24</sup> Yu Wenzao, in Zhang Tienan, 1990, p.384.

<sup>25</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "The Chinese People have Stood up!", *SW*, vol.5, pp.15-18.

<sup>26</sup> These included the Sanmin zhuyi Comrades Association, the Guomindang Association for the Promotion of Democracy, the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD, the Democratic League, the Peasants and Workers Party, China democratic National Construction Association, the Chinese People's National Salvation Association, the Association for the Promotion of Democracy, the Jiusan Study Society, Zhigong dang, the Taiwan Democratic Self-government League, and the Vocational Education Society. The Shanghai Federation of People's Groups was also represented and the non-party democratic personages were counted as a group. *Liberation period documents*, pp.212-213.

<sup>27</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Characteristics of the Draft Common Program of People's Political Consultative Conference," (September 22, 1949), *SW*, vol.1, p.405

acknowledged that there would be continued internal Party opposition to united front work, the very concept of the CPPCC and the continued existence of groups such as the MPGs. However, he warned sceptics that it was wrong to believe that these organisations could be done away with.<sup>28</sup> Different classes and different forms of economic production would continue to exist for some time and therefore the need for the MPGs to represent them would also continue. Zhou reassured Party members, however, that the state owned sector would lead over other sectors.<sup>29</sup> Liu Shaoqi made clear that the immediate concern was not the destruction of any particular economic sector but the encouragement of all in order to “heal the wounds of war as quickly as possible and to restore economic activities.”<sup>30</sup> The CCP’s maximum program of establishing socialism was not included in the CPPCC Common Program for fear it would confuse the measures which needed to be taken immediately. While declaring the transition to socialism inevitable, Liu Shaoqi said that this would occur in consultation with the Party’s united front allies.<sup>31</sup>

The CPPCC went smoothly. The MPGs were represented in a manner which far outweighed their memberships. The CCP discussed many important issues with them and included them in its deliberations.<sup>32</sup> The MPG leaders were well treated and honoured; they were sent on inspection trips and much attention was paid to their conditions.<sup>33</sup> Alluding to his allies’ sense of self importance and in deference to their influence, Zhou Enlai stressed that arrangements for them needed considerable attention and had to be in accordance with their “universally known” “sense of propriety and honour and disgrace.” As a consequence, Zhou decided many such arrangements himself.<sup>34</sup> This privileged treatment of the MPGs was in accord with united front

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<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, pp.405-406.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, p.408.

<sup>30</sup> Liu Shaoqi, "New China's Economic development," (An internal party report of June 1949) *Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi*, vol.1, p.425-426.

<sup>31</sup> Liu Shaoqi, "Strengthen the Revolutionary Unity of the Chinese People," (Speech to the CPPCC, September 21, 1949) *ibid.*, p.431-432.

<sup>32</sup> At least in the early stages, the CCP instructed that they be given ready access to all except certain documents and policies. [CCP CC instructions on the treatment of democratic personages] (January 22, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, pp 240-241.

<sup>33</sup> Li Weihai pointed out that they had to be treated more gently than Party members as they were accustomed to different (*i.e.* better) conditions and needed special attention. Li Weihai, 1986, p.525.

<sup>34</sup> Lin Yuan (ed), *Tongyi zhanxian gailun*, [A general discussion of united fronts] (Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1987), p.200.

principles stated by Mao in early 1948.<sup>35</sup> When it concluded, the Conference had endorsed the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Organic Law of the CPPCC, the Organic law of Central People's Government and *The Common Program*. The conference settled the issues of the national flag, national anthem, and a new calendar. Conference delegates elected Mao as the Chairman of the Central People's Government. All these measures, claimed Zhu De, "conformed to the will of the people."<sup>36</sup>

Most importantly, however, the CCP's proposals were in general accord with many MPG principles. In addition, by 1949, the CCP increasingly had behind it the moral weight of its impending victory over the GMD. It would have been churlish of the MPGs to attack CCP proposals which seemed to offer not only a great hope but the only hope. The GMD had failed to deliver peace and prosperity; it had failed to save China from civil war and it had criminalised the MPGs.

### **The Guomintang's last efforts to win back the Minor Parties**

The eventual success of the CCP in gaining a dominant influence over the MPGs during 1948 did not go completely unchallenged by the Nationalists. The decision to outlaw the Democratic League had been resisted by both the Guomintang's more liberal factions and the Americans. When the rapidly accelerating deterioration and increasingly common defeats of the GMD armies and the loss of popular support proved that Jiang's policies were failures, the more liberal elements of the GMD attempted to win back the support of the MPGs.

The opportunity for this political courtship came when Jiang Jieshi resigned as president in favour of Li Zongren on January 21 1949. Li immediately sought to make peace with the CCP. Jiang had already begun advocating a peace deal move in late 1948 but the CCP had rejected it. Mao made it clear that the CCP was already clearly

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<sup>35</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "On Some Important Problems of Party's Present Policy," (January 18, 1948), *SW*, vol.4, p.187.

<sup>36</sup> "Closing speech at the First Plenary Session of the CPPCC," (September 30, 1949), *Selected Works of Zhu De*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1986), p.277.

superior in military and political terms. Any GMD-CCP peace had to be on the CCP's terms.<sup>37</sup> Mao, However, continued to denounce Li's calls for peace as "reactionary."<sup>38</sup>

Li's calls threatened the CCP's united front work and its efforts to confirm its victory by military means. Mao argued that Li Zongren's government consisted of three factions. A loyalist faction would follow Jiang Jieshi to the end. One faction was prepared to go over to the people and accept the CCP. Between these two was a third group:

hesitating at the crossroads, and it is uncertain which way they will go. They do not want to offend Jiang Jieshi and the United States Government, yet they hope they will be understood and admitted by the camp of people's democracy. But this is an illusion and is impossible."<sup>39</sup>

The problem for the Party was that Li's peace offers appealed to united front allies, such as Li Jishen and Feng Yuxiang. A concerned CCP instructed its Hong Kong and Shanghai offices to convince these waverers that Li Zongren and the United States' were unreliable. Not only was this 'independence' endangering the Party's alliances with the two warlords, it posed the danger of infecting moderates such as Zhang Bojun and Tan Pingshan.<sup>40</sup> The CCP warned that the GMD's inevitable attempts at "seduction" were attempts to destroy the Party's new Political Consultative Conference and Li Jishen had to be persuaded to stick to his original declarations.<sup>41</sup> The CCP succeeded in these efforts and by late January 1949, Zhou Enlai was instructing Gao Gang and Li Fuchun on how Li Jishen should answer Li Zongren's telegrams. In an action designed to increase the divisions between Jiang Jieshi and other GMD factions, Gao and Li were instructed to have Li telegraph Bai Chongxi, Li Zongren and others to

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<sup>37</sup> "On the War Criminal's Suing for Peace," (January 5, 1949), *SW*, vol.4, pp.309-313. Mao laid out eight conditions which in demanding the punishment of war criminals (which included both Jiang and Li Zongren), abolition of the new constitution and confiscation of bureaucratic capital in particular, went to the heart of Jiang's own authority and power base and left him as a war criminal. "Statement on the Present Situation," (January 14, 1949), *ibid.*, pp.315-319.

<sup>38</sup> "Reactionaries Clamour for Total Peace," *ibid.*, pp.341-349.

<sup>39</sup> "Wither the Nanking Government?," (April 4, 1949), *ibid.*, p.383.

<sup>40</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Li Jishen, Feng Yuxiang dao Jiang huodong de zhengce gei Hu ju, Gang fenju de zhishi," [Instructions to Shanghai Department and Hong Kong branch on policy towards Li Jishen and Feng Yuxiang's activities in overthrowing Jiang] (August 2, 1948), *Liberation period documents*, pp.204-205.

<sup>41</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zhengqu Li, Shen, Zhang, Cai deng, fandui Guomindang pohuai Xin zhengzhi xieshang hui de yinmou gei Dongbei ju dian," [CCP CC telegram to the North Eastern Bureau on winning over Li, Shen, Zhang, and Cai *etc.* to oppose the GMD plot to destroy the new PCC] (January 24, 1949), *ibid.*, p.242.

“side with the people and accept Mao’s eight conditions for peace.” The Revolutionary GMD’s Tan Pingshan was among those used to pressure Li Jishen to keep to his past promises.<sup>42</sup> Tan Pingshan also publicly affirmed his support for the CCP in the pages of *Huashang bao*. Denouncing what he called Jiang’s “peace plot,” Tan called for the “deluded” liberal third roaders and so-called democrats to join the Party’s united front.<sup>43</sup> In late January 1949, Li buckled and together with MPG and non-party personages he signed a joint declaration accepting CCP leadership, extolling conditions in the CCP areas, and again repudiating the third road.<sup>44</sup>

Li Jishen’s actions helped further undermine the GMD by persuading significant sections of the Nationalist Party to defect to the CCP. In April 1949, Li played an important part in convincing a delegation of GMD leaders, such as Zhang Zhizhong and Shao Lizi, to sue for Peace with the CCP. As Zhou Enlai pointed out, winning over these GMD leaders was vital because, even though their numbers were small, they effectively represented millions of people: to win over one such leader was to win over a whole batch of people.<sup>45</sup>

However, there could be no successful CCP-GMD peace talks because the CCP insisted on settling the question of political power by force. Addressing democratic personages in Beiping, Zhou Enlai declared:

The reason we insist on using the People’s Liberation Army to take-over political power, is that this is a question of whether or not the revolution will be carried through to the end. After the revolution of 1911, the warlord governors and the like remained in place and the only thing that changed was the flag. .... Well, the lesson is precisely this: if once again we just change flags and let all sorts of reactionaries go around oppressing the people and churning out gold yuan, the people will go on suffering as before and they will certainly condemn us. That would not be acting responsibly to the people. Unless we overthrow the old order, we cannot set up a new revolutionary order. Where there is no People’s Liberation Army, the nature of the regime will not change, the reactionary armies will not be re-organised and production will not resume.<sup>46</sup>

42 "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu shuofu Li Jishen zhengque duidai Guixi junfa zhi Gao Gang deng dian," [CCP CC telegram to Gao Gang *etc.* on convincing Li Jishen on the correct manner to handle Guixi Warlord] (January 31, 1949), *ibid.*, pp.251-252.

43 Niu Yufeng, in Zhang Tienan, 1990, p.388.

44 "Women duiyu shiju de yijian," [Our opinions on the current situation] (January 22, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, pp.319-322.

45 Zhou Enlai, "Unite with the Broad Masses to Advance Together," (April 22, 1949), *SW*, vol.1, pp.367-368.

46 "Report on Problems Concerning the Peace Talks," (April 17, 1949), *ibid.*, p.357.

Without military victory the CCP would be constrained in its ability to make revolution as it saw fit.

### **MPGs in the final struggle for CCP victory**

Using the MPGs to help win over GMD leaders reduced the cost of gaining power and Zhou Enlai acknowledged that the Party's resources were stretched to their limits. China's population was 475 million but Zhou pointed out that the Communist Youth League membership totalled 200,000 and CCP membership did not exceed 3 million.<sup>47</sup> The Party constituted less than one percent of the population and yet it wanted to rule. It was precisely in situations such as these, when revolutionaries were a tiny minority, that Gramsci had argued that a revolutionary party needed the consent and support of a population and its intellectuals to allow it to rule and build up its strength to transform or replace them. Reliance on coercion alone was untenable.

The relative weakness of the Party as it prepared for the final seizure of power increased the importance of united front work with non-Party people. Zhou Enlai reminded all Party members that they should learn to work with non-Party people and overcome their sectarian inclinations. They need to "treat all people outside the Party who can be won over and can co-operate with us in the same way we do Party cadres." The goal was to "first draw a huge circle and unite with the masses in their hundreds of millions in a joint struggle to isolate, oppose and overthrow the most reactionary landlord and bureaucratic capitalist classes."<sup>48</sup> In May 1949, Zhou reiterated Mao's injunction to united with as many people as possible:

So Chairman Mao tells many cadres in our party that when they write their diaries every day, if they just jot down "Unite with 90 percent" and nothing else, that will be enough. I think that our biggest achievement under his leadership is that we have won over the vast majority to the common cause of overthrowing reactionary rule.<sup>49</sup>

Yet, it is important to note that Zhou was urging that the people be united to overthrow reactionary rule without explicitly favouring revolution.

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<sup>47</sup> "Unite with the Broad Masses ...," *ibid.*, pp.365-367.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, p.367.

<sup>49</sup> "Learn From Mao Zedong," (May 7, 1949), *ibid.*, p.378.

The MPGs were not only symbolically significant as evidence demonstrating the Party's claim to rally 90 percent of the Chinese population to its side, they also played an important practical roles in the transfer of power. They contributed their knowledge, contacts, and skills to undermining the GMD, reassuring their constituencies of the CCP's good intent and, in a small way, even providing direct and indirect military support.

This military contribution is the least well known aspect of MPG history. The Third Party had extensive military connections. It raised a small guerilla army of 300 men from the Zhejiang provincial city of Jinhua and its surrounds. It also raised troops in Guangzhou and other areas to create four armed groups with a total of 2,600 armed men. In Jiangxi, the party organised 4,500 soldiers of whom 3,000 were armed. A similar group was organised in Hu'nan. These small forces liaised with the CCP and engaged in battle with the GMD. The Yunnan Warlord Long Yun, a secret Democratic League member, donated 20,000 yuan to assist the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD (Revolutionary GMD) and to help establish a guerilla training school.<sup>50</sup>

The Revolutionary GMD had the most direct military influence. Li Jishen and Cai Tingkai had formed a military cell (*junshi xiaozu*) with the CCP's Fang Fang, Pan Hannian, Yin Shizhong and others. In Shanghai and Nanjing the Revolutionary Committee organised a group of 5,000 people to stage an uprising timed to meet the approaching communist armies. This plot failed when its leaders were arrested. In South-west China, Li Jishen and others organised small armed groups, sought to develop cells in GMD armies and win over local guard units. Yang Jie, a Revolutionary GMD leader responsible for Sichuan and adjacent provinces, organised a "Protect Sichuan, resist Jiang" (*bao Chuan, ju Jiang*) warlord army alliance of Liu Wenhui, Pan Wenhua, Deng Xihou, and Long Yun but Yang was killed by the GMD.<sup>51</sup> In August 1949, a group of Revolutionary GMD and Third Party leaders coordinated an uprising by GMD troops in Hunan.<sup>52</sup> As the CCP took over areas in which MPG controlled military groups operated, these groups were to be absorbed into the ranks of

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<sup>50</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, p.404.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p.405.

<sup>52</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.218.

the CCP armies.<sup>53</sup> While not substantial, these acts were important contributions reducing the human and material cost of CCP victory.

The MPGs supported the CCP military cause indirectly by encouraging youths and intellectuals to join CCP armies. For example, the Beijing Democratic League recruited 200 intellectuals for guerilla groups and the Shanghai branch recruited 300. Similarly, regional branches of the League also encouraged young intellectuals to enlist with the CCP.<sup>54</sup> Again, while small these were useful contributions. The Party had long been short of intellectuals and had been very actively seeking to unite with and convert as many as possible for over a decade.<sup>55</sup> In addition, Liu Shaoqi pointed out that encouraging intellectuals from rural backgrounds to return home, even those opposed to land reform, would benefit the Party while reducing their presence in and support for “anti-popular” *i.e.* anti-communist urban forces.<sup>56</sup>

An important MPG contribution to the CCP’s eventual victory was assisting in the peaceful takeover of Beiping. Co-ordinating their actions with the CCP, the MPGs helped pressure GMD General Fu Zuoyi as he defended Beiping. Li Jishen wrote to Fu urging a peaceful solution. The MPG’s united front work assisted the CCP’s disintegration (*huajie*) of Fu’s forces and sought influence Fu by contacting and influencing prominent and strategic individuals including Fu’s former teacher, Liu Houtong, his commander Deng Baoshan and Fu’s daughter Fu Dongju (a secret CCP member).<sup>57</sup> During the siege, the League’s Liang Shuming advocated turning Beiping into an open city. Zhang Dongsun, the former Democratic Socialist Party leader and head of the Beiping Democratic League, negotiated with the CCP on Fu Zuoyi’s behalf. The successful peaceful “liberation” of Beiping on January 31, 1949 was another

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<sup>53</sup> Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zenmeyang duichi ge minzhu dangpai, tuanti de difang zuzhi de zhishi," [CCP CC on how to handle the local organisations of each minor party and group] (February 17, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, pp.257-259.

<sup>54</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, pp.405-406.

<sup>55</sup> The best known initiative perhaps being Mao's "Recruit large Numbers of Intellectuals," (December 1 1939) *SW*, vol.1, pp.301-303.

<sup>56</sup> Liu Shaoqi, "Directive on the Land Question," (May 4, 1946), *Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi* vol.1, p.375.

<sup>57</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, pp.406-407.

important symbolic victory for the CCP and it served as a potent example to other cities.<sup>58</sup>

The peaceful takeover of Beijing was important because the CCP wanted to minimise damage to China's infrastructure and to revive industrial production and the economy as soon as possible. The CCP was concerned about businessmen fleeing in the face of CCP advances and it sought to reassure them of its good intentions and the benefits of New Democracy.<sup>59</sup> Calming the bourgeoisie's fears was particularly important in Shanghai. In one action regarded as remarkably successful, copies of Mao's "The Current Situation and Tasks" were distributed to Shanghai business people. This action alone is said to have acted as a very effective tranquilliser.<sup>60</sup> These takeovers again demonstrated why reliance on force alone was often impractical and counter-productive.

In other actions aimed at preserving resources and maintaining production the Democratic League, for example, copied and printed CCP documents. Huang Yanpei's son, Huang Jingwu was said to have been buried alive for his part in organising a strike of bank workers to prevent the transfer of funds to Taiwan. Other League members prevented raw materials being sent to Taiwan. According to one official League history seven members, or two percent, died in prison or in battle.<sup>61</sup> On Christmas day 1948, the Shanghai Jiusan branch adopted the tasks of dispelling capitalists' fears of the CCP and spreading propaganda aimed at protecting factories and schools. It also intensified its co-operation with the underground sections of the National Construction Association, the Association for the Promotion of Democracy and the Democratic League.<sup>62</sup> Another important act to reassure Shanghai capitalists occurred in June 1949, when the CCP appointed Huang Yanpei, Shi Fuliang, and others as special advisers to the Shanghai Municipal Government. Their explicit task was to encourage Shanghai capitalists to revive production and re-establish transportation links.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.205-207.

<sup>59</sup> Zhao Xihua, 1992, p.309.

<sup>60</sup> Robert Loh, *Escape From Red China*, (Michael Joseph, London, 1963), p.3.

<sup>61</sup> Zhao Xihua, 1992, p.307.

<sup>62</sup> Da Yijin, 1985, pp.98-99.

<sup>63</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu jue ding pingqing Huang Yanpei deng shi si ren wei Shanghai shi zhengfu guwen gei Huadong ju dian," [CCP CC telegram to East China Department on the decision to

In April 1949, the CCP had stated that without the help of “liberal capitalists,” the difficulties in taking over Shanghai would be great and it would be difficult to impose the CCP’s will. The Party believed that it would face strong opposition from those it termed bureaucratic capitalists and GMD supporters. The liberal capitalists, such as those in the National Construction Association, had to be involved before the takeover and even more so in its wake.<sup>64</sup> Such was the importance of this task that Mao invited Huang Yanpei, Zhang Naiqi, Shi Fuliang, and Sun Qimeng of the National Construction Association to a banquet at which he personally requested their assistance.<sup>65</sup>

The underground MPGs in GMD areas launched “protection movements” to prevent the destruction of schools, industrial infrastructure, official records etc. They sought to win over GMD official and officers and encourage them to rebel.<sup>66</sup> Shanghai Jiusan was active in this work.<sup>67</sup> This was an extension of the CCP’s rural takeover policies as outlined by Liu Shaoqi in 1946.<sup>68</sup> Such protection activities occurred in many places where MPGs had maintained an underground existence and undoubtedly helped reduce the degree of destruction which would have otherwise occurred.

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appoint Huang Yanpei, etc, 14 people as advisers to the Shanghai Municipal Government] (June 25, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, pp.269-270.

<sup>64</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zhengqu zichan jieji daibiao renwu xiezhu jieguan Shanghai gongzuo de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on winning over representatives of capitalist classes to help the take over of Shanghai] (April 7, 1949), *ibid.*, p.263.

<sup>65</sup> *Pujiang tongzhou*, no.12, 1995, p.9.

<sup>66</sup> Shi Liang, "Zai Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng chengli si shi zhou nian jinian da hui shang de jiang hua," [Speech on the fortieth anniversary of the Democratic League]. In *Yu gang*, 1987, p.90.

<sup>67</sup> Da Yijin, 1985, p.99.

<sup>68</sup> *Selected works of Liu Shaoqi*, p.374.

*Chapter 4***From “Semi-Feudalism/Semi-colonialism” to Socialism: 1949-1955**

When, in late 1949, the Party finally defeated the GMD by force, it celebrated a victory over a party left politically isolated by the CCP's united front strategies. This isolation occurred when Party achieved consent for its takeover, when many of the people vital for the functioning of the GMD state withdrew their support from it. Yet, this victory did not mean the end of the united front or of the MPGs within it. This chapter examines how the CCP consolidated its hegemony. The Party utilised the united front in a Gramscian fashion; it both utilised and set out to transform the classes of the old society while simultaneously training new, communist, intellectuals.

To achieve the transformation of Chinese society, its economy and the very thinking of the population, the Party maintained and expanded its united front work. The CCP re-directed much of its united front work after 1949 to get the middle elements to actively accept its rule and to implement its radical goals. The Party needed to persuade the middle elements to accept its socialist ideology. The old intellectuals, once free of bourgeois influences, would train the new communist ones. Once socialism was established, New China would produce only proletarian intellectuals whose ‘common sense’ would be based completely on Party ideals and precepts. The old ideology would be eliminated through re-education. This ‘remoulding’ of minds was clearly laid out in Mao's “On the People's Democratic Dictatorship” (June 30, 1949), as one condition required to ultimately eliminate bourgeois classes and their associated political parties.<sup>1</sup>

Like Gramsci before them, the leaders of the CCP realised that as a revolutionary organisation, the Party was a minority group that would need the support of many ostensible class enemies in order to establish and consolidate itself. The Party could not “hit out in all directions,” said Mao, because:

making too many enemies will create unfavourable nation-wide tension, we must create concessions and an easing in tension in some aspects so workers, peasants, and all crafts

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<sup>1</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.4, pp.411-423.

people support us *and the overwhelming majority of the bourgeoisie and intellectuals do not oppose us.*<sup>2</sup>

The united front continued to act as the vehicle by which the Party enlisted the bourgeoisie and their intellectuals to firstly consolidate its rule and then begin the process of transforming them.

To accomplish the dramatic ideological changes its revolution demanded, the CCP set out to destroy the legitimacy of existing ideologies and what it saw as their economic and philosophical basis: the bourgeois, feudal and imperialist old society, foreign bourgeois influences and their economic basis. Once this was accomplished the Party's ideology could fill the vacuum and the Party's hegemony would be complete: a historic bloc would be achieved.

A major aspect of the CCP's political education was the united front principle of uniting with allies in order to eliminate enemies one by one. With each victory, "clear lines between reactionaries and revolutionaries," and between progressives and moderates, had to be redrawn.<sup>3</sup> The successive elimination of enemies to the right of the CCP left formerly intermediate classes and groups and their MPG representatives increasingly exposed as the most right-wing elements remaining in China and Mao's policy was to kill tigers.<sup>4</sup> Allies after all, were temporary while the Party's interest in revolution was permanent.

The minor parties had an important role to play in this new united front, particularly as it related to the political education of the bourgeois classes and groups the CCP held them to represent. The MPGs remained key symbols of the consent of these groups and their re-education and assimilation of CCP ideology served as models for both their specific constituencies and Chinese society generally. The political education of the MPGs therefore became a major UFD concern. A number of prominent MPG leaders were re-defined as enemies and used as important negative

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<sup>2</sup> "Telegraph to Chen Yi," (April 1950). Quoted in Hu Sheng, 1994, p.408. In June, Mao told the CPPCC something similar. See "Do not hit out in all directions," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, vol.5, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1977), pp.33-36. Michael Y. M. Kau and John K. Leung (eds), *The Writings of Mao Zedong: 1949-1976*, (M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1986) pp.103-106. (Emphasis added)

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

models personifying negative class traits in series of increasingly intense political education campaigns. These negative models acted as figures against which members of their parties and the public could rally in support of the Party. This need for negative exemplars as part of the Party's political education process explains why many MPG leaders were re-classified as enemies or having reactionary ideology despite staying within the bounds of debate as defined by the CCP. Particularly vulnerable were those who had opposed the Party or advocated lines to which the CCP objected, such as supporting a third road or foreign ideas and countries.

The re-education and symbolic functions of the MPGs, as well as their more direct practical uses, were aided by the CCP's formalisation of their already inherently corporatist organisations. The inherent dysfunctional tendencies of corporatist structures, however, soon became a source of complaint.

### **Consolidation and Social revolution**

The official founding of the Chinese People's Republic on October 1 1949, vindicated Mao's statement that the Chinese Communist Party's success was based on:

A well disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the methods of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people; an army under the leadership of such a Party; a united front of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups under the leadership of such a Party - these are the three main weapons with which we have defeated the enemy.<sup>5</sup>

As part of the Party's implementation of socialism, the united front and the minor parties were to continue. The CCP's power required consolidation and the revival of the war-torn economy. Hitting out in all directions would damage these goals. The united front, in contrast, could help maximise support and minimise hostility. The new united front was therefore renamed as the People's Democratic United Front (*Renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian*). The Party's united front allies could no longer look to the GMD as a potential protector and even leaving China became increasingly difficult. These factors, together with the CCP's increased found legitimacy as the new state power, greatly increased the Party's ability to make demands on allies who were now

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.422.

also its subjects. Nevertheless, the Party realised that it still needed help to run the state apparatus and rebuild the economy. This recognition was evident at the Party's National United Front Work Conferences which set out the tasks of the new united front and the roles of the MPGs within it.<sup>6</sup>

At the First National United Front Work Conference of 1950, Li Weihan, the head of the United Front Department, clearly stated the front's role in the consolidation of CCP rule. The front would assist with the Party's continuing struggle to eliminate enemies and with the revival and development of a new economy and culture, to establish suitable conditions for entering the socialist stage. To achieve this goal, said Li, the UFD would work to stabilise the support of the middle elements behind the Party's rule and begin the transformation of their middle and the right-wings. Li acknowledged that it had been the failure to unite with these 'bourgeois' middle elements and following instead a leftist policy of "overthrowing everything" which had left the Party fatally isolated in the rural soviets of the early 1930s.<sup>7</sup> Li did not want to repeat this mistake. He partly justified the MPGs continued existence by reminding united front workers that the MPGs had supported the Party during the civil war; some had renounced dearly held ideals, such as advocating a third road, to support the CCP.<sup>8</sup>

The UFD aimed to unite with the middle elements by having the Party's united front allies take the *Common Program* to heart and then using their influence to convince the groups they represented to do likewise.<sup>9</sup> As the officially permitted representation of China's bourgeois classes, the MPGs were a vital part of this united front. Zhou Enlai pointed out that of the 2,400,000 government personnel at the district level and above, over 50% were non-Party people and the many intellectuals among

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix B: *Table of National United Front Work Conferences* for the dates of these conferences.

<sup>7</sup> Li Weihan, "Guanyu muqian tongyi zhanxian gongzuo zhong de ji ge wenti" [On several questions in present day united front work] (January 25, 1951), in Ren Tao (ed), *Li ci quan guo tong zhan gongzuo huiyi gaikuang he wenzhai*, [Selections and summaries from National United Front Conferences] (Dangan chubanshe, Beijing, 1988), p.65.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p.9.

them contained MPG elements. Relations with these groups needed to be well handled.<sup>10</sup>

There was, however, a major problem which worked against the successful implementation of Zhou's injunction. The Party's earlier appeals to class warfare had made such a profound influence on Party members that many rejected the need to maintain a post-victory united front. Li Weihang stated that this attitude created problems for the UFD's work, including that with the MPGs. Many Party members believed that the MPGs continued existence could only bring trouble (*zhao mafan*). While some members conceded the MPGs had been useful in winning democracy, they were subsequently seen as redundant. For many Party members then, democracy did not extend outside their own ranks. Li admitted that the UFD itself was held in contempt by some Party members who regarded it as "non-Party people in the Party" and as "the Party's right-wing." The very concept of united front work was seen as 'Rightism' and not as something engaged in by "decent" Party members. Party cadres in Gansu, for example, derided united front work as "the landlords line" and the democratic view as "the confused view." There were, said Li, even Party members who wanted to turn the MPGs into radical bolshevik organisations and those who accused the Party of being over conciliatory towards allies.<sup>11</sup> To overcome this potentially serious disunity over a vital Party policy Li Weihang called for an internal Party propaganda campaign asserting the importance of both united front principles and his United Front Department.<sup>12</sup>

Top CCP leaders defended the MPG's continued existence. Mao remarked that the negative attitude of many Party members towards the MPGs reflected an incorrect but common view in Chinese society generally. This misconception was to see the friendly parties in isolation, as a mere strand of hair. In reality, Mao argued, if one looked at them from another angle, one would see that behind each strand was a

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<sup>10</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Fahui renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian jiji zuoyong de ji ge wenti," [Several issues regarding giving free rein to the active role of the People's Democratic United Front] (April 13, 1950), *ibid.*, pp.30-31.

<sup>11</sup>Li Weihang, Xing Xiping and Liao Chengzhi, "Di yi ci Quanguo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo huiyi de jianyao baogao," [Briefing report on the First National United Front Work Conference] (May 4, 1950), *ibid.*, p.35.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.18.

handful of hair. In other words, each united front ally represented a large number of people; they therefore carried considerably more social, political, and economic weight than was immediately apparent. Moreover, the MPGs were necessary for liaising with the bourgeoisie that the handful of hair represented. Mao referred to the *Communist Manifesto* which maintained that in order to liberate themselves the proletariat needed to liberate all classes, not just themselves. Therefore, Mao pointed out, the bourgeoisie also needed to be liberated from their class shackles and the united front was the means to achieve this.<sup>13</sup>

Yet Mao's support for united front work after 1949 was not wholehearted as subsequent events were to reveal. He did not attend the 1950 United Front Work Conference but he did comment on reports of its proceedings.<sup>14</sup> More significantly, in 1951, in the face of continued reports of hostility towards non-Party people, Mao refused to give united front work more public support. Instead, Mao directed united front workers towards the less authoritative Deng Xiaoping, Deng Zihui and Xi Zhongxun and have them issue supportive statements. Mao placed the onus for success on the united front workers themselves, requiring them to "actively work with democratic personages, educate them and lead them forward towards socialism."<sup>15</sup> Positive results in this work could then be used to persuade Party secretaries and committees to support it. Lu Dingyi, the Minister for Propaganda reiterated Mao's line when he told conference delegates that they were responsible for their own propaganda work, and needed to personally build support for united front work within the Party.<sup>16</sup> Just as they persuaded non-Party people to become allies, so too united front workers had to convince fellow Party members to actively support united front work. Without the full support of the Mao and the Party as a whole, however, the chances of successfully implementing united front policies were significantly inhibited and almost certain ultimately to fail.

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<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, pp.6-7.

<sup>14</sup> These comments were then reported to the conference by Li Weihuan. *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Summary of Second National United Front Work Conference, January 1951, *ibid.*, p.44.

<sup>16</sup> Lu Dingyi, "Zhengqu he tuanjie guangda jiaotu, suqing diguo zhuyi zai Zhongguo de wenhua qinlue de yingxiang," [Win over and unite vast numbers of believers. Eliminate the influence of the cultural imperialist invasion in China] (January 19, 1951), *ibid.*, p.50.

In his report to the First National United Front Work Conference, Li Wei-han had detailed the tasks of the new united front. Li reiterated that consolidation of power required that the Party to unite with China's bourgeois classes, especially the national bourgeoisie. The Party needed to maximise support in order to combat enemies such as imperialists and reactionaries. There was also the urgent need to revive the "new democratic economy and culture" to "prepare the conditions for the entry to socialism." China's backward economy still required the energies of private capital to transform the economy from an agricultural to an industrial one. The united front was therefore still necessary. To maintain the required co-operation, Li argued that the representatives of the middle elements had to be given both representation and influence in government.<sup>17</sup> The MPGs were the major vehicle for this representation.

As a group, the CCP held the MPGs to represent bourgeois class interests. As individual organisations the MPGs were attributed "definite although varying in degree, class relations or representativeness (*daibiaoxing*)" towards particular bourgeois classes or strata, and most importantly, towards the "national and the urban petty bourgeois and their intellectuals." The Party would use these connections to directly "organise the politically active of these democratic classes."<sup>18</sup> Zhou Enlai put it even more plainly in 1951:

We let the democratic parties exist and develop precisely to help organise these classes.... It is because we have democratic parties that we can use them to influence the unorganised bourgeois, petty bourgeois, the intellectuals and professionals and through the democratic parties' political activities temper and test this group.<sup>19</sup>

The Party also sought to use the MPGs to monitor the attitudes and demands of the groups they were held to represent.<sup>20</sup> Correct views would be accepted while erroneous ones would be exposed using criticism. In Bo Yibo's words, they acted as "eyes and ears" for the CCP.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Li Wei-han, "Renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian de xin xingshi yu xin renwu," [The new situation and tasks of the People's Democratic United Front] (March 21, 1950), *ibid.*, p.9-10.

<sup>18</sup> Li Wei-han, *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>19</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Zai Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu juxing de chahua hui shang de jianghua, [Zhou Enlai's speech to a tea meeting of the hosted by the Central United Front Department] (January 20, 1951), *ibid.*, p.55.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, pp.14-15.

<sup>21</sup> Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhong da juece yu shijian de huigu*, [Looking back on certain important policies and incidents] (Zhonggong zhongyang dang xiao chubanshe, Beijing, 1991), vol.1, p.34.

Zhou Enlai and the Party also recognised their problems in addressing some groups, and the importance of personal relations in Chinese society. Zhou told conference delegates that the MPGs could perform some valuable work better than the CCP. Moreover, not only were many MPG leaders famous nationally, some had influence internationally.<sup>22</sup> This influence could be used to the Party's advantage.

The MPG's connections, expertise, and their distance from the CCP, also allowed them to provide the Party with useful non-Party opinions on Party policy. In 1951, Zhou Enlai reminded conference delegates that the Party constituted only one percent of the population. Opinions within the Party were "generally very similar" (*zong shi cha bu duo*) and it was therefore difficult for the Party to hear different viewpoints. Zhou emphasised the fact that Mao met several times a month with democratic personages precisely to hear alternative ideas and nurture non-Party contacts.<sup>23</sup>

This listening to alternative opinions began in 1945, and evolved into the principle of mutual supervision. Li Weihan referred to the Democratic League's 1945 visit to Yan'an when Huang Yanpei had asked Mao how the CCP would avoid the age-old problem of eventually falling prey to corruption. Mao acknowledged this danger and told Huang that the Party would avoid this problem by "depending on supervision by the people." As political organisations, the democratic parties could "effect a supervisory role (*neng qi jiandu zuoyong*) and they therefore could not be done without."<sup>24</sup> Other Party leaders also supported the united front with MPGs and non-party persons arguing that their inclusion in government, in turn, encouraged other talented and useful non-Party people to assist the Party, and specifically, in the implementation of land reform and the eventual peaceful transition to socialism.<sup>25</sup>

Mao also told the UFD that united front figures fulfilled a safety valve function. He admitted that many people were unhappy with the prevailing socio-economic and political conditions. If there was no safety valve and all complaints were suppressed

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<sup>22</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.6.

<sup>23</sup> Zhou Enlai, in, *ibid.*, p.55.

<sup>24</sup> Li Weihan, in, *ibid.*, p.68.

<sup>25</sup> Bo Yibo, 1991, pp.34-35.

indiscriminately, there would be no means of differentiating the reasonable ones from unreasonable ones and discontent would develop behind the Party's back. "If we were not afraid of Jiang and the GMD," asked Mao, "why should we be afraid of the criticisms of the MPGs?"<sup>26</sup>

To reassure Party members that the MPGs would not become a source of trouble, MPG members would be educated to fully accept the *Common Program* and Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought. Ideologically, the hearts of MPG members would be with the Party.<sup>27</sup> With "help and education from the CCP" the MPGs could enter socialism with the Party,<sup>28</sup> as these factors would ensure their political transformation. The implementation of this political education was greatly facilitated by the UFD's re-organisation of the MPGs along corporatist lines. This re-organisation greatly reduced the MPGs potential for creating trouble while maintaining an appearance of plurality and diversity.

### **The Corporatist Transformation of the MPGs**

The Party's proposals for the re-organisation of the MPGs were presented to the First United Front Work Conference by Beijing's deputy head of the Central UFD, Xu Bing.<sup>29</sup> The new arrangements almost certainly reassured many Party members that the Party retained the ability to control the MPGs. The MPGs were to be limited in number rather than abolished or amalgamated. Nor was the Democratic League to become an "alliance of the working People" (*laodong renmin tuanti*), a proposal that had apparently been advanced in early 1949 by dual CCP-League member Hu Zhengzhi and the radical League leader Wu Han.<sup>30</sup> It was a proposal which would reappear in 1957.

The rationalising of MPG numbers had begun even before the 1950 conference. In November 1949, the 'democratic' factions of the GMD had officially amalgamated

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<sup>26</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.6.

<sup>27</sup> Bo Yibo, 1991, p.34.

<sup>28</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.6.

<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately and perhaps reflecting present day sensitivity to the degree of CCP involvement Ren Tao only mentions, but does not include, Xu's report.

<sup>30</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zenmeyang duidai ge minzhu dangpai, tuanti de difang zuzhi de zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on how to handle the local organisations of each MPG] (February 17, 1949), *Liberation Period Documents*, p.259.

to form the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD. Several other prominent groups, notably the National Salvation Association, were dissolved on the basis that their historical task was complete. The NSA's members joined other MPGs, particularly the Democratic League or the CCP.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, the Chinese Democratic Revolutionary League (*Xiao ming*) had served its purpose and was also disbanded.<sup>32</sup> Other groups included in the original CPPCC were also dissolved. While the Vocational Education Society survived, it did so as a non-political organisation promoting vocational education and it was excluded from the CPPCC. Some potential MPGs and other organisations were refused official recognition by the Party, often on the grounds of criminal connections. The Rural Reconstructionists, reformed in 1950 as the Chinese Association for the Promotion of Mass Education, were denied recognition because of their American connections and their schools and assets were eventually confiscated.<sup>33</sup>

In 1950, in accordance with Schmitter's definition, the number of MPGs allowed a continued existence and rights of representation within the Chinese political system was restricted to eight.<sup>34</sup> After 1951 they were effectively joined by the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce (*Zhong Hua quanguo gong shang lianhe hui* ACFIC). This organisation grew out of the Party's anti-Japanese war period efforts to unite with private business in order to gain vital supplies and the Party's post-1949 three and five anti campaigns. In late 1949, the Party began formalising its relations with private business when the UFD began to prepare the organisational basis of the Federation. In June 1950, the UFD established a preparatory committee and the Federation was officially established in October 1953. The Federation became intimately related to the CCP's plans to develop, organise, control, and then transform

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<sup>31</sup> The dissolution of the NSA was announced at a banquet in Beijing on December 28, 1949. Luo Guangwu, 1995, p.36.

<sup>32</sup> Zhou Enlai, 1984, p.492.

<sup>33</sup> See Ivanov, in Jeans, 1992, pp.171-188. The CCP's position on excluding triads and secret societies was laid out in "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Hanliu bu ying canjia zhengxie wenti gei Xinhua she xibei zongfen she de fushi," [Supplementary instructions to the New China News Agency Northwest Agency on not allowing Hanliu to participate in the CPPCC] (January 12, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, p.237.

<sup>34</sup> According to Zhou Jingwen, the reason the CCP did not reduce the number of parties to four was because Mao had a change of heart saying: "If it costs just as much to maintain these parties and groups (after they have been incorporated) as before, lets keep all the parties and groups. They make a good show." Chow Chingwen, *Ten Years of Storm; The True Story of the Communist Regime*, (Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1960), p.43.

private business.<sup>35</sup> The ACFIC developed in a close relationship with the National Construction Association. While the NCA concentrated on national capitalists, the ACFIC recruited extensively amongst lower level bourgeoisie and small entrepreneurs and artisans. Leadership of the two organisations often overlapped and functions such as conferences were often held together.

The MPGs were ideologically selective in recruitment. Ideally, the CCP wanted MPG memberships of carefully balanced combinations of 'progressive' left-wingers, middle, and middle-right elements, although a small number of right-wing and even so-called backwards elements were sometimes acceptable. This process began as soon as the Party won an area from the GMD. The Party registered all MPGs, absorbed their military forces (if any), investigated them and warned them to expel any persons it considered undesirable. The looseness of MPG organisation, a feature which had earlier allowed the Party to easily penetrate them, was now regarded as dangerous because it facilitated GMD infiltration.<sup>36</sup> In 1950, the MPGs were instructed to purge their ranks of any members who had recently wavered in their support for their MPG, and/or those who had indicated an interest in a CCP compromise with the GMD.<sup>37</sup> These early purges seem to have been confined to ordinary members, as nationally famous MPG advocates of compromise were spared. Political education was subsequently used to increase political reliability. While the MPGs began with variations in ideological composition, this would be progressively reduced and eventually eliminated.

The re-organised MPGs were to be non-competitive. The Party would make use of the CPPCC and the UFD to mediate between MPGs should disputes arise over issues such as potential members.<sup>38</sup> However, the propensity for disputes was much reduced by the formalisation of the MPGs' existing tendencies to represent particular groups. In

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<sup>35</sup> *UFE*, pp.486-487.

<sup>36</sup> *Liberation period documents*, p.257-259.

<sup>37</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu 1950 nian shang ban nian gongzuo zongjie," [DL summary of the work report for the first half of 1950] (July 22 1950), Zhongguo Minzhu tongmeng Zhongyang wenshi weiyuan wei (eds) *Zhongguo Minzhu tongmeng lishi wen zhai, 1949-1949*, vol.1, [Selected historical documents of the Chinese Democratic League] (Wenwu chubanshe, Beijing, 1991), p.132. (Hereafter *DL Historical Documents*)

<sup>38</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.42

practice, they had all been reasonably specific in their orientation. Under the direction of the CCP, this predisposition was formalised, so that they would recruit among particular interest groups based on class and occupation. The MPGs would be able to liaise with and influence these groups more efficiently. Competition between MPGs was ideologically unacceptable because, explained the League's Hu Yuzhi, this was "an old democratic idea" and unacceptable under New Democracy.<sup>39</sup>

On December 4, 1950, the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD declared that it would recruit "the middle stratum of former GMD elements ..., [and they] shall be chosen as our principle target for recruitment." It would continue to recruit 'democratic' (*i.e.* anti-Jiang, and/or pro-Party) elements. The Revolutionary GMD's targets included personnel of the former GMD government and GMD party organisations "who now show good work records"; former GMD members identified as supporters of the CCP's political campaigns; and elements of the "democratic revolutionary strata who have historical relations with the GMD."<sup>40</sup> Zhou Enlai justified the inclusion of politically reliable progressives in the party in terms of balancing what he described as the party's "strong feudal character."<sup>41</sup> These progressives would, in practice, control the party.

In January 1951, the Chinese Democratic League declared that it was to be:

... a political organisation with intellectuals, particularly petty bourgeois intellectuals as its principal components. These were to be intellectuals among cultural and educational workers (among them faculty members of universities, middle schools and primary schools), university students, technical personnel, professional people, personnel of government organs, industrialists and merchants, and patriotic democrats among overseas Chinese...<sup>42</sup>

The League would, Zhou Enlai declared, also include a "very small portion of workers and feudal elements."<sup>43</sup> Even in 1949, the Party had planned for the League to become

<sup>39</sup> Hu Yuzhi, "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng zuzhi xuanchuan gongzuo huiyi taolun zongjie," [Summary of discussions by the DL Organisational Propaganda Work Meeting] (December 8, 1951), *DL Historical Documents*, p.267.

<sup>40</sup> "Decision of the Revolutionary Committee of KMT of China on the development of organisation," New China News Agency (Hereafter NCNA), January 24, 1951. In *Selections from Chinese Mainland Press* (Hereafter *SCMP*), no.56, 1951.

<sup>41</sup> Zhou Enlai, in Ren Tao, 1988, pp.28-29.

<sup>42</sup> "Decision of the Democratic League of China on the development of organisation," NCNA, January 24, 1951. In *SCMP*, no.56, 1951.

<sup>43</sup> Zhou Enlai, in Ren Tao, 1988, pp.28-29.

the political face of these groups. The League could then be used to gradually exclude and eventually isolate the remnants of China's still influential right-wing.<sup>44</sup>

The China Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, the former revolutionary Third Party, was no longer to consist of GMD soldiers and disaffected CCP members. It now recruited among the urban petty bourgeois class, particularly public functionaries (personnel of official organs together with school teachers), experts and technical personnel, and small industrial and commercial entrepreneurs.<sup>45</sup> The party eventually garnered a considerable proportion of members in the medical professions although this was not an explicit target group in the early 1950s. This inclusion resulted from the personal networks of some PWP leaders among Western style trained and Chinese traditional doctors. Over time, the health workers came to dominate party membership and set the PWP apart from other MPGs.<sup>46</sup> This specialisation was formalised in late 1956.

The Association for the Promotion of Democracy sought members among progressive intellectuals, professionals and industrial and commercial elements: "The nucleus should be centred around cultural, educational, scientific and technical workers." The Association aimed at "developing a nucleus of intellectual elements of industrial and commercial operators."<sup>47</sup> Yet in practice, the Association came to represent primary school teachers and principals together with writers, editors and others involved in the publishing industry.

The Jiusan Society resolved that it was "imperative to observe the tradition of the Society by enlisting first of all progressive, cultural, educational, and scientific workers as members."<sup>48</sup> Jiusan formalised its status as an organisation representing scientists and high level academics and lawyers. A resolution of a dispute with the Peasant and Workers Party over the recruitment of doctors trained in Western style

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<sup>44</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Minzhu tongmeng xingzhi wenti zhishi," [CCP CC instructions on the issue of the nature of the Democratic League] (May 25, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, p.267.

<sup>45</sup> "China Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party on Development of Organisation," *NCNA* January 24, 1951, in *SCMP*, 1951, no.56.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with PWP leaders in Shanghai, November 16, 1993.

<sup>47</sup> "Decision of the China Association for Promoting Democracy on Development of Organisation," *NCNA* January 24, 1951, in *SCMP*, 1951, no.56.

<sup>48</sup> "Decision of Chiu San Society on Development of Organisation," *NCNA* January 24, 1951, in *SCMP*, 1951, no.56.

medicine allowed those who wished to do so to join Jiusan. Practitioners of traditional Chinese medical practitioners were encouraged to join the PWP.

The National Construction Association continued as a party of national capitalists but it also included 'progressive' intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie. The NCA therefore included both big capitalists and a mass base of smaller operators and traders.<sup>49</sup> In line with the Party's plan to eventually transform both the economy and the bourgeoisie, the NCA also established an Industrial Reconstruction Guidance Department to aid its target groups to police and transform themselves.<sup>50</sup>

The memberships and target groups of the Taiwan Self-Government League and the Zhigong dang were always very specific but the two groups were interest orientated rather functionally specific. The Taiwan Self Government League acted as the official representative of the Taiwanese who had been stranded on the Mainland by the end of the civil war and those who had fled to the Mainland in the wake of the GMD's takeover of Taiwan.<sup>51</sup> The Zhigong dang with its secret society connections, continued to represent the interests of Overseas Chinese. It was headed by Situ Meitang, an overseas Chinese who had spent seventy years in America. The activities of both groups have remained obscure. They were rarely mentioned at united front work conferences or discussed in the same context as the other MPGs. Moreover, in 1952, the Party resolved to end their recruitment program although both groups continued to be represented in the CPPCC.<sup>52</sup>

The MPGs were clearly hierarchically ordered. They either already operated on or were re-organised along clear, bolshevik-type lines using democratic centralism as their leadership principle. Their central committees were sub-ordinate to the CCP, whose leadership they accepted in return for their right to exist, financial subsidies, and permission to represent their constituencies. Mao directed the UFD to help the MPGs with finance, give them work to do, and respect them as if they were Party cadres.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, pp.28-29.

<sup>50</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.213.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p.214.

<sup>52</sup> The decision that they cease development was announced at the Third National United Front Work Conference of June 1952. See "Guanyu minzhu dangpai de jue ding," [Decisions regarding the democratic parties] (June 1953), Ren Tao, 1988, p.104.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p.6.

The CCP granted the MPGs the privilege of representing the “legal and reasonable” (*hefa he heli de*) interests of the bourgeois classes in general and their particular constituencies in particular. In return, the MPGs observed the Party’s controls on their selection of leaders. They promised to reflect the CCP’s demands and they helped mobilise their constituencies support of CCP aims. Thus the Democratic League’s Work Report for 1950 set four tasks: to struggle to defend China; to consolidate the Peoples’ Democratic Dictatorship, Chairman Mao and the CCP; to consolidate the economy, strengthen (Korean) war production, implement land reform, eliminate feudal influences and improve the people’s livelihood; and to take part in cultural and social struggles and the reform of intellectuals. The latter included instilling anti-Americanism, patriotism, internationalism and faith in the nation.<sup>54</sup>

The CCP requirement that the MPGs undertake political education reflected the corporatist requirement for “observing certain controls.” Theoretically, participation in all forms of education was voluntary. However, the consequence of non-participation was exclusion from important political information. “If they do not begin political education,” said Mao, “then do not let them into the know. This is correct.”<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, the MPGs were to retain their individual forms and characters in order to set them apart from the CCP. There was no advantage, said Zhou Enlai, in merely having us “recognising ourselves.”<sup>56</sup>

The corporatist inclinations reflected by the CCP’s re-organisation had long been inherent in traditional Chinese and early Chinese socialist thought. Corporatist solutions to avoid class struggle were seen as very desirable in the early part of this century and had been heavily promoted by Zhang Dongsun and others.<sup>57</sup> The apparent lack of opposition to the allocation of specific, although not rigid constituencies, can be partially explained by existing pre-disposition towards corporatist ideas among MPG leaders. There is nothing to suggest that the CCP’s demarcation of responsibilities was

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<sup>54</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.169.

<sup>55</sup> Mao apparently made this comment during the Second National United Front Work Conference of 1951 as part of a discussion on the role of MPGs. Ren Tao, 1988, p.43.

<sup>56</sup> Zhou Enlai, “Chuli hao renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian de si ge guanxi,” [Manage the four relationships of the democratic united front well] (April 12, 1950), *ibid.*, p.20.

<sup>57</sup> Dirlik, 1989, especially Chapter 7.

difficult for them to accept. Moreover, the MPGs' history under the GMD showed that once recognised and accorded representation they were reluctant to openly criticise the state power and they still sought to contribute their expertise and skills towards national development.

The CCP's corporatist division of interests among the MPGs offered many advantages. It maximised a semblance of plurality and thereby helped refute the belief that the CCP was a one party dictatorship. By representing a diversity of classes and groups it also appealed to a belief common amongst Chinese intellectuals that representation in itself equalled democracy. The MPGs provided a legitimate avenue of expression for opinions (as allowed by the state) through ostensible non-CCP channels.

The division of interest groups made the tasks of each party clearer and reduced potential overlapping and wasteful duplications of effort. The MPGs became formal pools of technical expertise upon which the CCP could draw when it needed specialist advice. At the same time these groups of like-minded people had many professional interests and backgrounds in common, factors which had the potential to make the MPGs valuable to their members as epistemic communities. Keeping eight MPGs allowed the CCP more leeway to provide allies with leadership positions and social and political status in keeping with their sense of self importance.

The use of corporatism also increased CCP control of the MPGs. Because of the relatively large number of MPGs, divisions and jealousies became entrenched thus further decreasing their ability to unite to form an anti-CCP united front. Separating the more politically inclined social science academics from the more neutral hard sciences helped isolate the two streams. The Jiusan Study Society, which had been valuable during the GMD-CCP civil war in attacking the third roaders, became responsible for most scientists and technicians. This division reduced the chances of the scientists becoming contaminated by political trouble in the historically more volatile Democratic League. Problems in any one of eight MPGs could easily be restricted and controlled, much more so than if they had been amalgamated into only three organisations as had

been considered in 1949.<sup>58</sup> The divisions also significantly restricted the issues over which each MPG could speak authoritatively.

What the CCP explicitly did not want was the formation of broadly-based parties which could in any way provide a base for opposition to itself. Li Wei-han argued that their class nature and the people's faith in the CCP precluded the MPGs from being or becoming mass parties. They could only "develop into organisations of a cadre nature (*ganbu xingzhi*)."<sup>59</sup> Li's concept of the MPGs as cadre parties was somewhat different from Western conceptions of the term. Zhou meant that members would be able to act as government functionaries. Duverger's model of cadre parties (as opposed to mass parties), in which membership is selective but members act as active mobilisers and fund raisers among masses and elites, has only limited applicability to the MPGs.<sup>60</sup> The MPGs were certainly selective. It was only after the CCP had organised them, purified their membership, and united and educated them, that the MPGs could again begin to develop.<sup>61</sup>

In the first few years the MPGs could only grow slowly. The potential membership of the Revolutionary GMD, for example, was several million but it would merely be allowed to expand to several tens of thousands.<sup>62</sup> Only in 1951 did the CCP begin to seriously discuss expanding the MPGs. With the help of the CCP and particularly the Communist Youth League (CYL),<sup>63</sup> the MPGs were permitted to increase their memberships by 100-200 percent.<sup>64</sup> There was no wish to see them become mass parties but the CCP considered the memberships of the MPGs to be far too small relative to the size of the constituencies they represented.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Van Slyke, 1967, p.211.

<sup>59</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.15.

<sup>60</sup> Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State*, (Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1959), pp.62-67.

<sup>61</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.15.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, p.30.

<sup>63</sup> Youth League leader Jiang Nanxiang, "Zai Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu juxing de chahui de jianghua" [Speech at a tea meeting held by the Central Committee United Front Department]. *ibid.*, p.61.

<sup>64</sup> These plans were part of, "1951 xiezhu ge minzhu dangpai fazhan dangyuan de jianyi," [1951's suggestions on helping the development of the memberships of the democratic parties], *ibid.*, p.41. Only the name of the document and not the text were recorded here.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*, pp.69-70. Unfortunately, the size of MPG memberships have been a closely kept secret and there are many gaps in our knowledge of this. See Appendix C for known membership figures.

Yet despite the MPGs' small memberships, the CCP had high hopes for their usefulness. The CCP wanted to use the MPGs to reach and influence those it could not directly reach and convince itself. After the CCP transformed these groups into proletarians, then its need for the MPGs to bridge the state-civil society gap would also disappear. However, in the initial stage of the Party's consolidation of power there was much room for individuals and groups to be passed over by CCP propaganda and control. This gap was largely based on the economic independence that the new democratic mixed economy provided.

Before the MPGs and their constituencies were successfully transformed the CCP insisted on maintaining its control of them. One of the corporatist *quid pro quos* for official recognition of the MPGs was the inclusion of left-wing progressives as their leadership 'backbones.' These progressives were to unite with the MPG members to their right, and to educate and convince them to move forwards, to the left. Nevertheless, all MPGs had to include a large proportion of middle elements and others further to the right.<sup>66</sup> This balance was seen as both ensuring the MPGs' credibility as representatives of the middle elements and providing the progressives with people to educate. Yet, the requirement that MPG members undertake political education and submit to the influence of progressives was a disincentive for potential new members. There would have to be some compensatory rewards to overcome this and other problems.

The CCP's strategy of relying on progressives entailed some serious problems. The May 1950 united front work conference revealed that progressives tended to be "too severe" in their treatment of basic level MPG organisations. The progressives were said to often adopt "arrogant and isolationist" attitudes which excluded precisely the middle and right-wing elements they were supposed to transform. Alternatively, they only co-operated with MPG members who were already confirmed leftists. Li Weihai argued that this state of affairs "was obviously wrong"<sup>67</sup> and injunctions

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<sup>66</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Fahui renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian he jiji zuoyong de ji ge wenti," [Several problems in bringing into play the active role of the People's Democratic United Front] (May 13, 1950), Ren Tao, 1988, p.28.

<sup>67</sup> Li Weihai, in *ibid.*, p.15.

against so-called 'closed doorism,' and the exclusion of the right-wing, became common MPG declarations.<sup>68</sup> The MPGs split internally along right-middle-left factional lines.

Li also criticised CCP members working within the MPGs declaring that they also had to respect the MPGs' organisational hierarchies and independence.<sup>69</sup> Yet after 1950, and with Mao's personal approval, the CYL in particular, was to pursue a contradictory policy: to join the MPGs and help them develop while simultaneously allowing suitable MPG members to join the CYL.<sup>70</sup> Control and transformation could occur together. The placement of communists within the MPGs was presented as a result of requests from the MPGs for "a few able cadres" to assist them.<sup>71</sup> The transformation of MPG memberships was assisted by the tendency of MPG members who were lapsed CCP members to reapply for party memberships, a feature noted by Bo Yibo.<sup>72</sup>

During the struggle with the GMD, the existence of dual MPG-CCP members had been strenuously denied and the GMD's evidence denounced as false. An appearance of independence was maintained for the foreign and domestic public but MPG members were well aware CCP members in their midst. The Democratic League justified dual membership on the grounds that it created an organisational backbone and because both parties were working for the people.<sup>73</sup> Luo Longji explained it as a problem reflecting the League's inadequacy rather than an issue of CCP control. Zhou Xinmin, himself a dual member, stated that the phenomenon of CCP members assisting the League from within would continue indefinitely and could even increase.<sup>74</sup> In fact

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<sup>68</sup> For example, "Second Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee held in Peking," *NCNA*, November 27, 1950. SCMP, no.56. 1951.

<sup>69</sup> Li Weihai, in Ren Tao, 1988, p.16.

<sup>70</sup> Jiang Nanxiang, "Zai Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu juxing cha hua hui shang de jiang hua," [Speech at a tea meeting held by the United Front Department of the Central Committee of the CCP] (Jan 20 1951), *ibid.*, p.62.

<sup>71</sup> Li Weihai, *ibid.*, p.70.

<sup>72</sup> Bo Yibo, 1991, p.33.

<sup>73</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng difang Mengwu zongjie," [Summary of tasks for local Chinese Democratic League branches] (December 8, 1949), in *DL Historical Documents*, 1991, p.30.

<sup>74</sup> Zhou Xinmin, "Wei fazhan yu gonggu Minmeng er fendou - yi nian lai Meng wu zong jie he jinhou renwu," [The struggle to develop and consolidate: summary of League tasks over the past year and for the future] (December 10, 1950), *ibid.*, p.179. Luo Longji, "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng yi jie liu zhong quan hui yilai zuzhi xuanchuan gongzuo baogao," [Report on propaganda work since the sixth conference of the first plenum of the DL] (December 8, 1951), *ibid.*, p.250,

the Democratic League was effectively run by Zhou Xinmin and Min Ganghou, both dual members.<sup>75</sup>

Yet Luo Longji's statement did have a reasonable historical basis. Long before 1949 the MPGs had failed to build successful organisations. This same point was emphasised in 1951 by Li Weihang who maintained that the people did not understand the MPGs and they would not join them voluntarily. He argued that the growth of the MPGs was therefore dependent on CCP assistance.<sup>76</sup> For many people there seemed to be little benefit in MPG membership. As early as 1949 the CCP itself recognised that excessive Party interference would destroy the ability of at least the Democratic League to maintain credibility and attract high level members.<sup>77</sup> The problem for the UFD was that while having CCP members within the MPGs increased its control over them, it also inhibited their ability to carry out many of their roles.

Control and direction over the MPGs was exercised by the United Front Department's Democratic Party Bureau and through the CPPCC. Department officials frequently attended MPG meetings and, although this was presented as an honour, the result was adherence to the CCP line. All resolutions had to be approved by the UFD before they were announced. The MPGs' funds came from the CCP although the Party represented them as self-supporting by including a provision for raising membership fees in MPG charters.<sup>78</sup> The CCP prevented the MPGs from operating in sensitive areas such as the military, the diplomatic service and Revolutionary Universities and from recruiting peasants and workers. They were confined to medium and large cities, the home of the bourgeoisie.<sup>79</sup> The United Front Department also held a vital coercive element over individuals MPG members in the form of their personal files (*dang'an*). One possible explanation for this was to protect members from unwelcome scrutiny by their work units (*danwei*), but this measure also increased dramatically the UFD's direct

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<sup>75</sup> Chow, 1960, pp.48-49.

<sup>76</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.39.

<sup>77</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu jiaqiang minzhu tongmeng de fang-zhen gei Peng Zhen," [CCP CC Telegram to Peng Zhen on strengthening Democratic League Policy] (February 22, 1949), *Liberation period documents*, p.260.

<sup>78</sup> Chow, 1960, pp.45-47.

<sup>79</sup> See, for example, [China Democratic League on work summary for the first half of 1950] (July 22, 1950), *DL Historical Documents*, pp124-143.

control over them. Without UFD dispensation, a change of job, being allocated housing and receiving other benefits became impossible.<sup>80</sup>

In accord with corporatist theory, the MPG leaders did seek to lobby the UFD and Party leaders but they were excluded from the bodies which determined their future. At the first united front work conference, for example, MPG leaders held meetings, hosted receptions and discussed issues of establishment, funding, study for MPG cadres, and the problems of unemployment amongst their members. This was seen by the UFD as an excellent way to exchange ideas and opinions.<sup>81</sup>

### The Rewards of Alliance

United front theory echoed Gramsci's theories of alliances when it acknowledged that while national-popular appeals were important, they were not enough to ensure the support of allies. Allies required concessions to their interests. To this end, the CCP offered the bourgeoisie a continued role in its new political system. In moves that symbolised the continued respectability of the bourgeoisie and acknowledgment of the aspirations of its allies, the CCP offered MPG leaders and important non-party persons prominent political positions while promising work to the general MPG memberships.

Many MPG leaders and non-party personages were given high government positions. Three of the government's vice chairpersons, Li Jishen, Zhang Lan and Mme. Song Qingling were MPG or non-party figures. Other appointments included:

Guo Moruo: Head of Education and Culture Committee  
 Tan Pingshan: Head of People's Supervisory Commission  
 Huang Yanpei: Minister of Light Industry  
 Zhang Bojun: Minister of Communications,  
 Zhu Xuefan: Minister for Post and Telegraphs  
 (Zhu was a labour activist and Revolutionary GMD founder)  
 Li Shucheng: Minister of Agriculture (An NPP and soldier with extensive warlord connections)  
 Liang Xi: Minister of Forestry (Jiusan Society)  
 Fu Zuoyi: Minister of Water Resources (NPP)  
 Shen Yanbing: (One of the CCP's earliest members, Shen lost contact with the party in 1928. He helped found the League of Left-wing writers with Lu Xun)  
 Ma Xulun, Minister of Education

<sup>80</sup> Laszlo Ladany, *The Communist Party of China and Marxism 1921-1985, A Self Portrait*, (C. Hurst and Co., London, 1988), p.514.

<sup>81</sup> Li Weihai, Xing Xiping, and Liao Chengzhi, "Briefing report on the First National United Front Work Conference," (May 4, 1950), Ren Tao, 1988, p.36.

Mme. Li Dequan: Minister of Hygiene (Revolutionary GMD).<sup>82</sup>  
 Shen Junru became head of the People's Supreme Court.  
 Luo Longji, Minister of Forestry and Land Reclamation,

These appointments of non-Party ministers was balanced by each being shadowed by communist vice-ministers. Nevertheless, non-Party representation was, on the surface at least, substantial. In the new government's main committee, 27 of the 56 members were non-Party.<sup>83</sup> Of the 15 members of the Standing Committee, 9 were non-Party.<sup>84</sup> Yet Li Weihan admitted that besides their political outlook, the main problem was providing allies with genuine positions and real power. Li recognised that conflicts with them over principle was unavoidable. But the Party needed to consult actively with its allies, to give them appropriate responsibilities, arrange an appropriate division of labour between the two sides, and discuss all problems with them.<sup>85</sup>

Zhou Enlai admitted to many problems in MPG work, notably in senior personnel arrangements. Indicating the limitations on such non-party appointments, Zhou declared that non-Party heads of departments should be able to make reports themselves. Using Huang Yanpei and Fu Zuoyi as examples, Zhou argued that if they were initially unfamiliar with their work then departmental (*i.e.* CCP) deputies could give supplementary reports but should no longer be required once the non-Party appointments had more experience. If persons such as Fu wanted complete responsibility they should have it; positions should equate with power and responsibility. Indicating the Party's lack of trust in them hitherto, Zhou reiterated that non-Party officials should have access to relevant documents and, even more importantly, have the authority to revise orders and instructions. "Relations with such allies" declared Zhou, "should be on the same basis as relations within the Party."<sup>86</sup> Yet despite this official stress on equality, it was clear that many communists were

<sup>82</sup> Bo Yibo, 1991, p.33. Madam Li was the wife of the warlord Feng Yuxiang.

<sup>83</sup> He Xiangning, Sai Fuding, Chen Jiageng, Ma Yinchu, Ma Xulun, Guo Moruo, Shen Junru, Shen Yanbing, Chen Shutong, Situ Meitang, Li Xijiu, Huang Yanpei, Cai Dingkai, Peng Zemin, Zhang Zhizhong, Fu Zuoyi, Li Zhujian, Li Zhangda, Zhang Bojun, Cheng Qian, Zhang Xiruo, Chen Mingshu, Tan Pingshan, Zhang Nanxian, Liu Yazhi, Zhang Dongsun, Long Yun. Bo Yibo, 1991, pp.33-34.

<sup>84</sup> Tan Pingshan, Zhang Bojun, Ma Xulun, Chen Shaoxian (Revolutionary GMD), Wang Kunlun, Luo Longji, Zhang Naiqi, Shao Lizi(ex-GMD), and Huang Shaohong (ex-GMD). Bo Yibo, 1991, p.33.

<sup>85</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.16.

<sup>86</sup> *ibid.*, pp.32-33.

disinclined to concede the necessity of allies, let alone give them any power. Any gains by allies was regarded as a loss for the Party and this perception was never successfully ameliorated.

Unemployment was the most pressing problem among ordinary MPG members and it also needed to be addressed.<sup>87</sup> Measures instituted by the CCP subsequently eased this problem and boosted interest in the Democratic League. Although many people expressed interest in joining the League they often failed to further attend meetings after securing work through it.<sup>88</sup> This was a problem presumably common to all the MPGs.

### **The Central Role of Thought Reform**

Although the CCP had at its disposal numerous means of external control over the MPGs, these were regarded as short-term measures. The CCP wanted its united front allies and the population generally to assimilate its ideology through education and persuasion. Success would render coercion redundant and people would then voluntarily and whole heartedly support the Party and its goals. To transform the ideology of its subjects the CCP developed extensive and intensive political education campaigns. Political education was not unique to the CCP. The GMD had also attempted to inculcate school and university students with its *sanmin zhuyi* ideology. The nationalists' attempts at "partyisation" (*danghua*) had been vigorously resisted by both the CCP and the MPGs.<sup>89</sup>

Political education had long been a part of CCP policy, including its united front work as it was an intrinsic part of its unity-struggle-unity principle. During its struggle against the GMD between 1935 and 1945, the CCP had united groups such as the MPGs to keep the GMD in the anti-Japanese alliance. After 1945, the CCP had invoked all means useful at the time, such as personal relations, moral and political principles, to prevent the MPGs joining the GMD's National Assembly. All the while, the Party had

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<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, p.30.

<sup>88</sup> *DL historical documents*, pp.140.

<sup>89</sup> Ka-che Yip, "Education and Political Socialisation in Pre-Communist China: The Goals of San Min Chu-i Education," *Asian Profile*, vol.9, no.5, October 1981, pp.401-413.

also sought to win MPG support for other aspects of its policies and its formulations of socialism. The Party had been developing these unity-struggle principles since at least 1939 and by 1950, this practice together with its experience in internal party rectification campaigns gave the CCP considerable practical experience in political indoctrination.<sup>90</sup>

The CCP leadership used formal political education for united front allies to reassure the Party generally that such allies would not cause undue trouble. After all, when MPG leaders and others had joined the CCP to attend preparations for the CPPCC in 1949, one of the first acts had been to give them the works of Marx, Lenin and Mao to study.<sup>91</sup> Mao's "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" had also clearly stated the CCP's plans to remould China's bourgeois classes.<sup>92</sup> This remoulding, Li Wei-han pointed out, included using the MPGs' left and progressive elements to both "stabilise the middle elements and reform the middle and right elements." This required "politically mature and socially influential non-Party revolutionary intellectuals such as progressives who steadfastly uphold the *Common Program*." These activists would study Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary policies and become united front propagandists.<sup>93</sup>

The CCP's initial demand was that the MPGs study the *Common Program*. The MPGs would then "influence and educate those with whom they have connections and share activities."<sup>94</sup> These influential representatives would then said Zhou Enlai, restating the common belief that one leader carried along many followers, "educate the people and take them forwards together with us."<sup>95</sup>

Political education was so important to the CCP that it began a political campaign in Beijing's schools and universities as soon as it took over the city.<sup>96</sup> Similar campaigns occurred in the MPGs. In December 1949, the Democratic League's

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<sup>90</sup> Theodore Hsi-en Chen, *Thought Reform of the Chinese Intellectuals*, (Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong, 1960), Ch.1.

<sup>91</sup> *Liberation period documents*, p.240.

<sup>92</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.4, p.419.

<sup>93</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, pp.9-10.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>95</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.34.

<sup>96</sup> Theodore Hsi-en Chen, 1960, p.12.

Central Committee declared that since the CCP had won power, suitable adjustments were required. These adjustments demanded that League members study politics and reform themselves. Members had to admit their personal and political short-comings and subject themselves to criticism and self-criticism in order to correct their weaknesses.<sup>97</sup> Members in lower level branches were called on to rid themselves of feudalism. They were also to rid themselves of the very features which had distinguished the League from the GMD and CCP: their individualism and their “liberalism.”<sup>98</sup> Like CCP members, MPG members had to study Mao Zedong thought and Marxism-Leninism. Only through political study they could “progress.”<sup>99</sup>

As part of their political education, Luo Longji and Zhou Jingwen had to criticise their actions over previous years. They had to rid themselves of any desires for independence, “dividing the house,” or “causing contention within the family” (factionalism). Failure to involve themselves actively in the rectification process resulted in accusations of “spectatorism” and the political remoulding process was then drawn out even longer.<sup>100</sup> Individuals therefore submitted to the re-education process for fear of the consequences of not doing so. They thus allowed the CCP to perpetuate the necessary and politically powerful claim that their participation as voluntary.<sup>101</sup> Individuals could not legitimately invoke an alternative moral, philosophical or political framework to defend themselves: those who did not submit were *ipso facto* enemies. There was no longer any space between the CCP and any political or ideological alternative, such as had existed between 1931 and 1947 when the GMD had allowed MPGs an independent political voice. After 1949, the line was again clearly defined, as

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<sup>97</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng yi ji si zhong quan huiyi zhengzhi baogao," [Political report of the expanded full meeting of the first plenum of the fourth Central Committee of the Chinese Democratic League] (December 8, 1949), *DL Historical Documents*, p.11.

<sup>98</sup> This "liberalism can be interpreted in two ways, one in the sense as Westerners might understand it and another along the lines condemned by Mao in his "Combat Liberalism" speech of September 7, 1937. The latter lists eleven features which Mao claimed resulted from "petty bourgeois selfishness:"

1) letting things slide for the sake of friendship, 2) irresponsible private criticisms, 3) letting things drift if they don't affect one personally, 4) not obeying orders but giving pride of place to one's own opinions, 5) indulging in personal attacks, spite and revenge, 6) failing to rebut incorrect views, 7) failing to conduct propaganda among the masses, 8) allowing people to continue harming the interests of the masses, 9) working perfunctorily or only half heartedly, 10) being proud of having served in the revolution and then disdaining minor work, 11) failing to correct one's mistakes.

*SW*, vol.2, pp.31-33. Although addressed to CCP members, "Combat Liberalism" was just as applicable to the MPGs. Mao found both sorts of "liberalism" equally unacceptable.

<sup>99</sup> Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng difang Meng renwu," [Summary of task for local branches of the Democratic League] (December 8 1949), *DL historical documents*, 1991, pp.33-34.

<sup>100</sup> Chow, 1960, pp.46-47.

<sup>101</sup> A claim Theodore Chen described as the CCP's "fetish" of voluntarism. Chen, 1960, p.74.

it had been by the GMD before 1931, as being for or against the state power. The CCP was intent on eradicating any thought of a middle way.

The CCP's 1949 demand that the MPGs undertake political study was a precursor of the mass political education campaigns of 1950 and the thought reform campaign for intellectuals of 1951. The MPGs constituted a testing ground and acted as models (*mofan*) for other intellectuals to emulate or, more commonly, to disassociate themselves from.<sup>102</sup> As Theodore Chen pointed out, the use of negative examples personifying the ideological manifestations being attacked was a vital and recurring theme of thought reform.<sup>103</sup> The use of such models has a long tradition in China<sup>104</sup> and Mao referred to it repeatedly.<sup>105</sup> Mao initially recognised that with variations between groups, ideological reform would require a considerable time to complete. He informed Huang Yanpei, for example, that only a small number of national capitalists, such as those represented by the National Construction Association, would be able to accept socialism, at least during the First Five Year Plan (1953-58); initially, acknowledging CCP leadership and the *Common Program* would be enough.<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, in 1950, in preparation for instilling its new socialist ideology, the Party began launching a series of campaigns to sever the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals from their ideological roots and any attraction to the West or Western bourgeois ideals. Anti-Americanism therefore became a major CCP theme.

Speaking at the Second United Front Work Conference, Zhou Enlai declared that promoting the Resist America-Support Korea movement was a major task for united front workers. Zhou argued that the defeat of America in Korea was both a major setback for imperialism and proof that America was not invincible. In addition, this movement had to be linked to land reform, the elimination of bandits and the

<sup>102</sup> Choosing MPG members on the basis of potential to act as influential models and examples was and remains a vital of their recruitment policies. "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu fazhan zuzhi de zhishi," [DL instructions on organisational development] (December 10, 1950), *DL Historical Documents*, 1991, p.187.

<sup>103</sup> Chen, 1960, ch.6. "Personalising the Targets."

<sup>104</sup> Richard H. Solomon, *Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture*, (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971), p.112.

<sup>105</sup> For example, invoking the 1930's leader Wang Ming as having "a good role as a teacher by negative example." See Mao's "Talks at a Conference of Secretaries of Provincial, Municipal and Autonomous Region Party Committees," (January 1957), *SW*, vol.5, p.376.

<sup>106</sup> Mao Zedong, "Letter to Huang Yanpei," (September 2, 1952) in Kau, *et al*, 1986, vol.1, p.283.

suppression of counter-revolutionaries to win the support of not only workers and peasants, but also the upper level bourgeoisie and intellectuals with pro-American sympathies.<sup>107</sup> The association of America with aggressive imperialism, bandits, counter-revolutionaries and turmoil, built on the Party's successful anti-American campaigns of the 1947-49 second front period. It further de-legitimised both America as a nation and Western ideals in general. Idealism and third road/bourgeois notions of gradual reform had to be rejected in favour of Marxist materialism, class struggle and revolutionary change. Feudalism, declared the Democratic League, had to be swept away, anti-Americanism instilled and patriotism, internationalism, and faith in the Nation boosted.<sup>108</sup>

As part of the remoulding process, MPG members were sent to observe and implement the land reform program that would destroy the ostensible economic origin of their class. MPG participation was a powerful example to their members, the Chinese public, and to the Party itself, that the CCP had the approval of the bourgeoisie for these reforms. As in the 1940's, Huang Yanpei was a major symbolic figure in these efforts. Mao showed Huang both positive and negative reports on the implementation of the Party's land reform policies and the suppression of counter-revolutionaries. Mao attributed the negative aspects of implementation on the Party's inexperience. In being candid with Huang, Mao sought to persuade Huang of the CCP's good intent because "if Huang writes letters saying the North-East Bureau is correct it educates the democratic personages."<sup>109</sup> The MPGs' participation in land reform as ordered by Mao,<sup>110</sup> both legitimised such reform and involved the MPGs in the elimination of their class base. The Democratic League then declared that this involvement required resolve, participation in special training classes, respect for the land reform policies, and submission to a united leadership.<sup>111</sup> Both the League and the

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<sup>107</sup> Zhou Enlai, in Ren Tao, 1988, pp.53-54.

<sup>108</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.169.

<sup>109</sup> Zhou Enlai quoting Mao, in Ren Tao, 1988, p.57. Any aspects of so-called bandit suppression work which touched on united front work had to be reported to the CPPCC, especially if it involved national bourgeoisie who might have once been involved in anti-CCP activities. Kau, *etal*, 1986, vol.1, p.190.

<sup>110</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.58.

<sup>111</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu fadong mengyuan canjia tudi gaige de tongzhi," [DL notice on launching members involvement with land reform] (August 4, 1950), *DL Historical Documents*, 1991, pp.148-49.

CCP argued that such participation provided an opportunity for MPG members to temper themselves and to become active propagandists for the reform process.<sup>112</sup> Involvement with land reform became a necessary part of the political reform of all MPGs.<sup>113</sup> In the words of one CCP official:

Intellectuals returned to the city with a new feeling of comradeship with the peasants ... The intellectuals had helped to reform the age-old feudal land system of system of China. This in turn helped them reform themselves. It had given them a clearer insight into the historic tasks of the revolution, in wiping out the terrible exploitation to which the majority of the Chinese people, the peasants, were subjected; ... It helped to make them better citizens of the people's China.<sup>114</sup>

The main means of destroying the identification of China's middle elements with the West and America in particular was the Resist-America, Aid-Korea campaign which was launched after the entry of China into the Korean War (1950-1951). Among the strategies used to debunk a common belief in American superiority was the use of American military setbacks as analogies for the inadequacies of American economics and the superiority of socialist economic planning.<sup>115</sup> Peace petitions and the issuing of joint CCP-MPG declarations opposing American and United Nation actions presented an image of broad Chinese opposition to the West, it was not just the view of the CCP.<sup>116</sup> The MPGs protested against American actions, collected signatures for petitions, and raised millions of yuan in donations from "patriotic" groups such as former capitalists, sources the CCP found difficult to tap.<sup>117</sup>

### **The *Sanfan* and *Wufan* Campaigns**

The CCP also launched major attacks against individuals and the class base of the MPGs in the form of the Three-Anti (*sanfan*) and Five-Anti (*wufan*) campaigns of late 1950. Xu Dixin, the long-time Party united front work leader, described these

<sup>112</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu dongyuan mengyuan zai tudi gaige zhong jiaqiang xuanchuan gongzuo tongzhi," [DL notice on motivating members involved in land reform to intensify propaganda] (September 3 1950), *ibid.*, p.150.

<sup>113</sup> "Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi quanguo weiyuanhui guanyu minzhu dangpai canjia tudi gaige de xieyi de zhishi," [CPPCC National Committee instructions on the participation of the democratic parties in land reform] (August 12, 1950), *ibid.*, p.150.

<sup>114</sup> CCP official Ouyang Caiwei. In Chen, 1960, p.22.

<sup>115</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.166.

<sup>116</sup> *Eg.*, "Zhongguo gongchandang yu ge minzhu dangpai fabiao lianhe xuanyan," [Joint declaration of the CCP and all democratic parties and groups] (November 4, 1950), *ibid.*, pp.152-154.

<sup>117</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng zai kang-Mei, yuan-Chao yundong zhong de gongzuo gaikuang," [The Chinese Democratic League general survey of the work in the "Resist -America, Aid-Korea" movement], (February 1951), *ibid.*, pp.199-202.

campaigns as occurring when the land reform movement and Korean war increased the demand for goods. This demand, said Xu, had made capitalists unwilling to accept the CCP's fixed price purchase system for manufactures, a major part of the CCP's new democratic "utilise but restrict capitalism" policy.<sup>118</sup>

On October 23 1950, Mao launched the first campaign, with a speech to the CPPCC. He attacked the three evils of corruption, waste and bureaucratism. The Three-Anti campaign initially targeted CCP members. The subsequent Five-Anti campaign, which targeted bribery, tax evasion, fraud, theft of state assets and the leaking of state secrets, was particularly aimed at business people.<sup>119</sup> These campaigns, "marked by harrowing accusations, public trials, forced confessions, confiscatory fines, even summary executions," "broke the back" of the urban 'bourgeoisie.'<sup>120</sup> The CCP used these campaigns to show the bourgeoisie as thoroughly disreputable and heavily tainted by corruption and vice. These campaigns quickly escalated into general attacks on bourgeois thought. This change in emphasis was integral to the Party's plan to eliminating such thinking amongst MPG members and intellectuals generally.<sup>121</sup> Heavy fines combined with political pressure forced many businesses into bankruptcy or collective, state or joint private-state ownership. This process marked another step in the socialist transformation of China's economic base. Many of the former managers and capitalists were left apathetically awaiting the final liquidation of their businesses.<sup>122</sup>

The MPGs also were included in these two campaigns. Some prominent MPG leaders, such as the National Construction Association's Sheng Pihua, Hu Juewen and Rong Yiren, the Democratic League's Zhao Puchu and a number of non-Party intellectuals such as academics, were members of the Shanghai "Increase Production

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<sup>118</sup> Only after these two campaigns was this policy fully accepted. Xu Dixin, "Dui wo guo gaizao zibenzhuyi gongshangye licheng de huiyi [My memories of the course of our nation's transformation of capitalist industry and commerce], *Zhonggong dang shi ziliao*, no.14, 1985, p.65. This system involved state deliveries of raw materials or semi-processed goods to private enterprise for fixed-price processing.

<sup>119</sup> For a good overview see Theodore Hsi-en Chen and Wen-hui C. Chen, "The "Three Anti" and "Five Anti" Movements in Communist China," *Pacific Affairs*, vol.XXVI, no.1, March 1953, pp.3-23.

<sup>120</sup> Chen, 1960, p.52.

<sup>121</sup> *ibid.*, p.54.

<sup>122</sup> Chen, *et al.*, 1953, p.73. See also John Gardner, "The Wu-fan Campaign in Shanghai: A Study in the Consolidation of Urban Control," in A. Doak Barnett (ed), *Communist China, The Early Years 1949-55*, (Pall Mall Press, London, 1964), pp.477-539.

and Practice Economy Committee” which directed the Five-Anti campaign.<sup>123</sup> The Shanghai ACFIC played vital part in the Five-Anti campaign in Shanghai. Sheng Pihua (then a Deputy director of the Federation), Rong Yiren and Hu Juewen were members of the Federation’s special Five-Anti Committee. Hu and Rong played important roles as positive models after Sheng had called for business people to eliminate the evils of the old society and “create a new ‘society of virtue.’” Hu Juewen, for example, confessed to “stealing” state economic secrets, while Rong Yiren confessed to accepting an order in December 1949 but only delivering the goods in late 1951.<sup>124</sup> These ‘confessions’ weakened the ability of smaller fry to resist the pressure being placed on them and many likewise confessed, reassured by the promise of better treatment for doing so. Many such “meritorious” business people became part of a special “*Wufan* united front,” used to persuade still more to likewise confess.<sup>125</sup>

In December 1951, the Democratic League directed its members to play their part in combating the three evils.<sup>126</sup> In early 1952, the CPPCC issued complementary instructions on how to implement the accompanying political education<sup>127</sup> The waste and corruption uncovered among the bourgeoisie was attributed to the negative influences of feudalism and capitalism. As early as March 1952, when the Five-Anti campaign began, the League was already uncovering not only alleged “economic tigers” (*jingji laohu*) but also “ideological tigers” (*sixiang laohu*).<sup>128</sup> The ACFIC Preparatory Committee called on all industrial and commercial associations in to remould themselves to suit the new conditions, conditions under which state enterprises would dominate. Thus in June 1952, Chen Yi, the mayor of Shanghai, told the

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<sup>123</sup> *ibid.*, p.503.

<sup>124</sup> *ibid.*, p.506.

<sup>125</sup> *ibid.*, p.520.

<sup>126</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu kaizhan zengchan jieyue fan tanwu fan langfei, fan guanliaozhuyi yundong de zhishi," [DL in-structions on launching the movement for increasing production and practising economy, combating waste, corruption, and bureaucrati-sation] (December 19 1951), *DL Historical Documents*, 1991, pp.282-282.

<sup>127</sup> Zhongguo renmin zhengxie huiyi quan guo weiyuan hui Changwuyuan weiyuanhui guanyu zhankai ge jie renshi sixiang gaizao de xuexi yundong de jue ding," [CPPCC National Standing Committee on the decision to launch the thought reform movement for people of all circles] (January 5, 1952), in Li Qing, Chen Wenbin and Lin Zhicheng (eds), *Zhongguo ziben zhuyi gong shang ye de shehui zhuyi gaizao, Zhongyang juanshang*, [The socialist transformation of Chinese industry and commerce: Central Committee volumes] (Zhongguo gongchandang lishi ziliao congshu, Zhongyang dang shi chubanshe, Beijing 1993), vol.1, p.246.

<sup>128</sup> "Ba fan tanwu, fan langfei, fan guanliaozhuyi douzheng jinxing daodi," [Carry on the struggle against corruption, waste and bureaucratism to the end] (March 7 1952), *ibid.*, p.286.

Federation that the two campaigns had been “a social reform movement aimed at changing old attitudes and habits.”<sup>129</sup>

There was, however, resistance to the campaigns. The Democratic League wrote in its internal journal, *Meng xun* (League dispatch) that many members were not actively promoting them. Some members did not regard them seriously while others were actually resisting them. The League therefore called on all members to throw themselves into the struggle to expose evils, to use the struggle to get closer to the people and to “educate and transform themselves.”<sup>130</sup> However, the CCP’s political education process required negative exemplars. In practice, this meant that the lines between left and right-wing elements within the MPGs were constantly re-defined according to the CCP’s latest standards. The boundaries between those who had become the most right-wing of MPG members, the middle elements and left-wing had to be redrawn. This re-definition of boundaries decided against whom the middle elements would be rallied as the next step in their political re-education. In this context, some of the most prominent former advocates of the third road were redefined as the most right-wing.

Shi Fuliang, the Democratic League and National Construction Association leader and then a deputy minister of the Ministry of Labour, and Zhang Naiqi (then NCA vice-chairman) became prominent targets. Shi Fuliang was criticised for “anti-CCP thoughts” while Zhang’s “bourgeois ideology” resulted in him being struggled with for eight days and nights.<sup>131</sup> In an article suitably entitled, “Lay Down the Arms of Old Democracy and Surrender to New Democracy,” the National Construction Association’s Zhang Naiqi confessed his errors and clearly laid out how he and all capitalists should submit totally to CCP leadership and reform or “meet with opposition of the overwhelming majority of the people and be doomed to failure.”<sup>132</sup> In June 1952, illustrating the change in attitudes demanded by the CCP, Zhang declared that business people had to “recognise their own smallness through struggle with the

<sup>129</sup> Gardner, in Barnett, 1964, p.535.

<sup>130</sup> *ibid.*, p.287.

<sup>131</sup> Chow, 1960, pp.127, p.131.

<sup>132</sup> Chang Naich’i, in *Dagong bao* (March 2, 1952). Quoted in *SCMP*, no.289, March 1952, pp.17-22.

masses” although he also expressed concern that the campaigns had turned some from “egotists” into “self debasing elements.”<sup>133</sup> Mao himself called on the CCP to “help” the National Construction Association eliminate corrupt members and to represent the “legitimate interests of the bourgeoisie” more closely.<sup>134</sup> Mao’s call followed a Democratic League decision to dissolve a Guangdong sub-branch after its leaders were accused of anti-Party activities and corruption.<sup>135</sup>

Zhang Dongsun had remained committed to Democratic League policies in late 1946. He and his followers subsequently split from the Democratic Socialist Party by refusing to join the GMD’s National Assembly and became another object lesson for all MPGs and their members. In June 1951, Zhang, the Chairman of Beijing University’s Philosophy Department, was imprisoned as an alleged American spy. In March 1952, Zhang was called before staff and students on several occasions to undergo criticism and self-criticism.<sup>136</sup> Part of Zhang’s “crime” was an inscription, written ten years earlier, in which he had declared that if forced to choose between fascism and communism, he would prefer a choice “between being shot or hanged.”<sup>137</sup> Zhang was forced to resign and, with protection from further persecution reportedly guaranteed by Mao, lived out the rest of his life in painful isolation.<sup>138</sup> Similarly, Zhang’s fellow former Third Road advocate, Luo Longji, was extended protection because Li Weihan intervened on his behalf.<sup>139</sup>

In an address to the Revolutionary GMD, Zhou Enlai praised those members who had written to Mao demanding that Zhang be dealt with severely. Despite his past contributions, Zhang was now vilified as being guilty of “unforgivable” crimes for having connections with Americans, Japanese and the GMD. His exposure was used as

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<sup>133</sup> Gardner, in Barnett, 1964, p.524.

<sup>134</sup> Mao Tse-tung, “Struggle Against ‘Three Evils’ and ‘Five Evils,’” (March 23 1952), *SW*, vol.5, p.69.

<sup>135</sup> “Central Political Bureau of China Democratic League Approves Decision of its Kwangtung Provincial Sub-Branch on Abolition of the Kongmoon-Sunwui Sub-branch and the Punishment for Wen Chih-yu and Others,” NCNA (March 13, 1952), *SCMP*, no.321, April 23, 1952.

<sup>136</sup> Howard L. Boorman, *Bibliographical Dictionary of Republican China*, (Columbia University Press, 1967), vol.1, p.133.

<sup>137</sup> K. C. Yap, *Western Wisdom in the Mind’s Eye of a Westernised Chinese Lay Person: The Thought of Chang Tung-sun (1882-1962)*, (Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1991), p.126.

<sup>138</sup> *ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>139</sup> Luo Longji, “My Preliminary Examination.” Quoted in Robert R. Bowie and J. K. Fairbank (eds), *Communist China 1955-59: Policy Documents with Analysis*, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. 1962), p.335.

'proof' that the MPGs could produce traitors and counter-revolutionaries. The MPGs were instructed to draw a clear line between enemies and friends. Enemies included those individuals who worshipped America (*chong Mei*), were close to America (*qin Mei*) or who were afraid of it (*kong Mei*). Zhou Enlai reminded his audience that contradictions among enemies should be exploited and that while an enemy's enemy could become a friend, these "friendships" had to be treated with caution as temporary, tactical measures. The only real friends, Zhou declared, were the people and the MPGs had to prevent enemies hiding in their ranks.<sup>140</sup> The CCP's need for allies such as Zhang Dongsun had been temporary and he had become dispensable.

The importance of Zhang as exemplar was particularly relevant in the Democratic League. In June 1953, Mme. Shi Liang, often at the forefront of attacks on the moderates and the liberally inclined, presented the League with a condemnatory official report on Zhang's "criminal betrayal." The meeting unanimously called for Zhang's expulsion and for the government to handle his case through legal means.<sup>141</sup> At the same meeting, the number of League vice-chairpersons was increased to five; vice-chairperson Shen Junru was joined by the progressives Ma Xulun and Shi Liang and dual League-CCP member Gao Chongmin. Zhang Bojun effectively became the representative of the middle elements and Luo Longji of the right.

In February 1951, the CCP launched the Suppression of Counter-Revolutionary Campaign, and further increased the pressure on many of those already under attack in the Three and Five Anti campaigns. The Democratic League was actively involved in this campaign which targeted alleged enemies of the people. These 'enemies' were subjected to all the coercive powers of the People's Dictatorship. The League supplied members to serve as judges and it used its connections to convince suspected counter-revolutionaries to "register." It expelled 69 members on suspicion of being GMD

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<sup>140</sup> "Minzhu dangpai de gongzuo yao tong guojia de zhongxin renwu xiang peihe," [The work of the democratic parties and groups must complement the nation's central tasks] (March 1, 1953), Zhou Enlai, 1984, pp.242-43 f.n.347, p.511.

<sup>141</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng zhongyang weiyuan hui yi ju di qi ci quanti huiyi jueyi an," [The resolution of the seventh full meeting of the Central committee of the first plenum of the Chinese Democratic League] (June 8, 1953), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.376-377. Yet, despite the seriousness of his alleged crimes, Zhang was not executed and he died in 1973 at the age of 87.

special agents, 12 for opposing land reform, and 16 for corruption.<sup>142</sup> These “exposures” of internal “enemies” combined with the other campaigns to undermine MPG confidence and facilitate increased CCP domination. The pressure exerted by the campaigns weakened resistance and aided the acceptance of thought reform by the MPGs and their constituencies. However, the fear engendered by these campaigns spread widely and directly contradicted the CCP’s desire to convince the MPGs’ constituencies to actively support Party policies.

These political movements complemented Zhou Enlai’s September 1951 announcement of a thought reform movement for intellectuals.<sup>143</sup> In line with the Party’s need for apparent voluntary submission to CCP dictates, Zhou Enlai introduced his call for thought reform by saying he had been invited by Ma Yinchu to give a report.<sup>144</sup> It was therefore Ma Yinchu, reportedly the head of the Committee for Thought Reform in Universities,<sup>145</sup> rather than the CCP, who is credited by the Party as having experimented with special summer political classes for intellectuals and then advocating their wider adoption.<sup>146</sup> Similarly, Ma Xulun of the Association for the Promotion of Democracy, called on primary school teachers to undertake thought reform; the nominally non-Party progressive Guo Moruo exhorted scientists to do likewise.<sup>147</sup> During the “Criticise Wu Xun” campaign of mid-1951, the self-criticism of League leader and world famous sociologist, Fei Xiaotong was quoted in the CCP journal *Xuexi* (Study).<sup>148</sup> Other symbols of foreign, particularly American influence, were also attacked, including former American ambassador and president of Beijing University, Leighton Stuart, and the pre-imminent Chinese philosopher Hu Shi. Chen Heqin, a renowned authority on childhood education (he had joined Jiusan that year) was criticised for holding reactionary and imperialist educational theories, especially those of John Dewey.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>142</sup>Luo Longji’s Report, (December 8 1951), *DL Historical Documents*, 1991, pp.247-253.

<sup>143</sup> Zhou Enlai, “Guanyu zhishi fenzi de gaizao wenti,” [On the question of the reform of intellectuals]’ (Speech to teachers in Beijing and Tianjin) in Zhou Enlai, 1984, pp.208-221.

<sup>144</sup> *ibid.*, p.208.

<sup>145</sup> Barnett, 1964, p.128.

