

**SINKIANG UNDER SHENG SHIH-TS'AI (1933 - 1944 A.D.)**

**Thesis for the Degree of Master of Arts**

**submitted by**

**CHAN FOOK-LAM, GILBERT, B.A. (HONS), DIP. ED.**

**UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**

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Recent Photograph of Shêng Shih-ts'ai

- By the courtesy of Mr. Shêng Shih  
ts'ai.





Sheng Shih-te'ai and his daughter in Sinkiang

By the courtesy of Mr. Lin Pe-ya.



## PREFACE

"Sinkiang is a vast land of exceptional beauty.

I wish I were an artist or a playwright so that, for the benefit of the world's millions and future generations, I could paint hundreds of murals and write hundreds of plays depicting the beauty and greatness of that province."

(1)

This short paragraph, quoted from the memoirs of Shêng Shih-ts'ai (盛世才), gives a vivid description, written with heart-felt sentiment, of Sinkiang (新疆), a province of many attractions. Although much valuable work has been done by such brilliant scholars as E. Chavannes, E. Huntington, A. Stein, and S. Hedin, the history of Sinkiang, particularly of the modern period, remains comparatively an unexplored subject. The difficulty in obtaining reliable source materials is definitely one of the obstacles.

I first became interested in this limited field of study when I was only an undergraduate at the



University of Hong Kong (香港大學). In response to the suggestions made by Mr. Lo Hsiang-lin (羅香林), my supervisor, I took up the project of writing a thesis for the B.A. degree examination on the history of the kingdom of Great Yüeh-chih (大月氏). Even at that time, I was fully aware of the difficulties ahead of me. However, to attempt a work which offered little chance of success was a challenge too powerful for me to resist. Finally, in 1961, the work was accomplished, though, I must own, not with great satisfaction.

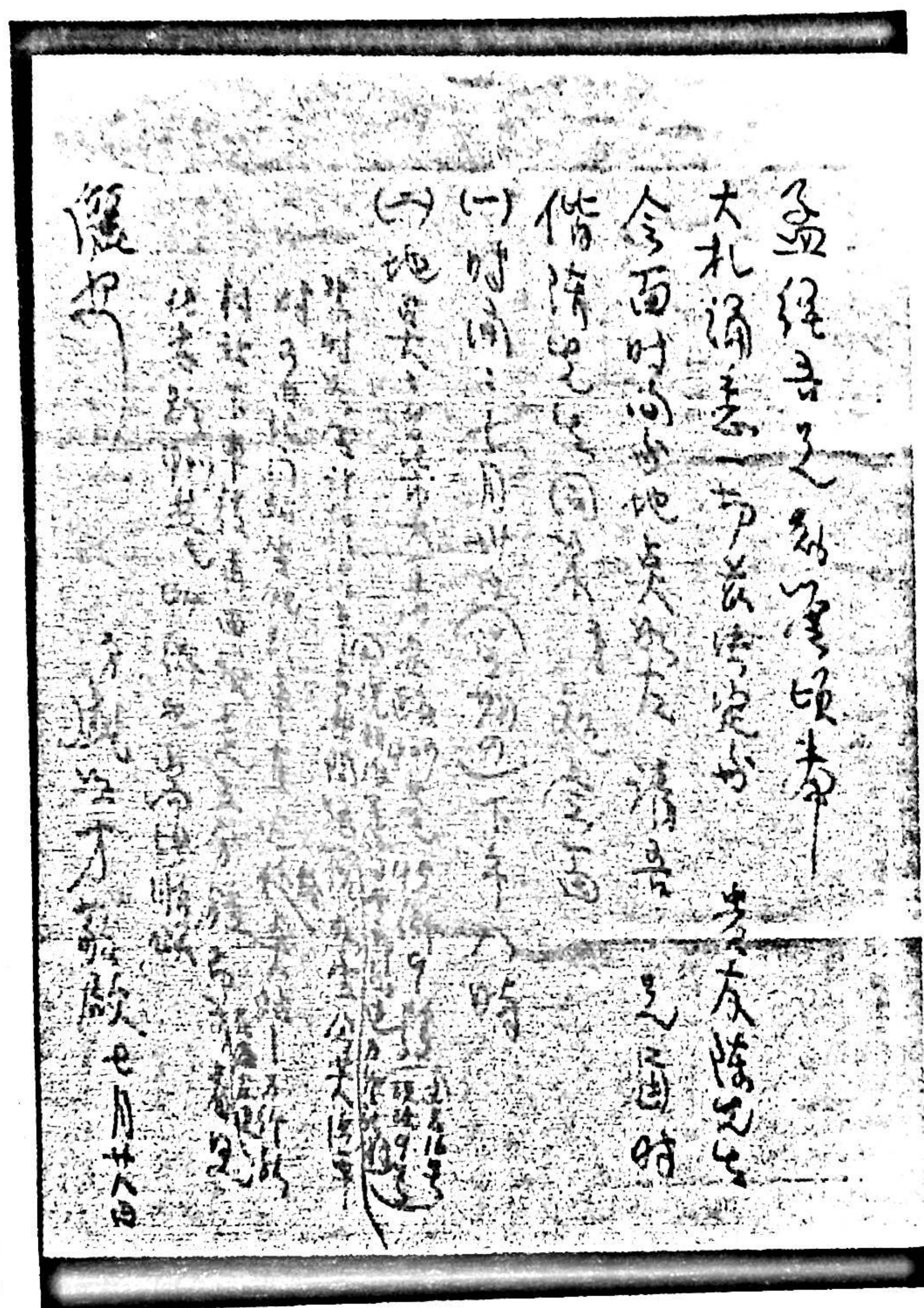
This initial success gave me whatever encouragement needed for embarking upon a new project, which was, in every way, more difficult than the previous one. I thereupon chose the period when Shêng Shih-ts'ai was Tüpan (督辦), or Military Governor (2), of Sinkiang (1933 - 1944) as the field of research for my M.A. degree examination. The work began in a most promising manner. Through Mr. Lo Hsiang-lin, I gained acquaintance with Mr. Lin Pê-ya (林伯雅), whose experience in Sinkiang has, in these years, been a nightmare to him and his wife (3). This couple related to me, on one of my visits to their house, a detailed yet biased account of the conditions in the province under the regime of Shêng Shih-



ts'ai, and they lent to me certain records of their sufferings in the province. Their generous aid in both ways gave my thesis a solid foundation. Nevertheless, to accept completely what they told me about Shêng would be most unjust to the Tupan, and in Hong Kong (香港) there was hardly another source from which I could obtain material which was more reliable. I was thus prompted to take a trip to Taiwan (臺灣) in July-August of this year.

In Taiwan, Mr. Kuo T'ing-i (郭廷以) of Academia Sinica (中央研究院) advised me, in an exceedingly discouraging tone, to abandon the project, maintaining, with some justification, that many of the official records on the subject were still kept confidential by the government in Taiwan. Little did he realize that I had already gone too far to turn back. Moreover, from the start, I had never expected the project to be an easy one. Believing that no difficulty was truly unsurmountable, and, at the same time, following partly the advice of Mr. Kuo, I gave up the hope of gaining access to official archives, and decided to approach the subject in a different way.





Letter from Shêng Shih-ts'ai to M.T.D. Prince of Torghut

By the courtesy of M.T.D. Prince  
of Torghut.



The result was gratifying. I found in the libraries of Academia Sinica a number of journals, published within the period of 1933 - 1944, which specialized in the study of frontier problems (4). Furthermore, I managed to visit the Office for the Provincial Government of Sinkiang (新疆省政府秘書處) and the Committee of Mongolia and Tibet (蒙藏委員會), and to interview persons who were directly and indirectly connected with the subject (5). Lastly, through the effort of H. C. D. Prince of Terghut, I met Shêng Shih-ts'ai himself, and had a long talk with him in his house in the suburb of Taipei (臺北). He patiently offered explanations to many of his actions taken when he was Tapan of Sinkiang.

In the course of my research, I have found that, in both Hong Kong and Taiwan, books on this subject are disappointingly few. As a matter of fact, many of them fail to give much useful information. In some cases, I was forced to rely on the microfilm services of Columbia University and Stanford University. Moreover, nearly all the descriptions that I have of Shêng Shih-ts'ai are strongly prejudiced. Some people, like Ch'ên Chi-ying (陳紀英), picture him as an ideal ruler (6); others like Kuang Lu (廣祿) and Lin Chi-jung (林繼



庸), his political opponents, describe him as if he were the incarnation of Satan himself (7). In this work of mine, much effort has been made to avoid committing myself to such prejudices. It is my wish to present Shêng Shih-ts'ai in a true light: an ordinary human being, with merits and demerits. It is only fair to point out that many of his actions were dictated by environmental influences which were entirely beyond his control.

Acknowledgments are due to Prof. Kuo T'ing-i of Academia Sinica, Taiwan, and Prof. Chang Ch'i-yün (張其昀) of Yang Ming Shan National War College (陽明山國防研究院), Taiwan, for their constructive advice; to Mr. & Mrs. Lin Pè-ya of Hong Kong, Mr. Yü Yung-huan (于榮寰) of the Legislative Yuan, Taiwan, Mr. Chou K'un-t'ien (周昆田) of Taiwan, M. T. D. Prince of Torghut of Taiwan, and Mr. Kuan Yen-chang (關炎章) of Taiwan for relating to me first-hand information of Shêng Shih-ts'ai; to the Office for the Provincial Government of Sinkiang, and the Committee of Mongolia and Tibet, both in Taipei, Taiwan, for supplying me with valuable material; to Mr. Yen Kêng-wang (嚴耕望), then of Academia Sinica, Taiwan, for showing me to various libraries in Taipei, Taiwan; to Mr. Ma Ming-tao (馬明



道) of Queen's College, Hong Kong, for drawing all the maps for me; and to Mr. Liao Ch'ing-oh'i (廖慶齊) of Queen's College, Hong Kong, for taking photographs for this thesis. Special thanks should be extended to General Shêng Shih-ts'ai for granting me an interview in his house, and for answering my many questions as well as to Prof. F. S. Drake and Mr. Lo Hsiang-lin, my supervisors, for their unfailing guidance and most helpful criticisms. There is but one thing to be regretted: Prof. Drake retired in June 1964, before the completion of my project. Had this been otherwise, I am sure this work would have been much more successful.

Chan Fook-lam, Gilbert.

December 1964.



## NOTES

- (1) Shêng Shih-ts'ai, "Red Failure in Sinkiang", Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot? (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1958), p. 151.
- (2) Some writers prefer the term of commissioner to that of military governor. The complete form is Commander of the Border Defence Commission.
- (3) In 1943, Mr. Lin Pê-ya was sent to Sinkiang by the National Government to help in the re-establishment of a branch of Kuomintang (國民黨) in the province. In the coup d'état of August 11, 1944, he and many of his colleagues were imprisoned. All of them, including Mrs. Lin, suffered tremendously in the torture chambers of Shêng Shih-ts'ai. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that an editorial, entitled "Ching-peí tsung-pu pu-ying kên-chū Shêng Shih-ts'ai wu-kao lan-hsing pu-jên" (警備總部不應根據盛世才証告濫行捕人), in Free China Fortnightly (自由中國), Vol. 22, No. 11 (Taipei, Taiwan, June 1, 1960), pp. 336 - 337, accused the Police in Taipei of



accepting the false charges of Shêng, and of imprisoning Lin without trial, when the latter returned from Hong Kong in 1960 to attend the National Assembly as a representative of the people.

- (4) The journals are, namely, Frontier Affairs (邊政公論), Report of Frontier Studies (邊疆研究通訊), Pien-chiang (邊疆), Hsin-chiang lun-ta'ung (新疆論叢), Hsi-peí yen-chiu (西北研究), K'ai-fa hsi-peí (開發西北), Hsi-peí lun-hêng (西北論衡), Pien-to yeh-k'an (邊疆月刊), and Pien-shih yen-chiu (邊事研究).
- (5) When I was in Taiwan, I was granted interviews with Prof. Kuo T'ing-i, Prof. Chang Ch'i-yün, M. T. D. Prince of Torghut, Mr. Yü Yung-huan, Mr. Kuang Lu, Mr. Lin Chi-yung, Mr. Chou K'un-t'ien, Mr. Kuan Yen-chang, and, most important of all, General Shêng Shih-ts'ai himself. Among them, Mr. Kuang and Mr. Lin had been imprisoned by the General, whereas with whom Prof. Kuo is not on friendly terms.
- (6) Ch'ên Chi-ying, Sinkiang niao-kang (新疆鳥瞰)



(Chungking, 1941).

- (7) Kuang Lu and others, Shêng Shih-ts'ai tsen-yang t'ung-chih Sinkiang (盛世才怎樣統治新疆)  
(Taipei, 1954).



SINKIANG

PHYSICAL

(SCALE 1:10300000)

land over 2000m.

U. S. S. R.

DZUNGARIA BASIN

SHAN TUFAN

TARIM BASIN

TSING HAI

INDIA

TIBET

MONGOLIA

Tarbagatay



## CHAPTER ONE

### SINKIANG: A CHINESE PROVINCE IN CENTRAL ASIA

Sinkiang, more commonly referred to in works of western languages as the Chinese Turkestan, forms the north-western land frontier of China. Running from west to east across this area, and cutting it into two unequal parts is the snow-clad T'ien Shan (天山), or the Celestial Mountains, which rise to heights of over 20,000 feet. North of the mountains lies the Dzungaria Basin (準噶爾盆地), which extends upwards to the foothills of the Altai Mountains (阿爾泰山), bordering Outer Mongolia (外蒙古). South of T'ien Shan is the Tarim Basin (塔里木盆地), bounded by the Kunlun Mountains (崑崙山) along India and Tibet (西藏). This region, enclosed on three sides by mountain masses, is one-sixth of the size of the whole of China, and is inhabited by a majority of non-Chinese peoples.

In 1884, Emperor Kuang Hsi (光緒), after deliberate consideration, made Sinkiang a province of the Ch'ing (清) dynasty, and named it Hsin Chiang (新疆), or the New Dominion. But this dominion was not so new as its name suggested. Wei T'ing-sheng (衛挺生), in his article,



"Lun Hsin-chiang-sheng ying kai-ch'êng wei Hsi-chiang-sheng" (論新疆省應改稱為西疆省), states that, as early as the days of Huang Ti (黃帝), Yao (堯) and Shun (舜), China had already exercised sovereign rights over this piece of territory, which was in every way a very old dominion. Basing on this conclusion, he goes further and suggests that the province should be renamed Hsi-chiang-sheng (西疆省), or the Province of Western Dominion, as the word "hsin" (新), or new, tends to arouse the ambition of the aggressive foreign powers (1). Moreover, the book, Mu-t'ien-tzu ch'uan (穆天子傳), points out that King Mu (穆王) of the Chou (周) dynasty once visited the territories which are nowadays within the limit of Sinkiang. As a matter of fact, basing upon this account, many historians maintain that a close relationship was established between the two countries in this period. However, as most of the history of Huang Ti, Yao and Shun belongs to a kind of legendary description and the book, Mu-t'ien-tzu ch'uan, likewise cannot be taken as a reliable source for historical research work, both of them therefore cannot be accepted without reservation.

Yet it is indisputable that Sinkiang has come within the political horizon of China for more than two



thousand years, since the first official contact was made by Chang Ch'ien (張騫) when Wu Ti (武帝) was the Emperor of the Han (漢) dynasty in China. In 133 B.C., he was sent to investigate the possibility of entering into an alliance with the Kingdom of Great Uch-chin against the invasion of Hsiung-nu (匈奴). Details of his missions to Hsi Yu (西域), or the Western Region, part of which forms what is now known to us as Sinciang (2), are recorded in Shih-chi (史記), ch'uan 123, and Han-shu (漢書), ch'uan 61, and ch'uan 96, parts I and II. Soon afterwards, many of the rulers of the oasis kingdoms in this region sent their sons to China as hostages, and acknowledged the suzerainty of China. Self-supporting military colonies, or t'un-t'ien (屯田), were placed at strategic points to watch for signs of disloyalty occasionally expressed by rulers of these kingdoms. This casual arrangement continued until 60 B.C. when Cheng Chi (鄭吉) was appointed Hsi-yü Tu-hu (西域都護), or Protector-General of the Western Region, with his headquarters at Wu Lei (烏壘), by Hsüan Ti (宣帝) of the Han dynasty (3). One of the articles collected in the book, Hsin-chiang yen-chiu (新疆研究), entitled "Liang-Han ch'eng-fu tsai Hsi-yü ti ching-ying" (兩漢政府在西域的經營), written by Lao Kan (勞幹), has a detailed



description of the system of Hsi-yü Tu-hu (4). In that year, to all intents and purposes, the suzerainty of China was firmly imposed on Sinkiang.

Nevertheless, China was unable to maintain this superior position for a long period. Its influence over this part of the frontier ebbed as the Han dynasty declined in power. Hou-Han-shu (後漢書), chüan 118, states:

"From the reign of Chien Wu (建武) to that of Yen Kuang (延光) (25 - 125), communications with Hsi Yü were thrice cut off and thrice restored." (p. 5a)

It is interesting to note that the rise and fall of a ruling family in China affects directly China's hold over the frontier peoples. Sometimes, the policy of an able Emperor and that of a mediocre one also made a great difference.

After the fall of the Han dynasty in the third century, political chaos prevailed. With the possible exception of a short period at the beginning of the Chin (晉) dynasty, the country remained disunited. The control



of the Chinese people over the nomadic groups was not restored until the seventh century when unification was achieved by the T'ang (唐) dynasty, and it was T'ai Tsung (太宗) who brought the disloyal rulers of the oasis kingdoms into submission. Two military protectorates, or Tu-hu Fu (都護府), were established in Sinkiang: the An-hsi Tu-hu Fu (安西都護府) at Kucha (疏勒), and the Pei-t'ing Tu-hu Fu (北庭都護府) at Beshbalik (庭州). Their work was to co-ordinate as well as supervise, and, for the sake of convenience in administration, they were both placed under the charge of Lung-yu Tao (隴右道), one of the ten tao (道), or provinces, of the T'ang dynasty. Nor was this all. After the subjugation of the Eastern Turks, Tai Tsung assumed the title of Heavenly Khan, and placed most of the Khans in Hsi Yü under his power (5). At this stage, the Chinese influence increased rapidly, and the tie between China and its north-western frontier grew much tighter than that of the Han period.

But no golden age could last for ever. In 755, An Lu-shan (安祿山) raised the banner of revolt. The rebellion, though ultimately suppressed, impoverished China, and the foundation of the ruling family was so



fatally shaken that the year 755 is generally recognized by historians as marking the beginning of the end of the rule of the Li family in China. Henceforth, the strength of the T'ang dynasty waned in both China and the frontier regions. In Sinkiang, the barbarians one by one abandoned their allegiance to the dynasty. Finally, in 907, the T'ang dynasty, which had maintained the Mandate of Heaven for nearly three centuries, was replaced by the Five Dynasties (五代), and this ushered in another epoch of political disunion in China.

In 960, China was reunited under the Sung (宋) dynasty which was, from the start, weak as far as its military strength was concerned. Causes for this weakness are suggested by E. O. Reischauer and J. K. Fairbank in their book, East Asia: The Great Tradition:

"The relative weakness of the Sung dynasty in arms was perhaps partially the result of T'ai Tsu's deliberate policy of undermining the provincial military and subordinating the army to the civil government. A more fundamental reason for this condition may have lain in the social and ideological changes of this period."



Anyway, the result was that the country was continually threatened by invasions from such barbarian groups as Liao (遼), Hsi Hsia (西夏) and Chin (金). In defending itself, China was literally exhausted and could hardly spare the money and manpower necessary for the development of the frontier. Consequently, Sinkiang was left at the mercy of the powerful barbarian kingdoms which had been established in this area when China was politically unstable. Indeed, the Sung Emperors had to keep the barbarians out of the country by offering them annually a very substantial tribute payment. As the Emperors of this period never succeeded in controlling any part of Central Asia, the Chinese influence, formerly established there by the Emperors of the Han and T'ang dynasties, completely disappeared.

In 1279, China was overrun by alien Mongols, who founded the Yuan (元) dynasty. The conquerors, being brave warriors, adopted an aggressive policy of war and conquest towards the frontier regions. Never in history had China, as a nation, been so much feared by its neighbours. At the time of Genghis Khan (成吉思汗),



when China had not yet fallen completely into the hands of the invaders, Sinkiang had already been incorporated into the Mongol Empire, and its territory was later shared by different Khanates. A large part of it, together with some neighbouring land, was allotted to Chagatai (察合臺), son of Genghis Khan, to form the Khanate of Chagatai (察合臺汗國). After the death of Ogatai (窩闊臺), also son of Genghis Khan, in 1241, his descendants were awarded land on either side of the Altai Mountains. This became known as the Khanate of Ogatai (窩闊臺汗國). The eastern part of Sinkiang, however, was placed under the direct rule of the Mongol Empire. This evidently was the heyday of the sway of China in the region. Nevertheless, the control of the central government at Peking over the Khanates was gradually loosened after the accession of Kublai Khan (忽必烈), and the subordinate Khans, instead of receiving orders from Peking, engaged themselves in self-seeking political rivalry, with the result that the Khanates developed into states which were almost autonomous. Thus the influence of the Mongol conquerors over this part of Central Asia, though most impressive at the beginning, was but short-lived, and any form of control exercised by the succeeding Emperors was no more than a nominal phenomenon.



It was Chu Yuan-chang (朱元璋) who drove the alien conquerors out and restored the rule of the Han people in China. In 1368, he founded a new dynasty, which bore the name, Ming (明). Unfortunately, the Chu family did not possess the military prowess of the Mongols who, still maintaining their power in the north and north-west, continued to be a menace. In Sinkiang, the Ming interests were excluded. Even after the Mongols had deteriorated in power, very seldom could the Chinese extend their power beyond the eastern extreme of the region.

It is true that many oasis kingdoms sent tributes to China (6), but these tribute-bearing missions were not sent out of any respect for the sovereign nation; they were sent merely for commercial reasons, as trade with China brought the frontier peoples great financial gains. Very often it was these gains that urged them to live peacefully along the Chinese border. Ming-shih (明史), chüan 332, records:

"Many of the barbarian tribute-bearers were actually merchants. Whenever they came, they brought with them a lot of merchandise, so that they might trade with China." (p. 26a)



There were cases in which more than one barbarian chief claimed to be the legitimate ruler of a single kingdom, and sent tribute-bearers to China. For instance, in the reign of Chia Ching (嘉靖):

"In Turfan (吐魯番), there were fifteen rulers; in Mekka (天方), twenty-seven; and in Samarkand (撒馬兒汗), fifty-three."

(7)

It became necessary for the Ming court, therefore, to draw repeatedly the attention of the barbarians to the importance of having only one ruler in each kingdom. At the same time, edicts forbidding tribute-bearers to engage in commerce were issued, though they were frequently ignored (8). This reflected the seriousness of the problem, and the failure of the Ming Emperors to provide a lasting solution for it was an indication of the ineffectiveness of the Chinese control over the nomadic tribes.

