

KMT-CCP Armed Conflicts – New 4th Army Incident

by Ah Xiang

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Continuing from

- 1) [THE ENEMY FROM WITHIN: CHINESE COMMUNIST ATTACKS AT GOVERNMENT TROOPS - 1940](#)
- 2) [The Battle of Huangqiao – Communist forces routing Haan Deqing’s Jiangsu Troops.](#)

In the opinion of Zhang Yufa, Nationalist Government was very much aware of the communist sabotage but chose to refrain from taking action as a precautionary measure for maintaining the collaboration scheme with the Soviet Union & Chinese communists and securing the wartime support. Tolerant policies would include: 1) allowing the establishment of Shen-Gan-Ning Borderline Government [March 1939] and Jinn-Cha-Ji-Sui Borderline Government which were empowered with printing own currency and assignment of administrative officials; 2) conferring the post of "politics participants [councilor] of national government" onto seven senior communist leaders including Mao Tse-tung, Zhou Enlai, Chen Shaoyu [Wang Ming], Qin Bangxian [Bo-gu], Dong Biwu, Wu Yuzhang & Deng Yingchao, and the post of deputy director of "politics department of the military committee of the national government" onto Zhou Enlai; and 3) approving the communist publication & distribution of "New China Daily" newspaper in Chongqing and establishment of representative offices of the Eight Route Army in Chongqing, Xi'an & Chengdu etc.

However, Mao Tse-tung had taken the path of expansion right after the Shanxi Province campaign by ordering Lin Biao's 115th Division, Heh Long's 120th Division and Liu Bochong's 129th Division to Shandong-Hebei provinces. The expansion into domains other than Yan Xishan's Second War Zone in Shanxi Province meant for the annexation of the military districts and subdistricts of the other Nationalist Government generals. From August of 1939 to Feb of 1940, communist forces attacked the Nationalist Army nine times in northern China [per Zhang Yufa]. Zheng Langping cited the report from the KMT military committee in pointing out that communist forces had mounted close to 1000 attacks at the government troops, including Zhang Yinwu & Qiao Mingli's government troops in Hebei Province, Qin Qirong's forces in Shandong. In March of 1940, Lu Zhonglin the KMT Provincial Chair for Hebei Province, retreated to Shanxi Province under the communist attacks. In June 1940, communist troops laid siege of Sun Liangcheng & Gao Shuxun's troops in Shandong Province.

At the cost to government troops, communist Eight Route Army and New 4th Corps expanded to a **purported** headcount of 400,000-500,000 from the original 8RA three division base of 28,000 and N4C base of 10,000.

Mao Tse-tung himself had betrayed the actual strength of communist forces in first demanding various units of 8RA divisions and columns as well as detachments to supply 150,000 "refined" troops for attacking wartime interim capital Chungking and subsequently lowered the par to 70,000 troops in late 1940. For New 4th Corps [New 4th Army], Mao Tse-tung was demanding N4C to supply 20,000 "refined" troops. Actual N4C troops numbered probably no more than 30,000 in total - consisting of Chen Yi and Su Yu's 8000 troops [i.e.,

First Detachment, Second Detachment and Third Detachment] that routed Haan Deqing's Jiangsu troops at the Huangqiao Battle, less than 9,000 combat + 2,000 noncombat at N4C headquarters, and unspecified number under Fourth Detachment and Fifth Detachment as well as under Li Xiannian's guerrillas in Hubei Province.

CCP claimed that KMT, after Jan 1939 KMT 5th Plenary of 5th Congress, had launched five bloody crackdowns on CCP, i.e.,

Boshan Incident on April 30th, 1939 [i.e., local skirmish with local county leaders? Arrest of some communist agents?]

Shenxian Incident on June 11th, 1939 [i.e., some excuse for Luu Zhengcao's 8RA forces to take out Zhang Yinwu's Hebei Populace Army which intruded into Shenxian in the wake of communist retreat in face of Japanese sweep campaign?]

Pingjiang Incident on June 12th, 1939 [i.e., death of some N4C representative in Pingjiang office, Hunan Province]

E'dong [Eastern Hubei Prov] Incident on Sept 1st, 1939 [i.e., communist claim that some guy by the name of "Cheng" (?) in Hubei had conflict with communist armed band]

Queshan Incident on Nov 11th, 1939 [i.e., **Liu Shaoqi and Zhu Lizhi deliberate steering away of armed bands for Hubei and Henan enclaves while leaving behind some wounded soldiers for the county magistrate to kill ?**]

What had been skipped were large-scale systematic attacks at government troops across Shanxi-Hebei-Shandong-Anhui-Jiangsu provinces:

[THE ENEMY FROM WITHIN: COMMUNIST ATTACKS AT GOVERNMENT TROOPS](#)

[The Battle of Huangqiao – Communist forces routing Haan Deqing's Jiangsu Troops.](#)

The only reason that communist forces had to fight a railway disruption war, i.e., **[Hundred Regiment Campaign](#)**, was Japanese success in paving railways and highways across North China after communist forces routed all government troops and government guerrillas across Hebei-Shandong-Shanxi provinces. For example, **Japanese started the construction of Dezhou-Shijiazhuang Railway in mid-June 1940 and celebrated the project completion five months.**

Wan-nan Incident (Jan 1941)

Chiang Kai-shek, on Oct 19th, in a de facto ultimatum, made a ruling by yielding the domain north of the Yellow River to communist-controlled forces with a relocation deadline **good for one month**. Heh Yingqin and Bai Chongxi, as chiefs of staff, wired to 8RA and 4NC with the order, rebuking communist attacks at Shen Honglie and Haan Deqing, and pointing out that communist forces had disrespected war zones' territory assignment, disregarded the authorized establishment for army units, and disobeyed central government's order.

In the aftermath of **Tripartite Treaty** [27 September 1940] among Axis powers, Mao Tse-tung, still unconvinced that Chiang Kai-shek had the chips to counterattack the communists and always doubting that Russians truly harbored high hopes for Chiang Kai-shek as the pillar of resistance wars, hurriedly probed the Anglo-American positions as well as conferred with Russians through its offices in Chung king, Guilin, and HK. In late October, Mao Tse-tung, having received reports of British re-opening Burma-China Highway as well as possibly more American barter trades with China, was still attempting to justify his theory that Chiang Kai-shek, being anti-CCP and anti-USSR in nature, would turn into Philippe Pétain, not Charles de Gaulle. On November 1st, Mao Tse-tung, made a decision to both militarily and politically attack [against the central government]. Constant exchange of opinions between Russians and CCP Central served to exert pressure on the Chinese communists to stick with the united front. On November 6th, Mao Tse-tung reversed his standgrounds and agreed to have no grudge

against China's joining the Anglo-American camp in lieu of an "**independent war**", albeit not actively advocating for allying with the "imperialist warmonger group".

On November 9th, Mao Tse-tung, borrowing the names of 8RA and N4C commanders, replied to Heh Yingqin and Bai Chongxi with a request to stay the October 19th order, claiming that it would be inhuman to uproot "localized" forces away from their hometowns for the northern Yellow River bank. Heh Yingqin and Bai Chongxi responded to call the communist telegram by evasion, recited the history of communist attacks against government troops and destruction of non-communist political and civilian organizations across the provinces of Shanxi, Hebei, Shandong and Jiangsu. Having seen no government action, Mao Tse-tung, on November 21st, claimed that Chiang had merely threats and blockade as two "[[Buddha]] treasury weapons", instructed Ye Ting and Xiang Ying to procrastinate the Yangtze crossing for one to two months, and approved N4C raid against Cheqiao-Caodian territory.

On December 10th, Liu Shaoqi, in observance with Mao Tse-tung's Anhui-Jiangsu corridor campaign, reported back to Yanan with plans to further route Haan Deqing's Jiangsu troops and Huo Shouyi's Northeastern Army troops. After incurring a casualty of 2000 in a debacle ensuing from two-day siege, Liu Shaoqi frantically requested for reinforcement with Yanan. Communist forces continued the encirclement against Caodian for 18 days.

Back on November 29th, Gu Zhutong devised two routes for N4C headquarters to cross the Yangtze. Days later, Heh Yingqin, in light of the continuing communist siege against and encirclement of Haan Deqing's Jiangsu troops, revised the routes to prohibit the ferry at Zhenjiang. In mid-November, Shangguan Yunxiang called over Ye Ting, a fellow cadet from Baoding 6th Session, for a meeting. Having approved the passthrough of N4C noncombat staff as well as weapon repair shop, uniform factory, printing shop and hospital, Shangguan Yunxiang reminded Ye Ting to march the N4C combat troops out of the war zone cordon line at Madouzhen and travel to the north of Xuancheng for southern Jiangsu. On December 9th, Shangguan Yunxiang reported to the zone command that N4C headquarters personnel and archives were continuously moving across the Yangtze along Yunling-Fanchang line. On December 10th, Chiang Kai-shek wired to the Third War Zone command center with prohibition of Zhenjiang ferry for sake of protecting Haan Deqing but gave Gu Zhutong discretion in arranging other routes.