<sup>146</sup> Chen, 1960, p.32.

<sup>147</sup> *ibid.*, p.36.

<sup>148</sup> *ibid.*, pp.40-41.

<sup>149</sup> *ibid.*, p.49.

Among the MPG leaders, the most prominent target singled out in late 1951 was Liang Shuming, the prominent advocate of moderation and GMD-CCP compromise. Liang symbolised moderation, idealism and peaceful change; he was one of China's most respected scholars and a man renowned for his integrity. In October 1951, like many other prominent intellectuals and following the examples set by the philosopher and Democratic League member Feng Yuolan, Liang published a long self-criticism. He praised the CCP and admitted many mistaken views. However, Liang refused to change his basic views, especially his denial of the existence of class differences in China. Liang maintained that classes had disappeared in earlier dynasties and he refused to accept CCP historiography.<sup>150</sup> Liang's refusal to accept the CCP's dogma of class differences and class struggle resulted in the first of several campaigns against him. It was of major importance to the Party that Liang's reputation and the validity of his views be destroyed. It was a destruction which took several years and acquired a greater urgency as the focus of CCP struggle moved to what were formerly intermediate elements.

### **1952: Mao Sets the General Line of Socialist Transformation and Redefines China's Major Contradiction**

On June 6 1952, following the basic completion of land reform and the suppression of counter-revolutionaries campaigns, Mao criticised Li Weihan's continued recognition of the national bourgeoisie as an intermediate class by writing on the draft of a United Front Department document:

With the overthrow of the landlord class and bureaucratic capitalist class, the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie has become the principle contradiction in China; therefore the national bourgeoisie should no longer be defined as an intermediate class.<sup>151</sup>

Mao's declaration marked his impatience to push further left-wards towards the next stage of socialism. In June 1953, Mao therefore advanced the General Line of the Transition to Socialism which incorporated "the three great transformations" (*san da*

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<sup>150</sup> *ibid.*, pp.47-49.

<sup>151</sup> *SW*, vol.5, p.77.

*gaizao*): industrialisation, the socialist transformation of agriculture and the socialist transformation of capitalist industry and commerce.<sup>152</sup> The years 1953-56, marked the beginning of the CCP's first Five Year Plan of transition to a form of state capitalism.<sup>153</sup> Mao prevailed over Party leaders, such as Liu Shaoqi, who wanted to further consolidate new democracy and protect private capital.<sup>154</sup> The timetable for the transition to socialism, which Mao had promised the bourgeoisie would be a long one, was considerably shortened. Mao demanded a commensurate re-drawing of the boundaries between left and right, adjustments to united front policies and an intensification of thought reform. He no longer regarded the national bourgeoisie as an intermediate class because the groups to their right, the landlords and bureaucratic capitalists, had been eliminated.<sup>155</sup> The national bourgeoisie now became China's most right-wing elements. Class struggle would focus on this group and their erstwhile representatives: the MPGs. The next transition and the elimination of bourgeois ideology, such as idealism and third road beliefs, had to continue to conform with the changing situation. Any faith in the West and its beliefs had to be destroyed and replaced with faith in the CCP, Marxism-Leninism, and the Soviet ally towards which, as part of their "lean to one side policy," Mao and the Party increasingly looked for inspiration, technology, and advice. Mao wanted to "whip up a high tide of learning from the Soviet Union."<sup>156</sup> At the same time, China's economy was becoming increasingly dominated by state and co-operative enterprises. Despite this fundamental change, the absolute value of private production (wholesale trade, and retail trade) increased by some thirty percent in 1953 over the figures for 1952, even as the private sector declined from 83.5 percent of the economy in 1950 to 50.3 percent in 1953.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> This "line" was formalised in August 1953. *ibid.*, p.102

<sup>153</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Refute Right Deviationist Views that Depart from the General Line," (June 15, 1953), SW, vol.5, p.94. "On State Capitalism," (July 1953) *ibid.*, p.101.

<sup>154</sup> Bo Yibo, 1991, vol.1, pp.61-66.

<sup>155</sup> The classification of "left" was entirely dependent on Mao's position and attitudes. See, Andrew J Nathan, and Tianjian Shi, "Left and Right with Chinese Characteristics: Issues and Alignments in Deng Xiaoping's China," *World Politics*, vol.48, July 1996, no.4, pp.522-550.

<sup>156</sup> Mao Zedong, "Closing Speech at the Fourth Session of the First National Committee of the CPPCC" (February 7, 1953), Kau, *et al.*, 1986, p.318.

<sup>157</sup> George N Ecklund, "The Private Businessmen," in William T. Liu (ed), *Chinese Society Under Communism: A Reader*, (Wiley, New York, 1967), p.206.

Mao's intensification of the transformation process compounded the common problem of Party members' negative attitudes towards the MPGs as the representatives of the bourgeoisie. This hostility increased the difficulty of implementing united front work. At the Third National United Front Work Conference of 1952, Li Wei-han recognised that Mao's radicalisation of the political line was causing problems when he warned united front workers that the MPGs should not be despised because some of them had in the past advocated a middle road.<sup>158</sup> The destruction of third road reformism idea was, after all, a major aim of thought reform. In June 1950, for example, Guo Moruo reported to the CPPCC that 470,000 intellectuals had taken part in political study and one achievement had been that "the fallacious idea of a so-called middle road, has in the main, been eradicated."<sup>159</sup> Influential former third force figures such as Shi Fuliang, Zhang Naiqi, and particularly Huang Yanpei, continued to play important political roles, especially in assisting the ideological transformation process. Huang, for example, was lauded as a progressive by Zhou Enlai for telling the bourgeoisie about the CCP and its policies in ways that they could understand. Huang was praised for getting the bourgeoisie to talk to him openly, and Huang, in turn, relayed their views to the CCP thereby allowing the Party to assess their attitudes.<sup>160</sup> Mao personally encouraged Huang Yanpei and Chen Shutong to popularise CCP policy.<sup>161</sup> This feedback function has remained a valuable feature of MPG work.

The transformations demanded by the General Line were reflected within the united front by the increased importance of the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce and the National Construction Association. To promote the political education function of the two organisations, the Party increased the number of progressives, CCP and Communist Youth League members within them.<sup>162</sup> The result of this action contradicted CCP aims. The ACFIC and the NCA were soon seen as emphasising politics at the expense of production. To remedy these problems and to

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<sup>158</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.78.

<sup>159</sup> Chen, 1960, pp.16-17.

<sup>160</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Guanyu Zhongguo de minzu zichan jieji wenti," [On the question of China's national bourgeoisie] (June 19, 1952), Ren Tao, 1988, p.101.

<sup>161</sup> "Letter to Huang Yanpei and Chen Shutong," (March 1953), in Kau, *et al*, 1986, vol.1, pp.328-329.

<sup>162</sup> "Guanyu minzhu dangpai gongzuo de jue ding," [Decisions on democratic party work] (June 1952), Ren Tao, 1988, p.101.

increase MPG/ACFIC enthusiasm, raise production and consolidate CCP control, Li Weihan advocated yet more education. To increase Party "leadership" more representatives from state enterprises were appointed as NCA/ACFIC leaders and committee members.<sup>163</sup> On September 7 1953, Mao addressed the MPGs and non-Party personages on how state socialism would be used to transform capitalism into socialism. He stressed the need to continue educating those capitalists who "lean towards the CCP" "so that most of the other capitalists may be convinced through them."<sup>164</sup>

One of the first targets of the new education campaigns was the Democratic League's Liang Shuming. On September 11 1953, addressing an expanded session of the CPPCC Standing Committee and numerous delegates from Shanghai and Tianjin commercial and industrial circles, Liang criticised the CCP's Soviet style policies of development. In particular, Liang criticised the bias of the CCP's policies towards the urban proletariat at the expense of the peasantry. The peasantry, claimed Liang, had been forgotten as soon as the CCP entered the cities. Moreover, the workers had unions to act for them and the ACFIC and NCA represented business people while the peasantry's Peasant Associations were now useless. Urban workers, he declared, were now in the ninth level of heaven while peasants had been placed in the ninth level of hell (*jiu tian, jiu di*). Liang's speech was endorsed by the Revolutionary GMD's Li Jishen. Details of the proceedings were taken down and passed onto Mao by Zhou Enlai and the head of the Peasants Department.<sup>165</sup>

The next day, at a preparatory meeting of Central Government Committee Mao, without naming Liang, invoked the closed argument that those who criticised the general line (which he himself had forced on the Party despite objections) were supporting American imperialism. Liang did not respond to Mao's criticisms directly but wrote to him declaring that his accusations were wrong. No one had criticised

<sup>163</sup>Li Weihan, "Guanyu liyong xianzhi he gaizao ziben zhuyi Gong shanglian ye wenti de yijian," [Opinions on the issue of using, limiting and reforming capitalist industry and commerce] (July 15, 1953), *ibid.*, pp.147-148.

<sup>164</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "The Only Road for the Transformation of Capitalist Industry & Commerce," *SW*, vol.5, pp.112-114.

<sup>165</sup> Dai Qing, 1989, pp.24-25.

Liang until September 17 when Zhou Enlai accused him of being a reactionary. Among Zhou's 'evidence' was Liang's peace proposals made in October 1946 as part of the Third Force peace negotiations; the proposals that had so upset Zhou. The other evidence was Liang's subsequent articles in *Dagong bao* in 1949 calling for peace. In 1953, Zhou used these facts to accuse Liang of being a reactionary opposed to the CCP.<sup>166</sup> On September 18, Liang rose to defend himself but soon almost all present interrupted and began condemning him. Only He Xiangning and Chen Shuming attempted to defend him.

Liang had not only criticised the Party when he criticised the General Line, he had implicitly impugned Mao's judgement for it was Mao who had imposed the line over the objections of Party leaders such as Liu Shaoqi and Bo Yibo. Mao's response, later published as "Criticism of Liang Shuming's Reactionary Ideas," denounced Liang and his ideas on several levels, and more importantly, laid out clearly the basis and some of the standards for subsequent campaigns of criticism, not just of Liang but also of many others. Mao's criticisms also revealed other problems in united front work, the attitudes of people such as Liang, and problems within the Party itself.

Like Zhou Enlai before him, Mao used out of context, Liang's ideas and the 1946 efforts of the Third Force to secure a GMD-CCP peace. Thus in 1953, Mao denounced Liang as a reactionary who had "backed Jiang to the hilt." Mao attacked Liang's integrity declaring him an "assassin" with a pen and an associate of traitors (Mao specifically named Liang's former Third Force and recently disgraced colleague Zhang Dongsun). He later added "hypocrite" and "schemer."

More pertinently, Liang's criticisms of Party policy and therefore its leader were to be taken as opposition to the Party and evidence of being a reactionary if not a traitor. Thus Liang's genuine and long-held concerns for China's peasantry were criticised by Mao as supporting imperialism and feudalism. To attribute any credibility to Liang's claims would undermine Party legitimacy and Mao's personal prestige as Mao claimed that the Party had "stood for the worker-peasant alliance for more than three decades."

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<sup>166</sup> *ibid.*, pp.27-29.

Liang's criticisms attacked crucial aspects of CCP ideology which Mao could not leave unaddressed, particularly as Mao claimed that Liang had declared that his alternative program came close to the CCP's "new democracy." Mao condemned Liang's long-held beliefs that China was essentially classless, that its problems stemmed from cultural mal-adjustment, that its revolution was due to external causes, and that China needed "colourless, transparent government" (*i.e.* an open government of neutral experts). Mao claimed that Liang believed himself wiser than the CCP.<sup>167</sup> Moreover, Liang's claims were fundamentally at odds with Mao's conviction that class struggle was vital to the revolutionary process and Mao's wish to follow the Soviet model of industrialisation, a model which stressed the development of heavy industry paid for by extracting surpluses from the peasantry. Liang's descriptions of workers as being in heaven and the peasants in hell, together with his praise of the ACFIC were taken as slanders by Mao. "Can this be taken as 'support for the General Line'?" "No," declared Mao, "it is an *out-and-out reactionary conception.*"<sup>168</sup> Mao also found Liang's criticisms of corrupt rural Party cadres unacceptable. Mao declared that only ten percent of cadres were a problem and he blamed this, not on the cadres' lack of discipline, but on "reactionary elements, enemy agents landlords and rich peasants."<sup>169</sup> Mao made it clear that it was impossible for anyone to represent the peasants better than the Party.<sup>170</sup>

Afraid that Liang's ideas and criticisms had widespread currency, both within and outside the Party, Mao declared vehemently, "Let me repeat, we will never adopt your line." Mao maintained that Liang's line would result in the ruin of all China's parties (including the MPGs) with the result that "socialism would be impossible." He claimed Liang's line was "a bourgeois line" and likened it to that of the Party's economic moderate Bo Yibo.<sup>171</sup> Mao made clear the official line that China was a

<sup>167</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.5, p.122.

<sup>168</sup> *ibid.* (Emphasis in original).

<sup>169</sup> *ibid.*, p.128.

<sup>170</sup> *ibid.*, p.125.

<sup>171</sup> *ibid.*, p.122.

semi-feudal, semi-colonial country and he declared that Liang's refusal to admit this meant that he was in fact helping imperialism and feudalism.<sup>172</sup>

Mao held up former GMD General Fu Zuoyi as a positive counter example to Liang and the "reactionary ideas he represents." Fu had been a reactionary but confessed fully. Liang, in contrast, saw himself as a paragon and refused to confess to being an absolute reactionary. Holding out the promise of forgiveness and redemption, Mao announced that "we welcome all those who have broken their ties with imperialism and the Taiwan gang. They are genuine patriots."<sup>173</sup> Mao demanded that Liang give a clear account of the development of his reactionary ideas and how he came to represent landlords. The aim was to "cure the sickness and save the patient."<sup>174</sup> Recognition of the Party's leadership and infallibility, especially of its leader, and the confession of errors were the basic demands of thought reform.

Despite the fundamental challenge that his ideas posed to the CCP, Liang saw himself in the mould of a loyal remonstrator to the state and its leader. There was no clearer illustration of this than Liang's wish, rejected by Mao, to be re-classified as "progressive." Such a classification would help overcome a problem of united front work revealed by Mao's attack. Liang had asked for more access to information in order to make informed decisions. Not only did Mao reject this request, he banned Liang from attending restricted meetings of the MPGs.<sup>175</sup> The fact that Liang had been praised by Taiwan for not wholeheartedly endorsing all Party policies was also held against him. Yet, although he denounced Liang vehemently, Mao nevertheless instructed that he to be re-elected to the CPPCC, to act as "living teaching material."<sup>176</sup> Mao instructed that Liang and Bo Yibo were to become the centre of a national remoulding campaign of criticism and self criticism.<sup>177</sup> Liang's status allowed him to live out the rest of his life protected from direct and physical struggle although he did

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<sup>172</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> *ibid.*, p.124.

<sup>174</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> *ibid.*, p.122.

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.*, p.126.

<sup>177</sup> *ibid.*, p.129.

submit a self-criticism to the CPPCC in February 1956.<sup>178</sup> Many less famous and less well-connected individuals were not so fortunate.

The 1953 campaign which followed Mao's denunciation of Liang did not destroy Liang's reputation nor the influence of his ideas. In 1955, his ideas were again attacked when first Feng Yuolan and then others traced the development of Liang's thought in an effort to prove that he had always been anti-communist and anti-Marxist. In particular, Liang's idealism and anti-industrialisation views were strongly attacked. All reactionary ideologies were said to spring from idealism as exemplified by Liang. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences held a series of meetings to continue the struggle against Liang's ideas and the influences which had given rise to them.<sup>179</sup> The Party ideologist, Wang Ruoshui (who himself became a dissident in the late 1980s), subsequently made it clear that in attacking Liang, and subsequently Hu Shi, the Party was seeking to destroy the faith of intellectuals in the objectiveness and absoluteness of truth.<sup>180</sup> Truth was to be no refuge from the Party's tyranny. It became quite clear that no matter what the scientific or academic basis, any opposition to Mao's policies was unacceptable and the price for voicing doubts would be very high.

Just as important as the attacks on Liang, although not discussed in depth here, were the literary and philosophy based political campaigns also used by Mao and the Party to continue remoulding of China's intellectuals. Mao continued his drive against bourgeois idealism exemplified, in his view, by the philosopher Hu Shi.<sup>181</sup> "We must," said Mao,

propagate dialectical materialism among the five million intellectuals inside and outside the Party and among cadres at all levels so that they will grasp it and combat idealism, and we shall then be able to organise a powerful corps of theoretical workers, which we urgently need. That again will be a very good thing.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Alitto, 1979, pp.329-333.

<sup>179</sup> Chen, 1960, pp.91-93.

<sup>180</sup> Hua Shiping, "One servant, Two Masters: The Dilemma of Chinese Establishment Intellectuals," *Modern China*, vol.20, no.1, 1994, p.97.

<sup>181</sup> See Mao's "Letter Concerning the Study of the *Dream of the Red Chamber*," (October 16, 1954), SW, vol.5, pp 150-151.

<sup>182</sup> "Concluding Speech to Party National Conference," (March 31, 1955), *ibid.*, p.159.

This need became all the more urgent as Mao pushed ahead with the socialist transformation of agriculture.<sup>183</sup>

The renewed attacks on Liang Shuming in 1955 came after the second campaign against the philosopher Hu Shi of late 1954. This campaign had grown out of an earlier one criticising the 'bourgeois' studies of the Chinese literary classic, *Dream of the Red Chamber*.<sup>184</sup> In 1955, however, the thought reform movement which had perhaps the most long-lasting effect, became the Anti-Hu Feng Campaign.<sup>185</sup> Again, the Party's motive was to continue the destruction of old ways of thinking, particularly individualism, idealism and reformism.<sup>186</sup>

The MPGs were deeply involved in these campaigns. The Democratic League and all MPGs, were instructed to launch their own anti-Hu Shi, and later, anti-Hu Feng movements. The anti-Hu Shi campaign was a class struggle over ideology. Erroneous bourgeois ideology had to be criticised, all members had to participate actively and were not permitted to remain passive. The vacuum had to be filled with Marxism/Leninism.<sup>187</sup> Similarly, the League was instructed to carry out its own Anti-Hu Feng "propaganda and education" campaign based on criticisms of Hu published in *Renmin ribao*.<sup>188</sup> These criticisms had been written by Mao himself.<sup>189</sup> Unlike Hu Shi, Hu Feng was a communist whose criticisms of the results of Party policies among intellectuals: fear and "uniformity of public opinions," had even more resonance among intellectuals. Hu was labelled an anti-people, anti-revolutionary and anti-Party element and the CCP concocted an elaborate but spurious 'clique' and conspiracy around him. The League and other MPGs were instructed to purge themselves of such elements.

<sup>183</sup> "On the Co-operative Transformation of Agriculture," (July 31, 1955), *ibid.*, pp.184-207.

<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*, pp.150-151.

<sup>185</sup> For a general overview of these campaigns see Chen, 1960, *passim*. For an account of the literary context of these campaigns see Merle Goldman, *Literary Dissent in Communist China*, (harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1967)

<sup>186</sup> As, for example, in the case of Hu Shi. See Chen, 1960, p.85.

<sup>187</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu zhankai dui Hu Shi zichan jieji sixiang de pipan he xueshu shang de ziyou taolun de tongzhi," [Notice on the Democratic League's launching of free academic discussion criticising Hu Shi's bourgeois ideology] (January 11, 1955), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.408-409.

<sup>188</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu jiu Hu Feng shijian kaizhan xuanchuan jiaoyu gongzuo de tongzhi," [Notice of the Chinese Democratic League on the launching of a propaganda and education campaign on the Hu Feng affair] (May 20, 1955), *ibid.*, pp.419-421.

<sup>189</sup> See Mao's attacks on Hu's criticisms of the CCP. "In Refutation of Uniformity of Public Opinion," (May 24, 1955) *SW*, vol.5, pp.172-175. and Mao's "Preface and Editors Notes to *Material on the Counter-Revolutionary Hu Feng Clique*," (May and June 1955) *ibid.*, pp.176-182. Chen, 1960, pp.85-90.

Moreover, members were to report any situations or problems they came across in the course of using class struggle or carrying out their anti-Hu Feng propaganda and education work with fellow members or the public.<sup>190</sup> All those not conforming to new socio-economic reality as the transition to socialism approached had to be reformed or weeded out.

At the heart of these new realities was Mao's wish to intensify the socialist transformation process. By 1955, Mao had achieved unanticipated rapid success in the collectivisation of agriculture and he turned his attention to commerce and industry. Between 1953 and 1955, the number of joint state-private enterprises had leapt from 1,036 to 3,193 and made up 49.6 percent of private industrial output.<sup>191</sup> Mao was keen to push ahead with this final transition and, in December 1955, he went to Shanghai to "listen to the opinions" of national capitalist friends. In the light of recent political campaigns, these 'friends' urged that the socialist transformation be speeded up. The ACFIC took Mao's hints to heart and wrote an open letter calling for the transformation process to be accelerated even more.<sup>192</sup> However, reinforcing this apparent consent and even enthusiasm for socialisation, was a very threatening new suppression of counter-revolutionaries (*sufan*) campaign which had been launched in mid-1955. The earlier *sufan* campaign had loomed in the background of the Three and Five-anti campaigns and had been very comprehensive, not only in remote areas where there had been active, even armed opposition to the CCP but also in areas such as Shanghai. In 1951, for example, over 2,000 *sufan* committees investigated and suppressed alleged counter-revolutionaries. Some 40,000 cases were examined and 3,000 accusations meetings conducted.<sup>193</sup> The fear of being 'struggled against' at such meetings and the danger of summary executions, were enough to scare many people into submission and passivity in the face of Party demands. In 1955, the CCP estimated that 5 percent of the

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<sup>190</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.420.

<sup>191</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.482.

<sup>192</sup> Roderick MacFaquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution, volume 1, Contradictions Among the People 1956-57*, (Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1974), pp.116-120.

<sup>193</sup> Gardner, in Barnett, 1964, p496.

bourgeoisie were serious counter-revolutionaries.<sup>194</sup> This figure was essentially a quota to be filled and its shadow hung over those who refused to comply with the Party's wishes. In addition, the Party had significantly increased social control with the implementation of a comprehensive household registration (*hukou*) system which severely restricted the ability of people to move without Party permission.

The cumulative result of the political campaigns and thought reform movements of the past years induced a great deal of passiveness towards state initiatives amongst both the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals. By 1956, this passivity began to give rise to serious concerns within the Party about the need to relax its policies and win back their active support lest the final transformation to socialism be inhibited. The years 1956 and 1957 became ones in which the MPGs played a central role in the CCP's attempts to overcome the problems its earlier policies had given rise to.

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<sup>194</sup> Feng Zhengqin and Yang Chengsheng, *Zhongguo gongchangdang tongyi zhanxian lilun fazhan shigao*, [A draft history of the development of the CCP's united front theory] (Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, Shanghai, 1993), p.203.

*Chapter 5***From “Blooming and Contending” to the Anti-Rightist Campaign:  
1956-57**

The crisis of passivity engendered by the Party's policies of coercion and thought reform severely affected Mao's plans for a rapid socialist transformation. Measures were implemented to win the active support of both the intelligentsia and the technical/managerial intellectuals required to staff the new increasingly socialist state apparatus. A crisis, as Gramsci had pointed out, required passive revolutionary strategies and the result was Mao's 1956 call to allow “a hundred schools of thought contend and a hundred flowers bloom” (*bai hua qifang, bai jia zhengming*): the Hundred Flowers campaign of 1956.

The Party relaxed its attitudes towards intellectuals and the bourgeoisie generally, made important concessions to them, and eased significantly the controls exerted over their MPG representatives. As the Party's body for organising its links with the intellectuals and controlling the MPGs, the United Front Department played a major role in this campaign. The intellectuals, MPGs, the UFD, and its head, Li Weihuan, were also major victims of Mao's subsequent anger when the campaign unleashed unexpectedly strong criticism of the Party and its policies and suggested significant changes to them, criticisms Mao regarded as manifestations of rightism and revisionism. However, the UFD's role in the Hundred Flowers campaign has hitherto been obscured by a lack of information and by the tendency of observers to overlook the department's activities.

One aspect which needs to be explained is why, in the light of the MPGs' experiences since 1949 and the danger that speaking out could present, did many MPG leaders nevertheless speak up? There was nothing new in their criticisms. What the MPG leaders did do was re-state aspects of a way of thinking: of idealism and associated political beliefs. They again promoted aspects of the third road ideology which the CCP was attempting to eradicate. Yet this chapter shows that the MPGs spoke out, not in opposition to the Party, but because they had the support of the UFD.

The extreme contentions of 1957, such as calls for the CCP to be overthrown, did not emanate from MPG leaders or UFD sponsored forums.

### **Mao's Impatience for Socialist Transformation**

After Mao had "sought the advice" of the national bourgeoisie on the pace of socialist transformation, the process quickened dramatically. In early December 1955, this process was scheduled to occur by 1957. However, on January 15 1956, Beijing declared it had completed the socialisation process and other cities hurried to catch up. Shanghai business people were told that transformation was to take only six days.<sup>1</sup> On January 25 1956, Mao announced to the Supreme State Conference that only about three more years were needed to "basically complete the socialist revolution."<sup>2</sup> Peaceful methods were to be used for the final transformation of individual businesses into collective ones and capitalist ones into socialist ones. For the United Front Department this meant that the remnants of the feudal and bourgeois classes had to be prepared psychologically for the final nationalisation of that which remained in private ownership.<sup>3</sup>

The passivity of the bourgeoisie when under the GMD had been an advantage to the CCP. However, after 1949 a major goal of united front work was to achieve precisely the opposite: to motivate and stimulate the energies of all groups to build socialism. The Party's need to release all remaining pent up energies was particularly important now that it planned to step up socialisation through commissions, ministries and other organs set up along Soviet lines. "This being the case, China would need all its professional and expert talent, indeed all expert personnel."<sup>4</sup> All of China's intellectuals, managers, and technicians had to be persuaded to commit themselves to this vital cause. Yet the CCP's policies hitherto, the repeated campaigns of thought reform and the supporting political campaigns, such as the elimination of counter-revolutionaries, had instead induced fear, apathy and passivity. Zhou Enlai had to

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<sup>1</sup> MacFaquhar, 1974, p.23.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p.26.

<sup>3</sup> "Summary of Sixth National United Front Work Conference," Ren Tao, 1988, p.210.

<sup>4</sup> MacFaquhar, 1974, p.33.

reassure Party leaders that the national bourgeoisie still retained valuable *jijixing* or energy and that they could still play a useful role under socialism.<sup>5</sup> The Party even instituted various policies to persuade remaining private business to think that they would not be socialised in the same violent manner as agriculture had been.<sup>6</sup>

In many respects, the CCP had tenuous links with the intellectuals it needed to achieve socialist transformation. In 1955, only seven percent of China's estimated 3,840,000 ordinary intellectuals and 100,000 higher intellectuals were Party members. However, of the estimated 7,499 associate or full professors, 2,110 or twenty eight percent were MPG members, as were approximately one third of high school principals and deputy principals.<sup>7</sup> The MPGs, particularly the Democratic League, the Association for the Promotion of Democracy and the Jiusan Society, were significant mechanisms by which the CCP sought to unite with and motivate the intellectuals. By instilling the correct ideology, the CCP believed that the energies of all intellectuals would be released to benefit socialist construction. Reflecting this belief, the Democratic League re-affirmed that both economic and ideological development were inseparable.<sup>8</sup>

In late 1955, the CCP asked the League, and almost certainly the other MPGs, to survey the attitudes of their members and other intellectuals.<sup>9</sup> As a result, the Jiusan Society and other MPGs held discussions on the need for progress in thought reform.<sup>10</sup> These surveys then formed the basis of Zhou Enlai's famous "Report on the Question of Intellectuals" of January 29, 1956.<sup>11</sup> Zhou began by declaring that China's intellectuals had made tremendous progress and played an important role in developing

<sup>5</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Guanyu ziben zhuyi gong shang ye shehui zhuyi gaizao de ji ge wenti," [Several issues concerning the socialist transformation of capitalist industry and commerce] (November 16, 1955). Zhou Enlai, 1984, p.265.

<sup>6</sup> Bill Brugger, *China: Liberation and Transformation 1942-1962*, (Croom and Helm, London, 1981), pp.120-121.

<sup>7</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, pp.804-810.

<sup>8</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.424.

<sup>9</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng fachu guanyu yaoqiu ge difang zuzhi jixu dui guanyu zhishi fenzi de ge xiang wenti jinxing shenru diaocha yanjiu de tongzhi," [Chinese Democratic League notice on requiring all local League organisations to continue to carry out penetrating research and investigations into all the problems of intellectuals] (December 2 1955). *ibid.*, pp.426-428.

<sup>10</sup> Chen, 1960, p.100.

<sup>11</sup> For a translation of this document see Harold Hinton (ed), *The People's Republic of China, A Documentary Survey 1949-1979*, (Scholarly Resources, Wilmington, 1980), vol.1, pp.283-294. See also, Zhou Enlai, *Selected Works of Zhou Enlai*, Volume 2, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1989), pp.167-194.

socialism. However, this progress was underestimated by many and the CCP's policies towards intellectuals had not been carried out properly. "Consequently," said Zhou, "only apathy ruled in such urgent matters as how to fully mobilise and develop the potential of intellectuals, to further transform them, to expand their force, and to raise their academic standards."<sup>12</sup> Much of this problem was blamed on leftist sectarianism, which on the one hand resulted in discrimination against bourgeois non-Party intellectuals, and on 'Right-conservatism' an excessive deference and a lack of will to struggle with them on the other. Despite the problems, Zhou claimed that forty percent of intellectuals actively supported the government; forty percent were intermediate elements; ten percent were backward elements; while counter-revolutionaries or bad elements constituted less than ten percent.<sup>13</sup> Implicit in Zhou's statement was the need to transform the middle elements into progressives and the elimination of the bad elements. The overwhelming emphasis of Zhou's speech was on the need to expand the ranks and gain the active support of the technical intellectuals in particular, because:

Basically, we are building a socialist economy in order to provide maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural demands of the entire society. To reach this goal, we must constantly expand the productive forces, raise labour productivity and improve and increase socialist production on a foundation of high technology. In the socialist era, it is more necessary than ever for us to raise production skills, develop the sciences and utilise scientific knowledge. ... we have to rely on close co-operation between manual workers and mental workers and upon a fraternal alliance among workers, peasants and intellectuals.<sup>14</sup>

To win the active support of the intellectuals the CCP conceded pay rises, better working and living conditions, and more resources. The Party would also open its doors wider to intellectuals with the aim of eventually recruiting a third of the higher intellectuals. "In short," wrote one commentator, "Zhou was saying that the Party needed the intellectuals for economic development and to get the most out of them it had to treat them right."<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, Zhou made it clear that the Party's aims of eliminating counter-revolutionaries and remoulding all other intellectuals into proletarians remained firmly in place. At the same time, an air of relative political

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<sup>12</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.286.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, passim.

<sup>14</sup> Zhou Enlai, *SW* vol.2, pp.167-168.

<sup>15</sup> MacFaquhar, 1974, pp.34-35.

liberalisation began to develop with Party leader Liu Shaoqi advocating press reform, Peng Zhen urging that law reform again be taken up, and Hu Qiaomu's establishment of *Reference News* (*Cankao xiaoxi*), a restricted publication which was widely read by intellectuals, especially for its information from Western sources.<sup>16</sup>

The criticisms of CCP policies and practices, reported by the MPGs' surveys and aired by Zhou, were incorporated into documents presented at the Sixth National United Front Work Conference (February-March 1956). Li Weihan reported that the MPGs' common demand, from leaders and ordinary members alike, was to be allowed to expand. The MPGs wanted to work for the nation, to be given funds, and to be able to develop both their organisations and socialism. These were reasonable demands said Li, and because the MPGs had not increased their membership since 1954, they should now be allowed to alternately expand and then consolidate. The critical issue was *how* they would develop: should it be voluntary, according to the requirements of their work, in small towns, or via the CPPCC. Moreover, Li asked, how was the elimination of counter revolutionaries to be incorporated in this expansion? This was a complex issue and decisions on such detail as the categorisation of counter revolutionaries and who to struggle (*dou*) with required careful investigation.<sup>17</sup>

The improved treatment of the MPGs and other intellectuals in the united front symbolised the CCP's official renewed respect for intellectuals. However, Li Weihan and others described many instances of negative attitudes towards allies, including from within the United Front Department itself. Li wanted to minimise Party anti-intellectualism and class-based anti-bourgeois hostility affecting MPG work. He therefore down played Mao's preference for using CCP and Communist Youth League members in the MPGs, preferring instead to make much more use of the MPGs' progressives to raise issues on behalf of the CCP despite complaints that many intellectuals saw them as opportunists.<sup>18</sup> Li implicitly acknowledged the failure of the policy of relying on the placing of radical left-wing progressives, CCP and CYL

<sup>16</sup> Brugger, 1981, p.134.

<sup>17</sup> Li Weihan, "Zai quan guo tongzhan gongzuo huiyi shang guanyu 1956 nian dao 1962 nian tongzhan gongzuo de fangzhen (cao'an) de fayan," [Speech on the 1956 to 1962 (draft) plan for united front work given at the National United Front work Conference] (February 28, 1956). Ren Tao, 1988, pp.224-226.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

members within the MPGs, when he called for real “flesh and blood” progressives who had emerged from within the MPGs themselves and who could unite with the middle elements.<sup>19</sup>

Among the examples of demoralising interference in MPG affairs cited by the UFD were of Party (including UFD) cadres, drawing up candidates lists for the CPPCC, NPC, and other bodies, without consulting the MPGs or non-Party personages concerned. Consultation with these allies on important issues was often absent, and there were frequent attempts by Party members to avoid CPPCC reviews of measures altogether. Such meetings as were held, often became ones in which the Party’s friends were allowed to express an opinion but all measures were nevertheless passed without change. One measure suggested to improve this situation and reassure allies, was to expand the CPPCC.<sup>20</sup> Yet how such an expansion, although consistent with legitimating the MPGs and their constituents, could avoid such problems was not explained. Since the adoption of a new constitution and the inauguration of the National People’s Congress in 1954, the CPPCC had been left with only a vestigial role. Perhaps this suggestion implied to some that the Party envisaged a greater and more influential role for the Conference.

The Central United Front Department’s review of its own attitudes to the MPGs resulted in scathing self-criticisms. The Central Committee of the UFD discovered serious ‘conservatism’ (*baoshou zhuyi*) and leftist ‘closed door’ sectarianism. The report claimed that the UFD had failed to take into account the MPG’s progress in thought reform; it had failed to trust them politically or to allow them a free hand; and it had interfered in their internal affairs, “even to the extent of implementing organisational control over them.” Department cadres were described as often being arrogant, relying more on their status than on negotiation. To improve the situation, the Central UFD called on all levels of the department to examine its relations with the MPGs and report their findings to the Centre.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, p.223.

<sup>20</sup> Yu Yifu, “Zai Quanguo tongzhan gongzuo huiyi shang de jiang hua,” [Speech at national united front work conference] (March 2, 1956), *ibid.*, p.241.

<sup>21</sup> “Guanyu quanguo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo huiyi de baogao,” [Report on the National United Front Work Conference], *ibid.*, p.212.

### The Hundred Flowers Campaign

The United Front Department's self-criticism included implicit calls for a substantial loosening of controls over the MPGs and this moderation heralded a dramatic change in CCP policies towards the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals. These changes were foreshadowed in Mao's important "On the Ten Major Relationships" speech to the CCP's Politburo on April 25, 1956. This speech concentrated on the factors crucial to the success of socialist construction and was dominated by Mao's concerns over economic development such as proper relationship between heavy and light industry.<sup>22</sup> The relations between Party and non-Party elements were Mao's seventh concern. It was better, declared Mao, to have several parties rather than one. "This has been true of the past and may well be true of the future: it means long-term co-existence and mutual supervision." Even so, Mao recognised that many in the MPGs were unhappy with aspects of the Party's policies, such as the suppression of counter-revolutionaries. Nor had they wanted the *Common Program* and CPPCC abolished in favour of the new constitution. Nevertheless, even these opponents could be struggled with and united behind the cause of socialism.<sup>23</sup>

Several weeks later in May 1956, Mao announced the beginning of the Hundred Flowers campaign, a campaign intended to win the active and whole-hearted support of the MPGs and intellectuals generally. In a still officially secret speech to the Supreme State Conference on May 2, Mao called for different points of view to be freely aired. On May 26, the substance of Mao's speech was publicised by the Minister of Propaganda, Lu Dingyi, when he addressed the Chinese Academy of Sciences. It was, Lu declared, permissible to hold divergent views on "matters of a purely artistic, academic or technological nature. ... In matters of this sort there is a freedom to voice different opinions, to criticise and to counter criticise and debate." He announced that the time was ripe for this freedom because "to let 'a hundred flowers blossom, a hundred schools of thought contend' is the expression of that freedom among the

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<sup>22</sup> "On the Ten Major Relationships," *SW*, vol.5, pp.284-307. Maos' first concern was fixing the relationship between light and heavy industry. See pp.285-286.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.296.

people in art, literature and science.”<sup>24</sup> There was no indication by Lu that any contending should extend to overtly political matters.

Yet, while Lu announced a major relaxation of existing policies, the openness he espoused was very restricted and the ideologically transformative aspects of the Party’s policies remained firmly in place. Lu explained that clear lines between the enemy and the people had to be maintained. There was freedom for “the people” but not for their enemies. Open debate was encouraged but its aim was to establish the superiority of materialism over bourgeois idealism and the ideals of counter-revolutionaries, such as Hu Feng and Hu Shi. This debate had been made possible because the CCP believed it had already won the decisive victory in achieving the basic transformation to socialism and produced a fundamental change in the ideology of China’s intellectuals.<sup>25</sup>

Experiences since 1949 had shown that Lu’s qualification was substantial because the power to define enemies and what constituted ‘counter-revolutionary’ rested with the Party, and in particular with Mao. This power was both arbitrary and shifting and even acts and words from before 1949 had often been turned, retrospectively, against their authors. Thus Lu’s statement that: “Scholars who hold seriously mistaken bourgeois views in the academic field should still be given suitable jobs” was immediately qualified by the rider, “as long as they are not engaged in counter-revolutionary activity.”<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the emphasis of Lu’s address was on more open debate in areas of pressing need, like science and technology, areas where such debate was less likely to have political ramifications. “As everyone knows, the natural sciences,” Lu declared, “have no class character.”<sup>27</sup> As Qian Junrui, long-time united front worker and CCP leader explained, “to raise the level of our science and technology, we must in matters of scholarship, thoroughly carry out a policy of free discussion and ‘letting a hundred schools contend.’”<sup>28</sup> Yet given Lu’s continued

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<sup>24</sup> Lu Dingyi, "The Invitation to Bloom and Contend," (May 26, 1956). Hinton, 1980, p.343.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p.345.

<sup>28</sup> Qian Junrui (Ch'ien Chunrui), in Chen, 1960, p.118. Qian had been an NSA activist and, after 1949, a chairman of the CPPCC.

emphasis on eliminating enemies and continuing thought reform, there was little in his speech to encourage even scientists to speak up.

The UFD immediately began incorporating the Hundred Flowers policy into its work but intellectuals remained very wary. At the CCP's Party Congress of September 1956, Deng Xiaoping's "Report on Party Constitution" called for improvements in the Party's work. One proposed measure was to implement the Party's mass-line and combat bureaucratism by cooperating closely with non-Party personnel in this struggle. Deng acknowledged that even some party leaders "still make the mistake of refusing to co-operate with non-Party personnel or are not skilful in doing so." However, he went on to declare that, while the necessity of struggle with united front allies, such as the MPGs remained:

The question does not lie here: it lies in the fact that these democratic people outside the Party can play a supervisory role which our Party is not easily capable of doing by relying solely on Party members, that they can discover in our work, certain errors which we have been unable to discover ourselves, and that they can be of some help to our Party.<sup>29</sup>

Deng's views on the benefits of using non-Party people to help supervise the Party were not welcomed by some. Many CCP members exposed their 'sectarianism' when they expressed unhappiness with Deng's sentiments.<sup>30</sup> Even the general Party membership had to be convinced that Mao's new policy was desirable. Yet, in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, developments including the Polish revolt and the Hungarian uprising were causing Mao and the CCP leadership much disquiet. In early 1957, in an effort to prevent similar unrest in China, Mao decided to intensify his calls for open debate and criticism of the Party's faults in order that these be overcome, the Party to be drawn closer to the people, including the intellectuals. This would forestall East European-type unrest developing in China. Thus, it was not until after February 27, 1957, and a secret speech by Mao to the Supreme State Conference, that any real public debate began. This speech was not published until June 19, 1957 because Mao claimed it needed amending and some inflammatory aspects deleted.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Hinton, 1980, pp.393-394.

<sup>30</sup> MacFaquhar, 1974, pp.110-116.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Schoenhals, "Original Contradictions-On the Un-Revised Text of Mao Zedong's 'On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People,'" *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no.16, July, 1986, p.100.

Mao's speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," was delivered to a largely united front audience of 1,800 delegates of all circles. Other speakers included Li Jishen, Zhang Bojun, Huang Yanpei, Ma Xulun, Ma Yinchu, Chen Shutong, Xu Deheng, and Huang Qixiang.<sup>32</sup> Of vital importance to the MPGs was Mao's position that the normally antagonistic contradiction between the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie could be turned into a non-antagonistic one if handled properly. Moreover, the original speech failed to make any mention of class struggle. This omission strongly implied that the Party would henceforth concentrate on uniting with the bourgeoisie rather than struggling with them. Just as importantly, the original speech consistently attacked leftism and dogmatism and failed to mention revisionism.<sup>33</sup> These differences in emphasis became crucial when the blooming and contending initiated by Mao quickly developed in ways that he found unacceptable.

In essence, the Hundred Flowers campaign was one of political education and the rectification of negative traits, initially within the CCP. The CCP would rectify within its own ranks, the features it saw as giving rise to social unrest, particularly bureaucratism, dogmatism and sectarianism. Criticism would be used to reveal examples of these problems and these could then be addressed using the *unity-criticism-unity* principle.<sup>34</sup> Both the MPGs and their constituents were still wary of the CCP's recent campaigns and the qualifications on the freedom to speak out and they remained passive. The Democratic League's Fei Xiaotong had written an article, "Early Spring for Intellectuals" (*Zhishi fenzi de zaochun tianqi*) which highlighted their ambivalence and fears. Although the sentiments revealed by Fei's article reflected badly on the Party's credibility, Zhou Enlai praised it, declaring that such an honest reflection of the attitudes could not have come from the Party's own intellectuals. Zhou admitted that many of the Party's friends were even afraid of divulging their fears to him because he was a Party member. He wanted this suspicion overcome, the faults of

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<sup>32</sup> "Speaking notes for "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People."" In Roderick MacFaquhar, Timothy Cheek, and Eugene Wu (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao: From the Hundred Flowers to the Great Leap Forward*, (The Council On East Asian Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge Mass., 1989), pp.131-190.

<sup>33</sup> Schoenhals, 1986, pp.101-106.

<sup>34</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "The Ten Major Relationships," *SW*, vol.5, pp.284-307.

the CCP exposed in order that the Party be strengthened. The MPGs, he declared, had an important role in this process.<sup>35</sup>

By April 1957, Mao moved to bring forward the campaign of Party rectification and he encouraged the MPGs and intellectuals to overcome their inhibitions and to bloom and contend as part of the rectification movement.<sup>36</sup> He expected the rectification process to reveal bourgeois thinking but he believed that any such 'poisonous weeds' among the 'fragrant flowers' could be easily weeded out. Speaking in January 1957, Mao stressed the strength of the Party and its ideology. The GMD, Mao claimed, had been "mortally afraid of criticism," "going into fear and trepidation each time the Political Council was in session."<sup>37</sup> By contrast, the CCP's ideology was strong enough to withstand scrutiny and criticism. Only by the Party discussing and debating issues with doubters, argued Mao, would it persuade sceptics to adopt its socialist thinking and serve socialism more productively. It was only by allowing people to speak up that misconceptions could be exposed and refuted:

Criticisms from democratic personages can be of only two kinds, those that are wrong and those that are not. Criticisms that are not wrong can help remedy our short-comings while wrong ones must be refuted. As for types such as Liang Shuming, Peng Yihu<sup>38</sup> and Zhang Naiqi, if they want to fart, let them.<sup>39</sup> That will be to our advantage, for everybody can judge whether the smell is good or foul, and through discussion the majority can be won over and these types isolated. ... The falser their words and the greater their mistakes the better, and the more isolated they will become and the better they will educate the people by negative example. We must both unite with and struggle against the democratic personages and, according to circumstances, work among them on our own initiative in some cases, while in others let them expose themselves before we take action rather than striking first.<sup>40</sup>

Yet, as with previous rectification and thought reform campaigns, the implied threat of coercion remained strong. When Mao discussed the need to recognise enemies, he defended the campaigns to suppress counter-revolutionaries. Warning his audience that

<sup>35</sup> "Chang qi cunzai, huxiang jiandu," [Long-term co-existence, mutual supervision] (April 24, 1957), Zhou Enlai, 1984, pp.349-352.

<sup>36</sup> Party rectification had been originally planned to begin in 1958. Macfaquar, *et al*, 1989, p.12.

<sup>37</sup> "Talks at a Conference of Secretaries of Provincial, Municipal and Autonomous Region Party Committees," (January 1957), *ibid.*, p.375.

<sup>38</sup> Peng Yihu was a member of NCA Central Committee Standing Committee. In 1954, he had written to the CCP CC criticising the policy of unified purchase and supply of grain. He was labelled a Rightist in 1957. Kau, *et al*, 1986, vol.2, p.274, fn.73.

<sup>39</sup> In another version of this speech, Huang Yanpei is also included as having criticised the CCP and then having subsequently to have made a self-criticism. Said Mao; "We gave them a free hand to criticise and once they had criticised us they were themselves isolated. After there was a struggle against the [NCA], they were still provided with food to eat and were retained in their ministerial positions." *ibid.*, pp.282-283.

<sup>40</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.5, pp.375-376.

these campaigns were not to be questioned, Mao told his audience not to criticise the work of cadres involved in suppression work, even though few counter-revolutionaries remained.<sup>41</sup>

Yet the use of the Hundred Flowers policy for Party rectification was bound to produce unforeseen consequences. Party members were hostile that the remnants of the bourgeois classes could criticise the proletarian victors of the revolution. Mao admitted in his "On Correct Handling ..." speech, that ninety percent of the Party did not approve of the policy and needed persuading.<sup>42</sup> He also acknowledged that it was difficult to tell fragrant flowers from poisonous weeds. Most importantly, Mao failed to provide clear guidelines on what constituted acceptable criticism and counter-revolutionary attacks. When informed that university professors were afraid of contending for fear of themselves being criticised, Mao's only suggestion was that they write a third article in refutation.<sup>43</sup>

In March, when speaking to representatives of the Shanghai press, *Shanghai Xinwen* (Shanghai news), *Dagong bao*, and *Wenhui bao*, Mao provided more guidelines for the conduct of blooming and contending. Criticism of the Party's faults was not to be unconstrained. There was to be no big democracy (big character posters (*da zi bao*), demonstrations etc), Mao advocated instead what he called "ultra small democracy" (*xiao xiao minzhu*), "like drizzle" (*mao mao yu*), for resolving problems in literature and the press. This type of criticism would be constructive but not threaten the Party. Mao told the press representatives that the forthcoming rectification campaign "would unavoidably affect the democratic personages, but make absolutely sure never to rectify people to death. We should use the method of small democracy first to rectify the CCP." A "ladder" would always be provided to critics to enable them to clamber to safety when the masses encircled them; that is, they would be given the opportunity to recant. That the critics would in turn be criticised was revealed by Mao's comment that "some people like to use democracy against other people, they want to rectify others."

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<sup>41</sup> MacFaquhar, *et al.* 1989, p.173

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p.146..

<sup>43</sup> "Talk at the Forum of of Heads of Propaganda, Culture and Education Departments from Nine Provinces and Municipalities," (March 6, 1957), *ibid.*, p.196.

But when it come to rectifying themselves, then the smaller the democracy the better.”<sup>44</sup> These critics included democratic personages, the criticism of whom, Mao claimed, would also help consolidate the united front.<sup>45</sup> Overall, however, there was no objective or consistent theoretical position upon which to decide the boundaries of the acceptable as that power effectively rested with Mao. Despite this shortcoming, on April 27, 1957 the Party issued official directions on how to conduct the rectification and brought it forward by a year.<sup>46</sup>

On April 30, 1957, Mao met with representatives of the MPGs and some non-Party personages to encourage them to speak up about the Party’s failings, a meeting which finally launched the Hundred Flowers campaign in earnest. Mao again made statements which encouraged his audience to gather the courage to speak up and voice their concerns. They were given the task of creating the right “atmosphere” for the rectification campaign. Mao informed them that within ten years, less than two-thirds of the intellectuals would still cling to the old world view:

... at present they are suspended in the air. The old economic system is gone, but their mind has not yet changed. It takes years for ideology to seep in. Now the hair has already adhered to the new skin, in their minds they still consider Marxism no good. People can’t be forced to believe in a Marxist world view. If people are to believe there must be a process.<sup>47</sup>

Mao reassured his audience that the MPGs would continue to be relevant. Moreover, he discussed class struggle in the context of wars against imperialism and diplomacy with capitalist countries; not as continuing within China. “In general “ said Mao, “this is a new era with new tasks; class struggle has ended and war has been declared on Nature.” The expertise in MPGs, such as the Democratic League, Jiusan, and the National Construction Association, would be used to fight this new war.<sup>48</sup> This was a restatement of a view Mao had made in his original “On the Correct Handling ...” speech. As Schoenhals has pointed out, this was another important reassurance by Mao

<sup>44</sup>“A Summary of a Talk with the Representatives of the Press and Publishing Circles,” (March 10, 1957). In MacFaquhar, *et al*, 1989, pp.261-262.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, pp.258-265.

<sup>46</sup> “The CCP Central Committees's Directive on Rectification Campaign,” Union Research Institute, *Documents of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee: September 1956-April 1969*, vol.1, (Union Research Institute, Hong Kong, 1971), pp.253-257.

<sup>47</sup> “Transcript of a Talk to a Gathering of Responsible Persons From Various Democratic Parties and Non-Democratic Personages.” MacFaquhar, *et al*, 1989, p.369.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, p.371.

that, notwithstanding the simultaneous calls for a continuation of remoulding and the suppression of alleged counter-revolutionaries, the era of class struggle was over.<sup>49</sup>

Mao also admitted that there were contradictions in united front work which had long been “insoluble.” These, he said, would now be solved because the crooked thinking of Party members which had prevented allies from having positions of power and responsibility was going to change:

Now, the relations between those inside and outside the Party should change to one of equality, with [non-communists having both] position and power in fact, not just in form. From now on no matter where, whoever is the chief is in charge.<sup>50</sup>

Mao had reportedly denounced appointments without power as akin to Party members “bullying the sister in-law” and he wanted the situation improved.<sup>51</sup>

Rectification was to be achieved by Mao’s preferred means of criticism: “I attack you, you attack me; if you have an opinion then express it. Those inside and outside the Party are becoming one.” Mao told his audience that it was no longer necessary for them to devote all their time to the study of dialectical materialism at the expense of political relations and combating the three “isms” (bureaucratism, dogmatism and sectarianism).<sup>52</sup>

In another major concession, Mao declared that the system of Party committees in factories, villages, and schools, the source of many complaints about sectarianism:

Is now perhaps inappropriate. It should be somewhat modified. Power should be concentrated in the committees on college affairs and the councils of professors. ... This problem should be studied.

A CCP leader, possibly Deng Xiaoping, was delegated to solicit MPG opinions on both this issue and the equally sensitive problem of powerless united front appointments.<sup>53</sup> It is therefore not surprising that these issues, endorsed by Mao personally, should have been taken up by MPGs. They modelled themselves on Mao’s comments.

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<sup>49</sup> Schoenhals, 1986, p.101.

<sup>50</sup> Macfaquar, *et al*, 1989, p.366.

<sup>51</sup> Bo Yibo, 1991, vol. 2, p.610.

<sup>52</sup> Macfaquar, *et al*, 1989, p.366.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, pp.367.

Mao argued that in this transitional period, “the old relations of production have been destroyed, but the new economic base has not yet been consolidated.”<sup>54</sup> He implied that the MPGs would have a continued role to play in this consolidation by continuing to educate their constituencies about socialism and using their talents for nation building. Zhou Enlai had already told MPG leaders that although the CCP and MPGs were born at different times, the principle of long-term co-existence with the CCP meant that they would “die” at the same time as the Party: when communism had been achieved.<sup>55</sup>

Mao’s talk encouraged the MPGs and NPPs to support the rectification campaign by criticising CCP shortcomings. The UFD organised thirteen forums for MPGs and non-Party personages, at which more than seventy people spoke, and twenty five forums for people involved in commerce and industry, at which 108 people spoke. Similar meetings were held at provincial and municipal levels.<sup>56</sup> The press began to publish letters of criticisms from intellectuals and from MPG members and NPPs particularly. All manner of sensitive issues were raised and debated. But Mao’s small democracy of “mild wind and gentle rain”<sup>57</sup> soon became “driving winds and pouring rains.”

### **United Front Department and the encouragement of blooming and contending**

Mao’s speeches and his talks with MPG and ACFIC representatives greatly encouraged the MPGs and others to not only take up his calls for criticism but to also go beyond it. Robert Loh, a businessman active in united front work, was called to attend a UFD organised meeting to hear a tape recorded version of Mao’s “On the Correct Handling ...” speech. Loh emerged convinced of Mao’s sincerity and largely ignoring the associated warnings, took great heart from Mao’s pronouncements:

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, pp.371-372.

<sup>55</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Chang qi gong cun, huxiang jian du," [Long-term co-existence, mutual supervision] (April 24, 1957), Zhou Enlai, 1984, p.350.

<sup>56</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.831.

<sup>57</sup> This was the CCP’s directive for guiding criticism of Party cadres. See "Why we must carry out the rectification Movement ‘as gently as a breeze or mild rain?’" *Renmin ribao*, May 7 1957. In Hinton, 1980, pp.501-504.

Obviously for example, the coming rectification campaign requiring the people to criticise Party officials meant that we were to have a period of free speech. ... then the thought occurred to me that the authorities might really have learned their lesson from Hungary. Perhaps we would now be entering an era of decency, and human values again would have meaning. If that happened, some of our old dreams might be fulfilled. Moreover, having worked myself into such a secure position, my future here in China could be bright indeed.

I was in a daze. After Mao's speech anything seemed possible. For the first time I allowed myself to hope.<sup>58</sup>

The confidence inspired by Mao's pronouncements was supported by accompanying changes in UFD policy and Departmental shortcomings which reinforced MPG belief in Mao's sincerity and simultaneously gave them greater freedom of activity.

The position of the MPGs improved greatly after January 1956. Basing its policies on the MPG's complaints and Mao's calls for increasing mutual supervision, the UFD eased its controls over them considerably. Complaints at the Sixth National United Front Work Conference against the Central UFD's excessive interference in and manipulation of MPG affairs clearly reflected Mao's new position. Party discussion began on the topic of easing constraints on the MPGs, allowing them to recruit new members, and allowing the expansion of their organisations in even small towns.<sup>59</sup> Yet these changes merely marked a change in the methods of promoting thought reform, not a negation of the ultimate aim of achieving the full assimilation of a proletarian ideology.<sup>60</sup>

The theoretical status of the MPG's also changed. They were upgraded from parties of the bourgeoisie, to "political groups serving socialism." It was in keeping with this improved status that the MPGs' independence was increased to allow them to organise their own development.<sup>61</sup> Speaking to the National People's Congress in June 1956, Li Wei-han reassured the public that the Party's policy of democratic co-operation was unmovable (*guding bu yi*) and eternal (*yongyuan bu bian*) and he publicised the principles of MPG equality, freedom and organisational independence.<sup>62</sup> In September

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<sup>58</sup> Loh, 1963, p.222.

<sup>59</sup> Li Wei-han, in Ren Tao, 1988, p.225.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, p.209.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, p.260.

<sup>62</sup> Li Wei-han, "Jixu gonggu he guangda renmin minzhu tongyi zhan-xian," [Continue to consolidate and expand the People's Democratic United Front] (June 1956). In Li Wei-han, *Tongyi zhanxian wenti yu minzu wenti*, [United Front issues and the national question] (Renmin chubanshe, Beijing, 1983), p.158.

1956, when Mao again called for increased unity with the MPGs, he reinforced Party support for them.<sup>63</sup>

The Seventh national United Front Work Conference of September-November 1956 concentrated on MPG issues. It marked a major step in overcoming MPG suspicions about Mao's initial call for blooming and contending. The UFD's surveys carried out earlier in the year had cited positions without power, the sectarianism of their progressives, poor MPG-CCP consultation and lack of respect for non-Party opinions as major common concerns of the MPGs. The UFD tabled five documents it had drafted to overcome the MPGs' problems:

- 1) How the UFD could help democratic party work.
- 2) How the CCP and government organs could help the democratic parties.
- 3) Notice on democratic party development.
- 4) Additional regulations on Democratic party recruitment of CCP members.
- 5) Opinions on solving the democratic parties' problems with publishing, motivating cadres, finance and cadres' living conditions.<sup>64</sup>

The major thrust of the conference, including the new documents, was to promote the Hundred Flowers campaign.

In a major decision designed to make effective the task of supervising the CCP as called for by Deng Xiaoping's September speech, Li Weihai declared that the UFD would guarantee the MPG's freedom of criticism and debate, accept valid criticisms, and not oppose good suggestions. They would be permitted to speak freely in the NPC, CPPCC, government, schools, and people's groups. In an effort to raise the MPGs' own standards, this freedom to criticise was also to apply to themselves.<sup>65</sup> Li was aware of the lack of clarity about the limits on criticism but his own guidelines to UFD cadres, that the parameters of the criticism should not be manipulated as long as such criticism was in a "general socialist direction," was itself equally ambiguous.<sup>66</sup>

Li Weihai also realised that most Party members found it difficult enough to accept criticism from inside the Party, let alone by the MPGs, the ostensible

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<sup>63</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.270.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.* p.272. The continued sensitivity of these surveys, even into the 1980s, is shown by their absence from the published proceedings of the conference.

<sup>65</sup> Li Weihai, "Guanyu minzhu dangpai gongzuo de jige wenti," [On several issues in democratic party work] (October 1956). *ibid.*, p.285.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*

representatives of the bourgeoisie. Compounding this problem was the fact that some cadres had an ideology of “special power and tyrannical work-styles.” Cadres, he warned, had to be spiritually prepared to take criticism and they needed to “stay sober and not to use fear.”<sup>67</sup> To overcome the MPGs’ trepidation about criticising the Party, the goodwill gesture of easing controls over them was unavoidable.

The degree of what Li described as “unavoidable help” in organising the MPGs after 1949 was now “inappropriate” and it was blocking their development.<sup>68</sup> The UFD’s interference had to be dramatically reduced. Henceforth, the UFD was to fully respect MPG independence and allow them to manage themselves. This self-management included handling such vital and sensitive issues as the suppression of counter revolutionaries and the maintenance of personnel files. The UFD would curtail its reliance on progressives and promote more comprehensive discussions with all sections of the MPGs, including their middle- and right-wings.<sup>69</sup>

The UFD’s relaxation on MPG recruitment was another major change to MPG policy, particularly in light of subsequent charges against Zhang Bojun. Any person in the MPG target groups would be permitted to join the appropriate MPG if they wished. At the same time, except for a select few, suitably qualified progressives could join the CCP. In light of objections from some MPGs, even the corporatist occupational restrictions on MPG membership were no longer to be applied “mechanically.” The issue of MPG members who belonged to more than one MPG was to be subject to negotiation if it caused problems. New MPG branches could be established with CCP help. Zhigong was to be encouraged to actively undertake a major expansion into Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, and Jiangxi provinces. One of the restrictions on this new recruitment, especially as applied to the Revolutionary GMD, was not to allow individuals to join the MPGs merely to get work.<sup>70</sup>

There was, however, a strong note of caution issued to the UFD’s cadres by senior Party leader Peng Zhen. While he stressed the need to unite with the bourgeoisie

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<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*, p.287.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, p.288-289.

and the intellectuals as a critical pre-requisite for advancing science and building socialism, Peng also emphasised the importance of the Party's leadership of the united front, reliance on the masses, and the elimination of counter-revolutionaries. Peng also drew attention to the weakest link in united front work, the vital need for Party Committees to support it if it was to succeed: "No matter how busy they were," declared Peng, "they should not forget or slacken united front work."<sup>71</sup>

The issue of the UFD's practical ability to manage the MPGs was also significant. Li Weihang's address to fellow UFD workers revealed serious shortages of both funds and cadres. The CCP had allocated the UFD 730,000 yuan in 1955 when (excluding the ACFIC) there were only 371 central, provincial, and municipal level cadres for all eight MPGs. Moreover, if these resources were to be subject to the prevailing call for economy and cadre numbers were reduced to 250, there would then be only six cadres per branch. This funding shortage exacerbated the existing problems of recruiting united front cadres. United front work was already unattractive because relative to other departments the UFD's cadres would be faced with low wages and poor living conditions. They would often be ignored by other CCP cadres and were frequently subjected to unreasonable demands by the Party.<sup>72</sup> The UFD's inherent need to associate with bourgeois elements was already a major potential inhibition to attracting any cadres. Notwithstanding the demands it made of the UFD, the CCP was not prepared to finance the department adequately enough to allow it to carry out its work. It is not surprising then, that even progressives who looked to the UFD for support were often disappointed by the CCP's attitude.

All these factors, from Mao's encouragement of the new UFD policies to the latter's lack of resources to monitor and control the MPGs completely (a task made almost superfluous by the prevailing political climate), all contributed to MPG discontent.

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<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*, pp.274-275. The text of this speech was not included in the published conference proceedings.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*, p.292.

### **From Gentle to Driving Rain: MPG Criticisms and Luo Longji's and Zhang Bojun's Proposals**

The publication of MPG and other complaints exposed many problems with united front work, the United Front Department, and CCP attitudes generally. They revealed numerous examples of sectarianism, dogmatism and bureaucratism. The weaknesses of the MPGs and their relations with the CCP and UFD were also exposed to publicly reveal major problems.

Many MPG complaints revolved around the talent wasted by CCP sectarianism. Mao himself had already acknowledged that unemployment amongst ACFIC members remained unsolved.<sup>73</sup> Even after the Five-Antis campaign and the expropriations of private firms, businessmen continued to complain that their abilities were now wasted even though "they really asked for little more than that their wealth of experience be acknowledged and that their advice sometimes be accepted."<sup>74</sup>

The Democratic League's Luo Longji listed far more extreme examples of wasted talent, such as intellectuals who had returned from overseas but were then forced to work as cart pullers and cigarette sellers. He also detailed instances of chemists teaching languages, philosophers acting as librarians, and lawyers as book-keepers.<sup>75</sup> Other examples included English literature majors working in libraries and students of aeronautical engineering becoming bus conductors.<sup>76</sup> Unemployment among MPG members remained a common problem. This even applied to groups with apparent propaganda value, such as Taiwanese natives who came to Mainland China from Japan and elsewhere rather than return to Taiwan.<sup>77</sup>

While all MPG leaders bloomed and contended to some degree, the progressives were the most cautious. The more right-wing elements, conditioned by years of remoulding were also initially cautious. Yet it was the proposals and criticisms by Luo Longji, Zhang Bojun, and MPG leaders associated with them, which became the basis

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<sup>73</sup> "Speech to delegates of the first meeting of the second national conference of the ACFIC," (December 8, 1956), Kau, *et al*, vol.2, p.205.

<sup>74</sup> Loh, 1963, p.235.

<sup>75</sup> Luo Longji to CPPCC in March 1957. Roderick MacFaquhar, *The Hundred Flowers*, (Atlantic Books, London, 1960), p.20.

<sup>76</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.516.

<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*, p.510.

for much of the subsequent backlash and condemnation by the CCP. When considered in conjunction with the proposals of other MPG leaders, Zhang and Luo's suggestions amounted to a basic program for revitalising and dramatically increasing the MPG's importance as partners and supervisors for the CCP. Criticisms by the National Construction Association's Zhang Naiqi, in contrast, were directed towards the basis of the CCP's socialist transformation.

On May 10, 1957, Luo described three problems which needed to be addressed to allow the effective development of the principle of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision: the development of MPG organisation, the involvement of MPGs in policy making, and the effective use of MPG basic level organisations. Luo argued that the idea of the MPGs being "mere eyebrows" (mere decorations) to the CCP's face, was the result of a basic misunderstanding of their past, present, and future roles. As examples of the valuable roles they could play he cited the NCA's role in the socialisation of industry and commerce and the Revolutionary GMD's role in the peaceful liberation of Taiwan.<sup>78</sup>

However, in order to be effective the MPGs needed to expand. Zhang Bojun claimed that people were already describing the Democratic League Central Committee as "a sick body dragging itself along with no independent views or specific measures with which to carry out the CCP's new policy."<sup>79</sup> Luo Longji supported this image when he described the restrictions limiting League recruitment to a shrinking pool of aging, old-style intellectuals. Following Zhou Enlai's "Intellectuals" report of January 1956, this problem was compounded even further when the CCP itself began recruiting progressives from this same shrinking group. Many intellectuals now preferred to join the CCP rather than the MPGs and this contradiction was, claimed Luo, not conducive to long-term co-existence.<sup>80</sup>

It became obvious that many intellectuals had only joined the MPGs because they had been unable to join the CCP. In his subsequent self-criticism, Luo stated that most of the 30,000 Democratic League members had originally been progressives;

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<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, pp.508-509.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*, p.505.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*, pp.509-510.

recruitment after early 1956 had concentrated on enlisting middle-of-the-road and backward elements. Overall, however, numbers did not change, perhaps indicating that many progressives in the League joined the CCP.<sup>81</sup> In their subsequent self-criticisms, Zhang and Luo spoke of each party recruiting several hundred thousand members, and the total for the eight MPGs reaching several million.<sup>82</sup> To achieve this, Zhang is alleged to have planned to circumvent CCP restrictions on the age, political status and occupations of MPG members and develop MPG organisations down to the county level.<sup>83</sup> Ironically, amongst the appeals Peasant and Worker Party members were alleged to have used to recruit these new members was the promise of subsequent entry into the CCP and an increased chance of positions in the CPPCC.<sup>84</sup>

The expansion of MPG membership to the extent desired by Zhang went far beyond anything the CCP envisaged. It would also have extended the MPGs and their supervisory role down to levels where the CCP dominated almost completely and where, according to Shao Lizi of the Revolutionary GMD, there was effectively no separation of Party and Government whatsoever.<sup>85</sup> The growth of the MPGs might well have helped rally more people behind the CCP's goals but it would also have given the MPGs the potential to constitute an opposition. Although it had relaxed recruitment restrictions on the MPGs in 1956, and had allowed their membership to increase to around 100,000,<sup>86</sup> the Party almost certainly did not want them to develop into significant semi-independent political forces.

When Luo Longji was criticised by Shi Liang for planning to restrict intellectuals to the Democratic League, he denied the proposition and raised the related issue of the MPGs' lack of real power.<sup>87</sup> Powerlessness was the major problem facing the MPGs; they had no clear role in a system where the line between the CCP and the

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<sup>81</sup> Bowie, *et al*, 1962, p.332.

<sup>82</sup> See Zhang Bojun's self-criticism, "I Bow My Head and Admit My Guilt Before the People," *ibid.*, p.336. There seems to have been some confusion over these figures. Luo gave the figure of millions for the Democratic League alone.

<sup>83</sup> See "Zhang, Huang, Li, youpai jituan de erxing 'Da fazhan,'" [Zhang (Bojun), Huang (Qixiang), Li (Boqiu) evil 'great expansion'"]. In *Dagong bao renmin shouce bianji weiyuanhui, Renmin shouce*, [The people's handbook] (Dagong bao, Beijing, 1958), pp.126-127.

<sup>84</sup> *Renmin shouce*, 1958, p.127.

<sup>85</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.508.

<sup>86</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.42.

<sup>87</sup> Hinton, 1980, pp.509-510.

government was increasingly blurred. The more the CCP dominated government, the less place there was for non-Party people. Illustrating the Party's lack of trust was the fact that even a MPG leader as progressive as Huang Yanpei was denied access to documents listing provincial directors of his own Ministry for Light Industry "for security reasons." Yet this information was displayed in the office of a lower ranked Party leader. The Revolutionary GMD's Weng Wenhao claimed that in light of this situation, "it would be a great joke for other people to expect to have authority to go with their posts."<sup>88</sup> The Revolutionary GMD's Wang Kunlun warned that such powerlessness soon resulted in a retreat into a passive "guest mentality."<sup>89</sup>

Luo Longji believed that the abolition of the Party Committees controlling tertiary institutions would immediately demonstrate CCP goodwill to MPG members and ameliorate CCP sectarianism in schools. Luo advocated joint committees made up of CCP, MPG and NPP representatives. Such a change, he argued, would demonstrate that the democratic personages were more than eyebrows.<sup>90</sup> University Party Committees were of vital concern to the many MPG members employed in the education system and their abolition became a common demand of many MPG leaders. The Revolutionary GMD's Chen Mingshu advocated new university committees made up of both Party and non-Party members.<sup>91</sup> He later called for unqualified Party members to be removed from schools but at the same time he requested that united front work in education institutions be intensified.<sup>92</sup> The Democratic League's Huang Yaomian advocated expanding joint CCP-MPG committees from schools into the culture and education departments. While Huang wanted the Party's policies retained as guides for both sides, he asked for a defined formal status for the MPGs within state organisations and for their members to compete with Party members on the basis of merit.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, p.226. Huang's radical documents for the NCA were sometimes softened in tone by Mao himself. See Mao's "Letter to Huang Yanpei," (September 5, 1952). In Kau *et al*, vol.1, 1986, pp.283-284.

<sup>89</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.507.

<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*, p.504.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*, p.506. Ma Yinchu also later endorsed Chen's school committee idea. *ibid.*, p.510.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*, p.517.

Committees made up of both CCP and non-Party people offered a way of controlling sectarianism in schools where complaints of CCP discrimination against non-Party people were numerous. An Association for the Promotion of Democracy deputy principal at a middle school claimed that her transfer was as a result of complaining about the violence of her CCP superior.<sup>94</sup> Another APD member was principal but all decisions were referred to the school's Party deputy.<sup>95</sup>

Sectarianism was rife in many areas. One extreme example was a Party member who threatened his wife with divorce for being a MPG member.<sup>96</sup> Party members were generally promoted to leadership positions over non-party intellectuals, even though they often had no expertise in the areas they were to supervise. Party members were rapidly promoted; in one example a CCP cadre rose three grades within a year, while non-Party people were fortunate to be promoted once in three years. Non-party people were often treated as being a grade below their official one; they were also often excluded from important activities in their units, unless there was a need to criticise someone.<sup>97</sup>

Joint CCP-non-Party university committees also offered a way of constraining the Party dogmatism which was inhibiting the development of a vital rational and scientific culture. A Jiusan Society professor of biology, for example, had his textbook thoroughly criticised over a period of weeks, not for scientific errors but on political grounds.<sup>98</sup> Similarly, a geographer was afraid of being dubbed a "geographical determinist."<sup>99</sup> Economics was similarly handicapped with all economists prevented from using any non-Marxist analysis.<sup>100</sup> Academic debates and writings in the natural sciences were no longer regarded as class neutral giving rise to the types of problems for which Lu Dingyi had prescribed active academic debate.

One issue of major concern to the Party's united front allies was that of the political movements which so easily targeted them, particularly the suppression of

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<sup>94</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, p.64.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*, p.67.

<sup>96</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.512.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*, p.518.

<sup>98</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, p.90.

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*, p.27.

<sup>100</sup> *ibid.*, pp.117-120.

counter-revolutionary campaigns. In his original "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions" speech, Mao explicitly declared "basically there were no errors." This certainty was despite his immediate admission that 700,000 people had been killed in the *sufan* and related campaigns to 1953, 70,000 had been killed since, and individuals continued to be killed.<sup>101</sup> These figures, large enough in themselves, did not encompass the fear that the campaigns had created amongst large sections of the population. However, the admission regarding the number of deaths was omitted from the official version of Mao's speech in which it was merely stated that "After liberation, we rooted out a number of counter-revolutionaries. *Some* were sentenced to death for major crimes."<sup>102</sup> Moreover, Mao said this was perfectly justified:

This was absolutely necessary, it was the demand of the masses, and it was done to free them from long years of oppression by the counter-revolutionaries and all kinds of local tyrants, in other words, to liberate the productive forces. If we had not done so, the masses would not have been able to lift their heads.<sup>103</sup>

Many united front allies ran the risk of being denounced as counter-revolutionaries, often as a result of the very CCP sectarianism the Hundred Flowers was designed to expose. Contradicting Party members could easily result in someone being labelled as counter-revolutionary. Mao's statements that, notwithstanding such enemies having been "virtually eliminated," counter-revolutionaries were nevertheless still present and the CCP was now "generous" in its treatment of them, served to justify continued denunciations<sup>104</sup> Moreover, in both the original and official versions of "On the Correct Handling ...," Mao had made it clear that the *sufan* campaigns were not to be debated:

Now a few people want to reverse this verdict, a few friends want to reverse this verdict. It's wrong to reverse the verdict of that time: I don't think it is worth reversing. If its reversed, the people will rise up and strike us with their carrying poles, the peasants will rise up and strike us with their carrying poles, the workers will grab some weapon, grab iron bars and beat us.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> MacFaquhar, *et al*, 1989, p.142.

<sup>102</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.5, p.397. (Emphasis added)

<sup>103</sup> *ibid*. Moreover, in his original speech, Mao did not invoke any alleged demand by the peasants although he stressed that the deaths were necessary to release the productive force by removing the fetters on them. MacFaquhar, *et al*, 1989, p.142.

<sup>104</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.5, p.397.

<sup>105</sup> MacFaquhar, *et al*, 1989, p.143.

Not only were united front allies raising doubts about the campaigns, “a few people” in the Party even wanted verdicts reversed. Mao stated that this was impossible; he referred to the Hungarian anti-Soviet uprising of 1956 to justify his stand, declaring that because the Hungarians had not “basically eliminated” counter-revolutionaries, killing “only a few” and actually killing some revolutionaries, “thus emerged the Hungarian incident.”<sup>106</sup>

Yet, while Mao declared the overall inviolability of the *sufan* campaigns, he also admitted that some mistakes, omissions, and excesses had occurred. He called for these to be investigated and the experience summarised, a process in which the Standing Committees of the NPC and CPPCC could be involved.<sup>107</sup> However, these investigations were not explicitly to uncover wrong verdicts. If anything, they were to discover whether any counter-revolutionaries had survived. “Our current goal is, first, not to pour cold water on [cadres]; [and] second to help them. To throw cold water on the majority of cadres is not good.” Mao clearly associated the elimination of remaining counter-revolutionaries with China’s social stability. He refused any general amnesty despite being urged by some “friends” to do so, “because then everyone would want one.” Nevertheless, Mao conceded the desirability of the secret and slow release of individuals labelled as counter-revolutionaries if they had fully repented.<sup>108</sup>

The arbitrary definition of counter-revolutionary crimes and the CCP’s need to negative exemplars and enemies against whom to struggle meant that the MPG memberships and constituencies with their bourgeois, landlord, and overseas connections, were always particularly susceptible to being targeted. This danger increased as the more obvious suspects were eliminated and the definition of what constituted “right” moved towards what had formerly been the centre. The Zhigong dang leader, Chen Qiyou, complained that his party was not notified when any of its members were arrested; he asked if this meant that the MPGs were not trusted and that the MPG leaderships were irrelevant to their parties’ memberships.<sup>109</sup> In 1954, one of

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<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*, p143-144. These, and most other references to Hungary, are absent from the official version of Mao’s speech.

<sup>107</sup> *ibid.*, p.145.

<sup>108</sup> *ibid.*, pp.147-148.

<sup>109</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.507.

the CCP's closest friends, Huang Yanpei had written to Mao about lingering problems from the Five-Antis.<sup>110</sup> In May 1955, representing the fears of the constituency of the National Construction Association, Huang again wrote to Mao expressing their concerns about the *sufan* campaign and requesting a general amnesty.<sup>111</sup> It had been precisely to avoid arousing such fears among the middle elements that Mao had stated in 1951: "As long as we do not kill anyone by mistake, even if there is an outcry on the part of the bourgeoisie, we will not have to be frightened by their outcry."<sup>112</sup>

Despite Mao's placing the *sufan* campaign out of bounds, Luo Longji sought to use Mao's admissions as a basis to extract more concessions. He advocated the establishment of a committee made up of MPG, non-Party personages and CCP representatives to show the CCP's faith in the MPGs, give them some real influence and, at the same time, address a major concern of his constituents and a dominant factor behind their passivity. Taking Mao's suggestion of an internal Party inquiry into the issue two steps further, Luo's proposed committee would investigate appeals against judgements made during CCP political campaigns. This committee would examine appeals made, not only during the Three and Five-Anti campaigns but, most importantly, during the *sufan* campaigns. Highlighting his concern for the vulnerability of potential plaintiffs, Luo wanted this committee to provide guarantees of freedom of speech for those who dared to bloom and contend before it.<sup>113</sup> Luo's proposal touched a public raw nerve and he received over 170 letters of support despite the topic's extremely sensitive and inherently dangerous nature. Using this support as a basis, Luo sought to convince the UFD and CCP to adopt his proposal.<sup>114</sup>

Another major issue for the MPGs was the decline of their political relevance, a decline that went hand-in-hand with the decreasing economic importance of their constituents as the socialisation of private business proceeded apace. It was the MPGs

<sup>110</sup> "Letter to Huang Yanpei," (November 23, 1954) Kau, *et al*, 1986, p.500.

<sup>111</sup> "Letter to Huang Yanpei," (May 26, 1955), *ibid.*, pp.556-557.

<sup>112</sup> "Comment on Suppressing and Liquidating Counter-revolutionaries," (January 17, 1951), Kau, *et al*, 1986, vol.1, pp.162-163. Mao had earlier instructed: "In suppressing counter-revolutionaries, please make that strike firmly, accurately, and relentlessly, so that nothing detrimental can be said about it among the various circles in society." See "Comment on Suppressing and Liquidating Counter-revolutionaries," (December 19, 1950), *ibid.*, p.152.

<sup>113</sup> MacFauhar, 1960, p.48.

<sup>114</sup> Bowie, *et al*, 1962, pp.332, 312-313.

raising of issues related to their own political relevance, such as overcoming the passivity of their constituents, that resulted in some MPG leaders offending Mao. Wang Kunlun had first raised the “MPGs as eyebrows” analogy during discussions of the united front allies’ lack of influence in the NPC and CPPCC. Wang described a situation in which the non-Party members of the NPC Standing Committee discussed major issues while CCP members remained silent. The clear implication was that the issues had already been settled and discussion was a formality.<sup>115</sup> Yet these were among the very few forums where legitimate non-Party interests to be legally represented. If non-Party opinions were never considered then this collaboration was no more than mere window dressing.

Wang Kunlun’s “eyebrows” analogy had exposed the NPC Standing Committee as a rubber stamp for the CCP, and the PWP’s Liu Boqiu claimed that the CPPCC was the most neglected of MPG activities.<sup>116</sup> To maximise the MPGs’ political effectiveness and exercise Mao’s principle of mutual supervision effectively, Zhang Bojun revived the idea of China adopting a bi-cameral parliamentary system. Zhang advocated turning the CPPCC into an upper house to review government policy. These proposals would formalise the CPPCC as senate to the legislative NPC. The MPGs, NPPs, and the people’s organisations in the united front would thus be provided with an opportunity to bring their talents to bear on investigating national issues and supervise the government. It should be noted that Zhang’s proposals were not designed to supplant the Party’s power in any way. On the contrary, they merely sought to take advantage of the promise of Mao’s apparent new generous and cooperative attitude towards united front work designed to support the Party. Zhang’s proposals were within the united front framework. Not only did Zhang believe in the role of the united front, he wanted it expanded and consolidated. This expansion would also require a commensurate “continual increase in the tasks and work of the CPPCC,” a stance endorsed by the UFD itself. He also took pains to point out that the both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and not only capitalist countries, already had upper houses. The

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<sup>115</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, p.42.

<sup>116</sup> Bowie, *et al*, 1962, p.512.

CPPCC's powers to "make proposals and exercise supervision could be strengthened," not only at the central, but down to the local level.<sup>117</sup> This expansion would be complemented by developing MPG organisations at county level. Luo Longji supported Zhang's proposal although he subsequently denied it to the dual CCP-League leader Gao Chongmin.<sup>118</sup>

Zhang Bojun sought a strengthened CPPCC to delineate the boundaries between the CCP and the government. This would overcome the prevailing situation where "the Party's organisation virtually exercises control over all things."<sup>119</sup> Luo Longji also advocated making the existing CPPCC and NPC more effective as legislative bodies. Any regulations or system which prevented non-Party people from having access to relevant materials, documents, meetings, and conferences had to be changed. Without such access and preparation, non-Party participation in National People's Congress and CPPCC committees would remain a formality. It was only by being briefed in advance that MPG members and others could contribute constructively to discussions with Party members.<sup>120</sup>

Zhang Bojun's was an attempt to reverse the CPPCC's decline into merely a propaganda and thought reform body. The replacement of the *Common Program* by the new Chinese constitution of 1954 had left the CPPCC as the ultimate expression of the united front while the locus of power was now nominally vested in the NPC. However, the seven tasks of the CPPCC, as laid out by Zhou Enlai in December 1954, had left little room for input into policy by the allies represented within it.<sup>121</sup> The CPPCC was to assist the transition to socialism and it was not incorporated into the new constitution. Its usefulness had all but expired.

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<sup>117</sup> "Speech to the CPPCC" (March 18, 1957), in MacFaquhar, 1960, pp.21-22.

<sup>118</sup> Bowie, *et al*, 1962, p.337.

<sup>119</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.505.

<sup>120</sup> *ibid.*, p.509.

<sup>121</sup> These seven tasks were: 1) protect and help implement the new constitution, 2) consolidate the leadership of the proletariat and the leading status of the socialist portion of the economy, 3) assist state organs to promote the social forces, realise the industrialisation of the nation and the socialist transformation, 4) liaise closely with the masses and reflect the masses' opinions and raise their suggestions, 5) strengthen national unity, raise revolutionary consciousness and maintain the struggle against internal and foreign enemies, 6) strengthen the forces for world peace, 7) on a voluntary basis, study Marxism-Leninism and national policies, begin criticism and self criticism, and actively implement thought reform. "Guanyu Zhengxie zhangcheng he Zhengxie di er jie quanguo weiyuan hui mingdan wenti," (December 4, 1954), Zhou Enlai, 1984, p.259.

On May 21, Zhang Bojun advanced the idea of a Political Design Department (*zhengzhi sheji yuan*) in which the CCP, the National Committee of the CPPCC, the Standing Committee of the NPC, the MPGs, and people's organisations could discuss issues of national import.<sup>122</sup> However, he did not elaborate further on what this would involve.

On June 6, Zhang Bojun met with Democratic League Central Committee members, Zeng Chaolun (deputy Minister of Education), Fei Xiaotong (deputy director of the Institute of Ethnic Studies), Huang Yaomian, Tao Dayong (professors at Beijing Normal University), Wu Jingchao (a professor at People's University), and Qian Weichang (vice President at Qinghua University). These men represented the League's Propaganda, Culture and Education, and Organisation departments. They agreed to set up four groups: a Long-term Co-existence Blooming and Contending Group, a Scientific Planning Group, a Duties Group, and a group for Party Committees in Tertiary Institutions. According to Luo Longji, these groups were to promote the Democratic League and their role would include working for the abolition of Party Committees in schools and the collection materials in support of League submissions to the Central Government.<sup>123</sup> These groups would constitute formal lobby groups to support the MPGs' calls for change. Realising the sensitivity of these groups, Luo Longji avoided telling the League's progressive leaders, Shen Junru, Shi Liang and Gao Chongmin, and the League's Standing Committee about them.<sup>124</sup> This act was later taken as evidence of a plot. However, the fact that the meeting was attended by League leader and CCP member, Min Ganghou,<sup>125</sup> render the conspiracy theory even more ridiculous.

An integral aspect of the Hundred Flowers campaign apparently unaddressed by Luo and Zhang was the inadequacy of China's legal system. Some, such as the Revolutionary GMD's Liu Fei, argued that this under-development had facilitated the CCP's domination of government, especially at the county level.<sup>126</sup> Huang Shaohong,

<sup>122</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, pp.47-48.

<sup>123</sup> Bowie, *et al*, 1962, p.336.

<sup>124</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>125</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.95.

<sup>126</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, p.51.

of the same party, also declared that the development of China's legal system lagged behind that of the rest of the state system. With the problems of *sufan* campaign in mind, Chen Qiyu wanted the state civil and criminal codes formulated and promulgated as soon as possible and, together with the state constitution, strictly adhered to.<sup>127</sup> Similar complaints were echoed by lawyers generally.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, the problem of the need for an independent judiciary to enforce the laws was not broached.

Many of the problems raised at the UFD forums were related to the moderation of the relationship between MPG and NPP representatives and the CCP by the United Front Department. Allies looked to the UFD for the resolution of their problems. The League's Min Ganghou, for example, sought the Department's help to resolve the problems of bureaucratic gradings. Jiusan's Xu Deheng wanted issues of recruitment resolved. Chu Tu'nan, likewise, looked to the UFD to find jobs for MPG cadres at both the professional cadre and part-time levels. Chu sought the Department's help in raising the political consciousness of MPG cadres. Wang Yifan, of the Peasants and Workers Party, wanted the Department to launch a general propaganda campaign to increase awareness of the united front. Wang criticised the UFD for over-emphasising respect for the MPG's independence, equality, and freedom rather than providing the support they needed. The NCA's Tan Zhiqing suggested solving the problems of positions without power by using the UFD to arrange meetings with Party leaders in relevant government departments. Huang Qixiang criticised the Department for giving a disproportionate amount of aid to the National Construction Association and he called for equivalent amounts to be given to the other MPGs. Likewise, even Luo Longji's aim that MPGs and non-Party personages should be better prepared to undertake mutual supervision involved active UFD support as did his calls for MPGs to maintain their independence, equality and freedom. Luo, however, did add pointedly that the Department's help "should not go past a proper amount."<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> *ibid.*, p.47.

<sup>128</sup> *ibid.*, pp.114-116.

<sup>129</sup> Hinton, 1980, pp.508-511.

In a serious criticism related to Luo's sarcasm about UFD involvement in MPG affairs, Zhang Naiqi, the NCA leader and Minister for Food, raised the sensitive issue of CCP and progressive activists within the MPGs. He described "visible and invisible" sectarianism within the NCA in which some members, the progressives, "put on airs of a CCP member." This resulted, said Zhang, in many other members retreating into passivity, lest they be attacked for their views.<sup>130</sup>

There were many CCP members in the MPGs, often as part of the CCP's leadership cores. Both the powerful secretariats, the centres of administrative control, were almost invariably held by CCP members.<sup>131</sup> Sun Qimeng, of the NCA, for example, was a former activist in the Socialist Youth League and had been in the CCP since at least 1950. Sun occupied numerous powerful NCA positions, especially in personnel and the secretariat.<sup>132</sup> The sarcastic tone of Luo Longji's comments about UFD support for MPG independence and equality being constrained to the proper amount, also had much to do with the presence of the progressive revolutionary intellectuals and dual CCP-MPG members. Just as Jiusan had lost 200 members to the CCP in 1956,<sup>133</sup> many progressive leaders in other MPGs had joined the CCP. Between 1953 and 1955, some two hundred and fifty five League members joined the CCP.<sup>134</sup> The Party wanted to increase the proportion of intellectuals within CCP ranks to one third and the MPGs provided one means of achieving this goal. From early 1956, the UFD began actively educating "revolutionary intellectuals" in the MPGs to allow them to join the CCP,<sup>135</sup> although by late 1956, some prominent progressives were told to "stay outside the CCP."<sup>136</sup> This approach allowed the appearance of independence to be maintained.

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<sup>130</sup> *ibid.*, p.506.

<sup>131</sup> Kei'ichi Iwamoto, *Flower Vases of the Chinese Communist Party: A Study of the Chinese Democratic Parties*, (AM thesis, Harvard University, 1995), pp.10-11.

<sup>132</sup> *UFE*, p.791. Sun, along with Hua Gang, had also worked for the CCP training revolutionaries in Yan'an in the 1940s. Li Weihai, 1986, p.636.

<sup>133</sup> Xu Deheng, quoted in Hinton, 1980, p.506.

<sup>134</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.451.

<sup>135</sup> Zhongyang tongzhan bu, "Guanyu bangzhu minzhu dangpai de yijian," [Opinions on helping the Democratic parties and groups] (March 26, 1956). A document of the Sixth National United Front work Conference). Ren Tao, 1988, p.261.

<sup>136</sup> Li Weihai, in *ibid.*, p.289.

Shi Liang was an important progressive in the League although it appears that she never officially joined the CCP. Shi stood up for the CCP positions and strongly attacked deviations from the CCP line. Her attacks on Luo's suggestions for MPG expansion and her defence of CCP leadership and remoulding were notable examples.<sup>137</sup> The progressives made some criticisms of the CCP, but with the significant exception of Wang Kunlun's exposure of the NPC as a rubber stamp, they and the dual CCP-MPG members stressed the mutual nature of problems and supervision. They called on the UFD to help solve problems and certainly did not advocate setting up new organisations. Dual members, such as Wang Shao'ao of the APD, declared that the wall between the CCP and non-Party masses was built up from two sides and both sides had to dismantle it, not just the CCP. It was therefore not enough, said Wang, to have rectification only in CCP ranks; this should also be extended to the MPGs. Similarly, dual CCP-DL member Chu Tu'nian called for the raising of ideological levels.<sup>138</sup> Nevertheless, in the spirit of the rectification campaign, many dual CCP-MPG members and progressives forwarded proposals to improve united front work.

In contrast to the progressives' defence of the CCP, some of the most trenchant criticisms of the CCP, criticisms which went well beyond a gentle breeze, were advanced by one-time third road supporter Chu Anping, the new editor of MPG mouthpiece *Guangming ribao*. With Chu as editor, Zhang Bojun as manager, Zhang Naiqi on the editorial board and Luo Longji having influence with Chu, it was natural that given an opportunity, they would use the paper to promote their views.<sup>139</sup>

This chance had been provided by Mao when, in March 1957, he had met with representatives of the press. Mao told the CCP representative from *Guangming ribao* that it was inappropriate for a Party member to edit a paper for the democratic parties. He had stated that non-Party people ran newspapers better than Party members. Moreover, Mao's expressions of confidence in the MPGs was again within the context

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<sup>137</sup> Hinton, 1980, pp.509-510.

<sup>138</sup> *ibid.*, p.510.

<sup>139</sup> Bowie, *et al.*, 1962, p.340.

of encouraging non-Party criticism of the CCP's short-comings as seen by Mao himself.<sup>140</sup>

Following Mao's talk, the widely respected former thorn in the side of the GMD, Chu Anping, was appointed editor of *Guangming ribao* on April 1. Not only could many of Mao's pronouncements be taken as encouraging active criticism of the Party, Chu's editorial freedom was greatly increased by the unprecedented agreement of the UFD and its allies to dissolve the paper's Party Committee and allow it to be independent.<sup>141</sup> This was indeed an unique expression of trust in the reliability of the MPGs. Chu soon dispatched reporters to other cities to host forums where intellectuals could bloom and contend and then see their grievances published. These complaints, however, soon went far beyond minor grievances about literature and the press. For his part, Chu was happy with again being able to use *Guangming ribao* to expose major issues, "it is the Party's task to solve them."<sup>142</sup>

In keeping with his long-held third road views and criticisms of the GMD, Chu held strong opinions on China's problems under the CCP. He laid the blame for CCP sectarianism squarely on what he characterised as a "the world belongs to the Party" mentality. Everything had to be done with CCP approval but the skills and talents of many Party cadres failed to match their responsibilities; many made serious mistakes and the Party had lost respect. Moreover, Chu added, "recently the public advanced many critical opinions about the young bonzes but nobody has anything to say about the old bonzes." He pointed out that Mao had promised a coalition government and in 1949, three of the six deputy chairpersons of the Central Government had been non-Party as were half the deputy premiers, and it "looked like a coalition government." Since the government had been re-organised (in 1954) the deputy chairpersons had been moved to the Standing Committee of the CPPCC. Of the twelve deputy premiers, not one was currently non-Party.<sup>143</sup> For Chu, this state of affairs effectively reflected

<sup>140</sup> "A Summary of a Talk with the Representatives of the Press and Publishing Circles," (March 10, 1957), MacFaquhar, *et al*, 1989, pp.249-271.

<sup>141</sup> *Guangming ribao* editorial section, "*Guangming ribao* zai Zhang Bojun, Chu Anping, deng gai zhengzhi fangxiang qijian suo fan cuowu de jiancha," [Investigation into the errors of political direction at *Guangming ribao* by Zhang Boju, Chu Anping etc.], *Renmin shouce*, 1958, p.150.

<sup>142</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, p.52-53.

the decline in the CCP's need for its former allies and its increase in arrogance. At the same time, Chu was implicitly criticising Mao, the most senior bonze and the force setting both the direction and pace of socialist transformation.

### **Mao's Reaction to Criticisms and the Beginnings of the Anti-Rightist Campaign**

Mao had launched the blooming and contending in the face of strong internal Party opposition but this campaign rapidly gave rise to manifestations which caused him unease. Li Weihan reported regularly to Mao on the forums conducted by the UFD. In mid-May, around the time of the third or fourth forum and two weeks after the blooming began, Li found Mao becoming unhappy with the tone and content of many of the criticisms. Many criticisms were pointed and revealed a very high level of discontent; there were widespread problems within the Party and the CCP's relations with other groups. In *Guangming ribao's* forums, in the paper's "Letters to the Editors" section, and in *Wenhui bao* (where Pu Xixiu, Luo Longji's wife and also a Democratic League leader was an editor) there was little restraint.<sup>144</sup> Li Weihan sought to play down the complaints being published in these forums but Mao disagreed with Li's descriptions of the criticisms as "a family quarrel (*gu sao chaojia*)." "These are not family," said Mao, "they are enemies (*shi di wo*)."<sup>145</sup> On May 15, Mao wrote an inner-Party circular, ominously called "The Situation is Changing," in which he declared that "ferocious Rightism" was manifested in the MPGs and tertiary institutions. Nevertheless, he did not call for an immediate end to the blooming. Rather, he declared that "we must let them rave on for a while; let them reach their peak."<sup>146</sup> On May 20, another Party instruction was issued to collect and analyse "reactionary" statements being issued in the name of the Hundred Flowers.<sup>147</sup> These collated materials were subsequently published to act as irrefutable evidence against those accused.

