

In commemoration of the centennial anniversary of the 1911 Xinhai Revolution

Continuing from <http://www.republicanchina.org/ChaharAlliedArmy-v0.pdf>

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Chinese Communists and Feng Yuxiang's Chahar Allied Army: The Final Demise

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While Feng Yuxiang ordered a cessation of all military activities on August 5th and dismissed the allied army headquarters on August 6th, Ke Qingshi's frontline work committee held a meeting to discuss countermeasures on the 7th and decided to have Feng Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang announce the opposition to the abolition of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army. The next day, the 8th, communists reconvened and decided on launching the revolutionary war offensive to counter the government, with a resolution that all communists evacuate to Zhangbei other than a representative office and the Kalgan City Commissariat to be left behind for the underground operations. The troops which either stationed at or evacuated to Zhangbei, north of Kalgan, included part of the 2nd Division, the 5th Division, the 6th Division, the 18th Division, and Fang Zhenwu's teaching regiment. On the same day, Japanese planes bombed Pingdingbu in Guyuan area, and moved towards Guyuan and Duolun.

In mid-August, the communist Frontline Work Committee officially operated in the public, and held its first meeting in the name of the Revolutionary Military Committee, with Ke Qingshi as secretary for the committee, Ji Hongchang as the general officer in command, Zhang Mutao acting as secretary for the party-league caucus, and Xuan Xiafu and Xu Quanzhong et al., as the 7-member standing committee members. The meeting passed the resolution to implement the CPC Central's directive in launching the first soviet enclave of North China in central and southern Hebei Province. The initial military thrust called for taking the forces westward to Shangdu, and then moving out of Hohhot, for a southern direction to Yuxian, Hebei Province. With no interest in fighting the Japanese Army or the puppets, Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang abandoned Duolun on the night of August 15th, without putting a fight against Li Shouxin's puppets, who were subsequently rewarded with ten artillery pieces and one hundred machineguns from the Japanese for the recovery of Duolun. On August 16th, Fang Zhenwu announced the assumption of the post as acting commander in chief of the defunct Chahar Anti-Japanese Allied Army. However, Fang Zhenwu differed from Ji Hongchang and other communists, and advocated for taking the fight to Peiping in a campaign against Chiang Kai-shek and the central government. Wang Zanting, after quitting Zhang Renjie's army, followed Feng Yuxiang's footsteps to Mt Taishan where he was given an assignment to relay three opinions to Ji Hongchang, which was admonishment against rashly spending money, rashly taking action and rashly hiring people. Ji Hongchang replied to Feng Yuxiang that there was no need to worry about bad apples hurting him since he had three kinds of people serving under him, i.e., the dumb kind, silly kind, and the poor kind.

On August 24th, at Erquanjing (two spring wells), not far away from Zhangbei, Ke Qingshi held a frontline work committee meeting to restructure the standing committee of the Revolutionary Military Committee, and revoked some of the titles that Zhang Mutao held over a possible dispute related to inclusion or exclusion of Fang Zhenwu's army. On August 26th, Ji Hongchang and Fang Zhenwu parted ways. On the 27th, Ke Qingshi convened an expanded military committee meeting during which Zhang Mutao's standing committee commissar post was revoked on the purported excuse, as was written in all

future communist documents, that Zhang Mutao had advocated for an “alliance with the Japanese against Chiang Kai-shek”. While Ji Hongchang, leading more than 3,000 soldiers who were mostly of the 2nd Division, split off from Fang Zhenwu’s army for a western push towards Shangdu to purportedly ally with Gao Shuxun’s army which already declared allegiance to the central government, Fang Zhenwu’s army moved eastward towards Dushikou. In late August, Ji Hongchang’s army was impeded and intercepted by Zhao Chengshou’s Shanxi provincial troops and Zhang Lingyun’s army east of Ertai (two terraces). On September 1st, the frontline committee had a meeting about the next steps to take. On the 5th, Zhang Mutao and Zhang Gonggan were sent to the 2nd Division for a persuasion of officers and soldiers to conform to the frontline committee’s new decision to take an eastern detour, whereas the communists in the 2nd Division might be more interested in going west to join forces with Liu Zhidan’s Shenxi Red Army. The persuasion failed, with the end result that the 2nd Division, where communists boasted of the full control under communist regimental commanders, sought reorganization with 29th Corps commander Sung Che-yuan. Finally, Ji Hongchang’s remnants, having failed to break out towards Suiyuan and Ningxia, returned east towards the Dushikou Pass for a union with Fang Zhenwu’s troops.

