

Confrontations Between Russians And Nationalist Chinese Government

by Ah Xiang

[Excerpts from "Civil Wars: 1945-1950"]

Li Zongren memoirs stated that Xiong Shihui had asked Russians to delay evacuation twice. Li Zongren said that Xiong Shihui had dereliction of duty as director for "Northeast Military Office" because Xiong Shihui had fully observed Russian request to stay inside of his office which was guarded by Russian patrols all the time: Xiong Shihui dared not even receive delegates of patriotic people of Manchuria, which encouraged Russians in hindering KMT government from taking over Manchuria. However, Xiong Shihui should not take the full blame. China had shown its weak position to Americans who passed on the signal to Moscow. On April 13th 1945, the second day after Roosevelt passed away, Gu Weijun reported that American Navy General Li-hai [Admiral William Leahy] had tested his response in regards to China's possible reaction to Russian grabbing Dalian and Luushun [Port Arthur] ports. Gu Weijun's response was that i) China would seek a peaceful solution in dealing with possible Russian takeover of two ports and ii) Russians could have better find a non-frozen port inside of Korea.

There had been discussion among top KMT leaders as to the possibility whether China could fight a war against USSR for sake of territorial integrity. Reading through Zhang Lingao's "Records From Repeated Recollections Of Dreams At Attache Office" [Shanghai Bookstore Publishing House, Oct 1998 edition, Shanghai, China], one conclusion could be reached, i.e., Chiang Kai-shek had conferred "special commissar" for diplomacy onto Jiang Jingguo in Oct 1945 in the hope that his son might recover China's rights from USSR. However, Jiang Jingguo, from beginning to end, had adopted an appeasement policy and exhibited soft positions. Jiang Jingguo had told his followers, including Zhang Lingao, that he was granted a personal visit by Stalin who both welcomed him by calling him "Junior General" and rebuked him as to insistence on Chinese suzerainty over Outer Mongolia. Right after the end of WWII, Chiang Kai-shek rezoned Manchuria into nine provinces and three municipalities on basis of Manchukuo layout, set the seat of the Military HQ for the ROC Military Committee at Changchun, and designated Xiong Shihui as director and Jiang Jingguo as secretary. In mid-Sept, Jiang Jingguo changed his title to "special commissar" for diplomacy under ROC Foreign Ministry at the suggestion of Xiong SHihui who played a trick by telling Chiang Kai-shek that Jiang Jingguo, with 12 years of living history inside of USSR, could do better with Russians as a diplomatic bureaucrat. Jiang Jingguo, with high ambition, selected multiple classmates from his Russian time period [including Yu Jiyu, Gao Weihai, Gao Liwen, Peng Jianhua & Xu Jiyuan] for the jobs in Manchuria, and naively designated two branch offices of "special commissar" for diplomacy in Dalian & Harbin [i.e., two cities out of reach for the Nationalist government] and one rep office in Shenyang in addition to headquarter in Changchun.

On Oct 9th, first batch of Chinese arrived at Changchun Airport where Russian women soldiers and remnant puppet administrators greeted them with flowers. The second day, Dong Yanping & Hu Shijie hosted the national flag ceremony on the occasion of Double Ten National Day. Russians restricted Chinese by providing one jeep to Jiang Jingguo's office but refused to acknowledge Xiong Shihui's

status. Furthermore, Russians threatened Chinese with "bearing no responsibility" should Chinese staff move around the city or Manchuria without Russian military escort. Per ZLA, no people were seen on the streets by 4:00 pm; some Russian soldiers robbed people of watches, cameras and leather coats; and Japanese refugees from northern Manchuria roamed the streets, with their women blackening out the faces with charcoal. On Oct 12th, Jiang Jingguo and Xiong Shihui personally arrived at Changchun. The first encounter was relatively smooth, with Russians providing reception by "Red Flag Troupe". Soon after that, Russians began to object to Chiang Kai-shek's request for dispatching engineers and managers to inspection of industries and Southern Manchurian Railway, claiming that anything in Manchuria could be treated as Russian bounty of war. Additionally, Russians had procrastinated on the matter of allowing Chinese officials enter the hinterland of Manchuria by merely escorting Mo Dehui to Jilin city for a short duration. Russians then dared Chinese officials in going into Manchuria hinterland by themselves without escort. Xiong Shihui's "Military HQ" office was ordered to take its banner off the building. Russians claimed that they would not allow any military organization to open office inside of Manchuria yet.

Xiong Shihui and Jiang Jingguo flew to Chongqing to report to Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang Kai-shek, for fear of communist takeover of Manchuria under Russian umbrella, immediately made preparation for immediate Russian transfer of three big cities, i.e., Changchun, Shenyang & Harbin. On Oct 26th, Xiong Shihui & Jiang Jingguo flew back to Manchuria, and ordered that various mayors and governors be ready for entry into Manchuria hinterland. For one dozen days, Russians claimed that they could not guarantee security for Chinese officials and refused to assist Chinese. Xiong Shihui & Jiang Jingguo flew back to Chongqing. Chinese communist forces, wearing black uniforms and with red triangle flag on the gun barrel, surrounded both the "Military HQ" office and the "diplomatic special commissar" office in Changchun. When Xu Peiyao called Russians, communist forces withdrew quietly before Russians came over.

On Nov 7th, Chiang Kai-shek dispatched several planes to Changchun to pick up stranded Chinese officials. Russians then requested with Dong Yanping & Hu Shijie that Chinese do not evacuate. Jiang Jingguo was sent to Moscow for one week negotiation. Jiang Jingguo requested for one month delay in Russian evacuation, beyond the original date of Dec 3rd. On Dec 1st, both China and USSR announced the new deadline. Russians approved the air delivery of Chinese troops to Changchun and Shenyang as well as assistance with Chinese officials in establishing civil organizations in various cities and regions. Russians acknowledged Xiong Shihui's "Military HQ" office and agreed to station a liaison officer inside of the office building which was formerly Manchukuo Coal Building. On the Chinese side, one more concession would be acknowledgment that industries in Manchuria were Russian bounty. When Chinese officials returned to Changchun, they found out that locals had already dismantled their doors and windows as burning materials for keeping warm.

Meanwhile, Americans began to implement the appeasement and collusion policy towards the Russian and Chinese communists. Since the Fall of 1945, General Wedemeyer was "restricted in the use of American sea and air transport by the officials in the Far Eastern Division of the State Department... On November 2, 1945, Vice Admiral Barbey, in command of the United States Navy ships transporting Nationalist troops to Manchuria, withdrew from the port of Yingkow [Yingkou] after a conference with Soviet representatives ashore, and after viewing several thousand Chinese Communist troops digging trenches under Russian protection. Admiral Barbey was similarly forced to retreat from the Manchurian port of Huludao, after Communist riflemen had fired at his launch [page 6 & 7, Freda Utley's *The China Story*]." On Dec 9th, Secretary Byrnes sent a memo to the War Department with instructions that "pending the outcome of General Marshal's discussions with Chinese leaders in Chungking ... further transportation of Chinese troops to North China, except as North China ports maybe necessary for the

movement of troops and supplies into Manchuria, will be held in abeyance". George Marshall, carrying Truman's personal letter as well as Truman's Dec 15th 1945 "Statement of United States Policy", i.e., the "carrots and stick" policy, came to China and told Chiang Kai-shek that "a China disunited and torn by civil strife could not be considered realistically as a proper place for American assistance..."