Inside of the N4 C headquarters, Xiang Ying, who had been expecting to revive southern Soviet enclaves pending Japanese penetration along Zhejiang-Jiangxi Railway since 1938, reluctantly agreed to vacate southern Anhui. Mao Tse-tung's flip-flop evacuation instructions, in an undesired sense, suited Xiang Ying's needs to maintain independency in the ideological and power struggle against Mao Tse-tung's CCP Central in regards to the control and operation of N4C. After receiving the order to vacate the N4C leadership to political commissar Liu Shaoqi and report to Yanan for CCP Seventh Central Committee Meeting, Xiang Ying subconsciously looked for crisis and opportunity to reverse his fate. After repeated Yanan instructions to cross the Yangtze via southern Jiangsu, Xiang Ying made a decision on December 28th to stealthily move south to Maolin, Sanxi and Jingde for a roundabout trip to southern Jiangsu, claiming that should government troops attack N4C, then he would have free action to launch guerrilla warfare on Mt Tianmushan and Mt Huangshan. To justify the circuitous move, Xiang Ying claimed that

Li Pingxian had confiscated boats at the northern Yangtze bank and that 52nd Division had built four blockhouses against N4C direction at Madouzhen.

In late afternoon of January 4th, 1941, Xiang Ying ordered N4C to set out on the southern move by organizing 9000-men into three routes, with Fu Qiutao, Zhou Guisheng and Zhang Zhengkun in charge. Soon, communist forces came into skirmished with probing government troops which were sent out after telephone and telegraph services with N4C headquarters were cut off. Xiang Ying, having convened a quick meeting to maintain the southern course, ordered his troops to sack Xingtian and consecutively Sanxi. Shangguan Yunxiang divided his troops into two flanks, with 108th Division and 52d Division defending the Xuancheng-Nanling line to the northeast, and 40th Division, 79th Division, 144th Division, and one brigade of NEW 7th Division as the strike force to the south and southwest.

On January 7th, New 3rd Regiment failed to sack Xingtian, while majority of Fu Qiutao's left column turned around for the north after being impeded at Weishuihe River. Xiang Ying then ordered a change of direction to attack Gaoling to the southwest, between Tongshan and Sanxi, in the hope of edging closer to Mt Huangshan. 52nd Division sped towards Langqiao for assisting 40th Division; 79th Division and 144th Division attacked Maolin; part of 79th Division attacked Maling which was next to Gaoling; and New 7th Division pushed to Daijiahui-Daliding-Hejiawan. On 8th, Xiang Ying, at Piling (Pilingjiao), ordered to attack south against Gaoling for breaking out towards Taiping. At night, Xiang Ying convened a new meeting and decided to break out against Maolin to the west. Thereafter, Xiang Ying, together with Zhou Zikun and Yuan Guoping, slipped out of the headquarters for a stealthy breakout.

On January 9th, Ye Ting, having recovered command over N4C, send teaching unit to reinforcing Gaotan. At Bangshan, northwest of Langqiao, deputy commander Zhao Lingbo, after encirclement by 52nd Division, abandoned remnant 1st Column for an escape. Ye Ting, having collected the remnant troops, attempted to go west to cross Qingyijiang River for the Yangtze bank. **On 10th, Ye Ting frantically requested with Yanan to have Zhou Enlai threaten Chiang Kai-shek with full KMT-CCP split to relieve the siege.** Xiang Ying, unable to break out, returned to N4C headquarters.

On January 12th, CCP Central officially announced the decision to have Ye Ting and Rao Shushi take charge of N4C military and political affairs as well as instructed Zhou Enlai and Ye Jianying to contact the government for withdrawing the government siege. On this day, N4C lost the strategic positions at Mt Dongliushan, to the north of Gaotan (Gaotancun). Musician and composer Ren Guang was killed in battle. At night, Ye Ting ordered troops to break out in all directions. Chiang Kai-shek claimed to have ordered Gu Zhutong to have a ceasefire on 12th and 13th, respectively. On 13th, 108th Division sent a messenger to fetch N4C espionage section chief Lin Zhifu for peace talk. After 8 days and 8 nights, by 13th, war was over, with about 4000 New Fourth Army soldiers caught by the government troops. On 14th, Ye Ting, with Rao Shushi's approval, personally went downhill for peace talk after seeing no return of Lin Zhifu.

On Jan 17th, KMT declared the New Fourth Army a rebel, revoked the numbering as well as proclaimed a court martial for corps chief Ye Ting. Mao Tse-tung, however, immediately empowered Chen Yi & Liu Shaoqi with leadership of the New Fourth Army which was re-

organized into seven divisions. The consequence of Wan-nan Incident would be propaganda attacks at the Chiang Kai-shek government both domestically and internationally. Hence, **the original plan of relocating communist-controlled forces to north of the Yellow River collapsed.**

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