<sup>144</sup> It's interesting to note that the relationship between Luo and Pu is never clarified in Chinese sources. Boorman states that Luo and Pu were husband and wife. Boorman, 1967, vol.2, p.437.

<sup>145</sup> Li Weihan, 1986, pp.833-834.

<sup>146</sup> Kau *et al*, 1986, p.549. In *SW*, vol.5 it is called "Things are beginning to Change." See pp.440-446.

<sup>147</sup> Bo Yibo. 1991, p.615.

On June 1, a significant hint to the MPGs that the Party's attitude had changed came in a comment by He Xiangning, the progressive vice-chairwoman of the Revolutionary GMD and chairwoman of the Overseas Affairs Commission. She described as "Rightists," those who "paid lip-service to socialism, but actually admired capitalism; their minds were filled with admiration of the Euro-American type of government."<sup>148</sup> As a trusted long-standing progressive, He's statement was a pointed warning to Zhang Bojun, Luo, Chu, and others.

On June 3, 1957, Li Weihan asked Mao, Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai to read a speech he was preparing. Although he had not yet referred to rightists, should he do so? Mao added a line to Li's speech stating that of the opinions expressed so far, "a considerable (*xiangdang*) proportion of them were wrong." On June 8, at a meeting of representatives of industry and commerce, Li stated that although most opinions and ideas discussed thus far had been good, "a portion of them were wrong, and among these some of the errors were of a serious nature."<sup>149</sup> The wind was now clearly beginning to change. Li Weihan was particularly well placed to discover this change. Li Weihan moved to protect some MPG leaders, realising that any new criticism of the Party and its policies were going to be interpreted as Rightist attacks. He arranged for Sun Qimeng to organise replacement speakers for the NCA and ACFIC's Huang Yanpei and Hu Ziyong, lest the delivery of their recently compiled reports resulted in them becoming classed as Rightists. Their hapless substitutes were indeed subsequently denounced.<sup>150</sup>

The beginning of an open counter-attack on the CCP's critics came on June 7, with the publication of an anonymous letter. Lu Yuwen of the Revolutionary GMD was attacked for declaring during a UFD forum that any blame for a gap between the Party and the non-Party masses should be borne by both sides and not the CCP alone. The letter accused Lu of being a "shameless rascal" and "abetting the ferocious tiger."<sup>151</sup> Mao himself wrote the next day's *Renmin ribao* editorial, "What is this

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<sup>148</sup> MacFaquhar, 1960, p.54.

<sup>149</sup> Li Weihan, 1986, p.835.

<sup>150</sup> *ibid.*, pp.834-835.

<sup>151</sup> Chen, 1960, p.171.

for?"<sup>152</sup> Within the Party Mao circulated the directive, "Muster Our Forces to Repulse the Rightists Wild Attacks." This missive instructed the left-wing and middle elements within the MPGs to actively refute the Rightists.<sup>153</sup>

Many letters published in the name of the Hundred Flowers after June 8 were highly critical of the CCP, advocating it stand down or even its overthrow.<sup>154</sup> While sometimes written by ordinary MPG members, these letters were far more radical than those of the famous MPG leaders. However, any distinctions between the utterances of MPG leaders, MPG members, and disaffected members of the public soon disappeared as the CCP's officially sponsored reaction gathered momentum. The critical letters by often unknown individuals served to inflame public opinion and presented the impression that the bourgeoisie and intellectuals were hostile to the Party. The very extremism of these letters prepared the public for the gathering political campaign against any questioning of the Party and its leader.

Concerns within the CCP over the direction of the campaign could not be divorced from the wider problems of social unrest it had fostered, especially the danger of chaos on some university campuses. The possibility existed of an uprising by students and the general populace, as had occurred in Hungary in 1956.<sup>155</sup>

Mao was more concerned with attacking what he saw as rightism within the CCP rather than the MPGs. This rightism included anything which reduced his own power. Mao's overestimation of the ideological transformation of the MPGs led him to enlist them in his efforts to change the Party in the manner he desired. This overestimation did not mean that Mao was oblivious to the existence of what he regarded as bourgeois ideology within the MPGs; this was always inherent in his division of them into left-, middle-, and right-wings. Mao had been prepared for some discontent in the MPGs, indeed he felt it inevitable. Nevertheless, it also seems that he was quite

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<sup>152</sup> Kau, *et al*, 1986, pp.564-568.

<sup>153</sup> *SW*, vol.5, pp.448-450.

<sup>154</sup> For example, statements such as, "The masses want to overthrow the Communist party." (June 8), and the, "The Party will collapse soon." (June 10), MacFaquhar, 1960, pp.88-89.

<sup>155</sup> Frederick C. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, (second edition, ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1993), pp.230-235.

unprepared for the very high degree of dissatisfaction and the apparent lack of success of the Party's political education work.

That these failures came as a revelation to Mao was not surprising. He had little direct contact with united front work since 1949; he had not attended the united front work conferences, and his contact with MPG leaders seems to have been largely restricted to their radicals and progressives, such as Ma Xulun, Liu Yazhi and Huang Yanpei.<sup>156</sup> Less than optimistic UFD reports about the degree to which the MPGs had become progressive had been condemned by the CCP Central Committee as "Rightist conservatism."<sup>157</sup> From his talks with the press in March, it is clear that Mao had initially envisaged carrying out an anti-Rightist rectification of the MPGs *after* the completion of the CCP rectification. Now, however, the MPGs became the first major target of rectification and through struggle rather than gentle persuasion.

In "The Situation is Changing," the internal Party document of May 15, Mao described clearly what he saw was at stake for the CCP. "Rightist opportunism" and particularly "revisionism," manifested as criticism of the Party and objections to the pace and the form of its transition to socialism, were now revealed as Mao's growing preoccupations. The importance of leftist sectarianism and dogmatism receded quickly. Mao argued that Rightist and revisionist criticisms of the Party reflected the strong persistence of bourgeois ideology, especially within the ranks of intellectuals both within and outside of the Party. Rectification was therefore vital to purge Party members of leftist one-sidedness and even more importantly, to eliminate "erroneous revisionist or Rightist opportunist thought," particularly amongst Party intellectuals.<sup>158</sup>

Yet, it was the alleged Rightists outside the Party, most notably in MPGs and universities, who came under the initial and strongest attack by the Party. It was in these places, Mao claimed that, "the Rightists have manifested themselves as the most determined and ferocious." In the 1940s the CCP had struggled with the GMD for the loyalty of the middle elements. In 1957, Mao declared that the struggle for the loyalty of this same constituency was now between those in the Party following the correct,

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<sup>156</sup> For his letters to these progressives see Kau, *et al*, 1986, *passim*.

<sup>157</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.512.

<sup>158</sup> Kau, *et al*, 1986, pp.547-552.

that is his road, and the revisionists and Rightists. This situation arose because the seventy percent of intellectuals who remained outside of the Party were not yet committed to socialism. This struggle, Mao argued, was a fight for leadership in the press, literature, art, science and technology.<sup>159</sup> It was effectively an internal Party battle for hegemony.

By acknowledging that the Rightists believed that their ideas appealed to the children of the bourgeoisie, still the bulk of the student population, Mao implicitly admitted the strength of those ideas and a major failure by the Party to win their support. These “Rightist” ideas included a denial of class differences and class struggle, “anarchic” competition in the economic sphere, an admiration of “bourgeois liberalism” and opposition to “centralised leadership, planning, and control over cultural and educational undertakings (including journalism) which are necessary to realise a planned economy.”<sup>160</sup> The Rightists would be identified and labelled, and once isolated by counter-attacks from the left and the middle, they would nevertheless still be able to be won over to the left. The bourgeois intellectuals of the old society, said Mao, had to work and most could be reformed.<sup>161</sup> A ladder to redemption remained.

Mao’s post-June 7 attacks on the MPGs, particularly his denunciation of them as centres of ferocious Rightism, moved the timetable for their rectification forward dramatically. These attacks were designed to further isolate and discredit the right and transform the thinking of the middle elements. Rectification was an integral part of political education in united front work as well as for the CCP. The campaign was orchestrated to prove that the only path for the middle elements was Mao’s socialist road. The isolating and discrediting of what became known as the Zhang-Luo alliance (Zhang Bo Jun, Luo Longji, Chu Anping, Zhang Naiqi, Pu Xixiu and others) marked what was intended to be the final destruction of any remnant notions of a third or middle way. The middle elements had to be pushed further and irrevocably to the left.

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<sup>159</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> *ibid.*, p.548.

<sup>161</sup> *ibid.*, pp.548-550.

Once again, this political education required enemies and these MPG figures came to symbolise all accused of rightism.<sup>162</sup>

What their writings and utterances had shown was that there was an urgency on the part of the members of the so-called Zhang-Luo alliance, and to a lesser degree, other MPG leaders, to slow the final transition to socialism and to continue to follow what they considered to be a middle way between full state socialism and the GMD's bureaucratic capitalist system.<sup>163</sup> Accusing the CCP's critics of being capitalists and reactionaries was to use a simple and false either/or absolutist proposition. Any disagreement with the official line was automatically cast as out-right opposition. It was only in the context of Mao's post-1949 desire to push China leftwards as quickly as possible that the Zhang-Luo positions had become relatively more "Rightist." Mao's subjective position towards "the right" was the obverse of his position towards the left. Mao labelled as "left,"

... those who stood on the side of what he considered progress. ... Those who failed to push historical progress at the appropriate speed were right deviationists guilty of class compromise. The position Mao occupied at any moment defined the magic place that constituted the authentic left between the ultra-left and the right.<sup>164</sup>

For the MPGs this re-location was a passive one, not the result of the active movement implied by Deng Xiaoping when he declared that those who had once been a part of the middle, "even of the left, have become rightists now."<sup>165</sup> It was Mao who had moved leftwards, both quickly and far, and he now sought to force the middle elements, symbolised by the MPGs, along with him.

Zhang, Luo, Chu, and Zhang Naiqi, were well aware of the CCP's teleology and desire to eliminate the bourgeoisie. The promised "long" period of New Democracy had disappeared in seven years. The elimination of their economic basis had occurred much faster than the MPGs could have anticipated. Stepping up the thought reform of

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<sup>162</sup> When queried about the ability to always find enemies on the Right, Mao declared: "With the exception of the desert, wherever there are people, there is a Left, a Centre and a Right. It will be like this even after a thousand years. Why is this out of keeping with the state of things?" *ibid.*, p.552.

<sup>163</sup> The term alliance is used here as a short-hand term. There was no alliance as such, only a loosely connected group of influential intellectuals who shared many political views, experiences and personal connections.

<sup>164</sup> Nathan, *et al.*, 1996, p.527.

<sup>165</sup> Deng Xiaoping, "Report on the Rectification Campaign," (September 23, 1957), Hinton, 1980, p.589.

old-style intellectuals meant that all would soon be expected to have a proletarian outlook and the MPGs would be redundant. Moreover, Mao's rush towards socialism ignored the Marxist pre-condition, accepted by third road advocates, that each stage of economic development had to exhaust itself before society could progress to the next one.<sup>166</sup> New Democracy could not have achieved this in a short seven years. There was much truth to the denunciation by Hu Yuzhi, (then Democratic League Secretary-general and CCP member) that Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji were bourgeois middle-of-the-roads.<sup>167</sup>

But what the Zhang-Luo alliance effectively represented was not a desire to restore any form of bureaucratic or *laissez-faire* capitalism, as implied in the CCP's allegations; the third roaders had never believed in that. Rather, it was as alleged by the Party, a vain hope of returning some way towards a third road. The third road had called for individuals to have political and economic equality, especially in the form promoted by Shi Fuliang. The slogan had been "In politics implement the English and American system, in economics develop national capitalism." The 'democratic' economic form of New Democracy, with its abolition of bureaucratic capitalism, the creation of state and co-operative enterprises while allowing the continued existence of some private enterprises had achieved economic equality. However, Shi had also perceived the benefits of maintaining and controlling capitalism in order to raise China's productive capacities. The complete elimination of capitalist enterprises, before they had exhausted their productive potential, did not make sense. From a third road point of view, the CCP's rushed transition to socialism was not desirable at all, especially if it was accompanied by violence. The third road idealism esteemed gradual reform and eschewed rapid violent revolutionary change.

It was in terms of political equality that the third road ideal had the furthest to go. Perhaps it was the contradiction between the CCP's achievement of relative economic equality and increasing CCP control that led Zhang Bojun to declare to the

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<sup>166</sup> Shi Fuliang was accused by Mao of stirring student unrest in Zhejiang Province during the Hundred Flowers but seems to have escaped serious censure in 1957.

<sup>167</sup> Chen, 1960, p.178.

CPPCC that he loved socialism but he also loved democracy.<sup>168</sup> The third roaders had called for a parliamentary system, particularly one along English or American lines. This would allow the common people (*pingmin*), to rule through a parliament. As it was, China was being ruled by the CCP in the name of the people (*renmin*), as a people's democratic dictatorship. Not content with democracy being the result of mere definition by the CCP, Zhang Bojun's calls for the CPPCC to become a senate to the NPC lower house harked back to these third road ideals. Zhang, Luo and many others did not see a bi-cameral parliamentary system as contradicting socialism; they saw a vigorous parliament as complementing and strengthening it.

Despite the fact that they had restated some of their old principles, figures such as Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji moved swiftly to minimise the danger to themselves once they realised that the political wind had changed. On June 13, less than a week after Mao's editorial in *Renmin ribao*, Zhang Bojun admitted in his preliminary confession to having a "flippant liberalist attitude."<sup>169</sup> It was precisely for advocating 'liberal' middle-of-the-road ideals, such as the separation of state, parliament, and the legal system (*san fen tian xia*), that Zhang, Wang Qixiang, Li Boqiu and other Peasants and Workers Party members were now condemned. Significantly, Zhang was denounced not only for promoting middle-of-the-road positions, he was also said to have found an appreciative audience for them. Zhang and his co-accused were charged with making use of all possible methods to unite the middle elements behind them, to attack the PWP's progressives and exclude the CCP. Although the CCP's claims should be treated sceptically, the Zhang-Luo alliance was said to control forty of the PWP's branches. This attempt to win influence for their positions was condemned as "nibbling tactics" (*canshi*) weakening CCP leadership.<sup>170</sup> Luo Longji also 'confessed' to having been in favour of a third road and that he had had this in mind during the formation of the Democratic League.<sup>171</sup> Luo's ideas for a committee to review alleged

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<sup>168</sup> Bowie, 1962, p.338.

<sup>169</sup> Chen, 1960, p.183.

<sup>170</sup> "Pubian shen ru fan youpai douzheng, chedi gaizao Nong-Gong dang," [Universally go deep into the anti-Rightist struggle, thoroughly reform the Peasants and Workers Party ] (September 16, 1957), *Renmin Shouce*, 1958, pp.123-124.

<sup>171</sup> Bowie, *et al*, 1962, p.335.

mistakes in the CCP's political campaigns was far less radical than Zhang Bojun's proposals and it had been endorsed by Mao, at least partially.

### Zhang Naiqi's Road

The potential influence of any Zhang-Luo alliance among the intelligentsia, had it existed, would have been complemented by Zhang Naiqi's prestige in industrial and commercial circles. The Li Weihan speech which Mao had amended was largely a direct refutation of many of the views of Zhang Naiqi, the Minister of Food. In January 1957, Mao had explicitly referred to allowing Zhang and others, to "fart," to prove that his objectionable views carried no weight and would be overwhelmingly rejected by the people.<sup>172</sup> Li's list of Zhang's serious errors included Zhang's criticism of thought reform, denials that capitalists were still exploiters, denials that fixed interest payments were exploitation, declarations that the bourgeoisie's dual nature had been eliminated, a belief that bourgeoisie-proletariat class differences did not exist, and those who had not undergone thought reform could also accept socialism.<sup>173</sup> These 'errors' all derived from Zhang's third road principles.

Zhang Naiqi was a long-time left-wing capitalist who had become famous in November 1936 when, along with Shi Liang and others, he was arrested as one of the 'seven gentlemen.' Zhang had been a founder of the Shanghai National Salvation Association and contributed to Zou Taofen's *Dazhong shenghuo*. He had a long involvement with state and private banking and later managed several successful businesses.<sup>174</sup> Reflecting his complex history and views, Zhang, and fellow Zhejiang provincial, Shi Fuliang, had helped form the National Construction Association. Although a left-wing activist, Zhang believed in both democracy and private enterprise as valuable parts of a socialist society. These beliefs, together with his contact with Shi Fuliang, led Zhang to adopt a third road position. When the third force proved impracticable, Zhang increasingly supported the program which most closely approximated it: the CCP's New Democracy. In mid-1957, Zhang's claim that he had

<sup>172</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *SW*, vol.5, p.375.

<sup>173</sup> Li Weihan, 1986, p.833

<sup>174</sup> Boorman, 1967, vol.1, pp.87-90.

“sought socialism in a capitalist society” seemed inappropriate but it summarised his views.

In 1957, after describing Zhang’s attempts to “set up another kitchen,” the third force between the CCP and the GMD, the CCP alleged that Zhang had tried to use his connections with Huang Yanpei and the Vocational Education Society and Hu Juewen’s wartime Federation for Moving Industry to Sichuan (*Qian Chuan gongchang lianhehui*) to establish the NCA as a bourgeois party. Zhang had opposed the CCP’s support for the NCA’s progressives and had advocated instead, a “don’t lean left, don’t shield the right” (*bu zou pian, bu you tan*) policy. The implication was that the NCA would be a third force political party. After May 1957, however, previous support for a middle road was regarded, *ipso facto*, as anti-Party.<sup>175</sup>

Zhang Naiqi’s Third Road beliefs had resurfaced during the CCP’s land reform campaign. In keeping with CCP policy of encouraging MPG participation, Zhang was made head of a land reform group in Sichuan’s Yunmen county. However, instead of using violent class struggle methods, Zhang implemented a program of peaceful land reform. In an attempt to avoid harming the interests of landlords, he emphasised the use of “reason and law” (*yi li, yi fa*) and issued regulations that held cadres responsible for anti-landlord violence. When the Party reaffirmed class struggle as a core principle of land reform, Zhang, in an effort to justify his own methods, set about collecting from the peasants affected, first-hand accounts supportive of his methods.<sup>176</sup> These actions conformed with the third road principles of gradualism, abhorrence of violence and minimising the importance of class struggle.

Similarly, Zhang Naiqi’s 1957 refutation of Stalin’s statement that “communists are made of special material,” not only attacked communist mysticism, it also accorded with the third road affirmation of equality, regardless of class. Zhang warned the Party about the danger to its hard won prestige of accepting Stalin’s claim. Zhang argued that if only one percent of the CCP’s twelve million members became arrogant as a result of Stalin’s quote, incalculable harm would be done to the Party’s relations with the rest of

<sup>175</sup>“Youpai fenzi Zhang Naiqi de chou'er mianmao,” [The ugly face of the Rightist element Zhang Naiqi] (*Gongshangjie*), [Industry and Commercial Circles, no.8, 1957], *Renmin Shouce*, 1958, p.111.

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.*, p.110.

society. Zhang also maintained that Mao's position refuted the argument that interest payments to former capitalists were a form of exploitation.<sup>177</sup>

A far worse evil than capitalism in Zhang Naiqi's eyes was bureaucratism. Like other third roaders, he sought to draw a clearer line between the Party and state. This dislike of bureaucratism also corresponded with Zhang's desire for efficiency. This view was clearly expressed in his attack on the April 22, 1957, *Renmin ribao* editorial which called for capitalists to submit completely to state leadership. Zhang pointed out that such submission inevitably created the problem of positions without power. There was no point in being a capitalist manager if you were required to submit unconditionally to the state's directions: the state then became the real manager.<sup>178</sup> Zhang claimed that the only reason he had any real power in his ministerial capacity was as a result of considerable personal struggle.<sup>179</sup>

A desire for efficiency also seems to have been part of the reason that Zhang defended the continuation of capitalism in China. After 1949, Shi Fuliang had continued to defend the three rights of capitalists: to own, to employ, and to manage enterprises.<sup>180</sup> Shi advocated utilisation of private enterprise to support industrialisation and increasing China's productive capacities and create the material basis for socialism. In the late 1940s, in keeping with Shi's position, Zhang had advocated that post-war China should remove obstacles to foreign investment. Zhang believed that the war had shown China incapable of independently producing enough commodities or developing its natural resources. He advocated that China borrow funds from overseas, enlist the help of foreign experts to organise Chinese enterprises, and buy foreign factories. This additional investment would stimulate both development and healthy competition between enterprises. Zhang claimed that even foreign competition was healthy and something from which lessons could be drawn.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Chen, 1960, p.155.

<sup>178</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.506.

<sup>180</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Tuanjie minzu zichan jieji, fazhan guomin jingji," [Unite the national capitalists, develop the national economy] (October 25, 1952). In Zhou Enlai, 1984, p.237.

<sup>181</sup> Qian Jiaju, Wu Dakun, Feng Hefa, Wang Dafu, He (unreadable)ming, "Zhang Naiqi shi fan renmin de lao shou," [Zhang Naiqi is an old hand at opposing the people] (August 5, 1957), *Renmin Shouce*, 1958, p.117.

In 1957, Zhang had pointed out that previously, many capitalists had employed workers and talent fairly and efficiently, produced profits and successfully competed. This achievement was, he argued, “something some socialist enterprises have not been able to do.”<sup>182</sup> Only weeks later, Zhang’s old proposals were scrutinised by the CCP and used to label him as a traitor advocating the destruction of the national economy to the benefit of foreign imperialists.<sup>183</sup>

Zhang was also condemned for again attempting to make the National Construction Association an independent organisation. MPG leaders claimed that Zhang was alienated from Huang Yanpei. They condemned Zhang for his declarations that the NCA was full of sectarianism and factionalism and for his criticisms of both the communist members in the NCA and the activists who relied on them. Zhang had asked the UFD to remove CCP members from the NCA, describing their presence as “vulgar policy” (*tongsu zhengce*) and a mark of dependency.<sup>184</sup> This was not a new attitude. Zhang was accused of earlier having attempted to rid the National Salvation Association of CCP influence.<sup>185</sup>

Zhang also objected to the CCP’s thought reform program. He was opposed to excessive remoulding which destroyed initiative and enthusiasm instead of winning active support for socialism. Complaints about the proletarian transformation of bourgeois ideology were seldom printed and in February 1956, in a speech to the National People’s Congress, even Zhang Bojun had fully endorsed remoulding.<sup>186</sup> Zhang Naiqi was more outspoken. In October 1957, Mao directly criticised him for declaring: “How can one endure that remoulding? ... being completely reborn amounts to being skinned and gutted.”<sup>187</sup> Mao objected to Zhang’s attack on the April 22

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<sup>182</sup> Chen, 1960, pp.166-167.

<sup>183</sup> *Renmin Shouce*, 1958, p.117.

<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*, p.112.

<sup>185</sup> *ibid.*, p.110.

<sup>186</sup> “Quan Meng geng jinmidi tuanjie qilai, chongfen fahui zhishi fenzi de jijixing he chuangzaoxing, nuli gaizao ziji, wei wancheng weida de shehuizhuyi geming shiye er fendou,” [The entire League unite closely, fully bring into play the creativity and energies of the intellectuals, work hard to reform oneself in order to to complete the great revolutionary cause and the struggle for socialism] (February 6, 1956), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.448-468.

<sup>187</sup> “Speech at Supreme State Conference,” (October 13, 1957), Kau, *et al*, 1986, vol.2, p.736.

*Renmin ribao* editorial which had restated the demand for more thought reform of the bourgeoisie.

Zhang's conditional opposition to thought reform was based on premises supplied by the CCP itself. Zhang made use of Mao's declaration that the basic transition to socialism had been achieved, the major contradictions, and the need for class struggle had been resolved, to argue that the bourgeoisie no longer had any ability to exploit workers. Nor could it be said, Zhang argued, that the continued payment to former capitalists of interest for the sale of their businesses was equivalent to exploitation. Even Mao had played down the importance of fixed interest payments, describing them as mere "tails of capitalism" when addressing the ACFIC in December 1956 and talked of re-classifying many small capitalists as more acceptable petty bourgeoisie.<sup>188</sup> The basic antagonistic contradiction between workers and capitalists had been overcome using this buy-back method. Moreover, Zhang argued, after seven years of thought reform there was even less need to force thought reform on industrial and commercial circles for this would "give them unlimited worries and misgivings. In doing so it would only increase the inferiority complex of the national bourgeoisie but do no good to anyone."<sup>189</sup>

There was nothing new in Zhang Naiqi's positions. His views had long been well known to Mao and Li Weihan. In 1956, when the UFD had surveyed MPG leaders, Li Weihan had again noted Zhang's complaints including his attacks on progressives and Party members who doubted that any transformation of the bourgeoisie was possible and those advocating a new Three-Anti campaign. Zhang argued that the UFD itself vulgarised and oversimplified the concept of class struggle. The Party's very exclusion of the national bourgeoisie created class struggle. As early as 1956, Zhang had told the UFD that as result of the prevalent dogmatism in the Party many people now felt that their situation was worse than it had been under the GMD.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Kau, *et al.*, 1986, pp.207-211.

<sup>189</sup> Hinton, 1980, p.506.

<sup>190</sup> Li Weihan, 1986, pp.820-821.

## The CCP's Response

The resurrection of many third road positions, particularly well thought out criticism by individuals such as Zhang Naiqi, revealed problems for the CCP. At the CCP's Eighth National Conference on September 25 1956, Li Weihang had described how the CCP had struggled against third road political positions since 1946 because they opposed the CCP's land reform and the complete overthrow of the GMD. Li credited the eventual abandonment of "middle road line" to the influence of the CCP's second front anti-hunger, anti-American and anti-imperialism campaigns. Li declared that the Party had continued to attack the remnants of third road ideology in its subsequent Resist America-Aid Korea, land reform, and suppression of counter revolutionaries campaigns. This struggle against the middle road line was, Li declared, "a struggle for the fate of the nation" and

... a struggle for the thoroughness of the revolution and for the leadership by the working class. It is also a turning point for the historical destiny of the national bourgeoisie, from this point they will really accept the leadership of the working class.<sup>191</sup>

The MPGs' criticisms in May-June 1957 revealed that third road beliefs were far from abandoned.

If in 1957, Zhang Naiqi and the other third roaders truly reflected the thinking of China's bourgeoisie then this group was still far from accepting the CCP's complete domination. Their criticisms went beyond the manifestations of sectarianism, bureaucratism and dogmatism allowed by Mao to question the underlying causes of these problems. This questioning was a threat to Mao because it challenged the direction in which he was taking China. It also threatened the Party because it sought to moderate the Party's increasing domination of all aspects of society.

The time allowed for criticism of the CCP proved brief. Mao's June 8 directive, "Organise Our Forces to Counter Attack the Reckless Attacks of the Rightists," was distributed the same day as his *Renmin ribao* editorial "What is this For?," which defended the Revolutionary GMD's Lu Yuwen against the CCP's critics.<sup>192</sup> Mao

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<sup>191</sup> "Jinyibu jiaqiang dang de tongyi zhanxian gongzuo," [Strengthen the Party's united front work] In Li Weihang, 1983, p.164.

<sup>192</sup> Kau *et al*, 1986, p.564-568.

denounced Zhang Bojun, Luo Longji and Zhang Naiqi as the “progenitors” of the Rightists.<sup>193</sup> It was because the middle elements were wavering, “and thinking of betraying us,” that now forced a counter attack against the Rightists.<sup>194</sup> However, Mao declared that the number of genuine enemies was only a tiny minority, one, two, or three percent. To isolate them Mao instructed:

Please pay attention to the reckless attacks by reactionaries within the various democratic parties. Each party should be organised to hold its own forums in which Leftists, middle-of-the-roaders and Rightists all participate so that correct as well as incorrect opinions are all exposed. Reporters should be sent to report on them. We should tactfully prompt Leftists and middle-of-the-road elements to make statements to counter-attack the Rightists.<sup>195</sup>

The Democratic League very quickly declared its struggle against alleged anti-Party elements in its ranks.<sup>196</sup> The middle elements, “who have not yet learnt the lesson they are now being taught,” would be shown that the Rightists were indeed isolated, enemies of the CCP and that they should rally behind the CCP and the MPG Left-wing.<sup>197</sup>

MPG leaders, such as Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji soon realised that they were in danger as the political wind changed direction. They rushed to take advantage of the redemptive ladder of confession. In July 1957 Mao began describing the alleged anti-Party elements in terms of the “Zhang-Luo alliance.”<sup>198</sup> It was an alliance that Mao attacked in terms of their influence on the middle elements. Addressing a UFD sponsored Conference of all Circles in Shanghai on July 8, Mao declared that the middle elements had not been listening to the Party, especially its unity-criticism-unity slogan. The exposure of the anti-Party elements could be used to compensate for inadequacies in the CCP’s political education efforts. These enemies, said Mao, could play their part in the Chinese tradition of “two sided education, a positive and a negative education.” All that was necessary was to:

<sup>193</sup> *SW*, vol.5, p.465.

<sup>194</sup> *Kau et al*, 1986, p.562.

<sup>195</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> “Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu haozhao quan Meng zhankai fan youpai douzheng bing kaishi Meng nei zhengfeng de jue ding,” [Decision of the Chinese Democratic League on calling the whole League to launch an anti-Rightist struggle and begin an internal rectification] (June 19, 1957), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.527-528.

<sup>197</sup> *ibid.*, p.563.

<sup>198</sup> “The bourgeois orientation of *Wenhui bao* should be criticised,” (July 1, 1957), *ibid.*, pp.591-596.

... let the demons and ogres come out and let everyone have a good look at them. After everyone has had a good look, they will recognise that these freaks and monsters are no good and should be overthrown.<sup>199</sup>

As in the previous campaigns against Hu Shi, Liang Shuming, Zhang Dongsun in 1957, the Zhang-Luo alliance became concrete examples of people and political positions against which oneself and others could be compared and unity-criticism-unity principles implemented. The anti-Rightist struggle was gradually merged with the rectification campaign as the CCP suddenly intensified its efforts to destroy capitalism and establish socialism.<sup>200</sup>

In September a UFD conference further formalised the internal rectification, purge, and political education of the MPGs. Their members had to learn to “walk the socialist road.” Li Weihan again declared that there was no middle way and that any hopes of New Democracy continuing forever were a delusion. The lingering influence of middle-way thinking had to be eliminated. Li called on the Left-wing and progressives to act as the positive role models winning the middle elements to the left.<sup>201</sup> The final elimination of third road idealism and the decline of the MPGs had begun.

## Conclusion

It is clear that Mao had greatly over-estimated the success of the Party's thought reform and under-estimated the extent of the intellectuals' disillusionment with the Party's policies. The bourgeois views of the MPGs still had considerable appeal to their constituents despite, or perhaps because of, the Party's efforts to eradicate such ideas. An editorial in *Renmin ribao* on April 15, 1956 had discussed the Party's isolation from the middle elements between 1927 and 1936 but Mao's efforts to redress a similar problem by invoking the Hundred Flowers principle revealed that the problem had re-emerged.<sup>202</sup> This re-emergence was, despite Mao invoking blooming and

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.*, p.607.

<sup>200</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu zai quan Meng kaizhan yiban zhengfeng yundong de guiding," [The Chinese Democratic League on regulations for launching a general rectification campaign throughout the League] (January 26, 1958) *DL Historical Documents*, pp.545-547.

<sup>201</sup> Li Weihan, "Ge minzhu dangpai xuyao jinxing genben de ziwo gaizao," [All democratic parties must implement fundamental self-transformation] from *Zhengxie hui kan*, [CPPCC magazine] no.5. Quoted in *Renmin shouce*, 1958, pp.307-308.

<sup>202</sup> Solomon, 1971, p.240.

contending, precisely to increase unity and gather support for the final transition to socialism. Refusing to recognise that this alienation was a result of his own methods, institutional failings and the failings of Party members, Mao like Lenin before him, simply redefined critics as opposition and therefore, *ipso facto*, as enemies.<sup>203</sup>

Mao's wish in 1956 to win the full support of the intellectuals by using the Hundred Flowers principle resulted in a dramatic moderation of the Party's control of the MPGs. They were given a new formal status as supervisors of the CCP, equal status and organisational independence to develop and recruit new members. As I have argued, these were not just window dressing. Organisationally, these declarations were supported by a reduction of the CCP control. The importance of the progressives and dual members diminished greatly with many such individuals leaving to join the CCP. The UFD guaranteed the MPGs freedom of speech and seemed to be sincere when it gave them control of *Guangming ribao*. This increased freedom was not unconditional. Lu Dingyi and Mao had made it clear that bourgeois idealism was as much a target as the shortcomings of the Party.

The third roaders in the MPGs seem to have forgotten the qualifications on blooming and contending. Third road positions, such as a bi-cameral system, separation of Party and state, a slowing down of socialist transformation and negating class-struggle and thought reform were anathemas to Mao. Struggle was an integral part of Mao's thinking and ideology and to criticise it was effectively to criticise him.<sup>204</sup> Third roaders such as Zhang Naiqi felt that there had been enough struggle and, unlike Mao, recognised that done to excess struggle resulted in the opposite of that which was intended: it produced apathy, fear, and resignation instead of conversion and enthusiasm. Mao lacked objective criteria by which to judge when coercion was excessive and counter productive. Moreover, his methods required a constant stream of new negative exemplars.

Most MPG critics refrained from any direct criticism of Mao and played the traditional role of remonstrators to the emperor, seeking to support the state by voicing

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<sup>203</sup> Leonard Shapiro (ed), *Political Opposition in One-Party States*, (Macmillan, London, 1972), pp.2-4.

<sup>204</sup> See Solomon, 1971, pp.186-189.

concerns, even over the objections of the emperor. Yet in seeking to solve China's problems they could only suggest institutional restraints on the exercise of power akin to those operating in bourgeois capitalist countries which limited the power of both the Party and of Mao. Hence, in an increasingly ideologically leftist schema their suggestions were always extremely vulnerable to being denounced as bourgeois, revisionist, and anti-socialist. This was even more so the case when potential enemies to Mao within the Party, such as Liu Shaoqi, suggested moderating Mao's push leftwards in order to allow free markets and underground capitalist factories.<sup>205</sup>

There was of course a degree of self-interest by both the MPGs and the UFD in their proposals. Mao's hitherto rapid push leftwards would inevitably quickly result in the end of the MPGs and therefore a large part of the responsibilities of the Department. The MPGs' suggestions required their continued existence and an increased role for the MPGs, the CPPCC and their overseer, the UFD. The reformulation of theory to justify the changes called for by the principle of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision and to reassure the middle elements included maintaining the two class alliance, of peasants and workers allying themselves with bourgeois intellectuals. This formulation, advocated by UFD deputy director Zhang Zhiyi in March 1957, contradicted Mao's wish to use the Hundred Flowers to hasten the transformation of intellectuals into proletarians.<sup>206</sup> Similarly, Lu Dingyi's claim that science had no class character, for example, sought to protect technical intellectuals by making science safe for its practitioners. These concessions were necessary to achieve the objectives of the time but left the UFD subject to accusations that it had been contaminated by its charges.

The MPGs' criticisms not only went beyond the scientific, cultural and artistic limits set by Mao, they revealed that bourgeois idealism was alive and well, even in trusted allies. The continued appeal of these ideals to many of the MPGs' constituents exposed a serious lack of consent by these strategically vital groups for the form and pace of Mao's transition to socialism. His preferred methods for remoulding them had

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<sup>205</sup> *ibid.*, p.309.

<sup>206</sup> *ibid.*, p.300.

proved largely ineffective. His attempt to use a more persuasive method in the Hundred Flowers only uncovered failings and not success. However, rather than admit that his methods were at fault, Mao simply resorted to yet more coercion. This response, the anti-Rightist campaign of 1957-59, the organic crisis which resulted from it and the subsequent need to revive the Hundred Flowers principles are the subject of the next chapter.

## Chapter 6

### Reaction and Counter-Reaction: 1957-1966

The anti-Rightist and the subsequent rectification campaign expanded rapidly with devastating effects, particularly on intellectuals and the MPGs. Mao initially announced that there were only "a handful" of Rightists: declaring, for example, that one, two, or three percent of Beijing University students and ten percent of its professors were Rightists.<sup>1</sup> In late June 1957, Mao estimated that there were only 400 Rightists in Beijing and some 4000 nationwide. In July he doubled these figures.<sup>2</sup> In October, Mao reiterated that die-hards constituted only two percent, and ninety to ninety eight percent of MPG members and that most intellectuals could be remoulded.<sup>3</sup> Mao's October figure already totalled 60,000 and he believed the number of Rightists would peak between 150,000 and 200,000.<sup>4</sup> Yet by December 1957, some 300,000 alleged Rightists, including 10,000 primary school teachers had been "exposed" and were serving as negative exemplars.<sup>5</sup> By the conclusion of the campaigns at least 550,000 persons were officially labelled as Rightist, including some twenty percent of Democratic League members and ten percent of members of the other MPGs.

For the CCP, this pressing problem required more exposure of the miscreants, punishment, and even more remoulding. Already a major cause of discontent among intellectuals, these measures only exacerbated their alienation. This chapter describes how the CCP applied thought reform in the wake of the 1956-57 Hundred Flowers period. During the Great Leap Forward, the use of mass mobilisation temporarily eliminated the need for high-level expertise and the skills the MPGs represented. However, when the shortcomings of the Great Leap Forward combined with bad weather and a deteriorating international situation to produce a major crisis, the services of these groups were again urgently required. The solution in 1959 was the same as in 1956: the reduction of

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<sup>1</sup> *SW*, vol.5, p.458.

<sup>2</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.528.

<sup>3</sup> "Have Firm Faith in the Majority of the People," *SW*, vol.5, pp.499-501.

<sup>4</sup> "Speech at the Third Plenum of the Eight Central Committee," in Kau, *et al*, 1986, vol.2, p.691.

<sup>5</sup> "Speeches at the Second Session of the Eighth Party Congress," (May 20, 1958). Joint Publication Research Service (eds), *The Miscellany of Mao Tse-tung Thought*, (Joint Publication Research Service, Arlington, Virginia, 1974, p.114. (Hereafter *JPRS*))

demands on intellectuals, a relaxation of controls over them, and changes to its methods to regain their support. This process gave rise to a second Hundred Flowers period until the crisis facing the CCP eased and Mao began to re-assert his policies of class struggle and continuing revolution. Increased control was followed by relaxation. In mid-1957, however, this relaxation was far away and the anti-Rightist struggle claimed increasing numbers of hapless victims.

### **Discrediting the MPGs**

For many CCP members, declarations made by MPG leaders and radical statements criticising the Party attributed to some ordinary MPG members served to destroy what little remaining legitimacy the MPGs had. The subsequent 'exposure' of twenty percent of Democratic League members as Rightists reinforced the common distrust of united front work among Party members. In February 1957, Mao had admitted that few Party members endorsed or understood united front work. Moreover, only fifty or sixty percent of Party members understood the principle of criticising to unite, and uniting to save the patient.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless he had continued to promote this principle despite knowing that few of those responsible for its implementation had mastered it. Liu Shaoqi was very aware of this problem and its consequences. Addressing UFD cadres at the ninth National United Front Work Conference in December 1957, he warned that Leftism was a bigger problem than Rightism because some Party members believed that "Rightists come out of the United Front Department."<sup>7</sup> Many Party members wanted to eliminate united front work altogether. However, Mao was more concerned with Rightism.

Mao contributed greatly to the discrediting of united front work, and of intellectuals and the MPGs. In May 1957, he had declared the Rightists in the MPGs, universities and colleges as "the most determined and ferocious."<sup>8</sup> Most seriously, he accused some MPGs

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<sup>6</sup>Mao Zedong, "Talk at Yinian Tang," (February 17, 1957), Macfarquhar, *et al*, 1989, p.117, p.121.

<sup>7</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.364.

<sup>8</sup> Kau, *et al*, 1986, vol.2, p.549.

leaders of “having organisation, a plan and program, and a line for subverting the CCP.”<sup>9</sup> The Democratic League was declared to be both anti-Party and anti-socialist.<sup>10</sup>

In July, when *Renmin ribao* published an editorial describing the MPGs as bourgeois parties, it completely negated the Party’s ideological reform work of the past seven years. Mao also repudiated and reversed the conciliatory line of the eighth Congress. He asserted that the differences between the people and bourgeois Rightists were not contradictions among the people but an antagonistic “life and death struggle.”<sup>11</sup> Although Mao repeatedly stressed that Bourgeois Rightists were a minority among the bourgeoisie, his hostility largely negated the principles promoted by Li Weihan during the Hundred Flowers periods, principles such as treating the MPGs on the basis of freedom, independence, and equality with the CCP. The idea that the MPGs represented a class alliance between the bourgeoisie and the worker-peasant alliance was being replaced by a renewed emphasis on struggle. The Party journal *Xuexi* (Study) re-affirmed the principle of long-term co-existence but the MPGs were clearly redefined as bourgeois parties and were no longer regarded as political groups serving socialism. Consequently, *Xuexi* declared that any notion of their equality with the CCP should be discarded.<sup>12</sup> The MPG's loss of status reflected Mao's attitudes towards intellectuals generally. Despite the political education efforts of the last seven years, the outlook of intellectuals was declared to be basically unchanged and bourgeois. Thus, in the words of one United Front historian, their “negative aspects were emphasised and positive ones played down.”<sup>13</sup> One immediate result of this process of denigration was that the circulation of the MPG organ *Guangming ribao* plummeted.<sup>14</sup>

On June 19, 1957, an official version of Mao’s “On the Correct Handling ...” speech was published but, to justify Mao’s about face, six new criteria were inserted

<sup>9</sup> Feng Zhengqin and Yang Chengsheng, *Zhongguo gongchangdang tongyi zhanxian lilun fazhan shigao*, [A draft history of the development of the CCP’s united front theory] (Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, Shanghai, 1993), p.255.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> “The Situation in the Summer of 1957,” (July 1957), *SW*, vol.5, p.473.

<sup>12</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.58.

<sup>13</sup> Wang Bangzu, 1991, p.521.

<sup>14</sup> Lyne T. White, “Local Newspapers and Community Change, 1949-66,” in Godwin C. Chu and Francis L. K. Hsu (eds), *Moving a Mountain: Cultural Change in China*, (University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1979), p.103.

qualifying criticism of the Party. Rather than place co-existence with the MPGs in a positive light, Mao now stated that there was no reason *not* to have co-existence “with all political parties which are truly devoted to the cause of uniting people for the cause of socialism.”<sup>15</sup> The six criteria provided the basis for judging “how well they acquit themselves and on whether they enjoy the trust of the people.”<sup>16</sup> The vagueness of the criteria allowed almost any statement to be deemed to be in contravention of them if required. To ensure that the MPGs accepted CCP leadership completely their political education was intensified.

### Thought Reform and Class Struggle

The hysteria of the anti-Rightist campaign and the subsequent Great Leap Forward made the post-Hundred Flowers thought reform processes particularly traumatic for its victims. With the perceived failure of the gentle breeze, mild rain approach of the Hundred Flowers and the reversion to class conflict, the emphasis in the unity-struggle-unity principle switched to struggle.

In the summer of 1957 Mao set down some criteria for rectification and socialist education to be carried out in education, publishing press, science, technology, literature, art, public health, industry and commerce, as well as among the MPGs, the peasantry and the working class. However, instead of calling it “thought reform,” the CCP deliberately used the term “rectification” when referring the MPGs. Because the Party was undertaking a rectification campaign to eliminate Rightism within its own ranks, Mao argued that using the term “rectification” as a euphemism for implementing thought reform in the MPGs would make it easier for the bourgeoisie to accept. This acceptance was despite a major difference of emphasis between what occurred within the Party and the MPGs. The initiative for this campaign, said Mao, “will be completely in our hands.”<sup>17</sup> Its aims were familiar:

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<sup>15</sup> These Criteria were: 1) Words and deeds should help unite, and not divide, the people of our nation. 2) They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to socialist transformation and socialist construction. 3) They should help consolidate and not undermine or weaken, the people’s democratic dictatorship. 4) They should help, and not undermine or weaken, democratic centralism. 5) They should help strengthen, and not shake off or weaken, the leadership of the Communist Party. 6) They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to international socialist unity and the unity of the peace-loving people of the world. *SW*, vol.5, p.412.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p.413.

<sup>17</sup> In Mao’s The situation in the summer of 1957, *ibid.*, p.474.

.. to guide the struggle in such a way as to set the right political orientation, raise the ideological level, overcome shortcomings in work, unite with the broad masses, and isolate and split the bourgeois Rightists and all other anti-socialist elements. 18

Mao believed that this process would take about ten to twenty years and he warned that “if this struggle is not won, socialism is impossible.”<sup>19</sup>

In contrast to the Hundred Flowers principle of ‘gentle breezes,’ this time Mao stressed the efficiency of “big democracy” in the political reform process. He maintained that big character posters (*dazibao*), big meetings (*da hui*), and big debates (*da bianlun*), provided “excellent forms for revealing and overcoming contradictions.”<sup>20</sup> These methods were particularly favourable for “helping make people progress in institutions of higher education, in departments and government organisations at all levels.” One of Mao's few qualifications was that this struggle was not to interfere with production.<sup>21</sup> As a result of Mao's instructions, big democracy applied to those outside the CCP came to involve a great deal of public exposure and humiliation.

The MPG's hunt for Rightists began when Mao instructed MPG progressives to mobilise against them on June 8 1957, perhaps even earlier in some cases.<sup>22</sup> At the end of June, the Democratic League's Standing Committee declared that campaigns had been under way since June 18 with the exposure and public criticism of Zhang Bojun, Luo Longji, and Chu Anping. In addition to continuing this exposure and criticism, League members were also to study Mao's “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions” and *Renmin Ribao* editorials and writings as the “weapons” of criticism.<sup>23</sup>

To implement the new policies, the Democratic League and the other MPGs established Small Leadership Groups (*Xiao lingdao zu*). These groups consisted of the recently alienated minority of dual CCP-MPG members and progressives. They were

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, p.479.

<sup>20</sup> These three “bigs” and that of “*da ma*” [expressing things in a big way], came to be known collectively as the “four bigs” (*si da*).

<sup>21</sup> *SW*, vol.5, p.481.

<sup>22</sup> Seymour notes calls in *Tuanjie bao* of May 15, calling for rectification in the Revolutionary GMD. Seymour, 1987, p.55.

<sup>23</sup> “Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu Meng nei zhengfeng yundong de buchong zhishi,” [The Chinese Democratic League supplementary instructions on internal League rectification] (June 25, 1957), *DLHistorical Documents*, pp.529-530.

called on to strengthen the left-wing, unite the middle elements, and destroy the right. The Democratic League ordered that the rectification proceed “with a desire for unity,” making use of the principles of criticism and self-criticism, “to reach a new stage of unity.” The League called for the sickness (of Rightism) to be cured to save the patient using gentle breeze type education. Rightists were to be exposed, investigated, called on to make confessions and undertake real measures of self-reform. This process was to begin with the League's central leadership and gradually extend downwards. Branches were told to co-ordinate closely with the CCP and secure the CCP's help. A Special Central Rectification Office was established to guide the lower levels. “Where should the League go?” the League’s leadership asked rhetorically, “To the left, towards socialism, definitely not towards capitalism.”<sup>24</sup> Although one group, scientists, received special protection,<sup>25</sup> this socialist ideology was then to be extended to those with whom League members had contact. League membership was to be frozen while these measures were implemented.<sup>26</sup>

The League's Central Small Leadership Group soon noted that Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji had begun to acknowledge their crimes and that the League was winning its anti-Rightist struggle. Nevertheless, it warned of a long struggle and against any toleration. Notably, the Small Leadership Group emphasised the use of reason and facts and the avoidance of simple brutality. Despite this, any Rightists regarded as “relatively abominable” were to be exposed publicly. In what amounted to a double jeopardy, the Small Group stated that relaxing the struggle against those who had been subjected to the League’s internal discipline was disadvantageous to the overall struggle. Such members were to be struggled with again, this time in public. There was no escaping this process as members were forbidden to resign as a means of avoiding being struggled against.<sup>27</sup>

In January 1958, several months after the launch of Mao's Great Leap Forward, the Democratic League’s tone hardened further. Bourgeois Rightists were declared enemies of

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, p.531.

<sup>25</sup> “Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng xiang zhonggong zhongyang tichu guanyu “Dui yu wo guo kexue tizhi wenti de ji ge yijian”,” [DL to CCP CC “Several opinions on the question of our nation's Science system”] (June 9, 1957), *ibid.*, pp.511-516.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, pp.529-532.

<sup>27</sup> “Zhong guo minzhu tong meng zhongyang zhengfeng lingdao xiaozu guanyu jinyibu zhankai fan youpai douzheng he Mengnei zhengfeng de zhishi,” [Chinese Democratic League Central Committee Rectification Leadership Small Group instructions on the step by step development of the anti-Rightist struggle and rectification within the League] (July 21, 1957), *ibid.*, pp.533-535.

the people and the struggle against them was to be carried through to the end. The limitation on this struggle was the need to win over the middle elements. Only a few members were to be expelled if they were exposed as Rightists or counter-revolutionaries. Most members of long standing were to be retained within the League to allow other members to supervise them. Punishments were based on length of membership as well as attitude, the severity of alleged crimes and, importantly, the perception of their future usefulness (*jinhou de zuoyong*). The general punishment for members of long-standing was the loss of their official positions, either completely or partially. For serious cases there was retention but under supervision or expulsion with a request to the government to send them for education through labour (*laodong jiaoyu*). For those decreed guilty of minor offences, their punishment ranged from job demotions, demotion in gradings, and warnings. Members who joined in 1956, when MPG independence had been the greatest, were generally expelled unless they had been active in the 1945-1949 democratic movement, or had made what the CCP regarded as a considerable contribution to work or politics. Such decisions had to be ratified by higher levels while the Central Committee decided on the fate of committee members defined as Rightists.<sup>28</sup>

The political education of MPG members took place in three arenas, with the content being essentially similar in all. There were political education meetings at places of work, in the MPGs and in the united front political schools which became known as Institutes of Socialism.

### **The Institutes of Socialism**

In 1954, the CPPCC had been given the task of uniting with, educating, and reforming united front target groups.<sup>29</sup> In 1956, to further the "destruction of capitalism and the establishment of socialism," the UFD called on the CPPCC to set up political schools to promote thought reform. This was a policy built on pre-existing *ad hoc* policies of having MPG and NPP cadres attend revolutionary universities, CCP, and CPPCC

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<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, pp.541-544.

<sup>29</sup> Liu Shaoqi, "Quan guo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo huiyi guanyu renmin daibiao da hui zhi shixing hou tongyi zhanxian zuzhi wenti de yijian," [Opinions of the National United Front Work Conference on the questions of the organisation of united front work after the implementation of the National People's Congress system] (July 1953), Ren Tao, 1988, p.152.

political schools. The Party set out to establish a comprehensive political school system. Night classes and short-term political study schools were organised and culminated in the establishment of the first Institutes of Socialism (*Shehui zhuyi xueyuan*, IoS).<sup>30</sup> Attendance at the institutes would result in those students who “did not fully understand socialism,” the “small minority” who opposed socialism and needed transformation, coming to accept Marxism-Leninism and thereby allowing socialist construction to proceed.<sup>31</sup>

Established at Beijing's People's University in April 1956,<sup>32</sup> the first IoS began accepting students in October 1957.<sup>33</sup> To highlight the ostensibly voluntary nature of attendance, the deputy directors of the first institute included Shao Lizhi, Yang Mingxuan, and Qian Jiaju.<sup>34</sup> A Shanghai Municipal IoS was also soon established outside the city in Jiading County. Among the Jiading “students” were Shanghai associates of Zhang Naiqi and fellow Third Road advocates, such as Chen Renbing. Chen was a long time associate of Huang Yanpei and deeply involved in Huang's *Zhanwang* journal. Chen's crimes were seen as serious enough to warrant being sentenced to reform through labour.<sup>35</sup> Along with several others, Chen had been singled out by Mao in the same breath as he had condemned Zhang Naiqi.<sup>36</sup> In subsequent years, IoS students were expanded to eventually include all united front target groups. In 1961, the People's University IoS was named the Central IoS and all political schools under the auspices of the CPPCC were renamed “Institutes of Socialism.”<sup>37</sup>

The political schools, a rectification campaign and the continued elimination of counter-revolutionaries were all part of the UFD's seven year plan (1956-1962) to promote the integration and eventual elimination of classes and traces of the pre-1949 socio-

<sup>30</sup> “Zhongyang pifa Zhongyang tongzhan bu, Zhongyang xuanchuan bu “Guanyu bangzhu minzhu renshi, zichan jieji fenzi jinxing zhengzhi xuexi lilun xuexi de banfa,” [On helping democratic personages and capitalist elements implement methods of political and theoretical study] (April 1956), *ibid.*, pp.263-264.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p.258.

<sup>32</sup> “Guanyu jinyibu banhao Shehuizhuyi xueyuan de yijian,” [Opinions on the gradual building of an Institute of Socialism], in Zhonggong Shanghai Shiwei Tongzhan bu yanjiu shi [The research office of the Shanghai Municipal Party Central Committee] (Shanghai Municipal UFD) (eds), *Tongyi zhanxian zhengce xuanbian*, (Shanghai, 1992), p. 19. (Hereafter *Selected united front policies*)

<sup>33</sup> Jia Pingan, *et al*, 1993, p.367.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Wang Haibo, “Zhongguo zui hou de youpai Chen Renbing,” [China's last Rightist: Chen Renbing], *Shiji*, [Century], no.14 September-October, 1995, p.17.

<sup>36</sup> *SW*, vol.5, p.465. The others condemned by Mao were Wang Zaoshi, Lu Yi, Peng Wenying and Wu Yin.

<sup>37</sup> Jia Pingan, *et al*, 1993, p.367.

economic systems.<sup>38</sup> The UFD officially acknowledges that between 1956 and 1964 there were 430 institutes which 'educated' 140,000 students.<sup>39</sup>

### IoS Course Content and Teaching Methods

Institute of Socialism courses focussed on basic aspects of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought and included compulsory texts such as *Historical Materialism*, *Dialectical Materialism*, *Political Economy* and the *History of the Chinese Revolution*.<sup>40</sup> Teaching methods were guided by Mao's admonition that political education should employ "competitive methods (*bisai fangfa*), criticism, self criticism, and again encouraging more criticism; criticism is the main method of struggle."<sup>41</sup> The goal was to "raise the student's socialist consciousness" and "consolidate and develop the united front."<sup>42</sup>

Thought reform methods at both the IoS and the CCP's own Party schools aimed to create the same socialist consciousness and utilised the same methods.<sup>43</sup> The reform process has been described as consisting of three stages: togetherness, closing in, and submission and re-birth.<sup>44</sup> Togetherness meant that new students would be warmly welcomed, then organised into small groups to discuss and criticise the old order. Lectures and self-directed discussion stressed ridding oneself of the negative influences of the past. Communist theory was studied and discussed with group leaders who then reported the students' progress to their superiors. After several weeks, tension replaced friendliness as group pressure increased. Opinions freely expressed earlier were turned against their authors. Each student had to criticise others to demonstrate their sincerity. Failure to participate brought more criticism. Students wrote increasingly elaborate and incriminating confessions which could then be used against them. The accompanying

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<sup>38</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.209.

<sup>39</sup> Jia Pingan, *et al*, 1993, pp. 368-369. One Western account claims that there were 274 Institutes with 50,000 students in 1959. Alan Donald Pauw, "Chinese Democratic Parties as Mass Organisations," *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, July-August, 1981, p.375.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> Li Weihan, "Zai quanguo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo hui shang de jiang hua," [Speech at the Chinese united front work conference] (April 4, 1957), Ren Tao, 1988, p.337.

<sup>42</sup> Jia Pingan, *et al*, 1993, pp.368-369.

<sup>43</sup> For an account of the Party school system see Richard L Walker, *China Under Communism: The First Five Years*, (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1956), ch.3.

<sup>44</sup> Robert J. Lifton, "Thought Reform in China," *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XVI, November 1956-August 1957, No.1, p 77.

physical labour, justified in terms of providing effete bourgeoisie intellectuals with proletarian experience, physically weakened students and reduced their resistance. Final submission was marked by elaborate and often humiliating confessions, listing personal weaknesses and problems requiring further reform. Submission often required denunciation and renunciation of family and friends, acts which sometimes brought about emotional collapse, even suicide. Those who survived this ordeal promised to continue self-reforming and to serve the state and the Communist Party.<sup>45</sup> Eventual acceptance of the final confession resulted in great emotional relief that the student had “weathered the thought reform ideal, renounced his past and established an organic bond between himself and the government.”<sup>46</sup>

The reward for reform was a sense of being re-admitted into the fold, to join in “the great moral crusade” of reforming society and building a great communist future.<sup>47</sup> At its best, thought reform created zealous converts. Others were resisters or only partially convinced, while some students adapted without undergoing significant change.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, the intent of thought reform was to erase completely bourgeois and feudal thinking and to imbue recipients with Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought. Ideally there would be no difference between a graduate of an IoS and a Party school. This certainly seemed to be the case when MPG members who had experienced “rectification” at an IoS or elsewhere pledged their hearts to the CCP in early 1958.

### The “Giving of Hearts” (*Jiao xin*) Campaign

The public *jiao xin* or “giving one's heart to the Party” demonstrations early in 1958 marked what was taken to be the successful culmination of the disguised anti-Rightist and remoulding within the MPGs. The call to “give one's heart” first appeared in Tianjin and served as a model for the rest of China.<sup>49</sup> This campaign arose after Mao's January 1958

<sup>45</sup> See, for example, the confessions by MPG leaders such as Zhang Bojun, Zhang Naiqi and Luo Longji, Chu Anping, Chen Mingshu, and others, although these were not necessarily made in Institutes of Socialism. Chen, 1960, pp.184-188.

<sup>46</sup> Lifton, 1956-1957, pp.77-81.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, p.84.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> “Guanyu bangzhu he tuidong ge minzhu dang pai zuzhi jinxing zhengfeng gongzuo zhong ying zhuyi ji ge wenti de tongzhi,” [Notice on several issues which should be heeded in helping and promoting the implementation of rectification work in the democratic parties, (March 8, 1958). Ma Yulin, “Tongyi

call for the continuation of rectification, particularly within the MPGs. The UFD subsequently incorporated Great Leap Forward slogans of “faster” (*gao sudu*), high standards (*gao biao zhun*) and comparison and competition (*ping bi jingsai*). In February, MPG leaders were called upon to launch a Great Leap Forward in their political positions and ideology using these methods.<sup>50</sup>

MPG members were forced to participate in what was called an “advanced form of socialist self transformation.” This transformation involved participation in challenges, comparisons, and competitions, between individuals and between MPGs. This competition culminated in slogans, such as “one year to become a Leftist, two years to enter the CCP.” As the Great Leap Forward hysteria to set higher goals intensified, the slogan became, “half a year of reform to become a Leftist, one year to enter the CCP.”<sup>51</sup> The promised reward for transformation was to be able to enter the ranks of the Party and the possibility of the rewards of office. The movement culminated in March, with large public demonstrations of support for the CCP by MPG and ACFIC members. Some 10,000 MPG members assembled in Beijing's Tiananmen Square; 30,000 in other cities. In a letter to Chairman Mao these members pledged to:

- 1) Transform their political stance, to give their heart and, under the leadership of the CCP, steadfastly walk the socialist road.
- 2) Pledge themselves to the socialist system, to implementing its laws and policies, to contribute completely to the cause of national construction.
- 3) Through social practice, learn from the workers and peasants, implant a labour view point, and actively cultivate the working people's ideological feelings.
- 4) Work hard to study Marxism-Leninism, Soviet advanced experience, science and technology. Let a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend.
- 5) Hasten their socialist transformation to create the conditions for long-term co-existence and mutual supervision. Steadfastly implement united front policy in the service of socialism.<sup>52</sup>

The direction of the MPG's political education was clear; to instil a proletarian ideology. The League officially declared the *jiao xin* campaign a success, for raising members'

zhanxian gong zuozhong de "zuo" xie cuowu yu minzhu dangpai neibu de "zhengfeng", "jiaoxin" yundong." ["Leftist" deviation errors in United Front Work within the democratic parties during the "rectification" and "giving one's heart" movements]. In Zhang Tienan, 1991, p.461

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, p.460.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p.461.

<sup>52</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng yu ge minzhui dangpai he wu dangpai minzhu renshi lianhe fachu shehui zhuyi ziwo gaizao gongyue," [Joint declaration on their pledge of socialist self transformation by the Chinese Democratic League, all democratic parties and the non-party democratic personages] (March 6, 1958) *DL Historical Documents*, 1988, pp.554-555. See also *Renmin Shouce 1959*, p.276.

ideological standards and for enlisting their knowledge and skills for socialism.<sup>53</sup> The League announced that its members were well on their way to becoming proletarian intellectuals and that the League itself was transforming itself into a party serving socialism.<sup>54</sup>

However, recent Chinese writings describe the *jiao xin* campaign in negative terms. The flaw was that when the CCP subsequently continued its efforts to eliminate bourgeois influence among MPG members, the materials used as evidence against them were the confessions of their contact with Rightists and admissions of personal "Rightist" acts produced as part of the campaign. Materials presented by individuals as evidence of past transgressions and the basis of their transformation, was used to label them and others as Rightists. This occurred despite such actions contravening the apparent spirit of official instructions.<sup>55</sup> This process was a potent example of "coming down with a big stick, grabbing pigtails, and making people wear hats" (*da gunzi, zhua bianzi, dai maozi*). Grabbing pigtails meant seizing on, exaggerating and even inventing mistakes. Coming down on someone with a big stick was to persecute them for alleged political crimes. Making people wear hats meant assigning them bad labels. These actions created a vicious cycle of escalation and in part explains why, for example, the Revolutionary GMD increased the number of alleged Rightists discovered in its ranks from nine percent in January 1958, to thirteen percent by October.<sup>56</sup>

Rather than turn MPG members into avid and energetic workers for socialism, Chinese historians of united front work now acknowledged that their exposure to struggle and criticism as part of the thought reform process resulted in them becoming disillusioned, cynical, and passive. United front historians now admit that the *jiao xin* movement generated "enormous psychological pressures, and forced many to say things which went against the grain"; many problems previously resolved were dredged up in an effort to incriminate more and more people.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu shehuizhuyi gaizao guihua," [The Chinese Democratic League on the program of socialist transformation] (December 4, 1958), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.597-605.

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, p.599.

<sup>55</sup> See *Renmin shouce 1959*, pp.274-275.

<sup>56</sup> Zhang Tienan, 1991, p.464.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p.464.

In its 1958 report, the Democratic League was forced to admit that some members still needed to decide whether the socialist or capitalist road had won or whether the East wind had triumphed over the West.<sup>58</sup> The League did not declare that the giving of hearts had turned its members into good socialists. It merely recognised that they were still on the bourgeois side and their dual nature remained.<sup>59</sup> The League only dared claim that some of its members had “uprooted the white flag (of capitalism) and planted the red flag” (of socialism) to achieve the proclaimed goal of becoming both red and expert.<sup>60</sup>

The failure of the League and other MPGs to completely re-educate their members reflected the persistence of sectarianism inherent within corporatist organisations and compounded in such hierarchical ones as the MPGs. With the unleashing of the anti-Rightist and rectification campaign, the relative moderates like Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji lost their positions to the progressives and dual CCP-MPG members.<sup>61</sup> These progressives were precisely the groups that had earlier so alienated the middle elements they were supposed to win over. The central leadership of the Democratic League, for example, came to be dominated by Shen Junru as chairman, Yang Mingxuan, Ma Xulun, Shi Liang, Gao Chongmin, Hu Yuzhi, Deng Chumin, Chen Wangdao, Wu Han, and Chu Tu’nan. Yang, Gao, Hu, Deng, Chen, and Wu were all dual party members. In 1957, long-time progressive Wu Han was among those rewarded for their services by being allowed to join the CCP.<sup>62</sup> Just as importantly, the Party member Min Ganghou remained secretary. However, the isolation of the progressives from the general membership of the League had been reflected by the fact that Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji had been so influential. Claims about the extent of “Rightist” influence were borne out in evidence presented during the giving of hearts campaign by League members.<sup>63</sup> Yet, despite the seriousness of the charges against Zhang and Luo they remained, albeit demoted, within the League.

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<sup>58</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.566.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, pp.579-580.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, p.579.

<sup>61</sup> For a more comprehensive list of purged MPG leaders see Peter S. H. Tang and Joan M. Maloney, *Communist China, the Domestic Scene 1949-1967*, (Seton Hall University Press, Sth. Orange NJ, 1967), pp.208-211.

<sup>62</sup> For Wu Han's dual membership see Seymour, 1987, p.63, fn.2.

<sup>63</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, 1988, p.576.

The retention of alleged Rightists within the CCP and the MPGs was significant. In 1956, Mao had pointed out to Party members that within the CCP, Wang Ming and Li Lisan, although disgraced, represented a large portion of the bourgeoisie. Mao claimed that their retention within the Party and even re-electing them to the Central Committee, symbolised the Party's continued desire to represent the bourgeoisie as well as workers and peasants. This continued representation allowed the bourgeoisie to "sleep happily" and be "at ease." If Wang and Li had been treated more harshly and "completely toppled" the bourgeoisie would have panicked. Similarly, Mao claimed that the CCP's generous treatment of rich peasants during land reform had reassured the middle peasants.<sup>64</sup> In March 1957, Mao told CCP propaganda and education leaders that for these same reasons, Zhang Dongsun was still in his old job and his salary had been increased.<sup>65</sup> This was despite the campaign waged against Zhang's name and all that he was said to stand for. Still, the UFD admitted that it was very difficult to explain to Party members why Rightists should be retained.<sup>66</sup>

There was a double standard at work in the retention of and protection of MPG leaders and NPPs which resulted in the most famous often receiving a high degree of protection despite allegations against them. This became very obvious during the Cultural Revolution. The same seems rarely to have applied to lower level individuals. Zhang Naiqi, for example, was only prevented from retaining his positions because he refused to apologise and continued to speak out against Party policies with which he disagreed.<sup>67</sup> Although Zhang Naiqi, Zhang Bojun, Zhou Jingwen were removed from the CPPCC National Committee in March 1958, they retained senior positions in their parties. However, Jurgen Domes has claimed that a total 11,000 MPG members were sent to camps for reform through labour while more than 700 intellectuals were executed.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> "Reinforce the Unity of the Party and carry Forward Party Traditions," (August 30, 1956), *ibid.*, pp.116-117.

<sup>65</sup> "Talk at a Forum of Heads of Propaganda, Culture, and Education Departments from Nine Provinces and Municipalities," (March 6, 1957), Macfarquhar, *et al*, 1989, pp.205-206.

<sup>66</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.363.

<sup>67</sup> Boorman, 1967, vol.1, p.90.

<sup>68</sup> Jurgen Domes, "China's Modernisation and the Doctrine of Democracy," in Chu-Yuan Cheng (ed), *Sun Yatsen's Doctrine in the Modern World*, (Westview Press, Boulder, 1990), p.211.

### 1959: Repression Eases

For many MPG members it must have been disturbing to see how easily the CCP's system could turn individuals acting within the Party's guidelines into heinous political criminals. The consequence of the Party's post-June 1957 actions was not to convert them to socialism and to release their latent energies. Rather, the passivity and fear which rendered many intellectuals incapable of working well before the Hundred Flowers campaign was reinforced. Excessive and brutal coercion had produced precisely the opposite of the CCP's intent. The CCP now regrets this failure, not for the harm suffered by individuals, but because so many people had been "unable to bring their talents into play for national construction."<sup>69</sup> Even in 1956, there had been a shortage of scientists and, despite attempts to protect them, they were still often attacked.<sup>70</sup> The condemnation of so many school teachers and university lecturers as Rightists set back dramatically the goal of educating the vast numbers of proletarian intellectuals needed to bring about the technical revolution. In the same vein, even Mao had realised that without the help of China's 700,000 capitalist households and several million bourgeois intellectuals, China could not "run newspapers, engage in science or operate factories."<sup>71</sup>

The alienation produced by the CCP's anti-Rightist and rectification campaigns was itself a major obstacle to speeding up the development of China's economy. It was compounded by the failure of Mao's Great Leap Forward, the adverse weather conditions and a deteriorating international situation, especially Sino-Soviet relations. The latter culminated in the withdrawal of Soviet aid and technicians in August 1960. This withdrawal of foreign expertise meant that China was again reliant on its own intellectuals, many of whom were still being punished. The cumulative result of these problems was a crisis for the CCP and heavy blow to the prestige of both Mao and the Party. More than

<sup>69</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan Zhongyang tongzhanbu "Guanyu aiguo renshi zhong de youpai fucha wenti de qingshi baogao de tongzhi," [CCP CC transmits Central UFD's "Notice on the report on instructions on the question of re-examination of Rightists among patriotic personages] (June 11, 1980). In Zhonggong zhongyang tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu & Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (eds), *Xin shiqi tongyi zhanxian wenxian xuanbian*, (Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, Beijing, 1985), pp.120. (Hereafter *New Era United Front Documents*)

<sup>70</sup> John M. H. Lindbeck, "The Organisation and Development of Science," (in China), in Roderick MacFarquhar (ed), *China Under Mao: Politics Takes Command*, (The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1966), pp.333-367.

<sup>71</sup> "Talks at the Hangzhou Conference," (January 3-4, 1958), Macfarquhar, *et al*, 1989, p.378.

ever, the energies of all Chinese with technical and managerial expertise were required if China was to overcome its pressing problems. Faced with a crisis, Mao and the Party adopted conciliatory attitudes and policies towards those with the skills they required. With Leftism in decline, albeit temporarily, united front policies emphasising unity rather than struggle began to be re-asserted in an effort to win back the support of China's intellectuals. Moreover, this retreat occurred in conjunction with important economic reforms instituted by Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and others.

Speaking to a conference of UFD cadres in July 1958, Peng Zhen urged a more moderate line towards the bourgeoisie. He reminded cadres that the bourgeoisie had previously assisted the revolutionary cause and had accepted socialist transformation. He even suggested reassuring former capitalists by increasing the period for fixed interest payments. Intellectuals, Peng argued, did not need to be constantly struggled with and the emphasis now had to shift to uniting with them. They had to be given a chance to demonstrate sincere reform and because excessive control was harmful some relaxation towards them was required. Moreover, while intellectuals should continue to transform themselves into proletarians, excessive participation in labour would be harmful to academics and scientists.<sup>72</sup>

Peng's relative moderation extended to the MPGs. Mao's hostile designation of them as bourgeois parties was amended to the more neutral "middle parties" (*zhongjian pai*). The optimistic belief in the success of earlier thought reform efforts was abandoned. As the intellectuals had not yet undergone basic change, to ensure Party control the UFD cadre conference concluded that the MPG's Left-wing core and a stress on CCP superiority and vigilance should remain. The plan was to turn MPG members, and intellectuals generally, into proletarians over the course of a ten year transformation program between 1957 and 1968. At the end of this period, most of the bourgeoisie would support themselves through their own labour, and uphold Mao's six criteria of 1957. The MPGs would accept completely CCP leadership, conform with the six criteria, and both establish

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<sup>72</sup> Summary of the Tenth National United Front Work Conference, (July 1958), Ren Tao, 1988, pp.369-370.

and accept a leadership core of communists.<sup>73</sup> The flaws in Mao's coercive methods were now obvious and the emphasis in thought reform shifted towards persuasion except for those regarded as enemies. It was also significant that during Mao's drive against the so-called "right deviationists," the Party critics of his Great Leap Forward policies at the Lushan conference of July 1959, was explicitly confined to the CCP and was not extended to include the MPGs.

When Mao met with MPG leaders on September 15 1959, he told them that "changing people's world view" was difficult and time consuming; "brains," he said, "could not easily be washed quickly so slowly does it."<sup>74</sup> Mao assured the MPGs that they had made great progress and confirmed that there would be no more Three or Five-anti campaigns.<sup>75</sup> Using Mao's discussion with the MPGs as a basis, the UFD drafted instructions restricting the use of the "four bigs" against the bourgeoisie. High level allies in particular were to be protected. Rectification and heavy criticism within MPG, industrial, and commercial circles was to cease. The emphasis was instead shifted to stress self-education and the use of positive (*zhengmian jiaoyu*) rather than negative exemplars.<sup>76</sup> The CCP's major concession, however, began in September 1959 with calls for the review of judgements made during the anti-Rightist and rectification campaigns. Soon ten percent of Rightists had their labels removed and more were gradually rehabilitated.<sup>77</sup>

In December 1958, Mao became personally aware of the debilitating effect his policies had on some higher intellectuals. After reading a report on the deterioration of science, he demanded that Lu Dingyi redress the excessive leftist hostility being shown towards university staff. Mao called on all teachers to be won over to "the cause of educating the proletariat and serving the cause of culture and science."<sup>78</sup> However, this directive soon lapsed when he launched a campaign against "right deviationists" within the Party.<sup>79</sup> Still, Mao's instruction to Lu was a belated partial recognition of the contradiction

<sup>73</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhan bu guanyu quanguo tongzhan gongzuo si ji ganbu huiyi xiang Zhongyang de baogao," [Central UFD report to the Central Committee on the national conference of fourth grade united front cadres] (August 29, 1958), *ibid.*, p.376.

<sup>74</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, pp.853.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, pp.853-855.

<sup>76</sup> The new guidelines were approved by the CCP on November 29. Feng Zhengqin, *et al.*, 1993, p.256.

<sup>77</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.856.

<sup>78</sup> Feng Zhengqin, *et al.*, 1993, p.266.

<sup>79</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.596.

between the aims of training proletarian intellectuals and the method of struggling with and rendering passive, scared and resentful, the intellectuals whose knowledge had to be transmitted to the new proletarian generation. Such struggle also contradicted Mao's goal of national construction.

Li Weihan was much closer to these problems than Mao and he clearly linked the Party's relaxation of class struggle with the prevailing difficulties. All talents and skills had to be harnessed to cope with the crisis.<sup>80</sup> Yet, many intellectuals, technicians and managers were too frightened and inhibited to function well. The CCP's solution to re-enlisting these alienated bourgeois elements was to temporarily redefine its differences with them as contradictions within the ranks of the people. The first organisations to benefit were those with the closest links to production, the National Construction Association and the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce, both of which reconvened in late 1959.

### **The Meetings of Immortals**

Between December 1959 and February 1960, the NCA and the ACFIC convened a major joint conference. However, the delegates were aware of the Party's campaign against Rightist deviation campaign and mindful their own recent experiences, were very inhibited and pessimistic.<sup>81</sup> They had no faith in Party assurances that they would be excluded from its internal campaign. The delegates attended meetings "prepared to praise the CCP on the one hand and confess their faults on the other."<sup>82</sup> To overcome these problems, Chen Shutong (representing the ACFIC) and Huang Yanpei are said to have negotiated with the Party to allow the convening of a "meeting of immortals" (*shenxian hui*). This type of meeting used the principle of gentle breeze and mild rain to ensure that the 2000 delegates felt able to talk openly.<sup>83</sup> Based on the CCP's rectification methods of 1942, meetings of immortals stressed the "three no's" (*san bu*): no using a big stick, no grabbing of pig tails and no labelling. Instead it required the implementation of a "three

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<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, pp.858-859.

<sup>82</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, p.525.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.*

selves" (*san zi*) policy: personally raise, analyse, and solve problems. Informality was encouraged in order allow delegates to relax and speak freely.<sup>84</sup>

In a major speech to the NCA/ACFIC delegates, Li Weihang called on them to throw themselves into the struggle for production and urged them to discuss the question of class struggle in order to overcome their fear of it. As long as there were bourgeoisie, said Li, such struggle would continue. The anti-Rightist struggle had been necessary to eliminate antagonistic contradictions, but progress since then meant that the remaining differences were merely non-antagonistic contradictions among the people. Persuasion, education, and gentle breeze methods were now required.<sup>85</sup> The CCP simply temporarily, redefined the status of the bourgeoisie.

On February 20 1960, Liu Shaoqi attended the conference and met with NCA and ACFIC leaders. In a major effort to reassure their constituencies of the Party's good will, Liu announced a policy whereby the CCP would guarantee their welfare needs.<sup>86</sup> Liu also talked of extending the period for the payment of fixed interest.<sup>87</sup> Further reflecting the importance of the meeting, other senior Party leaders such as Zhu De, Chen Yi, and Li Xiannian attended, met with delegates, chaired meetings, and presented reports.<sup>88</sup>

Reinforcing Liu Shaoqi's assurances, the UFD leader Xu Bing announced a "five no-changes" (*wu bu bian*) policy. Three of these guarantees were positive: fixed interest payments to former capitalists would continue, salaries would remain unchanged, and personnel appointments of non-Party people to government would remain. However, the CCP's commitment to political education and socialist transformation also remained unchanged.<sup>89</sup> Significant concessions had been made to the NCA and ACFIC to win their renewed co-operation. The dire predicament of the Chinese economy had forced the CCP to encourage the former capitalists to "throw themselves" into the drive for increased

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<sup>84</sup> Li Weihang, 1986, p.860.

<sup>85</sup> "Jianjue kaolong gongchangdang, nuli zi wo gaizao, yi xin yi yi wei shehui zhuyi fuwu," [Firmly move close to the Communist Party, work hard to reform oneself, serve socialism with one heart and one will], (Speech to NCA and ACFIC), (January 1960), Li Weihang, 1983, pp.255-257.

<sup>86</sup> *Bao yi tou -bao dao di*. To go with the People's Government and cooperate with the CCP in return for which the government would look after the aged and the sick.

<sup>87</sup> Li Weihang, 1986, p.861.

<sup>88</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, p.520

<sup>89</sup> Feng Zhengqin, *et al*, 1993, p.259. The UFD's directive on these measures was approved in April 1960.

production and greater economy. The "meetings of immortals" were then extended to remaining MPGs.

The UFD had confirmed through the use of surveys and direct involvement in Central committee meetings of the MPGs, that all were subject to the same fears and anxieties which had afflicted the NCA and ACFIC.<sup>90</sup> These surveys again revealed the now familiar problem of friction between MPG members and Party organisations as well as a generation gap, with older members finding it difficult to relate to newer members.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, in moves which renewed MPG legitimacy in the eyes of Party members, senior Party leaders including Mao himself, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Peng Zhen, and Zhou Enlai, met MPG chairpersons at the MPG Conferences.<sup>92</sup> Eighteen hundred MPG delegates attended and Zhou Enlai, Li Fuchun, and Chen Yi presented reports on the national and international situation.<sup>93</sup>

The use of meetings of immortals to motivate and educate was extended to the other MPGs and then to the bourgeoisie generally. Almost one million people are said to have attended them.<sup>94</sup> These meetings allowed many of the complaints of 1956 to be aired again. Li Weihai noted that many delegates spoke of disruptions to united front work or of it being ignored altogether during the Great Leap Forward. Non-Party persons had been isolated; their positions were accorded no respect or trust and they had often become targets of struggle. Li declared that the UFD's task for 1961 was to investigate the problems of the CCP's allies and improve relations with them. The basis for this work was Deng Xiaoping's report on rectifying the errors of the Great Leap Forward. Deng had restated the principle of giving non-Party persons positions with real power, the rehabilitation of alleged Rightists and their return to their original posts.<sup>95</sup> As a result of the CCP's new attitude, measures for protecting non-Party people were implemented. In July, a report on the regulation of science urged improved treatment of intellectuals and in August, regulations were issued protecting former capitalists deemed to be "democratic"

<sup>90</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, p.528.

<sup>91</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.862.

<sup>92</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.309.

<sup>93</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, p.528

<sup>94</sup> Dennis Doolin, "The Revival of the "Hundred Flowers Campaign" 1961," *China Quarterly*, no.8, 1961, p.37.

<sup>95</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, pp.865-866.

from being sent down to the countryside to participate in labour.<sup>96</sup> China was entering a new One Hundred Flowers era.

### **The Second Hundred Flowers Period: 1960-1964**

The revived Hundred Flowers period of the early 1960s was quite different from its 1956-1957 predecessor. This time Mao's six criteria for guiding criticism were emphasised and referred to repeatedly. The Party issued clear instructions for the implementation of the new policy. It stressed that ideological and political issues were to be kept clearly separate from academic and scientific ones. Contending was to be confined strictly to academic matters.<sup>97</sup> The study of politics, hitherto dominant, was reduced. Five sixths of scientists' time was to be devoted to research rather than politics. Such was the prevailing cynicism, however, that some called for the new guidelines to be inscribed in stone.<sup>98</sup> The overall emphasis in united front work was to support the CCP's "Eight character policy:" adjustment, consolidation, replenishment, and improvement of the economy.<sup>99</sup>

The main object of the second Hundred Flowers policy, like the first, was to reduce the degree of passivity, even hostility towards the CCP, and to harness the efforts of all intellectuals behind the task of healing the damage to the economy. Rehabilitation measures were an important parts of this drive, including re-establishing the legitimacy of non-Party people and their interests. The sight of major Party leaders blessing MPG conferences with their presence was one aspect of this. Other important measures included an expansion and significant redirection of the CPPCC and the public endorsement of united front work in the National Peoples Congress.

At official celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the CCP on June 30 1961, Liu Shaoqi declared "we pay tribute to the patriotic democratic parties, democratic personages, national bourgeoisie, and overseas compatriots that have long co-

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<sup>96</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.311.

<sup>97</sup> Doolin, 1961, pp.34-36.

<sup>98</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.547.

<sup>99</sup> *Tiaozheng, gonggu, chongshi, tigao.*

operated with our Party.”<sup>100</sup> Liu stressed the role of intellectuals in building China and highlighted their progress, declaring:

The intellectuals are an important force, indispensable to the success of our socialist construction. In our country their ranks are constantly expanding, and they have made great progress in remoulding themselves ideologically. They have made valuable contributions on all fronts of socialist construction. We should continue to enlarge the ranks of the intellectuals and continue the policy of a “hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend” so that the cause of socialist science and culture may flourish still more ...<sup>101</sup>

Liu emphasised the continuation of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision with MPGs and the need to mobilise all possible positive factors behind socialism. Nevertheless, Liu made clear the CCP's commitment to eventually eliminate the national bourgeoisie by turning them into “conscious socialist working people.”<sup>102</sup> In April 1962, the official communique of the NPC highlighted Zhou Enlai's support for the positions outlined by Liu Shaoqi. This communique included measures such as the extension of fixed interest payments with the promise of a further extension for three more years beginning in 1963, measures which came immediately after Zhou's explanation of the ten adjustments required to regulate the national economy.<sup>103</sup> The MPGs were to play a useful role in a number of these adjustments. They would assist the rationalisation and an increase in the production of daily necessities (task 2), the adjustment of scientific, education, and cultural work (task 8) and, particularly in the case of Zhigong and its overseas connections, they had the potential to facilitate an increase in foreign trade (task 7).<sup>104</sup> This communique also drew attention to the presence at the NPC of united front figures, such as MPG leaders Huang Yanpei, Chen Shutong, and He Xiangning.<sup>105</sup>

The CCP sought to broaden its support by expanding of the number of CPPCC organisations and committees. The strategy of increasing the number of representative bodies to maintain social stability and help overcome crises was already being used

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<sup>100</sup> Stuart Kirby (ed), *Contemporary China*, (Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong, 1963), p.113.

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *ibid.*, p.114.

<sup>103</sup> "Press Communique of the third session of the Second National People's Congress of China," *ibid.*, 1963, pp.120-122.

<sup>104</sup> This possibility arose as the CCP moved from a reliance on trade with the Soviet Union to a "leaning to all sides" policy. By 1965 China was conducting trade through formal and informal channels with 125 countries. Jan S. Prybyla, *The Political Economy of Communist China*, (International Text Book Co, Scranton, 1970), pp.403-405.

<sup>105</sup> Kirby, 1963, p.125.

successfully by Britain in Hong Kong.<sup>106</sup> Chen Shutong reported that between 1960 and 1962, the CPPCC National Committee was the busiest it had ever been. Through the CPPCC, the Party encouraged MPGs and non-Party personages to participate in politics and national construction, oppose imperialism and support national liberation movements.<sup>107</sup>

The size of the CPPCC national committee itself increased from 599 members in 1954 to 1199 by 1965.<sup>108</sup> The number of local level CPPCC committees showed a similar increase. Between 1954 and 1959 some 908 committees were established. As the CCP radically moderated its policies towards the intellectuals between 1959 and 1960, 115 new committees were constituted with another 63 created by 1962, bringing the total to 1,086.<sup>109</sup> Between 1959 and 1962, the National Committee held 390 forums and meetings;<sup>110</sup> figures which contrasted sharply with the 68 held in 1956.<sup>111</sup>

The re-vitalised CPPCC and the new committees benefited the MPGs and their constituencies. The new CPPCC members came from the intellectuals and former bourgeoisie and were not peasants and workers. Highlighting the CCP's technocratic emphasis, the NPC's thirty five member Standing Committee also included fifteen scientists.<sup>112</sup> To re-motivate these constituencies, they needed to be reassured from the outset that they had some status and legitimacy in the new society being formed around them. The endorsement of their value by senior CCP leaders, although significantly not by Mao, and the incorporation of prominent intellectuals into CPPCC committees were important symbols of their revived importance. Just as important were the CCP's rehabilitation of alleged Rightists. Chen Shutong stated that many in this group had made great progress in self-transformation.<sup>113</sup> A major symbol of this rehabilitation was the re-

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<sup>106</sup> This process is exhaustively documented by Jose Oliveira de Barros, *An exploration of the Roles and Functions of the Quasi-Governmental Advisory Bodies in the Public Administration of Hong Kong*, (PhD thesis, Brunel University, United Kingdom, 1989)

<sup>107</sup> "Report on the Work of the Standing Committee of the Third National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference," (March 23-April 18 1962), Kirby, 1963, p.128.

<sup>108</sup> James T. Myers, "Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and the Political Socialization of Non-Party Elites," *Political Scientist*, January-June, 1967, p.88.

<sup>109</sup> *ibid.*, p.89.

<sup>110</sup> Kirby, 1963, p.128.

<sup>111</sup> Myers, 1967, p.90.

<sup>112</sup> Chang Ching-wen, "Peiping's Current United Front Policy," *Issues and Studies*, September 1965, p.13.

<sup>113</sup> Kirby, 1963, p.127.

instatement of Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji to the CPPCC in 1964. The fourth National Committee of the CPPCC had a total of one hundred and fifty eight MPG members.

The public rehabilitation of the MPGs and their constituencies was supported by the CPPCC giving “appropriate consideration to the well being” of CPPCC committee members.<sup>114</sup> The CPPCC established a National Liaison Committee to liaise with the families of united front figures and organise informal activities for them, such as “tea parties, rural excursions, concerts, and the study of calligraphy and poetry.”<sup>115</sup> In another major concession, the CPPCC National Committee's “National Conference on Theoretical and Political Studies” of July 1960, made official the general application of the meetings of immortals methods for political study. It also ended the participation of MPG members and non-Party personages in labour designed to assist their acquisition of a proletarian outlook. The latter decision was not justified in terms of its negative consequences or the waste of talent that it represented, but in terms of allowing more time for political education, especially the study of the fourth volume of Mao's *Selected Works*.<sup>116</sup>

The Party's efforts to re-assure intellectuals were motivated by the need to gain their active support in the CPPCC's forums. These forums served two purposes: to elicit constructive suggestions and criticisms supporting economic adjustment and administration, and to establish an atmosphere in which ideology could be instilled in a positive manner. Thus, the National CPPCC Committee held almost one hundred forums with experts from artistic, cultural and economic circles. Chen Shutong claimed that the forums discussing the Hundred Flowers policy and CCP/non-Party relations were “enthusiastic” and that many useful criticisms and suggestions were generated.<sup>117</sup>

The most important activities were those organised through the CPPCC and the MPGs themselves. These activities used the expertise of MPG members and NPPs to resolve problems obstructing production. The corporatist structures of the MPGs facilitated this. The NCA and the ACFIC were particularly valuable because of their direct links and expertise in economic production. The Chongqing CPPCC organised lectures in

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<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>115</sup> *ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>116</sup> *ibid.*, p.130.

<sup>117</sup> *ibid.*, p.129.

factories and developed industrial plant designs and improvements to production facilities. In Guizhou, NCA members and others inspected and proposed improvements to a local steel plant. Political study often gave way to discussions on improving production levels and technical skills.<sup>118</sup> Other MPGs organised seminars, such as ship building, chemical fertilisers, architecture, water conservation.<sup>119</sup> After Zhou Enlai outlined the ten points of adjustment, the NCA pledged itself to improving managerial systems, and the Association for the Promotion of Democracy pledged to improve language and mathematics programs for primary and secondary school students. The APD, Democratic League, Peasants and Workers Party, and Jiusan pledged to assist in the development of science for improving agriculture while Zhigong promised to work actively amongst Overseas Chinese.<sup>120</sup> The League used its specialist connections and expertise to conduct surveys on problems in education.<sup>121</sup> These activities conformed with a longstanding desire on the part of MPG leaders for real roles and responsibilities.<sup>122</sup>

To further the reconciliation process between the CCP and intellectuals, UFD leader Xu Bing repudiated the coercive political education of the past several years and called for the simultaneous rehabilitation of *all* those labelled during the *jiao xin* campaign.<sup>123</sup> Rightists who had finished their reform through labour or labour education far from their original registered place of residence were to remain where they were. Nevertheless, the children of Rightists were accorded protection from discrimination in education, employment, and housing.<sup>124</sup> One of those to benefit from the new policies was Chen Mingshu who was rehabilitated by early 1963.<sup>125</sup>

Xu also called for a major revision of attitudes towards the MPGs. Numbers had declined from the high of 100,000 members in 1956 to 85,000 and Xu advocated that they be allowed to again grow to 100,000. In addition, the number of Party members working

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<sup>118</sup> Pauw, 1981, pp.379-380.

<sup>119</sup> Doolin, 1961, pp.38-39.

<sup>120</sup> Tang, *et al*, 1967, p.207.

<sup>121</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.739.

<sup>122</sup> Pauw, 1981, p.379.

<sup>123</sup> White flags were "Backward units that do poor work and are plagued by problems, and individuals with backward or reactionary political ideas. The opposite of a red flag."

<sup>124</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhan bu guanyu Quan guo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo huiyi xiang Zhongyang de bao gao," [Central United Front Department Report to the Central Committee on the National United Front Work Conference] (May 28, 1962), Ren Tao, 1988, pp.411-420.

<sup>125</sup> Pauw, 1981, p.379.

in the MPGs and the ACFIC was to be reduced. The UFD wanted more resources to make the MPGs a force for socialism (rather than remain as bourgeois political parties) and to turn their members into proletarians. Of 33,500 UFD cadres, some 15,000 were involved in ACFIC and 2,900 in MPG work. With a ratio of one UFD cadre for thirty MPG members, the UFD regarded cadre workloads as heavy but did not think more cadres would be allocated. The Department recommended instead that the quality of existing cadres be improved by encouraging them to study Mao's thought.<sup>126</sup>

Political education remained a prominent aspect of united front work and the Institutes of Socialism were to continue. By December 1961, there were 430 institutes from which 140,000 students had graduated. This total included thirty percent of upper and middle-ranking ACFIC members. These figures represented a "considerable increase" over the 1960 total of 274 Institutes with 50,000 students. By 1964, the fifth batch of students, some 340, graduated from the Central IoS with an anticipated enrolment of 400 for 1965.<sup>127</sup> Struggle temporarily gave way to unity and coercion to persuasion.

While the number of people passing through the institutes was relatively small, they were influential members of important interest groups. If the political education of their 'students' was judged successful, they would be regarded as politically reliable and qualified to either join the CCP and/or take up MPG or government leadership positions. Even if students did not accept all of the indoctrination they at least learnt what was required of them. By playing their part in this education process the MPGs filtered, reformed and trained intellectuals for socialism. In transforming bourgeois intellectuals into good socialists they were also acting as "funnels" for the Party, directing their most reliable members into the ranks of the CCP.<sup>128</sup> At the same time, the MPGs were also working to render themselves redundant. Mao himself had endorsed the Party's recruitment of MPG members but not its leaders. His aim was to absorb half of the MPG members over six years.<sup>129</sup> The promise of the *jiao xin* movement and Zhang Bojun's 1957 attempts to expand the PWP, that of potential entry to the Party, finally had a

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<sup>126</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.404-409.

<sup>127</sup> Myers, 1967, p.91.

<sup>128</sup> United front historian Mu Yulin described the MPGs as "funnels." See Zhang Tienan, 1991, p.460.

<sup>129</sup> "Talk at the Hangchow Conference of the Shanghai Bureau," (April 1957), *JPRS*, 1974, p.69.

substantial basis. However, using the MPGs as half-way houses to CCP membership undermined their importance in their own right.

The February 1962 Guangzhou science conference, presided over by Zhou Enlai, marked a further improvement in the Party's attitude to intellectuals. One sign of this was Chen Yi's call for the bourgeois hats of intellectuals to be removed and replaced with "crowns."<sup>130</sup> Speaking to the NPC in 1962, Zhou Enlai confirmed that great results had been achieved in political transformation. In his report to the NPC in March, Zhou reaffirmed the role of the united front and praised the MPG's movement towards socialism. A new generation of both "red" and expert was being trained and old society intellectuals had undergone a "basic change" since 1949. Mutual supervision and long term co-existence could now be achieved. Referring to the prevailing atmosphere of moderation, Zhou said that even bourgeois intellectuals who had not changed their views would be united with, as long as they respected the law and were good workers.<sup>131</sup>

Addressing the twelfth National United Front Work Conference of April-May 1962, Li Weihai took his lead from Zhou Enlai's speech to the Guangzhou science conference and used some positions first advanced in 1956-57 to argue that the MPGs had undergone fundamental change. They could now be regarded, he maintained, as "political forces serving socialism." They had a "historical united front essence" and "included a batch of CCP members." Li claimed these factors helped and not hindered the tasks of uniting with and educating the national bourgeoisie and others.<sup>132</sup> The UFD adopted Li's position in early 1962.<sup>133</sup> Deng Xiaoping also reassured the conference delegates declaring that the united front was a long-term policy and its termination should only be considered fifty years hence.<sup>134</sup>

In January 1963, Zhou Enlai again reassured a Conference of All Circles that the MPGs would co-exist with the CCP until the achievement of communism and he affirmed

<sup>130</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.314.

<sup>131</sup> "Bu duan jiaqiang renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian shi guojia zhengzhi shenghuo zhong de yi ge genben renwu," [To constantly strengthen the People's Democratic United Front is a basic task in our nation's political life] (March 28, 1962). Zhou Enlai, 1984, pp.431-446.