On September 6th, Sung Che-yuan sent warning to Fang Zhenwu in regards to the government’s reorganization plan which contained a demand that Fang Zhenwu must leave the army for retirement. On the 9th, Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang’s armies converged with each other at Dushikou, and purportedly obtained the concurrence of Tang Yulin’s remnant Jehol troops and Liu Guitang’s banditry army to form a coalition army. On the 10th, Ji Hongchang went to Yunzhou, north of Chicheng, for a joint military meeting with Fang Zhenwu, and Liu Guitang, et al., and made a decision to rename remnant allied army to the “army for resisting Japanese and campaigning against enemy [Chiang Kai-shek]”, which was alternatively called the “united allied army of East Asia”, with Fang Zhenwu assigned the post as commander-in-chief, Tang Yulin as deputy commander, Liu Guitang as rightside general officer in command, and Ji Hongchang leftside general officer in command.

Fang Zhenwu and the gang devised an eastern campaign plan to attack Peiping along two sides of the Great Wall and via Miyun-Huaiyou counties and take over Peiping no later than the mid-autumn festival, which was October 4th on the Gregorian calendar. Fang Zhenwu/Ji Hongchang’s armies were designated the 1st route, Liu Guitang’s army the 2nd route, and Tang Yulin’s army as the 3rd route. The frontline committee objected to the change of name, but later reached an understanding with military leaders that they could share the same military objectives as Liu Guitang and Tang Yulin’s troops while maintaining a separate political agenda. Later, Tang Yulin’s army changed mind and refused to move south, while Liu Guitang decided to take the offer to be pacified by Sung Che-yuan as the eastern Chahar mobile force commander, and announced that they severed relations with Ji Hongchang and Fang Zhenwu’s anti-Chiang coalition forces. Ruan Xuanwu, who had obtained Fang Zhenwu’s compromise to retain the 16th Division at Zhangbei for reorganization under Sung Chen-yuan, earlier sent over a wire to Fang Zhenwu, advising against Fang’s making friends with Liu Guitang and Tang Yulin. Fang Zhenwu replied that he had no choice but to go south since Sung Che-yuan had no room for negotiation on his future in the army.

On September 12th, at Dushikou, Ke Qingshi and the Frontline Work Committee held a division-level anti-rightist party meeting against the original Kalgan commissariat and North China O.G.P.U. members who were either dismissed from their jobs or transferred to other functions at the August 24th meeting, and further purged them as the rightists. Specifically, Ke Qingshi, against the objection from Liu Shaowen and Zhang Gonggan, stripped Zhang Mutao and four 2nd Division military leaders, who were of Fenyang Military Academy background, of the communist party membership, among whom were Wang Lin, Yin Xintian, Zhou Maolan and Jia Zhenzhong. Zhang MuTao, who was expelled from the party a second time when counting his CPC 2nd Central Committee activity in 1931, was accused of heading the rightist line among the northern China communists, which led to the CPC North China representative’s call for a purge of the Zhang Mutao-line among Liu Zhidan’s Northern Shenxi Red Army, and subsequently in the initial years of the 1937-1945 resistance war, was further accused of being a "Trotskyite" and a "Japanese

spy”, and was arrested by communists while teaching at Yan Xishan’s resistance war university and handed over to the government for execution.

