

# Conspiracies Behind Xi'an Coup

by Ah Xiang

*[Excerpts from "Red Terror & White Terror"]*

## Secret KMT-CCP Direct Contacts In Multiple Channels

Throughout 1935-1936, emissaries for peace or ceasefire talks shuttled between KMT and CCP in secrecy. Chiang Kai-shek's KMT was also in talks with USSR. In early 1935, Chiang Kai-shek dispatched "Yan Huiqing cultural delegation" to USSR, and later, Chiang Kai-shek dispatched Deng Wenyi as military attache to Moscow. In autumn of 1935, Deng Wenyi returned to China and briefed Chiang on Stalin's support in the fight against Japan. In the winter of 1935, Deng Wenyi, after return to Moscow, was authorized to contact CCP's Comintern rep Wang Ming in Moscow. After several talks between Deng Wenyi and Wang Ming, CCP Comintern delegation sent Pan Hannian back to China for working on bilateral party talks. Before departing Moscow, Pan Hannian met with Deng Wenyi.

Pan Hannian and Hu Yuzhi returned to HK in early May 1936. Pan wrote to KMT's Chen Guofu for liaison in HK, while Hu Yuzhi went to Shanghai the next month for seeking a passage to CCP enclave in northern Shenxi. In Shanghai, Hu Yuzhi contacted leftist writer Mao Dun and learnt that CCP Shenxi had sent messenger Feng Xuefeng to Shanghai. Hu Yuzhi and Feng Xuefeng immediately went to HK for seeing Pan Hannian. Feng Xuefeng disclosed to Pan Hannian that CCP Shanghai possessed secret telegraph set (possibly the set inside of Louise Alley's residence?). At this time, Chen Guofu dispatched chief of staff Zhang Chong of KMT Central Organization Investigation Section to HK, with an invitation for Pan Hannian to visit KMT headquarter in Nanking. KMT also sent over Zeng Yangfu to HK and asked Pan Hannian travel to northern Shenxi Province for obtaining CCP's stance on second bilateral cooperation. Pan Hannian passed through Xi'an on July 24th and arrived in Bao'an on Aug 8th 1936.

KMT's initiatives in contacting CCP, however, could very well be a superficial gesture for sake of "looking good" in its dealings with USSR. The drawback would be the exemption allowed for some top CCP moles to move around the country at random, which served no other purpose than revitalizing the defragmented CCP underground network at the end of the Long March.

Aside from Chen Guofu's line of authority, Song Ziwen, in late Nov 1935, had assigned Zeng Yangfu & Chen[1] Xiaocen the task of locating CCP contacts. Chen[1] Xiaocen, who had been acquainted with Zhou Enlai during Tianjin's 1919 student movements, would ask Luu Zhenyu in checking out CCP activists among college students and professors, not knowing that Luu Zhenyu himself was an underground CCP. Zeng Yangfu, while asking Chen[1] Xiaocen to find CCP, also asked Zuo Gong [also an underground CCP] in locating CCP. Zuo Gong, after Shanghai CCP's approval, recommended Zhang Zihua for meeting with KMT. When Song Ziwen and Mme Sun Yat-sen sent "red priest" Dong Jianwu to northern Shenxi, Zhang Zihua, an underground CCP who was originally known as Wang Xuxiang, traveled along as a companion. (Zhang Yihe, in writing on father Zhang Bojun's friendship with Jian Bozan [<http://www.secretchina.com/news/articles/4/7/14/68493.html>], stated that Jian Bozan

was forced to commit suicide in 1968 for refusing to implicate Liu Shaoqi in the 1935 Nanking liaisons between KMT [Zeng Yangfu] and CCP [Chen[1] Xiaocen, Luu Zhenyu & Jian Bozan].)

CCP records claimed that Zhang Zihua and Dong Jianwu entered northern Shenxi's CCP territories without knowing the communist status of opposite parties. Bo-gu, who received Dong Jianwu on Feb 28th 1936, would seek for a secluded talk with Zhang Zihua on a separate occasion. Zhang Zihua, as a dual representative for both KMT & CCP, relayed the message of Chen Lifu. While Dong Jianwu left communist territory on March 5th, Zhang Zihua would stay on to attend CCP Politburo Expanded Meeting from March 8th to 28th 1936 in the frontier of Shanxi Province. It would be in mid-April that Zhang Zihua would return to Shanghai with one more CCP activist called Feng Xuefeng.