<sup>132</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, p.872.

<sup>133</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.393.

<sup>134</sup> Xu Bing, "Zai quan guo tongzhan gongzuo huiyi de zongjie baogao," [Summary Report to National United Front Work Conference] (May 19, 1962), Ren Tao, 1988, p.401.

the new Hundred Flowers policy. Zhou's attitude was not surprising because he realised the need for the support of all the groups represented by the MPGs if China was to realise what he termed the "four modernisations."<sup>135</sup> Science, Zhou explained, was required to assist China to modernise agriculture, industry, national defence, and technology.<sup>136</sup>

Thus, it was in the context of a promised continuation of policies of toleration and the Party's continued need for the services of intellectuals that the MPGs began to return to the membership numbers of 1956. In April 1962, the Democratic League began rebuilding its membership after euphemistically declaring the last four traumatic years a period of "consolidation." Yet despite this "consolidation," the League's central leadership called for the strengthening of leadership in some League organisations.<sup>137</sup> This may well have meant an increase in the number of CCP members to form their leadership backbone. Membership requirements were relaxed and members previously expelled were again considered for re-admission. Their tasks included carrying out surveys of the masses, learning from the masses, maintaining good relations with old style intellectuals and helping the latter to study politics. Indicating continued resistance to the CCP, the League admitted that some people still needed extensive political education and others had failed to acknowledge the supremacy of politics.<sup>138</sup>

There was another important change in CCP policy towards the MPGs at this time. In contrast to 1956-1957 when individuals had proffered opinions, the new form of mutual supervision stressed collective opinions. This emphasis on group opinions would prevent a recurrence of the events of 1956 by acting as a means through which opinions would be screened before they were passed on.<sup>139</sup> Such screening would also prevent a recurrence of ordinary members publishing possibly inflammatory material in the name of an MPG.

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<sup>135</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Chun jie zhuci," [Words of congratulations for Spring Festival January 28, 1963], Zhou Enlai, 1984, pp.447-450.

<sup>136</sup> Zhou Enlai, (January 29, 1963), Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.318.

<sup>137</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu tiaozheng konggu zuzhi he fazhan meng yuan de yijian," [Opinions on rectification and consolidation of organisational development and the development of League Membership] *DL Historical Documents*, pp.712-719.

<sup>138</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *ibid.*, pp.738-743.

## The Wilting of the Second Hundred Flowers

By mid-1962, the political situation which had been so conducive to reconciling intellectuals to the CCP was changing. In July 1962, the Party Central Committee refused to extend the period of rehabilitation for alleged Rightists.<sup>140</sup> The economic crisis which had forced Mao to allow others to moderate his policies was now receding and, at a September plenum of the Central Committee, he criticised the promoters of moderate economic policies, Li Fuchun and Xi Zhongxun.<sup>141</sup> In his speech to the plenum, Mao restated his growing conviction of the danger of revisionism because of a pervasive bourgeois influence. This influence stemmed from its continued existence internationally, from bourgeois remnants within China, and from the continuation of a self-perpetuating petty bourgeoisie seeking a restoration of capitalism. Mao declared that the struggle against this revisionism would continue. Even if their children restored capitalism, their grandchildren would rise and overthrow it. He re-asserted the importance of class struggle as weapon against this enemy. "Class struggle," he dictated, "had to be discussed every year, every month, every day."<sup>142</sup> Rectification would be used to rid the Party of its revisionists and those who acknowledged their mistakes would be accepted, "provided they returned to a Marxist stand point."<sup>143</sup> This Marxist viewpoint equated with Mao's views and was now firmly against moderation and concession. Significantly, Mao singled out Li Weihan as someone who had made revisionist mistakes but had corrected them.<sup>144</sup>

However, despite his apparent concession to Li, Mao attacked the basic UFD policy of rehabilitating Rightists. Declaring his opposition to wholesale rehabilitation, Mao stated that only those truly wrongly labelled should be rehabilitated.<sup>145</sup> Taking their lead from Mao's criticisms, and perhaps also from Li's self-criticism, other CCP leaders also began to attack the UFD.<sup>146</sup> Li Weihan came under repeated indirect attack within the UFD as a revisionist and "capitulationist" for his Hundred Flowers policies of moderation

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<sup>140</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.587.

<sup>141</sup> Li Weihan, 1986, p.876.

<sup>142</sup> "Speech at the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee," Stuart Schram (ed), *Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed, Talks and Letters: 1956-71*, (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1974), pp.188-196.

<sup>143</sup> *ibid.*, p.193. It is also notable that long-time united front worker and theorist, Zhang Wentian, was barred from this meeting.

<sup>144</sup> *ibid.*, p.194.

<sup>145</sup> *ibid.*, p.194.

<sup>146</sup> Li Weihan, 1986, p.876.

and concession towards bourgeois intellectuals, former capitalists, and the MPGs in particular.<sup>147</sup> Li was denounced for his post-1956 positions on several issues. He was condemned for having reassured the MPGs that classes would eventually be eliminated (then the goal of both thought reform and the Hundred Flowers campaign). By 1962, Li's encouragement of the idea that the successful remoulding of MPG members would ultimately result in the MPGs being transformed into socialist political parties was heretical. Li was also denounced for maintaining that the MPGs' left-wings were effectively a part of the proletariat, even though many their members were dual MPG-CCP members or progressives eligible or were about to join the Party. He was condemned for claiming that the People's Democratic United Front was a socialist united front.<sup>148</sup> By late 1962 then, the former fundamental tenet of united front work, that even the national, let alone the petty bourgeoisie, could be converted into proletarians had completely been overturned. Convicted retrospectively, Li was subjected to forty bouts of criticism over the next two years.<sup>149</sup>

Li Weihan's position weakened further when, on May 27 1963, Mao approved a report critical of the UFD and especially of Li. Mao personally altered the report's section on the elimination of classes by extending the time required to achieve such elimination from the original "several decades" to "several hundred years."<sup>150</sup> This report now attacked the positions Li and the UFD had advocated in 1956, particularly their promotion of the idea of the quick elimination of classes. This report was distributed to lower levels in January 1964 and laid the basis for the partial destruction of the UFD itself.<sup>151</sup> In public, however, this damage was not yet obvious as the CCP's post-1959 concessions to the bourgeoisie and its economic moderation had stabilised the society and economy.<sup>152</sup> However, early 1963 was the last time that CCP leaders responsible for the economic

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<sup>147</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> Lu Yongshan, "1962, 1964 nian dui Tongzhanbu de liang ci cuowu pipan," [1962 and 1964: two periods of erroneous criticism of the UFD]. In Zhang Tienan, 1991, p.486.

<sup>150</sup> "Guanyu Zhongyang tongzhangbu ji nian lai ruogan zhengce lilunxing wenti de jiancha zongjie," [General report into the investigation into a number of theoretical issues in the united front in the last few years]. *ibid.*, p.485.

<sup>151</sup> Lu Yongshan euphemistically termed this damage "very bad influence." *ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Frederick C. Teiwes, *Politics and Purge: Rectification and the Decline of Party Norms: 1950-1960*, (Second edition, ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1993), pp.372-373.

adjustment policies, such as Liu Shaoqi, Peng Zhen and Deng Xiaoping, publicly supported the MPGs with their presence at MPG meetings.<sup>153</sup>

Between mid-May and June 1964, the CCP Central Committee held a work conference during which Mao clarified his ideas on the emergence of revisionism. Having studied the relevant documents, the UFD subjected Li Weihan to another round of criticism and began relieving him of his posts. Subjected to the same pressures that many other united front allies had also suffered, Li eventually confessed to crimes against both the Party and against Mao.<sup>154</sup> Mao's attacks on Li and MPG related united front work were among the earliest manifestations of Mao's growing offensive against those he had increasingly begun to perceive as revisionists.

By the end of 1963, the change in the political wind was becoming obvious. One indication was a renewed attack on Zhang Naiqi. Although Zhang had already been attacked for criticising CCP economic policy in 1960, in late 1963 he was again denounced as a Rightist and relieved of his last official post, a place in the NPC.<sup>155</sup> In 1962, Li Weihan had found it necessary to again attack the validity of third road positions.<sup>156</sup> Li's attack was evidence that third road views such as Zhang's retained some appeal. The very nature of the concessions of the second Hundred Flowers period also indicated that such views had some value and that it remained necessary for the Party to destroy any belief that a third road was possible.

In December 1963, the Democratic League's work report instructed members to involve themselves and the masses in a new struggle, this time against revisionism. The re-appearance of political study which emphasised criticism and self-criticism, this time of manifestations of alleged 'revisionism,' made League members extremely apprehensive of a return to the anti-Rightist campaign. The League's leadership admitted that fears of "the big stick" and a rapid worsening of the political climate had re-emerged. Reinforcing these fears were the CCP's attacks on pacifism, humanism, welfarism, "a state of the whole

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<sup>153</sup> Pauw, 1981, p.379.

<sup>154</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.426.

<sup>155</sup> Boorman, 1967, vol.1, p.90.

<sup>156</sup> "Zhongguo xinminzhuyi geming shiqi zhengqu wuchan jieji lingdao de douzheng," [The struggle for proletarian leadership in the period of the new democratic revolution] (1962), Li Weihan, 1983, p.355. See also Li Weihan, *The Struggle for Proletarian Leadership in the Period of the New Democratic Revolution in China*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1962).

people-ism” (as opposed to particular classes) and a party of the whole people (*i.e.* all classes), and the CCP’s calls for League members to participate in class struggle and for the re-instatement of a new Five-Anti campaign to combat corruption, waste, and extravagance within the MPGs. The Leagues work report even acknowledged that members held strong doubts about whether China's socialism was progressive or backward and that many suspected that class struggle was a CCP contrivance.<sup>157</sup>

Mao's attacks on the policies of compromise continued into 1964, thereby increasing the fears of the MPGs' middle elements constituency. He derided non-Party personages, ridiculing, for example, their fear of the atom bomb.<sup>158</sup> In August 1965, in an effort to reduce such anxieties, Peng Zhen told the UFD heads, Xu Bing and Ping Jiesan, to relax UFD policies towards democratic personages. Peng instructed that class struggle within the ranks of the “democrats” be halted as they were “already anxious enough.” Their political education had to be stepped up but their “material conditions had to be improved a little.”<sup>159</sup> Peng's instructions came into effect in September but only briefly before the onset of the cultural revolution rendered them obsolete.<sup>160</sup> Peng himself became an early victim of the Cultural Revolution, condemned by Mao in May 1966 as a revisionist within the Central Committee who was “attempting to turn the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.”<sup>161</sup> In early 1965, Guo Moruo reported that a now more radical UFD was critical of the CPPCC's lack of emphasis on thought reform. The Conference therefore intensified its programs of political study.<sup>162</sup>

For the MPGs, the climax of Mao’s attacks on the policies of class compromise came in 1966. In May, the UFD was attacked as both a protector of monsters and demons and as bourgeois. Former capitalists were again branded exploiters and, even after almost two decades of CCP control and thought reform, the MPGs were damned as capitalist parties. The inevitable end of the MPGs as manifestations of capitulationism and revisionism, now defined as any co-operation and contact with the bourgeoisie, came on

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157 "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng gongzuo bao gao," [Chinese Democratic League Work Report] (December 6, 1963), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.750-770.

158 Schram, 1974, p.197.

159 Ren Tao, 1988, p.423.

160 *ibid.*, p.424.

161 Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China*, (The Free Press, New York, 1977), p.311.

162 Pauw, 1981, p.382.

August 23 1966 when Red Guard ultimatums demanded they disband. The MPGs quickly complied.<sup>163</sup> Mao, speaking to Li Zongren, remarked however, that the MPGs, together with the CPPCC, were still necessary and thus they were retained in name.<sup>164</sup>

## Conclusion

Until the anti-Rightist campaign, the Chinese implementation of united front work followed Gramsci's scheme closely. Yet, Gramsci's schema, unlike Mao's, did not include a constant need for struggle each time the push towards socialism was intensified. Mao's dominance resulted in an approach to ideological reform with little recognition of the limits of useful coercion. This shortcoming combined with Mao's need for symbolic enemies as part of the political education process created a cycle of intense thought reform resulting in passivity and crisis with a subsequent need for the relaxation of policies and concessions to win back support. Moreover, Mao's 1962 theory of a self-perpetuating bourgeoisie set the stage for a continuing revolution against them. Under this new theory, the full transformation of old society bourgeois intellectuals into proletarian ones could never be achieved. There would instead be a constant cycle of struggle and relaxation, resulting in, as Lifton had described, an increasing degree of alienation from the Party, its leader, and its goals. Implementing Mao's theories was unlikely to result in any catching up with Western science and technology. Intellectuals would be repeatedly cowed and intimidated instead of being inspired to devote themselves energetically to educating the new generation. As the Great Leap Forward had shown, Mao's radical methods involved vast waste of talent and resources.

Mao neither acknowledged responsibility nor heeded the lessons of the failures of the anti-Rightist campaign and the Great Leap Forward. The subsequent organic crisis required major economic reforms and reversals of policies. Mao only reluctantly admitted that bourgeois intellectuals had not yet been replaced by proletarian ones and remained indispensable. The CCP's post-1959 concessionary measures conformed with the passive revolutionary methods Gramsci had attributed to bourgeois states. These were not

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<sup>163</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.64.

<sup>164</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.125.

measures that Gramsci had envisaged might be needed under communism. Yet while Mao temporarily conceded the need for reforms and concessions between 1959 and 1962, he was never reconciled to them. As soon as his own political position and that of the economy improved, he began to undermine the reforms as revisionism.

Mao was to some extent correct. As the Hundred Flowers period had shown, some of the 'bourgeois' ideas of former third road advocates such as Zhang Bojun, Luo Longji and Zhang Naiqi continued to exercise appeal despite years of political education. One important reason for this appeal was precisely because of the negative effects of Mao's policies. Advocates of a third road believed that their positions offered some way of redressing the failures of the existing CCP system. However, all suggestions designed to limit the Party, its policies, or its leader were, *ipso facto* labelled as revisionist.

Nevertheless, after the basic socialisation of the means of production in 1956, and before Mao developed the theory of a self-perpetuating bourgeoisie, it was reasonable for the UFD to work towards transforming bourgeois intellectuals into proletarian ones and turning the MPGs into socialist parties. It is clear that those close to the MPGs, like Li Weihuan, heeded MPG concerns and sought to protect and use them as much as possible. They did so partially out of self-interest, *i.e.* the UFD's work would be greatly reduced if the MPGs were abolished and because the UFD was responsible for practical implementation of the Party's MPG policies. The Department's close contact with united front target groups ensured that it had a more realistic idea of how to implement its work, the need for gradualism, and the potential harm of Mao's leftist adventurism. For the UFD's work to be successful it had little choice but to water down many of Mao's policies. As Mao became obsessed with the danger of revisionism, the UFD's actions aroused his suspicions and enmity.

While united front work came under increasing attack as revisionism in the mid 1960s, it remained the CCP's only theoretically and historically justified method for dealing with an organic crisis. It was therefore inevitable that united front work including the MPGs would have eventually to be revived when the next organic crisis threatened the Party's power.

The corporatist nature of the MPGs did not allow for the adequate transmission of the ideas of MPG members as the leadership was dominated by progressives who were almost indistinguishable from the CCP. This consequence of intermediation resulted in Mao over-estimating the success of remoulding. When the CCP relaxed its controls ordinary members spoke up without going through their leaders. Relatively right-wing MPG leaders took Li Weihan's guarantees too literally and spoke on issues other than those originally intended by Mao while the progressives remained very careful in their criticisms and suggestions. The moderate and right-wing MPG leaders who had spoken as individuals were subsequently denied the protection of their organisations. The second Hundred Flowers period corrected these shortcomings by having all suggestions filtered by the organisation. This protected members but also exacerbated the prevailing tendency to couch all opinions in the terms and the tone that the CCP found acceptable.

There was an irony in the Party's failures and the subsequent use of passive revolution. Mao's fears of revisionism and bourgeois influence were similar to those which had led Gramsci to wage a long and bitter struggle with Italian Communist Party leader, Bordega.<sup>165</sup> Gramsci won his battle but he never had the chance to implement his theories of using alliances to transform Italian society into a socialist one. Mao, like Bordega, greatly feared revisionism but Mao's methods of eliminating it led repeatedly to a need for the CCP to practise it. Mao's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was one such attack on revisionism which resulted in the effective end of much of the UFD and the MPGs but also, eventually, in the need to revive them.

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<sup>165</sup> Simon, 1982, pp.117-118.

*Chapter 7***Hibernation and Revival: 1966-1981**

The Cultural Revolution meant the effective demise of the MPGs for almost a decade. It brought to a halt policies of compromise and co-operation with non-proletarian classes. Yet just as Mao kept Rightists in reserve he also found it unwise to eliminate the MPGs completely. A need for the MPGs did indeed re-appear, precisely because of Mao's Cultural Revolution policies. This chapter traces the gradual revival of united front work and the MPGs after 1973 as the CCP began tentatively to repair the damage caused by the Cultural Revolution. This revival began under Mao, but it was not until after his death that united front work again became an important part of CCP policy and practice.

Like the concessionary policies launched in the wake of the Great Leap Forward, the re-establishment of united front work in the mid 1970s occurred for the same reasons: a crisis brought about by Mao's policies. The energy and enthusiasm released by millions of ordinary people during the Cultural Revolution, like the Great Leap Forward before it, did not result in increased stability and prosperity. Rather, people were exhausted by years of upheaval and many suffered greatly as a result of Mao's policies. Intellectuals in particular bore the brunt of many of Mao's attacks on revisionism.

Mao's own dreams of a Chinese socialist superpower based on a strong and prosperous economy had failed to materialise, despite enormous sacrifices made by others on his behalf. China's relative strength declined *vis a vis* its rapidly industrialising neighbours. The CCP was again faced with an organic crisis which it sought to overcome anew by improving people's material conditions and by re-establishing links with the intellectuals vital for production and legitimacy.

Those communist Party leaders who had helped between 1959-1964 to overcome the crisis induced by Mao's Great Leap Forward, and who had subsequently been maligned as revisionists, were recalled to manage the Cultural Revolution induced crisis. Reverting to policies proven in 1959, Deng Xiaoping and others supported the

revival of the united front, the MPGs and in particular, the National Construction Association and the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce. This revival was part of a new passive revolutionary strategy to regain the consent and support of all groups, particularly those able to increase production. Material rewards were again used to compensate for the failure of Mao's moral exhortations.

The MPGs were an important part of the reformers' strategy. The active support of both the intelligentsia and the technical intellectuals was needed to enable China to modernise and meet existing and future demands. Yet after two decades of being discredited, the intelligentsia and technical intellectuals needed to have their legitimacy strongly re-asserted. The CCP needed to demonstrate that it respected intellectuals, including bourgeois ones. Their talents and expertise were again essential for modernisation. United front work was the CCP's means of achieving these goals and was justified by CCP theory and history.

This chapter shows how vestigial MPGs were maintained during the Cultural Revolution. These vestiges became the basis upon which they were gradually rebuilt. Yet it was only following the death of Mao and the subsequent victory of CCP reformists in late 1978 that united front work was fully revived. In 1980, in a debate which echoed the MPGs' 1957 demands for increased representation and a greater role, the CCP discussed the causes of its cycle of crises. Positions advanced during this debate were later gradually and partially implemented. The economic reforms themselves also bore similarities to third road positions.

### **Hibernation: 1966-1975**

Although the Red Guards forced the MPGs to announce their dissolution in August 1966, Mao declared in October that the MPGs were still required.<sup>1</sup> Mao's pronouncement allowed the central leaderships of the MPGs to continue a nominal existence for the duration of the Cultural Revolution. This retention amounted to select elements of the MPGs receiving varying degrees of protection. Progressives, dual

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.66.

CCP-MPG members, and individuals of special significance, especially to Taiwan, were accorded special protection.

Contemporary united front literature makes much of Zhou Enlai's involvement in protecting senior united front figures. This emphasis plays down Mao's responsibility for launching the Cultural Revolution, an action which destroyed the lives of many MPG members and intellectuals and it diverts attention from Zhou's faithful implementation of Mao's policies. Zhou is said to have taken advantage of Mao's directive to protect the academic Zhang Shizhao from Red Guard persecution, to protect others.<sup>2</sup> Using the authority of Mao's directive, Zhou wrote a list according protection to MPG, NPC, CPPCC, government department, and other leaders, similar to that afforded to Zhang. Zhou's list consisted of progressives and dual CCP-MPG members such as Song Qingling, Guo Moruo, He Xiangning, Sha Qianli, Jiang Guangnai, and Zhang Xiruo. It also included famous GMD figures, such as Cheng Qian, Fu Zuoyi, Zhang Zhizhong, Shao Lizi, and Li Zongren. Some of these leaders, including Zhang Shizhao and the Nationalists, were placed in the Peoples' Liberation Army Hospital 309.<sup>3</sup> If they were protected from possible Red Guard attacks, they were also effectively prevented from communicating with the outside world.

By publicly accompanying valuable united front personages at important official functions Zhou also provided them with a degree of protection by association. Thus, in October 1966, Zhou appeared at the national day celebrations in the company of Yang Mingxuan, Cheng Qian, Zhang Zhizhong and Zhou Jianren, Shi Liang, Zhuang Xiquan, Xu Guangping, Hua Luogeng, Yan Jici, Shao Lizi, Hu Zi'ang, Hu Juewen, Hu Yuzhi, Zhang Shizhao, Mei Gongbin, Cai Tingkai, Fu Zuoyi, Shen Yanbing, Xu Deheng, Li Dequan, Jiang Guangnai, Zhu Xuefan, Sha Qianli, Zhang Xiruo, and others.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Zhang's ability to call on Mao was based on his association with Mao's former teacher, Yang Changji. Mao Anqing (Mao's daughter) and Zheng Hua (eds), *Zhongguo chu le ge Mao Zedong cong shu: Gan dan xiang zhao*, [China gave rise to Mao Zedong series: Treating each other with sincerity] (Junshi kexue chubanshe, 1993), p.305.

<sup>3</sup> Yan Mingquan, "Zhou Enlai zai 'Wen hua da geming' zhong baohu minzhu dangpai he zhi mingming renshi," [Zhou Enlai's protection of democratic party and famous personages during the Cultural Revolution]. In Zhang Tienan, 1990, pp.492-498.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p.494.

Zhou Enlai also occasionally interceded on behalf of individuals. Zhou directed the Shanghai Party Committee to protect Song Qingling after her familial relationship to Jiang Jieshi was used by Red Guards to attack her. Mao spoke in support of Song. He praised her long support for the CCP and her help in protecting underground Party members. At different times Zhou dispatched soldiers or police to protect individuals such as Jiang Guangnai, Sha Qianli, and others.<sup>5</sup>

Yet shielding for united front figures was provided very selectively. Many MPG members who had made great sacrifices supporting the CCP were left unprotected. Even some of those referred to above were not fully immune from persecution. Mei Gongbin, for example, is said to have died as a result of Red Guard maltreatment. Some progressive and even dual CCP-MPG leaders also died. The DL leader and CCP member Wu Han, the author of the play, "Li Rui Dismissed from Office," which was so important in the lead up to the Cultural Revolution, died from torture and lack of medical treatment.<sup>6</sup> Wu, the author Deng Tuo, and Liao Mosha, the head of Beijing's Municipal UFD, were accused of having led an organised anti-Mao, anti-Party clique.<sup>7</sup> While each MPG has a list of leaders they claim died from ill treatment during the Cultural revolution, many of these leaders were already very old and it is difficult to separate old age from mistreatment as causes of death.

In keeping with Mao's statement that the MPGs were still necessary, the CCP's select group of progressive and dual membership MPG leaders continued to maintain some MPG activities. In 1969 Zhou Enlai ordered that MPG leaders and those (CCP) members responsible for united front work at provincial and central levels were not to be struggled with.<sup>8</sup> In November 1970, the MPGs' national leaders were brought together in the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce headquarters in

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<sup>5</sup> Luo Guangwu, 1994, p.127.

<sup>6</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.67.

<sup>7</sup> Ts'ai Yu-chen, "Hu Yao-pang: His Career and Prospects," *Issues and Studies*, vol.17, no.11, 1981, p.18. Despite the connections of Wu Han, Liao Mosha and the then Mayor of Beijing, Peng Zhen, (also implicated in this alleged plot) with united front work, and the concurrent attacks on Li Weihan within the UFD, there is no evidence that their united front connections were factors in the campaign against them.

<sup>8</sup> Zhou Enlai, "Guan yu baohu minzhu dangpai lingdao ren de yi feng xin," [A letter concerning the protection of democratic party leaders] (May 4, 1969), Zhou Enlai, 1984, p.451.

Beijing. There they were supervised by military personnel who had been placed in charge of what remained of united front work.<sup>9</sup>

This select MPG group spent its time studying CCP policy and documents. In 1971, the CCP again faced a crisis over the alleged treachery of Lin Biao. The residual importance of the MPG leaders was revealed when Zhou Enlai met with them over two days to discuss the Lin Biao issue with them. Other CCP Central Committee leaders with extensive experience with united front work, notably Li Fuchun, also held discussions with them. These were the first formal MPG meetings since 1966.<sup>10</sup>

In October 1972, the MPG's position improved; military supervision ceased and a joint MPG-ACFIC office was established. Temporary Small Leadership groups were formed to run day-to-day MPG activities. Unfortunately, there is no indication what these activities involved. The MPGs had no public profile at this time. The two exceptions were the presence of Revolutionary GMD members at commemorations for Sun Yatsen in 1972 and 1973.<sup>11</sup>

However, in late 1972-1973, there were significant moves towards re-establishing the role of the united front, particularly in relation to work among Overseas Chinese and in efforts directed at Taiwan.<sup>12</sup> On October 30 1972, the MPGs were divided into four study groups such as the joint Democratic League and the Association for the Promotion of Democracy group.<sup>13</sup> The same month, Ye Jianying and Deng Yingchao invited MPG leaders to discuss the name lists for the forthcoming NPC session.<sup>14</sup> In an important move signifying a return to practical roles, the MPGs were once again sent on study tours. While the exact purpose of these particular tours are unknown, the investigations they carried out on behalf of the CCP were almost certainly similar to those they undertook a year later in October 1974, when MPG leadership groups inspected industry and agriculture.<sup>15</sup> The year 1973, a time of international tension, was also the year that Deng Xiaoping re-emerged from disgrace to

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<sup>9</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.120.

<sup>10</sup> Xu Rihui, 1987, p.44.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p.45.

<sup>12</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, pp.338-339.

<sup>13</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.121.

<sup>14</sup> He Dayue, 1990, p.147.

<sup>15</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.122.

assist a cancer-stricken Zhou Enlai to rebuild state institutions weakened by the Cultural Revolution.<sup>16</sup> Just how important Deng was to the adoption of these new united front policies is, however, unknown.

The turning point for united front work and the MPGs came in January 1975. The NPC met and Zhou Enlai's report again raised the need for modernising agriculture, industry, defence, science and technology.<sup>17</sup> To help achieve these four modernisations Zhou called for a "Revolutionary United Front," which included the MPGs, "to unite ninety nine percent of the population in common struggle to build a great socialist motherland."<sup>18</sup> However, all progress towards re-establishment of a united front is said to have ceased in early 1975, when Mao renewed his attacks on Deng Xiaoping as a "rightist deviationist" and "capitalist roader."<sup>19</sup> Deng was eventually dismissed following the Tiananmen incident of April 1976. Zhou Enlai had died in January. With the Qingming commemorations for the dead in April, mourners laid wreaths at Tiananmen square in Zhou's memory. The removal of these wreaths culminated in demonstrations which were violently suppressed. The Party then blamed Deng Xiaoping for the incident.

Zhou Enlai's death in January 1976, was followed by that of Mao in September and these events set back united front work temporarily. The MPGs were, however, given a role in the construction of Mao's mausoleum, work supervised by the CCP's Li Ruihuan.<sup>20</sup> The MPG involvement in this construction was valuable in helping to re-establish MPG legitimacy in the eyes of a Party and public who had been told since 1966 that the MPGs were organisations of discredited bourgeois intellectuals and capitalists. In October 1976, MPG representatives joined many others in Tiananmen Square denouncing the so-called Gang of Four. The MPGs again played their corporatist role of articulating support for the state power. There was at this time no

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<sup>16</sup> Ching Hua Lee, *Deng Xiaoping: The Marxist Road to the Forbidden City*, (The Kingston Press, Princeton, 1985), pp.158-159.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p.168. Lee quotes Taiwanese reports saying that this report was in fact prepared by Deng Xiaoping.

<sup>18</sup> Xu Rihui, 1987, pp.45-46.

<sup>19</sup> Mao initiated a campaign based on the novel *The Water Margin* as an indirect attack on Deng. Lee, 1985, p.174

<sup>20</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.123.

small irony in the fact that the CCP could not immediately denounce the Gang of Four as "Leftists." The influence of the Cultural Revolution meant that they could initially only be denounced as "ultra-Rightists." Articles Mao had written in 1957 to denounce Rightists were re-published to attack Mao's wife and her allies.<sup>21</sup> In 1977, it was Jiang Qing and others close to Mao who became negative examples.<sup>22</sup>

### 1977: The MPGs Re-emerge

The year 1977 was a very important one for united front work. Hua Guofeng, the new Party chairman and Mao's official successor, continued reviving united front work albeit with an inherently contradictory Maoist inclination. In March, Hua, the new Chairman, spoke of reviving the united front at a Party meeting.<sup>23</sup> In August, Hua and CCP leaders again discussed the united front at the CCP's Eleventh Party Congress. This revival was again related to the potential of united front work to contribute to national construction. However, reflecting the continued influence of Maoist ideology, Hua placed this new united front in a framework of maintaining class struggle. Nevertheless, Hua declared:

We must develop a united front based on the leadership of the worker-peasant alliance and led by the working class, which embraces the democratic political parties, patriotic personages, Taiwanese, Hongkong, Macau, and Overseas Chinese compatriots.<sup>24</sup>

This call, and others to re-convene the NPC and the CPPCC in particular, marked the formal public re-emergence of united front work and the MPGs.

Ye Jianying's speech to the CPPCC in October 1977 set the scene for the MPGs' public revival. This CPPCC session approved UFD recommendations for the formal revival of the MPGs. The UFD's, "Report on Instructions on the Question of the Patriotic Democratic Parties," included CCP policies towards the MPGs, the question of leadership, the role of ACFIC, and discussion over the name of the Taiwan

<sup>21</sup> See For example, Lu Tan-wei, "Things are Begining to Change" *Guangming ribao*, (July 9, 1977). In *Survey of People's Republic of China Press*, (American Consulate General, Hong Kong) no.6403, August 15, 1977, pp.12-16. (Hereafter *SPRCP*)

<sup>22</sup> See Ren Ch'u, "A Study of 'Repulse the Attacks of the Bourgeois Rightists,'" *Guangming ribao*, July 9, 1977. *ibid.*, pp.54-58. For an in depth look at this phenomenon see, William A. Joseph, *The Critique of Ultra-Leftism in China, 1958-1981*, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1984).

<sup>23</sup> Feng Zhengqin, *et al*, 1993, p.292.

<sup>24</sup> See "Chairman Hua on the Domestic Situation and Tasks," (August 22, 1977). *SPRCP*, no.6413, p.106

Self-Government League. While the details of this document are unavailable, UFD historians claim it affirmed the MPGs' positive role in implementing Party policy and achieving Party goals. Firm control over the MPGs was re-affirmed. Strengthening CCP leadership over the MPG would help both develop the Revolutionary United Front and motivate Party and non-Party people alike "to serve the great cause of socialist modernisation and strengthening the nation."<sup>25</sup>

The motivation of intellectuals in support of modernisation was a crucial CCP concern. Articles praising intellectuals appeared in the press. Many intellectuals were alienated from the Party as a result of Mao's anti-intellectual and class struggle policies. Hua Guofeng blamed the intellectual's subsequent passivity towards the CCP on the Gang of Four, declaring that the Gang had suppressed the intellectuals' revolutionary enthusiasm. This was an indirect admission that this passivity resulted from Mao's policies. Yet Hua still demanded that the ideological transformation of intellectuals into proletarians continue.<sup>26</sup> This was despite thought reform being a major factor encouraging passivity.

The contradiction inherent in Hua's approach was perhaps inevitable during the transition from Maoism. However, Hua's Maoist line undermined efforts to use the united front to build hegemony by re-building alliances. Yet a Revolutionary United Front with its connotations of class struggle, violence, upheaval, and divisiveness could not form the basis of successful national-popular appeals to intellectuals. The continued use of the term "revolutionary" merely reinforced knowledge of the CCP as the power behind decades of anti-intellectual actions. Similarly, the connotations of "revolutionary" were for Overseas Chinese also largely negative. Despite the appeal of modernisation, Hua's perpetuation of Mao's theory of continuing revolution and ongoing warnings against revisionism gave intellectuals ample reasons to remain passive.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> "Guanyu aiguo minzhu dangpai wenti de qingshi baogao." This entry is only an summary of the original document and lacks detail. *UFE*, p.188.

<sup>26</sup>*SPRCP*, no.6413, p.106.

<sup>27</sup>See for example, "Chairman Hua Expounds the Tremendous Significance of Chairman Mao's great Theory of Continuing Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," (NCNA, August 22, 1977), *SPRCP*, no.6413, pp.113-117.

In contrast to Hua, Deng Xiaoping sought political support from both within and outside the CCP. Deng appealed to many people by encouraging calls for a clear repudiation of the Cultural Revolution and the full rehabilitation of its victims. The appeal of Deng's actions was revealed during the so-called Democracy Wall Movement of late 1978. While many of the Democracy Wall posters called for an undefined 'democracy,' most called for redressing the wrongs of the Cultural Revolution and expressed unhappiness at the slow rate of rehabilitation.<sup>28</sup> Deng successfully enlisted allies and gradually increased his power at Hua's expense. By the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978, Deng and the reformist line were triumphant.

It was highly significant for the cause of united front work that between 1975 and 1979 many Party leaders with united front experience also came to power replacing Maoist radicals. Deng Yingchao was prominent among these. Deng's experience with intellectuals was extensive and she also benefited from the kudos of being Zhou Enlai's wife. Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang joined the CCP Standing Committee in February 1979. Hu had been heavily involved in united front work during the Anti-Japanese war.<sup>29</sup> In November 1978, at a Central Work Conference, Deng emerged from a major confrontation with Leftists to win reversals of "ten major historical events," including the 1957 Anti-Rightist campaign, the Liu Shaoqi, and Wu Han cases.<sup>30</sup> These verdict reversals also facilitated the removal of Li Weihan and the UFD's "capitulationist" labels and allowed the full rehabilitation of both in February 1979.<sup>31</sup>

The success of Deng and the more radical reformers allowed the CCP to use the Third Plenum to relegate class struggle to minor importance and instead stress the need for economic development and the four modernisations. The use of mass movements, so effectively and destructively invoked by Mao, also ceased. These victories were reinforced at the Fourth CCP Plenum of 1979, when "seeking truth from facts" was effectively declared one of Mao's most essential and important theoretical formulations.

<sup>28</sup> Harry Harding, *China's Second Revolution: Reform After Mao*, (Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1989), p.61.

<sup>29</sup> Ts'ai Yu-chen, 1981, pp.8-21.

<sup>30</sup> Lee, 1985, p.201.

<sup>31</sup> Deng also had other possible reasons to help Li. Deng had married Li's former wife.

The plenum also changed the Gang of Four's ultra-Rightist labels to ultra-leftist ones, thereby helping re-legitimise 'rightist' initiatives. Many 'rightist' senior Party members with economics and related united front work experience, such as Chen Yun and Bo Yibo, also won important leadership positions.

What Harding termed the "capstone" of Deng's success was the adoption in 1981 of *Resolutions on Certain Aspects of Party History*.<sup>32</sup> *Resolutions* repudiated Mao's policies of conflict and the Cultural Revolution. It called for economic reform and for methods other than class struggle to resolve social contradictions.<sup>33</sup> *Resolutions* stressed the role of united front work in overcoming Mao's legacy of divisiveness.<sup>34</sup> Writings including, "On New Democracy," "On Coalition Government," and "The Present Situation and Tasks" remained relevant. Previous proletariat-national bourgeoisie alliances and the principles of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision were regarded by Deng and the modernisers as particularly useful. *Resolutions* drew attention to those aspects of "On New Democracy" that unified political and professional skills and stressed the role of intellectuals in revolution and construction.<sup>35</sup> Demonstrating united front spirit, CCP leaders spent three days discussing the content of *Resolutions* with MPG and non-Party figures.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Background of Political Reform**

Yet while *Resolutions* supported united front work, it did not deliver the promise of political reform inherent in prior internal CCP debates. Political reform had been an important topic of internal Party discussions in late 1980 despite the suppression of the Democracy Wall Movement, the arrest of Wei Jingshen,<sup>37</sup> and demands for the deletion of the "four bigs" from the constitution.

On August 18 1980, Deng Xiaoping's speech to Central Committee leaders, "On reform of the System of Party and State Leadership," laid the blame

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<sup>32</sup> Harding, 1989, p.65.

<sup>33</sup> *Beijing Review*, no.27, July 6, 1981, pp.10-39.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, pp.11, 12, 13.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, pp.29-32, especially p.32.

<sup>36</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.376.

<sup>37</sup> For advocating democracy as China's necessary "Fifth Modernisation."

for previous disastrous Party policies on the over-concentration of power in the hands of individuals.<sup>38</sup> Deng maintained that this over-concentration had been at the expense of collective leadership and collective wisdom resulting in both reduced socialist democracy and diminished democratic centralism. Moreover, he argued, it was necessary to “distinguish between the responsibilities of the Party and those of the government and stop substituting the former for the latter.” To benefit from the “superiority of socialism,” both the Party and the state system had to be reformed.<sup>39</sup> Several of Deng’s now familiar aims included:

- 1) Rapidly develop productive forces and raise living standards.
- 2) Develop people’s democracy to the full so that they control enterprises, perfect the legal system, arouse the enthusiasm of the people and maintain social stability.
- 3) Discover and train cadres who have both professional knowledge and who adhere to the four basic principles.<sup>40</sup>

Significantly, Deng attributed past errors not just to individual failings but also to organisational failings:

... problems in the leadership and organisation systems are more fundamental, widespread and long lasting, and that they therefore have a greater effect on the overall interests of the country.<sup>41</sup>

Reform was imperative, to overcome problems and to maintain and further strengthen Party leadership and discipline.<sup>42</sup>

In October, Liao Gailong, Party theorist and speech writer for Deng, addressed the National Party School of which he was the head, and expanded Deng’s August proposals. Liao strongly criticised Mao’s post-1956 policies and detailed the harm they had caused, especially to intellectuals and the cause of improving productivity.<sup>43</sup> Liao argued that the Party had to prevent a re-occurrence of the conditions which had allowed Mao to dominate and impose his erroneous views on the Party. Mao, he maintained, was wrong to change his 1956 analysis that the major contradiction in Chinese Society had shifted from class struggle to the need to develop production. This

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<sup>38</sup> Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping 1975-1982*, (Beijing Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1984) (Hereafter *SWDXP 1975-1982*), pp.302-325.

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*, p.303

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p.304.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, p.316.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p.324.

<sup>43</sup> Liao Gailong, "Historical Experience of Our Road of Development," Part 1, *Issues and Studies*, vol.17, no.10, October 1981, pp.65-94; Part 2, vol.17, no.11, pp.81-110; Part 3, vol.17, no.12, pp.79-104.

1956 line had been reinstated since 1978, said Liao, and class struggle was again of secondary importance. The Party now needed to use reasoning and democratic methods to resolve contradictions among the people. A perfected legal system could solve antagonistic contradictions. The need for mass campaigns to expose class enemies had passed.<sup>44</sup>

Liao invoked Mao's basic united front principle of unity-criticism-unity to resolve contradictions among the people. But he declared that by itself this principle was inadequate. It should be supported by the principles of "to each according to their work," "mutual supervision and long-term co-existence," and allowing one hundred flowers to bloom.<sup>45</sup> Liao argued that adhering to the mass line would prevent a re-occurrence of past errors.<sup>46</sup>

Liao declared that the CCP's goal was "a modern, powerful, socialist country with a high level of democracy and civilisation." This democratisation required a system of direct elections "from the grass roots to the higher levels and supervision of the Party and the state by the masses, and the democratic system of one man, one vote,"<sup>47</sup> Such democratisation would not only safeguard the realisation of economic modernisation and prosperity, it was also an aim of socialism itself.<sup>48</sup>

Liao's most radical proposal was to invest the system of People's Congresses with real power. Echoing Wang Kunlun's 1957 criticisms, Liao admitted that the congresses were essentially rubber stamps. He proposed reducing the 3,500 National People's Congress delegates to 1,000. Delegates would be divided between two houses; a territorially based "Regional House" of some 300 members and a "Social House" of 700 members "representing the interests of various strata and enterprises." The houses would jointly exercise powers to initiate and amend legislation, supervise the government, and exercise the supreme power of the state.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Part 2, p.96.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p.105. Part 3, p.82.

<sup>46</sup> Part 2, p.107.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, p.97.

<sup>48</sup> Part 3, p.80.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*, pp.86-87.

Liao and Deng's criticisms of Party and state failings strongly echoed those long made by MPG leaders, particularly in 1956-57. Liao's proposals would take China much further towards a corporatist political system. The Regional House would represent territorially-based interests while corporate and economic interests would be represented in the functionally-based Social House. The latter would allow "the convenient handling of contradictions among the people of various professions and strata." More general problems of state would be handled jointly. In keeping with his corporatist theme, Liao called for the creation of peasant associations to be included in the Social House. Liao argued that these new associations and other mass organisations should be allowed to appoint their own leaders and thereby become genuine representatives of their memberships.<sup>50</sup>

The two houses would have the power to draw up budgets and construction plans. To handle their responsibilities they would need to hold enough sessions and have strong permanent organs such as secretariats. The houses would establish committees to investigate and advise on financial, economic, labour and other matters. Such committees could engage "qualified experts and scholars," form think tanks, and thus "be able to pool the experiences and wisdom of the people of the whole country." The houses would become authoritative and effective representative organs able to carry out their legislative and supervisory roles.<sup>51</sup>

The withdrawal of the Party from mass organisations was in line with Deng's call for a separation of Party and state, although government work was to remain under Party leadership. The Party would use persuasion in the form of propaganda and policy work to influence the government and not resort to coercion. The withdrawal of direct Party involvement was to be partially extended to public opinion. "I think," said Liao, "extensive freedom of the press ... is of vital importance to the democratisation of the Party." But he added, "of course they (sic) must be responsible to the Party and the people."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, pp.87-91.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p.88.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, pp.89-93.

In addition to the demand that the Party “strictly observe the laws and constitution” lest its leadership be boycotted by state organs, Liao also wanted to strengthen supervision over the Party. This could be achieved by the CCP instituting more internal supervision and increasing mutual supervision with the MPGs. Liao therefore called for the full implementation of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision. Non-Party people had to be “actively invited” to discuss important issues of state life and attend some select Party meetings. Liao argued that Non-Party people had to have power, responsibility, and authority commensurate with their positions.<sup>53</sup> Of course a system for facilitating such discussions already existed. By 1980, the reconstruction of the CPPCC had been in the progress for some years. The difference between Liao’s proposed CPPCC and the one already in existence was that the latter was purely consultative and devoid of any decision making powers.

Deng and Liao’s radical “*Gengsheng*” reform plans were not implemented. This failure has been attributed to the 1981 rise of Poland’s Solidarity trade union. Solidarity made obvious to the CCP, the inherent dangers of a relative liberalisation of policy towards mass organisations, and by implication, the MPGs.<sup>54</sup> Others have attributed the reforms’ failure to negative reactions within the Party. The reforms were seen by many Party members as inherently anti-Leninist; they also implied that the CCP leadership itself was “a new exploiting class.”<sup>55</sup> The CPPCC remained the official organ of consultation and mutual supervision.

### **The Revival of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference**

Along with a nominal form of the United Front Department, Mao had retained a skeleton CPPCC for the duration of the Cultural Revolution. The CPPCC had re-appeared in 1973 as part of commemorations of the Taiwanese February 18 Incident. This meeting was chaired by Fu Zuoyi, the CCP’s Liao Chengzhi and Xu Deheng of Jiusan.<sup>56</sup> The CPPCC was gradually re-established and in March 1978

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p.99.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas B. Bernstein, “The Limits of Rural Political Reform,” in Victor C. Falkenheim (ed), *Chinese Politics From Mao to Deng*, (Paragon House, New York, 1989), p.307.

<sup>55</sup> Peter R. Moody, “The Communist Party of China as a Political Institution,” *ibid.*, p.188.

held its first major post-Mao conference. Only 1,016 or 51 percent of the CPPCC's 1,988 delegates were non-Party, well below its traditional 60-66 percent ratio.<sup>57</sup>

Many important united front and related policies were announced at the CPPCC reconfirming its status as the united front's supreme organ. Yet even though the revived Conference was chaired by Deng Xiaoping, it received little attention. In his major June 1979 speech on united front work given to the CPPCC, "The United Front and the Tasks of the CPPCC in the New Period," Deng set down clearly the future direction of united front work and the CPPCC's role in it. They were to

... mobilise all positive forces, strive to turn all negative forces into positive ones and unite with all forces that can be united so that all can work in harmony to maintain and strengthen political stability and unity in China and make it a modern powerful socialist country.<sup>58</sup>

The CPPCC's explicit role was to promote "people's democracy" and to maintain contact with people in different walks of life. It was to represent various groups and classes and act as a mechanism for ascertaining their opinions. To aid modernisation, the CPPCC would "hold discussions on the nation's general principles, its political life, and the social and economic questions related to modernisation." The CPPCC, as the official organ of mutual supervision, was to encourage

... the full expression of opinions, demands, criticism and suggestions from all quarters so that the government can benefit from them, promptly discover and correct its own shortcomings and mistakes and push forward all phases of our work.<sup>59</sup>

This supervision, Deng explained, would overcome the tendencies attacked earlier by Mao, particularly subjectivism, bureaucratism, and factionalism. The MPGs and the ACFIC were asked to proffer their opinions and suggestions on problems and major government policies.<sup>60</sup> Deng described the MPGs as a "political force serving

<sup>56</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991 p.338.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p.349.

<sup>58</sup> "Opening speech of the second session of the fifth national committee of the CPPCC," (June 15, 1979). *SWDXP 1975-1982*, p.194.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> "Ge minzhu dangpai he Gongshanglian shi wei shehuizhuyi fuwu de zhengzhi liliang," [Each democratic party and the ACFIC is a force serving socialism], Speech at a CPCC-UFD sponsored banquet for MPG and ACFIC leaders, (October 19, 1979). In Shanghai shi Shehui zhuyi xueyuan and Shanghai shi tongyi zhanxian lilun yanjiu hui (eds), *Xin shiqi tongyi zhanxian xuexi wenjian xuanbian*, [Selected study documents on New Era united front work], vol.1, 1979-1986, (Shanghai shi Shehui zhuyi xueyuan and Shanghai shi tongyi zhanxian lilun yanjiu hui, Shanghai, 1986), pp.24-27.

socialism” and he called on them to use their skills, talents, and experience to solve China’s problems, particularly the pressing need to increase production and to carry out surveys and investigations. Laying out the their tasks Deng declared:

I believe that each democratic party and the ACFIC is definitely capable of consolidating and developing peace and unity, promoting socialist modernisation, expanding democracy, strengthening China’s legal system, carrying out self-education, promoting the re-unification of the motherland, and other things, and will make an new and even greater contribution.<sup>61</sup>

Yet although Deng called on CPPCC delegates to speak freely they were to follow guidelines similar to Mao’s six principles of 1957. On March 30 1979, Deng had outlined his four basic or cardinal principles:

- 1) Keep to the Socialist road,
- 2) Uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat,
- 3) Uphold the leadership of the CCP,
- 4) Uphold Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong thought.<sup>62</sup>

Once again, these principles sought to constrain the comments of the MPGs in a manner acceptable to the CCP, prevent them from airing third road type views, and guide the direction in which the CCP wished them to develop. They were determining factors behind the form of intermediation.

Most significantly, the CPPCC allowed the renewed representation of China’s intellectuals. Their rehabilitation and re-legitimation increased CCP access to groups with the skills and resources necessary for modernisation. Deng Xiaoping’s 1978 position as CPPCC chairman was an indication of its importance. In addition to Deng, Zhao Ziyang, Yang Jingren, Wulanfu and Guo Moruo represented the CCP as vice-chairmen.<sup>63</sup> Of the twenty three vice-chairpersons, nine were MPG or MPG-CCP members: Xu Deheng, Shi Liang, Zhu Yunshan, Ji Fang (CCP-PWP-DL), Zhou Jianren, Zhuang Xiquan, Hu Zi’ang, Rong Yiren and Tong Dizhou (CCP-DL).<sup>64</sup> This

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<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," *SW DXP 1975-1982*, p.173.

<sup>63</sup> Guo had been elected to the CCP’s Central Committee in 1969. Guo joined the CCP in 1927, and was subsequently dispatched to Japan by the Party. There is no evidence in united front sources that he left the Party and therefore had to later rejoin in order to become a Central Committee member. *UFE*, p.909. Guo’s ambiguous status allowed him to play a valuable role for the Party as a nominally independent leftist.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, pp.396-397.

representation symbolised renewed legitimacy and rewarded individuals for their co-operation.

Liao's speech and *Resolutions* made it clear that many of the problems facing China were the results of Mao's policies. But ironically it was united front work attributed to Mao that the Party invoked to resolve these problems. Mao remained the CCP's most significant means of legitimation, especially within the Party itself. It was Mao's historical association with united front work, particularly New Democracy, which justified its revival. The full public form and role of this new united front began its development with the first post-Mao United Front Work Conferences of 1979.

### **The Fourteenth National United Front Work Conference of 1979**

In August 1979, the UFD held its Fourteenth National United Front Work Conference, the first such conference since 1965. It discussed the results of recent united front work, set the general line for work into the 1980s and incorporated into its official policies the principles Deng had announced in 1979.

The conference documents declared that the post-Mao period was a new historical era and the latest united front would conform to its needs. Wulanfu, the head of the UFD, summarised the differences between past and present united front work, claiming that previously it had been directed toward the elimination of the economic basis of the classes of the old society, the transformation of their members, and the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This work had been completed and the bourgeois classes no longer existed. However, Wulanfu recognised that for many in the CCP, these declarations of the abolition of classes meant that the united front was redundant. Such views, Wulanfu declared, were wrong. For while the former bourgeoisie had become workers for socialism and patriots and no serious conflicts remained, there were still numerous contradictions. The united front would continue to harness the talents and skills of the transformed classes, resolve vestigial contradictions and continue the long-term struggle against remnant bourgeois and feudal influences.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Wulanfu, "Zai quan guo tong zhan gongzuo huiyi shang de zongjie jianghua," [Summary of speech to the National United Front Work Conference] (September 3, 1979), in Ren Tao, 1988, pp.440-445.

The bourgeoisie and their intellectuals were perceived to have been only partially transformed, and unreliable members of the people and, at worst, members of the 'stinking ninth category' of class enemies, along with landlords and other 'bad' groups. The Party's new formulation allowed for the rehabilitation of both the bourgeoisie and those associated with them.

The CCP's stated goals of national re-unification and modernisation to create a united, strong, prosperous socialist nation formed the basis of its new national-popular appeals. The reasons were clear. Without referring to the divisiveness of class struggle, Wulanfu stated unequivocally that:

Our history proves that under the flag of patriotism we can unite classes, strata and individuals even more extensively. On the basis of patriotism we can have an even more extensive alliance.<sup>66</sup>

The new united front could, therefore, include any compatriots from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and Overseas Chinese, indeed almost anyone who loved China and wanted re-unification. Even if individuals had no sympathy for socialism they could be united with on the basis of patriotism. Deng Xiaoping had even raised the possibility of a third period of GMD-CCP co-operation. To facilitate this, the united front was termed a Revolutionary Patriotic United Front rather than a Socialist United Front.<sup>67</sup> Yet despite the desire for re-unification, a "revolutionary" united front, even if patriotic, would lack appeal in Taiwan. In Taiwan revolution and socialism were anathema to a GMD which saw itself as the loser in previous periods of GMD-CCP co-operation.<sup>68</sup> In June 1981, *Resolutions* solved this problem by omitting "revolution" to leave the new appellation as the much more attractive "Patriotic United Front."<sup>69</sup>

A particular quality of patriotism as a national popular appeal was its usefulness in helping overcome China's pressing need for economic

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<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, p.443.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Alluding to these suspicions, the NCA's Hu Juewen went to some effort to re-assure his Taiwanese compatriots that there was no "united front conspiracy." "My Understanding of the United Front Policy," *Beijing Review*, October 19, 1981, p.22.

<sup>69</sup> For history of these name changes see Sun Weiming, "Cong Renmin minzhu tongyi zhanxian dao Aiguo tongyi zhanxian de yanbian," [From People's Democratic United Front to Patriotic United Front]. Zhang Tienan, 1990, pp.508-514.

development. Invoking patriotism in this context allowed for an easy mixing of self-interest and altruism, of trade and patriotism; noble causes could justify material ones.

Modernisation was vital for CCP leadership. The Party needed economic development to compensate and reward groups such as the intellectuals, peasants, and workers. The intellectuals were indispensable for achieving this goal. The ideal of modernisation was also a national-popular appeal in its own right. The vision of a strong prosperous China able to play a major role in international affairs had long been an inspiration to China's intellectuals. Peaceful reunification also needed economic development. Prosperous Hong Kong and Taiwan would have little reason to relinquish their independence to a backward China. The CCP's need for intellectuals, in the broad Gramscian sense, was therefore intense.

The CCP's reforms contained inherent radical economic, political, and social changes and these had to be justified, both to sceptics within the Party and to the general population. Many changes involved full or partial reversions to 1950s policies in which the MPGs had participated. They were to again have a role in the 1980s. The skills, knowledge and contacts of MPG members which had been rendered irrelevant after 1956 were again of value to the CCP and could be used to re-establish old systems and develop new ones.

The MPGs could also play their part in overcoming the intellectuals' passivity. Wulanfu therefore called for the positive role of the democratic parties to be brought into play again.<sup>70</sup> The UFD's policy document, "Policies and Tasks for the United Front in the New Era," affirmed that the MPGs were now fundamentally different from what they were in the 1950's. They were no longer "parties of national bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and their intellectuals" but, alluding to their corporatist nature, had become:

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<sup>70</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.445.

... a political alliance consisting partly of socialist workers and partly of patriots supporting socialism, each liaising with their respective groups. They have become a political force under the leadership of the CCP.<sup>71</sup>

This statement clearly indicated that each MPG was to consist of politically reliable (including non-communist) elements and patriots representing their particular functional constituencies. The MPGs were to pay particular attention to liaison with intellectuals trained before 1949. The Party sought to make use of the skill and talents of even the elderly and it called for the utilisation of the talents of the former national bourgeoisie.<sup>72</sup> These old society intellectuals were to help train new ranks of “socialist talent.” The UFD regarded this task as urgent because many intellectuals had already emigrated.<sup>73</sup>

The UFD set out to encourage all MPG activities, assist in reviving MPG organisations and strengthen the relations of the MPG with their target groups. In the first step towards renewed organisational growth, the UFD called on MPGs to recruit members in their designated occupational categories, “in accord with the requirements of their work.”<sup>74</sup>

In addition to their directly practical tasks, the MPGs were also prepared for an expansion of their symbolically important political role. Deng Xiaoping had claimed that democracy was vital for liberating thinking in order to achieve the four modernisations. Part of this democracy included renewed MPG/NPP representation in the NPC and the CPPCC. The supervisory role of the MPGs, which had brought them so much grief in 1957, again became an important MPG task. The MPGs were to discuss, criticise, and make suggestions on state and Party policy. The UFD called for the revival of what it called Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai’s “great tradition” of political consultation with allies. The CPPCC had already begun to do so. “From now on,” the UFD declared, “all important national and regional issues should be discussed with non-Party and democratic personages.”<sup>75</sup> These measures formed the

<sup>71</sup>“Xin lishi shiqi de tongyi zhanxian de fangzhen renwu,” [Policies and tasks for the united front in the New Era] (September 13, 1979), *ibid.*, p.452.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*, p.453.

<sup>73</sup> *ibid.*, p.456.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.*, p.457.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, pp.457-458.

basis of this New Era democracy, together with the appointment of selected non-Party experts “with real ability,” including even former members of the bourgeoisie, to leadership positions in government, the NPC, and CPPCC. As in 1956, the UFD called for all non-Party appointees to be given a free hand, including trust, power, and responsibility to go with their positions. As it had many times in the past, the UFD demanded that non-Party appointees should not be discriminated against in the determination of job gradings, titles, wages, prizes, and travel. Just as importantly, their living conditions were also to be improved.<sup>76</sup>

Political education, the other vital ingredient of united front work, was not overlooked. Deng’s four principles formed the basis of ideological education. However, mindful of the anti-Rightist campaign and the Cultural Revolution, political education would now be based on persuasion involving meetings of immortals methods which “inspired” individuals to change their world views (*shijie guan*) rather than demanding complete ideological conformity. Party Cadres were told to “accept the lessons of history” and to “prevent and correct the use of simple and brutal methods.”<sup>77</sup>

The UFD also wanted an inner-Party education campaign to promote united front work. This work had to be implemented at all levels and become integral to the daily work of every Party member. The UFD acknowledged that many Party members remained suspicious of united front work, often resisting and obstructing it and the Department called on these members to overcome their “leftism.” Aware of its own weakness after decades of being attacked, the UFD also asked that its own ranks be strengthened.<sup>78</sup>

### **The Revival of the MPGs**

The revival of the MPGs in 1977 was based on the leadership groups which had maintained a nominal existence since 1966. Leaders who had been denounced

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<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*, p.459-460.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, pp.463-464.

after 1957 needed to be officially rehabilitated before they could again officially participate in MPG affairs. The known Provisional Leadership Groups were:

**Revolutionary GMD:** Zhu Yunshan, Wang Kunlun, Chen Cisheng;  
**Democratic League:** Shi Liang, Hu Yuzhi, Deng Chumin,  
 Chu Tu'nian, Sa Kongliao, Li Wenyi;  
**National Construction Association:** Hu Juewen, Hu Zi'ang,  
 Sun Qimeng, Sun Xiaocun, Guo Lihuo;  
**Zhigong dang:** Huang Dingchen, Wu Juetian, Wu Chan, Wang Tingjun; and  
**Taimeng:** Li Chunqing, Tian Fuda, Xu Mengshan.

These groups concentrated initially on re-establishing their organisations and memberships, implementing Party policies, and preparing for participation in the NPC and CPPCC. They also undertook the vital MPG task of organising political study.<sup>79</sup>

By 1979, the MPGs had 65,500 members,<sup>80</sup> 21,500 less than their 1966 membership of 87,000 and two thirds of their 1956 membership peak of 96,000. As there was no policy of active recruitment, the 1979 figures represented those who had been members in 1950s, including rehabilitated Rightists. The decline in the previous membership levels can be explained by the deaths of many former members, old age and ill health (problems exacerbated by the political turmoil of the previous decades), and because after 1956 many members had been 'funnelled' into the CCP.

The MPGs were now dominated by 'progressives' and leaders with dual MPG-CCP membership. This gave rise to internal tension when the now rehabilitated Rightists were re-absorbed. The schisms between the MPGs' right-, middle-, and left-wing groups revealed during the Hundred Flowers had been resolved by labelling the first as Rightists. In the late 1970s, these Rightists re-entered MPGs now run by the radical and once isolated minorities who had once condemned them. In the Democratic League at least, these divisions have remained sources of tension into the 1990s.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, pp.567-568.

<sup>80</sup> *Tongzhan dongtai*, [United front trends] (Established in 1978 as an occasional research publication of the Central UFD, *Trends* was published twenty times per year. In 1992 it combined with *Tongzhan lilun yanjiu* [United front theoretical research] to become the semi-restricted *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian* [China united front]) no.6, 1986, n.p.. (Reference courtesy of Zhang Kui). Please note that the figures for individual MPGs listed in the appendix only total some 57,000. However, this figure is much less reliable than Zhang Kui's UFD source.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Shang Ding, Shanghai, November 27, 1993.

The CCP immediately began to again use the MPGs as a means of recruiting high-level intellectuals into the CCP. Hu Yuzhi, (DL vice-chairman) perhaps in part reflecting his own position, described the many League members who joined the CCP as "glorious."<sup>82</sup> Zhou Peiyuan, the vice-chairman of Jiusan and also a dual party member, described the movement of Jiusan members in the same terms.<sup>83</sup> Yet, only a year later, the CCP became alarmed by the large number MPG members wanting to join it. The Party issued instructions declaring that its recruitment had to be very selective. It was far more beneficial, the CCP reiterated, for most MPG members to remain outside the Party.<sup>84</sup> The CCP remained aware of the dangers of making the MPGs indistinguishable from itself and turning the MPGs into mere stepping stones to CCP membership. Such perceptions could undermine, if not destroy, the usefulness of the MPGs as bridges to their respective constituencies. To counter the attraction of the CCP as a centre of influence greater rewards for MPG membership were required.

### **The Early Functions of the Revived MPGs**

The corporatist nature of the MPGs allowed the CCP efficient access to the interest groups each MPG represented on the CCP's behalf. This allowed the CCP to use the MPGs to mobilise these constituencies and allowed it to more easily tap into their specialist talent, knowledge and skills. One example of this occurred in 1973 when the Taiwan Self Government League was revived to assist the CCP compile information on Taiwan. This action followed the signing of the Sino-American agreement in March 1972, an occasion that again raised the issue of Taiwan's independence. To develop suitable policies on Taiwan-related issues, Zhou Enlai directed the League to compile relevant information. The League was also directed to

<sup>82</sup> "Di san jie Zhongyang weiyuanhui gongzuo baogao," [Work report of the the Third plenum Central Committee] (October 15, 1979), *DL Historical Documents*, p.787.

<sup>83</sup> "Zhou Peiyuan fuzhuxi 1979 shi yue shi yi ri zai Jiusan xueshe di san ci quanguo daibiao da hui de gongzuo baogao," [Vice-chairman Zhou Peiyuan's Work Report to the Third National Jiusan Congress of October 11, 1979], Yin Chongwen and Jiusan xueshe lishi bangongshi (eds), *Jiusan xueshe lishi ziliao xuanji*, [Jiusan Study Society: selected historical materials] (Xueyuan chubanshe, Beijing, 1991), p.195.

<sup>84</sup> "Zhong gong zhongyang guanyu zai minzhu dangpai fuze ren, wu dangpai shangceng aiguo renshi zhong fazhan Gongchangdang yuan wenti de guiding," [CCP CC regulations on recruiting CCP members amongst responsible democratic party members, non-Party personages and upper level patriots] (October 22, 1980). In *Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei Tongzhanbu yanjiu shi, Tongyi zhanxian zhengce xuanbian*, [Selected united front policies](Shanghai, 1992), p.65. (Hereafter *Selected united front policies*)

negotiate with concerned CCP units over the implementation of the Party's policies for Taiwanese compatriots and Taiwan related propaganda work. The League also became involved with hosting visits by Overseas Chinese.<sup>85</sup> These are the first known activities of this MPG since the anti-Rightist campaign.

Perhaps the most important task the MPGs carried out after 1977 was in aiding the rehabilitation of members and constituents who had been condemned after 1957. The CCP now maintained that while the anti-Rightist campaign had been perfectly correct in principle, it admitted that it had gone too far and had prevented many intellectuals from assisting socialist construction. While admitting past wrongs and that many of its friends had been badly hurt, the CCP stressed very pragmatic reasons for rehabilitation, maintaining that it would benefit social stability, and unity, and stimulate initiative. It would also eliminate obstructions to modernisation and benefit relations with Taiwan.<sup>86</sup>

Rehabilitation not only made individuals socially acceptable again, it also determined work, housing, social welfare, travel, and many other benefits. It was therefore of critical concern to hundreds of thousands of people. Influential and symbolic figures such as Ma Yinchu were fully and publicly rehabilitated.<sup>87</sup> The equally if not more important 1955 verdict against Hu Feng and the alleged "Hu Feng Counter-Revolutionary Clique," was also reversed.<sup>88</sup> The rehabilitation of MPG leaders had begun in 1975 and preceded that of other groups.<sup>89</sup> More than a thousand members and leaders of the Association for the Promotion of Democracy were rehabilitated after 1976.<sup>90</sup> In February 1979, the CCP fully rehabilitated the UFD itself by removing its "capitulationist" label.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>85</sup> "Minzhu dangpai, Gong shanglian huifu huodong jishi," [Record of the revival of the democratic parties and the ACFIC], Zhang Tienan, 1991, pp.517-519.

<sup>86</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhan bu 'Guanyu Aiguo renshi zhong de you pai fucha wenti de qing shi baogao' de tongzhi," [CCP CC transmission of the Central UFD's 'Report on instructions for the re-examination of Rightists among patriotic personages'] (June 11, 1980), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.842-843.

<sup>87</sup> Ma was rehabilitated in September 1979. Zhu Qitai, p.362.

<sup>88</sup> Hu Sheng, 1994, p.745.

<sup>89</sup> Zhang Tienan, 1990, p.519.

<sup>90</sup> *Minzhu* [Democracy: an official journal of the Association for the Promotion of Democracy], no.6, 1995, p.14.

<sup>91</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhan bu guanyu wei quanguo tongzhan, minzu, zongjiao gongzuo bumen zhaidiao "zhixing touxiang zhuyi luxian" maozi de qingshi baogao," [Central UFD report on the request

In April 1978, the CCP approved UFD-Public Security Bureau instructions for rehabilitating Rightists. Rehabilitated individuals were to be reinstated in their former jobs, and their political prestige and wages restored.<sup>92</sup> The MPGs established committees to collect and study materials on alleged Rightists. These committees then wrote reports for presentation for CCP consideration. Thus, the Shanghai Peasants and Workers Party, in the course of “assisting the CCP to implement its policies directed at intellectuals,” collected material on over one thousand members. As a result, 106 members had their wages restored, 185 had confiscated goods returned, 47 had their jobs restored, and the personnel files of 37 members were revised. Ninety nine percent of cases were eventually rehabilitated thereby allowing many to be promoted and allocated new housing. A number of PWP members were also permitted to join the CCP.<sup>93</sup> Even posthumous rehabilitation could dramatically benefit relatives.<sup>94</sup>

By 1980 only a tiny number of cases, around one hundred, had not been rectified (*i.e.* 0.00018 percent). Even Zhang Naiqi was rehabilitated, albeit posthumously, in 1980.<sup>95</sup> The five MPG figures left bearing what Roderick MacFaquhar described as a “fig leaf of responsibility” for Mao’s now thoroughly discredited anti-Rightist campaign were the famous third road advocates: Zhang Bojun, Luo Longji, Chu Anping and the much less prominent Peng Wenying and Chen Renbing.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, even as early as 1980, in what amounted to a back handed acknowledgement of their innocence, the CCP made special provisions for these remaining Rightists. Despite their errors they were deemed to have made “great contributions” to the revolutionary cause before 1957; their living conditions and political positions were to be looked after. They were even to again be given work to “bring their positive roles into play” and to encourage this the Party directed that their

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for instructions on the question of ridding the national united front, nationalities, and religious work departments of “capitulationist” labels] (February 3, 1979), *New Era United Front Documents*, pp.24-28.

<sup>92</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.350.

<sup>93</sup> Zhongguo nong gong minzhu dangpai Shanghai shi weiyuan hui & Wenshi ziliao gongzuo weiyuan (eds), *Zhongguo nong gong minzhu dangpai Shanghai shi zuzhi liu shi nian shi lue (1930-1990)*, [A brief history of the sixty years of the Shanghai Municipal Organisation of the Chinese Democratic Peasants and Workers Party: 1930-1990] (Shanghai), pp.27-28.

<sup>94</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.68.

<sup>95</sup> Jiang Jingyuan, 1991, p.199.

<sup>96</sup> Roderick MacFaquhar, “Introduction,” in MacFaquhar, *et al*, 1989, p.12. Dai Qing, 1989, p.114.

children were not to be discriminated against.<sup>97</sup> Yet despite these concessions, their third road positions were still regarded as constituting a threat.

Whilst the Party did not want the MPGs to be active proponents of political reform, it did want the MPGs to actively assist modernisation. The CCP's new emphasis on economic construction required vast numbers of technicians, scientists and administrators. Although the number of such experts had increased dramatically since 1949, repeated disruptions to the education system had resulted in many of the most recent generation being poorly trained. To overcome skills shortages and to raise the standards of existing ones, the CCP wanted to radically reform the education system. Those MPGs with teacher constituencies became very involved in conducting research into educational issues. The presence of the Education Ministry's Zhang Mengxu at the 1979 United Front Conference was almost certainly related to this.<sup>98</sup>

The Democratic League established an Education Planning and Education System Research Small Group. The League called on its members and its constituency to contribute knowledge, experience, and suggestions on educational reform. The group's research included undertaking surveys of educational issues and it co-ordinated this work with the CPPCC and fraternal MPGs.<sup>99</sup> The results of this work were then presented to the CCP by the UFD.<sup>100</sup> In October 1980, the Association for the Promotion of Democracy presented its plans for reform of primary and high schools, and teacher education.<sup>101</sup> At the same time, the Jiusan Society presented proposals for the reform of tertiary education, where most its members were concentrated.<sup>102</sup>

In a closely related move, the Chinese Academy of Science was re-organised and a three-thirds representative system established for its presidium. Scientists made

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<sup>97</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, pp.842-845.

<sup>98</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.437.

<sup>99</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu Tongmeng, guanyu chengli jiaoyu jihua he jiaoyu tizhi yanjiu xiaozu de jueyi," [DL on the decision to establish a Small Education Planning and Education System Research Group] (April 2, 1980), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.833-834.

<sup>100</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng hanbao Zhonggong zhongyang shuji chu, 'Guanyu wo guo jiaoyu gongzuo de ji dian jianyi'," [DL letter to CCP CC Secretariat 'On several proposals on national education work'] (October 9, 1980), *ibid.*, pp.846-867.

<sup>101</sup> "Dui zhong xiaoxue he shifan jiaoyu de jianyi, [Suggestions on high-school, primary school and teacher education], *Jiao Xiangying*, pp.283-299.

<sup>102</sup> Jiusan xueshe zhongyang weiyuanhui dui wo guo gaodeng jiaoyu tizhi gaige de jige jianyi, [The Jiusan Society Central Committee's several proposals on reform of the tertiary education system] (October 1980). In Yin Chongwen, 1991, pp.215-222.

up two thirds of members with one third chosen through consultation between the Academy's Party organisation, ministries, government departments, and the State Council.<sup>103</sup> Significantly, the first head chosen under the new system was Lu Jiayi, a scientist who was also both a CCP member and a leader of the Peasants and Workers Party.<sup>104</sup>

By 1982, the emphasis of MPG research work shifted slightly from concentrating on educational reform to addressing the problems of intellectuals more generally. This shift was ordered by the National United Front Work Conference and involved research into how to motivate intellectuals to play a greater role in modernisation. The Democratic League established a Small Research Group for Intellectual Work that set about investigating problems associated with the implementation of CCP policies directed at intellectuals.<sup>105</sup> Jiusan had established a similar group in 1981, conducted research amongst its members and constituents, and reported its findings to the CCP.<sup>106</sup> The APD produced a report calling for better wages and conditions, an increase in political and social status, and better living conditions for intellectuals. It complained that their allocated living space averaged less than three square metres per person.<sup>107</sup> Two years later, in an effort to attract more people to the profession, the APD was again calling for improvements in the living conditions of teachers and trainee teachers.<sup>108</sup> The Democratic League also sent the CCP one recommendation on education and intellectual policy after another.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Tang T'sou, "Political Change and Reform: The Middle Course," in Norton Ginsburg and Bernard A. Lalor (eds), *China: The 80s Era*, (Westview Press, Boulder, 1984), p.53.

<sup>104</sup> *UFE*, pp.758-759.

<sup>105</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu chengli zhishi fenzi gongzuo yanjiu xiao zu de jue ding," [DL on the decision to establish a Small Research Group for Intellectual Work] (February 17, 1982), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.939-940.

<sup>106</sup> "Jiusan zhongyang weiyuanhui guanyu jinyibu luoshi zhishi fenzi zhengce de ji ge jianyi," [The Jiusan Society Central Committee's suggestions on the gradual implementation of intellectual policy] (October 1982), Yin Chongwen, 1991, pp.223-227.

<sup>107</sup> "Guanyu jinyibu luoshi zhishi fenzi zhengce jixu zuo hao zhishi fenzi gongzuo de ji dian jianyi," [Several proposals on the gradual implementation of intellectual policy and continuing to do intellectual work well], Jiao Xiangying, 1990, pp.312-318.

<sup>108</sup> "Guanyu gaige shifan jiaoyu de jianyi," [Suggestions on the reform of teacher education] (November 1984), *ibid.*, pp.353-359.

<sup>109</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, pp.941-972.

### **The National Construction Association and the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce**

The MPG most directly relevant to the CCP's plans for economic development was the National Construction Association and its relatively low profile partner the ACFIC, the representatives of managerial, administrative and technical expertise in production. Even in 1975, Deng Xiaoping had complained that poor management was one of the most common problems in Chinese industry.<sup>110</sup> Communist Party pragmatists such as Deng had been slowly working towards again utilising the talent, capital, and overseas connections of China's former capitalists. An essential prerequisite for this was the redefinition of capitalists as "former" bourgeoisie on the grounds that their economic base had long been eliminated and their bourgeois ideology transformed through political education.

January 1979 marked the formal turning point for CCP policies directed at the former bourgeoisie. Deng Xiaoping, during a meeting with Hu Juewen, Hu Zi'ang, and Rong Yiren of the NCA and the ACFIC, declared his approval for their suggestions on improving economic construction. In his own speeches, Deng announced initiatives very similar to those for which the NCA's Zhang Naiqi had been condemned twenty years earlier. Deng's proposed measures included utilising foreign capital and talent, and permitting Overseas Chinese to establish factories in China. He advocated joint ventures with foreign companies, the use of compensatory trade, and the promotion of easily established businesses in light industry, handicrafts and tourism to facilitate the rapid attraction of foreign currency. Deng called on the former bourgeoisie to contribute their knowledge and talents to this economic development; he directed them to act as cadres, managers and advisers and use their technical expertise to establish new industries. Moreover, Deng advocated allowing foreign nationals to do likewise on the proviso that they were "at least patriotic."<sup>111</sup> In

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<sup>110</sup>"Comments on Industrial Development," (August 3, 1975), *SWDXP 1975-1982*, pp.43-46.

<sup>111</sup>"Gao jianshe liyong waizi he fahui yuan gongshangye jia de zuoyong," [Construction must utilise foreign capital and bring into play the role of former experts in industrial and commerce], *New Era United Front Documents*, pp.15-16.

the wake of Deng's speech, Rong Yiren was sent overseas on a trade mission to attract foreign investment.<sup>112</sup>

Deng's call for investment by Overseas Chinese complemented his 1977 initiative of calling for the revival of Overseas Chinese Affairs, which was another vital aspect of united front work.<sup>113</sup> Similar proposals had been made in the early 1960s during the second Hundred Flowers period.<sup>114</sup> Even the designation of the term "Special Economic Zones" for the regions where such investment was to be encouraged came from a united front body, Guangdong's provincial CPPCC.<sup>115</sup>

Former bourgeoisie were actively encouraged to take up business. Deng argued that the end of fixed interest payments meant the end of exploitation. There was therefore no reason why rehabilitated former bourgeoisie should not use their capital to establish new factories. They were to invest their capital in production rather than spend it. Deng entrusted Rong Yiren, as director of the new Chinese International Trust Company (CITIC), to draw up regulations to manage such investments in a purely commercial manner.<sup>116</sup> Many NCA members began working for CITIC, the Party's "window to the outside world,"<sup>117</sup> as managers and directors.<sup>118</sup> The beginnings of a complex inter-relationship between business and socialist party-state began to take shape.

Deng's speech was immediately followed by a UFD conference on Party policy towards the national bourgeoisie. In accord with Deng's statements, this conference set out policies calling for the return of confiscated capital, property, and housing to their original owners or their descendants. Former high wages were to be re-instated if this had not already been done. Engineers, technicians, advisers, and

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<sup>112</sup> Jude Howell, *China Opens its Doors: The Politics of Economic Transition*, (Harvester Wheatsheaf, Exeter, 1993), p.52. In another indication of the importance the CCP attached to this NCA/ACFIC work, their most important branches, those in Shanghai, were given a mansion on Huashan Lu to use as their offices while other Shanghai MPGs were left to share one run-down mansion.

<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*, p.49.

<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*, p.47.

<sup>115</sup> *ibid.*, p.55.

<sup>116</sup> Deng Xiaoping, in *New Era United Front Documents*, pp.15-16.

<sup>117</sup> Zhonghua Quanguo gongshang ye lianhehui yanjiushi (eds), *Fengyu tongzhou hua zhenqing*, [In the same boat through trials and hardships: discussions of true feelings] (Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, Beijing, 1992), p.8.

<sup>118</sup> Yu Yunbo, *et al.*, 1989, p.207.

others whose talents were being wasted were encouraged to again use them productively. No longer were they to be excluded from competitions involving production. Wulanfu claimed that such competitions would stimulate production. Living conditions were to be improved and the welfare policies Liu Shaoqi advocated during the Second Hundred Flowers period were to be reinstated. Fixed interest payments which had not been paid out were to be renewed. Discrimination against the children of this group was also to cease. The NCA and ACFIC were made responsible for observing the implementation of these new policies.<sup>119</sup>

A number of concrete measures soon followed the January conference and Deng's talks to the NCA and ACFIC. In October the UFD issued instructions on differentiating between various types of former bourgeoisie. These instructions called for the "three smalls," small traders, small peddlers and small artisans (*xiao shang, xiao ban, xiao shou*), who had formerly been treated as capitalists, to be reclassified as workers.<sup>120</sup> This measure immediately benefited the 'new' workers by increasing their entitlements and reducing discrimination against them. At the same time it made the task of working with the remaining former bourgeoisie far simpler. In 1956, the vast majority of ACFIC's 760,000 members were said to be of the three smalls groups.<sup>121</sup> The CCP's new policies laid the basis for reviving precisely that class which had supposedly been abolished since 1956. In September 1979, members of the Shanghai NCA, for example, used the funds from the formerly withheld fixed interest payments, now paid out to them as a result of the Party's new policies, to establish the Aiguo Jianshe Gongsi (Patriotic Construction Company). This firm has subsequently become a major construction company.<sup>122</sup> A Beijing equivalent was established in 1983, in the name of the so-called 'red' capitalist, Wang Guangying, a prominent

<sup>119</sup> Wulanfu, "Jin yi bu luoshi Dang dui minzu zichan jieji zhengce," [Implement the Party's national bourgeoisie policies step by step] (January 22, 1979). *New Era United Front Documents*, 1985, pp.18-23.

<sup>120</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu deng liu bumen guan yu ba yuan gong shangye zhong de laodong zhe qubie chulai wenti de qingshi bao gao," [Central UFD and six other Department's report on instructions for separating workers from among former industry and commerce persons] (October 29, 1979). *New Era United Front Documents*, 1985, pp.87-92.

<sup>121</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.459.

<sup>122</sup> NCA members contributed a total of 50,000,000 yuan and this had grown to 57,500,000 by 1984. Zhang Chengsong (ed), *Tongyizhanxian gongzuo yingyong shouce* [A Practical Handbook of United front Work] (Shanghai shi tongzhan lilun yanjiu hui, Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, Shanghai, np.), p.100.

NCA and ACFIC member.<sup>123</sup> The company, Guangda Industries (the 'Guang' was derived from Wang's name), the UFD now claims, was an "intermediary" attracting overseas capital and technology to China. Guangda's particular intermediary function was greatly facilitated by locating it in Hong Kong.<sup>124</sup> It has subsequently become a major enterprise in its own right.

As the causes of modernisation and economic development increasingly came to dominate CCP policy, they also assumed a greater role in united front work. This shift was then reflected in the roles assigned to the MPGs and changes in their constitutions.

### **Constitutional Changes**

Not only did the MPGs begin to focus on promoting the four modernisations, they revised their constitutions to institutionalise this. Li Wenyi stated that changes to the Democratic League's constitution were to conform with the fundamental changes in Chinese society since 1956 and the subsequent changes in the united front. The League no longer represented the old society bourgeoisie and its intellectuals but ideologically transformed intellectuals who were a part of the working class. The League's basic tasks were not only restricted to education issues, as Li Wenyi made clear, they also included helping the four modernisations, developing China's productive capacity and even increasing "worker productivity."<sup>125</sup>

The new 1979 constitutions removed any possible misunderstandings about the extent of MPG independence, as had occurred in 1956-57. Since the constitutions of all MPGs are very similar, that of the Democratic League used here will suffice as a indication of the content of all. In addition to stipulating the need to respect China's constitution, itself a limitation on political activity, the new MPG constitution

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<sup>123</sup> Wang came from a radical but rich business family in Tianjin. Despite their bourgeois background several of Wang's siblings became Party members in the 1930s and 40s while his sister and Party member Wang Guangmei, married Liu Shaoqi. *Zhonghua quanguo gongshang ye lianhehui yanjiushi*, 1992, pp.10-15.

<sup>124</sup> Jia Pingan, *et al*, 1993, p.291.

<sup>125</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu xiugai de zhangcheng de shuoming," [Explanation of the revision of the constitution of the Chinese Democratic League] (October 15, 1979), *DL Historical Documents*, p.808.

incorporated Deng's four basic principles. Li Wenyi described this in terms of a sincere acceptance of CCP leadership.<sup>126</sup> The League held the four principles to be the basis of its ideological work. The revised constitution affirmed their acceptance of the CCP's principles of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision. The principle of allowing one hundred flowers bloom was also invoked while the League described itself as "the Party's assistant (*zhushou*) in China's political life."<sup>127</sup> This embrace of CCP leadership required that each organisational level of the League accept direction from the equivalent level Party committee.<sup>128</sup>

The League's constitution set out clearly its tasks for the new era. Its primary responsibility was to link up with and motivate intellectuals to serve the CCP's socialist construction. This work included liaising with Chinese intellectuals living or working overseas. The second responsibility was to continue political education to transform the "subjective world view" of the League's members and targets. Another role was to take part in political activity by "liaising with the masses, understanding, researching and reflecting in a timely way, their opinions, proposals and demands, by encouraging the free airing of views and opening up of all avenues for people of talent and bringing fully into play the League's bridge function."<sup>129</sup> The League was to also develop the spirit of democratic consultation by participating in and nominating people to NPC and CPPCC committees. Of less importance, as reflected in the order the League ranked them, were the tasks of producing propaganda, promoting re-unification, and participating in "people's" diplomacy opposing hegemony and preserving world peace.<sup>130</sup>

All the MPGs revised their constitutions along lines similar to those of the Democratic League. There are only minor differences in emphasis between the MPGs depending on their target groups. Thus the Revolutionary Committee of the GMD and the Taiwan Self-Government League emphasised re-unification with Taiwan more

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<sup>126</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.807.

<sup>127</sup> *ibid.*, p.810.

<sup>128</sup> Item 8, *ibid.*, p.813.

<sup>129</sup> Item 4, section 8, *ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> *ibid.*

than the other MPGs.<sup>131</sup> The NCA emphasised the contributing of management skill and talents and technical expertise.<sup>132</sup> Only Zhigong Dang manifested a significant difference from its fellow MPGs in that it used the CPPCC's constitution as its political program.<sup>133</sup>

### **Political Education**

The Democratic League's program made it clear that political education remained an important part of MPG activities. A comprehensive political education program would have to be firmly in place before the CCP would again allow the MPGs to recruit new members. The MPG Small Leadership Groups had continued political study throughout the Cultural Revolution and political education was one of the first MPG activities to be revived as their organisations came back to life. The revived Shanghai branch of the Peasants and Workers Party, for example, established a political study group as one of its very first activities. When the Shanghai CPPCC established a Municipal CPPCC Study Group, the PWP joined it immediately.<sup>134</sup>

Shanghai PWP's involvement with the CPPCC Study Group was apposite. As in the 1950s, Deng Xiaoping directed that the CPPCC's role continue to include the promotion of political education:

The united front and the CPPCC should carry forward the tradition of self-education and self-remoulding, continue ideological remoulding in accordance with the formula of "unity-criticism-unity" and help the masses and prominent individuals in various spheres to constantly strengthen unity and make new progress on the common basis of service to socialism.<sup>135</sup>

As in the early 1950s when the CCP's basic demand of the MPGs was the acceptance of the *Common Program*, the CCP's New Era political education demanded that they assimilate the CCP's four basic principles.

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<sup>131</sup> For the Taiwn Self-Government League see, Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, vol.2, pp.504-505. For the Revolutionary GMD see *ibid.*, pp.189-191.

<sup>132</sup> *ibid.*, vol.1, pp.474-475.

<sup>133</sup> *ibid.*, vol.2, p.452.

<sup>134</sup> *A brief history of sixty years of the Shanghai organisation of the Chinese Peasant and Worker Party*, 1990, p.29.

<sup>135</sup> *SWDXP 1975-1982*, p.194.

In 1981, the Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy, in accord with CCP policy, was to play its part in the building of so-called socialist spiritual civilisation (*shehui zhuyi jingshen wenming*). The APD emphasised the use of persuasive measures including meetings of immortals, and upholding the “three no’s policy.” As part of its political education, the APD organised seminars and coaching, distributed study materials, and organised interviews and investigative inspection tours. It called upon its members to become friends, socialise with and open up to each other, claiming this socially-based method of political education to be very effective. Unlike the 1950s and 1960s when ideological transformation became an end in itself, 1980’s political education was related to the member’s work. Ideally, it was to help solve problems encountered at work and thereby promote the four modernisations.<sup>136</sup>

### Conclusion

To overcome a crisis and rebuild a hegemony greatly weakened by Mao’s Cultural Revolution, the CCP again adopted what was effectively a strategy of passive revolution very similar to that used during the second Hundred Flowers period. The economic reforms are merely the best known aspects of this strategy. These measures were complemented at both times by the revival of united front work to win back the support and consent of China’s alienated intellectuals and harness their support for the Party’s goals. The two tactics were mutually reinforcing with intellectuals supporting increased production to win broader consent for CCP domination. The rehabilitation of the MPGs and of Rightists was a major part of the Party’s efforts to win back the support of the intellectuals.

The revived MPGs and their rehabilitated Rightist leaders had good reasons to support the CCP. The death of Mao meant that the push leftwards had ceased. Significantly, the policies advocated by Deng Xiaoping and Liao Gailong also bore strong similarities with many of the positions publicly advocated by MPG leaders in

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<sup>136</sup> "Guanyu jiaqiang sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo de yijian," [Opinions on strengthening political education work] (November 2 1982), *Jiao Xiangying*, 1990, pp.294-296.

1956-57 and coincided with some third road positions. The Party's desire for modernisation and material progress also coincided with MPG aspirations. The CCP's shifting of the national-popular appeal away from emphasising a Maoist leftist ideology to the much broader and more powerful overarching theme of patriotism also reduced the pressure on many MPG leaders, members, and constituencies. The process of rehabilitation itself indicated to those who benefited from it that they had to some extent been proven correct, exonerated of criminality, and that the Party had recognised that their past actions had been intended in the interests of the Party and the nation. Their potential resentment at having been victimised was therefore significantly mollified. With this new direction of the Chinese state coinciding with their visions, and a renewed role and status, the MPGs had good reasons to support the CCP.

The New Era united front, justified in terms of its continuity with Mao's "correct" pre-1957 policies, was of direct benefit to the former national bourgeoisie. The payment of long owed interest of the buy-out of their companies in the 1950s gave them considerable capital to invest and the new political climate again allowed them to use their contacts and work with the Party to attract foreign, that is, mainly Overseas Chinese investment. This search for foreign investment went well beyond what Mao's policy of self-reliance would have allowed. Deng Xiaoping denied that the four modernisations and foreign investment would result in miniature capitalism and justified the reform policies by declaring that such investment was too small, relative to size of the economy, to influence the overall system of public ownership. Foreign capital and technology, "and even allowing foreigners to construct plants in China" can, said Deng, "only play a complementary role to our efforts to develop the socialist productive forces."<sup>137</sup> Perhaps it was because the Party's reform policies closely resembled third road policies, particularly those of Zhang Naiqi, that Zhang

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<sup>137</sup> "Answers to [Italian journalist Oriana] Fallaci," (August 21, 23, 1980), *SWDXP 1972-1982*, p.332.

was not only rehabilitated in 1980, but that in 1982 his remains were even transferred to the CCP's Babaoshan Cemetery in which revolutionary martyrs are interred.<sup>138</sup>

The fact that the NCA and the ACFIC were given a chance to again go into business, this time with active state support, minimised their potential for opposition to the CCP. However, by using the politically reliable progressives as the cores of the revived MPGs, the CCP had again laid a potential basis for the same problems to re-occur as had been revealed in 1957. The rehabilitated Rightists rejoined MPGs again dominated by those who had condemned them in 1957-58. This was bound to replicate the problems of lack of communication of the earlier period even though in the 1980s the progressives no longer represented progress but were reduced to the status of leftists. The legitimacy of their former radical positions had been fatally compromised by the failure of Mao's radical leftist experiments. The ability to objectively reflect the opinions of the MPG constituencies also remained compromised by the incorporation into their constitutions of the four basic principles and centralised organisation. Together with tight policy control by the CCP, these measures precluded much legitimate criticism of Party policy and honest discussion of issues. Moreover, in the light of 1957 and its aftermath, the dangers of speaking out must have remained vivid to all MPG members. These influences on intermediation meant that the CCP would still hear what it wanted from those it most trusted.

Yet, despite the potential problems, the ability of the MPGs to contribute their knowledge and skills to national development and the political changes encouraged optimism. The next chapter details how the MPG's supported the CCP's goals until a situation arose when the CCP seemed to again promise them a much greater role.

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<sup>138</sup> "Zhang Naiqi tongzhi guhui yi fang Babaoshan, she cuohua wei youpai fenzi wenti yi zai qiannian dedao gaizheng," [Comrade Zhang Naiqi's ashes moved to Babaoshan [cemetery], his incorrect labelling as a Rightist was already rectified the year before last.], *Renmin ribao*, May 14, 1982, p.1.

**Re-building for the New Era: 1981-1986**

Liao Gailong's radical reform proposals of 1980 failed to eventuate but they did find an echo in subsequent united front work as it continued to build upon the Party's post-1976 passive revolutionary strategy. This chapter deals with the period 1981-1986, a time marked by the Party strongly re-affirming the value and importance of the intelligentsia and technical intellectuals. Increasing prominence and status for the MPGs and united front work symbolised these attestations and culminated in the formal incorporation of united front work into the constitution. This explicit recognition occurred as the CCP continued to revive and develop the CPPCC and allow the MPGs to grow.

The CCP justified renewed MPG growth on the grounds that they could assist in making China a stronger, wealthier nation by contributing their skills and talents to compensate for defects and short-comings in the existing system. The use of the MPGs in poverty relief work, the establishments of schools, and in undertaking consultancies appealed to the MPGs' patriotism and diverted them from more overtly political subjects. The CCP also made increasing use of the MPGs to help attract foreign investment, talent, and technology. By assisting economic development, the MPGs were not only realising their own long-held aspirations, they were also providing the material basis necessary to support the Party's hegemony.

The increase in membership required to carry out the MPG's tasks, however, gave rise to a number of problems. The revival of the Institutes of Socialism was initiated by the CCP as a part of the solution to these problems. To show good faith, the CCP reduced its overt influence in the MPGs and relaxed its control over them while the united front was expanded. Nevertheless, the CCP's influence over and within them remained strong. The CCP continued to control leadership appointments and explicitly limited the scope of the MPGs by rewriting their constitutions. The problems inherent in the corporatist nature of the MPGs resurfaced. The importance of closeness to production and the salience of this to the CCP gave some MPGs

advantages over others which were not immediately obvious. The CCP's control of MPG leaderships also resulted in the re-emergence of problems seen in the 1950s.

### **The Fifteenth National United Front Work Conference**

The basis for the expansion of the MPGs was laid at the Fifteenth National United Front Work Conference (December 21 1981 - January 6 1982). The conference itself reflected increased attention to united front work. Many senior Party members attended, including Hu Yaobang, Ping Jiesan, Xi Zhongxun, Peng Chong, Liao Chengzhi, Li Weihang, and Song Renqiong. These leaders met with UFD delegates, attended meetings and, in some cases, gave speeches.<sup>1</sup>

The conference discussed Taiwan, religious affairs, and MPG work. It recognised the increasing complexity of united front work with the number of target groups increasing rather than diminishing as well as the long-term nature of this work. Delegates at the conference were informed of policies to incorporate the MPGs and united front work into the constitution. In line with the general reversion to the relatively open policies of 1956, the CCP extended invitations to MPG, ACFIC, non-Party personages, and leaders of mass organisations, to attend as observers for parts of the proceedings.

Many MPG-related proposals discussed at the conference were laid out by Hu Yaobang. Hu, in turn, attributed much of the credit for his proposals to the NCA's Hu Juewen and Hu Zi'ang. These proposals included more publicity for the new united front, allowing the independent development of the MPGs, ACFIC, and more appointments of non-Party people to official positions. They also called for the full implementation of united front policies and the overcoming of 'leftist' internal Party resistance to united front work. Intensifying propaganda and education in support of united front work was regarded as vital to combat "poisonous" leftism and allow the benefits of such work to be felt. The UFD, Education, Propaganda, Organisation and other relevant departments were singled out as requiring a convincing ideological basis for justifying united front work, both internally and to fellow Party members who still

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<sup>1</sup> "Summary of the Fifteenth National United Front Work Conference," Ren Tao, 1988, p.465.

saw it as unnecessary. The attacks on the UFD after 1957 had left many cadres fearful of being labelled as revisionists, capitulationists and the like, and these fears greatly inhibited their effectiveness and enthusiasm.<sup>2</sup>

Hu Yaobang declared that since 1978, there had been “great progress in putting at ease the feelings of non-Party people.” However, he added, “we can’t say very much at ease.” Hu credited the united front with contributing to this positive development. The front had also contributed to greatly boosting national and political unity. Further, Hu argued that developing the MPGs, ACFIC, and people’s organisations would “immediately increase our strength several fold.”<sup>3</sup> As examples of this, Hu Yaobang praised Hu Juewen and Hu Zi’ang’s proposals and the initiatives by the NCA and ACFIC. Reinforcing his call, Hu Yaobang declared that despite the CCP being very small during the war against Japan, it had policies and principles which motivated many intellectuals and patriotic soldiers (*i.e.* defecting nationalists). As a result, the CCP became a great force. Hu implied that learning from this experience would allow a new mighty force to be developed.<sup>4</sup> As part of building this new force he set a national target of 5,000 non-Party appointments in 1982. Achieving this target, claimed Hu, would be “great progress.”<sup>5</sup> Despite his admission of leftism in the UFD and a shortage of UFD cadres, Hu saw the implementation of united front policies as a relatively simple matter requiring merely money and co-ordination.<sup>6</sup> The central levels of the MPGs had 413 cadres compared to 436 before the Cultural Revolution. The number of cadres for 789 MPG branches totalled 4,382, far fewer than the pre-1966 number of 5,533. To remedy these shortages, the CCP called for an increase to 613 in the number of central level cadres and an overall increase to 7,000 cadres by 1985.<sup>7</sup> These cadres were selected by the CCP and were usually Party members. Their appointment gave the CCP direct control over united front organisations including the MPGs.