In synchronization with the Chahar machinations, the CPC Hebei Commissariat ordered a mutiny in Langfang by communist-controlled special task column among Wang Yizhe’s Northeastern Army. Chinese Communists, through its Tokyo branch, had recruited members among the Northeastern Army officers sent to Japan for military studies. Back in 1932, Du Changling, an officer who had contact with communists while studying in Japan, maneuvered to have 67th Corps commander Wang Yizhe organize a special task column to recruit the volunteer fighters and the students from Manchuria, with him acting as commander, and communist Wang Yueshi branch secretary. It was Wang Yueshi who converted Zhang Xuesi, i.e., Zhang Xueliang’s brother, into a communist. In April 1933, the military committee of the CPC Hebei Commissariat sent Zhang Kemin to the special task column to be the new party branch secretary, and consecutively, sent Zhang Xuesi et al., to the special task column to take control of the leadership in preparation for a mutiny and a conversion to the North China Worker and Peasant Red Army. In June, Zhang Kemin officially took in Du Changling as a communist. In July, Du Changling was ordered to stage the Langfang Mutiny, and then take the troops to the Zijingguan (paloverde pass), via Fangshan and Yixian, for a planned conversion with Ji Hongchang’s reorganized allied army which was attacking south against Peiping from Chahar.

To facilitate the mutiny troops’ move through Yixian, the provincial military committee sent courier Sun Zhichao to Yixian county where communist agent Liu Lanbo was working inside of Huang Xiansheng’s 2nd Cavalry Division. Huang Xiansheng, who attempted to continue the war against the Japanese by taking the cavalry to Longhua of Jehol after the Tanggu Truce, got in touch with the communists through the liaison of Liu Lanbo who once worked as a secretary at the Liaoning provincial government, and took in 17 communists to work on reforming the army. On August 4th, Du Changling, purportedly tipped by Wang YiZhe who had secretly instructed chief of staff Zhao Zhenfan send a notice that the military subcommittee at Peiping had instructions to arrest communists at the special task column, launched the Langfang Mutiny by taking his troops on a live ammunition firing drill. Blocked by the rising water at the Yongdinghe River as well as impeded by two regiments from the 107th Division of the 67th Corps, and outnumbered and defeated, Du Changling barely escaped alive to the British Settlement in Tientsin where he already settled his family prior to the mutiny. Wanted by the 3rd Gendarmerie regiment, Du Changling, after one year’s hiding, was dispatched to the Chinese Turkestan for service under Sheng Shicai, with a mission to open up the international corridor and build the rear base for the communist revolution.

Concurrently, in August-October 1933, communist Zhang Xiyao recruited a batch of “progressive” students from exile Northeastern colleges and universities and launched a secretive politico-military training class at Monastery in Western Hill of Peiping, and claimed to the outside world to be running a summer day. The politico-military training class was in the name of the National Salvation Society in Peiping which the CPC Hebei Commissariat claimed to have sent in half a dozen agents such as Feng Jiping and Ning Kuanglie et al., and under the authorization from Yan Baohang, i.e., salvation society leader, an early communism/socialism activist in Mukden and Peking and with YMCA-IPR connections since the early 1920s, and someone who had returned from overseas studies in Britain and whose application for the CPC membership was later personally struck down by Stalin in 1937. Yan Baohang himself tacked on the post as director for the politico-military training class, and numerous communists were hired as lecturers. While there was no follow-up action by the politico-military training class graduates to echo the Peiping excursion by Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang’s allied army or the Langfang mutiny by Du Changling’s special task column, student such as Song Lih was converted to a communist member through the summer training and later played an important role in inciting Zhang Xueliang’s Xi’an Mutiny on December 12th, 1936, a pivotal event that changed China’s history for ever.