In 1644, once more China was subject to foreign domination, as in that year the Ming dynasty was superseded by that of the Ch'ing (清). The conquerors, known as the Manchus, came from the north-eastern frontier. At the



beginning of the Manchu rule, the country was fortunate to have a few brilliant Emperors, notably K'ang Hsi (康熙), Yung Cheng (雍正) and Ch'ien Lung (乾隆), who took up the long-abandoned plan of developing the Western Region.

The Dzungars (準格爾), who were by far the most powerful nomadic people in the north of T'ien Shan, rose in a series of revolts against the Manchus, all of which ended in humiliating defeat. In the 36th year of the reign of K'ang Hsi (1697), Galdan (噶爾丹), after having been defeated twice — once at Ulan-butung (烏蘭布通), and the other at Tchao Modo (昭莫多) — committed suicide. The revolts started by the succeeding chiefs, Tsewang Araptan (策妄阿拉布坦) and Galdan Tseren (噶爾丹策零), were likewise quelled. At the time of Ch'ien Lung, Amursana (阿睦爾撒納), another Dzungar leader, after suffering defeat, took flight to the Russian territory, and later died there. At last, in the 27th year of the reign of Ch'ien Lung (1762), peace was restored in northern Sinkiang, and a military governor was appointed at Ili (伊犁). This signalled the revival of Chinese influence in the area after so long an interval.



The south of T'ien Shan was inhabited by the Moslems who were equally rebellious. Yet in the end, they met the same fate as the Drungars. The first important outbreak of disturbance took place when Ch'ien Lung was Emperor. Burhan-al-Din (博羅尼都), the Big Khodja, aided by his younger brother, Khozi Khan (霍集占), the Little Khodja, revolted, only to be suppressed by Chao-hui (兆惠). Later, during the reign of Chia Ch'ing (嘉慶) and Tao Kuang (道光), the rebellion headed by Jehangir (張格爾), grandson of Burhan-al-Din, also ended in failure. The most serious one was led by YakooB Beg (阿古柏) who stirred up so much trouble that even England and Russia became greatly concerned. But his success did not last long. In the 3rd year of the reign of Kuang Hsi (1877), he poisoned himself when he realized that he did not have the faintest hope of standing successfully against the might of the Manchu forces (9).

By this time, it was evident that China had succeeded in establishing its military, if not political, supremacy over the whole of the Western Region, and suggestions began to be made in favour of a closer union. This was urgently needed in view of the growing ambition of Russia and, to a lesser extent, England, over the territory. Tso Tsung-t'ang (左宗棠), a Chinese general who, with his personal



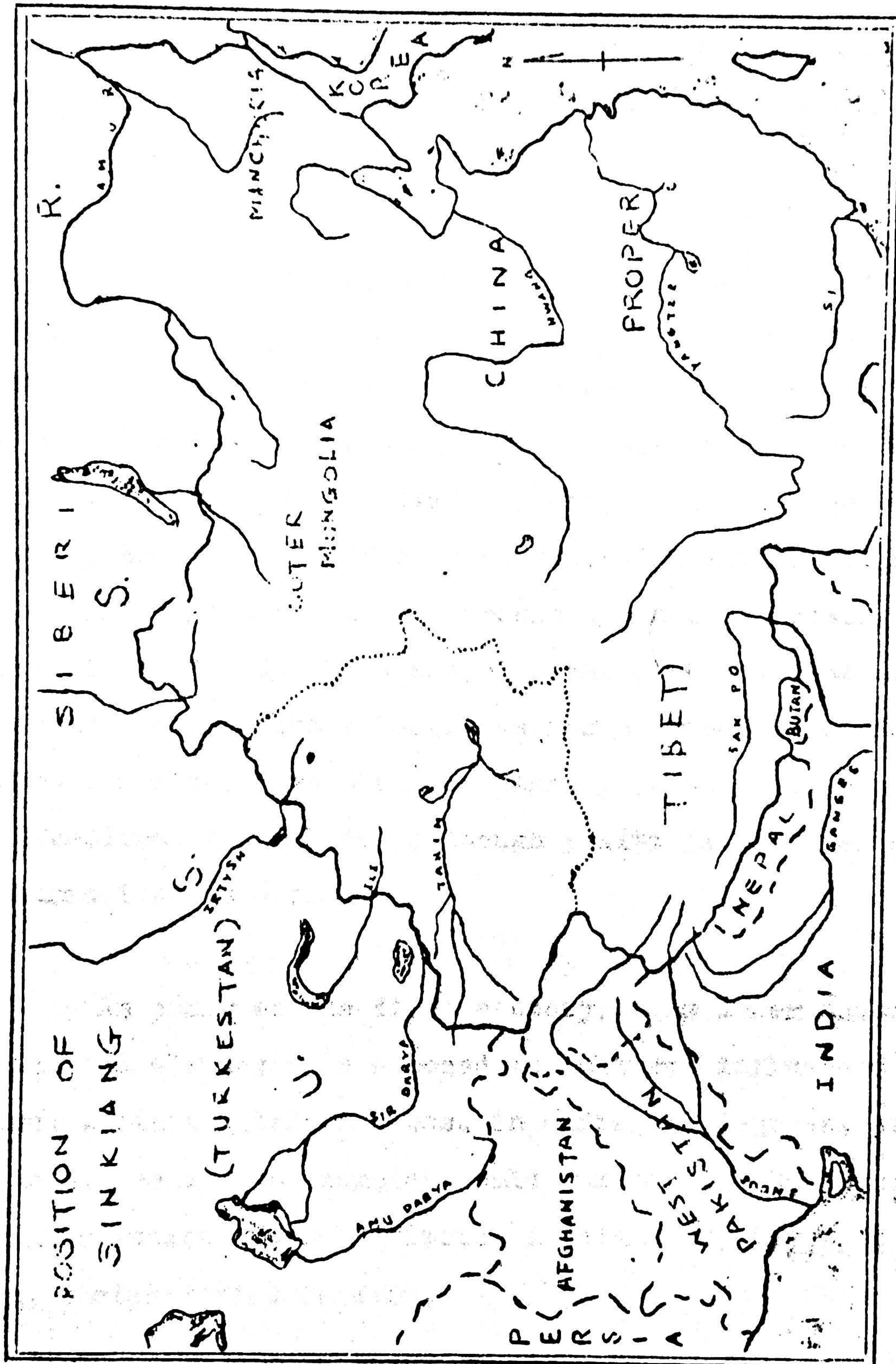
experience in the north-west, made the following penetrating observation on the situation:

"Since very ancient times, China's frontier troubles have been graver on the north-west than on the south-west. ... That is why to prize Sinkiang is to protect Mongolia; to protect Mongolia is to guard the capital. If Sinkiang is not fortified, there is no peace in Mongolia; then not only the borders of Shansi and Shensi are in danger of invasion, but there will be no assurance of peace in Chihli itself."

(10)

Later events proved how true these words were! Discrediting the ill-balanced policy of Li Hung-chang (李鴻章) of defending only the sea frontier in the east, he had the insight to stress the importance of strengthening the land frontier in the north-east. He was convinced that the only means of achieving this was to turn the region into a Chinese province. His recommendations, supported by Liu Chin-t'ang (劉錦棠), finally won the approval of the Emperor, and Sinkiang became part of the Chinese dominion in the 10th year of the reign of Emperor Kuang Hsü (1884)







(11). Liu Chin-t'ang was appointed the first governor of the province (12). This marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Sinkiang.

To relate only the political connections between China and its Western Region would be an exceedingly incomplete account, if we fail to mention how greatly they had enriched each other culturally through these years of contact. The Chinese civilization had, in the course of years, been strongly affected by various cultural influences penetrated into the country through its north-western passage. Located in the heart of Asia, Sinkiang necessarily provided a convenient cross-roads for a number of civilisations, and this, more than anything, gave the area an international atmosphere, although politically it was more inclined towards China.

As early as the first century, this Inner Asian region had already been exposed to cultural influences of China, India and Iran and was, in different degrees, affected by them. One or two examples would suffice for the purpose of illustration. Owen Lattimore, in his work, Pivot of Asia, states that from Iran,



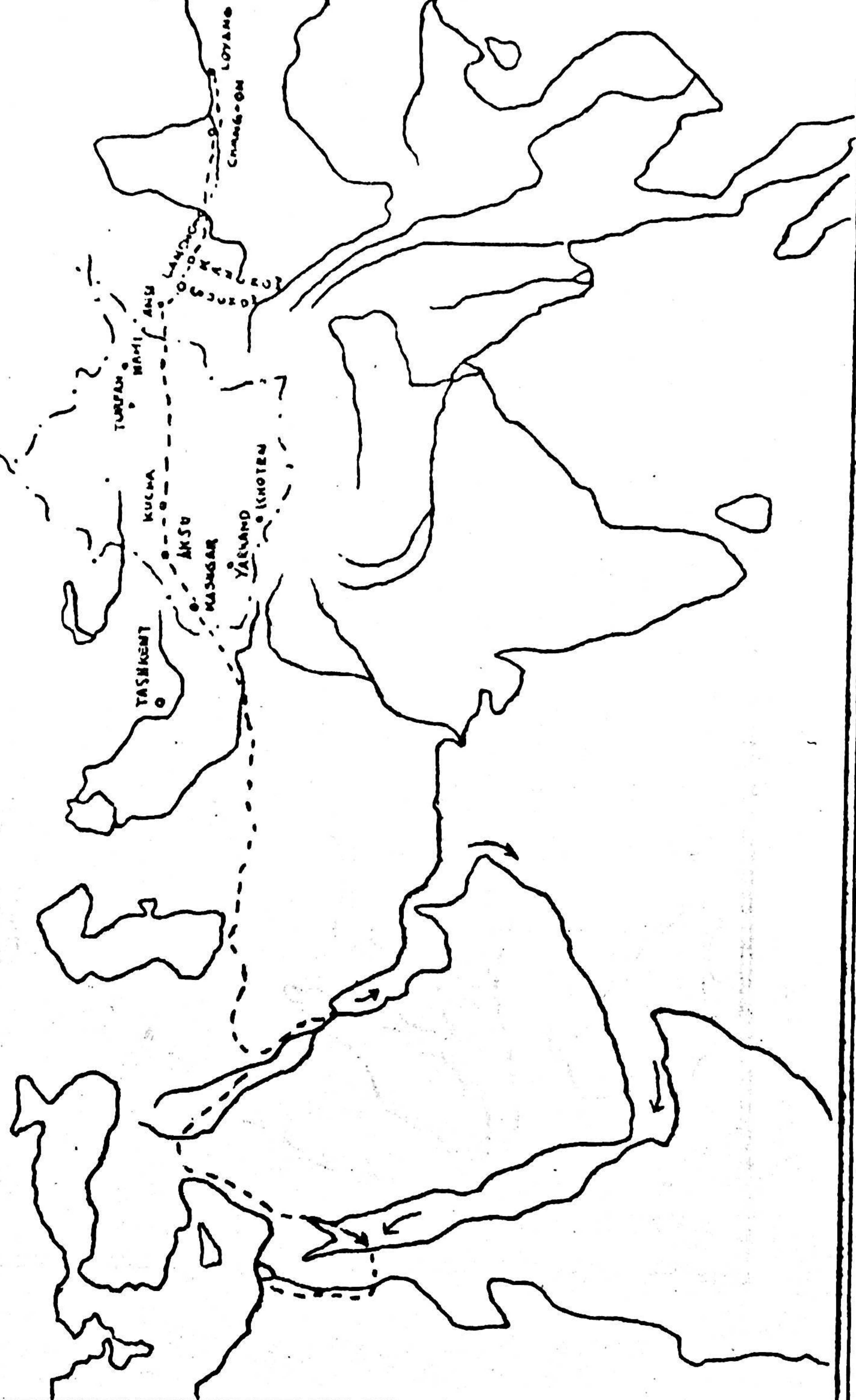
"Advanced irrigation engineering had penetrated into inner Asia — making it possible to support dense populations, and a high culture, in small oases." (p. 9)

With regard to Chinese influences, a less favourable account is given in Han-shu, chüan 96, part II, which tells us that, in the first year of the reign of Yuan K'ang (元康) (65 B.C.), the King of Kuoha (龜茲) and his wife came to China to pay tribute to the Emperor. Upon their return, after staying for one year in China, they imitated not only the Chinese way of constructing palaces, but also the ceremonies and customs of the Chinese court. Nevertheless, this imitation was not appreciated by their people, and was ridiculed as "half horse and half donkey" (13).

In the Han period, consequent upon the missions of Chang Ch'ien, the peoples of Hsi Yü were so deeply impressed by the greatness and prosperity of the Han dynasty that they travelled in large numbers to China. These travels brought much profitable trade to both parties. Records show that, in the first century, trade had developed to such an extent that China was commercially connected with countries as far as Ta Ch'in (大秦), identified by many

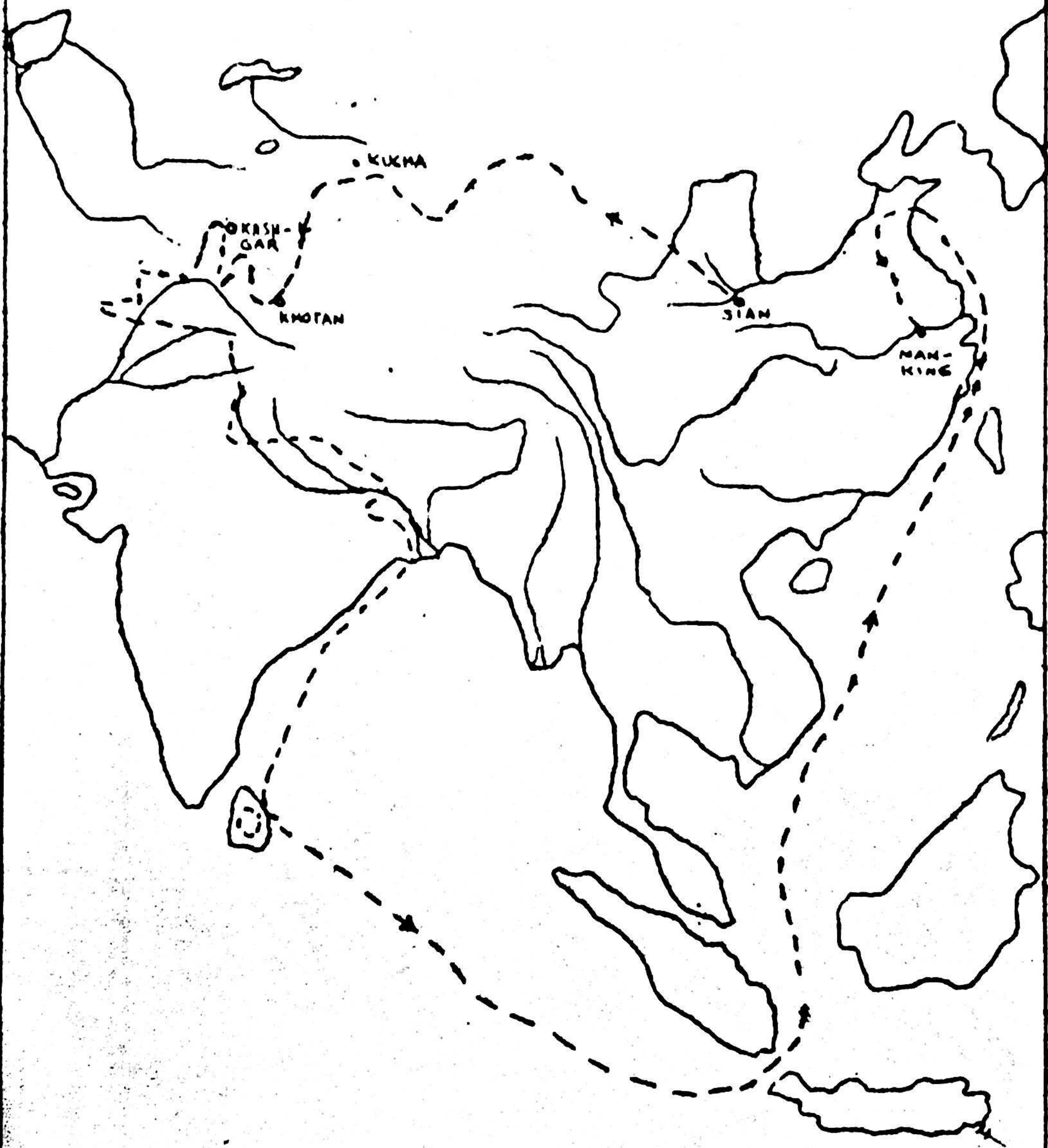


# THE GREAT SILK ROAD



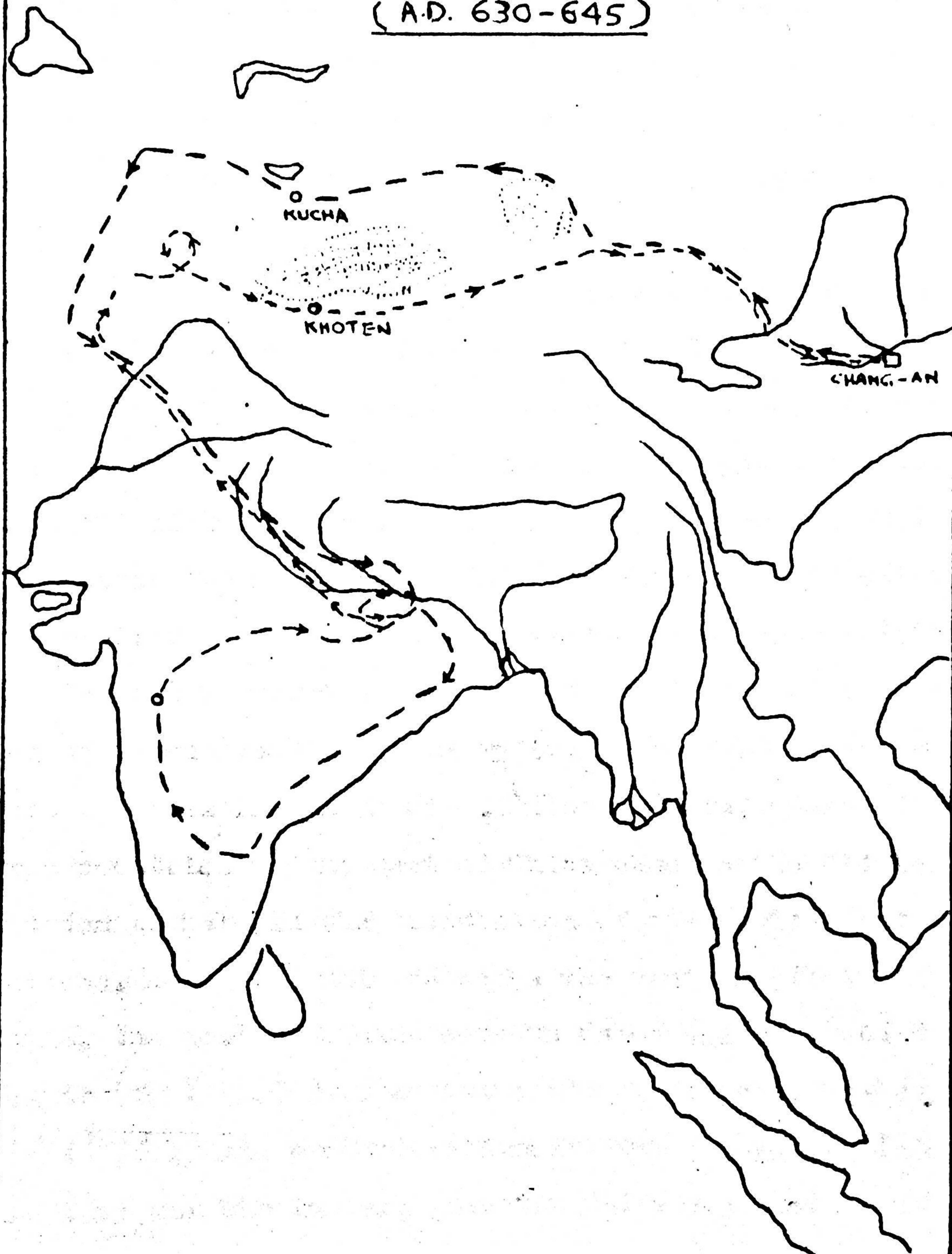


# THE ROUTE OF FA-HSIEN A.D.399-420





THE ROUTE OF HSUAN CHUANG  
(A.D. 630-645)





as the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire. The chief merchandise was silk which was sent to Ta Ch'in through the Tarim Basin along the route known as the Great Silk Road. Indeed, silk became so popular among the Romans that China was commonly called the Silk Country or Serica.

The Tarim Basin owed its importance not so much to its being part of the Great Silk Road as to the fact that, later in the dynasty, through the same gateway, Buddhism was introduced to China from the north-western part of India. As far as the history of Sinkiang is concerned the introduction of Buddhism to China had the effect of stimulating communications between the two countries. Monks, besides merchants, began to travel through the Inner Asian region in an ever increasingly large number. Chinese monks went to India in search of Buddhist scripts, whereas monks from countries to the west of China came to the Middle Kingdom to help in the translation of the scripts into Chinese. Among the Chinese monks who went on pilgrimage to India, the most prominent were Fa Hsien (法顯) and Hsüan Chuang (玄奘). Their accounts of the travels, Fo-kuo chi (佛國記), written by the former, and Hsi-yü chi (西域記), by the latter, gave the Chinese a much deeper understanding of the area.



In addition to Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity and Islam found their way into China through the same north-western passage as well. Although the extent of their influences could, in no way, be compared to those of Buddhism, yet the significance of Sinkiang as an avenue through which various cultural influences infiltrated into China could hardly be over-estimated. The people of this region, on their part, gradually became accustomed to the Chinese way of living. Late in the T'ang dynasty, many of them settled at Ch'ang-an (長安), Loyang (洛陽), Yangchow (揚州), and even Canton (廣州). This situation continued until the end of the fifteenth century when the discovery of new sea routes overshadowed the importance of the land route which traversed through Sinkiang.

Broadly speaking, the Chinese frontier policy was defensive in nature. It is true that, throughout the history of China, numerous expeditions against the oasis kingdoms of the Western Region had been launched, but, in most cases, the offensive was taken for defensive reasons. The frontier wars of the Han dynasty, for example, were waged for the sole purpose of "cutting off the right arm of the Hsiungnu". Statements to this effect can be found in Shih-chih, ch'uan 123 and Han-shu, ch'uan 61. In fact, when Wu Ti sent Chang



Ch'ien to make alliances first with Great Yüeh-chih, and then with Wu-sun (烏孫), his ulterior purpose was to weaken the Hsiungnu. In Hou-Han-shu, chüan 77, Pan Yung (班勇) explained very precisely the defensive nature of the Chinese frontier policy:

"By communicating with the Western Region, the power of the barbarians would definitely be weakened; should the power of the barbarians be weakened, the calamity caused by them would become negligible." (p. 16a)

Pan Yung further warned the literati of the Han court that to abandon the Tarim Basin would be tantamount to returning the treasures to the barbarians, and thus rejoining their "severed arm".