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<sup>2</sup> Hu Yaobang, "Zai quanguo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo huiyi shang de jianghua," [Speech to the National United Front Work Conference] (January 5, 1982), *ibid.*, p.475.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p.477.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.479.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.478, p.480.

<sup>7</sup> "Guanyu bangzhu minzhu dangpai jiejie gongzuo tiaojian he ganbu daiyu ruogan wenti de yi jian," [Opinions on helping MPGs solve certain questions of working conditions and treatment of cadres] (January 1983), *Selected united front policies*, pp.59-60.

The perpetuation of 'leftism' in the UFD remained an obstacle to good united front work. Li Weihan sought to overcome it by invoking continuities with the Party's pre-1957 policies. Li argued that if it had been acceptable for the Party and Mao to recognise the MPG's "political freedom, organisational independence and legal equality" in 1956, "then it is even more appropriate in this new era." Moreover, in 1980, the CPPCC had again written these principles into its political resolution.<sup>8</sup> Wulanfu stressed the transmission-belt function of the Chinese parties which set them aside from Western political parties. Rather than representing different classes and serving to protect the exploitation of one class by another, the MPGs represented the interests of their constituencies. The MPGs were channels for criticism from the masses; they allowed the CCP to hear the opinions of the masses and non-Party experts. These channels strengthened the CCP's unity with the masses and allowed it to discover and correct its shortcomings. The MPGs were therefore a means of "pooling the wisdom and knowledge of all." Drawing on MPG wisdom and knowledge strengthened the CCP's leadership, socialism, the socialist legal system, and the people's democratic dictatorship.<sup>9</sup>

The conference generated concrete policies. In February 1982, the CCP issued instructions which were to guide the general direction of united front work until 1986. These directions included the continued rehabilitation of Rightists, expansion of Taiwan and Hongkong work, and more education on the four basic principles and united front policies. The MPGs and people's organisations were both allowed to grow. Party members and UFD cadres were warned not to interfere with their organisational expansion. The UFD maintained that this free development would increase MPG creativity and initiative. Nevertheless, there was a simultaneous and contradictory demand for the strengthening of Party leadership over them.<sup>10</sup>

Hu Yaobang's announcement of the decision to increase non-Party appointments to government complemented the renewed growth of the MPGs. More

<sup>8</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, p.469.

<sup>9</sup> "Jinyibu gonggu he guangda Aiguo tongyi zhanxian," [Further consolidate and expand the Patriotic United Front] (January 6, 1982), *ibid.*, pp.485-486.

<sup>10</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Quanguo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo huiyi tongzhi," [CCP CC notice on the National United Front Work Conference] (February 12, 1982), *ibid.*, pp.489-493.

such people were to be appointed on the basis of their representativeness, their contributions to the four modernisations, and/or their influence in Taiwan. The CCP wished to minimise the number of people given multiple appointments. It was acknowledged that the holding of many offices concurrently had been an important factor behind the ineffectiveness of non-Party appointments in the 1950s, and it wished to avoid repeating such problems.<sup>11</sup> Yet it transpired that even Hu Yaobang's modest target of 5,000 appointments was very difficult to fulfil.

### CCP Recruitment within the MPGs

The difficulties of creating and filling positions for non-Party personages was not due to a lack of politically reliable MPG members. The MPGs had, after all, been revived using a core of reliable dual CCP-MPG membership holders and progressives. In 1981, however, the UFD decided to no longer recruit actively among MPG and ACFIC chairs, vice chairs, secretaries and organisational heads.<sup>12</sup>

In December 1982, the UFD directed that except for the MPG central committees and branches directly controlled by the UFD and ACFIC provincial, municipal and regional committees, ordinary members were "generally" not to be recruited into the CCP. Moreover, MPG progressives were no longer to get special treatment. Progressives could, however, continue to take part in CCP meetings and other Party activities if the relevant level Party organisations agreed, thus confirming that they were Party members in all but name. Progressives who were eventually allowed to join the CCP could be identified posthumously as Party members. Those who repeatedly applied to the Party for admission but died before permission was granted could be admitted posthumously.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhanbu fu Yunnan sheng wei tongzhanbu guanyu zai minzhu dangpai, Gongshanglian jiceng zuzhi fuze ren zhong fazhan wo dang dangyuan wenti de yijian," [Central UFD on Opinions of the United Front Department of the Yunnan Provincial Committee on recruiting Party members among responsible persons in the basic level organisations of the democratic parties and ACFIC] (August 3, 1981), *Selected united front policies*, pp.67-68.

<sup>13</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhanbu fu Hunan sheng wei tongzhanbu guanche Zhongyang 'Guanyu zai minzhu dangpai fuze ren, wu dangpai shang ceng aiguo renshi zhong fazhan wo dang dangyuan wenti de guiding,' zhong you guan wenti de yijian," [Central UFD on Opinions on relevant issues concerning the thorough implementation of "Regulations on the issue on recruiting Party members among responsible persons in the upper level of the democratic parties and upper level non-party personages" by the United Front Department of the Hunan Provincial Committee] (December 12, 1982), *ibid.*, pp.68-69.

Thus, while the Party maintained maximum influence amongst the MPG leadership, it ceased using the MPGs to recruit CCP members. In another sign of good faith, the CCP is also reported to have withdrawn Party members who had joined the MPGs after 1949.<sup>14</sup> The CCP regarded these dual members as quite different from MPG members who subsequently became CCP members. The withdrawal of this portion of the trusted backbone elements plainly indicated that the CCP felt its control of the MPGs was adequate and de-facto Party members in the form of Communist Youth League members were permitted to remain as MPG members.<sup>15</sup>

Although these reductions of CCP presence indicated an increased willingness by the Party to reduce somewhat its direct influence over the MPGs, they remained gestures. Not only were many MPG leaders also Party members, the Party-state's insurance of MPG reliability was still maintained by its control over the provision of their infrastructure, funding, and administrative appointments. Nevertheless, gestures had been made towards increasing MPG independence and a way had been prepared for a greater recognition of united front and MPG work, a recognition symbolised by a re-formulation of MPG-CCP co-existence principles and its renewed inclusion in the constitution.

At the CCP's Twelfth Congress in September 1982, Deng Xiaoping officially revealed the CCP's new formulation for co-existence with the MPGs. The existing slogan "long-term co-existence, mutual supervision," was complemented by adding, "treating each other with sincerity and sharing weal and woe" (*gandan xiangzhao, rongru yugong*). This second phrase has been traced to a sentence of Hu Yaobang's speech to the 1982 Fifteenth National United Front Work Conference.<sup>16</sup> This new formulation with its implications of common interests and goals became the CPPCC's official guiding principle. Yet the vast power imbalance between the CCP and MPGs

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<sup>14</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, p.129.

<sup>15</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhanbu guanyu Gongqingtuan yuan canjia minzhudangpai wenti de yijian," [Central UFD opinions on the question of the participation of CYL members in the democratic parties] (November 8 1986), *Selected united front policies* p.52. This document also refers to similar policies in place in 1983.

<sup>16</sup> Feng Zhengqin, *et al*, 1993, p.319.

was left unaddressed.<sup>17</sup> The united front was, however, again given nominal constitutional recognition.

### **Constitutional Recognition of the United Front**

On December 4 1982, the National People's Congress adopted a number of revisions to the *Constitution of the People's Republic of China*.<sup>18</sup> Like many post-Mao policies, this constitution was a partial reversion to the 1950s and it repudiated many of the changes made in the 1975 and 1978 versions. While upholding the "leading force" of the socialist economy, the new constitution reflected post-Mao economic reforms. It acknowledged and pledged to protect the rights of the individual economy, individual interests, foreign investment and foreign investors.<sup>19</sup> The reasons for these changes were implicit in the constitutional preamble which emphasised the task of national modernisation, particularly the four modernisations. This also called for the improvement of China's socialist institutions, legal system, the development of socialist democracy, re-unification with Taiwan, and the creation of a "high level of culture and democracy."<sup>20</sup>

The constitutional preamble invoked both the united front and the role of the MPGs in attaining these ambitious aims:

In building socialism it is essential to rely on workers, peasants and intellectuals and to unite all forces that can be united. In the long years of revolution and construction, there has been formed under the leadership of the Communist Party of China a broad patriotic united front which is comprised of the democratic parties and people's organisations and which embraces all socialist working people, all patriots who support socialism and all patriots who stand for the re-unification of the motherland. This united front will continue to be consolidated and developed. The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, a broadly based representative organisation of the united front which has played a significant role, will play a still more important role in the country's political and social life, in promoting friendship with other countries and in the struggle for socialist modernisation and for the re-unification and unity of the country.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.388.

<sup>18</sup> *Constitution of the People's Republic of China*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1987), Articles 7, 11, and 17.

<sup>19</sup> Byron Weng, "Some Key Aspects of the 1982 Draft Constitution of the People's Republic of China," *China Quarterly*, no.91, 1982, pp.492-506.

See *The Constitution of the People's Republic of China*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1978) for a comparison of the two versions.

<sup>20</sup> *Constitution of the People's Republic of China*, 1987, pp.4-5.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, pp.5-6.

The 1978 preamble had also called for development of the united front. However, this reference had been preceded by a statement calling for the proletariat's continued struggle against the evils of the bourgeoisie, capitalism, revisionism, subversion, and aggression.<sup>22</sup> These calls had been used to attack the MPGs' constituencies and were now most inappropriate. The goal of uniting all who can be united demanded changes. The phrase, "dictatorship of the proletariat," with its connotations of class struggle, was replaced by the far more inclusive expression, "the people's democratic dictatorship." The targets of dictatorship, Peng Zhen explained, were not intellectuals or groups based on class but spies and criminals *etc.*<sup>23</sup> The status of intellectuals was raised with the promise that conditions would be created to allow them to "give full scope to their role in socialist modernisation" and the previous demand that they become both red and expert was dropped.<sup>24</sup> While the CPPCC was accorded recognition in the preamble, it was not granted any power.

Paradoxically, the CCP's calls to develop democracy had also led to the earlier removal of the constitutional right to exercise the "four bigs." No longer could contending, airing views, arguing things in a big way, and writing big character posters, and the public humiliation these methods involved, be invoked by the Chinese public as legitimate expressions of democracy. During the anti-Rightist campaign and the Cultural Revolution, these methods had frequently been used to attack the bourgeoisie and intellectuals. Removing the "four bigs" as legitimate therefore had particular relevance to the MPGs and their constituencies. For instance, the Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy leader, Lei Jieqiong, used examples of the use of *dazibao* attacks on herself and others as a teachers to justify their abolition.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, there was a constant danger for the Party that the use of *dazibao* in particular could pose a threat to itself. In 1978-79, for example, *dazibao* expressions of discontent easily flared up into open attacks on the CCP. Abolishing the right to use

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<sup>22</sup> *The Constitution of the People's Republic of China*, 1978, p.4.

<sup>23</sup> Weng, 1982, p.495.

<sup>24</sup> *Constitution*, Article 23, p.21. Weng, 1983 p.496.

<sup>25</sup> "A Painful Lesson," *Beijing Review*, no.40, October 6, 1980, p.28. Lei's article forms one part of a special feature on the four bigs including a justification of the abolition of *dazibao* by Zhang Youyu, then a senior Party member and a vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

these four methods of political expression was therefore presented as a positive measure. Certainly those MPG members who had suffered as a result of their use in earlier political campaigns were very likely to support their abolition.

### **United Front “Science”**

In July 1983, the CCP declared that united front work was a “science.” This statement followed a series of UFD organised conferences in Shanghai, Beijing, and provincial capitals, which declared united front work a science and an important part of scientific socialism. A recently rehabilitated Li Weihang had first raised the idea in early 1979 and elaborated on it in 1983. Guided by the hundred flowers principle, the UFD, Propaganda departments, Party schools, and social science research organisations were all given responsibility for undertaking research into this new science.<sup>26</sup> The 1983 declaration further legitimised united front work to Party members and raised its status amongst the groups such work targeted.

While united front work’s claims to scientific veracity are at best dubious, the declaration did facilitate and justify a greater use of social science research methods to provide soundly based, if not scientific, information on which to base policies. The declaration was thus also another step in the rehabilitation of academic disciplines long discredited and abandoned by Mao, such as sociology. The declaration was followed by the establishment of the Chinese United Front Theory Research Association (*Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian lilun yanjiu hui*). This Association brought together Party and non-Party experts. The founding meetings of the Association were attended by not only Party schools, government and Party departments with direct united front responsibilities, but also tertiary institutions, the Academy of Social Science, MPGs and people’s organisation representatives. The CCP’s Secretariat member, Xi Zhongxun spoke at early meetings, along with MPG leaders, Xu Deheng, Hu Zi’ang, Zhou Gucheng and Fei Xiaotong. The first six topics listed for investigation were: the state capitalism of opening up and the new era; “one country-two systems” and national re-

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<sup>26</sup> “Quanguo tongyi zhanxian lilun gongzuo huiyi,” [(Summary) National united front theory work conference], Ren Tao, 1988, p.520.

unification; united front work in small towns; issues in democratic party work; religious issues; and new era united front work.<sup>27</sup> Among the Association's early publicly released works were reference books like *Zhou Enlai's Selected Documents on the United Front*. Subsequent books such as *United Front Psychology* were also to be related to the Association's work.<sup>28</sup>

### The Growth of the MPGs

In December 1982, the UFD held a National United Front Work Conference which designated the strengthening of united front work with intellectuals and the related organisational development of the MPGs as major tasks for 1983. The Central UFD directed that all levels of the Party actively assist in resolving the problems hindering MPG development.<sup>29</sup> In late 1983, the CCP re-wrote the MPG's constitutions to make explicit their united front role and the CCP's leadership over them.<sup>30</sup> These measures all served to help give subsequent MPG recruitment clear direction.

The MPGs, however, were very discriminating in the quality of the people they recruited. In keeping with their role as models, the MPGs sought people who were politically reliable, experts in their fields, and representative of their particular interest groups. This emphasis on expertise and influence has resulted in MPG members being disproportionately represented in some elite organisations. Some forty percent of the members of the Chinese Academy of Social Science, for example, were MPG members.<sup>31</sup> A large number of model workers and winners of advanced production prizes and awards were MPG members. These awards were sources of pride for the

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, pp.520-521.

<sup>28</sup> Liu Ningzhong (ed), *Tongyi zhanxian xinli xue*, (Hunan chubanshe, Changsha, 1991).

<sup>29</sup> *Selected united front policies*, pp.56-61.

<sup>30</sup> For English translations see: Taiwan Self Government League; See British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) *Summary of World Broadcasts* (SWB). SWB/FE/7517 B11/11-13, December 15, 1983; Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy; SWB/FE/B11 7507/8-15, December 3, 1983. China Democratic Construction Association; SWB/FE B11/1-9. November 25, 1983.

Revolutionary Committee for the Guomindang; Seymour, 1987, Appendix, pp.98-108.

<sup>31</sup> *Beijing Review*, quoted in Seymour, 1987, p.91.

MPGs and they vindicated the quality for their organisations.<sup>32</sup> In 1982, for example, the NCA and ACFIC jointly boasted of their 4,404 prize-winning members.<sup>33</sup> In a report submitted to the NPC, the Democratic League's Fei Xiaotong highlighted the fact that 2,302 League members had won awards and prizes in 1980, 1,876 in 1981, and 4,870 in 1982.<sup>34</sup> Jiusan boasted 94 members admitted to the Chinese Academy of Science, 55 with prizes for natural science or inventions and 6 with prizes for technical publications.<sup>35</sup> In 1986, the UFD was calling openly for nominations of exemplary persons so that they could be awarded prizes and held up as models.<sup>36</sup> In this new era then, MPG members often serve as positive role models rather than negative exemplars: a recognition of the failure of past political education policies and more evidence of the CCP's weakened hegemony and its subsequent need to win back intellectuals.

The figures for individual MPG membership are often fragmentary and the first reliable set of membership figures date from 1983:

Revolutionary Committee of the GMD	18,000
Democratic League	39,300
National Construction Association	24,767
Association for the Promotion of Democracy	15,000
Peasants and Workers Party	13,700
Zhigong Dang	2,200
Jiusan Study Society	11,014
Taiwan Democratic Self-government League	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>124,051</b>

This figure was almost double 1979's total of 65,482. For the totals to 1986 see Table 1. The available figures for 1984 show that subsequent recruitment was distributed unevenly:

<sup>32</sup> For an extensive description of the role of these positive models see: Betty B. Burch, "Models as Agents of Change in China," In Richard R. Wilson, Amy Auerbach Wilso, and Sydney L. Greenblatt (eds), *Value Change in Chinese Society*, (Praeger, New York, 1979), Ch.5, pp.122-137.

<sup>33</sup> Yu Yunbo, *et al*, 1989, p.206.

<sup>34</sup> In keeping with the number of teachers in the League, addition to model and outstanding worker awards, other prizes included "red flag awards," (*san ba hongqi shou*), model teacher, and activist (*jijifenzhi*) awards. "Tuanjie qilai, wei jianshe shehuizhuyi wuzhi wenming he jingshen wenming gongxian yiqie liliang," (Unite all in order to contribute all strengths to building the construction of socialist materialist civilisation and spiritual culture), [A work report to the NPC] (December 14, 1983), *DL Historical Documents*, p.982.

<sup>35</sup> Zhou Peiyuan, "Tuanjie, zhenxing Zhonghua, wei shehuizhuyi xiandaihua jianshe zuo chu xin gongxian"[Unite, vigorously develop China, make a new contribution to constructing and modernising socialism] (Work report to the Society's fourth national conference, December, 2, 1983), Yin Chongwen 1991, p.241.

<sup>36</sup> *Shanghai zhengxie bao* [Shanghai CPPCC paper], the official organ of the Shanghai municipal CPPCC], February 28, 1986, p.1.

	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>
Revolutionary Committee of the GMD	18,000	20,000
Democratic League	39,300	50,000
National Construction Association	24,767	25,000
Association for the Promotion of Democracy	15,000	15,000
Peasants and Workers Party	13,700	N/A
Zhigong Dang	2,100	2,300
Jiusan Study Society	11,014	25,000
Taiwan Democratic Self-government League	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<u>124,051</u>	<u>141,700</u>

For the Democratic League and Jiusan growth was dramatic but almost static for others. The only available figure for 1986 was one for the League. This revealed an increase over the 1984 total of 50,000 to 65,850: a 32 percent increase over two years. In comparison to the CCP's membership, however, these numbers were still insignificant.

**Table 1. MPG Membership Growth 1979-1986**

YEAR	1979	1983	1984	1985	1986
Total	65,482	124,000	141,700	178,000	190,000
Increase		58,518	17,700	36,300	12,000
% Change		22%	14%	26%	7%

*For full references for sources see Appendix A.*

Recruitment was to be at a rate which allowed the goals of quality and reliability to be achieved. The CCP's instructions were in part aimed at the "three types." These three types, alleged members of Lin Biao - Jiang Qing factions, those who in the course of the Cultural Revolution had attacked and vilified others, and those who had smashed, fought, and/or looted during the Cultural Revolution, together with criminals and people expelled from the CCP, were all banned from MPG membership. Just as importantly, MPGs were to prevent those "who saw the CCP as an enemy" or "who held different political opinions" from using the MPGs as "platforms."<sup>37</sup>

The occupational restrictions on MPG recruitment remained. The Revolutionary GMD did have its limits expanded to include more people with Taiwan and GMD connections. Because the number of national capitalists was small, ageing, and

<sup>37</sup> "Guanyu minzhu dangpai zuzhi fazhan wenti zuotanhui jiyao," [Summary of the conference on organisational development of the democratic parties] (November 15, 1983), *Selected united front policies*, pp.47-49.

decreasing, the NCA was permitted to recruit amongst those with whom it had a historical or working relationships. All MPGs, however, were encouraged to recruit amongst those in their particular target groups who had connections with Taiwan so that they could use these connections to promote re-unification. Previous restrictions on recruiting in small cities were also relaxed. The major exception to this increased openness was a continued ban on organising in Tibet. The long-standing restrictions on MPGs recruiting amongst workers in the police, intelligence, foreign affairs, broadcasting, CCP organs, Communist Youth League members, workers, peasants, and middle school students remained firmly in place.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, the massive relative increase in membership made the MPGs more able to contribute to the nation's modernisation in a variety of ways.

### **The Creation of a Supplementary Education System**

The easiest and most direct way that most MPGs could contribute to modernisation was to help remedy the shortfall in intellectuals needed to make modernisation possible. While it seems that the MPGs started to run various educational and training courses soon after their revival, it wasn't until September 1982 that the CPPCC vice-chairman and head of the UFD Yang Jingren and others chaired a conference on education. Attended by the MPGs, ACFIC, and the Vocational Education Society, this conference adopted a policy of having MPGs and people's organisations establish schools.<sup>39</sup> Members could in many cases aid modernisation merely by continuing to pursue their professions as teachers. This was particularly so for MPGs, such as the APD and Democratic League, where teachers dominated the memberships. However, all MPGs had authoritative members with valuable skills and knowledge worthy of being passed on. As Seymour pointed out, this work amounted to the early creation of a private school network consisting of five hundred MPG schools with 500,000 students by 1984.<sup>40</sup> A year later there were 1,200 such schools in twenty eight provinces conducting 3,000 classes for 600,000 students.<sup>41</sup> By 1987, the

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<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.388.

<sup>40</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.81.

<sup>41</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.419.

Democratic League alone was operating 616 schools, had seen 190,000 students graduate and had 170,000 enrolments.<sup>42</sup> In 1985, the Shanghai APD with only 2,696 members, operated thirteen schools holding 366 classes for 15,829 students.<sup>43</sup>

Other MPGs were also active in transmitting their skills. The Peasants and Workers Party began establishing special schools of traditional Chinese medicine in 1983. The PWP anticipated training 10,000 students within a few years. This action was part of a joint PWP-NCA initiative to revive traditional medicine and compensate for inadequacies in the training of many of the existing 300,000 practitioners.<sup>44</sup> By 1987, including the pharmacy schools, the PWP had 119 schools with 350,000 students.<sup>45</sup>

The CCP's emphasis on increasing production and efficiency by raising levels of technical and managerial skills made vocational education important. The NCA and ACFIC used their members to establish technical schools. In 1981, Shanghai saw the establishment of its first ACFIC "college."<sup>46</sup> By 1985, the Shanghai NCA and ACFIC had 13 schools conducting 1500 classes for 64,300 students.<sup>47</sup> In line with their expertise and experience, the NCA-ACFIC schools often taught management. A very early example of these schools was that established by the Zhejiang NCA and ACFIC in April 1979. Members donated 100,000 yuan to hold courses in space rented from a middle school. Many of the 6,300 adult students studied foreign languages and professional courses taught by retired NCA and ACFIC members.<sup>48</sup> Shanghai's NCA/ACFIC Industry and Commerce College offered courses such as foreign trade, industrial management and financial planning.<sup>49</sup> In 1986, the Vocational Education

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<sup>42</sup> [Summary of DL conference on consultancy work] (August 24, 1987), *DL Historical Documents*, p.1178.

<sup>43</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxie bao*, December 20, 1985, p.1.

<sup>44</sup> "Democratic party raises professional level of pharmacists," SWB FE/7507 B11/16.

<sup>45</sup> *Renmin ribao*, (O/S edition), April 12, 1987.

<sup>46</sup> *Shanghai zhengxiebao*, July 15, 1984, p.1. November 15, 1984, p.2.

<sup>47</sup> *Shanghai zhengxiebao*, December 13, 1985, p.1.

<sup>48</sup> Tong Yi, "The Democratic Parties in Action," *Beijing Review*, vol.26, no.45, November 7, 1983, pp.26-27.

<sup>49</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, April 4, 1986, p.2.

Society also began to re-establish itself in Shanghai, this time as a provider of one and a half, three, and four year part-time architecture courses.<sup>50</sup>

The MPG schools helped in a modest way to make up for serious shortfalls in the state system. They provided a range of services accessible to both adults and children including part-time, vocational, language, and higher education entrance preparation courses. Fees in the early 1980s were modest, varying between eight and twenty yuan per month but they provided the MPGs with valuable income.<sup>51</sup> Payments to teachers were a welcome and valuable income supplement to the poorly paid profession.<sup>52</sup> The state would occasionally provide classrooms or land for these schools but they were generally financed by the MPGs. The ultimate aim was to make the schools financially self supporting.<sup>53</sup> These arrangements increased the incomes of some MPG members and decreased their reliance on state finance.

### Poverty Relief

The MPGs also carried out poverty relief in remote areas. One UFD account traces the origins of the poverty relief policy to a very low-key start in 1979 by the Yunnan and Guizhou provincial branches of the NCA. These branches sent a group of cooks and barbers to train inhabitants of remote border regions. This modest beginning was then used by the NCA and ACFIC to launch the idea of providing poor regions with supplementary education and advisory services to stimulate their economic development. By the end of 1982, the NCA and ACFIC had established special advisory groups in Shanghai, Tianjin and Beijing to provide advice to Inner Mongolia and Ningxia.<sup>54</sup> The UFD praised the NCA-ACFIC efforts and called for their initiative to be emulated by all MPGs.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Zhonghua zhiye xuexiao fu xiao jiu yue shang zhengshi kaixue," [Revived VES school to begin formal classes in September], *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, September 5, 1986, p.2.

<sup>51</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.81.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Chinese Association for the Promotion of Democracy, Shanghai, November 12, 1993.

<sup>53</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.82.

<sup>54</sup> Zhang Datong, "Minzhu dangpai, Gongshanglian kaizhan zixun fuwu, zhili zhibian huodong de qingkuang," [The circumstances of the launching of democratic party and ACFIC consultancy and education support services in border areas], Zhang Tienan, 1991, p.527.

<sup>55</sup> "Guanyu Minjian, Gongshanglian jingji zixun fuwu gongzuo qingkuang he jinhou yijian de baogao," [Report into the circumstances of NCA-ACFIC work in economic advice service and opinions on the future] (October 16, 1982), *ibid.*

In February 1983, the UFD and National Minorities Commission invited the Democratic League, the APD, Jiusan, the Peasants and Workers Party, and the Revolutionary GMD to organise a formal mechanism for conducting advisory work in areas such as Xinjiang. This mechanism divided projects and areas of responsibilities amongst the MPGs. The resultant projects and the involvement of influential MPG members were seen as making good use of talent and advancing unity and equality among nationalities. Subsequent work involved advising poor regions on matters such as economics, science, education, law, health and culture.<sup>56</sup> An early example of this work was the Revolutionary GMD's dispatch of a group to help improve the Inner Mongolian coal industry.<sup>57</sup>

Remote area work also involved the dispatch of MPGs teachers and experts to raise local standards through training classes and seminars.<sup>58</sup> By October 1984, the Shanghai MPGs and ACFIC had organised 4,000 people to carry out such work on 2,260 occasions.<sup>59</sup> By 1987, the Democratic League had organised 1,666 visits to remote areas and initiated 1,089 aid projects.<sup>60</sup> An example of this work was the Democratic League's work in Sanming. This area of North-west Fujian had a population of 2.1 million served by 4,596 teachers in 171 middle schools. To raise teaching standards, the League sent five experts to give lectures and seminars to one third of Sanming's teachers.<sup>61</sup> This use of MPG talent helped develop the backward economies of remote areas thereby increasing national unity and stability.

### **Consultancies: The MPGs as 'Think Tanks'**

The MPG's remote area work consultancies overlapped with their more general consultancy work. Consultancies were a particularly effective way of using the talents,

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*, pp.528-529.

<sup>57</sup> "KMT (sic) grasps helps Inner Mongolia coal industry," SWB, FE/7417 B11/4, (August 20, 1983).

<sup>58</sup> This was further formalised in mid-1984. "Zhongyang tongzhanbu, Guojia minwei "guanyu jixu xiezhu minzhu dangpai he Gongshanglian zuo hao zhili zhibian gongzuo de tongzhi," [Central UFD, State Nationalities Commission, "On continuing to help the democratic parties and the ACFIC do remote area intellectual work well] (May 15, 1984), *Selected united front policies*, pp.75-76.

<sup>59</sup> *Shanghai zhengxiebao*, October 1, 1984, p.1.

<sup>60</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng zixun fuwu gongzuo huiyi jiyao," [Summary of DL conference on consultancy work] (August 14, 1987), *DL Historical Documents*, p.1178.

<sup>61</sup> *Beijing Review*, vol.26, no.45, November 7, 1983, p.26.

knowledge and connections of the MPGs. One writer described the MPGs as having become "a kind of think tank, with experts in many disciplines who have helped prepare the country for the modernisation drive."<sup>62</sup> This form of activity was not new. The MPGs had long investigated all manner of issues on the CCP's behalf. What was new in the 1980s was the increasing opportunity to sell the MPG's investigatory skills. Investigations and surveys of the past seemed to differ from consultancies in that the latter were directly related to economic matters. Poverty relief measures involving economic development and work for enterprises were classified by the MPGs and UFD as consultancies, even though they were not necessarily paid for it.

By the end of 1986, the CCP formalised the dominance of the economic imperative in MPG consultancy work. It described the MPGs' consultancy services as a means of motivating the MPG members and serving modernisation. Subject to CCP Central Committee and State Council regulations, payments for consultancies were now permitted. Consultancy work included investigations, surveys, training, supplying economic and technical information, translating and publishing, attracting investment, foreign talent, technology and equipment, and stimulating foreign trade. Profits were to be used to expand the services and defray MPG expenses.<sup>63</sup> Consultancy work could be profitable for the MPG members involved. Seymour quotes examples of consultancies in the early 1980s typically paying 2,000 yuan with MPG members receiving thirty percent.<sup>64</sup> The NCA and the ACFIC were the best placed to undertake business consultancies. In 1985, they undertook 4,391 consultancies of which more than 1,660 generated 220 million yuan of business for the enterprises concerned and employed 10,000 youths. Such consultancies in remote areas generated 1.2 million yuan of business.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, p.24.

<sup>63</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhan bu, Caizheng bu, Guojia gongshang xingzhen bu guanli ju yinfa 'Guanyu minzhu dangpai zixun fuwu zhuanmen yewu jigou de ruogan yijian,'" [Central UFD, Finance Department, and State Administration for Industry and Commerce distribution of 'Several opinions on the democratic parties specialist professional organs for consultancy services'] (November 4, 1986), *Selected united front policies*, pp.76-78.

<sup>64</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.82.

<sup>65</sup> *Shanghai zhengxiebao*, December, 13, 1985, p.1. In 1983 Hu Zi'ang claimed that the ACFIC and NCA had in the four years between 1979 and 1983 started 3,344 collective enterprises providing jobs for 90,000 unemployed and making profits of 32 million RMB. "Leading industrialist claims a "golden age" for businessmen," SWB, FE/7488 B11/13-14.

An early example of an important consultancy project was the Democratic League's assistance in overcoming a major problem in Fujian's Mawei harbour. An expert from the League drew up dredging plans that overcame problems of rapid siltation.<sup>66</sup> The MPGs could also sometimes co-operate as when the NCA utilised Jiusan's scientific expertise.<sup>67</sup> Even local MPG organisations could play a valuable role. The NCA branch of a transport firm had five of its fourteen proposals adopted with savings to the firm of 200,000 yuan a year.<sup>68</sup> Any measures which the MPGs could suggest to make enterprises more efficient and allow them to keep trading or to expand were regarded as invaluable by the UFD and CPPCC.<sup>69</sup>

By 1987, the Democratic League had 105 consultancy organisations which had carried out 3,546 projects involving 3.9 million yuan and 4,376 League members. Profits were distributed among the League's general organisation, foundations for developing the consultancies further, welfare foundations, and a foundation for awards. The League also encouraged the continued use of the talents of retired and semi-retired members for this work.<sup>70</sup> In the case of the NCA, members under forty five years old were even said to be discouraged from joining because they were deemed to lack the experience necessary for consultancy work.<sup>71</sup> The MPG's education, consultancy and aid functions often fused. As early as 1982, the NCA and ACFIC claimed that 20,000 members were involved in consultancy work and in the course of their work had re-organised or helped establish 2,500 collective enterprises employing 83,000 formerly unemployed youth.<sup>72</sup>

### **Attracting Investment Skills and Technology**

An integral dimension of economic development and modernisation was attracting foreign investment, technology and skills. Until 1985, MPG efforts to attract

<sup>66</sup> *Beijing Review*, vol.26, no.45, November 7, 1983, p.25.

<sup>67</sup> *Shanghai zhengxiebao*, September 1, 1984, 2.

<sup>68</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, February 21, 1986, p.2.

<sup>69</sup> As for example, in the case of the Democratic League's provision of advice to a shirt maker experiencing severe technical difficulties, see *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, July 1, 1984, p.1.

<sup>70</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1179-1181.

<sup>71</sup> Seymour, 1987, p.83.

<sup>72</sup> "Former Industrialists and Businessmen as Counsellors," *Beijing Review*, November 11, 1982, p.4.

investment were relatively modest. In mid 1984, the Democratic League mentioned the task of becoming a "bridge paving the way" for investment, for the first time.<sup>73</sup> In late 1984, however, following a special joint UFD-CPPCC conference on united front work in the coastal cities and Special Economic Zones, this emphasis became more pronounced. Party leaders called for more effort to influence and win over wealthy Overseas Chinese.<sup>74</sup>

The MPGs attracted funds from the "three compatriots" (*sanbao*): Hong Kong/Macau, Taiwan, and Overseas Chinese. The links between aiding China's modernisations and the simultaneously promotion of national re-unification had long been understood by united front workers. To foster this work, the overseas networks of MPG members were surveyed and all sorts of relations were invoked to encourage both academic exchanges and economic investment. The UFD encouraged MPG members and others to appeal to the patriotism and the love of ancestral towns of non-Mainland Chinese to re-establish or build new contacts and relationships with them. Furthermore, members were to use their influence to dispel any doubts and suspicions about the CCP harboured by Overseas Chinese.<sup>75</sup>

The Democratic League directed its members to meet compatriots when they visited China, introduce them to economic opportunities and encourage them to invest. In 1986 the League claimed responsibility for attracting 88 projects, 353 million US dollars, 105 million Hong Kong dollars, and 219 million yuan worth of investments. Over two hundred foreign experts went to China as a result of the League's efforts.<sup>76</sup> In addition to CITIC, the best placed of all MPG-linked organisations was the Patriotic Construction Company. Using its many subsidiaries and overseas connections, the company had attracted 4 million American dollars by 1984.<sup>77</sup> This was a considerable achievement at the time.

<sup>73</sup>[National organisation and propaganda work conference] (June 24, 1984), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1058-1060.

<sup>74</sup> Gu Mu, "Chongfen fahui dang wai pengyou zai dui wai kaifang zhong de zuoyong," [Bring fully into play the role of non-Party friends in opening up to the outside] (November 21, 1984), *New era united front documents*, pp.423-428.

<sup>75</sup> Work conference summary report, (February 1981), *DL Historical Documents*, p.843.

<sup>76</sup> DL Standing Committee work report, (December 31 1986), *ibid.*, p.1125.

<sup>77</sup>"Shi Aijian gongsi wei gao huo jingji zuo chu gongxian," [Shanghai's Patriotic Construction Company contributes to enlivening the economy] *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, September 1, 1984, p.1.

The direct economic development aspect of united front work was undoubtedly made far easier by Zhao Ziyang's 1982 pledge to guarantee the investments of Hong Kong businessmen. This gesture marked a dramatic step in boosting China's economic integration with Chinese business outside China's borders.<sup>78</sup> This economic integration also had profound long-term political implications, such as tying Hong Kong's business interests ever closer to Beijing. This activity had major implications for the Colony's return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997.

In 1984, the CPPCC reported that Shanghai's ACFIC and MPGs had attracted 200 million yuan and 260 million US dollars worth of technology and funds.<sup>79</sup> In 1986, Shanghai's 18,000 MPG members were said to have attracted investment in 500 projects which had already been settled or for which contracts were being drawn up: a total investment equivalent to three billion yuan.<sup>80</sup> Shanghai's Zhigong dang alone claimed credit for attracting 100 million American dollars of this investment.<sup>81</sup> Its Shanghai branch was established in 1980, and its efforts, even if perhaps exaggerated, were very impressive.<sup>82</sup> Even in 1984, Shanghai Zhigong's efforts were lauded by the CPPCC.<sup>83</sup> Shanghai's Revolutionary GMD, with its connections to former and current GMD members overseas, was also credited with attracting some 170 million dollars in 1984.<sup>84</sup>

The MPGs' efforts to assist modernisation by attracting foreign expertise were equally as important as economic investments, although their success was difficult to quantify. In 1983 Deng Xiaoping declared that the CCP should enlist foreign educational and technical expertise.<sup>85</sup> Again, the MPGs and ACFIC were urged to use

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<sup>78</sup> Zhao Ziyang guaranteed such investments in a talk with Hong Kong industrialist Hu Yingxiang. "Bu neng rang lai touzi de ren chi kui," [Don't allow those who come and invest lose money] (December 9, 1982), *New era united front documents*, 1985, pp.263-264.

<sup>79</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, October 1, 1984, p.1.

<sup>80</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, December 5, 1986, p.1.

<sup>81</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxie bao*, March 21, 1986, p.2.

<sup>82</sup> In 1985, this Zhigong organisation only had 330 members with 6,200 overseas relatives. The relative wealth and good connections of party members can be judged by the fact that they hosted 3,100 visits and invited 200 scholars and others to visit China. "Shanghai Zhigong dang zuzhi huo kexi chengji," [Shanghai Zhigong dang gets gratifying results], *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, October 18, 1985, p.1.

<sup>83</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, December 4, 1984, p.1.

<sup>84</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, December 4, 1984, p.1.

<sup>85</sup> "Use the Intellectual Resources of Other Countries," (July 8, 1983), in Deng Xiaoping, *Fundamental Issues in Present Day China*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1987), p.22.

their overseas relatives, friends, business and academic connections, to attract such expertise. A Chinese Cultural Exchange Centre was established in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone as part of the Democratic League's efforts to promote contacts.<sup>86</sup> The MPGs invited foreign experts to visit China on academic and friendship exchanges. In 1986, the Shanghai MPGs organised 290 such visits.<sup>87</sup> Nationally the Democratic League welcomed 218 visitors.<sup>88</sup> This formal hosting of influential visitors was used to promote the CCP's united front concept of "one country-two systems." In January 1986, following Britain's signing of the *Sino-British Joint Declaration on the Future of Hong Kong* in December 1985, the CCP carried out a major review of externally directed united front work. The resultant directives called on all united front workers, including MPG members, to do their utmost to promote the Party's re-unification policies.<sup>89</sup>

### **MPG Participation in the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference**

In addition to promoting modernisation, a prominent MPG role was and remains, participation in the National and local People's Congresses, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conferences and appointments to leadership positions at each level of government.

The CCP had endorsed the principles of sharing weal and woe, and agreed to provide a role for the MPGs in the NPC and lower level congresses. However, little is known of the effectiveness of the MPGs and NPPs in these congresses as MPG members in these bodies act as individuals and their MPG membership is not permitted to be acknowledged. As a result of this stipulation, MPG delegates to congresses do not publish any information on how they undertake their congress roles and what, if any, influence they have in them. Reflecting this, Kevin O'Brien's study of the NPC

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<sup>86</sup> DL Standing Committee Work Report, (December 31, 1986), *DL Historical Documents*, p.1125.

<sup>87</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxiebao*, December 5, 1986, p.1.

<sup>88</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.1125.

<sup>89</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang bangongting chuanfa Zhongyang tongzhanbu "Guanyu hai wai tongzhan gongzuo zuotanhui qingkuang de baogao," [Report on the conference on overseas united front work] (April 17, 1986), *Selected united front policies*, pp.14-16.

mentions the congresses' relationship to united front work and a number of important MPG leaders but not in their capacity as MPG leaders.<sup>90</sup> As the embodiment of the people, the congresses nominally wield power on their behalf and have obvious responsibilities. The CCP does not wish for any groups other than itself to be seen as sharing state power and thus MPG contributions in the congresses, if any, are completely subsumed. The national and lower level people's political consultative conferences are the MPG's main forum.

The inclusion of non-Party people in the NPC symbolically legitimates the Party's claim that it is not a one-party dictatorship although this function seems to be of minor importance. Chinese sources rarely refer to MPG participation in the sixth NPC elected in 1983 and MPG sources themselves make little reference to their participation in the people's congress system. Yet Hu Juewen, Xu Deheng, Shi Liang, Zhu Xuefan, Zhou Gucheng, Yan Jici, Hu Yuzhi and Rong Yiren were all elected as vice chairs of the NPC Standing Committee. Other MPG leaders such as Lei Jieqiong, Chu Tu'nan, and Wu Chan (Zhigong) were also represented in the NPC Presidium. This allowed the CCP to claim that the representation in this NPC had been broadened to include representatives from every MPG.<sup>91</sup> Progressive MPG leaders were also selected to NPC committees. Lei Jieqiong and Qian Duansheng (DL) became vice chairs of the Law Committee, and Liu Nianzhi (NCA/ACFIC) was appointed vice chair of the Finance and Economic Committee, (which included Hou Xueyu (DL) and Gu Gengyu (NCA/ACFIC) as ordinary members). Zhou Gucheng was chairman of the Education, Science, Culture, and Public Health Committee; Wu Juetian (Zhigong) was on the Overseas Chinese Committee; Wu Maosun (Revolutionary GMD) and Chu Tu'nan were vice chairs of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Acknowledgment of MPG membership by these leaders was, however, absent from committee name lists. In contrast, however, other relevant and often united front-related memberships, such as Chu Tu'nan's vice-presidency of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with

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<sup>90</sup> Kevin J. O'Brien, *Reform Without Liberalisation: China's National People's Congress and the Politics of Institutional Change*, (Cambridge University Press, New York, 1990).

<sup>91</sup> SWB, FE/7353 C1/3, June 7, 1983.

Foreign Countries, were cited.<sup>92</sup> Perhaps one reason that MPG membership *per sé* is not stressed by the CCP is that only the most trusted progressives and often dual membership holders were given NPC positions. Zhou Gucheng's dual MPG-CCP membership status probably accounts for his appointment to a full and not a vice-chair position. The NPC is then not the place for revealing MPG influence. The changes and expansion in the CPPCC were far more important in indicating the MPG's roles.

The CPPCC underwent significant reforms in 1982-83 when its constitution was revised and its structure re-organised. Constitutional reform began in September 1980, with the inclusion of Deng Xiaoping's instructions on principles and tasks. The new constitution emphasised the CPPCC's united front nature as an advisory body subservient to the NPC. Deng's "four tasks" of restructuring of the state organisation and economy, the creation of a socialist spiritual civilisation, combating of anti-socialist and economic crimes, and rectification of the Party, were all to be incorporated. While democratic supervision was a major part of the CPPCC's tasks, Liu Lantao emphasised that the

.. kind of supervision exercised by the CPPCC is a kind of democratic supervision which is not of the nature of state power and therefore does not have that binding force. ... The basic form of the CPPCC's democratic supervision is making suggestions and criticisms.<sup>93</sup>

Furthermore, together with four basic principles, the new constitution enshrined the need for political study and reinforced democratic centralism.<sup>94</sup> Once again reform measures constituted an attempt to increase control. The CPPCC's re-organisation was to conform with the CCP's demand that it become more streamlined, its cadres younger, more educated, and professional. Reform also included increasing the MPG's representation.<sup>95</sup>

In late April 1983, when speaking to the CPPCC Standing Committee, the UFD head, Yang Jingren, announced another major reversion to pre-1966 united front policies. Communist Party representation in the sixth CPPCC was to be reduced from

<sup>92</sup>"Special Committees of the Sixth NPC," SWB, FE/7354 C1/5-6, June 8, 1983.

<sup>93</sup>"Liu Lantao's explanation of the revised CPPCC constitution," SWB, FE/7196/b11/1-4. The CPPCC's constitutional revision committee included Zhu Yunshan, Shi Liang, and Hu Juewen as its vice-chairs.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, pp.4-5.

<sup>95</sup> SWB, FE/7196 B11/1-9, November 30, 1982.

sixty to forty percent. Yang announced that Party Central Committee, Advisory Commission, and Discipline Committee members were no longer to be elected to the CPPCC National Committee although other CCP leaders would remain. He claimed that this move was specifically to allow more MPG and other non-Party appointments to the committee.<sup>96</sup> The number of non-Party representatives would increase significantly. At the same time, CPPCC membership was increased from 1,560 in 1982 to 1,794 for the sixth plenum of 1983. This was another step towards a return to a traditional united front three-thirds system. Representation was as follows:

Revolutionary GMD	50
Democratic League	50
National Construction Association	50
APD	25
Peasants and Workers Party	25
Zhigong dang	12
Jiusan	25
Taiwan Self Government League	12

Minor party members constituted 14 percent of committee members. If the ACFIC's 50 delegates are included in the CPPCC's MPG members, then the percentage of MPG representation rose to 16 percent.<sup>97</sup> A major UFD objective in 1983 was to have more and younger intellectuals in the consultative system and the increase in their representation was at the expense of the vast bulk of China's population: the peasants and workers.<sup>98</sup> Although MPG numbers were relatively small, they had an increasingly disproportionate presence in the higher levels of the CPPCC. Of the 29 members of the CPPCC Standing Committee eleven were MPG leaders.<sup>99</sup> Other members including CASS committee members Qian Linzhao, Miao Yuntai (VES), and Zhou Shutao (ACFIC), also had close relations with the MPGs. Minor party members constituted one third of Standing Committee members although the dual-party status of some members rendered this statistic much less meaningful.

<sup>96</sup> SWB, FE/7321 B11/16, April 30, 1983.

<sup>97</sup> *UFE*, pp.407-417.

<sup>98</sup> Jia Tieyan, *et al*, 1991, p.92.

<sup>99</sup> Zhuang Xiquan (DL/CCP), Ji Fang (PWP/CCP), Hu Zi'ang (NCA), Wang Kunlun (Rev GMD/CCP), Fei Xiaotong (DL) Zhou Jianren (APD), Zhao Puchu (APD), Wang Guangying (NCA/ACFIC), Qu Wu (Rev GMD/CCP), Zhou Yuanpei (Jiusan/CCP), and Ye Shengtao (APD).

With Deng Yingchao as its chair, the CPPCC established numerous committees including (the names of MPG members are included if they were appointed as chairs of the relevant committee):

Study Committee (Fei Xiaotong, DL)  
 Cultural and Historical Data Research Committee  
 Proposals Handling Committee  
 Group for the Re-unification of the Motherland (Qu Wu, Rev. GMD/CCP)  
 Group for Economic Construction (Sun Yueqi, Rev. GMD)  
 Agriculture Group  
 Science and Technology Group  
 Culture Group  
 Education Group (Dong Chuncai, APD)  
 Health and Medical group (Shen Qizhen, CCP/PWP)  
 Sports Group  
 Foreign Affairs Group  
 Legal Affairs Group  
 Women Affairs Group  
 Nationalities Affairs Group  
 Religious Affairs (Zhao Puchu, APD)  
 Overseas Chinese Group (Zhuang Mingli, DL)  
 Group for the Study of International Affairs<sup>100</sup>

Many of the vice chairmen and members of these committees were also MPG members.

The expansion of the CPPCC, the increased representation of intellectuals, and the expansion of committees, demonstrated that the CCP intended to increase the CPPCC's effectiveness and support its supervisory and consultative functions. This emphasis on uniting with intellectuals, working with non-party intellectuals and increasing the role of the MPGs was a major CCP principle for the new CPPCC. When Liu Lantao called the CPPCC a symbol of national unity, it was clear that both he and the CCP saw it as a symbol of the CCP's unity with intellectuals rather than with other major targets of united front work such as religious believers and ethnic minorities, let alone workers and peasants. Liu stressed the need for expertise in carrying out CPPCC functions. In particular, Liu emphasised the role of the MPGs as forces upon which the CPPCC could rely. In return, the CPPCC was to help MPG development "as much as possible."<sup>101</sup> This development would in itself assist the CPPCC to carry out its increasing number of functions.

<sup>100</sup> "CPPCC Meeting," SWB, FE/7425/B11/3-5. This official release did not mention MPG membership.

<sup>101</sup> Liu Lantao, "Zhengque zongjie jingyan, quanmian kaichuang Renmin zhengxie gongzuo de xin jumian," [Accurately sum up experience, fully initiate the CPPCC's new phase] in *New era united front documents*, pp.323-335.

## Investigations, Consultation, and Overseeing the Implementation of Party and Government Policy

The changes to the CPPCC made it easier to carry out its tasks of consultation, inspection, research, and review of government policy and practice. One of its first consultative functions was to discuss the name lists for the NPC.<sup>102</sup> Between 1978 and 1983 the national CPPCC carried out almost thirty specialist investigations. In particular, the CPPCC investigated the implementation of policies directed towards intellectuals and united front work. This work touched on such issues as the protection of cultural relics, economic construction, culture, education, juvenile crime, the implementation of policies towards nationalities, religious believers, Taiwanese, Hong Kong, Macau, Overseas Chinese, mainland relatives visiting Taiwan, and former GMD members who took part in uprisings.<sup>103</sup>

There are significant difficulties in attempting to assess the effectiveness of the CPPCC's work because of the indirect manner in which it operates. The nature of its internal debates are known only to insiders. Nevertheless it is clear that many matters raised are not resolved. For example, Hu Zi'ang reported that in 1982, the CPPCC received 14,000 letters "and it has properly resolved the problems reflected by *some* letters." Of the 800 motions raised by members, "most" had "been processed by the departments concerned."<sup>104</sup> It is by no means clear how satisfactory this processing by departments was and the CPPCC had no means by which to enforce action except to raise unresolved issues again.

Under the aegis of the CPPCC and the UFD, the Democratic League, as experts on education, continued to present reports and suggestions on educational system reform to the CCP.<sup>105</sup> The Association for the Promotion of Democracy submitted material on education reform; reports on the implementation of CCP policies towards

<sup>102</sup> "Hu Zi'ang's work report," SWB FE/7196 B11/6.

<sup>103</sup> Liu Lantao, in *New Era United Front Documents*, p.333.

<sup>104</sup> "Hu Zi'ang work report," SWB FE/7196 B11/8. (emphasis added)

<sup>105</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng hanbao Zhonggong zhongyang shuji chu 'Guanyu gaodeng jiaoyu gaige de ji ge jianyi,' 'Guanyu chengshi putong jiaoyu gaige de jianyi'" [The Secretariat of the CDL's "Several suggestions on the reform of higher education," "Suggestions of reform of ordinary education in cities] (January 16, 1985), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1075-1085.

intellectuals;<sup>106</sup> and proposals for the publishing industry.<sup>107</sup> The NCA and the ACFIC put forward proposals for the revival of China's traditional foodstuffs industry, the past neglect of which was blamed on leftism. With enormous potentially national and international demand for such products, these proposals were economically important measures and earned high praise from Zhao Ziyang.<sup>108</sup>

### **The Expansion of Political participation**

The numbers of MPG members involved in the NPC and lower level people's congresses, the CPPCC, and the government is difficult to judge. As an indication of the problems of determining under which 'hat' a CPPCC or NPC delegate is being counted, one Democratic League member reported that he had, at different times and depending on the need at the time, been counted by the CCP as an intellectual non-Party personage, an MPG member and, on other occasions, as a representative of an ethnic minority<sup>109</sup> In December 1983, Fei Xiaotong reported that the Democratic League had a total of 1,965 representatives in people's congresses at all levels. Of these members, 134 were chairs or vice-chairs of standing committees. There were 4,326 League members in the CPPCC at all levels, 273 of whom held chair or vice-chair positions.<sup>110</sup> On the surface this meant that the 36,300 members had a seventeen percent chance of gaining a position, far better odds than the CCP.

While fifty delegates of the Revolutionary GMD attended the Sixth CPPCC in the name of the party, it claimed a total of one hundred and nine members attending under various other designations.<sup>111</sup> In 1983, the Revolutionary GMD also had fifty members elected to the NPC but they were not listed as such. Zhu Xuefan was made

<sup>106</sup> For example, "Guanyu gaige shifan jiaoyu de jianyi," [On suggestions for reform of teacher education], "Guanyu jinyibu luoshi zhishi fenzi zhengce jixu zuo hao zhishi fenzi gongzuo de ji dian jianyi," [Several opinions on continuing to gradually implement policies for intellectuals and doing work with intellectuals well] (November 1984), Jiao Xiangying, 1990, pp.353-360.

<sup>107</sup> "Minjin zhongyang dui chubanshe gongzuo de jianyi," [APD Central Committee proposals for publishing work]. Lei Jieqiong, "Work report to the fifth NPC] (November 9, 1983), *ibid.*, p.325.

<sup>108</sup> Zhao Ziyang, "Zhichi Minjian hui, Gongshanglian de jianyi, huifu chuantong shiping," [Support the NCA/ACFIC proposal to revive traditional foodstuffs] (June 19, 1983), *New era united front documents*, pp.344-345.

<sup>109</sup> Duan Muzheng, "Lun tigao renmin daibiao de suzhi," [A discussion on raising the quality of people's congress representatives], *Qunyan*, 1989, no.9, p.13.

<sup>110</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.985.

<sup>111</sup> Xu Rihui, 1987, p.151.

vice chairman of the NPC Standing Committee while Wu Maosun and Pei Changhui were made Committee members. The Revolutionary GMD had twenty seven members elected to the CPPCC standing Committee.<sup>112</sup> At the same time, the APD had "more than 1000 members" in the CPPCC at all levels.<sup>113</sup>

These issues of multiple representation, of people holding positions in both the NPC and CPPCC and at various levels, and MPG members attending under different designations make it difficult to determine MPG representation. Any simultaneous MPG-CCP membership is even harder to determine as this is rarely acknowledged except sometimes posthumously.

One aspect of representation which was not well developed in the early 1980s, despite Hu Yaobang's plans, was MPG participation in government. In 1983, the Democratic League could only claim a total of 42 members in government leadership positions at all levels.<sup>114</sup> The lack of any figures on such representation for 1985 and 1986 indicates that Hu's target of 5,000 non-Party appointments was still far from being met.

### **The CCP Rectification Campaign**

In 1983 the CCP launched another rectification campaign to arrest and reverse a decline in Party discipline.<sup>115</sup> This rectification and consolidation campaign, like that of 1956-57, included soliciting non-Party criticisms of the Party. The Party Central Committee called on Party committees at all levels to provide channels for facilitating external criticism. Once again, the CCP declared that:

Heeding to (sic) the opinions of non-Party people is an important aspect of following the Party's mass line in Party consolidation and a concrete manifestation of the Party's close links with masses; in localities departments and units where there are democratic parties and non-Party figures and patriots, discussions should be sponsored with Party leaders in the chair to enable the voicing of opinions and suggestions on Party consolidation, and this should become a regular practice during the whole Party consolidation period.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, p.151.

<sup>113</sup> Lei Jieqiong, "Work report to the fifth NPC," (November 9, 1983), Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.325.

<sup>114</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.985.

<sup>115</sup> Hsi-Sheng Ch'i, "Disciplinary problems and the CCP's Rectification campaign," in Falkenheim, 1989, pp.139-164.

<sup>116</sup> "CCP circular on opinions of non-Party people," SWB/FE7503 B11/1, November 29, 1983.

The CCP was well aware of the connotations of the phrase “Party rectification” and its potential to destroy the united front work of the previous years. The Party therefore explicitly ruled out the possibility of rectification being extended to the MPGs.<sup>117</sup> In the event, MPG contributions to this rectification campaign appear to have been negligible. Possibly reflecting the topic’s sensitivity and the need for great caution, such contributions are rarely mentioned in UFD and MPG related literature. Lei Jieqiong’s (APD) declaration that “the democratic parties can supervise the CCP but the CCP must supervise the democratic parties more” reflected clearly the MPG’s caution.<sup>118</sup>

Supervision of the CCP at all levels by the MPGs was fraught with danger for them. Mindful of the lessons of 1957, the MPGs could not be sure that Party policy would not suddenly change even if this was unlikely without Mao as leader. After all, in 1957, the MPGs had had both Mao’s encouragement and the UFD’s full support in the person of Li Weihan, but neither factor had saved them when Mao’s attitude suddenly changed. The MPGs were also dependent on Party organisations for support, financial and otherwise. It was therefore potentially disastrous to offend Party committees. There is no evidence that the MPGs offended the CCP in 1983-1984 and the Party’s rectification campaign was not followed by a purge of the MPGs.

### **The Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign**

The MPGs’ fear of being included in the rectification campaign had induced passivity because of the association of rectification with the CCP’s earlier anti-intellectual movements. Not surprisingly then, the first major post-Mao campaign targeting intellectuals, the anti-spiritual pollution (*fan jingshen wuran*) campaign, had a similar effect. In November 1983, Peng Zhen addressed a meeting of 270 non-Party and MPG figures to discuss the anti-spiritual pollution and the related Party rectification campaigns. While Peng affirmed that the rectification would be confined solely to the CCP and not the MPGs, the CCP’s Deng Liqun detailed manifestations of so-called spiritual pollution amongst those engaged in theoretical, ideological and

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<sup>117</sup> SWB/FE7503 B11/2.

<sup>118</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.335.

artistic work.<sup>119</sup> This spiritual pollution and its closely related evil, bourgeois liberalisation (*zichan jieji ziyouhua*), have been defined by the CCP as beliefs in excessive and unchecked freedoms that undermine the four basic principles.<sup>120</sup> For the CCP, an ideological battle against spiritual pollution was “an urgent task.” Nevertheless, the Party reassured the MPGs that this problem occurred in the thinking of Party members, cadres and the people generally. Spiritual pollution was defined as a contradiction among the people and it was therefore to be solved through the use of study, criticism and self-criticism.<sup>121</sup> The process of eliminating this problem was to proceed according to clear guidelines and one obvious place for carrying on the battle among united front targets was the Institute of Socialism.

### **The Revival of the Institutes of Socialism**

Despite the changes in united front work since 1976, political education remained an inescapable aspect of MPG membership. The threat of spiritual pollution and bourgeois liberalisation required a formalisation of the existing *ad hoc* MPG political education in CCP Party schools or in-house.<sup>122</sup> The Institutes of Socialism were therefore revived as the principal institutions for this education. This resurgence could be traced to a confluence of several factors, including the CCP's belief in the need for political education as a means of control. More significantly for united front work, it was also a recognition of the need to make MPG members, non-Party personages and UFD cadres more professional in their work.

In late 1982, Hu Zi'ang revealed that a preparatory committee for the re-establishment of the IoS had already been created.<sup>123</sup> As with the 1950s case of Ma Yinchu, the announcement of this political indoctrination measure came first from an ostensibly non-Party source. The re-establishment of the IoS was clearly in line with the CPPCC's long standing role as the united front's political educator. It also reflected

<sup>119</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, pp.401-402.

<sup>120</sup> Merle Goldman, "The Intellectuals in the Deng Era," in Michael Y. M. Kau and Susan H. Marsh (eds), *China in the Era of Deng Xiaoping: A Decade of Reform*, (ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1993), p.304.

<sup>121</sup> "Zhongguo gongchang dang zhongyang weiyuanhui zhi Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng di wu ci quanguo daibiao da hui de zhuci," [The CCP CC's words of congratulations to the DL's fifth national congress] (September 14, 1983), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.998-1000.

<sup>122</sup> Jiao Xiangying, 1990, p.327.

<sup>123</sup> "Hu Zi'ang's report...", SWB FE/7196/B11/5, November 30, 1982.

the need to cope with both the expansion in united front work and the growth of MPG membership before the work and the members became influenced by attitudes the CCP found unacceptable, such as bourgeois liberalism.

In August 1983, MPG goals and political education were outlined in the UFD's "Instructions on the revival of provincial, municipal and autonomous region political schools."<sup>124</sup> As in the 1950s, day-to-day operations were to be managed by the CPPCC. Allies were to study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought, CCP policies and principles.<sup>125</sup> Although the form and intensity of this education was not initially clear, Li Weihang noted that some cadres felt that principles of unity-struggle and unity-criticism were now inappropriate, especially when taking into account united front work aimed at Hong Kong. However, Li saw no antagonism between upholding the principle of unity and struggle and the unity-criticism-unity formula.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, without addressing why, Li revealed that many CCP members and cadres were no longer capable of applying these principles.<sup>127</sup>

As part of the CCP's passive revolutionary measures, the revived Institutes of Socialism differed significantly from their mid-1950s predecessors. The latter had, as part of the CCP's war of position strategy, sought total ideological transformation of its charges. In the 1980s, the invoking of Mao's 1956 declaration that the elimination of classes had been basically achieved meant that there was no longer a need for the use of brainwashing. In any event, these methods had proved counter-productive. The revived institutes were to concentrate on inculcating the CCP's ideological line, especially the four cardinal principles, and teaching students the content of prevailing Party and government policy. However, in another major change, the institutes began training and raising the professional standards of non-Party cadres, particularly those

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124 "CCP CC Zhonggong zhongyang bangongting chuanfa Zhongyang tong-zhanbu 'Guanyu hui fu ge sheng, shi, zizhi qu zhengzhi xuexiao di qingshi, 58 hao,'" [The Office of the Central Committee of the CCP distribution of the Central UFD "Concerning request for instructions on the revival of political schools in all provinces, cities, and self-governing regions, Number 58"] (August 8, 1983), *Selected united front policies*, pp.8-9.

125 *ibid.*

126 Li Weihang, "Zai shi sheng, shi, zizhi qu tongzhan lilun zuotanhui shang de jiang hua yaodian," [Important points from a speech to ten provincial, municipal and autonomous region united front theory associations] (April 14, 1983), Ren Tao, 1988, p.548.

127 *ibid.*, 1988, p.549.

who met the needs of the four modernisations. Cadres from the UFD itself were not only to teach at the institutes, they were also to be taught there. In a move designed to emphasise the improved status and trustworthiness of its united front allies, non-Party people were to be appointed to important IoS positions.<sup>128</sup> It became possible for non-Party people to teach UFD members about united front theory and practice.

The institutes also became centres for the United Front Theory Research Associations and co-ordinators of research into the history and practice of united front work. The institutes acted as intermediaries linking the UFD, the CPPCC with and relevant united front researchers including MPG members and academics such as CASS members. The changes to the IoS system revealed the dramatic change in the CCP's ability to make demands of MPG members since the 1950s. Now reliant on a strategy of passive revolution, the CCP's means for achieving the acceptance and assimilation of its positions and ideology were now based more on active consent rather than passivity induced by coercion. The promised reward remained the same: prestigious positions in representative bodies and possibly government leadership appointments.

### **MPG Problems**

Official leadership appointments had the potential to reflect the MPG's representativeness, skills, knowledge, and talent. Yet the MPGs faced many internal problems which inhibited their effectiveness. Shortly after the CCP allowed the MPGs to begin to grow, for example, the Democratic League's Chu Tu'nan declared that recruitment was going too fast for the organisation to cope with and called for the pace to be slowed down. Chu revealed that the League was encountering growing pains. Without detailing underlying causes, he listed tensions between new and old members, new and older cadres, members and cadres, between old members, and between cadres with responsibility and those without.<sup>129</sup> Much of this tension was almost certainly due to the friction between new members and rehabilitated Rightists on the one hand and the older, "progressive" core on the other. It is unlikely that CCP favouritism towards

<sup>128</sup> *Selected united front policies*, pp.8-9.

<sup>129</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng fuzhuxi Chu Tu'nan zai Minmeng quan-guo zuzhi xuanchuan gongzuo huiyi de jianghua," [League vice-chairman Chu Tu'nan's speech to the Leagues' national conference on organisation and propaganda work] (June 12, 1984), *DL Historical Documents*, p.1044.

dual members and progressives would be quickly eliminated or that resentment towards them by the now rehabilitated Rightists would dissipate soon. Moreover, many progressives are likely to have remained ideologically hostile to those to their right and therefore manifested the very leftism the CCP criticised as hindering united front work. Many UFD cadres were, after all, still being accused of maintaining "leftist" attitudes of exclusion.<sup>130</sup>

By 1984, 15 percent of the League's 2,683 branches and small groups were described by Chu Tu'nán as not working well, and 45 percent as "ordinary." Only 40 percent of branches were described as working well.<sup>131</sup> This dysfunction was partly attributed to growth out-stripping consolidation; cadre training was too slow; ideological work was inadequate and, perhaps even more importantly, too little was known about the attitudes of many of the new members.<sup>132</sup> Chu therefore called for surveys of the members and more experienced cadres to help run the League.<sup>133</sup> For MPG members, however, a more pertinent problem was a feeling among them that joining the League did not result in any meaningful reward.<sup>134</sup> Even League cadres felt undervalued and Chu needed to reassure them that they were not "third grade" (ie second rate) cadres.<sup>135</sup>

Thus while the CCP was proud of its re-building of the united front, problems similar to the complaints of the Hundred Flowers era had also emerged. League members discovered that despite their status as experts, there was often little for them to do and again they were without positions, responsibility or power. Access to necessary materials was also frequently denied. These problems persisted despite long-standing CCP Central Committee directions intended to remedy both.<sup>136</sup> In August 1983, speaking to MPG members in Qinghai and Gansu, Hu Yaobang acknowledged these

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<sup>130</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *ibid.*, pp.1053-1054.

<sup>132</sup> *ibid.*, p.1048.

<sup>133</sup> *ibid.*, p.1054.

<sup>134</sup> *ibid.*, pp.1053-1054.

<sup>135</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> "Zhonggong bangongting guanyu Dang wai renshi qian fa yue ban mima dianbao the tongzhi," [CCP CC Office notice on non-Party personages signing and reading encoded telegrams] (April 27, 1980), *Selected united front policies*, p.11. "Zhonggong bangongting guanyu danren lingdao zhiwu de Dang wai renshi yuedu wenjian ziliao wenti de tongzhi," [CCP CC Office notice on the issue of non-Party personages holding leadership positions reading documents and materials] (June 13, 1980), *ibid.*, p.12.

problems publicly. Hu pointed out that unity required non-Party friends, who understood current events, to be given real work. These friends wanted things to do and access to relevant Party and government documents. "We should make proper arrangements for them" said Hu.<sup>137</sup> His remarks came only a day after *Renmin ribao* had admitted that there were many problems in the proper implementation of united front work. Once again the blame was simplistically attributed to "leftist influences."<sup>138</sup> Neither Hu nor the Party seemed capable of finding acceptable means and resources to overcome these problems.

### Conclusion

By 1985-86 the MPGs had grown substantially and contributed in a very real way to training more intellectuals for the Party-state. The MPGs' status was now officially confirmed. This recognition was to a great extent symbolic but it did persuade many intellectuals and former bourgeoisie that there was again a respected place for them under socialism.

The MPGs were utilised by the CCP to pass on their skills and knowledge to a new generation. They provided the CCP with information on issues relevant to their areas of functional specialisation. The MPGs helped reduce in a small but significant way, pockets of poverty and unemployment.

The particular salience of production to corporatism had become obvious as the Party privileged members of the NCA and the ACFIC, particularly those who benefited materially when their long withheld interest payments were finally passed onto them. The linking of ACFIC and NCA members to new private and state businesses (notably CITIC), also laid the basis for the development of a complex mix of state and private ownership, the future ramifications of which were far from clear.

Nevertheless, there were problems with MPG related united front work and MPG membership did not seem to reward many for their efforts. In the case of the Democratic League and presumably in other MPGs also, tensions between the members

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<sup>137</sup> "Hu Yaobang expounds on tasks for non-Party figures," SWB/FE/7422 B11/9, August 26, 1983.

<sup>138</sup> Li Gui, "Continue to grasp firmly the implementation of various united front policies," *Renmin ribao*, August 19, 1983. SWB/FE/7422/B11/7-8.

and established leadership remained. Once again these problems of internal friction had implications for the process of intermediation. Constitutionally restricting MPG debates within the confines of the four basic principles compounded the problem of providing independent advice to the CCP. However, perhaps balancing these problems was the fact that the direction of the CCP's reform policies was in accord with those once advocated by the MPGs' right-wing members and third roaders.

The jealousy of many CCP members, protective of their own power, continued to prevent MPGs gaining government positions and excluded them from authority and power. Despite its stated support for united front work, the CCP leadership was still unwilling to give even the most reliable MPG leaders prominent government positions. The degree of representation of non-Party people in political forums had undoubtedly increased and the CCP had access to a wider range of advisers. However, almost all of this representation was in the CPPCC, which, regardless of its symbolic importance and the quality of representation, remained powerless. It had taken a major crisis to achieve even this level of non-Party representation. A degree of constitutional recognition for the united front promised much. Nevertheless, the CCP's promise to the MPGs which has implicit in its re-affirmation of MPG independence, freedom and legal equality, remained an empty one. The Party ensured the political reliability of MPG leaderships, controlled their memberships, and directed their activities. Yet, as will be shown in subsequent chapters, when faced once again with crises between 1986 and 1989, the CCP once more promised an increased democracy of more representation and greater power and influence for the MPGs and NPPs within the united front framework.

*Chapter 9***Zhao Ziyang, Political Reform and United Front Work: 1986-1989**

By the mid-1980s, the economic reforms which were such a prominent aspect of the CCP's post-Mao passive revolutionary strategy had given rise to several side effects. One consequence was an increasing social pluralisation as various groups emerged to take advantage of new economic opportunities. These new groups had somehow to be accommodated within the existing political system lest they develop autonomy and evolve into a potential threat. While the living standards of these new groups rose, inflation and corruption, the negative consequences of the reforms, made life much more difficult for some others. An important consequence of these changes was urban discontent manifested as student demonstrations. As in many earlier periods, these protests had immediate and practical grievances at their core but soon evolved into calls for democracy. The CCP's ability to manage the transition from Maoism was thrown into question.

The period between 1985 and the events of April-June 1989 marked the Party's recognition of the need to address these inter-related social, economic, and political problems. Its response consisted of the development of a new political theory that justified the reform process and permitted complementary policy modifications. These changes included expanding the united front to incorporate the new socio-economic groups, and moves towards substantial political reform to pre-empt calls for more democracy. These responses were essentially an intensification of policies implemented since 1976, policies which, in turn, had precedents in the early 1950s and the Second Hundred Flowers period.

The political reforms proposed by Zhao Ziyang in 1987 as part of the Theory of the Initial Stage of Socialism, had the potential to benefit the MPGs greatly. But while these changes were a form of liberalisation that would permit a greater degree of participation in the political system, they were not aimed at establishing in any way a Western-style democracy. Rather, they were a passive revolutionary expansion of the united front system, to provide broader representation of the intelligentsia and technical

intellectuals, and the theoretical justification for the co-option and legitimisation of the new social groups.

In tracing the background of some of those involved in the debate over how China's political system should be reformed, this chapter demonstrates how, rather than a simple dichotomy between Party 'conservatives' and 'liberals' over the issue of political reform, the united front aspects of the proposed reforms resonated positively with several factions, including the more radical of the CCP reformers and the MPGs. The radical proponents of reform within the Party found valuable support for their cause in united front circles and they used these circles and the media access provided by them to promote political reform. The case of the *World Economic Herald*, a prominent radical mouthpiece, exemplified these connections. Not only did the MPGs sympathise with these Party radicals, they had similar elitist and technocratic inclinations.

Formal recognition of the new socio-economic groups created by economic reform and the cooption of them in corporatist structures within the united front began in this period. These measures increased the legitimacy of these groups and undermined any potential need and justification by them to circumvent or oppose the state. This chapter traces how the CCP altered the relationship between the National Construction Association and the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce and created a new organisation for individual entrepreneurs. The Party also initiated a policy of creating complementary intermediary organisations to complement peak bodies, such as the NCA and the ACFIC.

However, unlike 1957, when criticism was directed towards the Party from outside and from the MPGs in particular, in the late 1980s radicals from within the CCP became well known for advocating radical political reforms. These reform proposals were often along the lines earlier proposed by the MPGs. The MPG debate about political reform has been largely overlooked. As a case-study, this chapter also examines the debate over the Three Gorges Dam Project to highlight the influence of MPG expertise. At the same time, this debate over the dam revealed some of the limits of the MPGs as organisations of experts.

### Social Unrest: The Side-effects of Economic Reform

One of the negative results of the Party's economic reforms was an increasing economic distress for many. Rising inflation led to a decline in the living standards of some urban residents, particularly those on fixed incomes, such as teachers and state employees. By 1987-1989, general inflation exceeded thirty percent while food prices rose at forty to fifty percent. Compounding these problems was the corruption rampant among Party cadres and their families.<sup>1</sup> In April 1988, the Democratic League's Qian Jiaju reported to the CPPCC in Beijing that problems within the education system and inflation were generating serious discontent among many groups.<sup>2</sup> Using a League report containing an extensive survey into the problems facing intellectuals, Qian highlighted the decline in their wages and living standards: 81 percent of respondents reported standard of living difficulties, housing shortages affected 88 percent of households, 27 percent of which were in serious difficulty. More than half of those surveyed had less than four square metres of living space per person while health and inadequate medical care were serious problems. Work allocations and job classifications were also major sources of dissatisfaction. For example, 80 percent of respondents regarded their classifications as unfair.<sup>3</sup> These problems created a need for second jobs by many intellectuals and MPG members.<sup>4</sup> *Tuanjie bao* called for a new compensatory system of subsidies to resolve some of these problems.<sup>5</sup> Inflation compounded the neglect of education and teacher housing. The Democratic League stated that China's investment in education was only one third that of Japan's and, not surprisingly, reported a declining interest in teaching.<sup>6</sup> These issues were also directly relevant to the many university students who would be allocated jobs as teachers.

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<sup>1</sup> Chu-yuan Cheng, *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre: Social Political and Economic Ferment in China*, (Westview Press, Boulder, 1990), p.3.

<sup>2</sup> "Guanyu wujia, jiaoyu, shehui fengqi wenti," [On the question of prices, education, and the social atmosphere], *Qunyan*, no.5, May, 1988, p.10.

<sup>3</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng xiang Zhonggong shuji chu zhi song, 'Guanyu dangqian zhishi fenzi qingkuang de baogao,'" [DL to CCP Central Committee Secretariat "Report on the present situation of intellectuals"] (September 18, 1987), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1183-1188. The League also investigated the specific issue of work classifications in May 1988. *ibid.*, pp.1253-1257.

<sup>4</sup> *Tuanjie bao*, (TJB), August 2, 1988, p.1.

<sup>5</sup> *TJB*, January 30, 1988, p.1.

<sup>6</sup> *TJB*, October 18, 1988, p.1.

Yet neither these employed intellectuals, nor the MPGs on their behalf, took to the streets to protest their plight. It was the students who manifested the growing discontent publicly. On September 12 1985, students at Beijing University attacked the attendance of the Japanese prime minister at Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine. The shrine honours Japan's wartime dead, many of whom were war criminals. Students from other universities responded quickly to demands for a "national humiliation day" to mark the Japanese invasion of China. Posters appeared calling for the overthrow of "Japanese imperialism." However, as with many earlier protests, specific complaints were soon joined by more general ones calling for more democracy and an end to dictatorship. Over 1,000 students marched to Tian'anmen Square but were quickly dispersed. Similar scenes were repeated in Xi'an. The possibility of more protests in December were forestalled when senior Party leaders met with students, promised improved student living conditions, pre-emptive official commemorations of the December 9 Incident, and appointed a student delegation to investigate claims of waste at the Baoshan steelworks.<sup>7</sup>

A year later, on December 5 1986, students in the Anhui capital of Hefei again demonstrated in anticipation of the December 9 Incident. This unrest spread rapidly to 150 campuses in seventeen other cities. This time, the students' demands coincided with the holding of people's congress elections in both Hefei and Wuhan where student's discontent with the electoral process encouraged protest. Initially, however, most of the students' concerns related to the rising cost of university tuition and high food prices.<sup>8</sup> Between December 19 and 22, over 70,000 people demonstrated in Shanghai. Several of the students' banners called for the overthrow of the CCP. The *Dagong bao* covered the demonstrations and cited student demands for "speedier democratic reforms, greater press freedom, recognition that their protests were lawful, and for a guarantee of their personal safety." The mayor of Shanghai, Jiang Zemin, met with students and agreed to all but their first two demands. On New Year's Day, thousands of students in Beijing rallied in Tiananmen Square. A group of some 300

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<sup>7</sup> Cheng, 1990, pp.91-92.

<sup>8</sup> Julia Kwong, "The 1986 Student Demonstrations in China: A Democratic Movement?" *Asian Survey*, vol.28, no.9, September 1988, pp.970-985.

students penetrated police lines and held up banners calling for democracy, freedom of the press, and reform.<sup>9</sup> The students' immediate demands were rejected but in January 1987, their protests had the effect of forcing the resignation of the reform-inclined Hu Yaobang as Party General Secretary.

Not all urban groups were suffering. New socio-economic groups had emerged and prospered as a result of the economic opportunities provided by the reforms. By the mid 1980s, there was the growing recognition of this phenomena by those involved in united front work. This recognition was qualitatively different from earlier statements that united front work in the New Era was richer in targets and broader in scope than in the pre-1957 period. These early pronouncements had merely reflected the targeting of non-Mainland Chinese by the UFD as it actively sought foreign investment in a manner which would have been inconceivable under Mao. The reforms of the late 1970s, including allowing foreign investment, released the economic initiative of tens of thousands of individuals and households that had been fully or partly dependent on state and/or co-operative enterprises. These *getihu*, individual and household entrepreneurs, had gradually become an important part of the economy and increasingly common parts of the social landscape. As a textbook on the psychology of united front work noted, reform was creating a more complex set of social contradictions.<sup>10</sup> Means had to be found to resolve them.

### **The CCP's Response: Expansion of the United Front**

The student demonstrations were serious manifestations of dissatisfaction with Party policies among the intelligentsia. Other signs included debates in theoretical circles on the possibility of alienation in a socialist society and a growing apathy towards political education. The emergence of the new socio-economic groups was also a potential problem; their existence in a socialist system had to be justified and they could not be allowed to become hostile to the Party-state. To overcome the intellectuals' expressions of discontent the Party could launch a wave of repression

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<sup>9</sup> Cheng, 1990, pp.92-93.

<sup>10</sup> Liu Ningzhong, 1991, p.12.

such as it had in mid-1957. Alternatively, it could undermine the protesters by solving their underlying material problems and conceding some of their more political demands. Neither a bout of general repression nor a broad attack on China's intellectuals were realistic options. Instead, the Party chose a carefully targeted campaign of repression in the form of an anti-bourgeois liberalisation campaign but counterbalanced this with the intensified use of the historically proven strategy and tactics of passive revolution using the united front.

The anti-bourgeois liberalisation campaign created much apprehension within the MPGs. Its anti-intellectual connotations resonated with the Cultural Revolution, the anti-Rightist, and other Party campaigns.<sup>11</sup> In March 1987, the UFD discussed the MPGs' fears and the Department subsequently issued instructions exempting them from the campaign. Deng Xiaoping himself endorsed the MPGs but also called on them to play their part in this latest ideological struggle.<sup>12</sup> Adopting the Party's lead, articles appeared in united front publications attacking Party radicals targeted by the campaign.<sup>13</sup>

The MPGs and the CPPCC were given the tasks of using their expertise to investigate the threats to social stability. Inflation became an important topic of united front work and the involvement of non-Party people in resolving this problem was used by the UFD as a good example of Chinese socialist democracy at work.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, the Party sought to reassure its allies that it was doing its best to solve the problem.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> In an echo of past united fronts, some of those black-listed and/or expelled by the CCP by the CCP in 1987, included Ge Yang, the editor of *Xin guan cha* (New observer), the modern namesake of Chu Anping's famous journal. The others included Yu Haocheng, Hu Jiwei, Yan Jiaqi, Xu Liangying, Liu Zaifu and Li Hongbin. Su Shaozhi and Wang Ruoshui who were expelled from the CCP, and three of the others were called "five gentlemen." See David Kelly, "The Chinese Student Movement of December 1986 and its Intellectual Ante-cedents," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no.17, January, 1987, p.129.

<sup>12</sup> Ren Tao, 1988, pp.501-502.

<sup>13</sup> For example, attacks on Su Shaozhi's "feudal remnants" argument. *TJB*, April 23, 1988, p.2. For attacks on Fang Lizhi and Wang Ruoshui for allegedly advocating "wholesale Westernisation," see *Lianhe shibao*, January 23, 1987, pp.1-2.

<sup>14</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, April 18, 1986, p.1. For some concrete MPG suggestions see *Lianhe shibao* [United paper] (The organ of the Shanghai Municipal CPPCC, formally *Shanghai zhengxie bao*), July 22, 1988, p.1.

<sup>15</sup> For example, *TJB*, January 23, 1988, p.1.

The new head of the UFD, Yan Mingfu, actively sought MPG and NPP opinions on economic structural reform.<sup>16</sup> Special consultative meetings were held at which MPG leaders, non-Party personages and Party Central Committee leaders discussed questions of wage reform and price control while the economics minister, Yao Yilin, explained CCP policies.<sup>17</sup> At the provincial levels, the MPGs and NPPs, together with CCP and government representatives, were frequently included in the investigation of economics related issues.<sup>18</sup> This participation was, in turn, cited by the Party as examples of real participation in government by non-Party people.<sup>19</sup>

Expanding the united front and, in particular, the MPGs would allow a greater use of non-Party experts in the investigation and resolution of the Party's social, economic, and political problems, thereby allowing the CCP to claim that its policy making was more scientific and more democratic. Such expansion might also fulfil the demands for more democracy. Moreover, democracy in a united front context had theoretical and historical precedents which served to make it more acceptable within the Party. There was the apparent 'golden age' of New Democracy, a time of both rapid economic growth and one when the CCP had been seen to share power.

The Sixteenth National United Front Work Conference of November-December 1986 was the first such conference since 1981. The major issues of the conference were the development of the system of multi-party co-operation and the promotion of national re-unification.<sup>20</sup> Signalling an increased openness, representatives of the MPGs and mass-organisations were permitted to attend as observers for the first time since the early 1950s. The Peasant's and Worker's Party leader, Zhou Gucheng, even delivered a speech. The attendance of the Party's highest and most reformist inclined leaders, Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, and Zhao Ziyang, further reinforced the importance of the occasion.

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<sup>16</sup> *TJB*, August 27, 1988, p.1.

<sup>17</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1990, p.454.

<sup>18</sup> *TJB*, October 25, 1988, p.1.

<sup>19</sup> *TJB*, March 28, 1989, p.1. *TJB*, April 25, 1989, p.1. Eight of the fifteen members of this special investigatory group were MPGs and ACFIC representatives.

<sup>20</sup> "Summary of the Sixteenth National United Front Work Conference," Ren Tao, 1988, p.497.

The conference resolved that the MPGs, ACFIC and mass organisations would henceforth play a greater united front role in an expanded system of multi-party co-operation. Most significantly, the conference officially recognised that economic development was changing the nature of united front work, particularly its increasing complexity. It concluded that "different classes, strata, democratic parties, groups - different interests, opinions and demands will be reflected in the united front."<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the management and mediation of the relations between these new groups was decreed to be a new united front responsibility.<sup>22</sup> A decision was made to examine the issues of foreign investment, the individual entrepreneurs, and the employees of private enterprises and to investigate the role of united front work in small towns and cities.<sup>23</sup>

In his speech to the conference, Yan Mingfu acknowledged the increasingly complex inter-relationship of economic reform and united front work and declared that the latter had to develop an economic outlook. Yan referred specifically to intellectuals as representatives and developers of modern productive forces; the Party's relations with them, as well as its understanding of their situation, had to be greatly improved. For Yan, these issues were contingent on the reform of the Chinese political system, particularly the institutionalisation of mutual supervision and political consultation. The CPPCC would be an important means of developing socialist democracy. Accordingly, Yan advocated that more attention be paid to the role of the MPGs in the CPPCC, more non-Party people be appointed to leadership roles, and that their political role be expanded.<sup>24</sup>

Yan realised that the key to multi-party co-operation lay in the hands of Party committees at all levels. These committees were required to recognise the principles of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision. They had to respect the MPGs' independence, freedom, and equality. As well as resolving the MPGs' material

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, p.500.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.517.

<sup>24</sup> Yan Ming Fu, "Fazhan zui guang fan de aiguo tongyi zhanxian wei tongyi zuguo, zhenxing Zhonghua er fendou," [Develop the broadest patriotic united front in order to unite the motherland and struggle for the invigoration of China] (November 27, 1986), *ibid.*, 508-511.

problems, the Party committees were also required to establish grass roots MPG organisations, and organise consultative meetings with them. For its part, the UFD was to assist the MPGs to find new members and leaders.<sup>25</sup> Yan almost echoed Li Weihan's words of more than two decades earlier.

Yan had publicly foreshadowed some of these points in July 1986, when he had called on the whole of the Party to support united front work.<sup>26</sup> More importantly, the basic plan for MPG united front work in the late 1980s had already been largely settled when the CCP Central Committee approved the UFD's "Party Report on the Tasks and Policies of the Democratic Parties in the New Era." This report reiterated the principle of long-term co-existence, mutual supervision, and sharing weal and woe. It therefore emphasised the need for all levels of the Party to seek MPG opinions, to inform them of CCP policies, and to uphold their right to supervise the Party.<sup>27</sup> This supervision was justified in the context of Deng Xiaoping's belief that a revolutionary party should hear the voice of the people and be very afraid if it heard nothing. The UFD's report stressed that by ignoring the opinions of the MPGs, the CCP would "very easily" lose touch with the masses and develop "arrogant, self satisfied, subjective, bureaucratic, and privileged styles of work and thought."<sup>28</sup>

To accommodate the MPGs' duties, the report called for the aging MPG leaderships to be encouraged to retire or accept honorary positions. This group would gradually be replaced by a new generation of leaders who were patriotic and who would protect national unity. Recruitment was to pay particular attention to those who could advance the cause of promoting the "one-country, two systems concept." Preference was to be given to those with connections and influence in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. In a major change, the 1983 restrictions preventing recruitment at county level were abolished although such recruitment was not encouraged. Injunctions against

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<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Yan Mingfu, "Fayang quan Dang zhongshi tongyi zhanxian gongzuo de youliang chuantong - jinian Zhongguo Gongchandang chengli 65 zhounian," [Develop the outstanding tradition of the whole Party paying attention to united front work - Commemorating the 65th anniversary of the founding of the CCP], *Renmin ribao*, July 1, 1986.

<sup>27</sup> "Guanyu xin shiqi Dang dui minzhu dangpai gongzuo de fangzhen renwu de baogao," [Party report on the tasks and policies of the democratic parties in the New Era] (July 16, 1986), *Selected united front documents*, pp.33-39.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p.37.

recruitment in the police, army, and foreign affairs remained, but organisations affiliated to these areas and the areas previously regarded as too sensitive like radio and television broadcasting, were opened to MPG canvassing.<sup>29</sup>

The adoption of these measures to expand MPG work was timely. Apparent disenchantment with the MPGs was indicated by the large number of their members applying to join the CCP. While the Party itself recruited intellectuals, the large number of MPG applicants threatened to undermine its plan to expand the minor parties. Contrary to regulations, many MPG members and non-Party personages were joining the Party through their local Party Committees without UFD approval.<sup>30</sup> This problem was yet another manifestation of the UFD's difficulties in having its orders respected at lower levels of the Party.

As a result of the CCP's new policies towards them, the MPGs grew rapidly between 1987 and 1989. Table 2 shows that MPG membership rose by 16 percent in 1987 and increased by another third over the course of 1988. The figures for MPG growth in 1989 are almost certainly those for the six months until the Tian'anmen Incident of June fourth.

Table 2. MPG Membership Increases 1986-1989

MPG	1986	1987	1988	1989
Revolutionary GMD			36,000	39,133
Democratic League	65,850		81,000	99,000
National Construction Association			40,000	50,000
Association for the Promotion of Democracy			N/A	48,000
Peasants and Workers Party			34,000	46,000
Zhigong Dang			8,400	10,000
Jiusan Society			N/A	45,000
Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League			N/A	1,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>220,000</b>	<b>290,000</b>	<b>338,233</b>
Percentage Increase		16 %	32 %	17 %

For complete listing of sources see Appendix A.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, pp.33-39.

<sup>30</sup> Zhonggong zhongyang zuzhi bu, Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu, "Guanyu ge ji minzhu dangpai fuze ren jiaru Zhongguo gongchandang shenpi shouxu wenti de tongzhi," [CCP CC Organisation Department and CCP CC UFD "Notice on the issue of examination and approval procedures for joining the CCP"] (September 4, 1986), *ibid.*, pp.69-70.

Assisting this membership growth was the CCP's policy of continuing to rebuild the reputations of prominent MPG Rightists to whom rehabilitation had previously been denied.

Liang Shuming, once so bitterly reviled by Mao, had been given an esteemed welcome at the CPPCC in 1985. In May 1987, Premier Zhao Ziyang made a point of meeting him, while the paper *Tuanjie bao* drew attention to Liang's resistance to the Cultural Revolution's anti-Confucius campaign.<sup>31</sup> The rehabilitation of Zhang Bojun, and Luo Longji had begun modestly in November 1985, with a joint Democratic League - Peasant's and Worker's Party meeting commemorating the ninetieth anniversary of the birth of Zhang Bojun. Attending on behalf of the CCP, the then UFD head, Yang Jingren, partially restored Zhang's reputation by describing him as a patriotic soldier and political activist.<sup>32</sup> In 1987, as if to prove this rehabilitation, Zhang's son, Zhang Shiming, was made a deputy chair of the PWP's Central Committee.<sup>33</sup> More remarkably, by 1993, the *United Front Encyclopedia* failed to even refer to Zhang Bojun's Rightist label. Yet another source revealed that Zhang's 1957 Rightist label had in fact been removed but it provided no details.<sup>34</sup> In November 1986, the Democratic League commemorated Luo Longji's contribution to the Chinese revolution.<sup>35</sup> Yan Mingfu praised Luo and another speaker discussed Luo's inspirational speeches to students in 1946 and his involvement in the student movement of that period.<sup>36</sup> Like Zhang, one MPG history reveals that Luo's Rightist label had been removed but again, no detail was provided.<sup>37</sup> In the 1990s it is the unfortunate Chu Anping who has been left to largely carry the blame for the alleged evils of 1957. Chu disappeared in August 1966, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, and is

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<sup>31</sup> "Liang Shuming xiansheng zai 'Pi Lin - pi Kong yundong' zhong," [Mr Liang Shuming during the "Criticise Lin Biao - Criticise Confucious campaign], *Lianhe shibao*, May 17, 1986, p.6.

<sup>32</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1990, p.423. See also Zhou Gucheng's memories of Zhang Bojun in *TJB*, January 11, 1986, p.3.

<sup>33</sup> *Renmin ribao* (Overseas edition), April 12, 1987, p.2.

<sup>34</sup> *UFE*, p.928. Jiang Jingyuan, 1991, p.269.

<sup>35</sup> *TJB*, November 1, 1986 p.2.

<sup>36</sup> *TJB*, November 29, 1986, p.7.

<sup>37</sup> Jiang Jingyuan, 1991, p.112.

presumed murdered.<sup>38</sup> He remains conspicuously absent from most Chinese sources on MPG history.

However, the most important symbol of renewed respectability for intellectuals was not the rehabilitation of MPG figures but that of Hu Feng. Despite Hu being a Party intellectual, his rehabilitation had important implications for united front work with intellectuals. The decision was of great symbolic importance to intellectuals generally as his case had symbolised the Party's mistreatment of them. Moreover, the Party justified its decision by using Li Weihang's analysis of the anti-Rightist campaign<sup>39</sup> to announce it had resolved more of the problems which had impeded Hu's full rehabilitation. These re-appraisals were then claimed as positive manifestations of reform and opening up in cultural circles.<sup>40</sup>

By late 1988, the official reputations of Luo Longji and Zhang Bojun were almost fully restored. A major *Tuanjie bao* article on Luo Longji all but declared the so-called Zhang-Luo alliance a myth. It was left to Democratic League leader, Qian Jiaju, to declare the accusations against Luo "historical errors."<sup>41</sup> Yet the CCP did not exonerate Luo and Zhang completely. It was a metaphoric fog, rather than a black cloud that was left hanging over the former proponents of a third road. To exonerate completely the "extremely small minority" of alleged anti-Party elements, in whose name the anti-Rightist campaign had been launched would destroy entirely the Party's justification for it and such an admission was untenable.

The optimism engendered by these rehabilitations and the Party's decision to expand the MPGs was encouraged further when the UFD and CPPCC were called on to become "homes" for democratic personages.<sup>42</sup> Another major symbol of increased MPG status was the presence on several of Hu Yaobang's overseas tours of the Democratic League's Fei Xiaotong as one of Hu's official delegation. It was an

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<sup>38</sup> Dai Qing, 1989A, p.116-117.

<sup>39</sup> *TJB*, June 7, 1988, p.2.

<sup>40</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, July 22, 1988, p.1.

<sup>41</sup> Liao Kai, "Zhang-Luo lianmeng de 'miwu'," [Lifting the fog surrounding the "Zhang-Luo alliance"], *Lianhe shibao*, September 30, 1988, p.3.

<sup>42</sup> *TJB*, July 19, 1986, p.1.

optimistic Fei Xiaotong who declared that a new golden age of united front work had arrived.<sup>43</sup>

### **Zhao Ziyang's 1987 Report and its Implications for United Front Work**

The exemption of MPGs from the CCP's anti-bourgeois liberalisation campaign indicated that they had support from within the Party. The forced resignation of Hu Yaobang in January 1987 and the accession of Zhao Ziyang did not change the direction of united front work; it was instead expanded and promised to develop into the centre-piece of the Party's democratic reforms.

Zhao Ziyang is generally presented as one of the CCP's foremost 'liberal' political reformers while Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, and others have generally been perceived as conservative obstacles to such reform. However, gradual political reform had also long been a part of Deng's platform and Deng's pro-reform inclinations explain why Zhao and his fellow reformers could develop an extensive reform program. Deng, for example, endorsed the series of political reforms proposed by Hu Qili in May 1986. Hu's proposals aimed to develop a "more creative and less dogmatic approach to ideology" and included increased democratisation and the further development of the legal system. Zhao Ziyang headed a small working group established to investigate Hu's ideas.<sup>44</sup> Hu Qili, in turn, along with Yan Mingfu, Wang Zhaoguo, Zhu Houze, and Tian Jiyun, was a part of a reformist Theory Working Group.<sup>45</sup> Wang Zhaoguo used official speeches and the Party's journal *Hongqi* (Red Flag) to promote political

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<sup>43</sup> *TJB*, July 26, 1986, p.1.