Two months earlier, in Jan 1936, CCP Northern Bureau regional leader Zhou Xiaozhou arrived in Nanking the KMT capital, learnt of KMT intentions from Luu Zhenyu, and met with Chen[1] Xiaocen with CCP demands including immediate suspension of military actions against the Red Army as well as CCP's agreement in serving as part of the "allied armies against Japanese invasion". Later Zeng Yangfu passed on to Luu Zhenyu 4 KMT demands including cessation of agrarian revolution, class struggle, Soviet movements, and armed rebellion that were aimed at overthrowing KMT government. In March 1936, Zhou Xiaozhou brought over 6 CCP demands to Nanking, among others, release of political prisoners and recruitment of communist guerrillas in Southern China for resisting Japanese invasion. CCP records claimed that Zhou Xiaozhou had with him a letter with seals of Mao Tse-tung, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Peng Dehuai etc. Zeng Yangfu replied to CCP on May 14th. CCP records claimed further that Chen Lifu intervened in mid-May to have Song Ziwen replaced. KMT proposed that CCP dispatched special emissaries for negotiations. Zhou Xiaozhou went to Nanking for the 3rd time in June-July 1936 and attended a meeting inside of KMT's Railway Ministry. CCP records claimed the two parties, represented by Zeng Yangfu and Zhou Xiaozhou, had heated arguments over the leadership issue. Hence, in Aug 1936, Zhou Xiaozhou made a last trip to Nanking and transferred away all telegraph codes and materials. In Oct, CCP Northern Bureau was told not to have separate contact with KMT. CCP spy chief Pan Hannian arrived in northern Shenxi's enclave in Aug 1936 after talks with KMT in HK, separately.

Zhang Zihua's line of contacts seemed to have overtaken Zhou Xiaozhou's line of contacts, while Dong Jianwu's mission culminated in CCP's capture of the heart of General Zhang Xueliang. Pan Hannian's return to northern Shenxi's CCP enclave from Moscow, dramatically, would serve as the next "runner" in an apparent link-race. In late April 1936, Zhang Zihua returned to Nanking and reported to Zeng Yangfu at private residence. In late May, Chen[1] Xiaocen copied Chen Lifu's 4 conditions to Zhang Zihua who returned to CCP-controlled Wayaobao in the same month. In early June, Zhang Zihua brought over Zhou Enlai's letter. Instead of accommodating Zhang Zihua with an office for publicizing CCP-KMT negotiations, Zeng Yangfu authorized Chen[1] Xiaocen in having Zhang Zihua arrested. Shanghai's CCP demanded the release with Zuo Gong one week later, ending in Chen[1] Xiaocen's personal escort of Zhang Zihua to Shanghai. Zhang Zihua gave Chen[1] Xiaocen a postal box in exchange for KMT Wuhan telegraph's signal band. In July, Zeng Yangfu requested that Zhang Zihua return to Shenxi with a letter to Zhou Enlai. Zhang Zihua returned to Bao'an on Aug 27th; Zhou Enlai replied on Aug 31st and moreover attached a letter to the two Chen brothers on Sept 1st; and Zhang Zihua arrived in Guangzhou [Canton] on Sept 20th for a scheduled meeting with Chen Lifu. Zhang Zihua did not meet with Chen Lifu but Zeng Yangfu again in Nanking on Sept 27th. CCP Shenxi's Central telegraphed to Zhang Zihua in early Oct, stating that they would not dispatch Zhou Enlai and his wife till KMT officially ceded its campaign against the Red Army. Zhang Zihua returned north to Xi'an on Oct 15th, with 4 KMT offers and conditions, including acknowledgment of Soviet regions, re-organization of Red Army under KMT's National Army, and invitation for CCP to attend National

Meeting. CCP records stated that they received this letter on Oct 17th and that after CCP learnt of Chiang Kai-shek's Oct 16th trip to Xi'an of Shenxi Prov, they had tried to connect Zhang Zihua with Chiang Kai-shek for a meeting in Xi'an.

## **The Riddle Deepens**

Zhang Ling'ao memoirs pointed out that Zhang Chong, i.e., the youngest KMT executive commissar elected in 1935 at age 31, had been sent on an inspection trip to Italy, Germany & USSR in the spring of 1934. After return to China, Zhang Chong first proposed the possibility of allying with USSR against Japan by joining an anti-fascist front. (In early 1935, Chiang Kai-shek dispatched "Yan Huiqing cultural delegation" to USSR. In Aug, CCP, with Moscow input, published so-called Aug 1st Proclamation in regards to establishing a united anti-Japan front. In autumn of 1935, Deng Wenyi, i.e., KMT military attache to Moscow, returned to China. In the winter of 1935, Deng Wenyi, after return to Moscow, was authorized to contact CCP's Comintern rep Wang Ming in Moscow.) Zhang Ling'ao further stated that in Dec 1935, Chen Lifu, with Chiang Kai-shek approval, went on a secret mission to USSR with Zhang Chong by disguising themselves among Cheng Tianfang & Feng Ti's embassy to Germany. After ship Potsdam arrived in Italy, the two contacted Stalin who declined an invitation over possible Japanese reactions. Meanwhile, Japan's news agency repeatedly claimed that KMT top representative Chen Lifu was sent to Moscow. Chiang Kai-shek hence recalled Chen & Zhang, and pierced Japanese "rumor".