Moreover, as C. P. Fitzgerald correctly points out in his article, "The Historical Background of Chinese Military Tradition":

"Outright conquest ... was never the purpose of Chinese frontier policy." (14)



One may contest that this assertion cannot be applied, with the same accuracy, to the period of Mongol rule in China. But the Mongols, being alien rulers, did not necessarily follow the traditional policy of their Chinese subjects. With this understanding, the statement of C. P. Fitzgerald can well be accepted. When Chêng Chi was commissioned Protector-General of the Western Region by the Han Emperor, Hsüan Ti, he was not given any administrative responsibility; his duty was merely to keep the barbarians peaceful and, above all, loyal to the interests of the Middle Kingdom. The military protectorates established by the T'ang Emperors had similar functions to perform. In neither cases was there any sign of territorial aggression. Even in the Ch'ing dynasty, when Tso Tsung-t'ang and Liu Chin-t'ang advocated that Sinkiang should be made a Chinese province, they did so for defensive reasons, for Tso believed that, in that way, Mongolia could be protected, and Peking, the capital, could be shielded from aggressive foreign powers.

Indeed, to bring about permanent political control over this area was an exceedingly expensive business. It became a continuous drain to China's financial resources. In the western world, colonization normally brought material gains to the mother countries; but in China this was rarely



the case. In China, the purpose of frontier wars was to keep the nomads out of the country; long-term settlement was considered unnecessary and undesirable. Measures of colonizing frontier regions were taken only when there was no other alternative, and the aim was to prevent the barbarians from breaking into China. If the nation was militarily weak, and could not resort to force, the frontier peoples were bribed to stay away. This was most common in the Sung and the Ming dynasties. When peace was again restored, the Chinese literati would immediately advise their Emperor, on financial grounds, to abandon all efforts of developing the frontier. This accounted, to a very large degree, for the failure of China to provide a lasting and systematic policy towards its border-land. The result of the lack of such a policy in Sinkiang was that the Chinese ruling class there never seriously attempted to solve the many problems which had existed for centuries, and to turn the area into a province did not, in any respect, make things easier for either the rulers or the ruled.

Lying within the orbit of Chinese administration, Sinkiang, however, possessed several peculiar features which distinguished it from other Chinese provinces. The Chinese, forming the ruling clique, constituted only six per cent



of the population. Besides, physical barriers separated the province from the central government, and caused grave inconvenience in communications. Consequently, the men on the spot were given a free hand to govern the province in their own way. Unfortunately, those who were sent to serve in frontier territories were seldom men of great ability, and they usually held prejudices against the subject races. Hence, the "Greater Chinese Theory" was universally accepted, and the Chinese officials maintained as far as possible an acute racial superiority. Therefore it was not surprising that the non-Chinese nationalities regarded themselves as subjects under an alien rule, rather than as citizens of a harmonious society. In his book, Pivot of Asia, Owen Lattimore, with some justification, compares the position of Sinkiang under the Chinese with that of India under the British (15). Racial animosity naturally ensued.

In every frontier province, racial differences often created delicate problems, which had to be tackled carefully. One wrong move would produce disastrous results. In the article, "Chung-kuo li-tai ch'ou-pien chih shan-ts'eh" (中國歷代籌邊之善策), Mr. Lo Hsiang-lin, my supervisor, makes a scholarly study of the frontier history of China, and groups the effective policies of various dynasties towards



the people of the marginal territories into three main categories. The first one aimed at cultural exchange. He maintains that the successful practice of this would ultimately lead to the sinicization of the less civilized people in the border-regions, thus bringing them into the sphere of Chinese civilization. The second attempted to attract the frontier people to participate in the Civil Service Examinations, so as to give them equal political opportunities. Besides, by sending the successful candidates from the frontier to work as government officials in the interior of China would help to rid them of their inferior sentiments, and to ensure them that the government respected them as much as it respected its own race. This would certainly remove whatever grudge the subject nationalities had against the Chinese. The third made use of inter-marriage to enhance the affection of the frontier races towards the interior people. A close blood relationship was the strongest tie China could find to link the two peoples together (16).

A glance over the history of China shows that these policies had repeatedly been carried out, very frequently with remarkable effect. Yet, in Sinkiang, they did not enjoy the same favourable results. Difficulties in communications definitely presented an obstacle to the interchange of



cultures, but this natural handicap could not explain fully the failure of the policies. Beyond doubt, the foolishness of the Chinese, who failed to realize the strong influence which Mohammedanism had over the people of the province, was a more important factor. Their unpopular religious policy estranged the Moslems, who indignantly kept themselves aloof from the Chinese inhabitants, with the result that the two groups of people could never reach some sort of mutual understanding. In addition, the religious customs of the Uighurs who, in comparison with the other races, had the greatest number of people in Sinkiang, forbade them to marry non-Moslems, and the policy of intermarriage was left with little hope of success. Such adverse circumstances might be softened if the subject races were permitted to serve in the provincial government or, better still, to work in the interior of China. Unluckily, for the people of Sinkiang at least, in 1905, only about twenty years after the territory had been incorporated into China, the traditional examination system was terminated. It was hard for the Manchu rulers, in this limited span of time, to extend the system to the province, though they deserved to be blamed for the reluctance of the Chinese ruling minority to enlist the subject races into the officialdom of the province. In short, no matter how effective those policies listed in Mr. Lo's article



were elsewhere, they failed, for one reason or another, to supply any practical solution for the problems in the north-western part of China.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, further complications developed in this area which nearly changed the fate of the province. Imperialistic powers began to manifest their interests in the territory which even China had more than once thought of abandoning. When Yakooob Beg tried to create an independent Moslem kingdom in 1870's, both Russia and British India were prepared to fish in troubled waters. Although, thanks to the efforts of Tso Tsung-t'ang, their manoeuvres were fruitless, those two neighbouring countries subsequently succeeded in establishing a prosperous commercial relationship with the people there. Nevertheless, nothing could be more incorrect than to interpret their aggressive designs in terms of commercial ambition. More than anything, England desired to build a buffer state in the Tarim Basin to thwart any unfriendly move from Russia towards India. At that time, Russophobia was a common disease that plagued the mind of every Englishman. Russia, in its turn, was equally determined to exclude all hostile influences from northern Sinkiang.



In executing their plans of penetrating into the province, these two nations were gratified to find that they did not encounter so much opposition as they had originally expected, as the Ch'ing dynasty, in its last fifty years or so, was unceasingly harassed by either internal revolts or external crises. The birth of the first republic in 1911 did not bring to the people a strong and united China. On the contrary, under the presidency of Yüan Shih-k'ai (袁世凱) (1912 - 1916), regionalism, which originated in the days of the T'ai-p'ing (太平) rebellion, reached a riping stage (17), and after his death, China, overcome by disruption, found itself on the threshold of an age of warlordism, in which regional powers, or warlords, totally ignoring the interests of their country, fought for personal benefits (18).

In Sinkiang, in the years of 1911 - 1928, Yang Tsêng-hsin (楊增新), who was Tupan and, concurrently, Chairman of the Provincial Government, ruled in the manner of a dictator (19). Nominally, he was appointed in 1912 by the government at Peking. However, after Yüan Ta-hua (袁大化) had deserted his governorship, and Yüan Hung-yu (袁鴻祐), nominated by him as his successor, had been assassinated, Yang was the only man in the province strong enough to restore



order: he was the ruler de facto. The Peking government did not have much choice, and Yang's appointment was but a recognition of fait accompli. As a matter of fact, in 1928, when Chin Shu-jên (金樹仁) succeeded Yang as Tupan and Chairman of the Provincial Government, and in 1933, when Shêng Shih-ts'ai became Tupan, the central government was confronted with similar situations, and was forced to make similar decisions.

It is significant that none of the three was sent from the capital to take up office in Sinkiang. Prior to their appointment, all of them had cultivated in the region their influence to such an extent that the Chinese government could not withhold its official sanction. Strange enough, this sanction was desperately needed by all provincial autocrats, no matter how powerful they were, as it was the only thing which could make their position legitimate, and this legitimacy, which proved theoretically that they had the backing and, if necessary, the military support of their government in the interior, was a useful weapon to frighten the consistently rebellious subjects from inciting revolts. But, to the annoyance of the central government, after they had been officially put to office, they acted so independently that they ignored the Wai-chiao Pu (外交部), or the



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and signed treaties with foreign powers.

Since its revolution in 1917, Soviet Russia, with its promise to help all the suppressed races, had become a treacherous neighbour. If the governors failed to win its friendship, Russia could easily stir up the already discontented subjects against the Chinese rule, and the province would be lost. If Russia, on the other hand, was turned into a friendly neighbour, there was hope of financial, or even military assistance. With these alternatives, the governors had no difficulty at all in determining what to do. One treaty after another was signed. China, with its internal troubles, could scarcely interfere. The outcome was soon obvious: Russian influence swelled, whereas Chinese control existed only in name.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai repeatedly declared that he would for ever keep Sinkiang a Chinese territory. This work of mine attempts to find out how far he, in face of Russian aggression, not to mention other difficulties, succeeded in doing so. Indeed, this, above everything, is the major criterion upon which he will be judged.



NOTE 3

- (1) Wei T'ing-sheng, "Lun Hsin-chiang-sheng ying kai-ch'ang wei Hsi-chiang-sheng", Thought and Time (思想與時代), Vol. III (Taipei, October 1963), p. 1.
- (2) The term, Hsi Yü, can be applied in two ways. In a restricted sense, it denotes the Tarim Basin. However, it is often used to include not only the whole of Sinkiang, but also the vast expanse of territory to the west of the province. The latter usage is adopted here, as the expeditions of Chang Ch'ien covered a much larger area than the Tarim Basin.
- (3) Han-shu, compiled by Pan Ku (班固) (reprinted by I-wen Press 藝文印書館 of Taipei in 1958 under the general title of Erh-shih-wu shih 二十五史), chüan 70, p. 4b and chüan 96, part I, pp. 2b - 3a.
- (4) Kuang Lu (edited), Hsin-chiang yen-chiu (Taipei, 1964), pp. 11 - 15.
- (5) Lo Hsiang-lin, "T'ang-tai t'ien-k'o-han chih-tu k'ao" (唐代天可汗制度考), T'ang-tai wen-hua shih



(唐代文化史) (Taipei: Commercial Press 商務印書館, 1955), pp. 54 - 87.

- (6) The names of the tribute-bearing kingdoms are found in Ming-shih, compiled by Chang T'ing-yü (張廷玉) (reprinted by I-wên Press, Taipei, in 1958 under the general title of Êrh-shih-wu shih), chüan 329 - 332.
- (7) Ibid., chüan 332, p. 6b.
- (8) Ibid., chüan 332, p. 7a and pp. 25b - 26a.
- (9) Accounts of the attempts of the Manchus to bring Sinkiang into the realm of the Ch'ing Empire are given in Ch'ü Yün-shih (新韻士), Hsi-ch'ui yao-lüeh (西陲要略) and Wei Kuang-tao (魏光燾), K'an-ting Hsin-chiang chi (戡定新疆記) (both reprinted by Yüan T'ung-li 袁同禮 under the general title of Sinkiang Collectanea 新疆研究叢刊, Taipei: Commercial Press, 1963).
- (10) Cited in Aitchison K. Wu, China and the Soviet Union: A Study of Sino-Soviet Relations (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950), p. 102.



- (11) Sung Pai-lu (宋伯魯), Hsin-chiang chien-chih chih (新疆建置志) (reprinted by Yüan T'ung-li under the general title of Sinkiang Collectanea, Taipei: Commercial Press, 1963).
- (12) In the Ch'ing dynasty, the governors who ruled Sinkiang after the resignation of Liu Chin-t'ang were, chronologically, as follows: Wei Kuang-tao, T'ao Mu (陶模), T'ao Ying-ch'ü (陶應祺), P'an Hsiao-su (潘效蘇), Wu Yin-sun (吳引孫), Lien K'uei (聯魁) and Yüan Ta hua.
- (13) Han-shu, chüan 96, part II, pp. 13a - b.
- (14) C. P. Fitzgerald, "The Historical Background of Chinese Military Tradition", The Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Sydney, June 1964), p. 30.
- (15) Owen Lattimore, Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China and Russia (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1950), p. 3.
- (16) Lo Hsiang-lin, "Chung-kuo li-tai ch'ou-pien chih shan-ts'ü", Li-shih chih jen-shih (歷史之認識) (Hong



Kong: The Asia Press Ltd. 亞洲出版社, 1955), pp. 1 - 7.

- (17) For regionalism, read the introduction, "Regionalism in Nineteenth-Century China", by Frans Michael, in Stanley Spector, Li Hung-chang and the Hwai Army: A Study in Nineteenth Century Chinese Regionalism (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964).
- (18) With reference to the struggle among warlords, read Li Chien-nung (李劍農), Chung-kuo chin-pai-nien chêng-ch'ih shih (中國近百年政治史) (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1957), Vol. II.
- (19) See Tsêng Wên-wu (曾問吾), Chung-kuo ching-ying Hsi-yü shih (中國經營西域史) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), pp. 479 - 539.



## CHAPTER TWO

### SHENG SHIH-TS'AI: THE MAN AND HIS RISE TO PROMINENCE

On December 3, 1895, when China was confronted with the imminent danger of being partitioned by western imperialistic powers, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was born in the province of Liaoning (遼寧) in southern Manchuria. It is claimed that his ancestors were of Manchu origin; however, this is not substantiated by adequate historical evidence (1). His father, Sheng Chen-chia (盛振甲), was a peasant whose education consisted only of three years in a local tutorial school, and he considered his own lack of proper education as chiefly responsible for the poverty from which his family was suffering. He therefore insisted that his sons (2) should receive as much education as he could afford to give them, so that (as interpreted by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in the interview which I had with him) they could be useful to their country. Consequently, Sheng, being the eldest son, was sent to school when he was very young and, at the age of fourteen, he was admitted to the Provincial Forestry and Agricultural School at Mukden (瀋陽), where he stayed for three years. He then attended schools at Shanghai (上海) and Nanking (南京). Before reaching the age of twenty, he had already begun to show a keen interest in political economy and military science and,



partly because of this, he went to Japan in 1915 to study at Waseda University.

At that time, the First World War had already started, and Japanese designs in China alienated many overseas Chinese students. During Shêng's short stay in Japan, his nationalistic sentiment and revolutionary spirit gave his fellow-students, particularly Tu Chung-yüan (杜重遠), a very favourable impression. In the book which he later wrote, Shêng Shih-ts'ai yü hsün Sinkiang (盛世才與新新疆),

Tu recalls:

"In Tokyo, whenever there was a controversy relating to Sino-Japanese problems, he (i.e. Shêng) always had his share. At the time of the peace conference at Paris when China objected to the recognition of the Twenty-One Demands, the Chinese students at Tokyo, after holding a few meetings, resolved to express their protest by returning en bloc to China. There were however several weak-minded students who were reluctant to give up their studies. I can still remember how Mr. Shêng, with a stick in his hand, was ready to cane those who refused to return home."



(3)

Soon, he was elected a representative by his fellow north-easterners, and was sent home to participate in the anti-Japanese student movements. This experience unquestionably had a profound influence on him and it helps to explain, to some extent, his unfriendly attitude towards Japan during the twelve years in which he ruled in Sinkiang.

Nevertheless, the immediate effect was to convince him of the futility of book-learning, and prompt him to take up a military career. So after the crisis, he resumed his studies at a college specialising in military art in Shao Chou (韶州), a district in the province of Kuangtung (廣東). For several decades, the province had been reputed a centre of liberal views, and most likely it was there that Sheng was first imbued with the spirit of radicalism.

After the completion of his training in Shao Chou, he returned to his native province. Recommended by Li Kên-yüan (李根源), the headmaster of the college in Shao Chou, he was able to serve under Kuo Sung-ling (郭松齡). His ability was highly appreciated by Kuo, whose strong recommendation resulted in his enrolment at the Imperial War



College of Japan in 1924. This gave him the opportunity of receiving further military training. But his second visit to Japan was not to continue without interruption. Once again, political upheaval at home brought him back to China in the following year. Kuo Sung-ling, his former superior, strongly resisted the pro-Japanese policy of Chang Tao-lin (張作霖), and had been directing a military campaign against the latter. When Shêng was informed of the news, he immediately abandoned his studies and rallied under the banner of Kuo. However, because of inadequate strength, the campaign was doomed to fail (4). Shêng thereupon returned to Japan, but was forbidden to continue his work at the Imperial War College, consequent upon a protest made by Chang to the Japanese government. Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and Feng Yü-hsiang (馮玉祥) intervened at this critical moment in Shêng's favour and offered him financial assistance. This enabled him to complete his studies.

Shêng's political opponents maintain that:

"In Japan, he had taken a crooked way, and become intoxicated with his research in Communism." (5)

Yet Shêng had a different story to tell when he was interviewed



by Allen S. Whiting in 1954. He dated his conversion to Marxism at an earlier period. He recalls:

"I became a Marxist in 1919. ... Although at that time I had no opportunity to enter the Communist Party, my ideas, personal outlook, and world views had already become those of a believer of Marxism." (6)

When he wrote to Chiang Kai-shek on July 7, 1942, he had the same confession to make:

"For a long time I had cherished a fond belief for Marxism." (7)

At any rate, it is safe to state that Shêng's interest in radicalism received further nourishment in Japan, although I am in no way inclined to label him a Communist (8).

In 1927, he returned to China, and served under Ho Ying-ch'in (何應欽) in the Headquarters of the National Revolutionary Army. Subsequently, he took part in the Northern Expedition. His ability in this field was generally recognised. Despite this, after the Expedition, he was not



given a position in the new government at Nanking commensurate with his ability, and he was painfully disappointed (9).

During this period, he made many friends and became a member of various cultural societies, notably the Wei-sheng hsüeh-she (維生學社) which advocated, among other things, the fortification of frontier (10). From then onwards, he turned his attention to the frontier provinces, realising that there he had more propitious opportunities of achieving greatness. He did not have to wait long; a chance soon came from the Inner Asian provinces: Sinkiang.

In those years, things did not go on smoothly in this north-western province. No doubt, Yang Tsêng-hsin, who ruled the territory in 1912 - 1928, succeeded in giving his people peace and prosperity, but, as Peter Fleming observes in the book, News from Tartary: A Journey from Peking to Kashmere:

"His sixteen years in office produced a curious kind of time-lag in the history of Sinkiang."

(p. 249)

Externally, he kept the province free from the influence of the Chinese civil wars and internally, he managed to put everything under the strictest control, nibbling all liberal



tendencies in the bud. He was clever enough to realise that these measures could only lead to trouble, and he sought remedy in encouraging trade. Owen Lattimore gives this policy a clear analysis in his High Tartary:

"He relied on the material contentment of his subject races to check any tendency towards independence, reckoning shrewdly that people with money to lose would not be eager for the risks of rebellion." (p. 70)

In this way, he was able to clothe stagnation and backwardness with material well-being.

Such a complicated scheme could only be worked out by one with political talent, so it was most unfortunate that Yang, after being murdered on July 7, 1928 by his Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, Fan Yao-nan (范耀南) (11), should be succeeded by Chin Shu-jên, an opium-addict, whose ability could not in any way be compared with that of his predecessor. As a governor, he bestowed to Sinkiang nothing but corruption, maladministration, and violence (12).

In 1929, Lu Hsiao-tsu (魯效祖), Chin's private



secretary, was sent to Nanking as a representative of the province. He was accompanied by his deputy, Kuang Lu (13). Before they left for the capital, Chin casually told his private secretary to look for a man with a gift for military affairs. At Nanking, Lu became acquainted with Kuang's former teacher, P'êng Chao-hsien (彭昭賢), who chanced to reside in the neighbourhood of his office. When P'êng learned, in one of their conversations, that Chin Shu-jên needed a capable young man to shoulder the responsibility of military training in Sinkiang, he spoke favourably of Shêng Shih-ts'ai. Lu was so delighted that, before he could seek approval from his superior, he extended the offer to Shêng, who accepted it without much hesitation (14).

Nevertheless, Shêng's new career did not begin promisingly. In that decade or so, China was so much disturbed by the conflicts of warlords that the only safe way to the north-west was through Siberia. When Shêng was ready for his journey, the regional government in north-eastern China quarrelled with Russia over the Chinese Eastern Railroad, and the route to Russia through Vladivostok was severed. Shêng was thus forced to stay at Peking (北京) for eight months, during which time he studied a lot of books, especially those on social science. After the crisis, he travelled with Lu



by the Trans-Siberian Railway to Urumohi, then known as Tihua (迪化), the capital of Sinkiang.

On reaching the province, he was received with neither warmth nor enthusiasm. At that time, Chin Shu-chih (金樹棼), a brother of the governor, was in charge of army administration, and he was not at all pleased to have one who had had superior military training as his subordinate. Moreover, the fear that he might one day be replaced by Shêng drove him even farther away from his newly arrived assistant. In fact, as Chin Shu-jên was first informed of the arrival of Shêng, he was overcome by surprise; never had he dreamed of the prospect of having an overseas graduate to work under him. Doubting Shêng's sincerity, he thereupon telegraphed to Lu Hsiao-tsu, then at Nanking, telling Lu that he disapproved of his choice. But Lu, a very hot-tempered man, considered this a loss of face, and threatened to resign. As he was a former classmate and a very intimate friend of Chin, the governor had to give way. In the end, however, Shêng was the one to suffer. He was only appointed Chief of the General Staff Office of the Frontier Army, a commission which hardly offered him an opportunity of showing his best. Needless to say, he was disappointed; yet it was to his credit that he never showed any sign of discontent. Chin was deeply impressed.



and when Shêng requested that he be made chief instructor at the military college in the province, he immediately gave his consent. This had significant results. First of all, it was the turning-point of Shêng's career in Sinkiang; thenceforth, fortune smiled upon him. Furthermore, by consenting to Shêng's request, Chin buried a time-bomb under his bed, and thus brought about his own doom.

As a military instructor, Shêng was, at least in Sinkiang, unsurpassingly qualified. His training at the Imperial War College of Japan was in itself an attraction for many young officers. Besides, his knowledge of social and political sciences, his ability to discuss and to analyse current political events of the country gained him not only the respect, but also the affection, of his students. It is therefore not surprising that these young men later became one of his main sources of support when he seized control of the provincial government.

As his popularity grew, the provincial government which was incompetent, venal and backward, gradually lost the support of the people. With the passing of time, the seed of discontent began to germinate. The dynamite was installed; all that was needed for the explosion was but a spark to light



the fuse. And it was the ill-advised policy of Chin Shu-jên towards the Uighurs at Hami (哈密) which finally led to the outbreak of hostilities.

Hami was an important city in the eastern part of the province. When the Ch'ing dynasty extended its rule to Sinkiang during the reign of Emperor Kuang Hsü, the age-long Khanate system was allowed to be retained in the city, and the inhabitants, instead of paying taxes to the provincial government, rendered services to the Khan. Indeed, the Manchus did not wish to offend the Uighurs who, due to their great number, were very influential in the area. The system was left unchanged even under the republican government.

In the winter of 1930, the old Khan, Shah Maksud (沙馬克蘇特), died. Liu Hsi-ts'êng (劉希曾), a divisional commander who was stationed at Hami, proposed to establish direct administration in the city to take the place of the existing obsolete system. The proposal, in itself, was sound, and it brought additional income to the government at Urumchi. At once, it was adopted by Chin Shu-jên, who transferred Nasir (納滋爾), son of the deceased Khan, and his counsellor, Yollbars (老樂博士), the Tiger Prince, to Urumchi. In the following year, the territory round Hami



was turned into three separate districts, and Nasir was given the position of Senior Advisor, which necessitated his permanent stay at the capital.