<sup>44</sup> Harding, 1989, p.192.

<sup>45</sup> Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994), p.195. Wang was reportedly a protege of Hu Yaobang and had been a Communist Youth League leader until he was promoted to the CCP secretariat. In 1987, Wang was made deputy governor of Fujian and subsequently appointed governor and head of the Taiwan Affairs Office.

and administrative reforms.<sup>46</sup> The new propaganda chief, Zhu Houze, also supported intellectuals by criticising Party interference in their intellectual lives.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to the united front connections of many of the Party's central leadership, there were a number of other Party or former Party members who became prominent advocates of political reform in the late 1980s and who also had important but generally overlooked united connections. In Western accounts of the ferment of this period, the Shanghai paper, the *World Economic Herald* (*Shijie jingji daobao*), stands out as a radical advocate of liberalisation. It has been seen as an ideological mouthpiece of a CCP counter-elite or 'liberal' faction. The paper's promotion of relatively radical political reform has been attributed to "institutional amphibiousness:" a need for reformers to find a protective sponsor and an organisation in which they can hide.<sup>48</sup> This argument is made even more interesting by the extensive united front connections of the *Herald* and many other reformist-inclined organisations, publications, and individuals.

The most prominent of the *Herald's* sponsors, Qian Junrui and Qin Benli, were both scholars with long involvements with intellectuals, propaganda, and united front work. Qian belonged to the national CPPCC Standing Committee while Qin was a member of the Standing Committee of the Shanghai Municipal CPPCC.<sup>49</sup> Most notable among the *Herald's* supporters was its senior adviser, Xu Dixin, the long-time economic united front work stalwart. The connection of another sponsor, Chen Lebo, was less direct. Chen was the son of the former head of the Shanghai UFD. Of the twelve original *Herald* founders, five had very strong united front connections. These links were highlighted in 1986, when the *Herald*, *Shanghai zhengxie bao* and Shanghai

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<sup>46</sup> "Party school graduates told of the need for political reform," SWB FE/8315 B11/2, July 19, 1986. This graduation ceremony was also attended by Zhu Houze. Zhao published several articles in *Hongqi*, the the speech referred to above is, "Gao hao gaige shi zhong qing nian ganbu de di yi wei lishi zeren," [The first historical responsibility of middle aged and young cadres is to do the work of reform well], *Hongqi*, no.17, 1986, pp.6-15.

<sup>47</sup> "CCP Official Criticises Official Interference in Literature and Art," SWB FE/8315 B11/7, July 19, 1986.

<sup>48</sup> X. L. Ding, *The Decline of Communism in China: Legitimacy Crisis, 1977-1989*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, 1994).

<sup>49</sup> Li Cheng and Lyn T. White, "China's Technocratic Movement and the *World Economic Herald*," *Modern China*, vol.17, no.3, July, 1991, pp.346-349.

Municipal CPPCC Economic Research Committee held joint meetings on political reform and economic development.<sup>50</sup>

Many of the CCP's radical young theorists published articles in united front publications. Their calls for political reform appeared to be appreciated when discussed in MPG forums and publications. In 1986, Yan Jiaqi used *Tuanjie bao* to promote MPG involvement in one country-two systems.<sup>51</sup> Su Shaozhi had used *Tuanjie bao* to promote the need for a greater plurality of views in the NPC and CPPCC. Su ridiculed NPC votes of 3000 to 0, and called for the airing of differing views in the Party to be permitted.<sup>52</sup> Yet such majorities were defended by the PWP's Zhou Gucheng precisely because he held them to be "much 'more convincing' and 'more democratic' than 50 votes to 49."<sup>53</sup> Pre-empting the position later adopted in 1987 by Zhao Ziyang, Su had also called for the formal recognition of interest groups. The MPGs, he argued, should be seen as representatives of various interest groups with naturally differing views.<sup>54</sup> Such views were later echoed by MPG leaders such as Fei Xiaotong.<sup>55</sup> Su therefore advocated that the Party listen to MPG opinion and respect their interests. To turn the MPGs into important political players, Su proposed the long-term and gradual reform of the NPC and CPPCC, the adoption of elections, and the development of the consultative system.<sup>56</sup> Complementing this exposure in MPG papers, the *Herald* also published MPG writings, allowing for example, Jiusan's Lu Jiayi to appear in its pages.<sup>57</sup>

What is striking about these CCP dissidents is that they were far from being liberals. Rather, as examinations of the *Herald* and noted individuals such as Fang Lizhi have shown, they were technocrats and instrumentalists seeking to reform the

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<sup>50</sup> *Shanghai zhengxie bao*, August 15, 1986, p.1.

<sup>51</sup> *TJB*, September 13, 1986, pp.1-2.

<sup>52</sup> *TJB*, August 30, 1986, p.2.

<sup>53</sup> O'Brien, 1990, p.142.

<sup>54</sup> The period 1987-89 marked the emergence of public discussion on pluralism. Eg., Luo Ruoxing, Zhu Huaxin and Cao Huanrong, "Different Interest Groups under Socialism," *Beijing Review*, November 30-December 6, 1987, pp.18-19.

<sup>55</sup> Anita Chan, "The Challenge to the Social Fabric," *Pacific Affairs*, vol.2, no.2, 1989, p.130.

<sup>56</sup> *TJB*, August 30, 1986, p.2.

<sup>57</sup> Eg., in 1984, Lu published, "Some thoughts on the world's new technical revolution," in Li, *et al*, 1991, p.361.

Party state in order to save it.<sup>58</sup> With their own history of elitism, their pride in their expertise, their belief in scientific policy, and traditions of remonstrance, the MPGs were little different.

The use of a historically proven and theoretically legitimated united front almost certainly made it easier to justify reform to those within the Party who were concerned about political change. It was, after all, 'conservatives' such as Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun who had pushed through the economic reforms. Chen had advocated united front measures to support the economy. Amongst other Standing Committee members there were many who were experienced in united front work or who were sympathetic to the plight of intellectuals. The economic reformer and Finance Minister, Yao Yilin, had carried out anti-Japanese united front work amongst students.<sup>59</sup> In August 1986, Party elder Wan Li had called for "democratisation and scientificisation" (*minzhuhua he kexuehua*): the greater use of experts in policy making.<sup>60</sup> Fujian's Fang Yi's united front experience dated from the 1930's and he was appointed as a CPPCC vice-Chair in April 1988.<sup>61</sup> Hu Yaobang was sympathetic to intellectuals and, as the head of the Organisation Department, had been in charge of rehabilitating alleged Rightists. Hu Qiaomu had worked with the National Salvation Association; he had been a member of the first CPPCC, and had participated in the drafting of *The Common Program*.<sup>62</sup> Hu Qiaomu also had extensive professional history in dealing with intellectuals. In addition to his long-term involvement in propaganda work, Hu had been the head of the CASS after 1977.<sup>63</sup> One of the three Party deputy secretaries, Song Ping, had worked in the UFD since 1949. He was promoted to UFD deputy director in 1988.<sup>64</sup> There were, then, a considerable number of senior Party leaders who were familiar and comfortable with united front work and likely to support its development. Moreover,

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<sup>58</sup> Christopher Buckley, "Science as Politics and Science as Politics: Fang Lizhi and the Chinese Intellectuals' Uncertain Road to Dissent," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no.25, January, 1991, pp.1-36. Hua Shiping, 1994, pp.92-110.

<sup>59</sup> Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian cidian bianwei hui (eds), *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian cidian*, [Chinese united front dictionary] (Zhonggong, dang shi chubanshe, Beijing, 1992), p.219.

<sup>60</sup> David Kelly, 1987, p.138.

<sup>61</sup> *UFE*, p.746.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, p.884.

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, p.831. (The other two secretaries were Qiao Shi and Wen Jiabao).

the Central Committee's Commission on Political Structural Reforms had included Bo Yibo, Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qili, Tian Jiyun and Peng Chong. The Commission's staff office also provided employment for Yan Jiaqi and fellow Party radical Bao Tong in what was called Zhao's "brain trust."<sup>65</sup>

In July, at a UFD-convened commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the principle of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision, Yan Mingfu declared that despite recent progress in encouraging wider participation in policy making,

... in giving fuller scope to the democratic parties' supervisory role, and in reflecting and respecting public opinion, we still have not set up a perfect system to work in these areas. We must therefore make an effort to study the problem and support it by drawing up a whole series of supporting measures. It is our hope that you (*i.e.* the MPGs) will unreservedly and actively put forward your opinions and suggestions on this fundamental issue so that multi-party co-operation and the socialist political system will be even better  
...<sup>66</sup>

A day earlier, Yan had promised that the CCP would codify the role of the MPGs to guarantee improved supervision.<sup>67</sup>

A clear picture of the socialist democracy which included such MPG supervision became clearer when the political reforms being researched and developed by Yan Mingfu, Wang Zhaoguo, and others, were articulated by Zhao Ziyang at the Party's Thirteenth National Congress of October 1987 as the "Theory of the Initial Stage of Socialism." This theory maintained that full socialism would only become possible when the productive forces were fully developed. This advance could only occur when the economy and productive forces were fully modernised. The theory was used to justify a retreat from the full socialisation of production in favour of the co-existence of various forms of ownership and the opening up of the economy to foreign capital. However, public ownership would remain dominant. Zhao argued that a major aspect of the initial stage of socialism was the building of a democracy based on social stability and national unity. Yet he alluded to past problems caused by rapid and radical change when he declared that:

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<sup>65</sup> Hua Shiping, 1994, pp.102-103.

<sup>66</sup> "'Uninhibited discussions' on the role of Democratic Parties," SWB, FE/8315 B11/3, July 19, 1986. Also *TJB*, July 12, 1986.

<sup>67</sup> "Promise of Greater Role for Non-communist Parties," (*Xinhua*, July 11, 1986), SWB FE8311 B11/3, July 15, 1986.

In a socialist society there should be a high degree of democracy, a comprehensive legal system and a stable social environment. In the primary stage, as there are many factors making for instability, the maintenance of stability and unity is of special importance. We must correctly handle the contradictions among the people. The people's democratic dictatorship should not be weakened. Because feudal autocratic influence is still strong it is particularly urgent to build socialist democracy, but in view of the restrictions imposed by historical and social conditions, *that can only be done step by step and in an orderly way.*<sup>68</sup> (emphasis added)

Zhao and his fellow reformers regarded political reform as a pre-requisite for successful economic development. Reform would prevent the over-concentration of power, and eradicate the bureaucratism and "feudal influences" hindering China's economic development.<sup>69</sup> Zhao envisaged developing democracy by gradually reforming that which already existed, "the system of the people's congresses, the system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the Communist Party and the principle of democratic centralism." These features, Zhao argued, characterised "the advantages" of the CCP's system.<sup>70</sup>

Zhao's report acknowledged that the varying views and interests of different groups required freedom of expression to enable each level to become aware of the conditions of others:

It is therefore imperative to develop a system of consultation and dialogue so that what is going on at the higher levels can be promptly and accurately made known to the lower levels and vice versa without impediment, thus enabling all people at all levels to understand each other.<sup>71</sup>

Zhao called for immediate improvements in the people's congress and political consultative conference systems. Of the CPPCC, Zhao declared:

We should improve the system of multi-party cooperation and consultation under the leadership of communist Party with a view to promoting the role played in China's political life by democratic political parties and patriots without party affiliation. Mass organisations too, are to be encouraged to become more active in consultation and dialogue in keeping with their functions as bridges between the party and the masses.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Zhao Ziyang, "Advance Along the Road of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics," [Report to the Thirteenth Congress of the Communist Party of China] (October 25, 1987), *Documents of the Thirteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China (1987)*, (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1987), p.16.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*, pp.42-43.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, p.43.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*, p.54.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*, p.56.

The Party was required to alter its conduct of elections; more candidates than positions were now permitted. Deputies to people's congresses were to be elected on the basis of geographical areas and from "different walks of life," in order to "represent broader sections of the people."<sup>73</sup>

Zhao explicitly rejected the Western principles of the separation of powers and allowing political parties to hold power alternately. Nevertheless, to curtail the over-concentration of power, the CCP planned to separate the Party from the government and submit itself to the state constitution. Zhao claimed that the prevailing overlap of state and Party, and even of the substitution of Party for the government, was diminishing the Party's status and weakening its position.<sup>74</sup>

Zhao's report acknowledged that its proposals were limited but declared that they laid the basis for future improvements.<sup>75</sup> A major guiding principle for these reforms was their gradually and orderly implementation. This was to be based on a process of pragmatism, experimentation, and exploration. The reforms were also a means to an end, "to raise the efficiency, increase the vitality and stimulate the initiative of all sections of society."<sup>76</sup> This was the objective of every reform.

### **Political reform and the MPGs**

In late 1988, and in accord with past practice, the MPG's amended their constitutions to conform with the new framework created by the theory of the initial stage of socialism. The Democratic League's new preamble detailed its roles clearly:

The basic tasks and goals of the League are:

Under the banner of socialism and patriotism, to unite vast numbers of intellectual; carry on democratic and scientific traditions, take the line of the initial stage of socialism, and participate in state political activities; to promote democracy and participate in the management of state political power and affairs; through political consultation, democratic supervision, interpellation of state affairs and practice, to develop the socialist commodity economy, boost productive forces in society, promote socialist spiritual civilisation, improve the ideological, moral, scientific and cultural quality of all nationalities, and build China into a wealthy, powerful, democratic, civilised and modernised socialist country.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> *ibid.*, p.57.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.*, p.46.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, p.60.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*, p.43.

<sup>77</sup> "Guiding principles of the China Democratic League", SWB, FE/0294 B2/8. October 28, 1988. For Luo Hanxian's explanation of these revisions see "Zhongguo Minzhu Tongmeng guanyu Meng zhang

These MPG constitutions differed only in minor ways and their goals were identical.

The League's revised constitution consisted of twelve points which elaborated on those in the preamble and included promoting the existing political system, developing education and production, and creating a new socialist culture. The League called on its members to protect the basic rights of ordinary citizens, but more specifically, to safeguard the "lawful rights and interests of intellectuals," its special constituency.<sup>78</sup>

In keeping with the prevailing atmosphere of relative political liberalisation, the League's new constitution increased members' rights. Leaders became subject to a degree of recall by members. Limits were imposed on the holding of official positions, re-elections and re-appointments. The revisions sought to invigorate the League's organisational life by allowing its branches more initiative. Perhaps the most important constitutional change was the inclusion of explicit guarantees allowing free discussion of national affairs, free reflection on issues, and the raising of suggestions "to transform League members into "a route of ideological transmission."<sup>79</sup> The amendments clarified members' rights to request information and make suggestions and criticisms. This liberalisation was, however, balanced by clarifications and the strengthening of constitutional regulations which increased the League's central committee control over lower levels.<sup>80</sup> Similar amendments were made to the constitutions of other MPGs.<sup>81</sup>

The MPG congresses of 1988 were notable for the increased degree of openness in their electoral procedures. Primary stage secret ballot elections were held with more candidates than positions. However, the progressive nature of this move was severely attenuated by the requirement that all nominations "be preceded by adequate deliberation and consultation."<sup>82</sup> This requirement provided MPG central committees with decisive influence over lower level elections and gave the UFD control over the

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xiugai de shuoming," [The Chinese Democratic League on revisions to the League constitution] (October 10, 1988), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1289-1294.

<sup>78</sup> SWB, FE/0294 B2/8.

<sup>79</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, p.1293

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> The new constitutions are included in Qin Guosheng, *et al.*, 1990. A translation of the 1988 National Construction Association Constitution, the first to be changed, is in SWB FE/0208/B2/2-7, July 20, 1988.

<sup>82</sup> See NCA constitution, article 14, in SWB, FE/0208 B2/4.

central committees. These new election procedures won the praise of the Revolutionary GMD.<sup>83</sup>

On November 14 1987, Zhao met with MPG leaders. He called for research into the significance for united front work of the recent Party Congress and he conveyed the CCP's trust and hope in their organisations.<sup>84</sup> This trust seems to have been a consequence of a 1987 investigation into the thinking of MPG members which had been ordered by UFD as part of the Party's drive against bourgeois liberalisation.<sup>85</sup> Zhao Ziyang's speech on the initial stage of socialism contained much promise for the MPGs and Peng Dixian of the Democratic League attributed it enormous significance and inspiration.<sup>86</sup> By late 1988, the MPGs' faith in the CCP seemed about to be rewarded. In October 1988, when Zhao Ziyang again exhorted the MPGs supervisory role and contributions to economic development, he also pledged to increase the involvement of non-Party people.<sup>87</sup>

An obvious means by which the CCP could expand democracy was by expanding the CPPCC, the symbol of its policies of inclusion. In 1988, number of CPPCC delegates for the new Seventh Plenum was increased by almost 300, from 1,794 to 2,081. Some 710 or 33 percent of the members of the new CPPCC were MPG members.<sup>88</sup> More important because of its long-term implications was the development of the local consultative system. In early 1986, Deng Yingchao and Xi Zhongxun were key guests at a major Party conference on developing local level political consultative committees.<sup>89</sup> In contrast, local level people's congresses had been developing since the early 1980's.<sup>90</sup> The result of the CCP's subsequent efforts was an increase in the number of local consultative conferences from 2,800 in 1985, (itself a major increase on

<sup>83</sup> SWB, FE/0315 B2/8, November 22, 1988.

<sup>84</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng fuzhuxi Peng Dixian zai wu jie zhongyang weiyuanhui de wu ci quanti huiyi kaimu ci," [DL Deputy Chairman Peng Dixian opening speech to the fifth full meeting of the fifth Central Committee] (December 3, 1987), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1206 - 1207.

<sup>85</sup> Ren Tao reports that in April 1987, a meeting of UFD leaders called for such an investigation. Ren Tao, 1988, p.527. This may well have been to ascertain the political reliability of the MPG memberships. Seymour, 1991, p.8.

<sup>86</sup> *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1206 -1207.

<sup>87</sup> *TJB*, October 15, 1988, p.1.

<sup>88</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.448.

<sup>89</sup> *TJB*, March 8, 1986, p.1.

<sup>90</sup> John Dearlove, "Village Politics," in Robert Benewick and Paul Wingrove (eds), *China in the 1990s*, (Macmillan, London, 1995), p.123.

the 1982 figure of 1,800) to 2,930 by 1988. In 1982, there had only been 20,000 local level conference delegates; in 1985 this had increased to 350,000; by 1988 numbers had grown by a further 19 percent to 416,000. The MPGs were disproportionately important within these local conferences as they occupied 63 percent of committee positions.<sup>91</sup>

The CCP sought to make the CPPCC more relevant. Drawing on the experience of Shanghai's municipal CPPCC, the Party drew up new regulations to increase the CPPCC's effectiveness. These provisional regulations guaranteed the right of CPPCC delegates to put any view at meetings.<sup>92</sup> These regulations were given little publicity and the references to freedom of speech were omitted in subsequent accounts.<sup>93</sup> The "*Guidelines for CPPCC Work*" issued in November 1988 also omitted the freedom of conference delegates to speak their minds. The document did, however, call for more openness, including the gradual opening up to the public of the proceedings of the CPPCC National Committee, the Standing Committee, and other conference bodies. In a move intended to increase the CPPCC's organisational openness, the *Guidelines* called for an "increase in the proportion of members of democratic parties and non-Party members among the cadres of various CPPCC organs." The overall objective was a reduction in the Party's domination of the conference.<sup>94</sup> This progress may also have prompted the MPGs' 1988 request for a guaranteed number of seats in the NPC.<sup>95</sup>

Another means by which the CCP could demonstrate its commitment to increased democracy was to increase non-Party leadership appointments to government leadership positions. The lack of such positions was a major source of MPG complaints. The united front worker, Lu Cunxue, claimed that the unlikelihood of government appointments was an major reason why many talented potential members refused to join MPGs. Not only were few appointments made, those individuals who were appointed then usually joined the CCP. Lu argued that remedying this situation

<sup>91</sup> *Peoples' Republic of China Year Book 1989-1990*, p.54.

<sup>92</sup> "Hua dao Beijing qu shuo," [Something to say, go to Beijing to say it], "Guanyu Zhengxie zhi xieshang, minzhu jiandu de zhanxing guiding," [Provisional regulations for political consultation and democratic supervision], *Lianhe shibao*, March 10, 1989, p.1.

<sup>93</sup> *UFE*, pp.252-253.

<sup>94</sup> "Guidelines for CPPCC work", SWB FE/0311/B2/1-3, November 17, 1988.

<sup>95</sup> Chan, 1989, p.130.

would bring more independent thinkers into the MPGs and the government. Under prevailing circumstances, anyone seeking such positions would join the CCP.<sup>96</sup> For the MPGs the memory of the early stages of New Democracy remained as a significant symbol of co-operation. The first government consisted of 61 people, of whom 31 were non-Party people while 3 of the 6 vice-chairs were nominally non communists.<sup>97</sup>

The appointment of more non-Party people to leadership positions was accepted as an obvious indication of sincerity in the CCP's plans to broaden representation and utilise non-Party expertise. From 1988 this work took two forms: the selection of special "reserve rank cadres" (*houbei duiwu ganbu*) to be trained as potential leaders,<sup>98</sup> and the selection of the first few young and middle-aged candidates to be groomed by the CCP and UFD as departmental (*juji*) level cadres.<sup>99</sup> In 1988, the NCA's Feng Tiyun was appointed as deputy head of the Ministry of Supervision, significantly, a body charged with investigating corruption. This was the first major appointment at the central level in the post-Mao period and Feng quickly used his position to criticise the department's lack of resources; some of his department's offices lacked even telephones.<sup>100</sup>

Despite this example from the Central government, other levels followed slowly. In Shanghai, the Municipal CPPCC for example, declared the selection and training of non-Party people to be of "strategic significance." But in practice, only eight such appointments had been made by March 1989, and these were restricted to the county and district levels.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, these positions did demonstrate that a formal system had been established. In February 1989, the Central UFD and Organisation Departments further institutionalised the selection process with a set of formal regulations.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> *TJB*, February 14, 1989, p.2.

<sup>97</sup> Li Qing, 1991, p.239.

<sup>98</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, September 30, 1988, p.1.

<sup>99</sup> *TJB*, October 11, 1988, p.1.

<sup>100</sup> *TJB*, January 3, 1989, p.1.

<sup>101</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, March 3, 1989, p.1.

<sup>102</sup> "Guanyu xuanpie dangwai renshi danren zhengfu lindao zhiwu de tongzhi," [Notice on the selection of non-party personages to undertake work as government leaders], *UFE*, p.253. Similar arrangements were put in place in Hainan. *TJB*, February 11, 1989, p.1.

Although some appointments had been made by 1989, the MPGs had reason to expect more jobs and a greater political role. In December 1988, a public announcement by Yan Mingfu of preparations to expand the multi-party system further encouraged expectations of more positions.<sup>103</sup> In January 1989, Deputy UFD head, Song Kun called for legal protection of multi-Party cooperation and pledged more appointments at and above provincial level.<sup>104</sup> Song was followed in this by a fellow UFD deputy head, Li Ding, who in March 1989, declared to the CPPCC that "great progress" in assigning democratic personages would occur soon.<sup>105</sup>

On December 20 1988, Yan Mingfu revealed that the CCP was to "take a big step in gradually and fully developing multi-party cooperation under the leadership of the CCP". Moreover, Yan announced in *Tuanjie bao* that a plan had already been produced and would be implemented gradually. With Gramscian logic, an accompanying article discussion of Yan's article, declared that "this great event shows that in times of trouble in particular, the CCP recognises the need for support from all circles".<sup>106</sup> On January 13 1989, Shanghai CPPCC's *Lianhe shibao* published four articles detailing the selection and appointments of non-Party leaders. It was in this positive atmosphere amid preparations and plans, that the March 1989 rumours, that 12 non-Party people had been selected for important central government positions, seemed very credible.<sup>107</sup>

In March 1989, Li Jishen's son Li Peiyao was appointed deputy head of the Ministry of Labour and Hong Fuzeng, a deputy head of the Ministry of Agriculture.<sup>108</sup> In 1988, Li had been made a deputy head of the All China Federation of Trade Unions but he had joined the Revolutionary GMD only two years earlier. Hong was member of Jiusan and an agricultural scientist who had held many prominent positions within his field in Jilin Province.<sup>109</sup> Jilin, together with Hainan, was an experimental area for the

<sup>103</sup> "Contributions of the Democratic parties," SWB FE/0336 B2/2. December 16, 1988.

<sup>104</sup> SWB, FE/0350 B2/4 January 5, 1989.

<sup>105</sup> "UFD Deputy head on political democracy," SWB, FE/0422 C1/3, March 31, 1989.

<sup>106</sup> *TJB*, December, 20, 1988, p.1.

<sup>107</sup> James D. Seymour, "China's Minor Parties and the Crisis of 1989," *China Information*, vol.5, no.4, 1991, p.10.

<sup>108</sup> *TJB*, April 3, 1989, p.1.

<sup>109</sup> *UFE*, p.896.

Party's new regulations on non-Party recruitments and Hong may also have benefited from this fact.<sup>110</sup> That Hong was also the brother of a prominent Taiwan academic made him even more suitable. The CCP was cautious with these initial appointments. Both Li and Hong were reported to be dual MPG-CCP members.<sup>111</sup> Li's former union position and rapid promotion over many senior Revolutionary MPG leaders supports this.

The appointments of Feng Tiyun, Li, and, Hong had the potential to re-assure the MPGs that rewards for service would be forthcoming. Since 1985, many MPG members had asked to resign because they felt ignored or unsupported.<sup>112</sup> In 1988, as in 1986, the UFD needed to again assure some MPG leaders that they were more valuable as non-Party people within the MPGs than as Party members.<sup>113</sup>

Seymour reports that in March 1989, there was a leak to the effect that "twelve senior government posts or one third of the total, might go to democrats."<sup>114</sup> There was an important side-effect of the promise of more government positions. Infighting was reported to have occurred within the MPGs in anticipation of these appointments.<sup>115</sup> This discontent seems related to the issue of dual membership which implicitly functioned as a pre-requisite for senior leadership positions and explains why so many MPG members sought CCP membership. Without dual membership the chances of being selected for high office were negligible. Another factor likely to have caused distress and jealousy among rank and file MPG members was the CCP's preference for trusted so-called "blue princes," the MPG equivalents of red princelings (*taizi*), the children of senior Party leaders.<sup>116</sup> Li Peiyao, Zhang Shiming, and Chu Zhuang were

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<sup>110</sup> *TJB*, August 20, 1988 p.1; *TJB*, March 28, 1989 p.1.

<sup>111</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.11.

<sup>112</sup> Li Chiu-i, "'Multi-party co-operation' under the CCP's Leadership," *Issues and Studies*, vol.26, no.11, November 1990., p.84 quoting *Renmin ribao*, December 10, 1985.

<sup>113</sup> "Zhongyang zuzhi bu, Zhongyang tongzhan bu, 'Guanyu quanguo renda daibiao, zhengxie weiyuan zhong dangwai renshi ru Dang wenti de yijian,'" [Notes on the question of non-Party NPC representatives and CPPCC Committee members joining the Party] (April 21, 1988). *Selected united front documents*, pp.73-74.

<sup>114</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.10.

<sup>115</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Hence the name of James Seymour's original version of his 1992 article: "Blue Princes: The Satellization of China Minor Parties and their Behavior During the crisis of 1989," (A paper presented for the conference, Roads not Taken: Oppositional Parties in Twentieth Century China, Lexington, Virginia, September 20-22, 1990). The explanation for "blue princes" is on pp.48-49.

good examples of such blue princes. Tensions between those who already held dual membership status and/or had blue prince connections, and other members was bound to increase.

Although prestigious leadership positions with commensurate authority were slow to materialise, the CCP began appointing MPG members as special investigators or procurators to examine problems within the Party and government. The first “special appointments” (*te yue*), of six MPG members were made in Inner Mongolia in mid-1988.<sup>117</sup> Appointments in Shanghai followed in October.<sup>118</sup> Six months later, the National Ministry of Supervision acted on UFD recommendations and appointed twenty-one MPG and ACFIC members to the position of investigator. As with the MPG’s corruption reporting system, these new appointments were hailed as important measures of mass-supervision, anti-corruption, and clean government.<sup>119</sup> In January 1989, conferences were held to review and regularise this special appointment work.<sup>120</sup> These appointments imposed an onerous burden on MPG members yet lacked even traditional status. The inspectors had no powers except to report on wrong doings and make recommendations to the government.

### **The MPGs’ Problems and Wishes**

The increased openness of the late 1980s allowed united front publications to report MPG problems and aspirations more openly. Many MPG members wanted greater public recognition and understanding. The Revolutionary GMD, for example, resented being frequently linked by the public to the GMD proper.<sup>121</sup> In one attempt to overcome these problems and raise the MPGs’ image, the Shanghai CPPCC held a televised quiz on knowledge about them.<sup>122</sup>

Many MPG members wanted their respective party to be distinguishable from the others and be easily identified. The National Construction Association leader, Sun

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<sup>117</sup> *TJB*, July 4, 1988 p.1.

<sup>118</sup> *TJB*, October 25, 1988, p.1.

<sup>119</sup> *TJB*, December 12, 1989, p.1.

<sup>120</sup> *TJB*, January 7, 1989 p.1

<sup>121</sup> *TJB*, February 8, 1986, p.7.

<sup>122</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, April 17, 1987, p.1.

Qimeng, initiated this call for a corporate individuality in 1988 when, despite opposition from within, he called for the creation of a NCA with its own character.<sup>123</sup> Soon similar demands were echoed by other MPGs. The *Tuanjie bao* encouraged all MPGs to develop individual characters.<sup>124</sup> In March 1987, a conference on multi-party co-operation was used as a forum to oppose perceptions of MPG homogeneity. It discussed the necessity of individual MPG political platforms as the basis for separate MPG identities.<sup>125</sup> Subsequent debate widened in scope to include the nature of the MPGs and queried whether they should change their designation as ‘democratic parties’ or be called fraternal or friendly parties.<sup>126</sup>

By early 1989, not only were individual MPG political platforms being advocated, it was also being argued in the press that MPG differences be manifested symbolically in flags and emblems. These symbolic distinctions would allow the public to differentiate the parties; it would also stimulate members’ interest and increase their confidence and prestige. The closer emotional links of MPGs with their members would, it was argued, increase their internal unity and promote their work.<sup>127</sup>

The issue of unity within the MPGs was an apposite one and recurrent complaints about the lack of it revealed problems attributable to the MPGs’ corporatist structures. The Revolutionary GMD even openly discussed the issue of time wasted on internal wrangling (*neihao*) in *Tuanjie bao*.<sup>128</sup> This problem related directly to the MPGs’ functionally based memberships. The Association for the Promotion of Democracy leader and author, Feng Jicai, reported that there was little political awareness on the part of many MPG leaders.<sup>129</sup> By contrast, academic awareness within the Democratic League was very strong and provided the League with the tag of the “professor’s party.” Choosing members mainly on the basis of their academic status was seen as harmful as their professional status dominated the social stage at the

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<sup>123</sup> *TJB*, July 16, 1988, p.1.

<sup>124</sup> *TJB*, September 3, 1988, p.2.

<sup>125</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, May 15, 1987, p.2.

<sup>126</sup> *TJB*, April 9, 1988, p.2; *TJB*, May 6, 1989, p.2.

<sup>127</sup> *TJB*, March 21, 1989, p.2.

<sup>128</sup> *TJB*, September 10, 1988, p.1.

<sup>129</sup> *TJB*, December 10, 1988, p.1.

expense of their League membership. This issue undermined the League's status as a real political party.<sup>130</sup> The teacher dominated Association for the Promotion of Democracy felt similarly constrained and sought to extend its involvement in political consultation beyond educational issues.<sup>131</sup> It was easy to argue over professional and other matters when there was no overarching commonly accepted political program to unite members.

This lack of political consciousness resulted in some commentators writing scathingly about MPG effectiveness. One described them as "often limited in outlook" with "small views and small suggestions." Implicitly criticising older MPG members, the writer suggested that younger, more politically aware recruits should be allowed a political platform.<sup>132</sup> Another critic complained that some individuals gave vent only to gossip and personal opinions while ignoring the needs of those they ostensibly represented. Suggested solutions to these problems included that full discussion of policy based on scientific research occur within MPGs before leaders spoke on their behalf and the suggestion that, rather than leaders dominating representation in the CPPCC and other forums, that members take it in turns to serve in them.<sup>133</sup>

Within the MPGs, geriatrification was undoubtedly a major source of discontent. Many elderly leaders retired to coveted positions in the NPC and CPPCC thus barring promotions for younger members while benefiting from the privileges accorded such positions.<sup>134</sup> Attempts were made to pass leadership to younger generations by creating special advisory committees to which elderly members could retire with dignity.<sup>135</sup> Yet in 1987, even as he promoted these committees, an elderly Fei Xiaotong declared ambivalently that advanced age should not necessarily prevent members continuing to play an active role.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, May 12, 1989, p.1.

<sup>131</sup> "Fahui qunti zuoyong, zuohao canzheng yizheng gongzuo" [Give play to the role of the groups, do political participation work well], *Minjin*, No. 9 1988, pp.24-26. (*Minjin* is a journal of the APD)

<sup>132</sup> *TJB*, February 21, 1989, p.1.

<sup>133</sup> *TJB*, February 14, 1989, p.1.

<sup>134</sup> Senior members of the CPPCC had, for example, a special club established for them in early 1987. *Lianhe shibao*, January 23, 1987, p.1.

<sup>135</sup> "Canzheng canyi weiyuanhui," [The Committee for participation in government and politics], *DL historical Documents*, p.1158.

<sup>136</sup> *ibid.*

Although the MPGs were committed to helping the CCP overcome bureaucratism and factionalism, they suffered these problem themselves. One sarcastic *Qunyan* article described these problems as a geometrical progression:

One person carries out the work.  
 Three people oppose.  
 Two people investigate.  
 Ten spread slanderous rumours.<sup>137</sup>

It was the need to overcome these problems that led some MPG members to demand more internal democracy, albeit couched in terms of improving the implementation of mutual supervision and investigation work.<sup>138</sup>

In other situations there was an apparent lack of bureaucracy. For while the MPGs grew rapidly after 1986, their organisational efficiency often failed to keep pace. In late 1987, the Democratic League reported that many basic level branches lacked structural cohesion. They were often unable to hold regular organisational activities and their cadres were under strain. The League called for more emphasis on consolidating the existing membership and organisations, asserting central control over lower levels had become a major concern.<sup>139</sup>

Many of the MPGs' problems were directly related to CCP and UFD policy. In 1986, as part of its plans for MPG growth, the UFD had instructed that more and younger cadres be assigned to them.<sup>140</sup> However, these young cadres often lacked an understanding of the MPGs' histories and memberships. Exacerbating this ignorance, the head of the Shanghai UFD admitted, was the fact that the political education of these new cadres had stressed class struggle and this gave them a negative attitude towards the bourgeoisie. These cadres then had difficulty working with the MPGs' as memberships.<sup>141</sup> Compounding these staff problems were recurrent shortages of

<sup>137</sup> Sun Chao, "Qiantan zuzhi renshi ganbu de zhiye daode," [A brief talk on the professional morality of Organisation Department and Personnel Department cadres], *Qunyan*, No. 3, 1987, p.17.

<sup>138</sup> *TJB*, January 16, 1988, p.1.

<sup>139</sup> "Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng guanyu dangqian jiceng zuzhi gongzuo ruogan wenti de yijian," [Opinions on several problems in present day basic level organization work] (November 15, 1987), *DL Historical Documents*, pp.1200-1201.

<sup>140</sup> "Zhongyang zuzhi bu, Zhongyang tongzhan bu, Guanyu jiji tuijian fei Dang zhong qingnian ganbu dao minzhu dangpai gongzuo de yijian," [The Central Organization Department and UFD opinions on actively recommending middle-aged and young cadres to work in the democratic parties] (October 28, 1986), *Selected united front documents*, pp.50-51.

<sup>141</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, February 27, 1987, p.1.

funds.<sup>142</sup> By early 1987, the Party again issued instructions to resolve the MPGs' problems of finance and accommodation.<sup>143</sup> Almost immediately, the Shanghai ACFIC was allocated a new building,<sup>144</sup> and the Shanghai Municipal Government pledged to maintain its MPG funding.<sup>145</sup> However, such prompt responses seem to have been the exception and they were publicised as positive models for other Party committees.

The MPGs' economic reliance on the CCP highlighted their lack of independence. In 1988, the Zhigong dang leader, Huang Dingchen, advocated increasing the party's financial independence.<sup>146</sup> The report on the 1989 Democratic League delegation tour of Poland stressed the relative autonomy of the Polish minor parties and the League emphasised the financial independence of its Polish equivalent. The report described its fundraising: from membership dues, the sale of handicrafts produced by artisan members, small scale production, and income from their own companies and publishing houses. The report also pointed out that there were 115,000 Polish minor party members in a population of 34 million.<sup>147</sup> Whilst there were almost 300,000 Chinese MPGs members in 1988, the Chinese population was vastly larger than Poland's and the comparison made the Chinese membership seem very small.

In China, it was initially only the ACFIC with its own enterprises that had the most potential for the financial independence enjoyed by the Polish minor parties. Yet, in 1988, perhaps as means of reducing MPG reliance on Party committees, a joint UFD-MPG investigation into finance and other issues implied that decreasing MPG dependence on UFD funding could be a positive development. The joint report criticised the MPGs for their failure to charge for consultation work and their total reliance on voluntary work by members. Many MPG members, however, opposed the commercialisation of their activities fearing that fees for consultancies were illegal and

<sup>142</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, January 23, 1987, p.2.

<sup>143</sup> "Zhengxie quanguo weiyuan wei, Zhongyang tongzhanbu, Caizheng bu, Guojia jiwei, "Guanyu bangzhu minzhu dangpai jiejie jingfei banggong yong fang deng wenti tongzhi"" [The National Committee of the CPPCC, the Central UFD, the Ministry of Finance and the State Planning Committee "Notice on helping the democratic parties solve problems of finance, office space, accommodation and other problems"] (February 16, 1987), *Selected united front documents*, pp.63-64.

<sup>144</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, October 16, 1987, p.1.

<sup>145</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, March 17, 1989, p.1.

<sup>146</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.57.

<sup>147</sup> *TJB*, March 28, 1989, p.2.

possibly constitute capitalism. Some members of Xiamen's Municipal Revolutionary GMD and Quanzhou's Democratic League opposed the charging of fees even though their organisations had been doing so for three years. These members were informed that fee-based services simply took advantage of their Taiwanese connections and aided China's economic development while simultaneously providing social benefits.<sup>148</sup> That these issues could now be discussed publicly demonstrated the marked liberalisation of the political atmosphere.

### **1987-89: The MPG's Criticism and Suggestions**

In 1988 and early 1989, the MPG found themselves in a situation akin to that of 1956-57. They had the implicit endorsements of both the Party leader Zhao Ziyang and UFD head Yan Mingfu, in an environment of increasing political openness and the promise of a greater political role. As in the Hundred Flowers period, the MPG's criticisms remained within the boundaries set by the Party. They concentrated on known faults in the present political system and party policies and suggested ways of improving them and the MPG themselves.

History had taught the MPG's that they were vulnerable to capricious policy changes by the CCP. United front work and the UFD remained Party rather than government responsibilities and this re-inforced the MPG's lack of security. MPG and united front workers utilised Zhao's call for the institutionalisation of supervision to press for the formal inclusion of the status of the MPG's and the CPPCC in the body of the constitution proper.<sup>149</sup>

The MPG's sought to stabilise the political structure by replacing the long-standing dependence on individuals with a system in which individuals could be easily replaced without creating disorder. In early 1988, for example, the Democratic League's *Qunyan* journal, called for this institutionalisation to be implemented through the creation of a fixed political order in which each component had clearly differentiated functions. Policy making and policy implementation had to be clearly

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<sup>148</sup> *TJB*, November 29, 1988, p.1.

<sup>149</sup> *TJB*, January 1, 1988, p.2.

separated and the whole system protected by constitutional and legal guarantees. The proposal emphasised the relationship between these structural issues and the development of China's legal system.<sup>150</sup>

This articulation of the need for a more independent and more impartial legal system failed to address the CCP's domination of the law and its hostility to the separation of the three powers.<sup>151</sup> *Qunyan* drew attention to the CCP's failure to institutionalise the constitution of 1954 to exemplify the dangers of the existing system. The journal argued that this failure had allowed Mao to dominate the Party, a domination which resulted in a succession of disasters. Any measure which increased the legal system's ability to prevent and correct administrative abuses benefited democracy. The promulgation of laws in the late 1980s which permitted citizens to sue government agencies was therefore seen a tremendous democratic advance.<sup>152</sup>

The MPGs also supported increasing the status of the CPPCC, their main forum for raising issues and promoting themselves. To make the CPPCC more effective, MPG members recognised that they needed to be able to speak more openly on issues of importance; they requested the protection of freedom of speech. In 1986, the Democratic League's Qian Jiaju raised the need to overcome the problems inhibiting the ability of the MPGs to speak up on issues. He praised what he identified as Hu Yaobang's permission for different voices to exist in the Party. There should be, said Qian, "even more differing opinions outside the Party" as only then would the real situation be understood.<sup>153</sup> While the Party's past denunciations of outspoken allies were not raised directly, the positive example of Ma Yinchu was. Ma's advocacy of population control in 1955, despite the criticism levelled at him at the time, had subsequently been officially vindicated. While he was eventually fully rehabilitated, Ma had paid a heavy price for his honesty.<sup>154</sup> Ma's action was raised as an example of

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<sup>150</sup> Liu Junning, "Zhiduhua yu shehuizhuyi minzhu zhengzhi," [Institutionalisation and the politics of socialist democracy], *Qunyan*, No. 3, March 1988, pp.15-18.

<sup>151</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Zhang Xiangzhuo, "Xingzheng susongfa he fazhan remmin minzhu," [Administrative Litigation Law and the Development of People's Democracy], *Qunyan*, No. 4, 1989, pp.34-35.

<sup>153</sup> *TJB*, July, 19, 1986, p.1.

<sup>154</sup> Zang Kaiji, "Chengshi jianshe de juece ji xu minzhuhua he kexiehua," [Policies of municipal construction urgently require democratisation and scientificisation], *Qunyan*, no.8, 1987. p.11.

the need to protect honest criticism intended to benefit the greater good of the nation and Party.<sup>155</sup> There were calls for the clarification of what constituted public opinion and for that which was deemed acceptable to be given formal status and authority in the NPC, CPPCC, and the press.<sup>156</sup> However, support for this increased freedom of speech did not extend to calls for the complementary measure of increased guarantees of freedom for the media although *Lianhe shibao* did call for editors to be permitted to decide news content.<sup>157</sup> The MPGs chose to concentrate on first establishing a greater variety of publications through which their own existence and united front work could be publicised.<sup>158</sup>

### The CPPCC

Zhao Ziyang's call for 'democracy' was specifically aimed at unleashing the creativity and enthusiasm required to develop a political system responsive to the needs of a changing economy and the continuous growth of production. The fetters on these forces included inefficiency, corruption and low levels of enthusiasm. In the vein of Zhao's instrumentalism, the Democratic League's vice-chair Guan Mengjue summarised democracy as a method and a weapon for controlling corruption, a guarantee against the committing of major errors and a means of activating the people's enthusiasm. The form of this method was consultation; socialist democracy was perceived to be consultation combined with training to raise democratic morality and discipline.<sup>159</sup>

The forums for consultation were the NPC and the CPPCC and much of MPG criticism was directed towards the improvement of the consultative system. These criticisms demonstrated that problems raised in 1986 by Zhigong leader, Yu Yunbo, remained substantially unresolved. The existing political arrangements did indeed need reform to enable them to become a system of formal structures and arrangements based

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<sup>155</sup> *TJB*, April 9, 1988, p.2.

<sup>156</sup> *TJB*, August 13, 1988 p.1.

<sup>157</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, November 25, 1988, p.4. *Lianhe shibao*, March 10, 1989, p.1.

<sup>158</sup> The Democratic League's Shang Ding invoked the support of the UFDs' deputy head Song Ping in support of these calls. *Lianhe shibao*, April 14, 1989.

<sup>159</sup> *TJB*, September 27, 1988 p.2.

on policies and principles rather than the arbitrary will and personal connections. This process needed strong mass supervision throughout the system both vertically, from Central to lower levels, and particularly horizontally where, Yu maintained, it was especially weak. Yu argued that situations where “the Party hands direct, the NPC hands are raised, the government’s hands do the work, and the CPPCC hands only applaud,” had to change. The stacking of both the CPPCC and NPC, particularly with retiring Party leaders, was regarded as deleterious to both organisations.<sup>160</sup> The issue of stacking related directly to perceptions about the quality of CPPCC representatives. Jiusan criticised the appointment of people on the basis of their “looks” rather than their political skills.<sup>161</sup> The Revolutionary GMD’s Zhu Xuefan called for CPPCC representatives to be talented individuals willing to undergo appropriate training.<sup>162</sup>

Throughout these criticisms, the subject of the separation of the Party from government was raised only cautiously by the MPGs. One exception was the National Construction Association’s vice-chair, Wan Guoquan, who was disturbed by the exclusion of NCA experts from responsible positions of power. Wan called openly for a separation between the Party and government to be achieved as soon as possible. He argued that this process would facilitate the absorption of non-Party people into administrative positions with commensurate power and responsibilities.<sup>163</sup>

Zhu Xuefan and Wan again focussed the debate about consultation on the question of technical expertise. The question of democratisation, supervision and consultation were for the MPGs inextricably linked with scientificisation. For the MPGs, this relationship had earlier been neatly expressed in 1986, by Jiusan member and the deputy head of the CASS, Yan Dongshen, when he wrote that “policy = democracy/science = procedure turned into law.”<sup>164</sup> The MPGs were well aware that their ability to influence the Party and change official policy was contingent on the political and scientific credibility of their proposals. Outstanding technical expertise

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<sup>160</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxie Bao*, September 19, 1986, p.1.

<sup>161</sup> *TJB*, March 7, 1989, p.2.

<sup>162</sup> *TJB*, March 7, 1989, p.1.

<sup>163</sup> “Dang-Zheng fenkai yao falu baozhang,” [The separation of Party and state requires legal guarantees], *Renmin ribao*, December 13, 1987, p.5.

<sup>164</sup> *Shanghai Zhengxie Bao*, August 22, 1986, p.1.

was the only real avenue available to the MPGs to demonstrate the superiority of their proposals over those of the government. To substantiate their scientific and technical strengths the MPGs increased their emphasis on research and investigations by establishing new special investigation teams.<sup>165</sup>

However, the effectiveness of the main forum for voicing the MPGs' expertise, the CPPCC, was far from ideal. In mid-1988, *Tuanjie bao* claimed that many issues raised in the Conference were not resolved or even responded to by the organisations in question. The paper criticised the perfunctoriness of the Conference as one of its major failings. This shortcoming was attributed in part to representatives being informed of meeting agendas so late that there was no time to investigate and research the issues to be discussed. To compound these problems, the conferences generally were too large, involved too much reading, and lacked adequate time for speeches. As solutions, the paper suggested setting reasonable agendas, providing ample notification of agendas and setting specific times within which organisations being criticised or addressed had to respond. However, the most important proposal for boosting MPG effectiveness was to allow them to organise within the Conferences as formal party blocs. For while the MPG delegates attended the CPPCC as MPG members, they still did so as individuals and they were not permitted to establish party organisations within the CPPCC.<sup>166</sup> This subtle restriction was yet another reason why it was so difficult for the MPGs to develop political and organisational cohesiveness.

### **Mutual Supervision and Eliminating Corruption**

The MPGs' ineffectiveness as political parties did not undermine Party legitimacy but corruption, inefficiency and bureaucratic mismanagement did. The MPGs were invoked as part of the solution to these problems but they were given little scope to exercise their supervisory role in combating them. In late 1988, as public complaints about corruption dramatically increased, the Shanghai CPPCC again declared it would investigate and handle complaints about speculation by officials.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> For example, *TJB*, May 24, 1988, p.1.

<sup>166</sup> *TJB*, August 23, 1988, p.2.

<sup>167</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, October 7, 1988, p.1.

But the effectiveness of non-Party investigations was severely inhibited by the vulnerability of whistle blowers and the relative immunity of Party members. In 1986, for example, one Jiusan member who had accused a Party official of corruption was subsequently subjected to harassment by the same official and he felt forced to flee. The case was only resolved after *Tuanjie bao* publicised it.<sup>168</sup> In 1988, the Shanghai CPPCC publicised the case of Li Xiaodi, a Party and state enterprise official who was accused of using his posts to speculate in cigarettes. The Conference demanded to know why Li had not been sacked.<sup>169</sup> To combat corruption, the Democratic League recommended more openness and the further development of the legal system. It also criticised traditional ideas which associated government appointments with opportunities to 'squeeze' those the system ostensibly served and it called for this association to be eradicated.<sup>170</sup>

One practical anti-corruption measure involved using the MPGs as neutral intermediaries through which suspected crimes could be reported. In March 1989, following a joint MPG-ACFIC conference on the same topic a year earlier,<sup>171</sup> a national conference on the establishment of systems for reporting corruption and economic crimes resulted in the creation of a new system of reporting in which the MPGs had an important role.<sup>172</sup> Each MPG subsequently established their own reporting system through which both their own members and the general public could more safely pass suspected cases of corruption onto the Party and Government. Notably, the first such reporting system was established at the central level by the National Construction Association in March 1989.<sup>173</sup> In April 1989, the Revolutionary GMD reported that its reporting system was being improved while the Association for the Promotion of Democracy established their system the following month.<sup>174</sup> This system was then

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<sup>168</sup> *TJB*, March 19, 1986, p.1. For the resolution see *TJB*, April 20, 1987.

<sup>169</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, September 9, 1988, p.1.

<sup>170</sup> *TJB*, April 3, 1988, p.1; *TJB*, August 13, 1988, p.1.

<sup>171</sup> *TJB*, December 3, 1988, p.1.

<sup>172</sup> This conference, convened by the UFD, was attended by the MPGs, ACFIC, the CCP Central Discipline Commission, the Supreme People's Procurate, Supreme People's Court, and the Ministry of Supervision. Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.461.

<sup>173</sup> *TJB*, March 7, 1989, p.1.

<sup>174</sup> *TJB*, April 3, 1989 and "Minjin zhongyang jianli jubao zhidu"[APD Central Committee establishes reporting system], *TJB*, May 6, 1989, p.1.

progressively extended downwards.<sup>175</sup> By late 1989, the Shanghai CPPCC had received 12,000 such MPG reports in addition to 13,000 reports direct from the public between January and July. These reports included 236 cases the Conference classified as “major.”<sup>176</sup> But the economic reform process had not only allowed more opportunities for corruption, it had also created groups which needed to be integrated into the existing system.

### **The UFD's Response to Increasing Social Pluralisation**

The MPGs were not the only united front groups to undergo important changes in the late 1980s. The UFD's recognition of the emerging new socio-economic groups led to important changes to several economic interest-related organisations. The organisations closest to the new entrepreneurs were the NCA and the ACFIC. The Federation was the natural choice for expansion if the new entrepreneurs were to be incorporated into the existing united front system. Despite its united front role and intimate relationship with the National Construction Association, the Federation was classified as a mass organisation and a non-government body (*minjian zuzhi*), but not regarded as equivalent to an MPG. The Federation was not therefore accorded the status of sharing weal and woe with the CCP,<sup>177</sup> a difference re-affirmed by the UFD in 1987.<sup>178</sup> Before 1966, the Federation had consisted of 860,000 small stall holders, artisans, and traders (the so-called three smalls). It had been revived to take advantage of the talents, skills and connections of former business people but by the mid-1980s its membership was aging and static. From 1984 onwards, the Federation broadened its target groups and began recruiting in state, collective, township and village (*xiangzhen qiye*) enterprises, private firms, and the “three investment enterprises” (*san-zi qiye*): Sino-foreign joint ventures, Sino-foreign joint management, and foreign funded

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<sup>175</sup> *TJB*, October 14, 1989; March 28, 1989, p.2.

<sup>176</sup> *TJB*, October 14, 1989, p.2.

<sup>177</sup> Zhang Yaozhong, “Xiwang minzhu dangpai canyu juece, fanying minyi,” [[We] hope that the democratic parties participate in deciding policy and reflecting the people's opinions], *Shanghai zhengxiebao*, July 11, 1986.

<sup>178</sup> UFD deputy head, Liu Ding to the ACFIC on April 24, 1987. Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.439.

enterprises.<sup>179</sup> These policy changes began a fundamental shift in the composition of the organisation as the "three smalls" declined in importance.<sup>180</sup> At its congress in November 1988, the Federation adopted a new constitution which both reflected and clarified its new areas of responsibility. The most notable manifestation of the Federation's newly raised status was the fact that this congress was the first held independently of the NCA.

The CCP's reasons for upgrading the Federation were clear. The Party now recognised private entrepreneurs as an integral and growing part of the economy, albeit officially as only "supplements" to the dominant state owned sector. It sought to "encourage and guide" what it called their "healthy development." Ultimately, the Party wanted to unite these new groups behind its policies and educate them politically. To achieve these aims the UFD recognised the need to understand the "political attitudes, economic strengths and personnel structures" of this sector. Such knowledge was an essential pre-requisite to enable the successful implementation of propaganda and political education work amongst these groups; to resolve any internal conflicts amongst them; and to resolve problems between them and Party and government organisations. To achieve these goals, the CCP designated the Federation the legitimate representative and protector of the legal interests of the non-state sector. The UFD recognised that the task of selecting, training, and appointing private entrepreneur representatives was facilitated by the access to them provided by the Federation.<sup>181</sup>

In a move which had set a very important precedent for later united front work in the 1990s, the Party directed the UFD to assist the organisation of private enterprises into non-government organisations and encourage them to implement policies of self-education and self-government. These new UFD sponsored organisations would act as bridges between private business and the government. It was the UFD's role to actively

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<sup>179</sup> Zhonggong zhongyang tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu (eds), *Tongyi zhanxian gongzuo ganbu jiben duwu: tongyi zhanxian wenxuan*, [Basic readings on united front work for cadres; selected united front works], (neibu) Yanshan chubanshe Beijing, 1992), p.414. (hereafter *Basic readings on united front work for cadres*).

<sup>180</sup> By 1991, the number of 'three smalls' members had shrunk to 300,000. *ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> "Guanyu kaizhan siying qiye tongzhan gongzuo de ji dian yijian," [Several opinions on launching united front work in private industry] (March 31, 1989), *Selected united front policies*, pp.262-263.

encourage the ACFIC to recruit among these new target groups.<sup>182</sup> The UFD planned to develop a complex network of overlapping corporatist organisations allowing the Party access to and influence over the new businesses.

However, the united front work imperative of maintaining Party leadership was not neglected. From the Federation's inception, the CCP had established organisations in all of its central and provincial branches. Normally Party committees control united front work but in the case of the upper levels of the ACFIC, the Federation's Party organisations are answerable to, and directed by, the UFD. Federation branch staff and vice-chairs are generally Party members while the secretaries are Party members with a good knowledge of united front policy. At the lower levels, the establishment of Party organisations within Federation branches is dependent on the approval of the local Party committees.<sup>183</sup> By August 1987, there were some 1,073 ACFIC branches.<sup>184</sup>

While the Federation's expanded charter included individual *getihu* entrepreneurs, it did not have an exclusive right to recruit them. The CCP had long had local-level organisations for these groups but, as their numbers continued to grow after 1978, the need to control, indoctrinate, and tax them became more urgent. In December 1986, three years after the first public call,<sup>185</sup> the Chinese Association of Individual Labourers (*Zhongguo getihu laodong zhe xiehui*) was established, ostensibly as a non-governmental organisation. Its purpose was to liaise between the individual entrepreneurs and the government. The Association's aims were stated in familiar terms:

... to unite and educate the nation's independent workers and to protect their legal rights and interests, in order to develop society's productive forces, to make the people's livelihood more convenient, and serve the building of socialist material culture and spiritual culture.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> *Basic readings on united front work for cadres*, 1992, p.414.

<sup>183</sup> *ibid.*, p.418.

<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*, p.99.

<sup>185</sup> In mid-1983, the president of the Harbin Municipal Association of Self-Employed Workers, and a delegate to the NPC, used the Congress to call for a federation of such association SWB, FE/7363/C2, June 18, 1983.

<sup>186</sup> Li Pengtao (ed), *Getihu zhinan*, [Guide for independent workers] (Zhongguo jingji chubanshe, Beijing, 1992).

The new Association was not, however, accorded the same status as the ACFIC. Despite being regarded by some as a people's organisation with the potential for a rapidly growing and increasingly wealthy membership, the Association was not granted direct representation in the united front. Rather, it came under the auspices of the State Bureau for the Administration of Industry and Commerce (*Gongshang xingzheng guanli ju*), a feature which allowed the Bureau to use the Association as a tax collector. This feature had important implications for the nature and effectiveness of the Association which will be discussed in a following chapter. The expansion of the boundaries of the ACFIC membership, the re-structuring of existing organisations, the creation of new ostensibly non-government organisations for particular groups, were factors that all set precedents which were subsequently applied to other united front organisations including the MPGs.

### **The Three Gorges Project**

The involvement of non-party experts in drafting policies for the Three Gorges Project was a good example of the Party's 'socialist democracy' in action, a democracy which aimed in part, to prevent the recurrence of previous policy disasters. The debate surrounding the Project allowed the MPGs to use their skills and influence in the national interest but the limits of their influence soon became apparent when the political atmosphere changed. In the early and mid-1980s, the Party's intention of using the MPGs' talents to improve policy-making turned the CPPCC's investigations into the Project into a test of CCP sincerity.<sup>187</sup> Wan Li, the CCP elder and CPPCC chair after 1988, proclaimed the Project as an example of "scientificatisation and democratisation" and it was treated as such by the MPGs.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> A fact implicit in the statements of Wang Xingrang, a deputy head of the Commerce and Industry Department and a CPPCC Committee member, Dai Qing, 1989, p.97.

<sup>188</sup> Qu Wei, "Minzhuhua jincheng de jiaobusheng" [The sounds of the footsteps of progress towards democratization], *Qunyan*, no. 6, 1988, p.10; Ma Dayou, "Sanxia gongcheng juece bixu mingzhuhua, kexuehua" [The Three Gorges Project needs democratisation and scientificatisation], speech to the CPPCC in *Qunyan*, no.5, 1989, pp.23. A good example of this linkage with 'democracy' was provided by Ye Danian's linking of the high level of debate and the national and international interest in the dam as indicating the high degree of democracy. *TJB*, September 17, 1988, p.2.

The Three Gorges Project (*Sanxia gongcheng*) is a 185 meter high dam, approximately two kilometres wide, which is to be built over a minimum of seventeen years at a cost of 12 billion American dollars. The Project will submerge some of China's most famous scenery and involves the relocation of hundreds of thousands of people from 13 cities, 140 towns, and 1,352 villages. The dam's surface area will be over 1,000 square kilometres. The turbines will provide 18,000 megawatts of electricity and greatly reduce China reliance on coal and nuclear power stations.<sup>189</sup> The enormous scale of this project and its huge, economic, social, engineering, hydrographic, and numerous other implications, made it a major research topic for the MPGs and they had raised significant issues about aspects of its construction since the proposal had been revived in the early 1980s.<sup>190</sup>

In 1983, the State Planning Commission committed itself to extensive consultation on major projects and this included discussing the dam with the MPGs.<sup>191</sup> Almost immediately, the MPGs voiced several major objections: the project was too large, there were too many areas of uncertainty and unpredictability, and it would absorb huge amounts of capital which could be better spent elsewhere.<sup>192</sup> Jiusan undertook its own feasibility study, reportedly with support from the Sichuan provincial government.<sup>193</sup> Jiusan's report was widely distributed and is said to have been influential at the national, State Council level. Jiusan's criticisms, those of others, and problems with the national economy, helped convince China's leaders to delay making a financial commitment between 1985 and 1987.<sup>194</sup>

Between 1987 and June 1989, the MPGs continued to debate the Three Gorges Project extensively and they covered it widely in their journals and papers, including a special regular section in *Qunyan*. The CCP's 1987 promise of greater democracy was

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<sup>189</sup> Lawrence R. Sullivan, "The Three Gorges Project: Damned if They Do?", *Current History*, September, 1995, p.226.

<sup>190</sup> Sun Yatsen, Jiang Jieshi, and Mao all had visions of building the dam.

<sup>191</sup> Kenneth Leiberthal and Micheal Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China; Leaders, Structures, and Processes*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988), p.320.

<sup>192</sup> This was still the general response of all MPGs interviewed in Shanghai in 1993.

<sup>193</sup> "Jiusan xueshe zhongyang zhixing ju guanyu Sanxia gongcheng wenti de yi-jian he jianyi," [Jiusan Study Society Central Committee Implementation Department opinions and suggestions on the Three Gorges Project] (July 1987), *Jiusan Study Society: selected historical materials*, 1991, pp.324-334.

<sup>194</sup> Leiberthal and Oksenberg, 1988, p.325.

seemingly borne out by this public debate. Ma Dayou's speech to the CPPCC openly critical of the Project was a good example of greater openness. *Renmin ribao* had highlighted claims by the dam's supporters that the project had been proved viable and Ma vigorously attacked this claim declaring that it had caused extreme surprise within the CPPCC. He reminded his audience that 182 CPPCC members had inspected the dam site in September 1988, and almost no-one had approved its immediate construction. In 1987, in fact, the CPPCC's Economic Construction Group had submitted a report to the Conference opposing the Project. Between May and July 1987 this group, "following the principle of observe, listen, question and record,"

convened more than forty forums as well as on-site investigations. A total of over four hundred people attended the forums. These included high ranking officials from ministries and bureaus of economic construction, transportation and communication, water resources, and electric power, geology, seismology, meteorology and hydrology: experts and scholars specialising in related fields: and members from the national and local political consultative committees. The investigative group consulted opinions from all quarters on the question of the Three Gorges Project.<sup>195</sup>

Foremost amongst the Dam's critics was Jiusan leader Zhou Peiyuan who, in November 1988, wrote directly to the CCP Central Committee outlining his concerns.<sup>196</sup> Zhou warned that supporters of the Project tended to see it in isolation when the reality was that it would inevitably influence the entire Changjiang river system. He strongly recommended more specialist scientific investigations into the Project's macro-economic, social, and environmental consequences. Zhou argued that problems raised by such investigations would have to be resolved by more democratic and science-based policy, utilising economists, environmentalists, sociologists, engineers, and other experts. Given the Project's uncertainties, Zhou asked, was it a project suitable for the period of the initial stage of socialism?<sup>197</sup> Two years later, the Revolutionary GMD's Sun Yueqi, another prominent opponent of the dam, and others continued to oppose those who believed that the Project's outstanding problems had

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<sup>195</sup> "The Three Gorges Project should not go ahead," in Shiu-Hang Luk and Joseph Whitney (eds), *Mega Project: Case Study of China's Three Gorges Project*, (ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1993), p.11.

<sup>196</sup> "Guanyu sanxia gongcheng de yixie wenti he jianyi," [Some issues and suggestions regarding the Three Gorges Project] in Dai Qing (ed), "Changjiang sanxia gongcheng ying fou xingjian", China Books Press, Hongkong 1989, pp.9-11. Translated as *Yangtze! Yangtze - Debate over the Three Gorges Project*. (Earthscan, London, 1994).

<sup>197</sup> "Cong zongti zhanlue shang lunzheng sanxia gongcheng," [Demonstrating the viability of the Three Gorges Project on the basis of an overall strategy], *Qunyan*, no.9, 1987, pp.27-28.

been solved and they repeated the list of issues requiring resolution. They urged that haste be made only slowly,<sup>198</sup> a stand publicised in forums such as *Tuanjie bao*.<sup>199</sup>

*Qunyan* openly criticised the Party's priorities, comparing its commitment to the dam with its commitment to education. The dam had been on the CCP's agenda since the 1950's, while education had only been given priority at the CCP's twelfth congress. Moreover, since the Thirteenth congress, funding for high school students was very low, five yuan per student (about one Australian dollar), and only one yuan for primary school students (approximately twenty cents). In contrast, the Party wished to raise billions of yuan for a dam of questionable viability.<sup>200</sup>

Based both on investigations and reports by its own experts and "several major volumes" of papers and articles prepared by members of the CASS Three Gorges Project Feasibility Study Team,<sup>201</sup> the CPPCC counselled the Party and government in the strongest of terms that the project should not go ahead. The Conference referred to the many unresolved issues: the enormity of the investment required; the uncertainty about whether the dam would, overall, decrease flooding; siltation problems; harm to river transport; poor prospects for power generation; the resettlement of hundreds of thousands of people; unresolved issues of dam safety (especially given recent major dam failures); and the increased probability that the massive weight of water might trigger earthquakes.<sup>202</sup>

Conflict developed between the CPPCC and the government departments responsible for the Project's construction.<sup>203</sup> Public debate was vigorous with numerous articles published in *Qunyan*, *Tuanjie bao*, and technical journals but the MPGs fell short of feeling secure enough to refute the project's viability out right. The MPGs were well aware that past opposition to government project had been interpreted as anti-Party despite being based on sound technical grounds. In 1957, critics had been

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198 "Guanyu sanxie gongcheng lunzheng de yijian he jianyi," [Opinions and suggestions regarding demonstrating (the viability) of the Three Gorges Project], *Qunyan*, no.4, 1989, p.29.

199 *TJB*, October 25, 1988, p.1.

200 Shen Jianzhong, "Sanxia gongcheng-jiaoyu xianshang naiyige?" [Three Gorges or education, which one first?], *Qunyan*, no.5, 1989, p.89.

201 Luk, *et al*, 1993, p.7.

202 *ibid.*, pp.110-120.

203 "CPPCC members on Three Gorges Project," SWB FE/0422 C1/9 March 31, 1989.

branded as Rightists precisely for such opposition.<sup>204</sup> In the late 1980's, critics like Sun Yueqi were careful to qualify and place their criticisms firmly within the framework of long term co-existence and mutual supervision.<sup>205</sup>

In March 1989, those opposing the dam, including the MPG and CPPCC critics, won a major victory. Two hundred and seventy NPC delegates put forward a general proposal to postpone the construction of the dam until the 21st century.<sup>206</sup> Among the reasons justifying this proposal were the huge cost involved, the necessity of a mass transfer of people, and the environmental consequences. The proponents of postponement called for further studies into various technical aspects related to the dam's construction. The accompanying comment by Xinhua newsagency declared that "the proposal carries enormous weight since it is submitted by almost one tenth of the total number of NPC deputies."<sup>207</sup> On April 3, Yao Yilin declared that "I personally think that there is no way the project can be launched in the next five years."<sup>208</sup> Science and democracy seemed to have triumphed.

However, revealing a major weakness of the CPPCC and of the influence of experts, however, the 1989 postponement of the dam fell victim to the CCP's post-June 4 backlash. The calls for postponement had been the result of a public opinion, principally an elite opinion, influenced by the expert opinions in forums such as *Qunyan*, CPPCC consultative survey and investigative work, and the efforts of CPPCC members. Dai Qing's book,<sup>209</sup> which had done much to alert people to the dam's potential problems, derived much of its strength and authority from the inclusion of the expertise of the MPG leaders, Zhou Peiyuan and Sun Yueqi. Yet after June 4, Dai Qing was imprisoned and *Qunyan* almost ceased publishing on the topic for the remainder of the year. Nevertheless, the influence of their efforts continued to be felt.

Premier Li Peng, a prime advocate of the dam, used the post-Tian'anmen crackdown to make new appointments to the Special Three Gorges Project Committee.

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<sup>204</sup> Dai Qing, 1989, p.94.

<sup>205</sup> *ibid.*, p.80.

<sup>206</sup> Dai Qing 1994, p.24.

<sup>207</sup> "NPC Deputies Urge Postponement of Three Gorges Project," SWB, FE/0426 C1/3 April 5, 1989.

<sup>208</sup> Dai Qing, 1994, p.25.

<sup>209</sup> Dai Qing, 1989.

Opponents of the dam were excluded from the new bodies.<sup>210</sup> In 1992, on the basis of optimistic new reports provided by the new committee, the Project was again submitted to the NPC and adopted. However, while 1,767 NPC delegates voted to proceed with the dam, 177 delegates openly opposed it and 664 delegates abstained. In a forum accustomed to unanimous or near unanimous votes of support for all measures, the dissenting votes and abstentions were a major show of resistance. Almost one third of NPC delegates actively or passively opposed the dam. Many delegates expressed reservations about potential problems.<sup>211</sup> The MPGs and the CPPCC had successfully convinced many people that the dam posed major problems thus even in defeat, the anti-dam votes represented a major victory for science-based united front democracy .

Despite the government's victory, the influence of MPG and CPPCC opposition to the dam was so considerable that the government was forced to continue trying to win their endorsement. In November 1993, it hosted a special CPPCC inspection of the dam site. This inspection team, the largest CPPCC delegation in forty years, included most of the project's elderly MPG opponents (thirty members were over 70). While the UFD claimed that the delegates' faith in the dam had been strengthened and many problems associated with it had been resolved,<sup>212</sup> the delegates' own public comments fell well short of open endorsement.<sup>213</sup> However, the official interpretation of the NPC votes against the dam as evidence of the progress of socialist democracy did reflect an increased degree of official openness, at least on some issues.<sup>214</sup>

## Conclusion

The program implied in the Theory of the Initial Stage of Socialism justified the recent and future changes to the political system designed to partially accommodate the interests of China's new socio-economic groups and allow their representatives to

<sup>210</sup> Sullivan, 1995, p.267.

<sup>211</sup> *China Quarterly*, no.137, 1993, p.486.

<sup>212</sup> *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian* ([China united front], a semi-restricted publication of the Central UFD in Beijing) (hereafter *ZGTYZX*), no.2, 1995, pp.24-25.

<sup>213</sup> There were, for example no direct quotes of support in the Xinhua release of November 16, 1993. See SWB, FE/1851 G11-12, November 20, 1993. "Dangwai renshi kaocha sanxia gongcheng, Li Peng zhaokai zuotanhui ting yijian," [Non-Party personages inspect the Three Gorges Project, Li Peng convenes a conference to hear opinions]. *Jiefang ribao*, [Liberation 3daily], November 23, 1993, p.1.

<sup>214</sup> "Xinhua Commentary on Hardening of NPC's 'Rubber Stamp,'" SWB FE 1633 B2/5-6, March 10, 1993.

become involved in the resolution of problems. There was, however, little that was inherently radical about the program as it conformed with united front theory and past practice. Its connections with united front work allowed the Party to accept it. Past united front practice had, after all, allowed the CCP to project its inclusiveness and the representativeness of its institutions and thus indicate the support of others for its rule. Effective control, however, remained firmly in Party hands. The Party had little to lose and much to gain by expanding the CPPCC; it allowed the MPGs to grow and provided a forum for the representatives of the new groups. Likewise, the CCP could only gain by appointing more non-Party people to government posts. Yet such appointments at the higher levels were few and the Party maximised its control of them by selecting reliable dual MPG-CCP members. At lower levels, progress in delegating any leadership positions at all to non-Party members continued to be very limited.

There was an irony in the liberalisation of this period. As in the Hundred Flowers period, the relative liberalisation allowed for more open discussion on ways of improving the united front system. This increased openness again revealed some of the limits of the MPGs' corporatist structures and nature as groups of experts. The controls on MPG leadership and membership selection was reflected in the lack of accountability of leaders and CPPCC representatives to the general memberships. Even selection of MPG appointments to the CPPCC on the basis of 'looks,' for example, was resented by those who preferred expertise. These complaints had a firm basis. American research has shown that attempting to raise the profile of groups espousing particular causes by associating them with famous individuals can be beneficial but it can also lower the prestige and authority of such groups.<sup>215</sup> In the case of the MPGs, it would also mean that long-time members were likely to be overlooked for promotions and appointments in favour of new recruits with more appeal to the CCP. Combined with the continued shortage of such positions, this could only increase internal discontent and infighting.

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<sup>215</sup> For an analysis of the benefits and pitfalls of recruiting celebrities for political purposes see, David S. Meyer and Joshua Gamson, "The Challenge of Cultural Elites: Celebrities and Social Movements," *Sociological Enquiry*, vol.65, no.2, Spring 1995, pp.181-206.

As some reports made clear, occupational rather than a political consciousness pervaded MPGs. This was not simply the natural consequence of having functional constituencies but, more importantly, also resulted from the external control of their political programs. This control created a degree of homogeneity under which at least some members chafed. There was certainly a desire among MPGs to become distinct political parties. The CCP wanted to be able to refute any allegations of tyranny and claim that the MPGs were real political parties taking part in its political system on the basis of equality with itself. Yet even in the CPPCC it did not allow the MPGs to organise as formal parties, let alone establish a MPG bloc, thereby minimising their potential for organised opposition. Any move to increase internal MPG cohesion and add substance to their 'party' designation was unlikely to be welcomed. This lack of political direction, compounded by the limited rewards would almost inevitably perpetuate the problems of discontented memberships and infighting.

The Three Gorges Project showed how the views of experts, such as Zhou and Sun, could be used to influence elite opinion and generate resistance based on rational and scientific grounds. However, the change in power relations and the consequent change of leaders resulted in a choice of other experts who could be relied upon to make conclusions in accordance with the wishes of the state. The experts were shown to differ and the state had no need to heed the dissenters to the degree it had hitherto. Nevertheless, the lengths to which the Party-state went to in order win a public endorsement of these and other dissenters after the go-ahead was announced, did reveal that their views continued to carry considerable weight.

## The Minor Parties and Groups and the Events of April-June 1989

The political reform process put into place by Zhao Ziyang and others was disrupted by the events which followed the death of Hu Yaobang on April 15, 1989. Hu was a symbol of progressive reformist ideals, a position confirmed in the eyes of students when, in the wake of the student demonstrations of 1986, he was sacked as Party General Secretary. Hu also had special significance for the MPGs. He had been the head of the Organisation Department when many "Rightists" were rehabilitated. Much of the initial revival of the MPGs had occurred under Hu's leadership and he had advocated a reduction in CCP dominance. Just as the CCP itself had invoked traditional forms associated with deaths and funerals to mount political campaigns, the death of Hu provided an opportunity for students to launch a counter-hegemonic political street theatre to protest rising corruption and inflation, call for political reform, and demand a vague and undefined democracy.<sup>1</sup> However, unlike earlier periods in the history of united front work, when the Party had used the MPGs to agitate and organise students, this time the role of the MPGs and the UFD was very different.

### The MPGs in the Spring of 1989

Although very sympathetic to students' demands, the MPGs did not play a prominent role in this movement and no MPG leader inspired the crowds as Luo Longji had in 1946. Minor party support for the students took the form of participating in demonstrations, providing moral and material support on the one hand, and playing a mediating and suppressive role on the other. Similarly, the UFD, once part of the Party's agit-prop work amongst students, was now used in an attempt to mediate with them. The air of uncertainty which accompanied the student movement allowed the MPGs to be more radical in their own proposals but, mindful of the experience of 1957, they certainly did not demand more than was implicit in Zhao's proposals.

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<sup>1</sup> J. W. Esherick and J. N. Wasserstrom, "Acting out Democracy: Political Theater in Modern China," Ch.2 in Jeffery N. Wasserstrom and Elizabeth J. Perry (eds), *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China: Learning from 1989*, (Westview Press, Boulder, 1992). Frank N. Pieke, "The 1989 People's movement, dramatisation and ritualisation of political action," in Chun-Chieh Huang and Erik Zürcher (eds), *Norms and the State in China*, (E J Brill, Leiden, 1993), pp.401-416.

Despite the description of the 1989 student movement as a 'democracy movement,' there is little to suggest that the students' demands represented a call for Western-style pluralist democratic politics.<sup>2</sup> Shortly before the events of April, even so-called bourgeois liberal radicals, such as Yan Jiaqi and Su Shaozhi, continued to uphold the central role of the Party. In a *Tuanjie bao* article in January 1989, for example, Yan Jiaqi upheld the CCP as the core of a multi-party system, with the MPGs being allowed to become more democratic and he advocated permitting *Qunyan* and *Tuanjie bao* to promote alternative views to those held by the CCP.<sup>3</sup> The MPG voices which came closest to Western democratic ideals were not those raised in direct support of democracy but those opposed to the promotion of neo-authoritarianism, a concept favoured in some academic and Party circles.<sup>4</sup> One article in *Qunyan's* May edition condemned neo-authoritarianism for its rejection of individual rights and freedoms. The author argued that the post-1949 suppression of democracy in favour of authoritarianism had destroyed and not encouraged creativity and enthusiasm. More, not less, democracy was required.<sup>5</sup>

The UFD, personified by Yan Mingfu, supported political reform, but the united front publication *Tuanjie bao*, was cautious in its accounts of Hu's death and generally only referred to the subsequent student movement obliquely. There was no official coverage of Hu's death until April 22. Rather, on April 18, it highlighted examples of Revolutionary GMD members raising such long-standing problems as corruption, inflation, and work allocations, the problems underlying much of the rising urban discontent being reflected in the CPPCC.<sup>6</sup> The first comment on the student movement came on April 29 with the reprinting of the *Renmin ribao* notice of the 26th, calling for

<sup>2</sup> A point made by Esherick and Wasserstrom. *ibid.* See also Andrew J. Nathan, "Chinese Democracy in 1989: Continuity and Change," *Problems of Communism*, vol.38, 1989, pp.16-29.

<sup>3</sup> "Ge zheng dang ying zai Renda Zhengxie fahui zuoyong," [Every party participating in government should bring their effectiveness into play in the NPC and CPPCC], *TJB*, January 14, 1989, p.1. Eg., on February 2, 1989 *TJB* published a photo of Yan Jiaqi along with his New Year's wishes for Taiwanese. *TJB* had earlier published an article by Su Shaozhi on Marxism in crisis, *TJB*, December 3, 1988, p.4. Yu Haocheng appeared in *Qunyan* in May 1989, "Lishi fansi," [Reflections on history], pp.14-16.

<sup>4</sup> For writings on this debate see Michel Oksenberg, Lawrence R. Sullivan, and Marc Lambert (eds), *Beijing Spring, 1989: Confrontation and Conflict: The Basic Documents*, (M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1990).

<sup>5</sup> Gao Gao, "'Xin quanwei zhuyi' yu shehui kongzhi" ["New authoritarianism" and social control], *Qunyan*, no. 5, 1989, p.36.

<sup>6</sup> *TJB*, April 18, 1989, p.1.

chaos to be combated. On May 9, *Tuanjie bao* printed Zhao Ziyang's calls for the use of calm and sober means to restore social order.<sup>7</sup> As if to emphasise that China already had democracy, the paper continued to stress the role of the MPGs in combating corruption and inflation by emphasising the roles of the MPGs in Xinjiang and Jiangsu MPG investigations into the tax system.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the only potentially subversive article in this period of rising tension between the students and government was one warning readers to pay close attention to the alleged sources of newspaper articles, to assess their veracity.<sup>9</sup>

*Tuanjie bao* continued to advocate political reform measures, such as the formal incorporation of the MPGs and the CPPCC into the constitution. The Zhejiang Revolutionary GMD maintained these measures would not only contribute to democratisation, but also increase the political consciousness of MPG members. Moreover, incorporation would raise the status of the MPGs. Constitutional recognition would make all levels of government aware of the nature and role of multi-party co-operation, result in greater transparency in government, and increase party consciousness amongst MPG members.<sup>10</sup> On June 3, the paper again stressed the role of multi-party co-operation but, in a move evoking memories of the anti-Rightist campaign and with the potential to serve as a warning against involvement with the students, *Tuanjie bao* began publishing stories on 1958 and the Great Leap Forward.<sup>11</sup>

One of the most interesting articles to appear in united front publications in this period related to the problem undermining CCP legitimacy, that of corruption. A comprehensive proposal to combat corruption came from the vice-chair of the Association for Promotion of Democracy and Shanghai Fudan University sociologist, Deng Weizhi, the most active of the younger MPG leaders.<sup>12</sup> In April 1989, Shanghai's *Lianhe shibao* published Deng's ten rules for bringing about clean government and overcoming increasing public cynicism. They were subsequently

<sup>7</sup> *TJB*, April 29, 1989, p.1.

<sup>8</sup> *TJB*, May 15, 1989, p.1.

<sup>9</sup> *TJB*, May 13, 1989, p.2.

<sup>10</sup> *TJB*, May 13, 1989, p.1.

<sup>11</sup> *TJB*, June 3, 1989, p.2.

<sup>12</sup> It seems that Deng may be a 'red-blue prince' as he is said to also be a CCP member.

given national coverage in *Tuanjie bao*.<sup>13</sup> The paper noted that perennial calls for clean government had hitherto produced few results. Deng's proposed remedies called for:

- 1) clean government becoming the basis of all selections and promotions;
- 2) an examination system for cadres which would test knowledge of anti-corruption measures and laws;
- 3) independent investigations using MPG members and representative from other circles;
- 4) maximum opportunities for people to inform against the corrupt;
- 5) investigations by outside organisations: especially the MPGs;
- 6) maxim exposure of anti-corruption work in all media;
- 7) separating the sources of power and revenue and the destruction of the traditional notion that becoming an official was a means of becoming wealthy. Most importantly, this measure stated that Party members should be prevented from using their Party positions to engage in business. Increasing their incomes was also proposed as a means of reducing the temptation of such corruption;
- 8) all property held by leaders was to be declared publicly with any changes in these also to be notified;
- 9) all presents received to be declared, registered, and made public; and
- 10) promotion of highly efficient government to block the holes of corruption.

The page layout accompanying Deng's rules drew attention to the extent of the CCP's problems. Deng's article was juxtaposed with one in which Yan Mingfu pointedly criticised some provinces for misappropriating poverty relief money to build hotels and restaurants. Directly below this report was another announcing the appointment of Revolutionary GMD members to the Zhejiang Investigation Work Advisory Committee.<sup>14</sup>

Deng Weizhi was also an advocate of political reform. Speaking at a May Fourth Movement commemoration, Deng argued that democracy should be developed slowly. However, he also claimed that the pace of reform had been too slow and that the degree of democracy in the initial stage of socialism should be higher than it had been under New Democracy. Deng pointedly reminded his readers that one of the CCP's periods of greatest prestige had been during the Yan'an era when it had instituted the three-thirds system.<sup>15</sup> In 1989 even that degree of democracy was distant.

### **The MPGs, the UFD, and the Student Demonstrations**

Zhao Ziyang's promises of increased political freedom did not eventuate. The death of Hu Yaobang in early 1989 triggered a wave of student unrest which

<sup>13</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, April 21, 1989; p.4, *TJB*, May 2, 1989, p.1.

<sup>14</sup> *TJB*, May 2, 1989, p.1.

<sup>15</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, May 12, 1989, p1.

culminated in the tragedy of June 4, the dismissal of Zhao, Yan Mingfu and other prominent political reformers, and a setback to the political reform process. While evidence is scarce, it is clear that many MPG members and leaders, as well as the UFD, sympathised with many of the students' demands. Some members participated in demonstrations; MPG leaders sought to protect the students, and the UFD attempted to mediate and resolve what had become an increasingly severe 'contradiction.'

An important contributing factor to the unrest in 1989 was that the long-standing underlying complaints of the student movements of 1985 and 1986 had never been resolved. Poor housing, bad food, tuition costs, problems with the allocation of work, inflation, and increasingly public corruption remained basic sources of discontent. Like so many previous protests, these complaints quickly became emotive calls for 'democracy,' the form and content of which was left unclear. The UFD understood this type of rapid evolution. The linking of concrete problems with vague political demands was precisely the tactic it had used to attack the GMD, particularly in its second front strategy of 1946-47. Significantly, very few students demanded the overthrow of the CCP although they did, at various times, call for the removal of particular leaders, such as premier Li Peng.<sup>16</sup> Rather, they demanded the reform of the CCP and government and the eradication of its ills, that is, they "maintained the hope that the authorities would initiate the changes it was calling for."<sup>17</sup> Their main demands were not for universal direct elections and changing the ruling party but for dialogue with the government and a freer press.

It is not surprising that the MPGs sympathised with the students' complaints as their goals were similar. In 1988, a survey of CPPCC delegates, for example, revealed that many wanted a freer press.<sup>18</sup> This measure would increase the transparency (*toumingdu*) which the MPGs regarded as necessary for cleaner and more efficient government. The MPGs also supported the students' calls for democratisation in the form of increased dialogue with the government. The demands of student in 1989'

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<sup>16</sup> For a firsthand account of this see Liu Xiaobo, *Mo ri xingcunzhe de dubai*, [A monologue by a survivor of judgement day] (Shibao wenhua chuban qiye youxian gongsi, Taipei, 1992).

<sup>17</sup> Nathan, 1989, p.17.

<sup>18</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.13.

closely resembled those of the anti-GMD student protests of the late 1940s. Many MPG members had taken part in these demonstrations and this time, their own children were among the protesters.<sup>19</sup> Some MPG members attended student demonstrations and, with rarely displayed party political consciousness, openly identified their affiliation by wearing headbands emblazoned with the name of their MPG.<sup>20</sup>

In mid-May, some prominent MPG leaders showed their support for the students by signing petitions. Fei Xiaotong (DL), Sun Qimeng (NCA), Lei Jieqiong (APD), and Zhou Peiyuan (Jiusan) wrote to Zhao Ziyang during the student hunger strike. They declared that the students' movement was patriotic, their demands were reasonable and their grievances were capable of resolution through "democratic and legal avenues." The MPG leaders proposed that Central Committee and State Council leaders meet and talk with the students. They also hoped that the hunger strike would end and the students return to their studies.<sup>21</sup> Other MPG members also undoubtedly signed other petitions in their capacity as professionals.<sup>22</sup> Of the twelve NPC Standing Committee members who signed a call for an immediate meeting to discuss the crisis, eight were involved in United Front work, six were MPG members, and one was a non-Party personage.<sup>23</sup> In February 1989, Wu Guozhen, a leader of the Taiwan Self-Government League and director of the All China Taiwan Friendship Association, and Jiusan's Wang Ganchang, signed a petition calling for more reform, an open press and clean government.<sup>24</sup> However, these MPG leaders were very cautious. They made their suggestions and appeals as individuals and did not invoke their MPG status.

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<sup>19</sup> Li Qing, 1991, p.212.

<sup>20</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.13. The photo accompanying Seymour's "Blue Princes" paper shows one such demonstrator wearing an APD headband. Seymour, 1990.

<sup>21</sup> "Letter to Secretary General Zhao Ziyang from four of the democratic parties," in Han Minzhu (ed), *Cries for Democracy: Writings and speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton New Jersey, 1990), p.240.

<sup>22</sup> For example the petition by People's University lecturers "Investigate and determine the liability of news organisations in accordance with law - protect the rights of citizens by legal means," Han Minzhu, 1990, pp.118-119.

<sup>23</sup> Twelve NPC members' letter of appeal for an emergency meeting" (May 18, 1989). In Michel Oksenberg, Lawrence R. Sullivan, Marc Lambert (eds), *Beijing Spring, 1989: Confrontation and Conflict: The Basic Documents*, (M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1990), pp.287-288. Of the signatories Jiang Bing was a former UFD deputy head and UFD adviser; Jin Banying was a non-Party personage; Xu Jialu and Chen Shuli were APD leaders; Yang Jike was a Zhigong dang leader; Tao Dayong was an editor of *Qunyan* and DL member; Peng Qingyuan was a member of the Revolutionary GMD; Chu Zhuang, a blue prince, is the son of the DL leader Chu Tunan and himself a leader in the APD.

<sup>24</sup> "Intellectuals' Open Letter to Leaders," (February 26, 1989), Oksenberg, *et al*, 1990, pp.169-171.

On May 18, in Beijing, the Revolutionary GMD's Zhu Xuefan called for the CCP leadership to meet with the MPGs and work out a solution to the growing crisis. Zhu advocated officially declaring the student demonstrations a patriotic movement and he recommended direct talks be held between the students and Party Central Committee members.<sup>25</sup> These appeals by Zhu, and similar ones by the Zhigong's Dong Yinchu, were broadcast on Beijing radio that day.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, a number of Revolutionary GMD members and *Tuanjie bao* workers demonstrated in support of the students in Tian'anmen Square. They also donated seven thousand yuan to the hunger strikers. Zhu Xuefan and other Revolutionary GMD leaders visited hospitalised hunger strikers. Towards the climax of the movement, *Tuanjie bao* temporarily ceased publication. Whether this signified a gesture of sympathy for the students, or was a consequence of the chaos of the time, or due to CCP intervention remains unclear.<sup>27</sup>

On May 21, the Shanghai Municipal Party called the MPGs to a UFD chaired summit to discuss the local unrest. The MPG representatives, including Deng Weizhi and the Zhigong's Dong Yinchu, supported the Party's measures for ensuring social stability but also called on both the Municipal Party and the city government to continue their dialogue with and protection of the students. They urged the CCP to expand 'democracy' and heed the opinions of all circles. Jiang Zemin, then the Shanghai Party secretary, listened to these opinions and addressed the meeting.<sup>28</sup> Three days later, the Shanghai demonstrations reached their peak when some 200,000 students marched and the movement gradually petered out peacefully.<sup>29</sup>

With many respected university teachers within their ranks, theoretically the MPGs were well placed to influence the students to return to their dormitories. This student movement appeared to be an ideal occasion for the MPGs to use these connections and exercise their role as mediators. In Yunnan Province, the Party

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<sup>25</sup> *TJB*, May 30, 1989, p.1.

<sup>26</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.15.

<sup>27</sup> " Yao wen jian bao" [Important news bulletin], *TJB*, May 30, 1989, p.1.

<sup>28</sup> "Gejie renshi dui muqian yansu jushi ji wei danyou" [All circles extremely worried about the current serious situation: the first major discussion is that democracy must be expanded and the opinions of all circles listened to fully], *Lianhe shibao*, May 26, 1989, p.1.

<sup>29</sup> John H. Maier, "Tiananmen, The View From Shanghai," *Issues and Studies*, vol.26. no.6. June 1990, pp.44-64.

attempted to ensure that the MPGs did not involve themselves in the student movement, or if they did, that they did so to persuade the students to stop their agitation. Yunnan branch members of the Revolutionary GMD are reported as working actively on campuses to stabilise the situation. At the Institute for Minority Nationalities they attempted to persuade local hunger strikers to return to their dormitories. Yunnan University members of the Revolutionary GMD sought to defuse local student demands for democracy by advertising the existence of the MPGs and multi-party cooperation. To prevent Revolutionary GMD members invoking their organisation's name in support of the students, the Yunnan UFD advised the branch secretaries of Revolutionary GMD to dissuade members from such actions.<sup>30</sup>

In Beijing, the involvement of the MPGs and university heads was far less effective. On May 27, the National CPPCC held a meeting of its Chairmen's Committee in the Party's Zhongnanhai headquarters. The CCP's Li Xiannian called on the chairmen and MPG members in particular:

... to use their extensive connections to help all circles, the broad masses of intellectuals and young students to recognise clearly the situation, unite all nationalities and the masses, work together, halt the turmoil and protect social order.<sup>31</sup>

However, apart from the examples in Yunnan, there is no evidence available to demonstrate that the MPGs, especially those at the central level, played this unifying and mediating role.

It was left to the UFD's Yan Mingfu to symbolise the shift in the emphasis of New Era united front work away from uniting allies to isolate enemies towards using allies to mediate social relations and maximise social unity.<sup>32</sup> The appropriateness of Yan Mingfu as UFD head meeting with the students was not recognised by them and reflected the failure of many aspects of united front work to enter the public consciousness. Shen Tong, a student leader and a member of the student dialogue team

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<sup>30</sup> *TJB*, October 24, 1989, p.1.

<sup>31</sup> *TJB*, May 30, 1989, p.1.

<sup>32</sup> This was becoming an important theme of united front work as united front theoreticians sought to develop united front work to cope with the rapid pluralization of interest groups. Zhang Kai, "Shehuizhuyi chuji jieduan tongyi zhanxian de shoyao renwu: xietiao shehui guanxi," [The primary task of united front in the initial stage of socialism: the mediation of social relations], *TJB*, March 25, 1989, p.2.

which met with Yan, regarded the UFD as the organisation responsible for negotiating with the CCP's enemies. "But," Shen asked, "were we natural adversaries of the Party?" Shen saw the occasion as a reflection of the fact that no one more important in government cared enough about them rather than an opportunity to liaise with the sympathetic director of the Party organisation responsible for relations with intellectuals.<sup>33</sup> For Shen, Yan's position as head of the CCP secretariat was much more important than his UFD role.

Yan first met with student representatives on May 13. He relayed to the Party Central Committee, the students' demands that their movement be recognised as patriotic and for their dialogue with CCP leaders to be broadcast live to air. Yan told the students that they should give the Party's reformers, the section most sympathetic to their demands, the time and the opportunity to push their agenda.<sup>34</sup> A meeting between Zhao Ziyang, Yang Shangkun, and Deng Xiaoping on the same day had reportedly agreed to take comprehensive measures against corruption and build democracy "so that the masses would realise that the CCP was genuinely making efforts." Perhaps as one of the concessions by which this increased democracy was to be demonstrated, Yan Mingfu and Hu Qili announced that publications would be given greater editorial freedom.<sup>35</sup> Other measures apparently agreed to by the senior Party leaders were in line with a number of those advocated by Deng Weizhi. They included investigating companies suspected of wrongdoing, publicising the incomes and family connections of high cadres, the abolition of some special privileges, independent investigations into the complaints against high ranking cadres, and the liberalisation of laws on demonstrations and the press.<sup>36</sup>

The students were unaware of the content of the Party's deliberations and dissatisfied with Yan Mingfu's status. Their attempts to contact higher ranked CCP leaders failed. The students were forced to fall back on another meeting with Yan at the UFD's headquarters on the morning of May 14. Yan reached a verbal agreement with

<sup>33</sup> Shen Tong with Marriane Yen, *Almost a Revolution*, (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1990), p.232.

<sup>34</sup> Liu Xiaobo, 1992, p.107.

<sup>35</sup> "A Chronicle of What Happened in Beijing from May 13 to May 14, 1989," *China News Digest*, Saturday, June 3, 1995, pp.1-7.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

the student representatives that in return for dialogue with the government, the hunger strikers would leave Tian'anmen Square.