On September 17th, the reorganized allied army, absent Liu Guitang and Tang Yulin's troops, reached Fengning of Jehol. Thereafter, the army departed for Huairou, Changping and Shunyi counties along the Heihe (black) River. The communist-controlled armies were designated into three routes. Xu Quanzhong's 18th Division, with the frontline committee embedded, moved as one route; Ji Hongchang's 5th Division and the teaching column which was converted from remnants of the Kalgan cadre school, as another route; and Fang Zhenwu's army as the last route. On September 20th and 21st, the two columns consecutively crossed the southern Great Wall line and entered Miyun and Huairou counties, two counties that fell under the demilitarized area covered by the Tanggu Agreement which stated that only the Chinese police would be allowed to station in that area. The Japanese Kwantung Army sent planes to cast out leaflets, setting a three-day deadline for the anti-Chiang coalition forces to leave, or they would send troops to attack and destroy the intruder. The Japanese Army, other than dropping leaflets in demand of a pullout of Ji Hongchang and Fang Zhenwu's army from the demilitarized zone, also prewarned Shi Yousan against rendering aid to the coalition army. On September 22nd, the frontline committee convened a meeting at Daotianwa (paddy field depression) of Huairou County, and launched the frontline revolutionary military committee and a general staff headquarters under the helm of Xu Quanzhong. Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang, not interested in fighting the Japanese, left the area within three days. On the 23rd, the reorganized allied army took over Mt Niulanshan (kraal hill) of Shunyi County.

On September 27th, Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang's armies, in the attacks against Peiping, took over Gaoliying (Koryo barracks), just 30 kilometers away from Peiping. On the 27th, Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang vacated Gaoliying to attack Xiaotangshan in vain, and retreated to Qincheng (celery fort 芹城) of Changping after encountering the interception by three routes of government troops commanded by Shang Zhen, Guan Linzheng and Pang Bingxun, sent by the Peiping military subcommittee of the National Government. On the 28th, Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang scurried to Nanzhuang (south village) and Beizhuang (north village), next to Nankou (southern exit) Pass where the Peiping-Suiyuan Railway ran through. On the 29th, part of Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang's armies entered the Ming Dynasty's Shisanling (the thirteen Ming Dynasty tombs) area of Changping County. On the 30th, Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang's armies began to attack Changping from Shisanling. On the night of October 1st, the reorganized allied army attacked and sacked the Laojuntang (supreme Daoist patriarch's temple) mountain mouth, boasting of the victory in taking over Shisanling (the thirteen Ming Dynasty tombs), and the next day, the 2nd, mounted an attack at the east gate of the Changping county capital. After failing to breach the county capital for a whole night, Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang's armies launched a third attack against Changping on the 3rd. Ji Hongchang's army was pushed towards 芹城 and into the mountains north of Changping County. Fang Zhenwu's route, having lost three regiments of troops, withdrew armies towards the mountains with his pistol column. During the battles, a Japanese officer from the Gubeikou Pass visited Fang Zhenwu to offer assistance, as recalled by Ruan Xuanwu in his recollections; however, Fang Zhenwu declined the offer, leading to the Japanese rage over Fang Zhenwu's arrogance and ending in the subsequent Japanese aircraft bombing of the united allied army. The frontline committee, for safety's sake, then moved with Xu Quanzhong's 18th Division to have a conversion with Ji Hongchang's 5th Division.

On October 2nd, CPC provincial leader Ke Qingshi left the post as secretary of the frontline work committee and slipped away from the army, purportedly to report the situation to CPC supervisory leaders in Peiping and look for conditions in Yuxian County for establishing an enclave. Before the trip, Ke Qingshi transferred the political leadership to Zhou Renshan (alias the young Zhu) and Zou Chunsheng, with Zou Chunsheng as acting secretary, and the military leadership to Xu Quanzhong. On October 4th, Ji Hongchang and Fang Zhenwu's armies scurried eastward to Xiaotangshan and Gaoliying. Ji Hongchang, with only one to two thousand remnants left, purportedly counter-attacked the government troops and took over Datangshan and Xiaotangshan hills. On the 6th, government troops closed in towards the mountain area in Northwestern Changping. From the 5th to the 8th, three days' lull ensued. On the 8th, the remnants