Undoubtedly, this measure was wise and, in many respects, necessary. It was however an exceedingly delicate matter. Most important of all, problems involving the Uighurs had to be tactfully handled; any sign of injustice could easily cause trouble. This partly explained the willingness of the provincial government in the past to attempt to change the system.

The new district government, without serious consideration, resolved to collect from the Uighurs taxes for the previous year in the form of arrears. Meanwhile, it declared that the Chinese who were ready to take up uncultivated land in the region would be exempted from taxation for two years. When a comparison was made between the two resolutions, it was evident that the Uighurs did not receive a fair treatment, and they had reasons to be agitated.

The discontent increased when Lung Hsieh-lin (龍溪林), a district magistrate, forced his subject race to forsake their cultivated land in favour of the refugees from



Kansu (甘肅). The Uighurs, still remaining peaceful, petitioned the provincial government for redress, but the letter was withheld. The complainants, being ignorant that their letter failed to reach the governor, were convinced that the government at Urumchi was equally unsympathetic.

.. Shortly afterwards, a Chinese tax-collector (15), who had become notorious for his irresponsible behaviour, compelled a reluctant Uighur couple to consent to his marrying their young daughter. This was the last straw, as they were forbidden by their religion to marry the non-Moslems, and any attempt to urge them to disregard this would inevitably result in disasters. The parents, unable to resist the demand of the tax-collector, ostensibly agreed to the marriage. At the night of the wedding, the bride and the bridegroom, together with the Chinese soldiers who were stationed there, were murdered. This bloodshed signalled the beginning of an insurrection which, under the leadership of Khodja Nias (和加尼牙孜) and Yollbars, steadily gained strength.

Blind to the limited power of his own military forces, Chin Shu-jên, rejecting the policy of conciliation proposed by Liu Wen-lung (劉文龍), Commissioner of Education, and Yen Yü-shan (閻毓善), Commissioner of Reconstruction,



resorted to high-handed suppression and sent Chu Shui-ch'ih (朱瑞峰) and Hsiung Fa-yü (熊發有) to Hami. Atrocious massacres were carried out by both sides. The rebels, wishing to be sure of final victory, appealed to Ma Chung-ying (馬仲英), a chieftain of the powerful and warlike Tungan clan in Kansu, for assistance (16). Ma most obligingly offered help and, in May 1931, marched from Anhsi (安西) to Hami, a distance of 215 miles, with an army of about four hundred cavalry soldiers. He was overwhelmingly confident that this would ultimately lead to his conquest of the province. On the way to Hami, he once said to a reporter:

"You are fond of the horses of Sinkiang. In the future, you may approach me for them. If you are willing to go there with me, all the better."

(17)

Yet this alliance of the Uighurs and the Tungsans was merely a "marriage of convenience". The two races had never been friendly with each other, and the fact that they were co-religionists was not strong enough to bind them together. In this incident, the factors which brought about their union were chiefly environmental. The Uighurs, obsessed by their bitter hatred of the governor, would pay any price



for the overthrow of his government. Yollbars admitted that they did not originally intend to seek aid from the Tungans. They had tried to go to Nanking, but were stopped by Ma from doing so (18). On the other hand, Ma had just been defeated in his struggle with Ma Pu-fang (馬步芳), the warlord of Ch'inghai (青海), and was looking for a place where he could go. The prospect of extending his influence to Sinkiang was too attractive for him to miss.

Anyway, having been re-inforced, the rebels won a succession of victories. Hami was besieged, and Urumchi was threatened. Hastily, Chin Shu-jên sent Lu Hsiao-tsu, Commander-in-Chief, Shêng Shih-ts'ai and Tu Chih-kuo (杜治國), his assistants, to stop the advance of the Tungan forces, a task which Lu failed to achieve. The provincial army, poorly trained and disciplined, was fatally defeated, and Tu was killed in a battle.

In order to turn the table against his adversary, Chin called upon Chang P'ei-yüan (張培元), who was stationed at Ili, to raise the siege of Hami, and Shêng Shih-ts'ai was commissioned his Chief of Staff. Chang had under his command the veteran White Russian mercenary troops (19). On approaching Hami, they forced Ma, who had been wounded,



to return to his native province in August. In the following month, the city was recaptured. Thereupon, Khodja Niaz begged for the termination of hostilities.

This could have been the end of the trouble, but Chin, dissatisfied with partial success, wanted to win a complete victory. Troops under Li Hai-ju (黎海如) were sent to arrest the rebels who had taken cover in the mountains. At that time, Chang P'ei-yüan was no longer there. He was distrusted by Chin, who purposely transferred him to Urumchi, hoping that he could be kept under watch. Chang was indignant and, disobeying the order, returned to Ili.

This gave the aggressive neighbours a chance to step in. Five representatives from Outer Mongolia came to encourage the Uighurs to resume their struggle against the provincial government, and promised them material support. There was no question that Russia was at the back of this, and Outer Mongolia was only its foil. The policy of Russia in Sinkiang was a complicated one. By creating troubles in the province, it was sure that the government at Urumchi, failing to obtain help from the interior of China due to difficulties in communications, would have to rely on its neighbouring republic. To have a friendly and yet dependent province on



its border was the primary aim of Soviet Russia. In case the governor should become insubmissive, the Russians would spur on the Uighurs, who had already been befriended, to overthrow the existing government and to set up, in its place, a puppet regime. Either way would work in the interest of Russia. Appreciating the seriousness of the situation and wishing to end the rebellion once for all, Chin, to please Russia, negotiated a trade agreement with her, extending Russian commercial privileges in return for her military aid (20). It was concluded on October 1 without the prior approval of Nanking (21).

Soon, hostilities were renewed. Shêng was made Commander-in-Chief of the army. The disturbance had evidently worked to his advantage. It gave him, besides other things, the long-deprived opportunity of putting his best foot forward. Undoubtedly, he was at that time the most experienced, competent and, above all, popular military man in Sinkiang. Since he had been extraordinarily successful in battles, it was easy for him to impress this on the minds of the people -- it was in fact made easier by the blunders of his colleagues. Hsiung Fa-yü, who had murdered in cold blood a great number of rebellious Uighurs, was at last mutilated by the rebels under Ma Shih-ming (馬世明), who had been sent to Sinkiang in



May 1932 by Ma Chung-ying to help the Uighurs (22). This was merely one of the numerous examples illustrating how the foolishness of some officers aroused the hatred of the people, and led to their own downfall. Shêng, however, was no ordinary officer. He came to Sinkiang with great ambition, and he was too careful to allow himself to touch upon the delicate subject of nationalities (23). Hence, he was unmistakably distinguished from the others.

The revolt dragged on; the policy of the rebels was to spread the revolt as wide as possible and it seemed that, for the time being, they were successful (24). Disturbances broke out at Shan-shan (鄯善), Turfan, or T'u-lu-fan (吐鲁番), Karashahr, or Yen-ch'i (焉耆), Kucha, or K'u-ch'e (庫車), Aksu (阿克蘇), and Khotan, or Ho-t'ien (和闐). Even the south of the province was infected (25). Early in 1933, when Shêng had defeated Khodja Nias at Turfan, Ma Shih-ming attacked Urumchi. This caused great alarm. Food was scarce; people were not allowed to move about; and the entrances to the city were heavily guarded (26). Luckily, on March 27, 1933, the Northeast National Salvation Army of Manchuria arrived just in time in Sinkiang from Russia (27). They were regular soldiers, well-disciplined, well-trained, and full of fighting spirit. Seeing that circumstances were



not in their favour, Khodja Niaz requested Ma Chung-ying to return to Sinkiang.

The nature of the activities of this Tungan leader in the province offers an interesting topic for research.

It is true that he was commissioned Commander-in-Chief of the 36th Division by Nanking soon after his retreat to Kansu in 1931, yet this cannot account for the strength of his military forces. Facts clearly show that Ma had received aid from at least one of the powers which were interested in the territory. T'ang Chi-ts'ung (唐季馬恩) states in his article, "Lieh-ch'iang tsai Sinkiang ti yin-mou" (列強在新疆的陰謀):

"The weapons of the soldiers of Ma Chung-ying were British rifles, imported from India. The target of attack was the pro-Russian Chin Shu-jên." (28). Even Hedin outlines the crimes for

However, this idea of British interference, with an anti-Russian motive, is not accepted by Shêng Shih-ts'ai, who firmly believes that Japan, instead of Britain, assisted Ma in attacking the province. This conviction is grounded on the fact that later a Japanese, Tadashi Onishi, who,



adopting a Chinese name, Yu Hua-hêng (于華亨), was attached to Ma's headquarters, was captured by Shêng's forces (29). Evidences from other sources tend to agree with Sheng and put the blame on Japan, whose designs in Sinkiang, though started much later than those of Russia and Britain, were equally penetrating. In that country, special schools for the study of this part of China were founded, and its government even made use of religion by keeping the exiled Sultan of Turkey, Abdul Kelim (阿訇都爾凱林姆), in the country. Thus it is reasonable to assume that this nation would not overlook the possibility of furthering its plan by helping Ma.

Before Ma finally decided to re-enter the province, a coup d'état took place at the capital on April 12. It started as a mutiny of the White Russian mercenary troops against the governor. In The Flight of Big Horse: The Trail of War in Central Asia, Sven Hedin outlines the causes for the mutiny:

"The discontent grew; everyone wanted to be rid of Chin. Without the help of the Russian émigrés Urumchi would have been taken and transformed into a shambles. Thanks to their better organ-



isation and military spirit, and to the courage, they had won victories which excited the astonishment of the Chinese authorities indeed, but did not awaken their gratitude. Chin's judgment was darkened by suspicion and envy. When the leader of the Russians demanded a vigorous attack which would provoke a speedy decision and make an effective pursuit possible, the governor-general turn a deaf ear. No attack was made on the rebel besiegers. The Russians were, with intention, poorly armed. They were given no horses, and when they refused to march out on foot, they received emaciated screws: the best horses were given to the Chinese soldiers who were keeping in the background. And when the émigrés, who themselves were no Sunday school, had got their horses all right, they were given no saddles." (p. 8)

General Pappengut (巴平古特), the commander of the White Russians, had obviously consulted the leaders of the Northeast National Salvation Army, and been assured of their sympathy. Moreover, he had also received the support of T'ao Ming-yüeh (陶明越), Ch'ên Chung (陳中), and Chang Hsin (張馨), subordinates of Chin Shu-jên. Chin escaped and, after attempting in vain to regain his power, succeeded in returning to



China through Russia.

Nevertheless, Kuang Lu is convinced that the coup d'état was engineered by Russia which became so disappointed with Chin that she decided to overthrow his government. In his memoirs, Sinkiang shih-nien hui-i-lu (新疆十年回憶錄), Shêng Shih-ts'ai agrees to this, and further points out that, while Ch'ên Chung was a Communist, T'ao Ming-yieh, Li Hsiao-t'ien (李笑天) and Pappengut were definitely pro-Russia (30).

It is difficult to decide how far Shêng was involved in the plot of the coup. He was an ambitious man, and he was dissatisfied with the policies of both Yang Tsêng-hsin and Chin Shu-jên. Yet, despite his radical ideas, he had rendered, during the years 1929 - 1933, loyal service to China. Had he truly been involved, what then was the cause for the change in his attitude? Could ambition and dissatisfaction explain everything?

Sun Fu-k'un (孫福坤), one of the fifteen men who prosecuted Shêng in April 1953 (31), states that Shêng, being in control of the army, offered to give great profit to the White Russians if they succeeded in overthrowing Chin and



his government (32). But in Shêng's memoirs, he claims that he was first informed of the news of the coup on the morning of April 13 by Li Hsiiao-t'ien, who flew to him at Uraba (烏拉巴) from Urumchi in the midst of the revolt, and urged him to return to the capital (33).

On the night of April 12, the anti-Chin clique met at Urumchi. At the beginning of the meeting, Pappengut declared that the coup d'état was a natural consequence of the misrule of Chin Shu-jên, and its purpose was to rescue the people of the province from the imminent danger of famine and starvation. After expressing their sympathy with the White Russians, those present promptly proceeded to discuss the arrangements for establishing a new government. At this, Ch'en Chung stated that the system of the Border Defence Commission, headed by a Commander, or Tupan, would give the Commander, who in the past was concurrently the head of the civil government, too much power. He therefore proposed that this Commission should be replaced by a Sinkiang Military Affairs Commission, in which a Committee, under a Chairman, would share the power of the Commander. There was much sense in the proposal, and it was adopted. Later at the meeting, Liu Wen-lung was elected Provisional Provincial Chairman, to be in charge of civil administration, and Cheng Jun-ch'êng



鄭洞成), the Brigade Commander of the Northeast National Salvation Army, was elected Provisional Chairman of the Sinkiang Military Affairs Commission, to be in charge of military affairs.

Upon the return of Shêng, a second meeting, in which he participated personally, was held on April 14. It was attended by representatives of the different races. During the meeting, Liu Wên-lung proposed to abolish the Sinkiang Military Affairs Commission, and to re-establish the Border Defence Commission. Shêng was unanimously elected Provisional Commander of the Commission. However, it is asserted that Shêng had surrounded the assembly hall with soldiers brought back from Uruba, and engineered the election in order to produce the desired result (34). It does not matter very much whether there was any truth in this or not. In all respects, the second meeting was a compromise. The fact that Liu Wên-lung, head of the civil government, should propose the abolition of the Sinkiang Military Affairs Commission after his visit to Shêng's residence shortly before the meeting is suggestive enough. The only reasonable explanation is that the revolutionary party needed the military support of Shêng, who in return would accept nothing short of being elected Commander of the Border Defence Commission. Anyway,



he became the undisputed leader in Sinkiang. Indeed, it is not at all surprising that he could have become master of the province; what is really fascinating to us is that he was able, in face of so many difficulties, to keep himself in that position for twelve years.

At that time, his position was far from secure. Ma Chung-ying was still the greatest menace in the province; Chang P'ei-yüan, now at Ili, was unco-operative; and, most important of all, the reaction of the Nanking government to the coup d'état of April 12 was uncertain. As a military leader of the province, he needed the recognition of Nanking to make his authority legitimate, without which he could hardly retain the loyalty of his soldiers and people, and what he had already won — the fruit of long years of struggle — would be worth nothing.

In June, when he was busy fighting against Ma, Huang Mu-sung (黃慕松) was suddenly sent to the province by the Nanking government as a Pacification Commissioner, whose ostensible duty was to be an intermediary and to attempt to bring peace to Sinkiang by persuading both Shêng and Ma to cease fighting. But it was generally believed that his primary duty was to investigate the causes and results of



the coup d'état, and that his report would have a vital effect on the decision of Nanking in relation to the position of Liu and Shêng as the civil and military leaders of the province. However, Shêng did not look favourably upon this representative from Nanking, and consequently the welcome extended to him was far from cordial. Indeed, Huang was even accused by Shêng as being an agent of Wang Ching-wei (汪精衛), who had designs to spread his political influence to the frontier province.

During Huang's stay at Urumchi, there took place a second coup d'état aimed, as related by Shêng, at his assassination (35). The leaders, T'ao Ming-yüeh, Ch'ên Chung and Li Hsiao-t'ien, were promptly arrested and, strangely enough, were executed almost in the presence of Huang. Immediately after this, Shêng, expressing his dissatisfaction with the intention of the central government to change the system of the Border Defence Commission, tendered his resignation to the provisional provincial government. Liu Wên-lung, completely at a loss of what to do, followed his example. The provincial government, realising that this would result in utter chaos, begged Huang to petition the Nanking government to abandon, at least for the time being, all considerations for changing the system. Huang, who was definitely affected by the



execution, telegraphed to Nanking, recommending the recognition of Liu and Shêng. Then, on July 20, the two leaders jointly sent a telegram to Nanking, pledging their loyalty to the central government. Part of the telegram reads:

"We, Liu Wên-lung and Shêng Shih-ts'ai, now acknowledge our debt to your wise advice which we have done all in our power to follow. ... Great as is doubtless our ignorance we have wisdom enough to know that only by obedience to our National Government can we be saved. This obedience we hereby promise and have sworn in the presence of the Omnipotent God. We will do as you ask us and dare not in any matter run counter to your will. Accept in these matters our whole-hearted pledge of loyalty, of which this message is a humble token." (36)

On the following day, Huang hurriedly left the province. The official recognition did not reach Sinkiang until September of the same year. On September 2, Lo Wên-kan (羅文幹), President of the Judiciary Yuan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, arrived at Urumchi as a representative of Nanking to officiate Liu and Shêng on September 7. No matter how



elaborate the ceremony was, it was obvious even to such travellers as Peter Fleming that this was the price which Nanking paid for the life of its "Pacification Commissioner" (37).

In this way, Shêng solved one of his major difficulties, and was thus able to concentrate his attention on Ma Chung-ying. At that time, Ma had already allied with Chang P'ei-yüan, and there were rumours that Liu Wên-lung plotted with them against his own colleague. Moreover, evidence clearly showed that Ma had been receiving aid from the Japanese government. This seriously threatened the safety of the province. Shêng might tolerate an internal revolt, but he could never bear to witness the penetration of Japanese influence in Sinkiang. He had seen Japanese imperialism in action in other parts of China, and he knew how dangerous it could be. He was therefore determined to end the struggle once and for all. Knowing that he could not possibly obtain help from Nanking, which was then preoccupied with internal strife, he was forced to follow the precedent of his predecessor, and turned to Russia for assistance. This might not be wise, but it was certainly the only step which he could take at the time.



In October 1933, Ch'ên Tê-11 (陳德立) and Yao Hsiung (姚希) departed for Russia. Evidently, their duty there was to negotiate with the Soviet government for military aid. They returned to Sinkiang in December, and were accompanied by Garegin Apresoff, who was to be the new Soviet Consul-General at Urumchi. This ushered in a period of pro-Russianism in the province.

In January 1934, Urumchi was besieged by the forces of Ma Chung-ying. The Soviet troops and aeroplanes came to Shêng's help and routed Ma. Chang P'ei-yüan, realising that he was playing a losing game, committed suicide (38). Ma fled to Khotan in southern Sinkiang, and remained inactive there for several months. On July 10, to the surprise of every one, he withdrew with a limited number of retainers to Russian territory.

The retirement of Ma to Russia ended the long struggle between Shêng and the Tungan warrior, and peace was finally restored to the northern half of the province. However, disturbance still continued in the south for some time. As early as November 1933, the Eastern Turkistan Republic had been established at Kashgar (喀什噶爾), with Khodja Niaz as President of the Republic, and Sarpiti (沙比提)



as Premier. This independent movement of the Uighurs was, beyond doubt, incited by the British who, considering the profitable trade in India, intended to make southern Sinkiang a sphere of exclusive British influence. If successful, this would counteract much of the Russian influence in the north. Nevertheless, the British were less lucky. In the summer of 1934, Khodja Niaz was tempted to accept the offer of Shêng to become the Vice-Chairman of the Provincial Government, and the Republic, much weakened by conflicts among its leaders and attacks from Ma Hu-shan (馬虎山), collapsed.

In Fu's statement, Shêng went to Japan for the first time in 1915 and he stayed there about a year. Hence, he could not have returned to China on the occasion of the Paris Conference which was held in January 1919. In my opinion, his return was due either to the Japanese invitation to negotiate the Twenty-One Demands or to the invitation of the Twenty-One Demands.

14. Regarding the rivalry between the Shêng-King and Shêng



## NOTES

- (1) It is reported that Shêng Shih-ts'ai himself denied this. See Wei Chung-t'ien (魏中天), Shêng Shih-ts'ai ju-ho t'ung-chih Sinkiang (盛世才如何統治新疆), (Chungking, 1947), p. 4.
- (2) In a personal letter, Shêng Shih-ts'ai states that he has five brothers, namely, Shih-ying (世英), Shih-chün (世駿), Shih-ch'í (世騏), Shih-chí (世驎) and Shih-ch'üan (世全). Shih-ch'í, then a brigade commander, was assassinated in 1942.
- (3) Tu Chung-yüan, Shêng Shih-ts'ai yü hsin Sinkiang (Hankow, 1938), p. 32. It should be noted that there is an error in Tu's statement. Shêng went to Japan for the first time in 1915 and he stayed there about a year. Hence, he could not have returned to China on the occasion of the Paris Conference which was held in January 1919. In my opinion, his return was due either to the Japanese activities at Tsingtao (青島) or to the presentation of the Twenty-One Demands.
- (4) Regarding the rivalry between Kuo Sung-ling and Chang



Tso-lin, read P'ei Yu-ming (裴育明), "Kuo Sung-ling tao-ko ch'ien-yin hou-kuo" (郭松齡倒戈前因後果), The Perspective Fortnightly (觀察半月刊), No. 4 (Hong Kong, September 10, 1964), pp. 2 - 5.

- (5) Kuang Lu and others, op. cit., p. 3.
- (6) Allen S. Whiting, "Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang: 1933 - 49", Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot? (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1958), p. 15.
- (7) Shêng Shih-ts'ai to Chiang Kai-shek, July 7, 1942. See Wai-chiao Pu, Su-lien tui Sinkiang chih ching-chi ch'in-lieh (蘇聯對新疆之經濟侵略) (Taipei, 1950), p. 60. The letter is included in Appendix E of this dissertation.
- (8) He never practised communism in Sinkiang during the years when he ruled the province. Despite his radical ideas, I am inclined to think that he called himself a Marxist only because he wanted to find justification in the policy of pro-Russianism. In 1942, when he broke his relation with Stalin, he called himself a disciple of the Three Principles of the People. Indeed, for this,



he was termed a "chameleon warlord", see Owen Lattimore, op. cit., p. 69.

- (9) It is difficult to explain why Chiang Kai-shek offered him financial assistance in Japan, yet denied him a really responsible position at Nanking. Allen S. Whiting suggests that this was because Shêng was not a graduate of the Whampoa Military Academy, see Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 14.
- (10) P'êng Chao-hsien and Ling Yün (凌雲), "Shêng Shih-te'ai shih tsen-yang chieh-ch'1 Sinkiang ti" (盛世才是怎樣崛起新疆的), The Observation Post Semi-Monthly (春秋半月刊), No. 148 (Hong Kong, September 1, 1962), p. 7. It is interesting to mention that, during my interview with Shêng, he told me that such a society never existed. He went so far as to describe the work of P'êng as "utter nonsense". Nevertheless, he admitted that he had great interest in frontier provinces. In Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., the author attempts to explain Shêng's interest by quoting from one of his associates who:

"identifies Shêng as one of a group of young officers



increasingly dissatisfied with the political orientation of the Nationalist movement as it moved into the financial strongholds of Shanghai and Nanking. This groups felt a betrayal of the initial purpose of the revolution, as landed and vested interest groups appeared to play a more prominent role in determining policy. According to this source, these 'progressives' looked to the remote areas of northeast and northwest China as bases for building power which could later be utilized in a 'second revolution.'" (p. 15)

- (11) Although Fan Yao-nan had causes to be antagonistic, it is difficult to decide whether personal hatred was the sole motive of the assassination. Certain reliable sources accuse Russia to be at the back of the tragedy. In Sinkiang shih-nien hui-i-lu, Shêng states that the coup d'état of July 7, 1928 was actually engineered by the Soviet government (Tzu-li wen-pao 自立晚報, Taipei, October 5, 1952). In the article, "T'u-hsi t'ieh-lu tui-yü Sinkiang chih ying-hsiang chi chin-hou tzu-pao chi ts'ê-lieh" 土西鐵路對於新疆之影響及今後自保之策略, Chang Chien-hsun (張建勛) holds a similar view (Pien-shih ven-chiu, Vol. I, Nanking



December 1934, p. 92). However, Sven Hedin does not agree with this. In The Flight of Big Horse: The Trail of War in Central Asia (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1936), he writes:

"Well-informed Chinese at Urumchi ... were fully aware that the foreign commissary Fan Yao-nan, who had been accused of the murder of Marshal Yang in 1928, was innocent, and that the real perpetrator of the crime was Chin Shu-jên, supported by Chang Pei-yüan." (p. 14)

- (12) It seems that Shêng Shih-ts'ai has a fairly high opinion of Chin. In Sinkiang shih-nien hui-i-lu, he thinks that Chin was surely not an ordinary person, and commends him for his attempts to introduce reforms in the provincial government (Tai-ji wan-pao, October 5, 1952).