At a second round of meetings in the late afternoon, Yan and Li Tieying (the son of Li Weihuan and a member of the State Education Commission) were very emotional "and did most of the talking." The promised live broadcast, however, did not occur and a sick Yan Mingfu apologised for the "technical difficulties." Upset by this failure, the students accused the government of bad faith. In response, Yan Mingfu walked out of the meeting.

Yan and Li Tieying went to Tian'anmen Square on May 14 to persuade the students there to call off their protests. Yan was reported to have been in tears late that evening when he thanked a group of scholars, including Dai Qing, as they reported that their efforts to convince the hunger strikers to leave the Square had also failed.<sup>37</sup> At one stage Yan Mingfu offered himself as a hostage in return for the students leaving Tian'anmen Square but this offer was refused.

Two days later on May 16, Shen and other student leaders were twice called to the UFD building as they waited for the results of a meeting between Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng, Hu Qili, Yao Yilin, and Qiao Shi which might support the student's cause. The outcome of the meeting was not in the student's favour and UFD officials escorted the students out at 2:00 am. The UFD continued to help the student leaders, feeding and providing them with transport. After discussions, and after they had been modestly feted by UFD officials, another decision was made to end the hunger strike. However, the agreement collapsed after it was rejected by the hunger strikers surrounding the UFD building.<sup>38</sup>

### **Betrayal?**

The most prominent role played by the MPGs in the events of June was one which seemed to contradict their earlier support for the student's demands. On the afternoon of May 26, the CCP's Peng Zhen called together seven MPG leaders with vice chair positions in the NPC. Peng is said to have told Zhu Xuefan (Revolutionary

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<sup>37</sup> Dai Qing, *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>38</sup> Dai Qing, quoted in *ibid.*, p.5.

GMD), Lei Jieqiong (APD), Rong Yiren (ACFIC), Fei Xiaotong (DL), Zhou Gucheng (PWP), and Yan Jici (Jiusan), that the motives of all but a “tiny minority” of students were pure but that their methods were inappropriate. “Our old comrades (*i.e.* the MPGs)”, said Peng “had a responsibility to help them and remind them to use the constitution and the law.” The problem for the MPGs was that a report of this meeting, including MPG declarations of support for the CCP, was published on June 3, the eve of the military attack on the remaining students in Tian’anmen Square. The report stated that the MPG leaders were worried about the situation and that they had also pointed out that the students’ demands were in line with the policies of the Party and government. The leaders reiterated their own calls for more democratic construction, transparency, and improvements in the work of the CCP and government. The newspaper report highlighted the meeting as a symbol of the MPGs sharing weal and woe with the CCP. For their part, the MPG leaders restated their support for the CCP and multi-party cooperation.<sup>39</sup> While the content was in itself standard fare, the timing of its publication was crucial as the appearance of the article is said to have greatly angered the leaders concerned. Its publication was almost certainly intended as an endorsement of the CCP's actions on June 4.

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<sup>39</sup> "Yiding he gongchandang yiqi wending jushi," [Definitely work together with the CCP to stabilise the situation], *TJB*, June 3, 1989 p.1.

*Chapter 11***The Continuous Expansion and Vertical Integration of Corporatist Organisations within the United front: 1989-1996**

The student movement of the summer of 1989, came to an abrupt and violent end on June 4 after the CCP sent the army into Tian'anmen Square. The MPGs had sympathised with the students' demands and called for the CCP to regard the student protests as patriotic, yet their role in criticising the Party had been minor. Even so, the CCP was left with a dilemma. Previous suppressions of intellectuals had resulted in their retreat into a passivity that had severely undermined the Party's ability to achieve its development goals and contributed to other setbacks. If the CCP launched another anti-Rightist-type campaign against intellectuals and their MPG representatives it would destroy its post-Mao united front work with intellectuals and its attempts to build 'socialist democracy.' Since 1978, the CCP had recognised that the intellectuals were vital to modernisation and had used the MPGs to symbolise this recognition; the Party could not now launch a broad attack against either without wrecking its plans for development.

Moreover, the demands for reform had not been limited to academic intellectuals; the National Construction Association had supported calls for reform and CITIC had even supported some CCP radicals.<sup>1</sup> Many small private entrepreneurs had also given moral and material support the students.<sup>2</sup> The successful continuation of economic development depended to a significant degree on the continued active support of the MPGs' constituencies of intelligentsia and the growing classes of technical intellectuals, particularly those in the NCA and the ACFIC. Resorting yet again to repression might re-awaken latent fears of a return to a socialism reminiscent of 1950s and 60s, especially among those former capitalists who now played an important role in the stimulation of economic growth, and the new entrepreneurial

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<sup>1</sup> Nathan, 1989, p.21. In mid-1990, speculation about Rong Yiren's political vulnerability resulted in CITIC issuing a press release declaring that Rong was in Canada on a vacation to recuperate from overwork and that he had gone with the approval of the State Council. SWB FE/0789 B2/5, June 13, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Orville Schell, *Mandate of Heaven*, (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1994), p.99.

groups. This economic growth underpinned the basis of much of the CCP's little remaining legitimacy.

Since the Party needed as much public support as it could muster at this time of crisis, it could not attack the MPGs while simultaneously requesting public endorsement. The symbolism of MPG support and consent for CCP rule remained vital. If the CCP was to satisfy demands for more democracy on its own terms, or to prove that it was committed to hearing expert opinions from outside of its own ranks, then harming the MPGs would be very counter-productive. In addition, were the MPGs to become passive then their valuable contributions to education and attracting foreign investment would be compromised and the Party's access to their expertise would be greatly reduced.

In Gramscian terms, the CCP's position after June 1989 meant that it had no choice but to continue its passive revolutionary united front work strategies. This chapter relates how, after an initial resort to repression, the Party re-asserted its pre-June 1989 commitment to maintaining and expanding the role of the MPGs as part of its 'scientificisation' and democratisation process. In 1992, in the wake of Deng's tour of Southern China to accelerate the pace of economic development, the CCP made several important decisions on united front work. It decided to continue with the formalisation of the roles of the MPGs and united front work within the political system and to broaden political participation and representation. This included the continuous development of the CPPCC at both the national and grassroots levels. These policies had major implications for the future shape of the MPGs and other united front organisations as the CCP adjusted them to conform with changing socio-economic and political realities.

The Party's expansion of united front work included the incorporation of the growing numbers of people in new socio-economic groups. These groups were less reliant on the state for work, housing, and other services and therefore had the potential to develop autonomously and come to threaten Party authority. Yet these new groups were vital to economic growth and this chapter examines how the CCP expanded its inclusive corporatism to integrate them into its political and administrative systems.

These measures included widening MPG membership criteria to include new groups. Significantly, the UFD intensified its tactics of promoting the growth of corporatist bodies, such as the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce and the ostensibly non-government economic interest groups. It planned to use these organisations to contain or neutralise the political demands of the growing non-state sector. The United Front Department made clear that these tactics were an explicit response to Western theories which posit pluralism and emergent middle classes as threats to dictatorships. The subsequent rise of ACFIC and 'non-government' associations reflected the bias of the united front's corporatism which favoured those groups closest to production. This encouragement of non-government organisations, in which the Party attempted to retain maximum influence, was initiated to forestall the development of pluralism and an autonomous civil society as the Party sought to manage the shift towards an economy increasingly open to market forces.

This period of transition was marked by an expansion of incentives and benefits to non-Party persons in the form of government positions and places in representative bodies. These measures were introduced to reward the newly co-opted and to make use of non-Party expertise to support CCP legitimacy. The Party's increasing need for such support was yet another indicator of the weakening of its hegemony. To compensate for the declining appeal of socialism, the CCP was forced to rely more and more on the national-popular appeal of patriotism. This reduction in the power of the overtly political was reflected in the content of political education in the Institutes of Socialism and the growing problems these institutes faced in indoctrinating their students.

In the wake of the events of June 4 1989, united front work suffered short-term setbacks, such as the dismissal of many reformist CCP leaders and a short-lived purge of the MPGs. However, many of the replacements of those CCP leaders removed or demoted also had strong reformist sympathies. As a result, the policies proposed or set in place by the reformers before 1989 continued to be implemented.

### The Aftermath of June 4, 1989

On the eve of the suppression in Beijing, the Party used Peng Zhen's April meeting with MPG leaders to demonstrate MPG support for the CCP. In the wake of the crackdown the Party again sought the MPGs' public endorsement and, responding positively, they conformed with the corporatist requirement of articulating demands and support for the state as embodied in the CCP's four basic principles. The *quid pro quo* for supporting the CCP's actions in suppressing calls for more 'democracy' and a clean responsible government was continued recognition and privileges.

On June 14, 1989, Premier Li Peng chaired a special meeting of MPG and ACFIC leaders in Zhongnanhai. This meeting heard the CCP's official version of the student movement and the events of early June as set out in Deng Xiaoping's speech of June 9. The presence of non-Party representatives was highlighted as symbolising broad support for the CCP's actions. Li Peng re-assured MPG leaders that the reform process would continue. Most importantly, by quoting Deng Xiaoping's statement that "the system of multi-party cooperation under the leadership of the CCP formed over many years could not have given rise to this counter-revolutionary chaos and change," Li absolved the MPGs of blame for the students' actions.<sup>3</sup> Yet, none of the non-Party leaders present were directly quoted in support the Party's martial law actions, possibly as a sign of MPG unhappiness and sensitivity to public reaction.

The open support of the student movement by some MPG members did result in members of the Beijing Peasant's and Worker's Party being arrested in the after-math of the killings. These members were held for several days, questioned about the PWP's involvement in the student movement but eventually released.<sup>4</sup> Some MPG members left China in fear of the possible CCP reaction, notably the Democratic League's Qian Jiayu, who went to Hong Kong.<sup>5</sup> There was also reported to be some weeding out of politically unreliable MPG members in the CPPCC. Seymour noted the case of the Democratic League's Luo Hanxian who resigned from the Conference, ostensibly

<sup>3</sup> *TJB*, June 17, 1989, p.1.

<sup>4</sup> Ren Yifu, "Interview with a Beijing University professor and Democratic League Central Committee member," "'liu-si' qi zhounian zhuankan," [Special seventh anniversary of June four edition], *Huaxia wenzhai zengkan*, June 5, 1996, p.2.

<sup>5</sup> SWB FE 2836 F/5 February 6, 1997.

because of his “old age” even though at 66 he was a relative young MPG member.<sup>6</sup> It is possible that it was Luo who had asked the CCP to release publicly the names of Party members within the League.<sup>7</sup>

The Beijing Democratic League also held meetings to endorse the CCP’s actions. However, according to a participant, “few people affected a high moral tone” in support of the Party.<sup>8</sup> Describing these meetings, one League leader emphasised that it was the “fake” League members, dual CCP-MPG members “stationed” (*zhu*) in the League, who had taken the lead in making pronouncements supporting the CCP. These dual members were said to work for the Public Security Bureau’s Democratic Party Section collecting information on MPG activities. Responding to criticisms of the League’s “weakness” in the face of the CCP’s actions, the League leader said that it was easy to criticise the democratic parties from the outside “but who,” he asked, “is going to criticise the CCP in front of the Public Security Bureau?”<sup>9</sup>

The MPGs leaders were certainly not going to criticise the Party. On June 14, while acting on behalf of the CCP Central Committee, Premier Li Peng re-assured MPG and non-Party members of the NPC and CPPCC that the “counter-revolutionary chaos” would not change its policy of multi-Party co-operation with them.<sup>10</sup> On June 17, MPG and non-Party personages were invited to a special meeting at Zhongnanhai where Qiao Shi thanked them for their support and suggestions regarding the suppression of what was now officially declared a counter-revolutionary incident.<sup>11</sup> It is not known what the suggestions were but in a further highly symbolic act of public support for the CCP, a delegation of MPG and ACFIC leaders visited injured soldiers in hospital and sent them a formal letter of support.<sup>12</sup> Notably, neither the *Tuanjie bao* nor *Renmin ribao* reports identified which leaders visited the soldiers, further

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<sup>6</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.14.

<sup>7</sup> Zhengyuan Fu, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics*, (M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1993), p.290.

<sup>8</sup> Ren Yifu, 1996, p.2.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Renmin ribao*, June 15, 1989, p.1. MPG representatives present were: Zhu Xuefan, Zhou Gucheng, Yan Jici, Rong Yiren, Fei Xiaotong, Sun Qimeng, Lei Jieqiong, Qu Wu, Sun Xiaocun, Cheng Siyuan, Lu Jiayi, and Hou Jingru.

<sup>11</sup> *Renmin ribao*, June 18, 1989, p.1.

<sup>12</sup> *TJB*, June 20, p.1; *Renmin ribao*, June 18, 1989, p.1. (This visit was reminiscent of those by Zhou Enlai and other Party united front workers to MPG leaders injured by the GMD in the Xiaguan incident of 1946)

highlighting the issue's sensitivity. Likewise, the signatures on the MPGs' letter of support for the soldiers were those of the organisations, not individuals.<sup>13</sup> The party's relative caution towards the MPGs indicated its sensitivity to the MPGs' recent support for the students and reflected a wish to minimise any further alienation of their constituencies. Yet even limited MPG endorsements of the CCP had the potential to undermine the MPGs' standing with their constituencies and the general public.

It is now clear that despite being exonerated by Li Peng, the MPGs suffered a short-lived purge, although the decline in MPG membership may have included some who resigned in protest at the actions of their MPG, or of the CCP, or both. There were no official directions for any purge but the vice-chair of the Association of the Promotion of Democracy Deng Weizhi claimed that many MPG organisations independently instituted a purge in anticipation of receiving such directions. It is not clear whether these purges were initiated by local Party committees, UFDs, or the leaderships of the MPGs themselves. What is clear is that if this purging was a pre-emptive action by the latter, then it would reflect a very high degree of internal fear. Deng claims he vigorously opposed a purge. In July he warned against such action in an article in a restricted publication.<sup>14</sup> Through August and September, Deng continued to argue that the MPGs had not opposed the CCP and were not responsible for the unrest. Furthermore, Deng maintained that a purge would adversely effect public opinion and the Party. In August/September 1989, the CCP issued official instructions against a purge of the MPGs and halted investigations into MPG members' pre-June activities.<sup>15</sup>

The results of the purge may have been substantial. If the combined membership figure of 290,000 quoted by one Hong Kong scholar for 1990 were confirmed, a dramatic loss of 30,000 members was indicated. This represents a 9.4 percent decline from 1989's figure of 320,000.<sup>16</sup> Even if this 290,000 figure is

<sup>13</sup> *TJB*, June 20, 1989, p.1.

<sup>14</sup> Deng says his call, "Dang zhongyang xuande mingque zai minzhu dangpai zhong bu gao qingchai," [The CCPCC should state clearly that it will not purge the democratic parties] was published in the restricted circulation *Jiefang ribao qingkuang bao*, of July 22, 1989.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Deng Weizhi, December 10, 1993.

<sup>16</sup> Kuan Hsin-chi, "Political Leadership and Development," in Kuan Hsin-chi and Maurice Brosseau (eds), *China Review*, (The Chinese University Press, Hong Kong, 1991), 2.25, fn.25. Kuan gives the

discounted, there remains a discrepancy of 18,000 between the CCP's official September 1989 statistic of 320,000 members and the total membership of 338,000 detailed by Zhang Kui.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, *Chinese Yearbook* statistics for 1990 released in 1991, show a total membership of 351,000 while available figures for 1991 show only 340,000.<sup>18</sup> It is highly unlikely that there was any MPG growth in the immediate aftermath of June 4 unless it was by CCP members ordered to join to maintain control and there is no indication that this occurred. It does seem however, that many 'progressive' activists in the MPGs, who had previously been persuaded to remain outside of the CCP, lost faith in the MPGs and sought to join the Party instead. In August 1989, the CCP was again forced to issue instructions discouraging MPG and non-Party representatives from joining the CCP.<sup>19</sup>

These MPG membership figures all indicate that there was considerable turmoil within the MPGs in the wake of June 1989. Yet, it is highly significant that there was no official announcement of any MPG purge. An official purge would have destroyed what was left of the Party's credibility in winning over the intellectuals and would have repeated the mistakes of previous anti-intellectual campaigns. Towards the end of 1989, the CCP and the UFD also adopted positive measures to reduce the MPGs' further alienation and win back their active support.

In particular, the Party made use of political education and the Institutes of Socialism to convince MPG members of the correctness of the CCP's actions in June. Participation and/or support for the student movement was deemed a result of erroneous political view points. There was therefore a renewed need to educate MPG members

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membership of the Taiwan Self-Government League as 12,000 but this is undoubtedly a typographical error and should read 1,200. A more probable explanation for the total figure of 290,000 is that it was that for 1988. Chinese sources generally quote MPG membership figures collated at the end of the previous year.

<sup>17</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.130-131.

<sup>18</sup> For the 1990 figures see, *Zhongguo baike nianjian 1991*, p.367. For 1991 see, Wang Dehua, 1992, pp.20, 27, 32, 39, 46, 51, and 57.

<sup>19</sup> "Zhonggong Shanghai shi wei zuzhibu, zhonggong Shanghai shi wei tongzhanbu zhuanfa Zhonggong zhongyang zuzhibu, Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhan bu, 'Guanyu shidang kongzhi xishou Dang wai daibiao renwu jiaru wo dang wenti de puchong tongzhi,'" [Shanghai Central Committee Organisation Department and United Front Department transmission of the Central Organisation Department and Central United front Department's, "Supplementary notice on the question of appropriate control of the recruitment of non-Party representative personages into our party"] (August 11, 1989), *Selected united front documents*, pp.72-73.

who had “lost their political standpoint and become confused.”<sup>20</sup> According to Shanghai’s new mayor Zhu Rongji, MPG members had to “study Deng Xiaoping’s speeches on upholding the four basic principles and opposing bourgeois liberalisation.”<sup>21</sup> In Beijing, the Peasant and Worker’s Party made it clear that it would exclude from the organisation’s leadership groups those individuals who had been influenced by bourgeois liberalisation: did not accept the four basic principles; were unhappy with the CCP; held independent political views, or who were “wild individual careerists.”<sup>22</sup>

The Institutes of Socialism, such as Shanghai’s Jing’ansi Institute, organised special classes to “bring order out of chaos” and taught their students about Party united front theory and policy.<sup>23</sup> The Shanghai Xujiahui Institute claimed success in eliminating confusion about the meaning of the events of June and in re-affirming its students’ faith in the principle of cooperation with the CCP.<sup>24</sup> This faith in cooperating with the CCP was sorely tested by the Party’s actions in June 1989 and its delay in issuing instructions not to purge the MPGs. The delay appeared to reflect dissension within the CCP leadership about how to deal with the MPGs and occurred when many united front’s supporters were removed from senior Party posts.

The Party’s actions in June posed another problem with long-term ramifications. The crackdown had enough similarities with past Party reactions to arouse strong reactions among the new entrepreneurs, especially in China’s South, who feared that Party policy would again become strongly leftist and its economic reforms reversed. According to the UFD, this fear combined with a “misunderstanding” of “administrative rectification” (*zhili zhengdun*) to generate several problems. As a result of this common “fear of policy change syndrome” (*kong bian zheng*) many entrepreneurs prepared to close their businesses and migrate.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *TJB*, November 4, 1989, p.2.

<sup>21</sup> *TJB*, July 4, 1989, p.1.

<sup>22</sup> *Renmin ribao*, October 23, p.4.

<sup>23</sup> Wu Shuxiang, [Maintain direction, outstanding characteristics and initiative in service], *Shanghai tongyi zhanxian lilun yanjiu* [Shanghai united front theoretical research, a publication of the Shanghai Municipal Institute of Socialism and the Shanghai United Front Theoretical Research Association], no.2, 1992, p.44. (Hereafter *STLY*),

<sup>24</sup> Cai Yiming, "Nuli ban hao you ziji tese de Shehuizhuyi xueyuan," [Work hard to create an Institute of Socialism with its own characteristics], *STLY*, 1993, no.1, pp.46-47.

<sup>25</sup> Nanhai shi wei tongzhanbu, "Guanyu kaizhan feigong you zhi jingji daibiao renshi tongzhan gongzuo de qingkuang yu tihui," [The situation and knowledge regarding the development of united front work

## The Removal of the CCP Reformers

Between the 23rd and 24th of June, the CCP met and dismissed many of the reformers who had sought to expand the united front as part of their democratisation plans. Zhao Ziyang was sacked, placed under house arrest, and replaced by the former Shanghai mayor Jiang Zemin. Hu Qili was dismissed from all his leadership positions and banned from receiving media exposure.<sup>26</sup> Yan Mingfu and Rui Xingwen lost their positions in the Secretariat. Reminiscent of the CCP's treatment of Li Weihuan, it was not until November 1990 that Yan was replaced as UFD director by Ding Guan'gen.<sup>27</sup> In mid-1991, Yan was quietly re-appointed to a senior deputy ministerial post in the Civil Affairs Ministry, the ministry in charge of expanding direct elections at the village level.

While this purge was a setback to the democratisation process, the elevation of Li Ruihuan, the former mayor of Tianjin, a city with a strong united front work record, to the CCP Secretariat went some way to redressing the dismissals. The appointment of Ding Guan'gen to the UFD was a transitional one and he was promoted to the more powerful and prominent post of head of the Propaganda Department in 1992. Wang Zhaoguo, an associate of the reformers, was appointed as UFD head. As the former Governor of Fujian, Wang had seen first-hand the increasing social and political complexity being created by reform. In March 1993, Wang became CPPCC deputy chairman. Wang's promotion to the UFD marked the effective return of reformers to positions which allowed renewed moves towards increased representation and a higher profile for experts.<sup>28</sup>

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with representatives of the non-state sector of the economy]. In Guangdong sheng wei tongzhan bu yanjiu shi, Jingji chu (eds), *Jingji lingyu tongzhan gongzuo yanjiu: Guangdong sheng feigongyou zhi jingji daibiao renshi tongzhan gongzuo yantaohui wenji*, [Research into economic united front work: conference papers on united front work amongst representatives of the non-state economic system of Guangdong Province], (Guangdong sheng wei tongzhan bu yanjiu shi Jingji chu, Guangzhou, December 1993), p.34.

<sup>26</sup> Willy Lo-lap Lam, "Leadership changes at the Fourteenth Party Congress," in Joseph Cheng Yu-shek and Maurice Brosseau (eds), *China Review 1993*, (Chinese University press, Hong Kong, 1993), 2.18.

<sup>27</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.491.

<sup>28</sup> Wang was himself a graduate of the Mechanics Department of Harbin's Industry University. Yet even under Ding Guan'gen, moves towards expanding the representation of experts in the political system continued.

### United Front Policy After June 1989

While the new CCP leadership was more wary of political reform than the leaders they replaced they nevertheless continued to call on the support of the MPGs. Within a week of their appointments, the new CCP leaders met with the MPGs. In his new role as Party General Secretary, Jiang Zemin re-assured the MPGs that the CCP remained committed to its system of multi-party cooperation and would continue to expand the role of the MPGs, people's organisations, and the CPPCC. The system of participation in government and supervision would continue to develop because Deng Xiaoping remained in favour of it. In a conciliatory tone, Jiang indicated that the MPG's past wavering and doubts about the Party and the political system were common. However, a clear understanding of the situation would eliminate doubts. Jiang pledged that reform and economic development would continue unabated. The assembled MPGs leaders including Fei Xiaotong, Rong Yiren, Sun Qimeng, Lei Jieqiong, Dong Yinchu, Cai Zemin, and representatives for Lu Jiayi and Zhou Peiyuan, reportedly all endorsed the ousting of Zhao Ziyang and pledged support for Jiang.<sup>29</sup>

In early July, the CCP again emphasised that it would not revert to repressive policies as it had in 1957 and 1964. Addressing the CPPCC Standing Committee on behalf of the CCP, Wang Renzhong reaffirmed the Party's Hundred Flowers policy and asserted that an absolute majority of intellectuals supported the CCP and socialism.<sup>30</sup> On August 4, Li Peng and Jiang Zemin stated again that intellectuals were a part of the working class with Jiang repeating this assurance to an audience at Qinghua University on August 25.<sup>31</sup> In October, while addressing the CPPCC, Li Xiannian again rejected any idea that the MPGs should become opposition parties but he also insisted that the belief that they only offered mild criticism on minor issues and full support on major ones was "a slander." The MPGs would, Li insisted, continue to consult with the CCP on major issues.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> *TJB*, July 1, 1989, p.1.

<sup>30</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, p.466

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, pp.467-468.

<sup>32</sup> *TJB*, October 17, 1989, p.1.

In December 1989, the CCP demonstrated its continued commitment to political reform with the adoption of *Guidelines for Upholding and Improving the System of Multi-party Cooperation Under the Leadership of the Communist Party of China* (Hereafter *Guidelines*).<sup>33</sup> It was no coincidence that the *Guidelines* were published the day after the Soviet Communist Party abolished the Soviet Constitutional article giving itself exclusive leadership.<sup>34</sup> Yet contradicting this ostensible increased openness was the fact that the MPGs received the document only one day before Jiang Zemin and other CCP leaders met with them to discuss the implementation of its contents.<sup>35</sup>

While detail of the proposals drawn up by Zhao Ziyang's advisers before June 1989 is unknown, the content of *Guidelines* was in keeping with their public pronouncements. While the scale of changes may have fallen short of those envisaged in early 1989, they were a significant step forward in the institutionalisation of MPG related united front work. The document promised a fixed but unspecified proportion of seats in the NPC, jobs in Government and the strengthening the CPPCC's role as a supervisory body. The rights of non-Party persons to participate as non-voting delegates in State Council and local government discussions on important matters were formalised. The promise of more leadership positions was also implied. Yet limits on the development of the MPGs remained. In 1991, Ding Guan'gen made it clear their participation in the political system was not "on behalf of the democratic parties" as parties, but for the benefit of the nation.<sup>36</sup> The MPGs were still not permitted to use any new-found status to promote awareness of themselves as political parties but as adjuncts and servants of the CCP.

To emphasise the Party's commitment to democratic consultation Ding revealed that Jiang Zemin had held 28 meetings with MPGs and NPPs between June 1989 and the end of 1990.<sup>37</sup> Finally, the *Guidelines* called for more money for MPG operations

<sup>33</sup> *Beijing Review*, March 5-11, 1990, pp. 14-18.

<sup>34</sup> Kuan Hsin-chi, 1991, 2.19.

<sup>35</sup> Zhu Qitai, 1991, pp.473-474.

<sup>36</sup> Ding Guan'gen, "Multi-party cooperation and political consultation system," *Beijing Review*, July 22-28, 1991, p.13. For the official MPG reaction to *Guidelines* see *Beijing Review*, February 26 to March 4, 1990, pp.14-18.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*, p.15.

and political education.<sup>38</sup> The latter made the major source of MPG funding clear. More funding for MPG organisational work permitted an increase in the number of MPG publications. The journal *Minzhu* (Democracy) began in September 1989, in the name of the Association for the Promotion of Democracy and was followed in December by the appearance of Jiusan Society's *Minzhu yu kexue* (Democracy and science). These new publications had the potential to reduce the influence of *Qunyan*.

Perhaps the publication with the greatest long-term importance was that of *Zhonghua gongshang shibao* (China industry and commerce news). Published in October 1989 by the ACFIC, the UFD described *Gongshang shibao* as a united front newspaper aimed at commercial and industrial circles.<sup>39</sup> This paper complemented a joint ACFIC/NCA journal, *Zhongguo gongshang* (Chinese industry and commerce), a new version of the ACFIC 1950's publications.<sup>40</sup> The appearance of these publications indicated once again that the Party realised that the post-Mao reforms were permanent; the emerging economic circles needed to be informed in a manner conducive to CCP aims.

Funds were also allocated to improve MPG conditions. This was demonstrated in Tianjin even before the *Guidelines* document was officially released. In one Tianjin district the objective was to resolve MPG accommodation problems and allow each MPG a separate office in a joint MPG-ACFIC and government building. The district government would increase the per capita expenditure money on MPG members to fifteen yuan per year, provide the MPGs and ACFIC with transport and more housing and solve outstanding disputes over the wages and welfare conditions so that the MPGs would come to stand on equal footing with other district organisations.<sup>41</sup> Elsewhere, efforts intensified to fund new MPG offices and Institutes of Socialism. The construction of MPG building in Shanghai eventually began in 1993 and by mid 1995 the Beijing Central IoS dormitory area was expanded to 5,600 square metres.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*, p.18.

<sup>39</sup> *UFE*, p.607.

<sup>40</sup> Initially revived as joint NCA/ACFIC publication in 1980 (as *Fuwu yu xuexi*), *Zhongguo gongshang*, became an internal publication in 1986. In 1988 it was revised to become a publicly distributed united front work publication aimed at economic circles. *UFE*, p.607.

<sup>41</sup> *TJB*, December 5, 1989, p.1.

<sup>42</sup> *Guangming ribao*, June 9, 1995, p.1.

## Constitutional Adjustments

The publication of *Guidelines* was followed by the Party's formalisation of its shift towards a market economy and greater recognition of the MPGs. In 1993, the CCP's abandonment of the planned economy was legitimised when the National People's Congress amended Article 15 of the constitution to read: "the state practises a socialist market economy." This major amendment legitimised the re-emergence of a variety of forms of ownership. At the same time the Party justified the existence of elements of capitalism and partially acknowledged the long-standing MPG demand for the institutionalisation of multi-party co-operation. The constitutional preamble was amended to read that "the system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation led by the CCP will exist and develop for a long time to come."<sup>43</sup> The CCP described these changes as "underlining the theory of building socialism with Chinese characteristics"; they were consistent with bringing sections of the constitution and "more in line with the realities and needs of development."<sup>44</sup> In an important symbolic gesture, the amendment acknowledging multi-party co-operation was submitted to the NPC by the NCA, one of the earliest beneficiaries of the reform process.<sup>45</sup>

As in the past when the CCP had made major theoretical changes, the constitutions of the MPGs were again altered to conform with them. Each MPG revised their constitutions, for example, the NCA adopted the CCP's "economic construction as the key task" as its guiding principle. MPG preambles were altered to reflect the incremental shift towards the separation of the Party from the government. No longer were the MPGs described as parties participating in government under the leadership of the CCP. The preambles now stated that they "use the Chinese Constitution as their basic standard." The MPGs were given "responsibilities to uphold the Constitution and its implementation" while benefiting from the political freedoms

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<sup>43</sup> SWB FE/1651 C1/9, March 31, 1993.

<sup>44</sup> SWB FE/1642 C1/9, March 20, 1993.

<sup>45</sup> Anita Chan, "Political opposition in China", paper presented at "Political oppositions in East and South East Asia workshop," sponsored by the Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University, September 2, 1994, p.26. footnote 21. Shanghai NCA leaders also claimed credit for the motion for the Association.

of legal equality and organisational independence.<sup>46</sup> Theoretically, these changes made the MPGs more beholden to the national rather than to the narrower Party interest.

The primacy of Party leadership was maintained by committing MPG members to the four basic principles and the principle of self-education. However, a love of the motherland and a desire to serve economic construction were regarded as the most important. The demand that MPG members “liberate” their thinking and “grasp opportunities” was also placed firmly in the context of “pushing economic construction to the fore.”<sup>47</sup> As developers of China’s productive forces, the MPGs were required to expand and improve the new socialist market economy. Supporting increased production included such elements as improving multi-party co-operation and political consultation, the continued development of the patriotic united front, the development of democracy and the socialist legal system, the institution of democratic supervision, the elimination of corruption, assisting the development of a stable society and contributing to peaceful re-unification and the success of the One-country Two-systems policy.<sup>48</sup> Similar revisions were made to the constitutions of other MPGs.<sup>49</sup> In the case of the Taiwan Self-Government League, the revisions changed its leadership structure, abolishing its presidium system in favour of the more common chairmen system.<sup>50</sup>

The NCA’s constitutional changes included explicit rejection of any oppositional role. Moreover, as an indication that united front policy was to become more inclusive, the NCA’s changes included extending its membership criteria, to encourage recruitment from the non-public sector.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Feng Tiyun, “Guanyu “Zhongguo minzhu jianguo hui zhangcheng (xiugai cao’an)” [An explanation of the draft revisions of the constitution of the Chinese Democratic National Construction Association] (November 22, 1992). In, Zhongguo minzhu jianguo hui Zhongyang weiyuanhui bangongting (eds), *Zhongguo minzhu jianguo hui di liu ci quan guo daibiao da hui wenjian huibian*, [Documents of the sixth national congress of the Chinese Democratic National Construction Association] (Huaxia chubanshe, Beijing, 1993), p.50.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, p.54.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>49</sup> For example, to the constitution of the Revolutionary GMD. See *TJB*, December 26, 1992, p.2.

<sup>50</sup> “Taiwan self-Government League meeting,” SWB /1554 B2/6, December 3, 1992. This change may well have been as a result of the 1991 decision to tighten the control of the central leaderships.

<sup>51</sup> “Democratic Construction Group Adopts Constitution,” FBIS-CHI-92-228, 25 November, 1992. (Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report (East Asia) (Photographic Sciences, Webster, New York) )

### **The CCP's *Outline of United Front Work for the 1990's***

The CCP and MPGs' constitutional changes formalised the shift in ideological emphasis to the concentration on economic growth that followed Deng Xiaoping's 1992 "tour of the South." At the CCP's Fourteenth Party Congress of 1992, Deng's emphasis was enshrined in official Party policy and subsequently written into the constitution. This emphasis on economic development at the expense of almost all other considerations had important implications for united front work.

To cope with the problems of developing relevant economic policies, monitoring policy implementation, and controlling negative side effects, such as corruption, the CCP again needed to maximise its access to relevant and specific expertise. Many experts remained outside of the Party and united front work was used to co-opt them. In December 1992, the UFD distributed its *Outline of United Front Work for the 1990's (1990's Outline)*.<sup>52</sup> The major thrust of this document was to recruit into the united front individuals who could assist the Party's central task of economic development. Other tasks such as national re-unification were still regarded as important but rendered secondary.<sup>53</sup>

To enable the MPGs to contribute to economic development, each party needed members with relevant experience and talents. Yet, all MPGs had aging memberships and the long-standing occupational restrictions had generally limited their expertise to specific issues such as education or medicine. To compensate for these shortcomings, the UFD's *1990's Outline* contained three major policy changes: permission for the MPGs to grow more rapidly, an easing of traditional occupational and interest-based recruitment restrictions, and encouragement for the MPGs to set up their own businesses. The document itself does not list these initiatives but MPG leaders stated that these changes flowed from this document.<sup>54</sup>

The decision to let the MPGs grow again was an important one. Table 3 below, charts MPG development after 1989.

<sup>52</sup> Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei Tongzhanbu yanjiushi (ed), *Jiushi niandai tongyi zhanxian bumengongzuo gangyao, Xuexi fudao cailiao*, [Outline of united front work for the nineties: tutorial study materials] (Shanghai shi weiyuan wei, December 1992 {*neibu cailiao*}) (Hereafter *1990's Outline*).

<sup>53</sup> *1990's Outline*, p.1.

<sup>54</sup> Personal interviews conducted with MPG leaders in Shanghai in November-December 1993.

Table 3. MPG Membership Changes 1989-1996\*

Year	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1996
Revolutionary GMD	39,133	41,333	40,000	40,000	42,000	44,628	52,000
Democratic League	99,000	102,492	99,000	106,000	110,000	111,059	120,000
National Construction Association	50,000	53,049	50,000	53,500	56,000	58,126	70,000
Association for Promotion of Democracy	48,000	48,217	48,000	50,000	53,000	53,129	62,000
Peasants' & Workers' Party	46,000	47,124	46,000	48,000	48,000	52,233	63,649
Zhigong	10,000	10,838	10,000	10,000	10,000	12,189	N/A
Jiusan	45,000	47,206	47,000	48,766	50,000	53,617	62,000
Taiwan Self-Government League	1,100	1,230	N/A	1,300	1,700	1,355	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>338,233</b>	<b>351,489</b>	<b>340,000</b>	<b>357,600</b>	<b>370,700</b>	<b>386,336</b>	<b>429,649</b>
<b>ACFIC</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>318,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>620,000</b>	<b>670,000</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

\* For a detailed guide to sources see *Appendix A*.

These statistics reflect a period of instability in MPG memberships in the wake of 1989. In 1993, the UFD admitted that in the early 1990s it had adopted a policy of slow MPG development to overcome unspecified problems.<sup>55</sup> Introduced at this time was the stipulation that the Party organisations of the units where potential recruits worked first approve of them becoming MPG members.<sup>56</sup> From 1992, the MPGs again grew steadily as they benefited from renewed CCP attention.

By 1993, membership had increased by 13,700 to 370,000, a growth rate of a 3.8 percent. This rate was well below the UFD's target of ten percent.<sup>57</sup> This low rate of recruitment was acknowledged by Shanghai MPG leaders in interviews conducted in 1993. They attributed the problem to the general loss of interest in politics after 1989, a situation that naturally affected the MPGs. They did not link it with the issue of the

<sup>55</sup> "Guanyu minzhu dangpai zuzhi fazhan gongzuo youguan wenti de tongzhi," [Notice on issues relevant to the development of the democratic parties] (July 1993). Wu Qiansheng (ed), *Xin xingshi xia de tongyi zhanxian gongzuo*, [United front work under New Era conditions], (proceedings of the Eighteenth National United Front Work Conference 1993) (Beijing yanshan chubanshe, 1994), p.91.

<sup>56</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.15.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Shang Ding, Shanghai, November 27, 1993.

MPGs' credibility having been undermined when their leaders first supported the student movement in 1989 only to fully endorse the CCP's suppression of it.

By contrast, there was a significant improvement in MPG growth rates between 1994 and 1996. At the time of writing the only figures available for 1995 was a total membership of 411,484. By the end of 1996, the total known MPG membership reached 429,649. Unless there was a late growth in members, the official 1996 *Chinese Yearbook* figure of 450,000 for the year is improbable.

The available individual membership figures represented a growth of 31 percent since 1989, and 24 percent or 5.8 percent p.a. since 1992. The available statistics for 1996, however, show that this growth was not evenly distributed. The largest MPG, the Democratic League, grew from 106,000 members in 1992, to 120,000 in 1996. This increase of 14,000 represented an annual growth of a mere 3.25 percent while the increase of 9,000 between 1994 and 1996 represents 4 percent p.a, below the 5.5 percent overall average.

In comparison with the Democratic League, other MPGs expanded much faster. The Revolutionary GMD, the NCA and Jiusan grew at rates between 7 percent and 9 percent. The National Construction Association grew faster, increasing from 53,500 in 1992 to 70,000 in 1996, which members represented a 31 percent total or 7.7 percent per annum growth. Between 1994 and 1996 NCA growth was over 11 percent; the Peasants and Workers Party also experienced an 11 percent annual increase. However, in 1996, a Taiwanese paper reported that henceforth, the Party intended to restrict MPG growth to 5 percent.<sup>58</sup> The rapid growth of some MPGs almost certainly re-awakened CCP fears about such increases out-stripping the MPG's and UFD's ability to consolidate and maintain control. In 1995 there was said to be a waiting list of intellectuals wishing to join the MPGs in Beijing.<sup>59</sup> The League's slow growth might have been due to difficulties in attracting those with direct connections to production rather than the intelligentsia.

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<sup>58</sup> *Zhongyang ribao*, [Central daily news] (Taipei), September 9, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> Information provided by Sylvia Chan after a field trip to Beijing in 1995.

### **The Changes in MPG Recruitment Criteria**

In 1992 the CCP departed from forty years of MPG policy. While 70 percent of members would remain within each MPG's traditional occupational or interest groups, the MPGs were now permitted to recruit members to enable up to 30 percent of their total membership to come from groups able to contribute more directly to economic development. This change allowed the new socio-economic groups to be represented in the political system. The constitution now broadened the NCA's membership to include representatives from the non-state sector.<sup>60</sup> The professions which came to be most valued by MPGs were economists, lawyers, accountants, scientists, managers and business people. Many of these young professionals were increasingly employed outside of the direct control of the state economic and administrative systems, as members of the new technocratic elites. These new target groups were divided among the MPGs but there was some inevitable overlap.

In 1993, Jiusan began recruiting among lawyers and managers of private firms, particularly those with scientific backgrounds as only 8 percent of its members were outside its traditional areas of science and technology, tertiary education and medicine.<sup>61</sup> These new members would complement the Society's high level scientific expertise.

At this time the MPG with the most problems was the Revolutionary GMD. The party had a serious problem of membership geriatrication and many ordinary Chinese continued to confuse it with the GMD in Taiwan.<sup>62</sup> In 1992, the Revolutionary GMD's membership criteria were expanded to include not only those with GMD connections and the relatives of former GMD members (even three generations removed) and persons with connections in Taiwan, Hongkong and Macau. Occupation was not deemed to be very important though, in 1993, the organisation did claim success in recruiting newly wealthy rural entrepreneurs.<sup>63</sup> How such members came to

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<sup>60</sup> FBIS-CHI-92-228, 25 November, 1992.

<sup>61</sup> Jiusan interview, Shanghai, November 16, 1993.

<sup>62</sup> While the average age of Revolutionary GMD members was 64, fully 70% of members were over 70 and some provincial branches were in decline as a result of members dying faster than they replaced. Revolutionary GMD interview, Shanghai, November 4, 1993.

<sup>63</sup> Revolutionary GMD interview, Shanghai, November 4, 1993.

join is unclear; they may have been recruited by Revolutionary GMD members or introduced to it by the UFD.

In the Peasant's and Worker's Party, the average age of members was 56, almost a decade younger than the Revolutionary GMD, the problem was not as pronounced. Nevertheless 50 percent of its members were retirees. The PWP is an organisation of mostly health professionals (55 percent of members in 1993). The Shanghai organisation maintained that broadening membership strengthened its claim to be a political party rather than a trade union. The group wanted to rebuild the membership it had in the 1950s among business people, but by late 1993, it had only recruited three.<sup>64</sup>

The Association for the Promotion of Democracy was dominated by school teachers. It was poorly placed to advise on economic construction and it therefore also wanted to recruit in the business sector. To complement its members in publishing, the APD had also sought to recruit in television and radio circles and experienced some initial success. However, the UFD soon intervened and "after consultation" the Association refrained from recruitment in these areas.<sup>65</sup> The implication was that the Party's sensitivity to MPGs recruiting in the media resulted from the events of June 1989 when television newsreaders in particular, had played an important role in subverting official pronouncements.<sup>66</sup>

The changes in Democratic League recruitment are less clear.<sup>67</sup> The Shanghai branch of the League was well placed to participate in economic advisory work with more than 160 members in banking. Like the APD, the League had attempted to recruit in television and radio circles but had abandoned this after intervention by the CCP's Propaganda Department.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Jiusan interview, Shanghai, November 16, 1993.

<sup>65</sup> APD interview, Shanghai, November 12, 1993.

<sup>66</sup> See Esherick and Wasserstrom, in Wasserstrom, *et al*, 1992.

<sup>67</sup> The League was the only MPG in Shanghai to refuse to grant official interviews. Attempts to enter the League's office in Beijing or even to purchase copies of *Qunyan* were rebuffed on two separate occasions. I was told each time that "all responsible people are out of town attending a meeting." Even in 1997, attempts by Chinese friends to obtain access to a complete set of *Qunyan* for 1989 were met with a requirement for a detailed list of reasons for such access and an indication of what was being sought.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Shang Ding, Shanghai, November 27, 1993.

The MPG best placed to take advantage of the CCP's shift of emphasis in united front work policy was the National Construction Association. In 1993, former capitalists still made up 40 percent of the NCA. Membership included all manner of other economics-related experts: accountants, lawyers and managers; university teachers, researchers and scientists; members in government economics, tax, and finance departments and banks. The NCA also included entrepreneurs from the new non-state sector. It even boasted some doctors and artists.<sup>69</sup>

The position of the smaller MPGs, Zhigong and the Taiwan Self-Government League is harder to discern. According to an interview with Shanghai Zhigong dang, 20 percent of members had economic related expertise. As a party representing Overseas Chinese, Zhigong's general advantage was that it was interest rather than occupationally based and therefore free to recruit from any group. In addition to industry and commercial circles, the party claimed members from cultural and education circles (50 percent), and science and medicine (30 percent).<sup>70</sup>

The Taiwan Self-Government League had the severest growth problems. The group was based on members who had relatives in Taiwan and in 1993 it acknowledged its membership was aging and static despite a widening of its membership criteria to include any individuals who had been born in Taiwan. Ironically, Mainland attempts to improve relations with Taiwan had hurt the TSGL. Many younger people with Taiwanese relatives had been allowed to migrate, thereby depriving the TSGL of the chance to recruit them.<sup>71</sup>

The 1993 United Front Conference accepted a MPG development proposal which called for a balance between the "three relations" of "consolidation and development; quantity and quality; and major and minor areas." The problem of geriatrification required a long-term solution.<sup>72</sup> The slowing of their development after 1989 had set back the MPGs' rejuvenation. This became evident at the MPG congresses of 1992 when the same figures had continued to dominate leadership

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<sup>69</sup> Revolutionary GMD interview, Shanghai, November 4, 1993.

<sup>70</sup> Zhigong interview, Shanghai, December 14, 1993.

<sup>71</sup> Taiwan Self-Government League interview, Shanghai, December 25, 1993.

<sup>72</sup> Wu Qiansheng, 1994, p.92.

positions. It was not until late 1996, in anticipation of forthcoming MPG congresses, that MPG leaders such as Fei Xiaotong, Lei Jieqiong, and Sun Yueqi finally resigned in favour of younger leaders.

### **The MPGs Go Openly Into Business**

The UFD's 1992 decision to further encourage the MPGs to operate businesses was, in part, justified in terms of giving them practical experience in economic development. This experience could then be put to good use when the MPGs discussed economic issues in government. Democratic League leaders, following their 1989 visit to Poland, had also noted that such moves contained the potential to reduce financial demands on the UFD and CCP. By late 1993, in addition to their pre-existing schools, almost every Shanghai MPG had set up trading companies and consultancies to profit from their skills and connections.

Not only did these MPG businesses provide experience, they also allowed the pursuit of the overriding united front goal of promoting economic development, which, in turn, helped subsidiary goals such as promoting national re-unification utilising contacts among Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau and Overseas Chinese business people. The Shanghai Revolutionary GMD's Tonghu Company combined all these goals. In 1992, Tonghu was reported to have held trade talks with 50 Taiwanese businesses, and signed 23 contracts with Hong Kong and American companies involving US\$300 million.<sup>73</sup> Shanghai Revolutionary GMD's district branches managed 20 consultancy organisations and a number of trading companies. However, the Shanghai Revolutionary GMD's trading company was losing money.<sup>74</sup>

The Shanghai Peasant and Workers Party's schools were profitable, particularly the Qianjin School which excelled at preparing students for *Test Of English as a Foreign Language* (TOEFL) examinations. The PWP also managed the Wuganke (specialist ear, nose and throat) hospital in Wuxi although technically it was not private (private hospitals were still illegal in 1993).<sup>75</sup> The Shanghai APD established a

<sup>73</sup> *Beijing Review*, March 23-29, 1992, p.27.

<sup>74</sup> Revolutionary GMD interview, Shanghai, November 4, 1993.

<sup>75</sup> Jiusan interview, Shanghai, November 16, 1993.

Promoting Cathay Trading Company, two municipal and five district level consultancies. Forty percent of the profits from these ventures were used for APD activities. Even the TSGL had its own Taishen Company and consultancy.

In Shanghai, at least, the NCA's relation to business was more ambiguous. The boundary between the NCA and the Patriotic Construction Association is unclear. The Jinhua branch of the Association had transport and consultancy companies. These entities were legally distinct from the Association and were said to retain their profits rather than pass them on to the Association.

The organisation with the most substantial independent financial basis was the ACFIC. According to official figures, ACFIC had 1,800 enterprises at the end of 1991.<sup>76</sup> The Central ACFIC controlled 29 business while in Guangzhou, ACFIC enterprises supported over 100 Federation employees.<sup>77</sup> The Federation had taken to heart CCP calls to do such work well.

In addition to these subsidiary companies, there was also an ambiguous relationship between MPGs and other enterprises they helped to establish. Thus, while the Shanghai Municipal Jiusan has its own Jiulong Company, it also claimed credit for creating local *minban* technology companies. The most famous of these is the Songhu Computer Research Institute which was proclaimed "a top ten star company" by the Shanghai government.<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately, the degree of MPG/ACFIC influence over *minban* companies and how the former might utilise their profits to increase MPG independence is unknown.

The MPGs did not neglect other aspects of their traditional roles, such as undertaking consultancies, establishing schools and undertaking poverty relief work. For details of this work after 1989, please refer to Appendix C.

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<sup>76</sup> *People's Republic of China Year Book, 1992/1993*, p.63.

<sup>77</sup> Jonathan Unger "'Bridges': Private Business, the Chinese Government and the Rise of New Associations," *China Quarterly*, no.147, September 1996, p.813.

<sup>78</sup> Jiusan interview, Shanghai, November 16, 1993.

## The Development of the ACFIC

Like the MPGs, the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce was also influenced dramatically in the 1990s by China's socio-economic changes and the subsequent modifications to united front work policies. Among these changes was the rapid growth in the number of entrepreneurs emerging from the rapidly expanding non-state sector. Federation membership reflected this growth. Between 1988 and 1991, ACFIC membership increased from 300,000 to 500,000 and by the end of 1993 it reached 670,000, almost double MPG membership.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, these raw figures masked major changes to ACFIC policies.

In March 1989, the UFD had commissioned a thorough investigation of the private sector including "the political attitudes of its members, its economic strength, and its personnel structures." This research was necessary to allow a "timely grasp of ideological trends in it, and to provide a basis for continually improving Party policy and principles directed at private enterprises." The Department was concerned that the private sector was giving rise to many new problems, some of which posed a threat.<sup>80</sup>

In June 1991, the UFD followed up its survey work and presented the CCP with a *Request for Instructions on Several Problems Concerning the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce (Document 15)*.<sup>81</sup> The document revealed that the ACFIC was declining in both economic influence and as an effective united front organisation. This decline was attributed to the domination by large state enterprises at the higher levels and by excessive Party cadre domination of county level organisations. As a result, the Federation was unable to carry out many of its functions.<sup>82</sup>

To make the ACFIC relevant to the new socio-economic conditions, the UFD called for its re-organisation. Henceforth the organisation was to be the government and the Party's bridge to the new non-state enterprises. The Federation was to now

<sup>79</sup> 1988 and 1991 statistics from *UFE*: p.297. 1993: *Renmin ribao*, October 18, 1993.

<sup>80</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu yinfa, 'Guanyu zhankai siying qiye tongzhan gongzuo' de tongzhi" [Central UFD notice on 'Several opinions on the launching of private enterprises united front work'] (March 31, 1989), *Selected united front documents*, pp.262-263

<sup>81</sup> Zhongyang tongzhan bu "Guanyu gongshanglian ruogan wenti de qingshi," in *Basic readings on united front work for cadres*, pp.413-418. Much of this document is included in "Yuan Ch'i-t'ung's (Yuan Qitong's) Address at the Conference of United Front Work Department Directors of Fujian Province (September 26, 1991), in *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 30, no.7, July 1994, pp.110-132

<sup>82</sup> *Basic readings on united front work for cadres*, pp.413-418.

concentrate on recruiting individual entrepreneurs and enterprises (as corporate members) from the private sector. These new members included representatives from enterprises owned by Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwanese Chinese (the so-called overseas compatriots, *qiaobao* or *sanbao*) and some township and village enterprises. While medium to small state enterprises remained in the Federation as corporate members,<sup>83</sup> large state enterprises withdrew, leaving only their managers as individual members. Other business organisations, such as the Individual Labourers Association, Private Industry Chambers of Commerce (*siying qiye shanghui*), Town and Village Enterprise Associations (*xiangzhen qiye xiehui*), and the Association for Enterprises with Foreign Investment (*Waishang touzi qiye xiehui*) could also have Federation membership.<sup>84</sup> In contrast to the 1950s, when most ACFIC members were individual peddlers, in the 1990s Federation members must have at least eight employees and assets in excess of 30,000 yuan.<sup>85</sup> The Federation's raw membership figures therefore represent a massive economic force.

The UFD had clearly set out to make the ACFIC a major united front organisation. Already equivalent in status to the MPGs, the Federation could nominate members for the CPPCC, people's congresses, and government, attend government meetings and participate in drafting law.<sup>86</sup> As a united front organisation, the Federation was required to carry out the standard united front tasks of supporting the Party and implementing government policies. In a move which anticipated later instructions for the MPGs, the Federation was to develop its own enterprises and "with the trust or approval of the government, take part in concrete economic activities."<sup>87</sup> *Document 15* was designed to maintain CCP control over the new economic sector while avoiding some of the problems which had given rise to the earlier dysfunction. It

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<sup>83</sup> Separate specialised united front work aimed at helping state enterprises had already begun to develop. See for example, Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhan bu zhence lilun yanjiu shi (eds), *Qiye tongzhan gongzuo xinbian*, [Industry united front work, new selections], (Yanshan chubanshe, Beijing, 1990)

<sup>84</sup> *Basic readings on united front work for cadres*, p.416.

<sup>85</sup> Christopher Earle Nevitt, "Private Business Associations in China: Evidence of Civil Society or Local State Power?" *China Journal*, no.36, July 1996, p.27.

<sup>86</sup> Ren Ningfen, "Fahui Gongshanglian yu minjian shanghui de shuang zhong youshi," [Bring into play the twin advantages of the ACFIC and Non-government Chamber of Commerce], *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian* [The Chinese united front] (hereafter *ZGTYZX*), no.5, 1995, p.35.

<sup>87</sup> *Basic readings on united front work for cadres*, p.417.

called for the Federation's CCP organisations to be placed under the direct control of the UFD and for their secretaries to be well versed in united front work.<sup>88</sup>

Behind the UFD's re-organisation of the Federation was a recognition that the non-state sector was generating many new problems. The head of the Guangdong UFD, Xiao Yaotang, revealed that surveys of these groups had identified several negative psychological features. Revealing the legacy of past CCP policy reversals, many of the actions of entrepreneurs were driven by a fear of future policy changes which could result in being forced to wear "pluralisation hats" (*duoyuanhua maozi*) or defined as "new capitalists." These groups strongly resented income level differentials;<sup>89</sup> they suffered social prejudice and discrimination, and lacked legal protection for their interests. These fears made the entrepreneurs very sensitive towards, and fearful of, political trouble. The entrepreneurs' fears manifested themselves in many ways, for example, as a desire to export their capital; contingency plans to rapidly liquidate their businesses; buying false passports with the intention of going overseas; refusing to make long-term plans; indulgence in reckless activities and hedonistic conspicuous consumption.<sup>90</sup> The UFD argued that these features represented a basic lack of faith in the CCP. If the CCP was to win the support of these groups it would need to grant them concessions.

To overcome these problems and reassure the non-state sector, the UFD called for the eradication of the "capitalism-socialism" debate and for education to show the public the valuable role played by successful entrepreneurs and the risks they took.<sup>91</sup> The 1989 designation of these groups in UFD publications as 'private' was replaced with 'non-state sector,' an appellation which is perhaps more accurate given the problems of attributing ownership in China. The Nanjing UFD indicated a preference

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<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*, p.417.

<sup>89</sup> The basis of this claim is unclear. It may refer to the resentment that many workers felt towards the relatively high incomes of entrepreneurs or to income variations between the entrepreneurs themselves.

<sup>90</sup> Xiao Yaotang, "Tongyi zhanxian gongzuo de yige xin lingyu," [A new field for united front work], *ZGTYZX*, no.10, 1994, pp.21-24. Even in 1990 I was struck by the presence of this attitude amongst people in their twenties with whom I lived. A major reason given for their desire to migrate to America was fear and cynicism of the government's attitude towards private property and the possibility of property suddenly being confiscated. For an account of entrepreneurs' inferiority complexes see SWB FE 1553 B2-3, December, 1992.

<sup>91</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, pp.21-24.

for the use of the term “industry managed by the people” (*minying*). Both changes avoided the use of the term ‘private’ with its connotations of capitalism.<sup>92</sup>

The complexity of the non-state sector was also a problem. The sector included not only some of the former pre-1949 capitalists but also *getihu*, private and township and village enterprises, and especially the cadres and intellectuals who had “dived into the sea” of business (*xiahai*) in the wake of 1989 and Deng’s 1992 Tour of the South. One UFD cadre warned that, because of their knowledge of the bureaucracy, government, Party and politics, the *xiahai* group required special attention.<sup>93</sup> These new non-state sector groups were arising, said Xiao, as an inevitable result of the transition from a planned to a socialist market economy.<sup>94</sup> It was transition which had to be managed as carefully as possible.

It was the long-term strategic task of the united front to rally and recruit non-state sector representatives. Although some Western accounts had reported that entrepreneurs were not seeking political influence,<sup>95</sup> Xiao and other UFD researchers warned that these groups were in fact actively seeking political backing for their legal interests.<sup>96</sup> Xiao maintained that the demand for such support, and eventually a place on the political stage would only increase as entrepreneurs’ market consciousness developed.<sup>97</sup> Failure to satisfy them would “result in their ideological differentiation developing into political pluralisation which would weaken and threaten Party leadership.” Consequently, Xiao argued: “We must prevent absolutely non-state enterprises becoming a basis for peaceful evolution.” Nor could there be complacency about their political demands.<sup>98</sup> The new sector had benefited from the CCP’s

<sup>92</sup> Nanjing Municipal UFD, “Kejixing sixing (minying) qiye de diaocha yu sikao,” [An investigation and reflection on scientific and technical types of private (managed by the people) industry], *ZGTYZX*, no.5, 1994, pp.37-39. Li Xiaomian, “Dang wai zhishi fenzi gongzuo de xin de shijiao,” [A new view of work with non-Party intellectuals], *ZGTYZX*, 1995, no.6, pp.38-39.

<sup>93</sup> Lin Senquan, “Shehui zhuyi shichang jingji dui tongyi zhanxian gongzuo de xinde yaojiu,” [The new demands of the socialist market economy on united front work], *ZGTYZX*, 1994, no.4. p.32.

<sup>94</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.22.

<sup>95</sup> David S.G. Goodman, wrote in 1994 that China’s new economic elites had not articulated political demands, “preferring instead to concentrate almost exclusively on the search for material wealth.” In “New Economic Elites,” in Benewick, *et al*, 1995, p.143.

<sup>96</sup> For example, Huang Zhu, “Ba dui fei gongyouzhi jingji gongzuo tidao geng zhongyao diwei,” [Raise the status of non-state sector to even greater importance], *ZTYZX*, no.2, 1994, pp.29-31.

<sup>97</sup> That these groups wanted this representation was borne out by reports of the new rich attempting to buy places in people’s congresses. Jean Phillippe Béja, *China Review* 1995, 1.18.

<sup>98</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.21.

economic reforms but at the same time its members frequently came into conflict with the state through the government's administrative, legal, and taxation demands.<sup>99</sup> Failure to mediate conflicts over these issues was recognised as a basis upon which the groups might fall prey to 'peaceful evolution.'<sup>100</sup>

That the MPGs had a role in the UFD's anti-pluralisation plans was made clear by the MPG with the most direct economic connections. In 1994, Sun Qimeng also stated the NCA's need to contribute to the management of economic pluralisation by uniting with the representatives of these new groups to ensure stability and healthy economic development. Moreover, Sun declared that the political changes required to cope with economic change would be accommodated within the development of the NPC and united front system of multi-party co-operation and political consultation.<sup>101</sup>

The CCP was concerned that, because of their problems, the new groups would fall prey to Western ideology. The head of the Fujian UFD, Yuan Qitong, made it clear that a major reason behind the re-organisation of the Federation was precisely to combat 'peaceful evolution' which promoted 'bourgeois liberal' concepts such as human rights and Western style democracy. Entrepreneurs required education to resist bourgeois ideas. "Ideology," Yuan argued, "is a major arena for the struggle between peaceful and anti-peaceful evolution. .... Domestic and foreign hostile forces have always attempted to cultivate the non-public sectors as the social basis for their strategy of peaceful evolution." As a result of these dangers, Yuan maintained that the most important aspect of *Document 15* was the ACFIC's ideological and political work.<sup>102</sup>

In short, Yuan was speaking for the Party when he warned of the potential danger of this new class demanding political rights at odds with those the CCP was

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<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Heping yanbian*: The subversion of socialist nations and restoration of capitalism by imperialist nations through non-military means. That is, using all propaganda tools and artistic works such as literature and art to disseminate bourgeois reactionary thoughts and corrupt lifestyle, in order to poison the thoughts of the people, dissipate their revolutionary will, making people of socialist countries, especially the younger generation, grovel before the bourgeois "civilisation." Furthermore, causing those with authority to completely relinquish the principles of Marxism-Leninism, to surrender to imperialism, so that capitalism would be restored in socialist nations. Beijing yuyan xueyuan (eds), *Hanying xin ci yu huipian / A Chinese-English Dictionary of Neologisms*, Beijing yuyan xueyuan chubanshe, Beijing, 1990) p.180.

<sup>101</sup> "Guanyu tongyi zhanxian, duo dang hezuo de ji ge wenti," [On several united front and multi-party co-operation problems] *ZGTYZX*, no.10, 1994, pp.3-4.

<sup>102</sup> Yuan Ch'i-t'ung's "Address at the Conference on United Front Work Department Directors of Fukkien Province, (Sept 26, 1991)," *Issues and Studies*, vol 30, no 7, July 1994, pp.120-123.

prepared to accede. The recent unrest of 1989 was a reminder of just how easily specific and often practical complaints could be transformed into dangerous calls for political change such as demands for 'democracy.' The CCP's response was to develop more appropriate political education and win support by resolving some of the entrepreneurs' concrete problems. Such measures were designed to rally this new sector firmly behind the Party.

The political sophistication of some non-state sector entrepreneurs compounded the CCP's concern about the sector's potential to become a political danger. Xiao reiterated that united front workers had a duty to overcome the entrepreneurs' problems because: "the basic function and superiority of united front work is to motivate their initiative for the benefit of the development of production, stability, and unity step by step and we must therefore resolve contradictions and smooth relations."<sup>103</sup> The *getihu*, for example, faced the "three rampants" (*san luan*): the rampant extortion of charges, "donations," and fines. These extortions undermined their incentive to produce and could develop into opposition.<sup>104</sup>

The potential of the non-state sector to become political had already been demonstrated. In 1989, *getihu* "Flying Tigers" had played an important role in transporting and carrying messages for the student protesters.<sup>105</sup> In the 1990s a more mundane but still threatening manifestation of such problems was the strike. In November 1993, for example, some 300 dissatisfied *getihu* in Henan's Pingdingshan city went on strike for ten days. The problem was resolved after a joint ACFIC-UFD investigation proposed conciliatory measures to the local government. A month later, some 100 Pingdingshan businesses refused to pay increased water charges and their water supplies were disconnected. The Federation again investigated, made its recommendations to the city government and resolved the problem within 24 hours. This success, the UFD claimed, helped promote the ACFIC as having the interests of its

<sup>103</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.21.

<sup>104</sup> (*shou fei, tan pai, fa kuan*), Chen Guichu (Nanning UFD head), "Guanyu geti siying jingji de diaocha," [On the survey of the individual private economy], *ZGTYZX*, no.6, 1994, pp.37-38.

<sup>105</sup> In 1997 one of these "tigers" was still being refused re-entry to China despite the fact that many other activists of 1989, notably the Democratic League's Qian Jiaju, who had fled China in 1989, were permitted to return. SWB FE 2836, F/5 February 6, 1997.

constituents at heart.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, the Tianjin Federation at both the municipal and district levels, was successful in reducing taxation on the businesses of its members. It also interceded on behalf of one member who had received an excessive fine. The *quid pro quo*, and a factor intrinsic to corporatism, was that in return for a reduction in the fine, the Federation undertook to police the member and prevent a recurrence of the offence.<sup>107</sup>

### **The Creation of Industry Associations and Chambers of Commerce**

The CCP sought to maximise its influence over the non-state sector by making the ACFIC relevant to the sector's needs. This relevance would increase production and create conditions conducive to the political work which would forestall peaceful evolution. Instead of relying on the ACFIC alone, the UFD also adopted the policy of controlling and encouraging non-government industry, commerce, professional organisations and in particular, chambers of commerce (*shanghui*). This policy of deliberately creating new corporatist 'bridges' between the government and new businesses had been foreshadowed as early as 1988.<sup>108</sup> This program was a natural extension of united front work and had major implications for the potential of emerging, ostensibly voluntary, associations to form the foundations of an autonomous civil society. The UFD's responsibility was to create or co-opt such organisations, to forestall the emergence of autonomous groups and instead to integrate the new groups into a Party-state system and civil society of the Party's design. By creating or assisting organisations which facilitated the resolution of the problems of entrepreneurs the CCP could present itself as both listening and responding to their concerns. In providing real help, the non-government organisations and the Federation would meet the united front work principle that ideology had to be underpinned by the provision of real benefits.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Deng Baoxian, "Jiefang sixiang, wushi chuangxin, kaituo Gongshanglian gongsuo xin jumian", [Liberate thinking, look pragmatically for new ideas, and open up a new situation for ACFIC work], *ZGTYYZX*, no 12, 1994, p.31.

<sup>107</sup> Nevitt, 1996, p.34.

<sup>108</sup> Xue Muqiao, "Establish and develop non-governmental self-management organisations in various trades," *Renmin ribao*, (O/S ed), October 10, 1988 (In FBIS, *China Report* 88/201). Quoted in Gordon White, 1993, p.69.

<sup>109</sup> This principle had been forcefully re-stated by Li Ruihuan at the UFD's 1993 Congress. "Zai Quanguo tongyi zhanxian gongzuo huiyi shang de jianghua," [Speech to the National United Front Work

To prove their utility to members, the Shenzhen ACFIC and the Entrepreneur Trade Association (*qiyejia gonghui*) jointly approved structures to provide consultancy services, created financial structures, industrial groups, recruit talent, and maintain contact with other professional associations.<sup>110</sup>

The ACFIC itself was to take part in implementing the new policy of encouraging non-government organisations. The Federation's Seventh Congress of 1993 approved the establishment of the Chinese Non-Government Chamber of Commerce (*Zhongguo minjian shanghui*) as part of a new "one office, two name plates" policy. The new body, which would co-exist with ACFIC and be staffed by the same people, helped resolve the debate within the Party over whether economic development or broader united front work should dominate the Federation's work.<sup>111</sup> The Federation remained primarily a united front body while the Chamber of Commerce concentrated on economic work, albeit with a small united front work role. The Chamber did not, for example, have the political status of the Federation nor the power to nominate people for official posts.<sup>112</sup>

The UFD's policy of creating chambers of commerce was, in part, a response to developments in Guangdong. For example, in 1988, a non-government Industry Entrepreneur Association (*minjian qiyejia gonghui*) was founded in Nanhai, apparently independently.<sup>113</sup> Only later did it also become an ACFIC member. By 1994, the Association had expanded to seventy chapters and more than 3,000 members throughout Guangdong. The Association's formation was spurred by the practical problems its members faced in dealing with numerous state organisations, sales and distribution. Reflecting fears of a capricious Party-state, many entrepreneurs falsely registered their enterprises as co-operatives in order to gain legal protection. Perhaps the most important problem entrepreneurs faced was the difficulty of securing finance

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Conference] (November 5, 1993), Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi (eds), *Shi si da yilai*, [Since the Fourteenth Congress], (Renmin chubanshe Shanghai, 1995) p.507.

<sup>110</sup> Huang Zhu, 1994, p.30.

<sup>111</sup> Ren Ningfen, "Fahui Gongshanglian yu minjian shanghui de shuang zhong youshi", [Bring into play the twin advantages of the ACFIC and the Non-government chamber of commerce], *ZGTYZX*, no.5, 1995, pp.34-35

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, pp.34-35.

<sup>113</sup> Huang Zhu, 1994, pp.29-30.

and the association could help to resolve this.<sup>114</sup> The Shanghai NCA, for example, encouraged the formation of non-government credit organisations. Industry-based associations could assist members secure private loans from fellow members. Only in 1996,<sup>115</sup> did the national level of ACFIC finally succeed in establishing a national bank for the non-state sector.<sup>116</sup>

The UFD recognised that the members of the Nanhai association identified strongly with it and this identification enabled the association to be effective at promoting "self-education, self-management and self-service."<sup>117</sup> Xiao Yaotang declared that these "uniquely created (*du chuang de*) associations were concentrated, appealing and attractive, with definite economic strength and were good intermediary and united front organisations." Moreover, they were expanding to many township and village enterprises and thus increasing their "scope and influence."<sup>118</sup> The UFD perceived that the co-opting of these associations would cement relations with the CCP and would forestall the use of their resources against the Party. As if to emphasise the link between potential unrest and unmet demand, the Shenzhen General Chamber of Commerce was established through a joint effort by the local UFD and, significantly, the Public Security Bureau.<sup>119</sup> This joint effort minimised the chance of the chamber acting autonomously against the state. At the same time the associations' practical services increased economic production and efficiency. The united front goals of unity and increased production would both be furthered. Xiao argued that the healthy development of the non-state sector required an intensification of the establishment of

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<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> This bank had long been in preparation. Lin Keping, "Tantan jiceng Gongshanglian gongzuo," [Speaking of basic level ACFIC work], *ZGTYZX*, 1995, no.9. p.29.

<sup>116</sup> Jonathan Unger "'Bridges': private Business, the Chinese Government and the Rise of New Associations," *China Quarterly*, no.147, September 1996, p.812. The first such bank had been established in Shanghai in late 1989. Its name and the placement of the announcement strongly implied NCA/united front connections. "Aijian jinrong gongsi fuwu kaiye san nian bianji shijie," [The Patriotic Construction finance Company begins service; in three years it will extend all over the world], *Lianhe shibao*, September 1, 1989, p.1.

<sup>117</sup> Huang Zhu, 1994, p.30.

<sup>118</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994 p.23.

<sup>119</sup> Wu Ju, "Shenzhen shi Zong shanghai guangda wei fei-gongyouzhi qiye fuwu zhineng," [The expansion of the Shenzhen Municipal General Chamber of Commerce is to serve non-state enterprises], *ZGTYZX*, no.6, 1994, p.22.

“non-government professional organisations.”<sup>120</sup> The UFD aimed to be actively involved in this work.

In 1994, the Central UFD specifically called for the implementation and strengthening of ACFIC work with chambers of commerce.<sup>121</sup> Yet this UFD influence, if not control, had been well concealed from outside observers who have sometimes credited the new associations and chambers of commerce with a degree of independence and distance from the government that they do not fully deserve. Jonathan Unger, for example, concluded that these organisations were indeed an attempt by the ACFIC to gain greater independence.<sup>122</sup> Yet not only was the UFD aware of the danger that such independent organisations could pose, it was working pro-actively to maximise its own influence among and within them and involved itself in their establishment from the outset. The existence of these UFD policies also renders suspect the independence of other organisations, such as the National Private Enterprise Research Association which was established by entrepreneurs in 1993 to improve their image. Department officials were present at the association’s opening,<sup>123</sup> and its goals were entirely in keeping with the UFD’s desire to raise the status of the non-state sector.

A study of private entrepreneurs in Guangdong’s Pearl River Delta revealed that membership of the Private Entrepreneurs Association was a crucial factor in the entrepreneurs’ success.<sup>124</sup> The Association provided members with valuable advice and business information. It acted as a substitute work unit by providing and formally endorsing official business documents. Most importantly, the Association, like the ACFIC in Tianjin and elsewhere, allowed members “to bargain with or protest collectively against local government or other public institutions’ unjust rulings.”<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.23.

<sup>121</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhan 1994 nian gongzuo yaodian," [The main points for united front work in 1994] *ZGTYZX*, no.2, 1994, p.6.

<sup>122</sup> Unger, 1996, p.812.

<sup>123</sup> *ibid.*, p.813.

<sup>124</sup> Kai-yun Yang, "The Development of China's Socialist Entrepreneur: an Ethnographic Study in the Pearl River Delta Region," *Issues and Studies*, vol.32, no.12, December 1996.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p.84.

Given the importance of the associations to economic success, it is not surprising that Xiao Yaotang recommended that county level ACFIC, and a range of other such 'non-government' associations be extended to all towns and villages.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, if membership of these organisations provided obvious benefits then the organisations would come close to fulfilling the corporatist ideal of compulsory membership for all members of their target groups. Even in 1991, 71 percent of foreign-funded businesses in Shanghai were members of the Association for Enterprises with Foreign Investment while the national figure was 40 percent.<sup>127</sup> Foregoing the benefits of membership of an appropriate association was likely to result in high opportunity costs.

To further its united front work among the non-state sector groups, the CCP also needed to increase the recruitment of suitable representatives. The role of leaders (*lingtou renwu*) was stressed as the Party continued to uphold the principle of using a few to carry along many.<sup>128</sup> Ranks of new non-state sector activists were required to carry out this task and the work of mutual supervision and consultation in the political conferences, peoples' congresses and government. The problem for the UFD was that its lack of experience with entrepreneurs made it difficult to define recruitment criteria. The development of relevant standards, wrote UFD researchers, required considerably more investigation. There was a pressing need to collate comprehensive personal files on existing and potential representatives and to establish a training system for them.<sup>129</sup> A special UFD conference on this work in 1995 drew up guidelines for this research.<sup>130</sup> Representatives were selected who were successful in business and influential in their peer groups. The UFD, through the ACFIC, the CPPCC and other channels, wanted to "create a stage" on which the influence of these representatives could be enhanced and

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<sup>126</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.23.

<sup>127</sup> Margaret M. Pearson, "The Janus Face of Business Associations in China: Socialist Corporatism in Foreign Enterprises," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, Issue 31, p.25-48, January, 1994, pp., p.37.

<sup>128</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.32.

<sup>129</sup> "Zhongyang tongzhanbu 1994 nian gongzuo yaodian", [The Central UFD's key points of united front work in 1994], *ZGTYZX*, no.2, 1994, p.6.

<sup>130</sup> "Fei gongyouzhi jingji daibiao renshi duiwu diaoyan gongzuo huiyi jiyao," [Summary of conference on investigations and research into the ranks of the representatives of the non-state sector economy] (May 17-18, 1995) Haikou, in *ZGTYZX*, no.10, 1995, pp.21-24.

allowed “to play a main role” as representatives in the CPPCC and People’s congresses.<sup>131</sup>

The CCP recognised the use of self-funding and self-policing groups, to monitor and, to some extent, control the non-state sector would allow a reduction in government involvement. Thus Shenzhen’s efforts to “help the government manage industry” using intermediary organisations, such as the ACFIC and the Entrepreneur Trade Association, were adopted by the Shenzhen Municipal Government in order to assist the implementation of a “small government-big society model” (*xiao zhengfu-da shehui*). The benefit to the government was that these intermediaries eliminated the need to create a special department to guide production.<sup>132</sup> Being self-funding they would not drain government revenue.

The ACFIC continued to have a relationship with the NCA, at least in Shanghai. Small to medium entrepreneurs usually joined Federation and other ‘non-government’ associations. However, those entrepreneurs deemed to have exceptional influence and representativeness were also recruited into the NCA. Shanghai NCA leaders declared that success in ACFIC leadership positions was used as a basis for recruitment into the NCA. There was thus a large degree of membership overlap. Similarly, *getihu* who distinguished themselves in leadership and committee work,<sup>133</sup> together with those with capital in excess of 4,000,000 yuan were also invited to join the NCA.<sup>134</sup> As the MPGs’ membership fee was set at 1 percent of income the NCA was potentially very wealthy and its claim to be self-financing was credible.

A major advantage in joining the NCA and the ACFIC was their growing proximity to political power; NCA-ACFIC members were disproportionately appointed to government positions and, particularly after 1992, their representation in the NPC and the CPPCC system increased.

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<sup>131</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.23

<sup>132</sup> Huang Zhu, *ZTYZX*, no.2, 1994,.

<sup>133</sup> Interview, NCA, November 4, 1993.

<sup>134</sup> Interview, Jinhua, Zhejiang, 1993.

## The NPC and the Eighth CPPCC

The Eighth NPC and CPPCC and their subsequent sessions marked the Party's acceptance of the non-state sector. The increased prominence of mutual supervision and the slowly growing number of non-Party appointments to leadership positions again held up the promise that the CCP would reward those who supported it. The convening of the eighth CPPCC and NPC in early 1993 therefore marked a very important stage in the development of united front work.

The political atmosphere had changed markedly since 1989, and the sessions of both the CPPCC and NPC were more open. The appointment of Qiao Shi to head the NPC was significant as he was reputed to have been close to Zhao Ziyang.<sup>135</sup> Also notable during a period of increasing emphasis on expertise was the fact that NPC deputies were younger (the average age had fallen to 53), and that 69 percent had tertiary degrees.<sup>136</sup> In another positive sign, the MPGs were given the formal recognition they had requested four years earlier. Moreover, reflecting the CCP's concern with integrating the new economic groups, entrepreneurs began to be selected for positions in the political system, particularly the CPPCC.

The CCP's emphasis on economic development and strengthened cooperation with non-Party people, including the new socio-economic groups, was reflected at the highest level of government. In a major symbolic gesture, the leader of the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce, Rong Yiren, was promoted from being a member of the NPC Standing Committee to China's vice president. As a result of this appointment, it was technically possible that a nominally non-Party figure could succeed the president. Deng Xiaoping was reported to have played a key role in Rong's selection, thus confirming Deng's decades of trust in him.<sup>137</sup> Also appointed to the NPC Standing Committee was the other famous "red capitalist," the NCA leader, Wang Guangying. Both appointments symbolised the CCP's renewed willingness to work with business people, even if they chose those the Party could rely on.

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<sup>135</sup> Willy Lo-lap Lam, *China Review* 1994, 2.38.

<sup>136</sup> FBIS-CHI-93-052, March 19, 1993, p.30.

<sup>137</sup> "Official admits Deng Xiaoping's role in picking new leadership," Wang Zhaoguo to *Renmin ribao* March 23, via Kyodo News Service, SWB FE/1645, C1/1, March 24, 1993.

The expansion of the CPPCC's roles in providing political representation and carrying out supervision, as mooted by Zhao Ziyang as aspects of socialist democracy and re-affirmed in 1989's *Guidelines* document, began to take a more concrete form. Much of this progress was due to the reformist Li Ruihuan, a Party leader who had escaped the purge in 1989 despite being close to the 'scientificisation' advocate Wan Li and the disgraced Hu Qili.<sup>138</sup> On becoming CPPCC chairman in 1993, Li immediately began to raise the CPPCC's national and international profile. Li was the first CPPCC head to visit Europe; he encouraged CPPCC tours to foreign nations and reciprocal visits.<sup>139</sup> He was supported by the appointment of the new UFD head, the reformist Wang Zhaoguo, as CPPCC deputy chair. Hong Kong sources attributed efforts to strengthen the roles of both the CPPCC and NPC to Deng Xiaoping. Deng had called for the CPPCC to be given more influence and decision making power.<sup>140</sup>

Among the CPPCC's post-1993 initiatives were moves to further normalise and institutionalise the CPPCC's work, particularly the drafting a comprehensive set of rules to regulate its work in 1994 and its adoption in 1995.<sup>141</sup> These new regulations shifted emphasis of CPPCC work away from symbolising the CCP's unity with diverse groups, to increasing its role of commenting on official policy and acting as a forum for raising suggestions of national interest.

The CPPCC's growing professionalism and the 'scientificisation' of its work was underscored by its increasing emphasis on research as the basis for its work.<sup>142</sup> The five years of the Seventh Plenum had seen 165 surveys and 814 investigations carried out with 130 reports compiled, some 26 reports per year.<sup>143</sup> Yet in 1993 alone,

<sup>138</sup> Willy Lo-lap Lam, *China Review* 1994, 2.38.

<sup>139</sup> By 1995, the CPPCC had sent delegations to 20 countries and had in turn hosted 15 visiting groups. "Ye Xuanping's work report," SWB FE/2244 G/6, March 6, 1995.

<sup>140</sup> "Communist Party of China 'to increase CPPCC political power,'" *Jingbao*, no.11, November 5, 1993 in FBIS-CHI-93-225, November 24, 1993, p.24; *Mingpao*, "NPC and CPPCC to cast off past image of 'political vases,'" SWB FE/1512, C1/9, October 15, 1992.

<sup>141</sup> "Provisional Regulations of the CPPCC Regarding Political Consultation and Democratic Supervision," SWB FE 2244 G/6, March 6, 1995. *RMRB*, March 4, 1996, p.4, "Ye Xuanping zai Zhengxie bajie sici huiyi shang zuo Changwei weiyuanhui gongzuo baogao", [Ye Xuanping delivers CPPCC standing Committee Work Report to the fourth meeting of the eighth CPPCC plenum].

<sup>142</sup> Deng Weizhi endorsed this trend. "Bu diaocha jiu meiyou canzheng quan," [Without investigations there is no power of participation in government], *ZGTYZX*, no.5, 1995, pp.24-25.

<sup>143</sup> "Yao chongfen fahui zhengxie weiyuan de zuoyong." [Bring the role of CPPCC committee members fully into play], *Renmin Zhengxie bao*, ([People's consultative paper], the organ of the National CPPCC, Beijing), September 16, 1993.

by 1994 there were 4.32 million non-state enterprises employing 64.84 million people, figures almost double those of 1992.<sup>151</sup>

Following the model of the national CPPCC, lower levels of the political system began actively recruiting economic group representatives and experts. In order to represent its 70,000 *getihu*, the Nanning Municipal government, for example, increased the number of non-state sector representatives from 25 in 1991, to 107 in 1993.<sup>152</sup> In one Shanghai district the NCA was awarded a special place on a district CPPCC for its assistance in saving a locally-based state-owned enterprise from bankruptcy.<sup>153</sup> In other places, special efforts were made to recruit local entrepreneurs.<sup>154</sup> Moreover, those entrepreneurs who joined MPGs were likely to be counted as MPG members and many may have entered the CPPCC in this manner.

The shift towards more emphasis on economic issues was seen as a necessary part of united front work rather than as compromising it. Economic difficulties and poverty threatened national unity; inflation and collapsing state enterprises threatened social stability while corruption threatened the Party-state.<sup>155</sup> Many of the CPPCC's reports and work were concerned with economic development (particularly in poor and ethnic minority areas), with saving state enterprises, combating inflation, and closing the growing economic gap between Eastern and Western China.<sup>156</sup>

Although the CPPCC handled numerous suggestions, the MPGs made few in their own name; in 1995, only 30 proposals were attributed directly to the MPGs.<sup>157</sup> Most suggestions by MPG members were credited to them as CPPCC members or to specialist committees and teams for which no single group could claim credit. The MPG proposals of 1996 included calls for controls on the migration of peasants to the

<sup>151</sup> Tang Lixia, "Yindao siying jingji jiankang fazhan de zhongyao baozheng," [Guidance is the important guarantee of the healthy development of the private economy], *ZGTYZX*, no.11, 1995, p.38. In 1992, the UFD reported that there 2,330,000 *sanbao*, *getihu* and private enterprises with 6,080,000 employees. Huang Zhu, *et al*, *ZGTYZX*, 1994, no.2, p.29.

<sup>152</sup> Chen Guichu, (Nanning UFD head) "Guanyu geti siying jingji de diaocha," [On the investigation of individual and private industry], *ZGTYZX*, no.6, 1994, pp.37-38.

<sup>153</sup> Shanghai NCA Interview, 1993.

<sup>154</sup> Maurice Brosseau details the case of the entrepreneurial peasant, Zhang Yintian, whose success resulted in nomination to his town's CPPCC, the local AFIC and the the local private Entrepreneurs Association. *China Review* 1995, pp.25-34

<sup>155</sup> SWB FE 1645 C1/9, March 24, 1993.

<sup>156</sup> See Ye Xuanping's CPPCC Standing Committee work report, *Renmin ribao*, March 4, 1996, p.4.

<sup>157</sup> *Renmin ribao* March 14, 1996, p.2.

17 teams totalling 424 members produced 16 reports on social order, prices, minorities and the economic development of remote former revolutionary base areas. The CPPCC's specialist committees researched 41 topics and produced 30 reports.<sup>144</sup>

The eighth CPPCC was marked by a large increase in the number of proposals it handled. In the year to March 1992, the last of the seventh CPPCC, it received 1,682 proposals.<sup>145</sup> In 1995, the number of proposals had increased by 41 percent to 2,377 of which 2,177 were accepted and filed (*li'an*). The CPPCC maintained that 1,937 of the accepted proposals were settled and 1,077 economic related proposals were passed on to relevant units for consideration.<sup>146</sup> The CPPCC reported that in 1995, 1,251 items had been passed to central authorities for consideration;<sup>147</sup> in 1994, only 151 political, economic, cultural and social matters had been referred to the CCP Central Committee.<sup>148</sup> However, the adoption or implementation of CPPCC proposals was ultimately entirely at the discretion of the CCP and government and even if initially accepted, could be reversed, as the Three Gorges Project had shown.

As the supreme united front body, the CPPCC needed to represent the new non-state socio-economic groups. In early 1993, in anticipation of these shifts, Wang Zhaoguo stated clearly the CCP's intention to increase the number of CPPCC representatives from large and medium enterprises, experienced economic affairs officials and economists, "as well as representatives from economic entities in non-public ownership."<sup>149</sup> The first indication that this policy had been implemented was that fifty percent of the Eighth CPPCC were new members. Jing Shuping, an ACFIC vice-chair, revealed that these recruits included 60 ACFIC members, and 82 representatives of economic circles. For the first time 20 non-state sector representatives were represented.<sup>150</sup> The inclusion of the latter was timely, given that

<sup>144</sup> *Renmin ribao*, March 4, 1996, p.4.

<sup>145</sup> SWB FE 1343 B2/1, March 31, 1992.

<sup>146</sup> SWB FE 2861 S1/18, March 7, 1997.

<sup>147</sup> SWB FE 2551 G/10, March 4, 1996.

<sup>148</sup> "Quanguo zhengxie jishi fanying sheqing minyi xiatong gejie, shangda zhongyang," [The CPPCC's timely reflection of social situation and public opinion reaches down to every circle and up to the Central government], *Renmin ribao*, March 14, 1996, p.2.

<sup>149</sup> SWB FE 1615 B2/8, February 17, 1993.

<sup>150</sup> SWB FE 1645 C1/9, March 24, 1993. It is important to note that Jing Shuping was also the Chair of China International Economic Consultants Inc., and a Deputy General Secretary of the CPPCC National Committee. For a detailed guide to CPPCC membership see SWB FE, 1621 B2/5-6, February 24, 1993.

cities,<sup>158</sup> and for the industrialisation of farm production.<sup>159</sup> Xu Mengshan of the Taiwan Self-Government League proposed strengthening laws against regional and departmental protectionism; he called for “a high quality law enforcement contingent,” and a strengthening of the system of legal supervision.<sup>160</sup>

Some of the suggestions credited to the MPGs were designed to further the CCP’s call for building a socialist spiritual civilisation. A Jiusan vice-chair and four other MPG delegates called for the purification and standardisation of Mandarin Chinese.<sup>161</sup> The Revolutionary GMD’s Zhou Tienong advocated compulsory community service for youths, to address what he identified as a deterioration of moral and ideological standards. Jiusan vice-chair Jin Kaicheng called for a “serve the people mentality” to suit the new market economy. Zhou Chang, the Fujian provincial head of Zhigong, submitted proposals promoting “ethical and cultural progress in home towns of Overseas Chinese.”<sup>162</sup>

The increased number of suggestions handled by the CPPCC and subsequently adopted by the government was used by an Association for the Promotion of Democracy member as evidence of the CCP’s growing respect for democratic consultation. As a result, the delegate claimed, CPPCC members were “more enthusiastic about” their participation in running state affairs.<sup>163</sup> Yet examples of CPPCC effectiveness are rarely provided. Even examples of specific demands are not supported by illustrations of successful influence. For example, in 1995, the CPPCC predicted difficulties for peasants after a bumper harvest. It called on relevant departments to forestall the threat of new but unauthorised charges on peasants by local authorities, flowing from an official increase in state grain purchase prices.<sup>164</sup> There was, however, no indication that it had been successful.

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<sup>158</sup> Suggested by the APD vice-chair Mei Xiangming, SWB FE/2862 S1/8, March 8, 1997.

<sup>159</sup> Huang Qixiang, Jiusan, SWB FE 2863 S1/9, March 10, 1997.

<sup>160</sup> SWB FE 2863 S1/6, March 10, 1997.

<sup>161</sup> They abhorred, for example, what they called “alienness, vulgarity, feudalism, and a new trend towards giving children foreign names.” SWB FE 2256 S1/9, March 9, 1997.

<sup>162</sup> SWB FE 2863 S1/6, March 10, 1997.

<sup>163</sup> SWB FE 2866 S1/9, March 13, 1997.

<sup>164</sup> SWB FE 2551 G/10 March 4, 1996.

There was evidence of the increasing dynamism of the CPPCC and NPC sessions, both in terms of activities and in coverage.<sup>165</sup> In 1995, Conference delegates criticised Premier Li Peng's Government Work Report. They queried his measures to control inflation and labelled his economic targets impractical.<sup>166</sup> This criticism occurred despite an internal directive calling for debate to be restrained and instructing delegates not to speak with Hong Kong and overseas reporters. The call was for "more good and less bad news."<sup>167</sup> Nevertheless, there were candid outbursts. In early 1997, only a month after the death of Deng Xiaoping, the writer Wu Zuguang used the CPPCC to call for an official re-assessment of the events of 1989.<sup>168</sup> Less dramatically, the internationally famous actress, Gong Li, used her CPPCC status as a representative of artistic circles to call for fewer restrictions on movie production.<sup>169</sup>

There was another major but almost totally unremarked upon aspect of CPPCC activities in the 1990s: the expansion of local consultative conferences. See Table 4.

Table 4. **The Growth of the CPPCC 1949-1995**<sup>170</sup>

<b>Year</b> (Bold = New Plenum)	National CPPCC Delegates	Local & Provincial. Conferences	Total Number of Delegates
(1) 1949	662	N/A	N/A
(2) 1954	559	N/A	N/A
(3) 1959	1,071	N/A	N/A
(4) 1964-65	1,199	1170	N/A
(5) 1978	1,850	N/A	N/A
1982	N/A	1,800	20,000+
(6) 1983*	1,794	N/A	N/A
1985	N/A	2,800	350,000
(7) 1988**	1,915	2,930	416,146
1990	N/A	2,931	440,000
(8) 1993	2,093	N/A	457,997
1994	N/A	3,041	461,336
1995	N/A	N/A	475,527

\* Note that 1983 was the year that the CCP resolved to reduce its representation in the CPPCC to under 40 percent.

\*\*Note that 1988 was the year that MPG representation again reached 33 percent.

<sup>165</sup> In 1996, there were 1,600 domestic and overseas reporters, special live television broadcasts and an information hot line. SWB FE 2551 G/11, March 4, 1996.

<sup>166</sup> "CPPCC members criticise Li Peng's work report", Yong Ching-chi, *Lienho pao*, SWB FE 2250 S1/4-5, March 13, 1995.

<sup>167</sup> *Singtao jihpao* (HK), quoted in SWB FE 2552 S1/8-9.

<sup>168</sup> Wu used the indictment in corruption charges of Beijing Mayor Chen Qitong rather than Deng's death as the basis of his call. Chen Chiu, *Singtao jihpao*, "CPPCC member calls for re-assessment of Tiananmen incident," SWB FE 2869 S1/12, March 17, 1997.

<sup>169</sup> *Zili kuai bao* [The Independence Daily, Sydney, Australia], (March 1, 1997). p.19.

<sup>170</sup> Shen Ronghua, 1988, p.12; *New Era United Front Documents*, 1986, p.302; Zhu Qitao, 1990, p.448; *Lianhe shibao*, September 22, 1989, p.2; *People's Republic of China Yearbook 1989-90*, p.54; *Zhongguo baike nianjian* 1993, p.392; Ren Tao, *et al*, 1995, p.422; *Zhongguo baike nianjian* 1994, p.392; *Zhongguo baike nianjian* 1995, p.399.

This table clearly shows a considerable increase in the number of delegates to CPPCC organisations after 1978. From 1,800 organisations with a mere 20,000 delegates in 1982, the CPPCC system had by 1995, grown to over 3,000 organisations and more than 475,000 delegates.

This expansion of the CPPCC provided the CCP with access to expertise down to the township level. This growth increased MPGs' opportunities for appointments. Because of the three-thirds principle, MPG members usually constitute one third of conference delegates and often dominate conference committees. This growth of potential places for MPG members may help explain the increase in MPG membership after 1992. Unfortunately, very little is known about the operations of grassroots consultative conferences although they are a subject deserving further investigation.<sup>171</sup>

Despite a growing vitality in CPPCC numbers and activities, the CPPCC reported that it was failing to reach the standards it had set for itself in the CPPCC constitution and other documents, particularly in the area of democratic supervision.<sup>172</sup> There were also indications that it felt it was failing to work adequately as a barometer of public opinion.<sup>173</sup> The CPPCC admitted problems of poor communications with MPG organisations outside of Beijing. Yet notwithstanding these shortcomings, there were positive developments. In one sign of increasing democracy, the Conference instituted an electoral system which permitted more candidates to stand than positions.<sup>174</sup> However, these candidates had all been selected in consultation with the UFD.

The admissions of CPPCC short-comings came after renewed calls by some intellectuals to turn the conference into a form of senate and the MPGs be allowed to become real political parties.<sup>175</sup> Once again, the UFD was forced to remind united front workers that the NPC was the sole organ of power and administration. The Party

<sup>171</sup> The CPPCC's *Renmin Zhengxie bao* did publish a book on this work but this writer could not obtain a copy. *Difang zhengxie gongzuo guifan*, [The norms and regulations of local CPPCC work] (*Renmin Zhengxie bao*, Beijing, 1993).

<sup>172</sup> "Ye Xuanping CPPCC vice-chairman delivers work report," SWB FE 2554 S1/3, March 7, 1996.

<sup>173</sup> *Renmin ribao*, March 4, 1996, p.4.

<sup>174</sup> SWB FE 1645 C1/8 March 24, 1993. This was a principle which had only gradually been accepted by CCP members. see SWB, FE 1643 C/1, March 22, 1993.