The riddle provided by Zhang Ling'ao would be the appearance of Zhou Enlai in HK in late 1935, and in Shanghai & Nanking in May-June 1936: Zhang Ling'ao claimed that Zhou Enlai met with Zeng Yangfu [i.e., mayor of Canton] in HK, and requested for a relay of his Sept 1st 1935 letter to Chen Lifu; however, Zeng Yangfu was unable to pass on the letter since Chen Lifu was already on his way to Europe in Dec 1935 for contacting Stalin ahead of any agreement with Chinese communists. After Chen Lifu's return to China, he instructed that Zhang Chong publish, in April 1936, a public notice on "Shen Bao" newspaper for a May 5th meeting with "Wu Hao" [i.e., Zhou Enlai's alias] in Xin Ya [New Asia] Hotel on Northern Sichuan Road. (Separately, Song Ziwen, in late Nov 1935, had already assigned Zeng Yangfu & Chen[1] Xiaocen the task of locating CCP contacts. In Jan 1936, CCP Northern Bureau regional leader Zhou Xiaozhou arrived in Nanking the KMT capital, and met with Chen[1] Xiaocen. In late April 1936, CCP emissary Zhang Zihua returned to Nanking and reported to Zeng Yangfu at private residence.)

Apparently, duplicate KMT authorities, under Chen Lifu & Song Ziwen respectively, had hindered and complicated the contacts with the communists. Zhang Ling'ao could be wrong in saying that Zhou Enlai went to HK or Shanghai or Nanking since communist documents did emphasize that they would not send Zhou Enlai till KMT military action against the Red Army ceased. However, Zhang Ling'ao repeatedly stated that Zhou Enlai & Pan Hannian were invited to Nanking, and moreover invited to Mt Mogan-shan in June 1936 for a meeting with Chiang Kai-shek. Zhang Chong was said to have escorted Zhou & Pan down the hill, and then lunch with the two in Die Lai [butterfly come] Restaurant of Hangzhou. Further, Zhang Cong & Pan Hannian held another talk in regards to Mt Mogan-shan issues on Oct 19th 1936. (per ZLA, Zhang Chong, who was fluent in Russian after studies at Harbin Law & Politics University, had already joined KMT around 1919 while studying in Peking. In 1927, Zhang Chong was sentenced to 4 year prison after Zhang Zuolin sabotaged KMT branch in Harbin. In 1930, Zhang Chong was relocated to KMT Central Organization Ministry, and was responsible for arresting Mr & Mrs Noulens [Niu-lan] the Comintern agents in Shanghai. The extra passage on Zhang Chong

was warranted here since the peaceful solution to Xi'an Incident could very well be the result of Zhang Chong & Pan Hannian operations.)

Separate CCP records claimed that they had authorized Pan Hannian as CCP's plenipotentiary on Sept 1st 1936. In early Oct, Pan Hannian arrived in Shanghai from Xi'an, with CCP's "KMT-CCP Draft On Resisting Japan & Rescuing Statehood". On Nov 10th, Pan Hannian met with Chen Lifu at Cangzhou Restaurant of Shanghai. Chen Lifu relayed Chiang Kai-shek's demands, i.e., CCP to reserve an army of 3000, and Red Army division-level generals to take overseas inspection trips for half a year. Pan Hannian declined the demands and moreover stated that CCP would not dispatch Zhou Enlai for talks till a ceasefire was reached. CCP records claimed that by that time, CCP had figured out the true intentions of Chiang Kai-shek's peace offers. Further talks ensued. On Nov 16th, Chen Lifu issued an invitation to Pan Hannian. On 17th, Pan Hannian arrived in Nanking, and two days later, met with Chen Lifu. Chen Lifu reiterated Chiang Kai-shek's demands. CCP records claimed that Chen Lifu hinted that KMT might join anti-Soviet bloc should CCP refuse to give in. Further, CCP records claimed that Chen Lifu denied that Zeng Yangfu's 4 offers and demands ever existed.

Also among the eminent emissaries would be Dong Jianwu the "red priest". In the previous section on "Zhang Xueliang's Collusion With CCP", we already expounded Dong Jianwu's activities. What could be discerned here is that CCP had intended for Dong Jianwu to reserve his "priest" cloak rather than blow it up. Dong Jianwu's next mission, interestingly, would be to take care of Mao Tse-tung's sons. Dong Jianwu at one time had asked his ex-wife take care of Mao Tse-tung's two sons [i.e., Mao Anying & Mao Anqing] and later in 1936 utilized Zhang Xueliang's assistance in having Li Du escort the two boys to Moscow. (The three Mao Anying brothers, after the 1930 death of their mother, were fetched to Shanghai by Mao Zemin, and then spent time in a communist-funded nursery till CCP Secretary General Gun Shunzhuang's surrender to KMT. They lost their younger brother Mao Anlong possibly as a result of illness or disappearance due to CCP agent's irresponsibility in custody or transfer of the younger boy. Two brothers were later abandoned by Dong Jianwu's ex-wife due to cutoff of funds when CCP Central Committee relocated to Jiangxi Province from Shanghai. At the times of Chiang Kai-shek death in 1975 and Mao Tse-tung death in 1975, I read about an article in regards to the death of a CCP agent who was responsible for placing the boy in temporary custody of a peasant family in the outskirts of Shanghai. There was speculation that Mao Tse-tung designated heir Hua Guofeng could be the lost son, i.e., Mao Anlong.)

In the other camp, Jiang Huiguo, i.e., Chiang Kai-shek's adopted son, was dispatched to Germany for military training. Jiang Huiguo would not be recalled till 1939 when Germany attacked Poland in a sudden blitz.