- (13) In his memoirs, Kuang Lu recalls that at Nanking they had two important duties to perform. Firstly, they were to petition the central government to give the idea of changing the title of Tupan to that of Chief Commander of the 18th Division a second thought, for Chin Shu-jên feared that the new title was not impressive enough



to keep the restless peoples in the province quiet. Secondly, they were to request the Nanking government to provide Sinkiang with financial aid. See Kuang Lu, Kuang Lu hui-i-lu (廣祿回憶錄) (Taipei: Book World Co. 文星書店, 1964), p. 127.

- (14) P'êng Chao-hsien recalls that, at the same time when Lu Hsiao-tsu came to Nanking, Ling Yün (龍雲), the warlord of Yunnan (雲南), also wanted to find a young man with military talent to be in charge of military education in Yunnan. However, Shêng chose to go to Sinkiang. See P'êng Chao-hsien and Ling Yün, op. cit., p. 7.

- (15) It is strange that, in various sources, only the surname of the tax-collector was given. It was, namely, Chang. As for his notorious, irresponsible behaviour, I attribute it to the fact that he came from the same district as the governor, who treated countrymen of his own exceptionally well. The following is part of a popular lampoon at Urumchi (quoted in Sven Hedin, op. cit., p. 171):

"In the morning learn the Hochow dialect, and you'll



get a fat job in the evening."

- (16) The early part of the life history of Ma Chung-ying is given in Sven Hedin, op. cit., pp. 4 - 5. As for the account of his death, read Sinkiang, Pawn or Pivot?, pp. 193 - 197.
- (17) Wen-hsien (文萱), "I-yüeh-lai chih hsi-peí" (一月來之西北), K'ai-fa hsi-peí, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Nanking, April 1934), p. 84.
- (18) Ibid.
- (19) They were known in Sinkiang as Kuei-hua Army (歸化軍). They were the Czarist soldiers who escaped to Sinkiang after the Russian Revolution of 1917.  
(Long Range, The Asia Press Ltd., 1936!, pp. 33 - 37.)
- (20) For the complete text of the agreement, read Chapter III of this dissertation.
- (21) As Chin had not obtained prior approval from Nanking, he was sentenced, upon his return to Nanking after the coup d'état, to an imprisonment of three-and-a-half years.



- (22) Shortly after Ma had returned to Kansu, he was commissioned commander-in-chief of the 36th Division by Nanking. This gave him the opportunity of regaining his power, and his interest in Sinkiang was thus revived.
- (23) This became more evident when Shêng became the military leader of the province. He tried his best to win the support of the subject races.
- (24) Chang Ta-chün (張大軍), "Min-kuo i-lai ti Sinkiang" (民國以來的新疆), in Kuang Lu (edited), op. cit., p. 115.
- (25) See Chang Ta-chün (張達鈞, alias 張大軍), Szu-shih-nien tung-luan Sinkiang (四十年動亂新疆) (Hong Kong: The Asia Press Ltd., 1956), pp. 33 - 37.
- (26) At that time, the atmosphere inside the city was tense and desperate. For a detailed account, read Wu Ai-ch'ên, Sinkiang chi-yu (新疆紀行) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), pp. 53 - 63.
- (27) When Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, a total of two



to three thousand soldiers, under the command of General Su Ping-wen (蘇炳文), were driven out of their homeland. They finally reached Sinkiang after being interned for some time in Russia.

- (28) T'ang Chi-ts'ung, "Lieh-ch'iang tsai Sinkiang ti yin-mou", Pien-shih yen-chiu, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Nanking, January 1936), p. 40.
- (29) Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 23 and Sinkiang shih-nien hui-i-lu (Tzu-li wan-pao, October 7, 1952).
- (30) Sinkiang shih-nien hui-i-lu (Tzu-li wan-pao, October 6, 1952).
- (31) The letter of appeal is included in Kuang Lu and others, op. cit., pp. 109 - 113.
- (32) Sun Fu-k'un, Su-lien lueh-to Sinkiang chi-shih (蘇聯掠奪新疆紀實) (Hong Kong: Free Press 自由出版社, 1952), Vol. 1, p. 8.
- (33) Sinkiang, Pawn or Pivot?, pp. 159 - 160.



- (34) Su-shih-nien tung-luan Sinkiang, p. 40.
- (35) Sinkiang, Pawn or Pivot?, p. 161. A more objective account is given in Wu Ai-ch'ên, op. cit., pp. 116 - 119.
- (36) Quoted in Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 41.
- (37) , Peter Fleming, News from Tartary: A Journey from Peking to Kashmere (London: Jonathan Cape, Thirty Bedford Square, 1951), p. 250.
- (38) In Wên-hsüan, "I-yüeh-lai chih hsi-peí", K'ai-fa hsi-peí, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Nanking, February 1934), p. 108.



(三) 四、政變後， 威才亦有 其功，故 威才亦 有封爵。	威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵。	威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵。	威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵。	威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵。	威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵， 威才亦 有封爵。	(一) 威才真正 是為民 思信，故 威才亦 有封爵。
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Written statement of Hsu Hwai-chieh on some aspects of  
Sinkiang history (1)







<p>(7) 盛世才的建國政策對新疆有良好成績</p>	<p>上舉諸事不少均屬實績</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>民權的實施，在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>	<p>在八十年來新疆行政中，盛世才的建國政策，對於新疆的建設，確有極大的貢獻。</p>
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Written statement of Hsu Hual-chieh on some aspects of Sinkiang history (3)

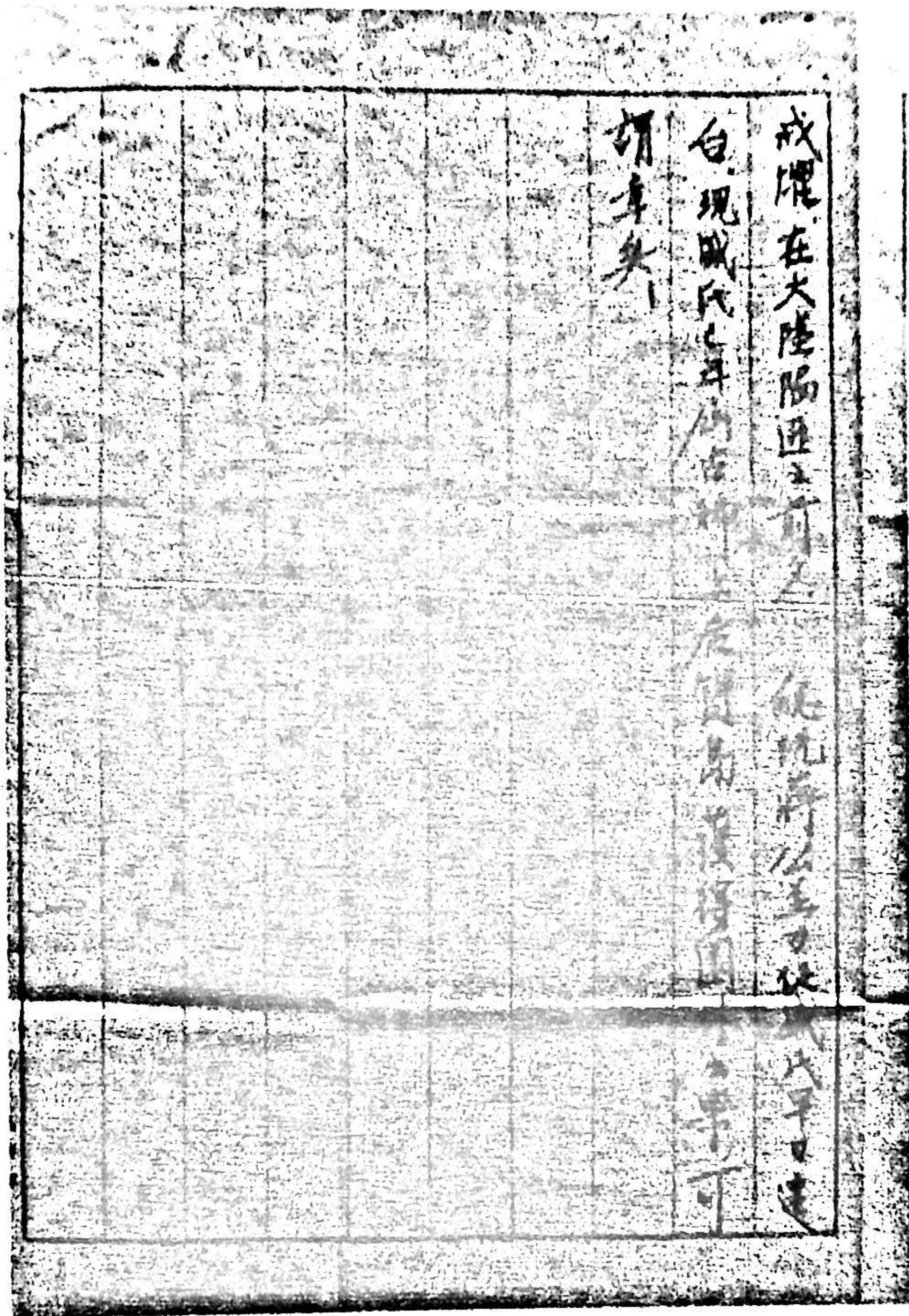












that remained between Sinkiang and China called to prompt, and the people of this Chinese frontier territory were forced

to Written statement of Hsu Huai-chieh on some aspects of  
Sinkiang history (6)

that in 1919, consequent upon the internal strife  
 of the loss of power, in Sinkiang, the trade



## CHAPTER THREE

### SOVIET INFLUENCE IN SINKIANG

Since the time of the Czarist regime, Russia had been attracted to Sinkiang. This was clearly manifested in the rebellion of Yakoob Beg. Yet, it is not without reason that she should have such keen interest. Comparing her position with that of China in the area, one cannot help concluding that she had several advantages over her rival. Geographically, the northern part of the region was conveniently exposed to Russian influence. This was much more so when Outer Mongolia was turned into a satellite state of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, China did not enjoy the same convenience. Physical barrier separated this border-land from the internal provinces. The only route accessible to the Chinese was that via Kansu, and it normally took months to travel over this apparently short distance. As a result, it was only natural that commerce between Sinkiang and China failed to prosper, and the people of this Chinese frontier territory were forced to rely more and more on their Russian neighbour. The following statement gives a vivid description of this situation:

"In 1918, consequent upon the internal chaotic conditions of Russia, in Sinkiang, the trade



with that country came to a standstill, and the import of her products was devastatingly reduced. Although, for the time being, goods from internal China became unprecedentedly active, the economic blow was irreparable. There was hardly any outlet for the raw materials and the prices of daily necessities rose to a great height. The common people suffered tremendously. This adverse situation was not relieved until 1924, when the Soviet-Sinkiang commercial relation was resumed."

(1)

Thus, before the October Revolution of 1917, Russia had already occupied a preponderant economic position in the province. Furthermore, commercial activities were frequently a herald of Russian territorial penetration. In Sinkiang, this was facilitated by the fact that the people living on the Russian side of the frontier and those on the opposite side were mostly of the same races. When trouble arose along the border, this racial complication very often gave Russia the desired opportunity to intervene.

In 1917, the revolution broke out, and its well-defined policy, as outlined in the Declaration of the Rights



of the Peoples of Russia, signed jointly by Nikolai Lenin and Joseph Stalin, had an irresistible appeal to the struggling dependencies, colonies and semi-colonial countries in Asia. As K. M. Panikkar writes in his Asia and Western Dominance:

"There is no doubt that the nationalist movements in all Asian countries gained moral strength by the mere existence of a Revolutionary Russia."  
(p. 191)

Naturally, this revolution likewise produced a tremendous impact on China and its frontier province: Sinkiang.

In the past century, China had been repeatedly threatened by the imperialistic powers and, more than once, she was on the verge of collapse. Her people had learned, among other things, to fear every sign of imperialism. Therefore, when the Soviet republic, posing as a champion against all imperialistic practices, promised to assist all weak races in the struggle against the aggressive forces of imperialism, the Chinese were fervently attracted, and when that country forsook the privileges which had been extracted from China by the Czarist government, they most readily



took her as a true friend to whom they could turn when they needed help. Thus, even Sun Yat-sen (孫逸仙), the spokesman of Chinese nationalism, stated:

"We no longer look to the West. Our faces are turned towards Russia." (2)

In Sinkiang, the effect of the revolution was rather unfavourable to the ruling clique. There, the subject nationalities had for centuries been persecuted by the Chinese whose behaviour in this region conformed to that of the imperialistic nations. Consequently, no sooner had the Soviet government proclaimed their anti-imperialistic policy than the non-Chinese races extolled Russia as their saviour. This drift towards the Soviet Union was extremely menacing, as it undermined the authorities of Chinese rule. Henceforth, any sign of encouragement expressed by the neighbouring government would at once make the subject peoples rebellious. The Chinese people, who had already found it difficult to maintain their power, were now confronted with another thorny problem. The outcome was disastrous. The provincial governors, in order to win Russia over to their side, yielded to her considerable economic privileges. This further increased Russian influence in the province.



Nevertheless, those who cherished a strong faith in Soviet ideology were soon to become disappointed. Shortly afterwards, when the Soviet regime had become stabilized after its successful revolution, Russia started to behave in a different manner. In fact, she turned out to be no less imperialistic than her Czarist predecessor. In Sinkiang, her behaviour exhibited a similar, significant, though gradual change.

Under the governorship of Yang Tsêng-hsin, the province, on a whole, was able to maintain a friendly relation with Soviet Russia. In face of numerous internal difficulties, this country was eager to avoid trouble with its neighbours. Thanks to the shrewdness and sagacity of the governor, the provincial government succeeded in exploiting the weakness of Russia and in pressing for a revision of the Treaty of St. Petersburg (1881). In this treaty, it was stipulated that Russian goods imported into Sinkiang should be free of duty, and this stipulation caused immense financial losses to the province. After some lengthy discussions between the two governments, the Ili Trade Agreement was concluded on May 27, 1920. This agreement, besides settling the problem concerning the return of Russian soldiers and refugees, imposed a duty on goods entering Ili from Soviet territory.



Conference relative to questions of commerce and return of  
Russian soldiers and refugees — May 27, 1920

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE HELD BY THE SINO-  
RUSSIAN COMMITTEE IN I NING CITY, ILI

On the twenty-seventh day of the fifth month of the ninth year of the Republic of China (May 27, 1920), the Sino-Russian Committee opened negotiations in I Ning City, Ili, relative to various questions of commerce at Ili and Ch'ihô on the border between the two nations and of the return of defeated Russian soldiers and refugees to Russia.

Titles and Names of the Members Participating in the Conference

Chinese:

Hsü Kuo-chên

Intendant of the Circuit of Ili and con-

currently in Charge of Foreign Affairs.

Hsiao Ch'ang

Director of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs.

Mu Wei-t'ung

Magistrate of I Ning.

Ch'ing Lien

Interpreter of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs.



Yin Tê-shan

Attaché and concurrently Inspector of  
Russian Affairs.

Pat'uhstn

Attaché.

T'uerhtiahung

Chairman of the General Chamber of Commerce  
of Chinese Residents in Ch'inhô, Russia.

Ahwut'ê

Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce of  
Chinese Residents in Samaerh, Russia.

Russian: ~~transliterated~~

Limaliehfu

3. Diplomatic Delegate with Special Authority.

Liehweit'assu

Commercial Delegate with Special Authority.

Erhjêrussuk'gyimakênienashihntien

Secretary of the Sinkiang

Combined Tax Administration.

A. Resolutions adopted by the two parties concerning various  
questions of commerce

1. The Chinese authorities at Ili, Sinkiang, and the delegates



of the Russian Turkistan Government, with a view to benefiting the people on the borders of the two countries, and to strengthening the relations between the two countries, propose mutually to establish an organisation for commercial and foreign affairs in order to facilitate negotiations.

2. China may establish an organisation for commercial and foreign affairs at Wei Erh Nei Sai, Province of Ch'ihô, in Russia, and Russia may establish an organisation for commercial and foreign affairs at the city of I Ning, Ili, in China, so that there may be a mutual exchange of benefits.

3. The Russian organisation for commercial and foreign affairs and common Russian nationals, transporting merchandise from Russia to Ili or transporting merchandise from Ili to Russia, must alike pay duty to the customs offices of China in accordance with the Sinkiang Combined Tax Regulations.

4. The inward and outward trade of the two countries must pass through the barrier at Ni Kan, and a detour, either inward or outward, will be dealt with as an evasion of



duty and a violation of the law.

5. In case of disputes arising out of trade between the nationals of the two parties and in all civil and criminal cases, the matters will uniformly be decided and disposed of in accordance with the law of the country in which they reside.
6. Nationals of the two parties crossing their borders, either going or coming on business, must bear a passport issued by the parties concerned before being permitted to enter the territory of the other country.
- B. Resolutions adopted by the two parties concerning various questions of the return of defeated Russian soldiers and refugees to Russia
7. The Russian Delegation declares that the amnesty promulgated by the Tashkent Government is to respect humanity and is a resolution which cannot be encroached upon under any circumstances, and that after this explanation there would be of course no danger in the return to Russia of defeated soldiers and refugees. The Chinese authorities will certainly exhort them to their utmost to return to



Russia so that each may follow his trade peacefully.

8. The authorities of Ili approve of Russia's deputing one delegate and two or three attachés to Ili to handle in collaboration with the Bureau of Foreign Affairs matters relative to the return to Russia of refugees and defeated soldiers. As soon as their functions have been completed, the delegation shall be dissolved and the members thereof shall return to their home country.
9. Annex to the resolutions adopted by the two parties concerning the question of the property and merchandise belonging to Chinese nationals in Russia, repeatedly detained and confiscated, and concerning other losses
9. The Russian Delegation declares that this question is not one which comes within its authority. However, as regards this subject, the Tashkent Government had already established an investigation and reparation commission. In future, the Chinese Commissioner for Commercial and Foreign Affairs may proceed to Russia to enter into direct negotiation; this would be a more effective arrangement. Nevertheless, the Russian Delegation sanctions and recognizes that the demand of the authorities of Ili will



be transmitted to the Tashkent Government, and that it will give aid to its utmost in the name of individuals.

10. The various above articles, having been agreed upon by the delegates of the two parties, have especially been recorded in the Chinese and Russian languages. Two copies of each text have been drawn. In faith whereof, the two parties have affixed their signatures and effected a mutual exchange.

**Limaliehfufu**

Commissioner for Foreign Affairs of Russia  
with Special Authority.

**Liehweit'assu**

Commissioner for Commercial Affairs of  
Russia with Special Authority.

**Jéfussuk'âyimakônlienshihtien**

Secretary.

**Hsü Kuo-chên**

Intendant of the Circuit of Ili, China,  
and concurrently in Charge of Foreign  
Affairs.

**Mu Wei-t'ung**

Magistrate of Ili.



Hsiaa Ch'ang

Director of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs.

Ch'ing Lien

Interpreter of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs

Pat'uhshu

Attaché.

Yin Ts'ahan

Attaché.

T'uechtiahung

Chairman of the General Chamber of Commerce.

Ahwut's

Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce.

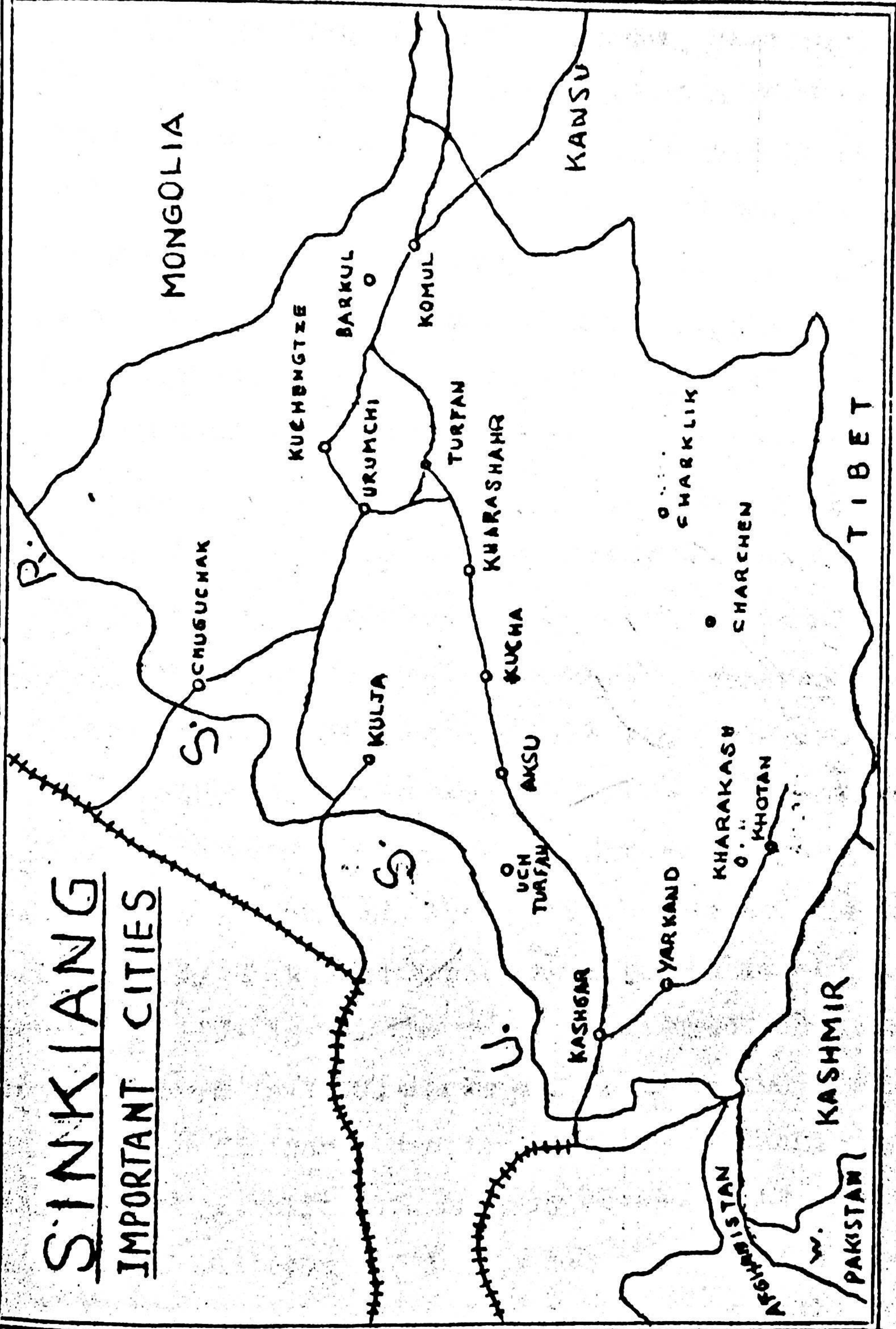
(From: Treaties and Agreements with and  
concerning China, 1919 - 1929.