<sup>175</sup> Gao Fang in *Xiandai yu chuantong*, [Modernity and tradition], no.5, 1994, pp.45-47, *China Review* 1995, 1.7.

continued to argue that raising the CPPCC to a status similar to that of the NPC would result in duplication and be at the expense of democratic centralism; it was therefore unacceptable. There would be no upper house or separation of powers.<sup>176</sup>

One of the casualties of the CCP's hardening of attitudes was the CPPCC's own *CPPCC News (Renmin zhengxie bao)*. The editorial staff was reportedly purged and transferred after publishing an article which displeased Jiang Zemin.<sup>177</sup> This action came shortly after Wan Li made two major speeches advocating a more liberal press. Ironically, Wan had criticised the *CPPCC news* as being too rigid and he proposed allowing it to develop its own style. Wan also called on the Party and government to give the MPGs more support and allow them to publish newspapers without guidelines and restrictions; "press censorship is necessary," he said, "but it must be based on state laws and regulations."<sup>178</sup>

### **Leadership Appointments Since 1989**

The 1993 appointment of Rong Yiren as vice-president was a signal that the CCP could appoint ostensibly non-party people to leadership positions. Yet progress in making these appointments was very slow. Although Hu Yaobang had set a target of 5,000 non-Party leadership appointments in the early 1980s, President Jiang Zemin had admitted in June 1990 that "the number of true slots for non-CCP cadres has decreased, not increased," and this situation needed correcting.<sup>179</sup> For a variety of reasons this correction came only slowly.

The Party's so-called leftism remained a major problem as it was more than an ideological remnant of Maoism. The UFD was aware that among the obstacles to non-Party appointments were the beliefs that the MPGs were irrelevant because "their time has passed" and they "lacked good people." MPG members were seen as either too old or too young and in any event they were unsuitable because "good MPG members join

<sup>176</sup> [Central UFD], "Jinian Renmin Zhengxie chengli sishiwu zhounian," [Commemoration of the 45th anniversary of the People's Political Consultative Conference], *ZGTYZX*, no.11, 1994, p.6.

<sup>177</sup> SWB FE 2248 G/7, March 10, 1995.

<sup>178</sup> Li Tzu-ching and Lo Ping, "Wan Li favours easing press controls," *Cheng Ming*, February 1, 1995, SWB FE 2248 G/5-7, March 10, 1995. Wan's speeches were made in October and November 1994.

<sup>179</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.18. Quoting Xinhua, June 1990 in FBIS CHI-90-117, p.25.

the CCP.” A third common view was that because of a shortage of positions for Party members, there was even less reason to appoint outsiders. The UFD admitted that even those few non-Party persons who were appointed were not trusted or used effectively by Party members, let alone given a free hand.<sup>180</sup> A UFD conference in 1995, described these problems as the “obstacles of conservatism.”<sup>181</sup>

To overcome these internal objections the CCP stressed that non-Party appointments received formal training as part of a specially selected pool of reserve cadres and they would acquit themselves well.<sup>182</sup> To train adequate numbers of reserve rank cadres by 1998, the CCP needed to convince many Party leaders that non-Party appointments were both reasonable and feasible. The reserve cadres of scientists, teachers, researchers and others, required gradual exposure to work as leaders and assessments of their suitability. The common practice of making excessive and unrealistic demands of such appointments, and the opposite extreme, of giving them nothing to do, had to cease. The CCP’s overall non-Party cadre policy had to be “serious training, creating a foundation and promoting selection” (*zhong peiyang, da jichu, cu xuanba*).<sup>183</sup>

The UFD encountered numerous problems in securing non-Party leadership appointments and without a major push from the centre, progress would be slow. Yet there was incremental progress. In 1991, there were only 781 appointments above county level which, as one Hong Kong scholar pointed out, “compared very poorly with the 2.9 million CCP leadership positions.”<sup>184</sup> By 1994, this number had doubled to 1,523 and included 18 positions as vice-mayors or deputy governors of autonomous areas.<sup>185</sup> At the lower levels of government there were also increases. Wang Zhaoguo reported that in April 1994, there were 6,721 non-Party leadership appointments at “chu” level or above. Subtracting the known number of county level and higher appointments indicates that there were around 4,000 appointments below county

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<sup>180</sup> Li Qing, 1991, p.248

<sup>181</sup> Zhang Qianjing, “Tongzhi zai quanguo peiyang xuanba dangwai ganbu gongzuo zuotanhui shang de jianghua”, *ZGTYZX*, no.8, 1995, pp.9-11.

<sup>182</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> Hsin Kuan-chi, *China Review* 1991, 2:18.

<sup>185</sup> *ZGTYZX*, no.8, 1995, p.9.

level.<sup>186</sup> However, once again, the validity of some of these appointments was doubtful as some officials simply became MPG members rather than *vice versa*.<sup>187</sup>

The increase in senior non-Party appointments was relatively greater. In 1991 there were six vice-ministerial level appointments:

Duan Muzheng: Vice-President of People's Court, Democratic League;  
Pan Beilei: Vice-Minister of Light Industry (Jiusan);  
Liu Heng: Vice-Minister of Textile Industry (NCA);  
Liu Hezhang: Vice-Chief Auditor, National Auditing Bureau (NCA);  
Lu Derun: Vice-Director, General Affairs Office, State Council (non-party personage).  
(Li Peiyao remained as Vice-Minister of Labour)

These new leaders were distinguished by being relatively young, with multiple united front representative values and/or strong economic related backgrounds. Duan Muzheng, for example, was a member of the Hui (Muslim) minority and an international law specialist. He was heavily involved with Hong Kong issues such as drafting the Hong Kong Basic Law.<sup>188</sup> Duan could therefore be claimed as a representative of experts, an ethnic minority or a Muslim (religious believer). Madam Pan Beilei was born in Taiwan and a specialist on light industry.<sup>189</sup> Liu Heng, a textile expert, had risen rapidly from model worker in 1979, to technical school principal, vice-mayor of Hubei's Sha city and a Hubei CPPCC committee member in 1988. He joined the Shanghai NCA in April 1988.<sup>190</sup> Liu Hezhang was an engineer experienced in youth work and former Vice-Mayor of Changzhou who, in 1982, moved to Shanghai and joined ACFIC where he became a deputy director, chairman of the union organisation and a director of the NCA related Patriotic Construction Company.<sup>191</sup>

In 1992, there were 12 high-level appointments in which science and commercial connections were most prominent. Bai Dahua, for example, a deputy minister of the Industry and Commerce Administration Department, held a vice-chair in the NCA. The PWP's Zhang Heyong became a deputy head of the Medical Administration Department; the Democratic League's Liu Wenjia, a Manchu and Deputy Governor of Liaoning Province, became a deputy head of the State Bureau of

<sup>186</sup> ZGTYZX, no.11, 1994, p.9.

<sup>187</sup> Seymour noted the example of a Gansu Vice-Governor who joined the NCA. Seymour, 1991, p.18.

<sup>188</sup> UFE, p.956.

<sup>189</sup> *ibid.* p.963.

<sup>190</sup> *ibid.*, p.775.

<sup>191</sup> *ibid.* p.784. On Lu Derun, united front sources are silent

Land Administration; and the Jiusan's Wang Honghui became a Deputy Governor of Fujian. The remaining appointments were non-Party personages.<sup>192</sup> By 1994, the number as senior appointments was still only nine.<sup>193</sup> In 1996, the only growth at the central level consisted of 22 appointments to State Council committees.<sup>194</sup> Top level appointments then remained static. Nevertheless, at the lower levels there was continued, albeit unspectacular growth.

Although these increases in non-Party representation were large in relative terms, in no way did they approach the situation of 1949, when 31 of 61 members of the government were nominally non-communists. Being granted leadership appointments rewarded some MPG members and allowed others to hope for positions. However, these appointments did not result in opportunities to use the resultant positions as political platforms. Nor could appointees utilise their positions to publicly promote their MPGs as this was, in Chu Zhuang's words, "absolutely" impermissible.<sup>195</sup> Thus, while the Party used the appointments to promote itself as 'democratic' and inclusive, these positions could not in anyway be construed as representative of their respective MPGs.

### **Mutual Supervision in the 1990s**

During the 1990s united front work was used to increase the number of channels through which advice and complaints could be transmitted to the CCP for its consideration. Special meetings with the CCP's central leaders was one channel for this consultation. Although meetings were sometimes held at times of crisis to demonstrate wide support for the CCP, notably in the summer of June of 1989, there is no doubt that the number of these meeting increased markedly. Between 1950 and 1987, there were 53 such meetings at the Central leadership level.<sup>196</sup> Between 1989

<sup>192</sup> *Zhongguo baike nianjian 1992*, p.331.

<sup>193</sup> *Zhongguo baike nianjian 1995*, p.265.

<sup>194</sup> *Liaowang*, [Outlook], no.18, May, 1997, p.7.

<sup>195</sup> Chen Deyong, "Minzhu dangpai congzheng renshi zuotanhui," [(APD) Conference on participation in government], *ZGTYZX*, no.6, 1995, pp.12-13.

<sup>196</sup> "Duodang hezuo tese yu zhengzhi xieshang tese de yitong," [Similarities and differences between the characteristics of multi-party cooperation and political consultation], *TJB*, October7, 1989, p.2.

and 1997, "over 100" meetings were held.<sup>197</sup> Meetings between MPG leaders, non-Party personages and senior CCP leaders, such as President Jiang Zemin, often occurred just before or after meetings of the CPPCC and NPC; Spring festival was another regular occasion.<sup>198</sup> Yet while the number of meetings increased, there is no means of assessing how effective they are in allowing an exchange of views and the raising suggestions.<sup>199</sup>

A system of bi-monthly meetings (*shuang yue hui*) with MPGs and non-Party personages was established as a channel to Party leaders at various levels. Originally initiated during the Second Hundred Flowers period, these regular meetings were reinstated at the Central level in 1988.<sup>200</sup> After 1989, they became common practice at lower levels. Dalian City had been holding such meetings since 1985 and was praised as a model by the UFD. In Dalian, the UFD ensured that non-party delegates would be well prepared for these meetings by distributing materials to them a week in advance. These meetings were utilised to introduce local Party leaders to MPG leaders and encourage Party cadres to seek MPG and non-Party advice. After 1993, this system was formalised with "annual democratic consultation plans" which set targets for measuring cooperation.<sup>201</sup> Again, nothing is known about the internal workings of these meetings or their effectiveness.

The MPGs, the Party, and government representatives also held a variety of special meetings. Shanghai established these "office meetings" in 1993. Government departments held regular meetings with specific MPGs. The Shanghai APD for example, met regularly with both the Municipal Higher Education and Education

<sup>197</sup> SWB, FE/2860/S2/19, March 6, 1997. *Liaowang*, no.18, 1997, p.7.

<sup>198</sup> SWB, FE/1915/G7, February 7, 1994.

<sup>199</sup> These meetings appear to be very formal when shown in photographs or seen on television. The physical layout and even the furniture design seem inimical to open discussion. Representatives are seated in deep armchairs a considerable distance from the Party leaders. They often have to turn their heads 90 degrees to see the leaders who are invariably seated at the head table, itself at 90 degrees to the armchairs. This arrangements suggest that the leaders deliver their message and the invited representatives listen and accept passively.

<sup>200</sup> *Lianhe shibao*, July 22, 1988, p.1.

<sup>201</sup> "Jiaqiang zhidu jianshi, gaohao duodang hezuo," [Strengthen system construction, do multi-party cooperation well], *ZGTYZX*, no.5, 1995, pp.40-41.

Departments, the Shanghai NCA and ACFIC with the Municipal Party's Economic Construction Committee.<sup>202</sup>

### United Front Political Education in the 1990s

The UFD had made it clear that the need to gain ideological influence over the sensitive non-state sector was the major reason behind its creation of chambers of commerce, industry associations, and its re-organisation of the ACFIC. Such ideological work was not limited to the Federation but was also a broader MPG responsibility, particularly of the NCA.<sup>203</sup>

Ideological work in the 1990s was very different from that of the 1950s. Xiao Yaotang declared that mere talk, let alone political movements, were no longer appropriate political education measures. Political education had instead to adapt to prevailing circumstances, to be timely, and perhaps most importantly, to use methods which were both enjoyable and related to production and business.<sup>204</sup> The UFD's problems with indoctrinating the non-state sector were not unique and applied also the MPGs. In November 1990, in response to the CCP's 1989 *Guidelines* document, the UFD issued its *Opinions on Gradually Creating a Good Institute of Socialism* (hereafter *Opinions*) document which specifically addressed united front political education issues.<sup>205</sup> *Opinions* formalised the calls in *Guidelines* for a strengthening of ideological work and the IoS system. The basic IoS curriculum of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought and the four basic principles remained. Students would also study CCP and government policy; the theory, policies, and history of the united front; the history of the MPGs and multi-party co-operation; the international situation; and "modern scientific knowledge of professional united front work."<sup>206</sup>

<sup>202</sup> NCA interview, Shanghai, November 4, 1993.

<sup>203</sup> For example, the Hubei NCA was active in this work. See, "Fazhan xiangzhen qiye xin sixiang lu," [Develop the ideological road in village and township industry], *RMZXB*, July 13, 1993, p.2. "Minjian zhaokai quanguo xuanchuan sixiang gongzuo huiyi," [NCA holds a national ideological propaganda work conference], *ZGTYZX*, 1995, no.1, p.40.

<sup>204</sup> Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.24. While a UFD study of political education for the non-state sector had been published in 1995, its content is unknown. *Fei-gongyouzhi jingji daibiao renshi sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo gailun*, [Introduction to the political education of personages in the non-state sector]. Advertised in *ZGTYZX*, no.10, 1995, p.30.

<sup>205</sup> "Guanyu jinyibu ban hao Shehuizhuyi xueyuan de yijian," [Opinions on gradually creating a good IoS] (November 22, 1990), *Selected united front documents*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>206</sup> *ibid.*

The overt political emphasis of the IoS curriculum was a major reason why it lacked appeal. United front sources acknowledged that a “student problem” extended from the central down to the district level.<sup>207</sup> This was underlined in 1992 when, celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the Central Institute, president Jiang Zemin, called on it to build its own “unique character” and a reputation as a united front institution. This would “attract” non-Party people to its “education *and* training base” (emphasis added).<sup>208</sup> Other prominent CCP leaders, such as Zhu Rongji and Qian Qichen, subsequently visited some of the 80 other Institutes to present reports to their students thereby raising the institutes’ public profile.<sup>209</sup>

Jiang’s speech underlined a process which had been under way for some years. The Party’s political education work was effectively being normalised. To make the IoS more attractive, the stress on political theory was being progressively reduced and subjects of direct practical benefit introduced instead. The “model course” run by the Guangzhou IoS in 1992, reflected this process. It consisted of:

- 1) Deng Xiaoping’s theories of building socialism with Chinese characteristics;
- 2) united front theory;
- 3) the history of CCP-led UF work;
- 4) “leadership science” (*lingdao kexue*); and
- 5) administration.<sup>210</sup>

Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought were noticeably absent. Deng Xiaoping’s socialism with Chinese characteristics and professional development courses became more common. Although Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought study was still officially required in Shanghai’s district institutes, the brevity of district level courses, which spanned several days to a few weeks, required that course content be condensed. Reflecting both this need for brevity and the shift to a socialist market economy, Shanghai IoS principals decided that socialist theory consisted essentially of Deng’s

<sup>207</sup> Liu Fengrui, “Gao biao zhun, Yan yao qiu, chuban ziji tese Shehuizhuyi xuexuan gongzuo yanjiu hui qingkuang bao” [High standards, rigorous demands; create our own uniqueness: A report on the IoS work conference], *STZLY*, 1992, no.4. p. 52. (In 1993, Liu was the head of the Shanghai Municipal IoS).

<sup>208</sup> Jiang Zemin’s letter of congratulations to the Central IoS] *Shanghai tongyi zhanxian*, [Shanghai united front] no.12, 1992, p.2. In 1993, this Shanghai Municipal Party UFD united front publication changed its name to *Pujiang Tongzhou* [In the same Pujiang (Shanghai river system) boat] and sought to broaden its appeal to those involved in all aspects of united front work.

<sup>209</sup> *Liaowang*, no.18, May, 1997, p.7.

<sup>210</sup> Liu Fengrui, 1992, p.52.

theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics and basic united front theory.<sup>211</sup> Even as early as 1988, the Hongqiao IoS had re-opened without an overt political content, offering instead a course on the relationship between united front work and economic activity. While the Institute claimed to teach Marxism-Leninism, this was “not to be restrictive” and Hongqiao instead emphasised Deng’s theories.<sup>212</sup> By the end of 1996, Li Tieying also proposed raising the status of Deng’s theories on building socialism with Chinese characteristics to the status of “thought,” thereby putting it on an equal basis with the “thought of Mao” and leaving the way open for an even further reduction of what had previously been a strongly defended principle.<sup>213</sup> In 1991, the Luwan IoS replaced Marxist philosophy with political education “using economic construction as the key.”<sup>214</sup> United front work texts such as *A Course on China’s United Front* reflected a similar shift, relegating basic communist theory to only forty pages out of a total of three hundred and sixty.<sup>215</sup>

Since 1991, the ACFIC has not included socialism as part of its political education and stressed instead patriotism followed by respect for work and respect for the law.<sup>216</sup> In discussions on the political education of the non-state sector, the UFD and the ACFIC never openly raised the principle of unity and struggle but clearly their objective was to unite entrepreneurs behind the CCP. For while the sector sought increased legal protection, the UFD recognised that members of the sector flouted the law and many entrepreneurs complained of corruption but they often sought to destroy the equity and fairness of the market.<sup>217</sup> Unity with the sector was necessary if its flouting of the law, bribery and tax evasion were to be overcome.<sup>218</sup>

Occasionally, Institute classes were organised after working hours to minimise disruption to the students and to prevent their work units from becoming hostile to their

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211 "IoS Teaching Trends" (back page column), *STLY*, no.2, 1993.

212 Cai Yiming, 1992, p. 46-47.

213 "China contemplates elevating Deng theory to 'thought.'" SWB FE 2827 G/4, January 27, 1997.

214 Luwan IoS, "Strengthen the training of the two ranks, investigate a new road for organising IoS' classes," *STLY*, 1992, no.2, p.48.

215 Ren Tao, Zhongyang tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu zhengce lilun yanjiu shi and Zhongyang shehuizhuyi xueyuan (eds), *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian jiaocheng*, (Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, Beijing, 1992).

216 Xiao Yaotang, 1994, p.32.

217 *ibid.*

218 *ibid.*, p.34.

employees' united front work obligations.<sup>219</sup> More attractive 'practical' courses had to be offered. The most successful Shanghai Municipal IoS course was Cantonese language lessons.<sup>220</sup> To offset the major disadvantage of IoS courses being unrecognised by the state and Party education systems, the Shanghai Municipal IoS offered an accredited course conducted jointly with the Shanghai Normal University.<sup>221</sup> To attract students, the Institutes attempted to provide a pleasant environment and build an *esprit de corps*;<sup>222</sup> the Shanghai Municipal IoS was re-located within Shanghai in an old mansion boasting a (privatised) restaurant and karaoke bar; courses for elderly MPG members were sometimes held in hotels.<sup>223</sup>

There was another major difference between the IoS of the 1950s and the 1990s. In the 1990s, the institutes were used to indoctrinate, select, and train ranks of non-Party leaders to take their place alongside CCP members in the political system. Students were assessed for their performance during classes and this assessment and details of their thinking was filed.<sup>224</sup> Inappropriate political attitudes no longer resulted in self-criticism sessions but in the removal from consideration for official united front (*eg.* CPPCC) and government posts. The promise of future positions remained the most important incentive to submit to IoS attendance.

Increasingly patriotism has been emphasised as the appeal and legitimacy of the CCP's socialism have been compromised by the Party's retreat from Mao's class-based, egalitarian socialism.<sup>225</sup> This patriotism consisted of "warmly loving the motherland," advocating national re-unification, promoting the unity of all nationalities, and assisting national rejuvenation. In August 1994, the CCP adopted "Outline for the Implementation of Patriotic Education" (*Aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu shishi gangyao*) as the

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<sup>219</sup> Cai Yiming, 1993, pp.46-47. In Hangzhou, units sometimes refused to support employees who went to the local IoS. See Ma Baoshun, "Vigorously build a good IoS and strengthen the construction of the two ranks," (a report on the Hangzhou IoS), *Qingxi Zhonghua*, [Love for China], 1994, no.4, p.39. This publication is the Zhejiang UFD's equivalent of Shanghai's *Pujiang Tongzhou* journal but is aimed more directly of Zhejiang natives with relatives overseas.

<sup>220</sup> Interview, Shanghai IoS, 1993.

<sup>221</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> Seen as an important part of the task of building and IoS with its own characteristics. *ibid.*

<sup>223</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>224</sup> *Opinions*, in *Selected united front documents*, p.21.

<sup>225</sup> Charles Burton, "China's Post-Mao Transition: The Role of the Party and Ideology in the "New Period," *Pacific Affairs*, vol.60, no.3, 1987, pp.431-446.

basis of political education and part of building “socialist spiritual civilisation,” both for the general public and in united front work.<sup>226</sup> Shortly after its adoption, the CCP Propaganda Department and the UFD held a special conference to acquaint the MPGs and the ACFIC with the document’s significance.<sup>227</sup> It subsequently became a major basis of MPG ideological work.<sup>228</sup> In successfully linking itself with unity on the mainland, stability and re-unification, the Party effectively defined any opposition to itself as unpatriotic, thereby catching its critics in a very powerful rhetorical “mouse trap.”<sup>229</sup>

The Institutes of Socialism’s motto, “patriotism, unity, democracy and seeking truth from facts,” embodied the most powerful appeals in Chinese politics and references to either socialism or communism were conspicuously absent.<sup>230</sup> Despite discarding much of the political theory underlying past CCP practice, the four basic principles were resolutely upheld, particularly those of Party dictatorship and Party leadership. Whenever these principles were threatened, as in 1989, the CCP moved forcefully to support them. However, the question of what the other principles of socialism and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought now consisted of, apart from CCP dictatorship and united front theory, was left unaddressed.

The student attendance problem was compounded by those of the IoS system itself. When the system was revived in 1983, it was intended that the UFD retain overall control while the CPPCC handled its day-to-day operations. All former IoS premises were to be returned to IoS use or compensation offered but this failed to eventuate.<sup>231</sup> The 85 institutes operating in 1993 represented less than 20 percent of

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<sup>226</sup> For the full text of “Aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu shishi gangyao,” See *Renmin ribao*, September 7, 1994, and *Xinhua yuebao*, no.9, 1994, pp.17-24.

<sup>227</sup> “Zhongxuan bu, Tongzhan bu jiu Zhonggong zhongyang yinfa, ‘Aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu shishi gangyao’ yaoqing ge minzhu dangpai he Gongshanglian fuze ren zuotan,” [The Central Propaganda Department, and the UFD CC distribution of ‘Outline for the Implementation of Patriotic Education’ and invites responsible persons from the democratic parties and the ACFIC to a conference] *Renmin ribao*, September 8, 1994, in *Xinhua yuebao*, [New China News Agency monthly], no.9, 1994, pp.25-26.

<sup>228</sup> For example, by the NCA. See, *ZGTYZX*, 1995, no.1, p.40.

<sup>229</sup> Chalmers Johnson, “The Mousetrapping of Hong Kong: A Game in Which Nobody Wins,” *Asian Survey*, vol.24, no.9, 1984, pp.887-909.

<sup>230</sup> This was the calligraphic inscription presented to the Central IoS by president Jiang Zemin in 1992 and subsequently adopted as the Institutes’ motto.

<sup>231</sup> “Instructions...,” *Selected united front documents*, p.9.

the 1950s' total.<sup>232</sup> Zhejiang, a province rich in united front targets, only re-established an IoS in 1991.<sup>233</sup>

Even sections of the UFD appeared ambivalent towards the IoS. The Central UFD implied that some of its cadres preferred to direct their resources elsewhere. Clear injunctions to support the IoS had frequently been issued by the Central UFD, but these were often ignored.<sup>234</sup> Factionalism within the united front system was also a problem. For example, in a bureaucratic twist, the Beijing CPPCC refused to return the Beijing Municipal IoS to direct UFD control.<sup>235</sup>

Despite the importance the central Party leadership accorded it, interviews of MPG leaders in Shanghai in 1993 revealed that the success of united front work, including the IoS, depended on the attention paid to it by Party leaders at lower levels. Lower level leaders were usually much less enthusiastic about united front work than those at the centre but they controlled the allocation of resources for such work.<sup>236</sup> The Shanghai Municipal IoS, for example, lacked heating, consequently, the number of courses declined in winter and both teachers and materials were in short supply.<sup>237</sup> Many staff were unhappy about differences in bureaucratic rankings which determined staff benefits and entitlements, as these varied greatly between levels of the IoS system.<sup>238</sup> The part-time teachers who supplemented the core of specialist teachers were often inexperienced while getting teachers allocated to the IoS was a major problem. In the 1990s, many experienced UFD cadres were retiring or transferred while the new, younger cadres, lacked knowledge and experience of UFD work.<sup>239</sup>

It was because of these problems that many potential students were denied a political education of substance even if they desired one. To increase the number of

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<sup>232</sup> IoS interview, Shanghai 1993. All provinces except Tibet have at least one IoS in the capital. Shanghai has the most extensive district system.

<sup>233</sup> *Qingxi Zhonghua*, no.4, 1994, p.39.

<sup>234</sup> *Opinions*, in *Selected united front documents*, pp.19-20.

<sup>235</sup> Liu Fengrui, 1992, p.53.

<sup>236</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> *1990s Work Outline*, 1992, p.86.

<sup>238</sup> Liu Fengrui, 1992, p.51.

<sup>239</sup> This information is based on a series of interviews with all of the Shanghai MPG organisations except the Democratic League. These interviews were conducted in late 1993. See also Wang Zhaoguo (UFD Head) [The central task of the 1990s is to thoroughly strengthen the two ranks of the united front], *ZGTYZX*, 1994, no. 5, p.10.

students being exposed to some political indoctrination, there was from the Central IoS downwards an increasing emphasis on short-term courses. At the Central school this could mean short one-month courses while at district levels it could mean brief three day courses. The UFD's minimum requirement was attendance at one IoS course every three years and this was all that many district institutes could manage. Between 1985 and June 1992, for example, Shanghai's Jing'ansi IoS trained 2,800 students in fifty batches. This left 700 MPG, CPPCC and other united front workers without any political education. Preference was therefore given to teaching the highest ranked of the students first and the institute attempted to influence the remaining students through one-off lectures or "hot topic" classes.<sup>240</sup>

### MPG Problems

MPG members in the 1990s faced a brighter future than for many years. They had attended the IoS and proven their political trustworthiness and ability, yet their overall growth disguised significant problems. In 1995, the leading united front researcher, Wu Qiansheng, reported that the problems of geriatrification and excessive numbers of retiree members persisted. In addition, the MPGs suffered from declining representativeness and a loss of interest in participation,<sup>241</sup> and in some places, even shrinking memberships. Even the broadening of membership criteria in 1992 had not been as successful as hoped and Wu reiterated the need to allow the MPGs to grow to reflect the changing social reality more accurately and to give voice to the opinions of all their constituents.<sup>242</sup>

In 1995, one united front worker wrote that, despite the number of non-Party intellectuals, very few of them were prepared to join the MPGs; despite the "unprecedented" growth of the MPGs, very little of this growth actually conformed to the targets set.<sup>243</sup> Initial attempts to rejuvenate the MPGs in the late 1980s had failed

<sup>240</sup> Cai Yiming, 1993, p.46.

<sup>241</sup> Interviews in Shanghai supported this conclusion. Interviewees reported, for example, that there was often difficulty in convincing members to contribute to consultancy work.

<sup>242</sup> "Guanyu shenhua duodang hezuo lilun yanjiu de jige wenti," [Several issues regarding deepening theoretical research into multi-party co-operation], *ZGTYZX*, no.9, 1995, p.18.

<sup>243</sup> You Luoping, "Shixi xin xingshi xia duodang hezuo mianlin xin qingkuang xin wenti de xingcheng yinsu ji qi tedian," [A tentative analysis of the elements and characteristics formed in the new

and by 1992, the average age had only declined from 68 to 67.1 years old.<sup>244</sup> By the mid 1990s, there was more progress in overall recruitment and rejuvenation but united front work researchers pointed out that the change had resulted in the recruitment of members with very different attitudes. The outlooks and values of new members were influenced strongly by the development of the market economy, a factor which was also changing their employment and their geographical distribution. These new values emphasised results and competition, openness, equality, and fairness. These were believed to promote democratic consciousness, participation and a concern for the legal system.<sup>245</sup> These changes explain earlier reports of internal MPG divisions along generational lines and levels of leadership and an increased susceptibility to bourgeois liberalisation among their younger members.<sup>246</sup>

Thus the MPGs had several concerns requiring attention. Many MPGs could no longer claim to be representative enough and lacked members with the skills and qualifications the Party's new tasks required. To overcome these shortcomings, the UFD or local CCP organisations often chose suitable non-Party people and simply inserted them into the MPG and at the level they believed needed them.<sup>247</sup> The UFD would approach prominent persons, many of whom were progressives and potential Party members, to instead join the MPG requiring their talents.<sup>248</sup> For the CCP, this 'solution' allowed the Party to place politically reliable candidates into leadership positions, as was the case with Li Peiyao.

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circumstances when the multi-party co-operation faces new situation and issues] *ZGTYZX*, no.8, 1995, p.40.

<sup>244</sup> Zong Delu (Head of UFD's West China Department), "Jinkuai peiyang xuanze guang qi yong xin de yi dai Dang wai daibiao renwu," [Select, train, and begin to use as soon as possible, a new generation of non-Party representatives], *ZGTYZX*, no.5, 1994, pp.25-27.

<sup>245</sup> Wang Tingjun / Zhang Xiangxian, "Ruhe zuohao xin xingshi xia de minzhu dangpai gongzuo", [How to do democratic party work well under New Era conditions], *ZGTYZX*, no.5, 1995, p.31-33.

<sup>246</sup> Li Qing, 1991, p.215.

<sup>247</sup> This was for example, the remedy adopted by the Haikou UFD. Haikou shiwei tongzhan bu, "Tigao minzhu dangpai chengyuan suzhi, zengqiang canzheng yizheng nengli," [Raise the quality of democratic party members, increase their ability to participate in government], *ZGTYZX*, no.7, 1995, p.43.

<sup>248</sup> Shenzhen's UFD stated bluntly that it pursued this policy in its MPG work. *ZGTYZX*, A prominent non-Party personage interviewed in 1993 said that he had been approached by the UFD to join a DP but had refused. At a subsequent recruitment attempt he agreed to become an official non-Party personage on the local PCC. The CCP Committee at Nankai University has also recruited a prominent young academic to join an MPG and only demanded of him that he appear at Tianjin municipal PCC meetings once a month. Informant, Adelaide, April 13, 1997.

Li joined the Revolutionary GMD in 1986 and was immediately appointed a deputy provincial leader. Li's obvious qualification was his parentage, he was the son of Li Jishen. Li Peiyao continued his work in the official union movement and, showing strong circumstantial evidence of CCP membership, he became the secretary and vice-chair of the All China Federation of Trade Unions in 1988. Only a year later, in 1989, Li was appointed a Vice-Minister of the Central Labour Department. He was subsequently appointed chairman of the Revolutionary GMD and, in 1993, made a deputy chair of the NPC Standing Committee.<sup>249</sup> Li's government appointment was lauded as a success for his MPG but he had by-passed numerous long-time Revolutionary GMD members and leaders. His rapid rise came to an abrupt halt in early 1996 when he was murdered by a People's Armed Police guard while in Beijing to attend the NPC.<sup>250</sup>

Li Peiyao's relatively rapid rise to deputy minister revealed problems with the CCP's united front work. Li's appointment was largely a consequence of his family ties and pre-supposed influence in Taiwan and amongst Overseas Chinese. This reliance on essentially *guanxi* relations was not meritocratic, although it was a common united front work practice, including within the department itself.<sup>251</sup> One of the first and easiest methods of achieving MPG growth was to extend the use of *guanxi*, first to direct family relations and then to others who had more distant familial connections.<sup>252</sup> While such recruitment could provide MPGs, particularly the Revolutionary GMD, Zhigong, and Taimeng, with a wide range of contacts, they did not necessarily result in the recruitment of the experts the MPGs wanted. More importantly, if leaders, particularly dual CCP-MPG members or progressives, were inserted into their positions by the Party ahead of long-time members then the latter would soon realise that the positions were unattainable. Those who had been overlooked were likely to lose interest in their MPG work, resent their new leaders and representatives, or seek to join

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<sup>249</sup> *UFE*, p.808.

<sup>250</sup> Li's official obituary reveals a long career in united front work. SWB FE 2538, G/7, February 17, 1996.

<sup>251</sup> One of Yan Mingfu's qualifications was his father, Yan Baohang, a famous progressive industrialist. Hu Deping, a UFD director and in 1993 the head of the UFD's economic work section, was the son of Hu Yaobang.

<sup>252</sup> Interviews 1993.

the CCP. Deng Weizhi openly admitted that even MPG promotions did not necessarily relate to the ability to get on well with ordinary MPG members.<sup>253</sup> The new emphasis on economic work also reduced the relevance of the knowledge of many older members from traditional MPG constituencies and was another factor behind membership passivity. To have a reasonable chance of being selected as a leader or appointed to government posts, members ideally needed to also be a Party member or at least a progressive, to embody multiple united front work values, such as Taiwan connections and/or be a national minority or religious believer; most importantly, one also increasingly required economic expertise.<sup>254</sup>

All MPG leaders were selected through a system of consultation with the UFD rather than by membership choice. This process deprived members of an opportunity to influence their leaders.<sup>255</sup> One provincial city MPG leader remarked that at the lower levels MPG members, and even leaders, exercised no power and little influence; the wielding of power was perceived to occur only at the higher levels of the political system.<sup>256</sup> For example, attempts in 1988 by Democratic League members to replace Fei Xiaotong as League chairman foundered.<sup>257</sup> This separation between MPG leaders and the rank-and-file was sometimes acknowledged by the Party but no solutions were advanced.<sup>258</sup> Yet it was at the national level that control of MPG leaders by the CCP was crucial and dual membership was most likely to be taken by the Party as an indication of political reliability. The NCA admitted in late 1989 that two percent of its members held dual NCA/CCP membership but it did not admit at which level of the organisation or what positions they held.<sup>259</sup> A survey of the CPPCC in 1988 had revealed that many of the MPG delegates, 35 of the 80, or 44 percent who responded,

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<sup>253</sup> Interview with Deng Weizhi, Shanghai, December, 10, 1993.

<sup>254</sup> A good example of person with multiple united front representativeness was CPPCC member Rabiya Kadir. Rabiya Kadir was a woman, a Muslim, a Uighur from Xinjiang province, and a successful entrepreneur. SWB FE 2554 S1/6. In early 1997, she was reportedly detained on suspicion of assisting separatists, a suspicion fueled by her involvement in charitable works.

<sup>255</sup> Interview with Deng Weizhi, Shanghai, December 1993.

<sup>256</sup> Interview, with Jiusan member, Jinhua, Zhejiang Province, February 10, 1993.

<sup>257</sup> Anita Chan, "China: The Changing Ruling Elite," in Garry Rodan (ed), *Political Oppositions in Industrialising Asia*, (Routledge, London, 1996), p.169.

<sup>258</sup> Li Qing, 1991, p.215.

<sup>259</sup> *TJB*, September 12, 1989, p.1.

were dual MPG-CCP members.<sup>260</sup> Leaders such as Zhou Peiyuan and Yan Jici were dual members and progressives such as the NCA's Feng Tiyun were CCP members in all but name. Moreover, supported by UFD appointed cadres within the MPG organisations, formal dual members were likely to dominate the organisation under the watchful eye of the UFD.

### **Problems with the UFD**

The problems of the MPGs stemmed from their subservience to the CCP and the UFD as its agent. Yet the Department itself suffered numerous problems which could not help but influence the effectiveness of its work. Recognising the importance of personal relations, the UFD had encouraged CCP members and leaders, and united front workers to create systems of formal meetings with non-Party people in order to establish productive "counterpart relations" (*duikou lianxi*).<sup>261</sup> However, to some extent the UFD itself was also reliant on personal relations. The CCP was unable to enforce uniform implementation of its united front policies at all levels and relied on calls to each level to have them implemented voluntarily. As a Party organisation, the UFD depended on Party committees and Party leaders at each level. If the local Party leaders could see the value of united front work, then its implementation was much better. The same principle of particularism applied to selected aspects of united front work. If local Party leaders recognised the value of the MPGs then MPG work was likely to be implemented in the spirit demanded by the Central Committee. The difficulties faced by the IoS system in gaining enough funds were pertinent examples of these problems.

The UFD's and hence the MPGs' reliance on what was effectively the good will of Party leaders was reported by some MPGs to become an increasingly significant problem at each step down the hierarchy.<sup>262</sup> One united front researcher reported that county level united front work suffered from reduced, not increased significance, as

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<sup>260</sup> Seymour, 1991, p.18.

<sup>261</sup> For example in Guangzhou. See "Guangzhou shiwei tigai wei zuo hao yu minzhu dangpai Gongshanglian duikou lianxi gongzuo," [Guangzhou's Municipal Reform Committee does counterpart relation work with democratic parties and ACFIC well], *ZGTYZX*, no.9, pp.38-39.

<sup>262</sup> This theme was reflected in interviews in both Shanghai and Jinhua.

well as poor organisation, a lack of funds and bureaucratic demarcation problems. Many local level cadres were reportedly only concerned with immediate economic returns and, failing to see any link between economic development and united front work, they found such work expendable. In many cases only propaganda work continued as Party organisations starved united front work of funds. Moreover, the fact that many government departments lacked interest in united front work resulted in apathy amongst those responsible for it.<sup>263</sup>

In the 1990s, UFD problems were being compounded by the generational change within the UFD itself. Older experienced cadres familiar with the personalities, histories and organisations of the MPGs, were being replaced by much younger cadres who lacked such specialist, and sometimes even general knowledge.<sup>264</sup> Given that many young UFD cadres lacked relevant united front knowledge it is not surprising that this ignorance was wide spread among young CCP cadres.<sup>265</sup> In 1995, Wang Zhaoguo reported unspecified discipline problems within the UFD, a situation he blamed on the influence of the market economy.<sup>266</sup> In one important reflection of this growing influence of the market economy imperative, Jonathan Unger reported that some UFD cadres in Beijing had transferred voluntarily to work with the ACFIC and they increasingly identified themselves more with the Federation than the UFD itself. Unger noted that "their regular contacts with and assistance to Beijing's business elite is providing them with opportunities, if they ever should wish to transfer in future to a good position in private employ."<sup>267</sup> That UFD members might wish to become like the targets of their work was a far cry from the time when those same targets were forced to transform themselves totally into the image decreed for them by the CCP. This reversal said much about the change in power relations between the CCP and those with whom it sought ally itself.

<sup>263</sup> Yu Zehu, "Qian tan jiceng tongzhan gongzuo de wangluo jianshe", [A brief talk on the network construction in local united front work], *ZGTYZX*, no.12, 1994, p.23.

<sup>264</sup> Interviews Shanghai, Jinhua.

<sup>265</sup> Zhao Zhenliang, "Jianchi dang de lingdao, gaohao hezuo gongshi," [Uphold party leadership, cooperate well], *ZGTYZX*, no.11, 1995, p.21. Lin Senquan, 1994, p.34.

<sup>266</sup> Wang Zhaoguo, "Zenyang zuohao jinnian de gongzuo", [How to do this year's work well], Speech to UFD, February 11, 1995. In *ZGTYZX*, no.4, 1995, p.5.

<sup>267</sup> Unger, 1996, p.813.

## *Conclusion*

### **The Ironies of the Evolution of the Party's MPG Work**

My dissertation has sought to demonstrate how, in a history replete with ironies, the CCP's united front work utilised corporatist structures to gain and maintain hegemony. The united front has been used to win the support of the old bourgeoisie and turn them against the GMD; it has been used in an attempt to eliminate the bourgeoisie as a class; it is now being used to co-opt the emerging bourgeois classes that have been created by the Party itself. United front work is both an important part of these post-Mao reforms and a means for coping with the changes it is bringing about. The CCP began adopting policies to cope with the changing socio-economic realities in the mid-1980s. By the early 1990s the Party recognised that there could be no return to the policies of the past and that the new groups needed to be incorporated but on the Party's terms. In 1992, the Guangdong UFD head, Xiao Yaotang, told an audience involved in non-state sector united front work that their task was to realise the maximum degree of unity possible.<sup>1</sup> United front work was no longer to unite the majority against a minority as it had been before the socialist transformation. The UFD's new goals were to henceforth integrate the new classes into the political and social system in order to forestall any need for them to organise in opposition to the state. The economic and social destabilisation from any such opposition would undermine Party hegemony and threaten Party rule. Implicit in Xiao's statement was an awareness of the CCP's now permanent shift to an expanding passive revolutionary united front, which had major implications for the type of society and political system China will develop.

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<sup>1</sup> Xiao Yaotang, "Tongzhan gongzuo de yi da zhanlue zhuanxi," [the great strategic shift in united front work], in Guangdong sheng wei tongzhan bu yanjiu shi, Jingji chu (eds), *Jingji lingyu tongzhan gongzuo yanjiu: Guangdong sheng feigongyou zhi jingji daibiao renshi tongzhan gongzuo yantaohui wenji*, [Research into economic area united front work: conference papers on united front work amongst representatives of the non-state economic system of Guangdong Province], (Guangdong sheng wei tongzhan bu yanjiu shi Jingji chu, Guangzhou, December 1993), p.13.

### **From War of Position to Continuous Passive Revolution**

Gramsci would have admired the success of the CCP's united front but have been dismayed by the Party's need to invoke passive revolution to redress the failed transition to socialism. Gramsci associated passive revolution with bourgeois attempts to cling to power. However, the Party's recourse to using united front work as a major passive revolutionary measure ensured the perpetuation of the MPGs and provided them with roles after each of the CCP's self-induced crisis. The MPGs did not disappear despite temporarily becoming redundant. As the political system develops in a direction Mao would never have approved of, the now permanent institutionalisation of passive revolutionary measures holds the promise of a continuing and expanding role for the MPGs and related corporatist groups, such as chambers of commerce.

As part of its passive response to the crisis created by Japan's invasion, the GMD had, reluctantly, allowed the MPGs a space in which they could use their ideological and personal influence to support the Nationalist cause. However, the national-popular appeal of patriotism and national salvation for which the MPGs supported the GMD was a double edged sword. The Nationalists maintained MPG support only while they remained identified with national interests.

The creation of this public space by the GMD allowed the CCP to target the MPGs as part of its war of position united front. The MPGs became invaluable to the CCP. They used their ideological and resultant political influence to increase public and political pressure to force the Nationalists to cease attacking communist forces, cooperate with the CCP, and remain committed to active anti-Japanese resistance. These pressures effectively impaired the GMD's ability to attack the CCP. These measures protected the Party and allowed it to rebuild and prepare itself for the long-term revolutionary struggle and establish its own nationalist credentials.

Similarly, after the defeat of Japan in 1945, the MPGs proved invaluable to the CCP as they pressured the GMD to moderate its hostility to the communists. The MPGs were crucial to propagating the perception, both among intellectuals at home and abroad, particularly with the GMD's American ally, that the Nationalists were intent on civil war, incompetent, and corrupt. The final failure of the MPGs' third force

mediation initiative had been seen to be the fault of the GMD. These perceptions allowed the CCP to emphasise and contrast its moral leadership over that of its enemy until it was no longer common sense for the intellectuals of China's middle elements to continue to support the Nationalist regime.

The Nationalists underestimated the importance of the MPG's support and influence so failed to reward them. Jealous of their powers and privileges, the Nationalists resented doling out even the crumbs of power which would have satisfied the MPG's desires for recognition and appointments. The GMD relied excessively on its status as the state power to gain MPG support but its quick resort to threats and violence when support was in doubt undermined long-term loyalty. Moreover, the GMD's inability to remedy a deteriorating war-debilitated economy and end a civil war demonstrated that the basic requirements of state power, peace and prosperity, were beyond its ability and control.

Aside from the belated and unrealistic plans of the third roaders to build a mass base, the MPG's never seriously set about becoming soundly based, soundly structured, and well-disciplined parties responsive to their memberships. Their belief in government by wise intellectuals, such as themselves, mitigated against proper political organisation. As educated experts they saw themselves as speaking for the people and assumed that they already knew what was in the people's interest. In the 1930s and 1940s, the very shortage of highly educated individuals and the weight of Chinese tradition meant that MPG leaders felt sure that they could contribute significantly to national development if only the state would give them the opportunity.

The CCP set out to win the hearts and minds of the MPG's and hence MPG influence over their constituencies of fellow intellectuals. It did this by emphasising Party leadership in the forms of its probity and concern for the nation and by making general political concessions: distancing the Party from immediate revolution; calling for peace; building extensive personal relationships; and supporting the MPG's materially, morally, and politically. The Party used these means to deliberately push the MPG's left-wards and obtain their support for the Party's policies and proposed programs. Infiltration reinforced the CCP's ideological advantage and increased its

influence within the MPGs. The Party also actively supported the creation of new MPGs. The CCP also credibly promised the MPGs a role in its New Democratic regime commensurate with their perceptions of their own importance.

The MPGs' strongly statist socialism, including that contained in their third road proposals, had enough similarities with the CCP's New Democracy for them to overcome their doubts about the Party's ideology and ultimate intentions. Winning the public support of the MPGs was a crucial part of the CCP's strategy for the defeat of the GMD, the takeover of urban areas, and the subsequent transition to socialism. Symbolically and politically, the MPGs exerted a strong ideological influence among the 'middle elements' supporting the GMD state. The MPGs' increasing opposition to the GMD and their concomitant growing affinity for the CCP gained more support for the Party among their constituencies and rendered others passive. It was no longer common sense to support the Nationalists. As Gramsci had predicted, without the support of the intellectuals, the GMD state collapsed like a house of cards. When the MPGs representing the major groups of intellectuals in Chinese society arrayed themselves behind the CCP and its military dominance became manifest, consent and coercion came together thus demonstrating that the Party had become hegemonic.

After 1949, the transition towards socialism was intended to change Chinese society fundamentally, socialising the means of production and using thought reform to ideologically transform the intellectuals of the feudal and bourgeois classes into proletarians. The MPGs served as models for the various types of intellectuals and classes they represented and they experienced one thought reform campaign after another. Yet these campaigns and Mao's impatience with the speed of socialist transformation ensured the latter's failure and the eventual need to adopt a strategy of passive revolution.

The Hundred Flowers campaign of 1956-57 saw the MPGs seek to influence the official Party line, slow the transition process, and increase the Party's accountability. Their remonstrations were within the original guidelines and were supported by the UFD with the imprimatur of Li Wei-han. Yet Mao took all suggestions as criticisms. Mao's anti-Rightist movement and attacks on the bourgeoisie and intellectuals impelled

these classes to retreat into passivity in a manner akin to that experienced under the GMD ten years earlier. Mao's initiatives all but destroyed the MPGs, leaving them under the leadership of radicals often indistinguishable from those in the CCP. Mao's subsequent initiatives to institute the Great Leap Forward resulted in waste and famine with huge costs in lives and resources. These failures discredited those most basic promises of Chinese socialism, to improve living standards and make China a strong nation.

Nor did the Party live up to its promise to reward all those bourgeoisie who become good socialist proletarians. Mao's need for negative exemplars and his constant shifting of the boundaries between what constituted right and left meant that even if individuals accepted ideological reform completely one day, there was no guarantee that they would not be persecuted the next. The talents and knowledge of many intellectuals were ignored and their retreat into passivity exacerbated the growing crisis. Mao's China was capable of building a new society without the bourgeois intellectuals but it would be unable to compete with Western capitalist nations or even its rapidly modernising and industrialising Asian neighbours.

The CCP's short-lived passive revolutionary response to the Second Hundred Flowers period implemented by Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and others, sought to regain popular support by retreating several steps from Mao's program of rapid socialisation. This period of crisis management was marked by increased consultation as exemplified in the rebuilding of the MPGs and CPPCC. Small-scale enterprise and entrepreneurship re-emerged to boost production and provide material rewards for support from the general public. Crisis demanded concessions. However, Mao soon reversed these policies and launched the Cultural Revolution.

To overcome the crisis created by the Cultural Revolution the Party was again forced to institute economic reform. This induced a complementary revival of a united front similar to that of the Second Hundred Flowers period. The death of Mao had removed the major obstacle to concessions with the bourgeois intelligentsia and technical intellectuals which united front work required. The resuscitation of these policies was supported by many of the same people who had instituted the first revival,

most notably Deng Xiaoping. The renewed attention to united front and MPG work was a recognition of the Party's need to re-establish links with non-Party intellectuals, to overcome their passivity and harness their talents and resources behind the Party's reform efforts. Without reform, the increased production necessary to form the material basis for the reward of consent would be absent and the Party's hegemony would continue to weaken.

The post-Mao reforms went much further than those of the late 1950s. During the 1990s, in what amounts to a major twist of irony for the MPGs, the CCP produced a political and economic system which resembles in important aspects, that which was previously promoted by third road advocates, especially the National Construction Association's Zhang Naiqi. As Zhang had proposed, China is now building a complex and competitive mix of private, state, and collective enterprises with resultant increasing productivity. Foreign capital, expertise, and technology are being imported to boost production further. Foreign investment in enterprises and technology, much from Overseas Chinese, has underpinned China's economic reforms. Central planning to guide the development of this mix remains, albeit of ever declining importance. The MPGs are playing an important role in these changes.

It is clear that this post-Mao passive revolutionary New Era Patriotic United Front has become a permanent and ever more institutionalised part of CCP policy and practice. The Party has become a victim of the success of its reform policy. The reforms, including united front work, were introduced to strengthen the Party and rebuild its hegemony. The resultant growth in production and prosperity has precipitated the need to not only continue these measures but also to intensify them. Any return to a more centrally planned economy is now impossible. The past failures of centrally planned socialism, not only in China but in all socialist nations, stand in stark contrast to the success of the CCP's reforms in raising living standards and increasing national wealth. Yet these changes have not only allowed a revival of the remnants of the old capitalist classes, they have also given rise to a rapidly proliferating number of new interest groups and classes. The reforms generate increased complexity in the process of government and administration. However, as previous chapters have

demonstrated, the existence of extensive united front structures provides the CCP with the means to co-opt non-Party experts and integrate new groups.

### **Corporatism and its Dysfunctions**

Initially, the corporatist united front structures facilitated the relatively smooth transition towards socialism but by the late 1980s they had come to serve the transition away from it, albeit in the name of the strengthening, not the dismantling, of socialism. The revival of the NCA and the ACFIC and the consequent establishment of CITIC demonstrate the inter-relationship of the economic reforms and united front work. The front and its constituents, such as the MPGs, have repeatedly been adjusted to cope with new demands generated by the continuation of the reform process. The corporatist structures of the united front are designed to facilitate social peace and support the Party-state's hegemony. These structures also provide a framework for co-opting non-Party experts to assist in the state's policy-making processes and include potential means for preventing or diffusing conflicts between the proliferating interest groups and, more importantly, between these groups and the state.

What then of Fewsmith's observation that authoritarian states have an interest in creating corporatist organisations that do not work? It is clear that the MPGs were very weak organisations even before 1949. The collapse of the Zhang Junmai's National Socialist Party and the China Youth Party after they joined the GMD's National Assembly demonstrated their weaknesses clearly and bore out Alexis de Tocqueville's observation that "small parties are generally without political faith. As they are not elevated and sustained by lofty purposes, their selfishness of character is openly displayed in all their actions."<sup>2</sup> The 1989 reports of MPG infighting about the potential allocation of official appointments indicated that little had changed even after forty years and a change of regime. In the latter case, however, this repetition was clearly the result of the organisational constraints imposed by the CCP.

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<sup>2</sup> In Alessandro Pizzorno (ed), *Political Sociology: Selected Readings*, (Penguin, Harmondsworth 1971), p.22.

After 1949, the CCP had no interest in allowing alternative political parties to exist but it wanted to represent the bourgeois classes and their intellectuals until they became redundant. To maximise control over them while still retaining their symbolic functions, the CCP has consistently utilised and exacerbated the dysfunctional tendencies inherent in the MPGs' corporatist form. The Party has minimised the MPGs' ability to develop into genuinely representative organisations let alone independent ones. Despite Party control over the selection of MPG members and leaders, and their ideological indoctrination, the CCP still feels the need to go on inserting trusted Party members into MPG leadership positions in particular. These factors are exacerbated by the inherent lack of accountability and colonisation by party-state bureaucrats and explain both why the MPGs have continually succumbed to infighting and why they reflect the CCP so closely. It was the CCP's intention that the MPGs become like the CCP.

While the Party maintains the MPGs are political parties, it is clear that they are not being permitted to become real parties. They are not permitted to organise as party blocs in their main united front forum, the CPPCC, let alone the NPC. The contributions of MPG individual members inside and outside of these forums are sometimes acknowledged but the contributions publicly attributed to the MPGs are usually peripheral. Individuals from MPGs can have an important role in opinion formation as the case of the Three Gorges revealed. However, as this example showed, the MPGs have all the weaknesses of groups of experts. They are restricted to "pragmatic dissent" based on expert knowledge and rational process.<sup>3</sup> This type of dissent can be easily ignored by the Party. Despite their large presence in the CPPCC, the suggestions of most MPG members are apparently made through the committees of which they are members and not accredited to their party. The Party can claim any credit for itself and its system. These features reflect another important but unspoken intent of the CCP's united front work: to prevent the emergence of any centres of opposition and potential alternatives to itself. Having once benefited from the space allowed it by the GMD, the CCP is most unwilling to allow any possibility for the

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<sup>3</sup> Shapiro, 1972, pp.9-10.

MPGs to develop into potential threats in a similar fashion. The very lack of any credible alternatives adds weight to the Party's claim that only it can provide the conditions needed for peace and prosperity.

Given the restrictions placed upon them there is no way in which the MPGs can function along the lines of Western-type political parties. Even the MPGs' constructive criticisms of 1957 and their support for the students in 1989 constituted support for what they believed was Party policy. These beliefs were encouraged by Li Wei-han in the case of the former, and by Yan Ming-fu and the proposals of Zhao Ziyang in the latter situation. Certainly there was no call on either occasion for the overthrow of the CCP. Minor party aspirations have repeatedly been for more Party and government accountability and a greater role for themselves. They have remained loyal remonstrators.

The CCP seeks to make use of the MPGs as political parties in name and form to demonstrate its 'democratic' credentials and broad-based consent to its rule while utilising their skills expertise. This growing need for more professional expertise is one reason behind the MPGs growth. By leaving the way open to consult with MPG and other non-Party experts, the Party continuously holds out to them the hope of a greater role in the policy making process while simultaneously claiming the consultative process as more 'democratic' and scientific and therefore more legitimate. Moreover, there is little to suggest that the Party's interpretation of democracy is at odds with those of the experts they are seeking to co-opt. The reward for participation in the MPGs is not power but special consideration by the Party, entrance to epistemological communities of fellow experts and appointments to positions within the united front, such as the CPPCC. While the slim hope of government leadership positions persists, the CCP is only marginally more amenable to making non-Party appointments than its predecessor despite being far more securely in power.

However, the MPGs' dependency on the CCP and their dysfunctional aspects, does not mean that they would inevitably collapse if the CCP fell suddenly and general elections were held tomorrow. The experience of MPGs in the Soviet satellite states of Eastern Europe has shown that they can survive the transition to a democratic system

and that they can possess important advantages over newly established political parties.<sup>4</sup> The Polish MPGs had the benefit of "considerable property, and premises and press." In 1989, these advantages allowed the Polish Parties to play an important role in the fall of the Polish communists. Many of these Eastern European MPGs had a lesser problem of identity than the (new) post-communist parties. They often spoke for a clear sectional constituency, as was the case with the Polish United Peasant Party. Within reason, they could claim to be resurrecting an identity which their subordination to the communists had suppressed.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast, the Chinese MPGs have generally not been allowed to develop to become responsive to their members. In 1989, for example, the CCP resisted MPG demands to be allowed to develop greater internal cohesion through the use of symbolic paraphernalia, such as flags, factors which gave their European counterparts an advantage over new parties.<sup>6</sup> Yet, the constraints in the CCP's ability to fund the MPGs and its wish to develop their economic expertise has resulted in it allowing the MPGs to establish the very type of enterprises and printing plants which the Polish Peasant Party used to its advantage.

The CCP's push to allow the MPGs to develop wider expertise has also resulted in important changes to MPG membership rules. Allowing the MPGs to recruit outside of their traditional areas contains the possibility of making the MPGs more broadly based and more likely to become normal parties. However, this change contains potential problems. As Seymour had discovered, a major attraction for existing MPG members was their nature as epistemological communities.<sup>7</sup> This attraction may now be undermined. If these new MPG members with valued economic skills are then given preference in appointments over traditional members the latter's dissatisfaction may well be exacerbated. As a general rule, the CCP has shown that it prefers

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<sup>4</sup> Attila Agh, "The Hungarian Party System and Party Theory in the Transition of Central Europe," *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, vol.6, no.2, 1994, pp.217-238. Micheal Waller, "Party Inheritances and Party Identities," in Geoffrey Pridham and Paul G. Lewis (eds), *Stabilising Fragile Democracies: Comparing New Party Systems in Southern and Eastern Europe*, (Routledge, London, 1996), pp.25-26.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.36.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Seymour, 1987, 74.

dysfunction over organisation if such organisation has the potential to become a danger. The MPGs may remain flower vases.

The bodies most likely to become effective organisations and political players are NCA, the ACFIC, and the new business-based associations, such as chambers of commerce and the like. The direct links to the economic production which the state is attempting to promote and the fact that entrepreneurs can harness large resources, has resulted in the interests and concerns of the organisations representing non-state enterprise becoming highly salient to the state. As CITIC's support for radical reformers in the late 1980s demonstrated, the relative autonomy of China's new enterprises also provides a potential base for opposition. This potential needs to be neutralised. Neutralisation is most effective when the state and the interest groups negotiate an accommodation. This accommodation requires that the state-sanctioned corporatist groups be able to enforce its agreements. The CCP is making the new associations effective and responsive in order that the possibility of exclusion becomes a measure which can be used as means to discipline members and enforce agreements. These associations have the ability to negotiate with the state which the MPGs lack.

The UFD's interest in chambers of commerce and the like reflects a profound shift in power relations since 1976. From 1949 onwards, because of the socialisation of the means of production and the Party's extension into all aspects of life, power had become increasingly concentrated in the Party-state. Today, the Party-state is no longer the only source of power and influence and its force is declining. The Party cadres within private entrepreneur related organisations are no longer directing inferiors but are working with, and increasingly for, individuals growing richer and more powerful as the market economy develops. Evidence discussed in the previous chapter reveals that state cadres in these business-based organisations are increasingly identifying themselves more with the interests of their organisations rather than with the interests of the state.

The CCP is, however, well aware of the potential that these interest groups have to endanger the social and political order if their interests and those of the Party become mutually inimical. Yet the Party's growing reliance on economic growth and this

possible threat are, paradoxically, reasons why the CCP is under pressure to allow entrepreneur associations to become effective and responsive bodies. Failure to solve the problems of business endangers the state by slowing economic growth. To minimise the political implications of the any such problems, the Party and the UFD have embarked on a policy of separating the clearly economic concerns of the entrepreneurs from more political ones using the one office two name-plate policy.

### **The Implications For Civil Society**

In the early 1990s, some Western scholars saw in China's rapid socio-economic changes and proliferating associations, the potential for a civil society.<sup>8</sup> The commonly accepted model of civil society, the Hegelian/Habermasian model assumes a dichotomy between private autonomous organisations in civil society and the state. The oppositional relationship of these two actors teleologically provides the basis for the emergence of democracy. However, the application of a model based on capitalist-state relations as they evolved in Europe has serious flaws. With the evolution of capitalism European civil society emerged from below. In China, the diversification of means of production is clearly the result of passive revolutionary changes from above, instituted by the state. Moreover, the distinction between private and state owned enterprises is blurred and makes the official designation of 'non-state sector' an apposite one. Despite the transition towards a market-based economy the new classes of entrepreneurs remain partially dependent on the state. Organisations such as the ACFIC and the MPGs have their own businesses but can these be considered private? Can CITIC be regarded as private or is Rong Yiren a director of a state firm? Can the Patriotic Construction Company be considered private if the UFD includes it in lists of united front organisations? The state and business are inter-penetrated at many levels. Jean Oi described the developing complex relationship between local authorities and

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<sup>8</sup> Notably. Gordon White, "Prospects for Civil Society in China: A Case Study of Xiaoshan City," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, issue 29, Jan 1993, pp.63-88. However, White did note that many of the organisations he surveyed were deeply penetrated by the state and he emphasised that the new associations were as yet only relatively autonomous. For an excellent review of the development of the idea of civil society in China and the criticisms of it see Timothy Cheek, "From Market to Democracy in China: Gaps in the Civil Society Model." A paper presented at the "Colorado College Colloquium: Market Economics and Political Change: Mexico and the People's Republic of China," March 4-5, 1994.

enterprises as “local state corporatism,”<sup>9</sup> a theme since developed by other researchers.<sup>10</sup>

Like China’s economic reforms, the proliferation of business and interest organisations and associations which some observers regarded as the beginnings of civil society is also the result of state policy. These bodies, like the MPGs, are all controlled by the state to some degree and exist with the permission of the state not despite it: their autonomy is both relative and conditional and they do not oppose the state. The involvement of the Public Security Bureau in the establishment of some business associations minimises the possibility of hostility.

Gramsci’s concept of civil society, “the ensemble of organisms commonly called private,” does not assume a dichotomy between state and civil society. It co-exists with and is inter-penetrated by “that of ‘political’ society or the State.”<sup>11</sup> Hegemony, it must be remembered, is consent created in civil society and supported by the coercion of political society yet there is ambiguity and overlap between the two areas; schools, for example, are state institutions possessing a degree of coercion but are also largely consensual. As state dominance of production erodes, replaced by a complicated mix of state and private, the Party-state is reducing its direct control of these associations thereby making them more ‘civil.’ Just as it has the power to shape the form of schools and the content of their ideology, so too the Party is shaping the associations and the space in which they operate. The CCP is shaping the sort of civil society it wants, one which creates a system of alliances and ideology which reproduces the consent and support necessary for its continued rule. In other words, it is effectively attempting to build the same sort of civil society bulwarks which Gramsci identified as the “fortresses and earthworks” underpinning the strength of bourgeois capitalism.<sup>12</sup> The Party’s goal is to establish a ‘small government - big society model’ of its own

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<sup>9</sup> Jean C. Oi, “Fiscal Reform and the Economic Foundations of Local State Corporatism in China,” *World Politics*, vol. 45, no. 1, October 1992, pp. 99-126.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Nan Lin, “Local Market Socialism: Local Corporatism in Action in Rural China,” *Theory and Society*, vol.24, 1995, pp.301-354. Gordon White also made this point. White, 1993.

<sup>11</sup> SPN, pp.12, 246.

<sup>12</sup> Gramsci had compared the ease with which Russia fell to revolutionaries with failure of capitalist societies to succumb to revolution despite their repeated crises: “In Russia the state was everything, civil society was primordial and gelatinous; in the West, there was a proper relation between the state and civil society, and when the state trembled a sturdy structure of civil society was at once revealed.” *SPN*, p.238.

design rather than have opposition, let alone an alternative political force, emerge from below. Timothy Cheek noted that these new self-policing corporatist organisations are also partially coercive and effectively part of Gramsci's political society. Cheek argues that what is developing in China is "the re-constitution of a transformed co-optive conversation between the official and private realms of China's economic and social elites." That is, we see not 'progress' towards Western-style democracy, but rather a reversion to the Qing period when merchant associations engaged the government and "represented *simultaneously* official and private interests," a stage he regarded as likely to be self-perpetuating.<sup>13</sup>

The new entrepreneur associations and chambers of commerce support CCP hegemony on the one hand, and represent their constituencies on the other, and are indeed Janus faced as Margaret Pearson described them.<sup>14</sup> The corporatist integration of the non-state sector serves the CCP by reinforcing its claims to provide social peace and increasing production. The long-time goal of Chinese patriotism, that of building a strong and prosperous nation, is effectively now the Communist Party's current *raison d'être*. Increasing the availability of goods and prosperity serves this goal while simultaneously rewarding consent to its hegemony. Anything which increases economic growth, even basic aspects of capitalism, is now called building socialism. Yet a danger is that the Party's resort to dependence on rapid economic growth and patriotism will leave it vulnerable in a manner similar to that which occurred to the GMD when it failed to control the economy in the late-1940s. The CCP's major advantage over the GMD is precisely that it has integrated intellectuals of all sorts, including those of the new classes, into its political system and it has not allowed any groups, including the MPGs to develop into potential rivals.

Although the involvement of the UFD in the operation of China's various corporatist organisations has been noted in the past, it is clear that since the early 1990s, the UFD, on behalf of the Party, has been quietly and systematically integrating them into the social and political system from the national level down to the local level. This

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<sup>13</sup> Cheek, 1994, p.25.

<sup>14</sup> Pearson, 1994.

system of incorporation is a vital part of the CCP's vision of democracy and integral to its vision of socialism with Chinese characteristics. In an interview in March 1997, president Jiang Zemin re-asserted the people's congresses and the system of multi-party co-operation and political consultation political conformed to Chinese conditions. Peace and development, Jiang maintained, were today's main goals. However, Jiang also declared that "We are actively implementing reform of the political system, strengthening socialist democracy and the construction of the legal system."<sup>15</sup> It was a theme he repeated at the Party's fifteenth Congress in September 1997:

We should gradually establish a mechanism that will help the decision makers to go deep among the people to see their condition, adequately reflect their will and pool their wisdom so that decision making will be more scientific, democratic and efficient, and will reach a higher level. We should adhere and improve the system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the Communist Party, adhere to the principles of long-term co-existence, mutual supervision, treat each other with all sincerity and share weal and woe. We should re-inforce co-operation and work with the democratic parties and solidify our alliance with non-Party people. We should continue to promote the standardisation and institutionalisation of the people's political consultative conferences' democratic supervision, participation in and discussion of state affairs so that they will become important channels through which the country can unite the various sectors. We should consolidate and develop the broad patriotic united front ...<sup>16</sup>

It seems that the hundred years of China's initial stage of socialism may be a century long period of corporatism using united front structures. Such a stage may not only help to effect the transition from an agriculturally based economy to an industrial one, ironically, it can also facilitate the eventual establishment of a democratic regime. One Chinese writer has concluded that China is as yet unable to make a smooth transition to democracy because it lacks the ability to facilitate the inter-elite pact-making required to facilitate a smooth transition from authoritarianism. This facility, he argued, was present in the corporatist regimes of Spain and Brazil which succeeded in making this transition.<sup>17</sup> What this writer failed to appreciate is that the CCP is intent on constructing precisely such a framework. The creation of a comprehensive corporatist system may result in the conditions required for the establishment of the sort of Western-style democratic system the CCP is doing its utmost to forestall.

<sup>15</sup> *Xinhua yuebao*, no.6, 1997, pp.147.

<sup>16</sup> "Jiang Zemin delivers political report to 15th Party Congress," pt.2, SWB FE/3024 S2/5 September 15, 1997.

<sup>17</sup> Baohui Zhang, "Corporatism, Totalitarianism and Transitions to Democracy," *Comparative Political Studies*, vol.27. no.1. April 1994, pp.108-136.

## Appendices

## Appendix A: MPG Memberships

Year	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1953	1954-55	1956 <sup>1</sup>
Rev. GMD				200 <sup>2</sup>			800 <sup>3</sup>			16,000
DL	3,000 <sup>4</sup>	5,000 <sup>5</sup>	15,000 <sup>6</sup>	8,000 <sup>7</sup>	14,185 <sup>8</sup>					30,000
NCA							4,700 <sup>9</sup>	6,900 <sup>10</sup>	7,000 <sup>11</sup>	25,000 <sup>12</sup>
APD										N/A
P WP				6,000 <sup>13</sup>						N/A
Zhigong										2,300
Jiusan								5,000	5,000 <sup>14</sup>	25,000
TSGL										N/A <sup>15</sup>
Total				40,000 <sup>16</sup>	28,000 <sup>17</sup>	10,939 <sup>18</sup>		(39,000)	39,000	96,000
ACFIC										760,000 <sup>19</sup>

Year	1979	1980	1981	1983 <sup>20</sup>	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Rev. GMD	8,500 <sup>21</sup>		9,700 <sup>22</sup>	18,000	20,000				36,000 <sup>23</sup>
DL	20,000 <sup>24</sup>	25,000 <sup>25</sup>		39,300 <sup>26</sup>	50,000		65,850 <sup>27</sup>	70,000 <sup>28</sup>	81,000 <sup>29</sup>
NCA	8,200 <sup>30</sup>			24,767 <sup>31</sup>	25,000 <sup>32</sup>			40,000 <sup>33</sup>	40,000 <sup>34</sup>
APD	6,000 <sup>35</sup>			15,000 <sup>36</sup>	15,000 <sup>37</sup>				
PWP	5,422 <sup>38</sup>		7,500 <sup>39</sup>	13,770	N/A				43,000 <sup>40</sup>
Zhigong	298 <sup>41</sup>			2,200	2,300				8,400 <sup>42</sup>
Jiusan	8,200 <sup>43</sup>			11,014	25,000				37,000 <sup>44</sup>
TSGL	171 <sup>45</sup>			N/A	N/A				
Total	56,791 <sup>46</sup>		N/A <sup>47</sup>	124,051 <sup>48</sup>	141,700 <sup>49</sup>	178,027 <sup>50</sup>	190,000 <sup>51</sup>	220,000 <sup>52</sup>	290,000 <sup>53</sup>
ACFIC							500,000 <sup>54</sup>		300,000 <sup>55</sup>

Year	1989 <sup>56</sup>	1990 <sup>57</sup>	1990 <sup>58</sup>	1991 <sup>59</sup>	1992	1993 <sup>60</sup>	1994	1995	1996
Rev. GMD	39,133	40,000	41,333	40,000+	40,000 <sup>61</sup>	42,000	44,628		52,000
DL	99,000	89,000	102,492	99,000	106,000	110,000	111,059		120,000 <sup>62</sup>
NCA	50,000	46,000	53,049	50,000	53,500 <sup>63</sup>	56,000	58,126		68,562 <sup>64</sup>
APD	48,000	31,000	48,217	48,000	50,000 <sup>65</sup>	53,000	53,129		62,000 <sup>66</sup>
PWP	46,000	35,000	47,124	46,000	48,000 <sup>67</sup>	48,000	52,233	59,975 <sup>68</sup>	63,649 <sup>69</sup>
Zhigong	10,000	8,000	10,838	10,000	10,000 <sup>70</sup>	10,000	12,189		
Jiusan	45,000	40,000	47,206	47,000	48,766 <sup>71</sup>	50,000	53,617		62,000 <sup>72</sup>
TSGL	1,100	1,200	1,230	N/A	1,300 <sup>73</sup>	1,700	1,355		
Total	338,233 <sup>74</sup>	290,200	310,156	340,000	357,600	370,700 <sup>75</sup>	386,336	411,484 <sup>76</sup>	450,000 <sup>77</sup>
ACFic		318,000 <sup>78</sup>		500,000 <sup>79</sup>	620,000 <sup>80</sup>	670,000 <sup>81</sup>	700,000 <sup>82</sup>		

- 1 Seymour, 1987, p.viii.
- 2 Barnett, 1963, p.88. (Hong Kong membership)
- 3 Tang, *et al*, 1967, p.202.
- 4 Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.105.
- 5 *ibid.*, p.118. Van Slyke gives 1-2,000. Van Slyke, 1967, p.194
- 6 Dou Aizhi, 1992, p.118.
- 7 Barnett, 1963, p.91, Barnett describes a League spokesperson as claiming they once had over 100,000 but now counted 8,000 members among Hong Kong emigre's and Overseas Chinese.
- 8 *DL historical Documents*, p.106. This number was made up of 3,005 fully investigated members, 6,080 not yet investigated, 1,100 in Liberated Areas, and 5,000 in Overseas branches.
- 9 *A brief description of the history of China's democratic parties*, 1989, p.193. This figure was quoted for 1952 but as there no MPG growth in 1952 this figure almost certainly refers to 1951.
- 10 *ibid.*, p.195. Of these 42% were intellectuals and 58% business people.
- 11 April 1955 figure. *ibid* p.195.
- 12 *ibid.*, p.198. The precise figure was 24,156.
- 13 Barnett, 1963, p.90.
- 14 During the Hundred Flowers Campaign, Yuan Hanqing claimed that Jiusan had increased its membership five-fold in 1956. Hinton, 1980, p.515. Working back from 1957's membership of 25,000 + 5 = 5,000.
- 15 Zhang Kui (1992 pp.131.) states that the TSGI had stopped operating in 1952 but the fact that it was involved in preparations for invading Taiwan almost certainly account for its disappearance from public view.
- 16 Note that this was given as a total figure for the Third Force by Zhang Kui, (1993, p.1). Zhang gives this as an "at most" estimate but it is not clear what it consists of.
- 17 Iwamoto, 1995, p.12.
- 18 Zhang Kui, 1993, p.1.
- 19 Ren Tao, 1988, p.459.
- 20 Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.130-131.
- 21 Based on figures from Li Qing, 1991, pp.124-125.
- 22 *Zhongguo nianjian 1981*, p.222. Gives an increase of 1,200 since 1979. The 1979's 8,500 + 1,200 = 9,700.
- 23 *TJB*, December, 20, 1988, p.1. *TJB* stated that there had been a doubling of 1983's total, *i.e.* 2 x 18,000 = 36,000.
- 24 Hu Yaobang, "Speech to the Democratic League," (February 1980) In *DL Historical Documents*, vol.2, p.829.
- 25 *Guangming ribao*, January 8, 1981, p.2.
- 26 *Beijing Review*, November, 7, 1983. This reported that the DL increased membership by 14,300 from its 1980 total, *i.e.* 25,000+14,300 = 39,300. The League itself reported a 16,000 *increase* in members over the previous three years. *DL Historical Documents*, vol.2, p.988. See also "Fei Xiaotong on Democratic League," SWB FE/7519 B11/15.
- 27 *DL Historical Documents*, p.1128. New members totalled 42,765. *ibid.*, p.1122.
- 28 *ibid.*, p.1200.
- 29 *ibid.*, p.1269. (*i.e.* 40,000 new members "in last five years")
- 30 Based on figures from Li Qing, 1991, pp.124-125.
- 31 1,742 were women. Chen Zhujun, *et al*, 1985, p.502.
- 32 Up from 1978's figure of 18,000. *Beijing Review*, Dec 28-Jan 3, 1993, p.23.
- 33 *Renmin ribao*, December 13, 1987, p.4.
- 34 *TJB* December, 20, 1988, p.1.
- 35 SWB, FE/7502 B11/4. An increase of 9,000 over four years. Yu gang, 1990, p.489, states 7,000.
- 36 SWB FE/7499 B11/7. This report stated that of the 15,000+ members, 8% were women and 61% teachers.
- 37 Zhang Kui, 1992, p.130. The APD increased to 25,000 by the end of 1985.
- 38 Based on figures from Li Qing, 1991, pp.124-125.
- 39 *Beijing Review*, no.29, July 20, 1981, p.5.
- 40 *TJB*, December, 20, 1988, p.1. SWB FE/6336 B2/6, December 16, 1988.
- 41 Based on figures from Li Qing, 1991, pp.124-125.
- 42 *TJB*, December 27, 1988, p.1. *Renmin ribao*, December 13, 1988, p.13, states 8,000.
- 43 SWB, FE/7109 B11/9, 15,000-2,800=8,200.
- 44 *Renmin ribao*, December 31, 1988.
- 45 Based on figures from Li Qing, 1991, pp.124-125.
- 46 Zhang Kui, 1993, p.2 gives 65,482. Original source is *Tongzhang dongtai*, no.6, 1986. The standard CCP figure for 1979 is 65,000.
- 47 The only available statistic is that membership increased by 5,200. *Zhongguo nian jian 1981*, p.222.
- 48 The sum of available individual MPG memberships totalled 124,000.
- 49 Iwamoto, 1995, p.12.
- 50 Zhang Kui, 1992, p.131.
- 51 Shen Ronghua, 1988, p.12.
- 52 *Renmin ribao* (O/S ed) April 12, 1987, p.2.

- 53 Iwamoto, 1995, p.12.
- 54 Ren Tao, 1988, *Tongyi zhanxian zhishi wenda*, p.93.
- 55 *UFE*, p.297.
- 56 Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.130-131.
- 57 *China Review* 1992, 2.25.
- 58 *Zhongguo baike nianjian*, 1991, p.367.
- 59 Wang Dehua, 1992 Pg 20, 27, 32, 39, 46, 51, 57 (47,057) These figures are supported by *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian cidian bianweihui* (United front Dictionary editorial Committee (Eds) ) *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian cidian* [Chinese united front Dictionary], (Zhonggong dang shi chubanshe, Beijing, 1992).. This reference book presumably uses 1991 figures. It gives total membership as 350,000 but only provides figures for four parties, Minge 40,000, Minmeng 100,000, Nonggong 46,000, and Zhigong 10,000.
- 60 Unless otherwise indicated these statistics were provided by high level members of the relevant party in Shanghai between September and December 1993.
- 61 *Beijing Review*, March 23-29, 1992, p.23.
- 62 *Qiushi*, 1997, no.9, p.5.
- 63 (Edited documents from the Sixth National Conference of the Chinese Democratic Construction Association), Feb. 1993. See also *Beijing Review*, Dec 28-Jan 3 1993, p.23, this gives a figure of 56,000.
- 64 SWB FE 2796 G/7, December 16, 1996.
- 65 *Beijing Review*, July 20-26, 1992, p.17
- 66 SWB FE 2802 G/10, December 23, 1996. This report stated membership was "almost 70,000."
- 67 This number is based on the party's own official mid 1992 national conference figure of 48,7666 members and includes anticipated growth. *Beijing Review*, Sept, 14-20, p.18, gives 47,000+.
- 68 Nonggong zhongyang zuzhibu [PWP central organisation department], personal inquiry.
- 69 *ibid.*
- 70 *Beijing Review*, Jan 18-31, p.29.
- 71 Jiusan Xuehui di liu ci quanguo daibiao dahui wenjian huibian (Sixth National Conference of the September Third Study Society), Jiusan Xuehui Zhongyang Weiyuan hui, (January 1993), p.21. This conference was held on December 26, 1992. The membership statistic is for the period ending June 1992.
- 72 Italicised figures for 1997 from private sources via correspondence.
- 73 *Beijing Review*, Dec 21-27, 1989, p.20.
- 74 *TJB*, September 12, 1989, p.1. This reported stated total membership as 320,000. See Chapter 11.
- 75 Iwamoto, 1995, p.12. Iwamoto states 374, 000.
- 76 *Zhongguo baike nianjian 1995*, p.266.
- 77 *Zhongguo baike nianjian 1996* states 450,000. The figure of 459,000 figure is a speculative one based on a 5% increase over 1995 as is reported by *Zhongyang ribao*, September 1996.
- 78 Between 1984 and 1990 there was a 180,000 increase in new members. *Basic readings on united front work for cadres*, p.414.
- 79 *UFE*, p.297.
- 80 Jonathan Unger, 1996, p. 809. *People's Republic of China Yearbook, 1993/93*, p.63. This figure represents 110,000 enterprises and 100,000 individuals as well as 9,500 government departments and firms. ACFIC had 1,921 branches. By the end of 1991, ACFIC also had 1,800 of its own firms. Some 15,000 members were delegates to the NPC/CPCC or worked in government.
- 81 *Renmin ribao*, October 18, 1993. In *Xinhua yuebao*, October 1993, p.36. This reveals an increase of 307,000 new members. Anita Chan, 1994, p.12, gives 623,000. *The PRC Yearbook 1994*, p.82, gives 578,000: 500,000 old members, 78,000 new including 39,000 enterprises members, 2,700 corporate members and 37,000 individual members.
- 82 *Renmin Zhengxie bao*, April 19, 1994, p.3.

## MPG Annual Membership Changes

YEAR	1948	1949	1950	1955	1956	1962	1966
Total	40,000	28,000	10,939 <sup>1</sup>	39,000 <sup>2</sup>	96,000	85,000 <sup>3</sup>	87,000 <sup>4</sup>
Increase			-17,061	28,061	57,000		
% Change			-60%	257%	146%	-11%	

1979	1981	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
65,482		100,751	141,700	178,000	N/A	220,000	290,000	320,000
19,518	+35,000	35,269	40,949	36,300		52,000	70,000	30,000
-23%		54%	41%	26%		24%	32%	10%

1990	1991	1992	1993	1993 <sup>5</sup>	1994	1995	1996
290,200/ 337,000 <sup>6</sup>	340,000	357,600	370,700	386,336	411,484 <sup>7</sup>		(459,900)
-29,800 +17,000	49,800 3,000	17,600	13,100	15,636	25,148	26,500	(21,500)
-9% +5.3%	17% +0.9%	5.2%	3.7%	4%	6.1%	6%	(5%)

<sup>1</sup> Zhang Kui, 1992, pp.130-131. Li Weihai, 1986, vol.2, p.803.

<sup>2</sup> Li Weihai, 1986, vol.2, p.803.

<sup>3</sup> Xu Bing, "Report to the 12th National United Front Work Conference," (May 19, 1962) Ren Tao, 1988, p.409. Xu wanted membership to be expanded to 100,000.

<sup>4</sup> Wang Bangzuo, 1991, p.556.

<sup>5</sup> *Zhongguo baike quanshu 1993*, p.265.

<sup>6</sup> Figure for June 1990. In Zhu Qitai, 1990, p.480

<sup>7</sup> *Zhongguo baike nianjian 1995*, p.266.

## Appendix B: National United Front Work Conferences

First National United Front Work Conference:	1950, March.
Second National United Front Work Conference:	1951, 16-January-January 25.
Third National United Front Work Conference:	1952, June 6-
Fourth National United Front Work Conference:	1953, 25 June-July 22.
Fifth National United Front Work Conference:	1954, 20 March-April 11.
Sixth National United Front Work Conference:	1956, 6 February-March 3.
Seventh National United Front Work Conference:	1956, 16 October-November 8.
Eighth National United Front Work Conference:	1957, 21 March-April 4.
Ninth National United Front Work Conference:	1957, 2 December-December 16
Tenth National United Front Work Conference:	1958, July.
Eleventh National United Front Work Conference:	1958, December 18-January 7.
Twelfth National United Front Work Conference:	1962, 23 April-May 21.
Thirteenth National United Front Work Conference:	1963, 25-May-June 18.
Fourteenth National United Front Work Conference:	1979, August 15-September 3.
Fifteenth National United Front Work Conference:	1981, december 21-January 6.
Sixteenth National United Front Work Conference.	1986, November 27-December 4
Seventeenth National united Front Work Conference	1990, June 11-15.
Eighteenth National United Front Work Conference:	1993, November 3-7.

## Appendix C:

### Other MPG Contributions in the 1990s

Special Appointments  
Attracting Investment  
Consultancies and Investigations  
Education  
Poverty Relief

#### Special Appointments

The 1989 *Guidelines* document also formalised the system of special (*te yue*) appointments as a specific form of mutual supervision utilising non-Party expertise. There were four types of appointments: procurators (*jiancha yuan*), inspectors (*jiancha yuan*), auditors (*shenji yuan*), and educational superintendents (*jiaoyu dudao yuan*). There were 837 procuratorial appointments between 1989 and 1995 including 18 at the central and 187 at the provincial levels. The Ministry of Supervision appointed two batches of 49 inspectors. There were more than 4,000 appointments at lower levels although the system had not been adopted universally. Thirteen auditors were appointed at the central and 443 at lower levels. In contrast in 1993, only three people had been appointed as central level education superintendents.<sup>1</sup>

Investigating corruption in the government and Party formed the bulk of the special appointees' work. Anxious to improve its image in the wake the unrest of 1989 when anger at corruption was a major issue, the CCP conspicuously increased the number of special appointees. In August 1989, for example, Anhui Province appointed 34 MPG members in 9 groups to investigate 112 units.<sup>2</sup> In Jiangsu, MPG members were appointed to discuss the Party's work style, how to improve it, and to report back to their members on the CCP's efforts to correct problems.<sup>3</sup> In September, the CCP in Shanghai held a special united front conference to re-state that it accepted non-Party supervision in which the MPGs would play a major role.<sup>4</sup>

This system of appointments continued to develop as the figures above show. The positions seem to be prestigious and therefore another means to reward MPG members. Yet while the system was explicitly linked to the construction of the legal system, the Party nevertheless controlled who and what the appointees could investigate. Moreover, no matter what investigators uncover, they can only submit their reports and cannot independently initiate legal action. Without the separation of the legal system from the CCP controlled executive, the power to prosecute, punish or absolve wrongdoing remained in Party hands.

<sup>1</sup> "Te yue "si yuan" gongzuo chengji xianzhu," [Obvious results of the "four officials" special appointments], *ZGTYZX*, no.3, 1995, p.46.

<sup>2</sup> *TJB*, October 3, 1989, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *TJB*, September 5, 1989, p.1.

Increasing political participation by the MPGs did not replace their other roles of bringing their expertise and contacts to bear in helping to develop China's economy and investigating particular problems. The MPGs contribution to economic development through helping to attract investment funds from Overseas Chinese alone was of substantial national benefit.

Zhigong dang, the MPG with specific responsibility for Overseas and returned Overseas Chinese, particularly those with Hongmen Society connections, was very successful in attracting investment. Between 1990 and 1991 alone, Zhigong's 10,000 members hosted 30,000 visitors resulting in 50 million yuan of donations to 300 public welfare projects.<sup>5</sup> In 1996, Zhigong hosted only 12,500 visitors but their efforts resulted in US\$670 million worth of business investment.<sup>6</sup> Even the tiny Taiwan Self-Government League is credited with attracting US\$14 million between 1988-90.<sup>7</sup> The UFD reported that total investments attracted by the MPGs and ACFIC between 1989 and 1992 were 940 million yuan, US\$840 and HK\$788 respectively.<sup>8</sup> The importance of MPG efforts and united front work in attracting investment was highlighted by the fact that they were credited by united front sources with attracting more than half the total US\$4billion of invested in Guangdong Province between 1988 and 1990.<sup>9</sup>

#### MPG Consultancies and Investigations

The MPGs also played a role in helping to improve the efficiency of local, and particularly state enterprises. Between 1989 and late 1992, the MPGs' 1,500 consultancy agencies conducted 11,300 projects.<sup>10</sup> In 1989 the NCA and ACFIC carried out 11,700 consultancies for small and medium enterprises and town and village enterprises in addition to those they conducted in poor areas.<sup>11</sup>

The NCA and ACFIC, because of the talents, knowledge and connections of their members, were particularly useful in helping state enterprises overcome problems such as inefficiency and indebtedness. In 1991, the NCA submitted proposals on invigorating large and medium industry to the CCP Central Committee. The Shanghai NCA claims that the 28 conditions of this proposal were implemented by many government departments. In 1992, the Shanghai NCA also submitted "Suggestions on Transforming the Management System of Shanghai's Nationally Owned Enterprises" although how many of these suggestions were implemented is unknown.

Practical examples of the NCA's efforts included investigating the Shanghai Toothpaste Factory. In 1989 the factory was going bankrupt because the prices of

<sup>5</sup> "Zhigong dang: Mouthpiece of Overseas Chinese," *Beijing Review*, January 18-31, 1993, pp.29-30.

<sup>6</sup> SWB FE 2802 G/1, December 23, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> Luo Hanxian, 1991, p.101.

<sup>8</sup> FBIS-CHI-93-225, November 24, 1993, p.23.

<sup>9</sup> Luo Hanxian, 1991, p.101.

<sup>10</sup> FBIS-CHI-93-225, November 24, 1993, p.23.

<sup>11</sup> *Beijing Review*, January 8-14, 1990, p.2

toothpaste set in Beijing were below its costs of production. After researching problem, the NCA submitted a report to the then mayor, Zhu Rongji, suggesting that the factory also be allowed to manufacture new products, the prices for which it could set itself. Zhu accepted the NCA's recommendations, the new products were successful and the factory saved. As a reward, the NCA was given a seat in the local district level CPPCC.

The NCA also helped Shanghai's Zhengguanghe Company when sales of the firm's carbonated drinks declined precipitously in the face of competition from Coca Cola. Investigations by the NCA revealed that Coca Cola's major advantages were its mechanised delivery system and winning retailer loyalty by supplying shops with refrigeration equipment. Based on the NCA report, the Shanghai Municipal Government removed restrictive price controls, supplied Zhengguanghe with a fleet of delivery vehicles and allowed it to produce a range of new drinks and supply retailers with refrigeration equipment. In 1993, the resultant "Laimeng" brand was reportedly competing successfully with Coca Cola's products.<sup>12</sup>

An example of the NCA helping new enterprises was its involvement with Shanghai's Shares Company Limited, a firm selling shares in state enterprises. Using NCA members who had been active in share market work before 1949, the NCA advises state owned enterprises when they wished to issue shares.<sup>13</sup>

Aside from economic based investigations the MPGs continued to undertake specialist investigations on behalf of the CCP and government. In 1993 the Jiusan Society for example, investigated negative elements of the developing economic system such as possible price rigging offences by the Shanghai Shares Company and the questions of who ultimately owned state assets. The Society's scientific Consultancies carried out 1000 projects between 1984 and 1993, one of which included providing advice on the construction of the major Shanghai Yangpu Bridge Project. The Society also undertook technical investigations for enterprises, for example, redesigning a factory, a move which saved the firm concerned two million yuan.<sup>14</sup>

The Shanghai Peasant's and Worker's Party had also established a scientific consultancy, but in 1993 it had little to say of its success. The PWP's medical based constituency did allow investigations such as the major investigation of rural health care it carried out in late 1990. The subsequent report addressed issues such as the damage to the old collective health care system caused by the adoption of the household responsibility system.<sup>15</sup> The use of the Shanghai PWP expertise and contacts at universities, had, however, been commissioned by the government to investigate the brain drain problem of scholars and gifted students going abroad but not returning. The

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<sup>12</sup> Interview November 4, 1993.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Interview, November 16, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> *Beijing Review*, September 14-20, 1992, pp.17-20.

PWP used questionnaires to survey six Shanghai universities and interviewed departing and returned students and teachers. A conference in 1991 attended by PWP, UFD, Education Department and other officials produced a report with numerous proposals to redress the problem. As a result, subsidies to teachers were increased and funds were provided by the Shanghai Municipal Government as incentives to young teachers while young academics received housing credits.

### Education

The pre-1992 dominance of the MPGs by education related professionals continued to be reflected in their growing school system. By 1990, this system had conducted 8,622 training classes and trained 170,000 students. More than a million people had attended special classes. The number of schools reached 1,222 with a total enrolments of 84,000 and 2,410,000 graduates.<sup>16</sup> In the several years to the 1993 United Front Conference, some 1,200 schools trained 16,500 classes and gave almost 8,000 special lectures and seminars.<sup>17</sup>

In 1992, the Association for the Promotion of democracy had 143 schools conducting 1,600 classes with 100,000 enrolments.<sup>18</sup> The Revolutionary GMD's Zhongshan part-time school in Beijing, boasted classes in Cantonese dialect taught by Li Xiaotong, the daughter of the party founder Li Jishen and sister of the murdered vice chairman, Li Peiyao. Li Xiaotong had taught 500 students over seven years.<sup>19</sup>

Shanghai's extensive MPG school system continued to develop. In 1993, the NCA had three municipal level and four district schools out of total 13 such schools. The NCA taught commerce and industry related courses at high school and university level to some 17,000 students.<sup>20</sup> The quality of these schools was often high. In 1993, Shanghai Jiusan's famous school, the Shanghai College of Science and Technology, was awarded prizes for being an outstanding educational collective. Each Jiusan district branch also operated schools. Courses taught included public relations, computing, business, trade and economics. The most common course was teaching English.<sup>21</sup> Shanghai PWP's Qianjin School was particularly well known for teaching English. The PWP also runs schools aimed at helping the unemployed find work, particularly in areas such as tourism..<sup>22</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Luo Hanxian, 1991, pp.100-101.

<sup>17</sup> Wu Qiansheng, 1994, p.75.

<sup>18</sup> *Beijing Review*, July 20- 26, 1992, p.20.

<sup>19</sup> *Beijing Review*, March 26-April 1, 1990, p.19.

<sup>20</sup> Interview.

<sup>21</sup> Interview, November 16, 1993.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

### Poverty Relief

The Democratic League's connections with pure commercial consultancy work are unclear but the League's consultancy work aimed at relieving poverty has received publicity. In November 1990, in a major achievement for the League, the Central Government approved its plan for the economic development of the upper reaches of the Yellow River. "According to the suggestion, the upper reaches of the Yellow River should emphasise agriculture and animal husbandry, and make full use of the local resources to boost raw materials and processing industries."<sup>23</sup>

The League is responsible for poverty relief in the Sui'ning area of Sichuan Province, an area lacking adequate transport and communications infrastructure. Three hundred League experts, including agronomists, visited the district to investigate and advise. This work is said to have resulted in a 100,000 tonne increase in grain production over several years. Between 1984 and 1991, the Liangshan University operated by the Sichuan Democratic League trained over 1,000 specialists. This education was in addition to that provided through 4,500 special classes for 350,000 people. Such work is seen as helping redressing the imbalance between the wealthier Eastern and much poorer Western regions of China. Fei Xiaotong's 1991 proposals on assisting the economic development of the Old Silk Road had the same aim and were praised by Jiang Zemin.<sup>24</sup>

The optimistic reporting of this MPG poverty relief work masks some growing problems. The Jiusan Society was given particular responsibility for work in China's South-West Karst area. Limestone karst areas have poor soils and are generally impoverished. The Society has conducted numerous surveys and investigations in the area since 1988. One result of this work was that Zhou Peiyuan and Jiusan supported several hydro-electric dam projects in poor areas of Guizhou and Yunnan Provinces. In 1991, the Society also raised proposals in the CPPCC and NPC to further develop their poverty relief work<sup>25</sup> As in all matters involving the MPGs, they could make suggestions at the Central level but it was for the Party to endorse and then support them.

Members of MPGs sometimes spent years working on poverty relief projects. Some Shanghai Jiusan members, for example, spent three years developing a cement factory in Yunnan. In 1993, Shanghai MPGs such as Jiusan reported increasing difficulties in conducting this type of work. Funds were short while expenses, for travel in particular, were high. There were disputes between the parties involved on what work needed to be done and how. A major problem was reported to be that local inhabitants of poor areas expected immediate returns from what were often medium to long-term projects. They often had unrealistic expectations of large financial

<sup>23</sup> FBIS-CHI-92-051, March 15, 1992.

<sup>24</sup> *Beijing Review*, June 29- July 5, 1992, pp. 25-29.

<sup>25</sup> *Beijing Review*, March 30-April 5, 1992, pp.24-26.

investments which were rarely forthcoming. Moreover, the Jiusan Society recognised that poor areas often wanted and required, not simply technical assistance, but also the complementary inputs, such as management and marketing skills. The Society's lack of these skills made which the Society lacked in order to make many projects successful.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Jiusan interview, November 16, 1993.

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