from the 5th Division, the 10th Division and Fang Zhenwu's pistol column, were surrounded by government troops near Huluhe (gourd river). On the 9th, the rebels attacked Beiyuan (north hunting ground) and Shahe (sandy river) from Xiaotangshan. The Japanese planes purportedly joined the fight and bomb the coalition army, killing Wu Zhige, i.e., Ji Hongchang's chief tactician. On the night of the 10th, the remnant allied army vacated the Xiaotangshan Hill, and attempted a breakout towards Tongzhou via Gaoliying (Koryo camp). From the 10th to the 11th, the bulk of the rebel armies attacked Dadongliu and Xiaodongliu area. On the 11th, Shang Zhen ordered a general attack, and the next day, encircled the allied army completely. On the 12th, the rebel armies converged upon Mt Niulanshan (kraal hill) of Shunyi. On the 13th, government troops encircled the rebels at the mountain. Encircled by the central army forces, Shang Zhen's former Shanxi army unit, and Pang Bingxun's former Northwest army unit, Ji Hongchang held a truce talk with Shang Zhen on Mt Niulanshan (kraal hill), sent messengers to Peiping to seek mediation, as well as contacted the local red spear society for ceasefire mediation. On the 16th, Leng Jiaji, president of the Peking Chamber of Commerce, with authorization from Ho Ying-chin, came to the united allied army headquarters to mediate. The two guys agreed to the pacification plan and came to Shahe (sand river) to surrender to the 142nd Division under Shang Zhen's 32nd Corps. The plan called for the remnant soldiers to be incorporated into Shang Zhen's 32nd Corps, the wounded to be shipped to Peiping Army Hospital for treatment, and battalion commanders and above to be sent to Baoding's military academy for indoctrination and studies.

On the matter of penalizing Fang Zhenwu and Ji Hongchang, Chiang Kai-shek, not knowing the latter's communist identity, instructed that Ho Ying-qin put Fang Zhenwu under arrest while letting go Ji Hongchang. Shang Zhen, who was empowered with disarmament, instructed his chief of staff Lv Ji to make arrangement for Fang Zhenwu to escape. Divisional commander Li Xingcun found civilian clothes for Fang Zhenwu to change to before the five-truck column carrying the entourage was to leave the Niulanshan command center for Peiping. En route, Fang Zhenwu, sitting in the first truck, told the receiving troops that Fang Zhenwu was sitting in the following truck, slipped away while soldiers pounced on the next truck, and escaped to Tientsin with the help of a peasant in Tongzhou, and subsequently fled to Hongkong but was late for the Fujian Mutiny that was conducted for the Cantonese 19th Route Army. Ji Hongchang, who was left unscathed while soldiers searched through the five trucks for Fang Zhenwu, later stealthily sought asylum in Tianjin's foreign settlements and continued the sabotage work against the government till Chen Gongshu's Peiping Station of Dai Li's Special Services Department caught him red-handed and extradited him to Peiping for execution. Meng Yunsheng, i.e., Fang Zhenwu's lifelong procurement director and chief secretary, who was caught alive at the Mt. Niulanshan battle, later in November executed for his blatant offense against Chiang Kai-shek during the Baoding visit earlier in the year. Tang Yulin, i.e., former Jehol provincial chair, was commonly known to have fled the Jehol battles early in the year, and transported his wealth to Tientsin. As recalled by Li Shouxin, a large portion of Tang Yulin's army was disarmed by Sun Dianying at the Langweiba (wolf tail) Mountain in Guyuan. Tang Yulin, whose whereabouts at the Jehol-Chahar border was more a loitering action to avoid the censure by the government for the loss of Jehol, later joined Sung Che-yung's various military committees before retiring from politics during the 1937-1945 Japanese occupation.

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http://www.chinahistoryforum.com/index.php?topic/19422-1933-chahar-peoples-anti-japanese-army/page_pid_5006727#entry5006727

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