Washington: Carnegie Endowment for  
International Peace, 1929.)

In the following years, the Soviet regime steadily gained strength and its power became consolidated. Thereupon, the government embarked on a more active and, in many ways, more aggressive policy towards Sinkiang. Indeed, since 1922, it had started making futile attempts to modify the Eli Trade Agreement. The initial failure did not discourage Russia. On



# SINKIANG IMPORTANT CITIES





the contrary, she became more energetic in her effort to regain the privileges which she had previously abandoned. Internal chaos in Sinkiang after the assassination of Yang Tsêng-hsin in 1928 gave her a chance to do so. It was unfortunate for the province that the new governor, Chin Shu-jên, was corrupt. This weakness of his deprived him of whatever strength needed for the resistance against Soviet aggression. As a result, Russian influence grew rapidly.

During his rule, the most important event, as far as the Soviet-Sinkiang relation was concerned, was the completion by Russia of the construction of the Turkistan-Siberian Railway. As a matter of fact, the scheme of constructing a railway which extended to Central Asia was first suggested by the Czarist government. However, it was hung up because of the outbreak of the First World War. Before the end of the war, Czarism was overthrown. About a decade later, the new regime, which had by that time firmly established itself, brought the scheme to life again. The work of construction started in 1927 was completed in 1930. Above all, this railway, which ran parallel to the north-western boundary of Sinkiang, provided the Soviet republic with an easy access to the province, and it removed whatever difficulty her people might have in entering this part of the Chinese territory. Its significance could



not be over-estimated. Actually, it is argued that its importance could well be compared with that of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which cut through the northern half of Manchuria (3). In fact, the effect was so threatening that even the British in India were alarmed (4).

Despite this, it is justified to mention that this railway, which was a danger to the province, was often made use of by the Chinese who had to go there, as the route through Kansu was occasionally blocked by the outbreaks of disturbance created by the rivalry between the Nationalists and the Communists. In his book, News from Tartary: A Journey from Peking to Kashmere, Peter Fleming gives a detailed account of his own experience in travelling through this north-western passage. He states that soldiers were busy engaging in anti-Communist operations in the provinces of Shensi and Kansu (5), and he describes how the travellers were delayed because the government wanted to find out if any of them was carrying Communist books (6). This usually caused so much inconvenience that many preferred to take a longer trip. In 1932, when Wu Ai-ch'ên (吳鶴宸) was sent to Sinkiang as a representative of the Nanking government, he, instead of going directly to Urumchi through Kansu, started his journey by sailing first to Japan. In that country, he boarded a



liner to Vladivostok (海參崴), where he took a train across Siberia to Chugachak (塔城), a city along the north-western boundary of the province. He later states with great pain:

"I am afraid that this method of travelling cannot be found in any other country." (7)

Indeed, in 1935, the inaccessibility of the province was so complete that Peter Fleming compares it with the darkest region in Africa (8).

Hence, Sinkiang was literally isolated from China and, in time of need, the central government could scarcely send aid to this frontier territory, even if it wanted to do so. This state of helplessness was, to a large degree, responsible for driving the provincial government to lean towards Russia. Due to geographical proximity, this country, if successfully befriended, could easily supply the province with any form of assistance. Thus, when the Hami insurrection broke out in 1931, the governor, Chin Shu-jên, appealed to the Soviet Union for military help. For this purpose, he agreed to concede to the Soviets certain economic privileges which were embodied in the Provisional Commercial Agreement, signed on October 1 of that year.



PROVISIONAL COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
THE U.S.S.R. AND SINKIANG PROVINCE

The Provincial Government of Sinkiang of the Republic of China and the U.S.S.R., in view of their adjoining territories and historical economic relations and the desire repeatedly expressed to develop their trade relations, have hereby agreed pending the conclusion of a formal Commercial Treaty between the Republic of China and the U.S.S.R., upon the following terms: The U.S.S.R. have concluded an agreement as follows:

I. It is agreed that merchandise as well as travellers from Sinkiang Province to the U.S.S.R., or vice versa, shall hereafter effect passage through the frontier points, Irkeshtan, Holkutz, Bakhti and Dzilmul in accordance with the existing laws and regulations of the Republic of China and the U.S.S.R.

II. The Provincial Government of Sinkiang desires that the Government of the U.S.S.R. should permit merchants of Sinkiang to import into the U.S.S.R. any amount of various products of Sinkiang to be sold to the national commercial bureau of the Soviet Union, without having first to obtain special permit for the act. This does not, however, include products whose



importation is forbidden by the existing laws of the Soviet Union.

III. The Provincial Government of Sinkiang agrees to allow the commercial bureaux of the U.S.S.R. and its citizens the privilege to carry on trade in the areas of Kashgar, Ili, Tacheng, Altai and Tihwa as well as the right to appoint from the above-named areas representatives or commissioners to proceed to Yarkent, Turfan, Karashar, Khotan and Aksu to enter into sale and purchase contracts of trade with the local merchants or commercial houses and to enforce the execution of the same.

For the purpose of putting this trade with the Soviet Union on a regular basis, the Provincial Government of Sinkiang agrees to permit employees of the commercial bureaux of the U.S.S.R. and its citizens the privilege of free travelling, in accordance with the existing laws and regulations, to and from the various representatives as well as places where such commercial bureaux are situated.

IV. The Provincial Government of Sinkiang desires that the Government of the U.S.S.R. should allow its commercial bureaux and citizens when they enter into sale and purchase contracts with merchants or commercial houses of Sinkiang, freely to



arrange the terms as regards price, transportation, and terms of contract and to register such items with the government bureaux in accordance with the existing laws of China. The Provincial Government of Sinkiang declares that the date limit for registration shall not exceed five days, in accordance with the existing practice in Sinkiang. In case of dispute, the Provincial Government of Sinkiang undertakes that government offices under its jurisdiction shall investigate the contracts or agreements held by either side, and to enforce fair and just fulfilment of such contracts in accordance with the existing laws of China.

V. The Provincial Government of Sinkiang agrees not to impose higher or heavier Customs dues or taxes on the commercial bureaux of the Soviet Union or its citizens than such as are paid by Chinese merchants or business houses, in accordance with the existing laws of China, either at the present or at any future time. Should business taxes or similar levies be introduced at some future time, in accordance with the existing laws of China, commercial bureaux of the Soviet Union or its citizens shall pay such taxes or levies along with Chinese merchants or business houses.

VI. With the object of promoting the national economy of



Sinkiang, the Provincial Government of Sinkiang desires that the Government of the Soviet Union should supply in full in the nature of a business deal various machineries for the development of Sinkiang, such as industrial, electrical, agricultural and transportation machines, also to provide necessary technicians, in the same nature, for the reconstruction of Sinkiang, and to train Chinese technicians for the same purpose. It is requested that the Soviet Government should give appropriate assistance in the improvement of agriculture, cattle raising, etc., in connection with the national economy of Sinkiang.

VII. With the object of promoting the national economy of Sinkiang, the Provincial Government of Sinkiang desires that the Soviet Government should allow free passage through territories of the U.S.S.R. of such products of Sinkiang into China proper or of such products of China proper into Sinkiang, as are given in the appended list. This list shall be made out by a special commissioner appointed by the Provincial Government of Sinkiang with the Soviet Consul-General at Urumchi, on the basis of developing commercial relations between Sinkiang and the U.S.S.R., not later than November 15 of the present year. Said list may be revised yearly to suit conditions necessary to the national economy of Sinkiang.



and the Soviet Union.

The Provincial Government of Sinkiang desires that the Soviet Government should allow free passage through its territories of such articles as are needed by the former, but not for purposes of trade, either from China proper into Sinkiang or from Sinkiang into China proper or from a third country with which the Soviet Union has commercial agreements already concluded or to be concluded in the future.

The Provincial Government of Sinkiang acknowledges the receipt from the Soviet Government of a written document stating that, should any article to be transported through the territories of the U.S.S.R. be prohibited by existing laws, passage of such would not be permitted. The above specified clauses are concluded with the aim and purpose of developing mutual economic relations, to which the Provincial Government of Sinkiang signifies agreement, and shall take effect herewith.

#### ANNEX I

For the purpose of developing trade between Sinkiang and the U.S.S.R., the Provincial Government of Sinkiang has ordered



the Sinkiang Customs to make a uniform rate of dues on all merchandise of import and export between Sinkiang and the U.S.S.R. in order to facilitate the mutual development of trade.

## ANNEX II

In order to promote the facilities for trade between the Soviet Union and Sinkiang, the Government of the U.S.S.R. proposes to establish at Urumchi, Kashgar, Ili and Tacheng, Soviet financial bureaux to take charge of the trade and financial affairs of the Soviet commercial bureaux or intercourse with Chinese merchants or business houses. Said financial bureaux will also accept commissions from Chinese merchants or business houses. The financial bureaux are entitled to charge certain amounts upon mutual consent, for the execution of such commissions.

## ANNEX III

For the purpose of facilitating passenger traffic and transportation of goods, the Government of the U.S.S.R. desires that the Provincial Government of Sinkiang will agree, six months after the opening of the pass at Dzimmal, to the



closure of the pass at Irkeshtan, so that merchandise already in transit and intended to pass through the pass at Irkeshtan may be enabled to arrive at its destination.

#### ANNEX IV

The Provincial Government of Sinkiang considers it necessary to regulate telegraphic communications between Sinkiang and the U.S.S.R. For this purpose there should be direct connection of the cable between Tacheng and Bahkti. At the same time, direct wireless communication between Sinkiang and the U.S.S.R. should also be established. The procedure and conditions for the materialization of such arrangements shall be made by the Chinese Commissioner for Foreign Affairs in Sinkiang and the Soviet Consul-General at Urumchi.

(From: Aitchan K. Wu, China and the

Soviet Union: A Study of Sino-Soviet  
Relations.

London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1950.)

According to the agreement, a big Russian commercial organisation known as the Sovsintorg, an abbreviated Russian



term for Soviet-Sinkiang Trading Company (蘇新貿易公司), was set up, and it soon exercised a near-monopoly of trade in the province. With this establishment, the dependence of Sinkiang on its neighbour, in the field of commerce, was complete. Sung Sheng (松聲), in his article, "Hsi-peï pien-fang ti wei-chi" (西北邊防的危機), records that, in this region, trade with Russia occupied eighty per cent of the total volume, while that with China amounted to fifteen per cent, leaving the remaining five per cent to British India (9). The difference was shockingly great!

In short, in those days, to lean towards the neighbouring republic seemed to every one a very reasonable and, above all, practical thing to do. As a matter of fact, to the rulers of this part of the border-land, such a policy was, in more than one way, necessary. Ling Hung-hsün (凌鴻勳) is correct to maintain:

"Sinkiang was not economically related to China; even the daily necessities of the people were not imported from the internal provinces. As Russia was situated in the neighbourhood, her goods imported to the province was wholesome and inexpensive. On the other hand, we were too far



away to render any assistance. The provincial government had to take care of its own business, and leaning towards Russia was the only means by which the province could survive." (10)

Besides, it is appropriate to point out here that, at that time, few would entertain the thought that pro-Soviet leanings might jeopardize the Chinese interests in the province.

Under Shêng Shih-ts'ai who gained control after the fall of Chin Shu-jên, an entente was reached between the province and the Soviet Union. Soon after his accession to power, pro-Russianism was proclaimed a policy of the government, and the Soviet-Sinkiang relationship entered upon a new era. In his memoirs, he differentiates his connection with Russia from that of his predecessor:

Let us now solve the innumerable problems of Sinkiang.

probably, "Governor Chin Shu-jên had negotiated for Russian

arms and munitions in exchange for which had

granted trading rights to Soviet representatives.

My plan went further, however, in that it sought

to link a positive policy of friendship for Soviet

Russia with substantial amounts of military, eco-

nomie, and technical assistance." (11)



It is generally accepted that the need of assistance was an important factor for his association with the Soviet republic, yet material benefit alone cannot account wholly for his desire to be friendly with Russia. Chin had sought Soviet assistance, but he had never thought of establishing an intimate relation with the neighbouring nation. Instead, he would rather pay a price for whatever aid he was to receive. What then was the cause for Shêng's leanings towards Russia?

In the first place, I am inclined to believe that he had a great fancy for the philosophy which guided the government in Russia. In spite of the fact that, after the break of China with the Soviet Union in 1927, the faith which the progressive Chinese had in Soviet ideology faded; some die-hards, who possessed personal reasons to be dissatisfied with the existing government, still clung to the belief that Leninism could solve the innumerable problems of China. Most probably, Shêng, who bore grudge against the Nanking government for placing him in an insignificant position after what he had done in the Northern Expedition, had a similar conviction when he determined to go to Sinkiang. Nor was this unnatural; he had great interest in the study of political sciences, and it is likely that he had browsed over the philosophy of Karl Marx and Nikolai Lenin. Indeed, he himself



admitted that he had studied quite a number of books of this kind. He told Allen S. Whiting in an interview:

"At that time (i.e. 1919), I read with interest a book published in Shanghai called The Economic Interpretation of History. ... Later, I read The ABC of Communism, The Philosophy of Feuerbach, The Philosophy of Hegel, and Dialectical and Historical Materialism." (12)

Actually, his writings show that his knowledge in this field was fairly profound and this knowledge which, in the least, gave him a friendly impression on Russia, undoubtedly played an important role in shaping his policies in that province.

Understanding this, it is by no means surprising that he should seek Soviet assistance in 1933, when he discovered that Ma Chung-ying was aided by the Japanese government. After his visits to Japan, Shêng was convinced that this country had aggressive designs in China which he decided to stop at all cost if he was given a chance to do so. With this background, he naturally believed that to appeal to Russia for military help against Japanese imperialistic designs in the province was an exceedingly sensible thing to do, especially when the



Nanking government, rent by the Nationalist-Communist strife, could give Sinkiang no assistance.

In October 1933, Ch'ên Tê-li and Yao Hsiung were sent to Moscow. Shêng claimed that the purpose of their trip was to urge the Russians to supply the province with the weapons which they had promised to give to Chin Shu-jên in 1931 (13). Nevertheless, this statement was not at all convincing, and much suspicion was aroused when Russia, almost unhesitatingly, responded favourably to Shêng's request for assistance. Some insisted that the intention of the Soviet government centred solely on territorial aggression; others argued that its goal was the Sovietization of the province. In fact, Shêng later admitted that, in the process of his negotiation with Apresoff in 1934, he offered to put Communism into practice in Sinkiang in return for Soviet military aid (14). In spite of this, I am of the opinion that Russia, in 1934 at least, was not yet strong enough to undertake either of these two formidable tasks. Indeed, at the beginning of 1935, Molotov, the Foreign Commissar of the Soviet republic, when addressing the Seventh All-Union Congress of the Soviets, outlined the policy of his government:

"I consider it necessary to emphasize the real



Soviet policy towards China: the Soviet Union considers as incompatible with its policy the seizure of foreign territories, and is an absolute adherent of the independence, integrity, and sovereignty of China over her parts, including Sinkiang." (15)

Though I do not have much faith in these words, I still think that Russia, at that time, needed a friendly and, if possible, dependant neighbour more than to further her territorial aggrandisement. Regarding the introduction of Communism into Sinkiang, it is likely that this was suggested by Shêng himself, who evidently realized the difficulties of the Soviet republic in accepting his offer, as Japan and British India would certainly object, even though China might acquiesce.

In this affair, one important factor has frequently been neglected: the imperialistic designs of Japan and, to a lesser extent, British India threatened Russia as much as they did the province. Hence, the Soviet government, fearing that the victory of Ma Chung-ying might lead to the enhancement of Japanese influence in this area, was equally anxious that he should be defeated. This was clearly appreciated by Shêng, who writes in his memoirs:



"It was to the Soviet interest as well as to the interest of Sinkiang that these imperialists be defeated, for what was the back door of China was also the back door of Soviet Russia." (16)

At any rate, in January 1934, Soviet troops and planes crossed the Chinese border. Alexander Barmine, who was responsible for the delivery of military assistance to foreign countries, gives the following account in his book, The One Who Survived:

"The Politburo ordered two brigades of G.U.P. troops with air units of the Red Army to clear the roads and liquidate the rebellion. Meanwhile, on the order of the Politburo, we shipped a number of planes and bombs to the borders of Sinkiang. There they were stuck for some time, as the road to Urumchi ... was blocked by the rebels. Finally, the command of the Red Army Air Force operating there took charge of this shipment. They 'delivered' out cargoes, consigned to the governor, by dropping the bombs on the rebel forces gathered round the capital, and by landing the planes right on the airfield of the besieged fortress. I was instructed



to send the bill for the bombs, as well as the other goods, to the governor." (p. 231)

Consequently, the insurrection was suppressed. Sir Eric Teichman later comments:

"Shêng owed nothing to Nanking, but much to Moscow, for the assistance which had enabled him to triumph over Ma Chung-ying." (17)

The remark is truly penetrating, and this incident, while proving that Soviet friendship was indispensable, fatally weakened the reliance of the Sinkiang government on Nanking.

After the restoration of peace, Shêng set out to eradicate the evils which had been existing in the province for years, and his purpose was to replace the old, backward and corrupt society by a new, modern and efficient one. In this work of reconstruction, he needed the technical and, most important of all, financial aid of the Soviet Union. Moreover, in the execution of this, he was constantly worried by the possibility of a renewal of hostilities. Had this been the case, his position would have been very precarious. Since Nanking was not very helpful, Russia was the only country which



could render assistance. There is no doubt that Russia, for her own reasons, was interested in the affairs of the province, but the fact that Ma Chung-ying, after being routed, was warmly received by Stalin cast doubt upon the willingness of the Soviet government to help Shêng again in the future. As a matter of fact, it puzzled even the keenest observers when Ma was offered sanctuary by the same country which had helped to defeat him. Analysing the motives of Russia in this matter, Shêng writes:

"Stalin was keeping Ma as a check upon my own power and that at some future date the Russians would overthrow my regime with Ma as a powerful, popular figurehead." (18)

It is thus clear that Russia was trying to play a double role: an obliging friend as well as a treacherous enemy. Shêng knew with much bitterness that in order to win her friendship, and consequently to obtain her help, he had to prove himself loyal to Soviet interests. Any sign of disloyalty would immediately turn Russia into a dangerous foe, and would culminate in his being supplanted — a phenomenon which was not uncommon in Sinkiang. Not with great ease had he obtained the position of a military leader, and he hated to see his bright future



destroyed by the interference of the neighbouring republic, which could have been prevented if he had adopted a more friendly attitude. This selfish consideration, coupled with the definite need of foreign help, prompted him to adopt a policy which would tighten the grip of the Soviet republic on the province.

Actually, before the flight of Ma Chung-ying to Russian territory, Shêng had already been negotiating with Russia for a loan of four million gold rubles. In a telegram which he, in concert with Li Yung (李溶) who was then the Chairman of the Provincial Government, sent to the Executive Yüan, it was alleged that this sum of money was to be used "for the development of industry and the relief of the poor" (19). This was necessary, it was argued, because Sinkiang had suffered tremendously from the disturbances created by Ma. Knowing that Nanking was suspicious, the two provincial leaders further assured that the agreement was of an entirely commercial nature, and had no political implication whatsoever. The negotiation dragged on for months, during which there was a continual exchange of telegrams between the province and the central government. This delay enabled Shêng to bargain with the Soviet republic, with the result that the loan was increased to five million gold rubles. On May 16, 1935, the agreement was ultimately concluded without the authorization of Nanking.



The Executive Yüan was informed of this about ten days later (20). In this matter, Shêng acted in the spirit of his age. In more ways than one, he was a warlord, and most warlords of that time took up an independent foreign policy which would give them material benefit.

Although Shêng insisted that the loan was merely an expression of good will on the part of Russia, whose aim was to win the affection of the people of the province, evidence shows that the agreement was more than a commercial arrangement. Shortly after it was signed, Russian experts came to the province in groups and were appointed advisers in various government departments. Very often, their advice was sought before an important decision was made. Hence, this part of the borderland gradually drifted away from China and became more and more subservient to its Soviet neighbour. Indeed, in 1935 - 1936, when the Six Great Policies were proclaimed, the transformation of Sinkiang from an independent Chinese province to a "voluntary, disguised satellite of the Soviet Union" (21) was complete.



# NOTES

- (1) Wang Wên-hsüan (王文萱), "Sinkiang chih tui-wai mou-i" (新疆之對外貿易), K'ai-fa hsi-pei, Vol. 4, No. 6 (Nanking, December 1935), p. 1.
- (2) K. H. Panikkar, Asia and Western Dominance: A Survey of the Vasco Da Gama Epoch of Asian History, 1493 - 1945 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1959), p. 191.
- (3) Chang Jo-ch'ü (張若渠), "Sinkiang yü T'u-hsi t'ieh-lu" (新疆與土西鐵路), K'ai-fa hsi-pei, Vol. 4, No. 1 & 2 (Nanking, August 1935), p. 32.
- (4) T'ang Chi-ts'ung, op. cit., p. 40.
- (5) Peter Fleming, op. cit., p. 43.
- (6) Ibid., p. 61.
- (7) Wu Ai-ch'ên, op. cit., p. 1.
- (8) Peter Fleming, op. cit., p. 12.



- (9) Sung Shong, "Hsi-peí pien-fang ti wei-chi", Hsi-peí yen-chiu, No. 2 (Peking, December 1931), p. 5.
- (10) Ling Hung-hsün, "Sinkiang ti chiao-t'ung" (新疆的交通), in Kuang Lu (edited), op. cit., p. 277.
- (11) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 163.
- (12) Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 15.
- (13) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 163.
- (14) Shêng Shih-ts'ai to Chiang Kai-shek, July 7, 1942. See Appendix E of this dissertation.
- (15) Cited in Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 39.
- (16) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 164.
- (17) Sir Eric Teichman, Journey to Turkistan (London, 1939), p. 105.
- (18) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 193.







## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE SIX GREAT POLICIES AND THE NEW SINKIANG

In the first three decades of the twentieth century, Sinkiang, unable to keep pace with the times, remained extraordinarily backward, and its history was punctuated by frequent outbreaks of violence. This was particularly so when Yang Tsêng-hsin and Chin Shu-jên were governors.

Yang was an autocrat who rose to prominence in 1912 when revolutionary influences penetrated into the province from the interior of China. Although the revolution succeeded in overthrowing the Manchu dynasty, it failed to give the country a centralised and, above all, a stable government. The new regime at Peking, so much beset by political strife, was only too willing to acknowledge the supremacy of Yang in Sinkiang in return for his nominal allegiance. Nevertheless, Yang's behaviour in the province was more like a dictator than an appointed officer responsible to the central government for his actions. Fearing that his province might be affected by the chaotic conditions of the interior, he purposely excluded from it all external influences. It is recorded in the book, High Tartary:



of the border-land would immediately be got rid of, and assassination became a common political feature. Consequently, under his rule, time stood still and, in all aspects of life, stagnation resulted.

Chin Shu-jên, his successor, was determined to follow the same steps in governing Sinkiang, but he lacked the ability to carry out successfully this intricate policy. Undoubtedly, Sven Hedin is justified to comment:

"As an official Chin had been impossible." (2)

As a matter of fact, Chin messed things up and ruined his own career as the governor of this frontier region.

In 1933, revolts broke out in almost every part of the territory, and it was due to the credit of Shêng Shih-ts'ai who finally restored order in the summer of 1934. Yet the cessation of bloodshed failed to provide any solution to the existing problems and Shêng, with his knowledge in political and social sciences, had no difficulty in realizing the necessity of formulating a new policy after he had been elected Tupan of the area.



The foremost obstacle to the establishment of a harmonious society was the prejudices which the subject races held against the ruling Chinese, and the suppression of the insurrection in 1934 did not, in the least, abate their hostile feelings. The only means of bringing about a lasting peace was to befriend them by removing their grievances. The "Greater Chinese Theory" which had for generations been the fundamental cause of racial antagonism had to be discarded and, to take its place, a more liberal principle was required. This was the most reliable way to gain the friendship of the non-Chinese peoples, and at the same time to solve the basic problems of the province.

Another factor which spurred him to reconsider the old policy was his faith in radicalism. It convinced him that Sinkiang could no longer be governed in such ways as his predecessors had governed it. For one thing, corruption, which had stained the public spirit of the government officers and brought misery to the people, had to be stopped. Moreover, a new approach was urgently needed. A far-sighted ruler should not be satisfied with mere peace and prosperity. This was where Yang Tsang-hsin was wrong. Shêng asserted that Sinkiang, gifted with rich resources, had no reason to remain backward (3). It seemed as if Fate had beckoned him to the province, and



shouldered him with the responsibility of transforming the originally underdeveloped country into a modern society. In the past, the few persons who were interested in Sinkiang claimed that the province occupied a significant position in national defence. Chang Oh'ien of the Han dynasty and Tso Tsung-t'ang of the Oh'ing dynasty were prominent figures of this group. Brilliant as they were, they failed to see the importance of the work of reconstruction, and Shêng was the first man who emphasized the need of reconstructing the province. For this, he deserved to be paid tribute.

With these considerations in mind, Shêng embarked upon a bold scheme of reshaping Sinkiang. In August 1934, a month after Ma had escaped to Russian territory, the Eight Points (八大宣言) were promulgated. They were, namely, equality between races (實行民族平等), religious freedom (保障信教自由), immediate rural relief (實施農村救濟), financial reforms (整理財政), administrative reforms (澄清吏治), extension of education (擴充教育), realization of self-government (推行自治) and judicial reforms (改良司法). In his book, Chêng-fu mu-oh'ien chu-yao jên-mu (政府目前主要任務), Shêng gives a detailed description of these points (4).



Regarding the first point — equality between races — he states:

"Racial problems are created by the development of capitalism. As a result of the rapid increase in population, the capitalist powers have to scramble for foreign markets, and the countries which are economically and culturally retarded are naturally looked upon as the most desirable markets. Hence, in modern times, the effective way of solving racial problems is to strive for the attainment of racial equality, which can best be achieved through anti-imperialism. This is because hatred, massacres, and mutual distrust between the races are direct consequences of the imperialistic policy of persecuting the weak races. In this world, the number of oppressed peoples is 1,250,000,000, while the people inhabiting in capitalist, imperialistic countries amount only to 343,000,000. The subject races must be firm in their resistance against the oppression of imperialism, and only after they have succeeded in expelling all imperialistic influences from their countries can they attain racial equality."



(5)

Following this, he goes on to explain the policy of religious freedom:

"Religion is an expression that the economic and cultural development of a human society has reached a definite stage. History tells us that the peoples who are economically and culturally backward have a greater urge towards religion. Thus, it is natural that religious worship is more popular in backward countries, and we should not subjectively restrict this inclination. The present stage of society in Sinkiang is hopelessly feudal. This explains why it is stipulated, in the declaration of April 12, that the freedom of religious worship should be safeguarded. This is done by protecting the positions and privileges of the religious leaders. In short, all Chinese people, disregarding their religion, should be absolutely free in their religious worship. Not only should there be an absence of restrictions, but every person should have the right to enjoy complete religious freedom." (6)



As for immediate rural relief, he lists three reasons for doing so:

"Firstly, the work of the new government is to promote the welfare of the people, in particular, the welfare of the peasants. In order to be certain of success, the provincial government has to assist the rural communities. Secondly, the strength of a nation has much to do with its people, and the people cannot play their part well on an empty stomach. In these years, Sinkiang has suffered tremendously from the oppression of the imperialistic countries. Prices have gone up and food has become scarce. This shortage of food can only be relieved by restoring the rural economy to a sound basis. The government has attempted to do this by distributing to the peasants cattle, sheep and seeds. Besides, the provincial bank has consented to loan money to the needy for relief purposes. Thirdly, the advancement of a society as well as the enhancement of its culture depend largely on the basic development of its economy. Sinkiang being an agricultural society, rural relief is an absolute necessity if its economy is



to develop at all." (7)

Analysing the need for financial reforms, he writes:

"The economic conditions of a province are as closely related to its financial system as the veins to a human body. ... Therefore, if the government intends to stabilize the economy, to lower the prices of goods, and to secure the livelihood of its officers, it has to introduce financial reforms. The following measures should then be carried out: firstly, every year, each department should be asked to prepare a budget; secondly, pains should be taken to increase the sources of income and, at the same time, to reduce the expenditure; thirdly, the coinage system should be improved; and finally, the loan system should be extended."

(8)

Further, he discredits the administration of the province under his predecessors, and he concludes that reforms in this field were urgently required. He maintains:

"Political corruption has reached its possible



limit in Sinkiang under the despotic government of Yang Tsung-hsin and Chin Shu-jên. In those years, incompetency of the officialdom was beyond comparison. There were neither restrictions on promotion nor criteria for punishment. Nepotism, bribery, embezzlement and ill-treatment of the people were all taken for granted. Once a retired district magistrate admitted in a banquet how much money and silver he had illegally received in his term of office. His relatives and friends were proud of him! Indeed, corruption among officers has become too obvious to ignore, and it is high time for the government to initiate reforms if it desires to win the support and trust of its people." (9)

He then explains how education could be extended:

"Should Sinkiang be reconstructed, it is essential to extend its educational system. Every race should be encouraged to start schools of their own, in which their native language would be taught. Meanwhile, attempts should be made to raise the expenses on education, to increase



the number of schools of various levels, to train more teachers, and to publish books written in the native language of each of the races. Only in this way can education be improved." (10)

Relating to the means of the realisation of self-government, he states:

"Democracy begins with the practice of local self-government and the nourishment of the talent of the people. The government of Yang Tsêng-hsin and Chin Shu-jên was absolute and despotic. However, since the revolution of April 12, the new regime has decided to bring about a few political reforms and one of these is to follow the policy of Nanking in the reorganisation of district administrative system, with the ultimate purpose of introducing self-government to different local units of the province. Under the new district government departments of Police, Finance, Reconstruction, and Education will be instituted. For the time being, the head of each department will temporarily be appointed by the provincial government. In the future, they will be elected by their own people,



but put to office by the Department of Civil Administration at Urumchi. This will give the local people an opportunity of participation in government." (11)

Finally, he stresses the importance of judicial reforms:

"Prior to the revolution of April 12, under the tyrannical rule of Chin Shu-jên, the Supreme Court existed only in name. In practice, the Judiciary was subordinated to the Executive. The government officers and the feudal land-owners had the power of killing any of their subordinates or the common people. The masses of Sinkiang were given a cruel and hellish life. Since April 12, 1933, however, the government has made public its intention of introducing judicial reforms. Orders have been sent to every part of the province, insisting that no death penalty could be inflicted on the guilty without the approval of the government at Urumchi. In order that human rights can be safeguarded and every man can receive a fair trial, the Judiciary must be independent."



Summing up, these Eight Points represented an attempt on the part of Shêng to rid the province of its domestic evils. A glimpse over the content of this reform programme will suffice to convince every reader that Shêng was more than a military genius. Besides other things, it shows that he had the political insight of a statesman. Nevertheless, the programme is not accepted favourably by his political opponents, who are of the opinion that it was only some sort of political propaganda, and its author had no intention whatsoever of carrying it out. This accusation, though not doing justice to Shêng, is not entirely without ground. In many respects, it was truly a political propaganda, and in promulgating the Eight Points, he was guided by ulterior motives. The fact that he was ambitious leaves no place for argument, and it is clear that his ambition could never be satiated by the mere appointment of Tuyen. When he took the oath in 1933 that he would leave the administrative side of the government to the Chairman of the Provincial Government, his sincerity was doubtful. Later in the year, when Liu Wen-lung was imprisoned and replaced by Chu Shui-ch'ih, his influence increased tremendously. When Chu died of illness in February 1934, and was succeeded, consequent upon Shêng's recommendation, by Li Yung, an old



man whose long service in Sinkiang taught him to mind his own business, even the most optimistic person would not cherish the hope that Shêng would keep his promise. Viewing the matter in this light, it is possible that Shêng intended to win the subject races over to his side by offering them political changes. Should this be the case, he was very successful. By discrediting the work of his predecessors, and by suggesting means of improvement, he had gained the trust and support of his people. But whatever his purpose was, he managed to do some useful work in the following years, and, to a certain extent, the ends could justify the means.

There was one important omission in the Eight Points: Shêng did not express his views on the relationship between the province and Soviet Russia. However, it would be mistaken to think that he had not made up his mind. As I have already pointed out, he was not left with much choice. At the time when China was resisting the invasion of Japan, pro-Russianism was a political necessity in Sinkiang. This was particularly so considering the fact that Russia was holding Ma Chung-ying, a man with substantial influence in the territory. But Shêng has reasons to hesitate in drawing too much public attention to his inclination towards Russia. For one thing, in this business, he was not sure of the attitude of the non-Chinese



peoples. Another problem which worried him even more seriously was the reaction of the central government. Its representatives in the province were, if not hostile, at least very unfriendly. In the past year, he had to resort to some rather underhand methods in crushing their power. Thus he had to be very cautious in handling this affair. However necessary it might be, the policy of pro-Russianism had to be introduced very gradually. Any drastic action would inevitably cause undesirable results.

Soon after the promulgation of the Eight Points, he declared that the new government had nine chief duties to perform. The duties were as follows:

- (1) to eradicate corruption,
- (2) to develop economy and culture,
- (3) to maintain peace by avoiding war,
- (4) to mobilize all manpower for the cultivation of land,
- (5) to facilitate communications,
- (6) to keep Sinkiang for ever a Chinese province,
- (7) to start the work of anti-imperialism and anti-Fascism, and to maintain a close Sino-Russian relationship.



- (8) to reconstruct a "New Sinkiang", and
- (9) to protect the positions and privileges of the religious leaders.

Many of these duties had already been included in the Eight Points; yet the repetition was not without cause. They were repeated so that the people, overcome by a sense of familiarity would not be estranged by the introduction of the pro-Russian policy. Moreover, the wording was phrased in such a way that friendly to Russia became an obligation of the people. It should be noted that this need of befriending Russia was very appropriately placed; it was listed in the same category with the policies of anti-imperialism and anti-Fascism. In this way, the people were purposely given the impression that the only way to thwart the growing forces of imperialism and Fascism was to become a friend of Russia. This is a very skilful way of conditioning the feeling of the masses. A few quotations from the book, Chêng-fu mu-ch'ien chu-yao jên-wu, would be sufficient to illustrate this point. Regarding imperialism and Fascism, the main attack fell on Japan which was, at that time, the common enemy of the Chinese. Shêng states:

"The fact that the Japanese imperialists had



dispatched agents to Sinkiang had one great significance. They aimed at invading, and finally destroying, Russia. Meanwhile, they intended to blockade the north-east and north-west of China, so that communications between Russia, a country which would willingly assist the weak races in the world, and China would be severed. If this should happen, not only would Sinkiang be isolated, but the whole of China would be placed at the mercy of Japanese imperialism."

(13)

The threat was evident, and he was able to tell his people, in a logical way, to bear in mind that:

"Firstly, Russia is definitely not an aggressive country. Secondly, Russia is determined to put the will of Lenin into practice, and is therefore ready to aid the weak races in the world, especially in those eastern countries which are culturally backward. Thirdly, Russia is non-aggressive towards Sinkiang, China or any country inhabited by the weak races. Fourthly, China can only be saved and liberated by perpetuating its





**Front Cover of Lu-ta chêng-ts'ê chia-oh'êng**

From: Kuang Lu & others: Shêng Shih-

tsai tsen-yang t'ung-ch'ih Sinkiang,

Taipei, 1954.



intimate connection with Russia. Fifthly, Sinkiang can never afford to reconstruct itself without the help of Russia. Sixthly, Sinkiang will permanently remain a Chinese province if it succeeds in keeping the friendship of Russia. Seventhly, only when the Sino-Russian relationship is maintained can Sinkiang tread on the path of anti-imperialism." (14)

After a period of close observation, Shêng was gratified to learn that the response of his subjects was by no means unfavourable, and he believed that time had been ripe for a complete turn towards the neighbouring republic. Hence the Six Great Policies (六大政策) were proclaimed. Nevertheless, he was still too careful to introduce all these at one blow. In April 1935, he adopted three of the six policies: anti-imperialism (反帝), peace (和平) and reconstruction (建設). At the same time, there was one important fact which might escape attention. Since 1934, Shêng had been negotiating with the Russian government for a loan of five million gold rubles, and an agreement was finally reached on May 16, 1935. This was done without the authorization from Nanking. Most probably, the agreement had the effect of urging Shêng to make public his policy of pro-Russianism. Consequently, in



1936, the policies of kinship to Russia (親蘇) and clean government (清廉) were added to the three previously announced. Shortly afterwards, the last one -- racial or national equality (民族平等) -- was also declared, thus completing the Six Great Policies. Above all things, they constituted the philosophical basis of Shêng's rule in Sinkiang, and were followed faithfully until he shifted his loyalty from Stalin to Chiang Kai-shek in 1942. For this reason alone, these policies deserve to be studied in detail.

In the policy of anti-imperialism, Shêng pointed out that Sinkiang was a feudal society, unprotected from the selfish ambition of imperialistic powers, chiefly Japan and Britain. In relation to racial antagonism which had plagued Sinkiang for many years, he evaded the responsibility of the Chinese, and put the blame entirely on the Japanese and the British, maintaining that racial tensions were the outcome of the policy of their governments in sowing the seeds of discord. He thus argued that the expulsion of all influences of the imperialistic powers would result in a harmonious union of all races, peace in society, and territorial integrity of the province.

He explained his pro-Russian policy in terms of geographical proximity, and interdependence in the field of commerce.

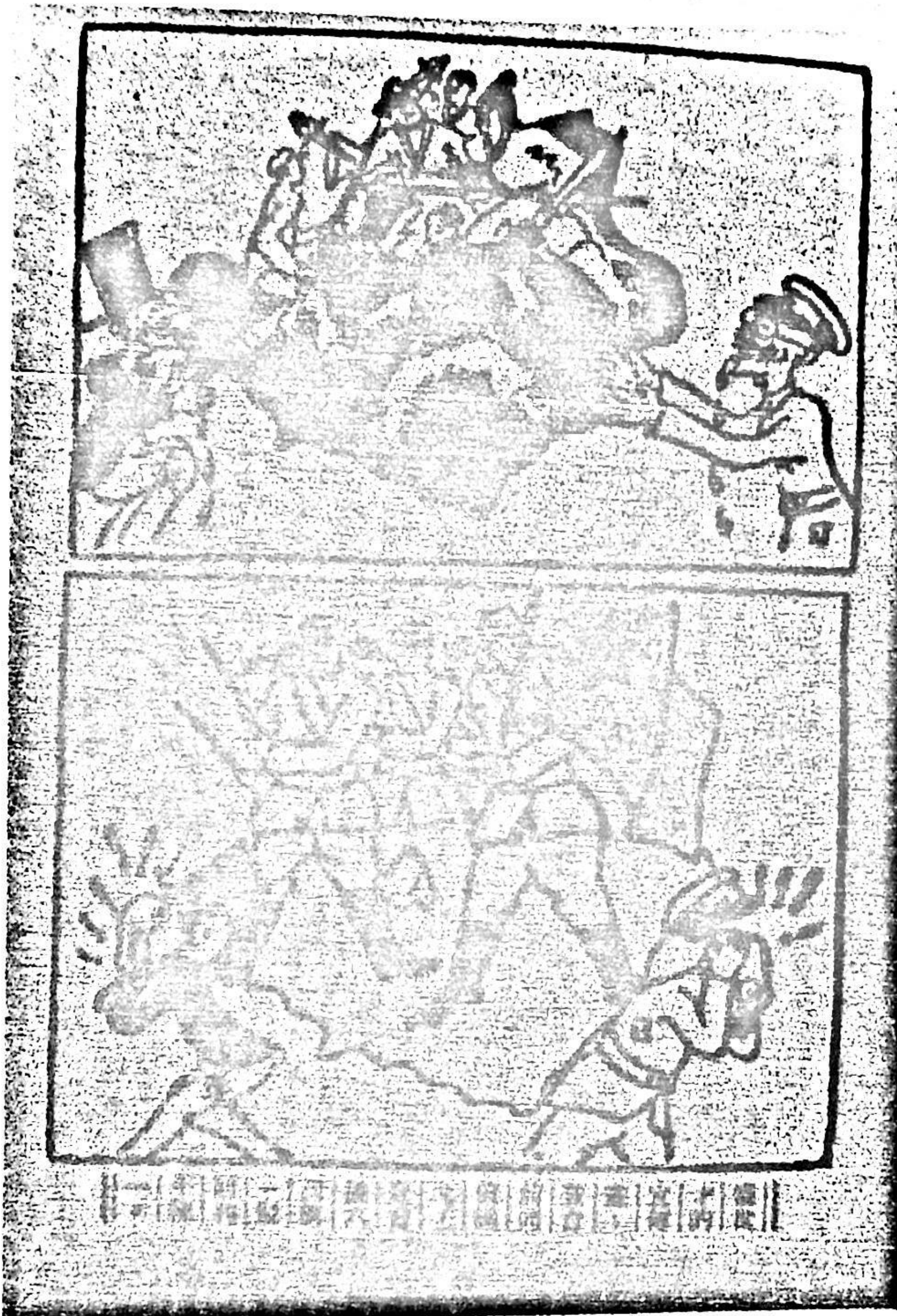


ce and economy between Sinkiang and Russia. This neighbour was extolled as a peaceful country, ready to help the weak and resist the aggressive. He continued to tell his people that Soviet aid was indispensable in the province in its battle against imperialism as well as in its work of reconstruction.

In his third policy, racial or national equality, he discredited the conception held by Yang Tsêng-hsin and Chin Shu-jên of the non-Chinese nationalities. He promised to give them greater political opportunities, and he even went so far as to state that, since the Uighurs were the majority race, the province might one day be ruled by an Uighur governor. He further accepted the theory of cultural autonomy, and allowed the people to study their own languages. This principle, brilliant as it seemed to be, was however attacked as being a special form of "divide and rule". Shêng disagreed with this emphatically, arguing that separation was made only for the sake of future union.

The policy of clean government aimed at removing corruption, which was a deep-rooted disease in the officialdom of Sinkiang. He hoped that, with this policy, efficiency would be enhanced, respect for government officials would be gained, and general improvement in administration would





**Propaganda placard: Policy of Peace**

**From: Chang Ta-chün: Szu-shih-nien tung-luan Sinkiang.**

**Hong Kong: The Asia Press  
Ltd., 1956.**



be achieved.

The policy of peace encouraged the people to abandon fighting as a means of settling disputes. Besides, only after the province had succeeded in becoming peaceful could it begin its work of reconstruction.

The policy of reconstruction was essential because Sinkiang had abundant natural resources which should be made use of for the benefit of the people. He painfully remarked that it was a shameful sarcasm that Sinkiang should be ridiculed as "the land of beggars who begged with gold rice-bowls."

Because of the shortage of reliable, unbiased source material, these policies rank among the most controversial subjects in modern Chinese history. The difficulty, I presume, is that the majority of the people who possess real knowledge of this field of study are themselves involved in one way or another. As a result, for those who have personal reasons to be antagonistic, the Six Great Policies, toned as they were with communist philosophy, were nothing but a masquerade for Shêng's pro-Russian leanings (15). On the other hand, for others who are attracted by his apparent accomplishments, the same policies took the shape of a shining beacon guiding



the reconstruction of a New Sinkiang (16). Unfortunately, neither of these descriptions give an accurate picture. They are equally prejudiced, though in opposite directions.

A close examination of the nature of the policies reveal two distinctive characteristics. Firstly, there was unmistakably the presence of the element of appeasement. The objects of appeasement were the Soviet Union and the non-Chinese nationalities.

The causes for the need of Russian friendship have already been expounded. Russia had done her part most generously by extending to the province a loan of five million rubles, and she naturally expected the beneficiary to express signs of gratitude, despite the fact that the benefactor had already gained, in return, enough advantages. Shêng was quick to realize this, and very readily he showed his willingness to submit, in every possible manner, to Russian direction. Even his book, Lu-ta-chêng-ta'ê chiao-ch'êng (六大政策教程), was written in the terms of Marxist philosophy. For instance, when he gives his reasons for the promulgation of the policies, he writes:

"Since September 18, 1931, the objective environ-



ment in China have changed, and the conditions in the north-<sup>western</sup> eastern corner of China — Sinkiang — have become more and more desperate. The colonial and semi-colonial countries are now at the threshold of a revolutionary epoch. In order to accelerate the speed of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, national and democratic revolution in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal China, in order to rid China, a nation with a five-thousand-year civilisation, of the danger of developing from a semi-colonial to a colonial status, in order to stem the conspiracies of imperialism in Sinkiang and in order to ensure the province of its safety, the Six Great Policies, which meet the needs of China at the time, and particularly Sinkiang which is economically and culturally retarded and is exposed to the attacks of Japanese imperialism, come into being." (17)

Driven by the same motive, in the book, he immoderately complimented Russia. The following extract is only one of the innumerable examples:

"Only by knowing Russia thoroughly, only by main-



taining a truly intimate relationship with that country, and only by supporting her loyally ... can we succeed in accomplishing the great and sacred mission of bringing about independence, freedom, equality and national liberation ..."

(18)

As for the non-Chinese peoples, they had never possessed any affection for the ruling Chinese. They were disobedient and rebellious. The preceding rulers of the province had to spend much energy and, of course, money to make sure that their non-Chinese subjects would remain quiet and, most important of all, submissive. Chin Shu-jên was expelled chiefly because he failed to achieve this. Shêng had witnessed the downfall of his superior, and he was the last person to repeat the same mistake, and to run the risk of having Chin's fate befall on him. Thus, throughout the period of his rule, utmost effort was made to rally the support and co-operation of the subject races. Undoubtedly, his emphasis upon the equality of all races and his promise to respect the privileges of their religious leaders won him greater popularity from these peoples than that enjoyed by any other ruler of the province. As a result, in his work of remodelling the old Sinkiang, he succeeded in recruiting them to his help. In fact, their



assistance in this respect was none the less indispensable than that of Russia.

Besides the element of appeasement, his genuine desire to improve the abject conditions of the province must not be obliterated. Indeed, this desire had clearly been expressed a few years ago when he termed the province the "New Sinkiang". Here, one has to be reminded of the amount of book-reading he had done, particularly in the field of social and political sciences, a subject in which he had real interest. This was, to a very high degree, responsible for his belief in radicalism which was, without question, the driving force behind the promulgation of the policies of clean government, peace and reconstruction. To prove the validity of this argument, we must examine carefully his work in Sinkiang.

According to Shêng, the Six Great Policies were remarkably successful. He boldly states:

"Under the policy of anti-imperialism, the peoples of Sinkiang have repeatedly stemmed the many conspiracies and military attempts plotted against the provincial government by the imperialistic agents, traitors and Trotskyites. Through the



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pro-Russian policy, the province has gained spiritual, material as well as technical assistance from its ally — Russia. This help has brought about a rapid development in the many-sided reconstruction of Sinkiang. ... The policy of racial equality has solved the racial problems which have existed in China for many thousands of years. By removing the deep-rooted hatred of the different races, the fourteen races in Sinkiang have learned to love each other like brothers and sisters. Under the policy of clean government, an incorruptible government has been established after the quick eradication of corruption. Under the policy of peace, the new regime has succeeded in giving Sinkiang peace and unity. Finally, under the policy of reconstruction, the economy of the province has been developed, the cultural level raised, the communications facilitated, the living conditions of the people improved, and the military forces of the Anti-Imperialist Army strengthened. Above all successes, the Six Great Policies have succeeded in influencing, promoting and leading the whole of China to tread on the right path of anti-imperialism and pro-Russianism." (19)



Although this quotation is full of exaggerations, it is not entirely untrue. Much valuable work was indeed achieved in the years 1934 - 1944.

Before really starting with his work of reconstruction, he strived hard to indoctrinate his subjects with his philosophy of anti-imperialism. On August 1, 1935, the Sinkiang Ko-tau Min-chung Fan-ti Lien-ho-hui (新疆各族民眾反帝聯合會, sometimes simply Fan-ti Hui 反帝會, or Anti-Imperialist Association) was founded at Urumchi. Following this, the provincial army was renamed Fan-ti Ch'ün (反帝軍), or Anti-Imperialist Army, and a magazine, bearing the name of Fan-ti Chan-hsin (反帝戰線), or Anti-Imperialist War Front, was published monthly, with Kao Tao (高陶) as the chief editor. The success in the process of deliberate indoctrination was obvious from the rapid increase in membership in the Anti-Imperialist Association. The following table proves this point:

(20)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of members</u>
1935	2,489
1936	2,954
1937	5,281
1939	10,000 strong



Regarding his treatment of the subject nationalities, the policy of racial equality produced an admirably harmonious relationship between the rulers and the ruled, which was unprecedented in the history of Sinkiang. In a speech delivered by him on April 12, 1935 in a ceremony commemorating the revolution of April 12, 1933, he outlined his racial policy as follows:

"In the past, the decisions of the government in Sinkiang were dictated by either a man or a party. Now that this piece of territory has become a part of China, its government can no longer labour only for the interests of the Chinese, the Tungans, the Uighurs, the Kazakhs, or the Mongols. The present government is formed and therefore shared by all the races, who should co-operate in promoting the common welfare of the province."

equality of (20) actuality in the government as well as in their educational curricula. In the first case, the young men of the In the execution of this policy, he conveniently classified the peoples into fourteen groups (21). The following is a list of the fourteen nationalities, together with the number of people in each group:



<u>Nationalities</u>	<u>Number of people</u>
Chinese (漢)	202,239
Uighur (維吾爾)	2,900,173
Mongol (蒙)	63,018
Kasakh (哈薩克)	318,716
Moslem (Tungan 東干)	92,146
Sibo (錫伯)	9,203
Solon (索倫)	2,489
Manchu (滿)	670
Kirghiz (柯爾克孜)	65,248
White Russian (歸化)	13,408
Taranchi (塔蘭奇)	41,307
Tadjik (塔吉克)	8,867
Tartar (塔塔爾)	4,601
Uzbek (烏茲別克)	7,966

Under the new government, these races were given equality of opportunity in the government as well as in their educational pursuits. In the first case, the young men of the non-Chinese races were encouraged to participate in governing the province, and quite a number of them were actually appointed to high posts in their own districts (22). Furthermore, in order to provide chances for the people to discuss and understand the policies of the government, assemblies attended by



representatives of all nationalities were held. The first of the kind met in April 1934, and was followed by two more: one in April 1936, and the other in September 1938. This method of inviting public opinion is described by Peter Fleming as keeping "a facade of democratic enlightenment" (23).

With relation to education, the non-Chinese peoples were urged to form cultural advancement clubs for the promotion of their own culture. For this purpose, schools were established by each race to cater for the study of its own language. In July 1938, the number of schools of this nature, started by the cultural advancement clubs of the Uighurs, Kazaks, Kirghis, Tungans and Mongols, amounted to 1,840. The following is a table illustrating this:

<u>Schools started by</u>	<u>Number of schools</u>	<u>Number of pupils</u>
Uighurs	1,540	89,804
Kazaks-Kirghis	275	14,322
Tungans	1	44
Mongols	24	917
	<u>1,840</u>	<u>105,087</u>

In addition, the promising young students were sent to Russia



to study such subjects as medicine, veterinary science, engineering and agriculture. Owen Lattimore records in his book, Pivot of Asia, that a total of 329 non-Chinese students were thus sent to the Soviet neighbour (24). In short, it can hardly be denied that there was enough ground to justify the statement that education prospered in Sinkiang when Shêng was its ruler, although his original motive was mainly to please the subject peoples.

Apart from this, he was determined to do away with the corrupt practices of the government officials. Inspectors and auditors were sent to every district to keep an eye on the officials. Towards the offenders, very often, he was unnecessarily harsh. Once, a district magistrate, Hsu Wen-pin (徐文彬), was executed after having been found guilty of corruption. Nevertheless, this severe punishment succeeded in producing the desired result. The officials were so much inspired with fear that they tried to live up to the reputation of a clean government. Yet it is doubtful whether Shêng himself was equally incorruptible. During his visit to Sinkiang in 1938, Ch'ên Chi-ying, a reporter of the famous Ta Kung Pao (大公報) in Chungking (重慶), was informed that Shêng had only two suits of clothes and, for seven or eight years, he was always wearing the same cloak (25). This is verified by Tu



Chung-yüan who states that Shêng was frugal and sparing (26). However, there are others who do not share the same opinion. In chapter six of the book, Shêng Shih-ts'ai tsen-yang t'ung-chih Sinkiang, many evidences are listed to prove that Shêng had been receiving bribes from his people<sup>(27)</sup>. As the authors of this book had all been persecuted by Shêng during their stay in the province, and their accusations are generally influenced by personal feelings, the evidences which they offer become less reliable than they appear. Unfortunately, when I visited Taiwan last July and August, I was not given access to the official archives. Besides bringing disappointment to myself, this failure makes it difficult for me to pass judgment on Shêng with regard to the question whether, as the head of the government at Urumchi, he was corrupt or not.

His greatest achievement was undoubtedly his work of reconstruction. This was first suggested, in a very limited scale, by Yüan Ta-hua, the last governor of the province under the Ch'ing dynasty, who had the insight of foreseeing the possibility of foreign intervention. He asserts:

"Sinkiang is a territory which is most abundant in hidden treasures. If we do not hurry to improve its communications and to collect capitals for





畫傳宣劃計年三才世成

**Propaganda placard: Three-year programme of reconstruction**

**From: Chang Ta-chün: Sai-shih-nien  
tung-luan Sinkiang.**

**Hong Kong: The Asia Press Ltd.**

**1956.**



the exploitation of mines, I fear that sooner or later these rights will be lost to the powerful neighbours which are waiting for an opportunity to grab them from us." (28)

Yet he lacked the ability in systematizing his idea in a plan for execution. Hence, he did nothing to transform his words into actions. In this respect, he was excelled by Shêng, because in 1934, a year after his rise to prominence, the latter instituted the first three-year plan of reconstruction. At the same time, he realized that the Sinkiang government could not carry this plan out successfully without foreign assistance. This, together with other reasons, prompted him to negotiate with Russia for a loan of five million rubles. With this help, he was able, after the completion of the first, to decree in 1937 a second, and in 1941 a third three-year plan. Broadly speaking, we may safely say that, as a result of these programmes of reconstruction, the former backward, stagnant province was ultimately replaced by a modern, advanced society.

In the field of agriculture, the cultivated area in the province before the Hami insurrection was 11,434,367 mou (畝), and it was reduced to 6,800,000 mou when peace was restored in 1934. Immediately after his ascendancy to power,



Sheng realized that some effective measures had to be adopted to save the situation. As a matter of fact, his emphasis on rural relief originated from this. He did what was within his capacity to encourage the people to open up waste lands in which extensive irrigation work was employed. In 1938, with much pride, he told a reporter:

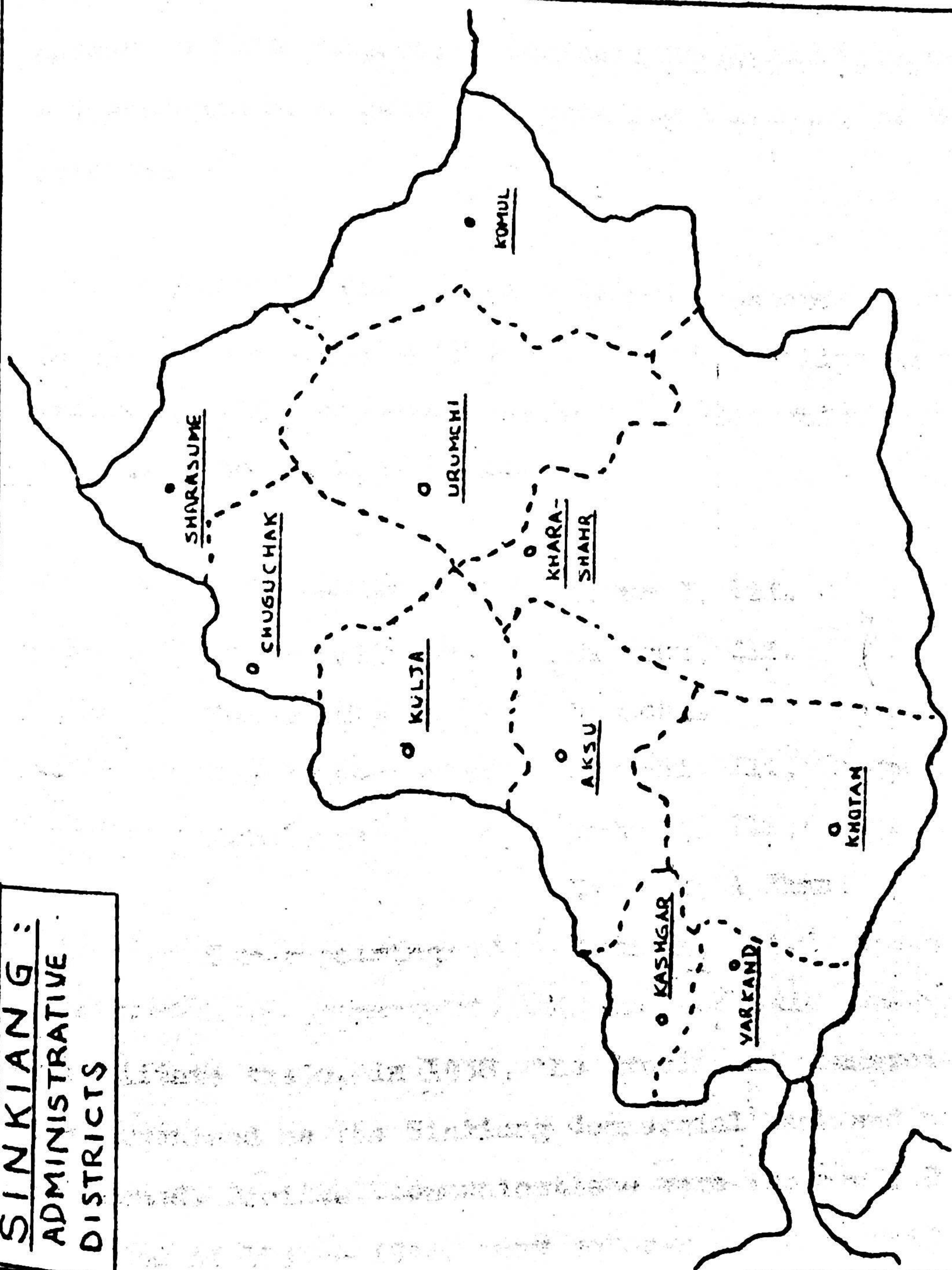
"At present, the land which is under cultivation can sufficiently support the life of five million peasants. Five years later, there will be no difficulty at all in supporting ten million of them." (29)

Meanwhile, he managed to buy from Russia mechanical implements which were then loaned to the people, so that cultivating land could become a scientific process. To give the cultivators the required knowledge, he invited Russian agricultural experts to come to the province. Furthermore, experimental farms were organised by the provincial government. The effort after all was not wasted, for it was reported in 1940 that the annual production of cotton was 28,000,000 catties, and that of other agricultural products was equally rewarding.

As for pastoral industry, much attention was given



SINKIANG :  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
DISTRICTS





to the provision of medical care for domestic animals. To answer to this purpose, veterinary hospitals were established and students were sent to Russia for the study of veterinary science.

Industry and commerce likewise prospered. Factories grew up in many parts of the province. The following is a table showing the distribution of factories which were engaged in different kinds of business:

Leather making:	Urumchi, Ili.
Flour-millings:	Urumchi, Ili.
Water-supply:	Urumchi.
Electric-supply:	Urumchi, Ili, Chugachak.
Printing:	Urumchi, Ili, Chugachak, Aksu, Kashgar, A Shan.

The Car-repairing: Urumchi, Ili. encouraged by the provincial government. This had been discussed in To facilitate trade, in 1938, the Provincial Commercial Bank was reorganised as the Sinkiang Commercial Bank and new notes were issued. Besides, communications were improved. During the period of 1933 - 1944, many motor-roads were built. One of these, connecting Urumchi with Ili, was as long as 1440 li (7). With the construction of new roads, the trucks used



increased rapidly in number:

1933: 20

1938: 400

1941: 3000

Moreover, within these years, 1350 miles of telephone lines were installed. The central government, on its part, had some important contributions to make. In 1937, by the stipulations of the Nanking-Moscow Non-Aggression Pact, the rapprochement between China and Russia was established on a sound basis. Two years later, on June 16, 1939, the Sino-Soviet Aviation Corporation was organised, bestowing to Russia priority over other countries in air traffic, jointly with China, over Sinkiang.

The development of education was greatly encouraged by the provincial government. This had been discussed in relation to the proclamation of the policy of racial equality. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that, in the extension of education, the business of publishing newspapers also received its proper share of attention. In 1935, the T'ien Shan Jih Pao was reorganised, and assumed a new appearance in the form of the Sinkiang Jih Pao, which was published in



different languages. It was, in the course of events, made used of by the government and became a useful tool for propaganda.

Adding to the above-mentioned achievements, much work was done to relieve the hardship of the people as well. Among other things, hospitals, clinics and pharmacies were started, offering very cheap, and in many cases, even free services.

Summing up, although the promulgation of the Six Great Policies were mainly guided by the intention of courting favour from Russia, one cannot help from concluding that there were still sufficient reasons for Sheng to bring them into existence. Many may argue that the work of reconstruction, though extremely successful, was undertaken solely in the interest of Russia. This is far from being the truth. Only those, blinded by prejudices, can state that the people of Sinkiang did not, in any way, enjoy the fruit of this work.



### NOTES

- (1) Owen Lattimore, High Tartary (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1930), p. 26.
- (2) Sven Hedin, op. cit., p. 171.
- (3) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, pp. 154 & 156.
- (4) It is unfortunate that this book cannot be found. For some reasons, Shêng Shih-ts'ai, who obviously has this book, is unwilling to lend it to me.
- (5) Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Sinkiang, p. 65.
- (6) Ibid., pp. 65 - 66.
- (7) Ibid., p. 66.
- (8) Ibid.
- (9) Ibid., pp. 66 - 67.
- (10) Ibid., p. 67.



- (11) Ch'ên Chi-ying, op. cit., p. 16.
- (12) Ibid., pp. 16 - 17.
- (13) Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Sinkiang, p. 71.
- (14) Ibid.
- (15) Kuang Lai & others, op. cit., p. 14.
- (16) Ch'ên Chi-ying, op. cit., p. 10.
- (17) Wei Chung-t'ien, op. cit., p. 7.
- (18) Kuang Lai & others, op. cit., p. 14.
- (19) Wei Chung-t'ien, op. cit., pp. 8 - 9.
- (20) From Shêng's speech, April 12, 1935.
- (21) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 156.
- (22) Ch'ên Chi-ying, op. cit., pp. 89 - 143.



- (23) Peter Fleming, op. cit., p. 254.
- (24) Pivot of Asia, p. 73.
- (25) Ch'ên Chi-ying, op. cit., p. 201.
- (26) Tu Chung-yüan, Shêng Shih-ts'ai yü hsün Sinkiang (Hankow, 1938), p. 77.
- (27) Kuang Lu & others, op. cit., pp. 57 - 64.
- (28) Yüan Ta-hua, Fu-Hsin chi-ch'êng (1911), 2 volumes.
- (29) Ch'ên Chi-ying, op. cit., p. 207.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SINKIANG: A SOVIET SATELLITE OR A CHINESE PROVINCE?

In many respects, 1937 was a critical year in the Sino-Russian relations. On July 7, the Marco Polo Bridge incident occurred. In face of the impending danger, the two nations whose connection had, in previous years, been far from intimate, agreed to resolve their differences. Consequently, the Treaty of Non-Aggression, aimed at counteracting Japanese aggressive designs in the Far East, was concluded on August 21 (1). Shortly afterwards, on September 22, the Chinese Communist Party declared its willingness to join hands with the regime of Chiang Kai-shek against foreign invasion. This rapprochement of the Nanking government with Russia and the Chinese Communists had significant outcome in the north-western province.

For one thing, Sinkiang, which had hitherto been placed in an obscure position and considered by many as wasteful to keep, was in 1937 brought to the fore-ground: it became the principal avenue through which Russian aids reached China. Hence, the two allies were obliged to protect with all their might the area from falling into the hands of unfriendly powers, and great pains had to be taken to ensure ~~that~~ the loyalty of



the provincial leaders.

This consideration raised the prestige of Shêng Shih-ts'ai as the Tupan of the province. Besides, the renewal of friendship between China and the Soviet republic removed whatever embarrassment he might have with the central government in the execution of his pro-Russian policy. In the past, his leanings towards the neighbouring country had to be administered with caution and, sometimes, even in disguise, for fear that the Nanking government might object. But, now that Russia had become an ally of China, his pro-Soviet inclination seemed to have received official blessing. At the end of the year, one could easily witness a prominent increase of subservience to Russian interests in the territory, and the status of Sinkiang as a Chinese province existed barely in name.

Nor was this all. After the inauguration of the United Front, members of the Chinese Communist Party flocked to the province and were allowed to work in government departments. Evidently, they wished to extend their influence to this frontier region, while the Nationalists were busily involved in the anti-Japanese warfare. The arrival of the Communists, with selfish purpose, inevitably brought further complication to the already unstable political situation in Sinkiang.



It mattered very little whether Shêng realised the dangerous position in which the province was situated, because, at that moment, he was in grave difficulty and he needed as much assistance as he could enlist. Under such adverse circumstances, the help of both the Russians and the Chinese Communists could be extremely valuable. Therefore, once more, he was forced to rely on outside aid, regardless of the price which he had to pay in the future.

As early as late 1936, the turbulent elements began to show themselves in southern Sinkiang. Ma Hu-shan, who had remained silent for quite some time, placed himself again at the head of an uprising, equal in strength to that of Ma Chung-ying, his brother-in-law, a few years ago, and the provincial government at Urumchi became his target of attack. Some authorities claim that the rebellion was caused by the resentment of the Moslems against Soviet penetration. However, this accusation was not accepted by Shêng, who attributes the disturbance to a mixture of Japanese and German intrigue, aimed at replacing Russian influence in the province by their own (2). He further maintains that the Japanese and German Fascists were in alliance with the Trotskyites who, holding responsible positions in the provincial government, were to make preparations for a coup d'état to break out at Urumchi on April 12,



1937, during which the Tupan and a number of political and military leaders were to be assassinated (3). He then outlines their subsequent plan as follows:

"According to the confession made by one of the conspirators, after seizing power the Trotskyites planned to lay low for a while, continuing my basic policies of anti-imperialism and pro-Russianism on the one hand and the six great policies on the other. Should Stalin's suspicions not be aroused and this coup be explained as an "anti-Fascist uprising" they would then have purged the entire province, filling all posts with loyal Trotskyites. At the same time German and Japanese advisers would be alerted to fly into Sinkiang at the proper time, ousting all Stalinist Soviet military personnel, and turning the province into a base in the vulnerable rear of both Russia and China." (4)

This analysis, whether based on factual evidence or not, had one obvious advantage. By putting the blame on the Fascists and the Trotskyites, the suppression of the insurrection became the concern of both governments at Urumchi and Moscow. Thus,



the way was open for Soviet military intervention. With the help of the Red Army, the uprising was ultimately quelled in 1938.

The fact that the central government did not launch any official protest against the Russian interference with a civil war in a Chinese province was encouraging to Shêng and his associates, as this could conveniently be interpreted as a sign of connivance on the part of China at Soviet activities in Sinkiang. As a result, the policy of pro-Russianism was enhanced to such an extent that Stalin became the ruler de facto in this border-region, with Shêng as his obedient vassal.

After the failure of the revolt, the Red Army, instead of being evacuated from the province, remained stationed at Hami, under the guise of the "Red Army Eighth Regiment". With reference to the motive of this arrangement, Allen S. Whiting writes:

and endeavoring to safeguard Sinkiang against all forms of control." (7)

"It did not serve to maintain Chinese control as  
In my opinion, opposed to Japanese control, but rather to safe-  
guard, and perhaps to extend, a Soviet sphere of  
Party. In 1931 influence in this critical area." (5)

him, was on his return journey from Moscow to Leningrad.  
thing related to him, in one of their conversations, his wish



Soviet interests were further promoted when, at the trial of the conspirators of 1937, Shêng took the unprecedented step of inviting Russian officers to participate in the investigation. Although he endeavoured to convince Whiting at an interview that the purpose of their presence was "to study the facts" (6), nevertheless, there leaves little room for doubt that Russia had, by that time, succeeded in effecting considerable control over the provincial government.

The domination of the Soviet republic over Sinkiang reached its climax when Shêng, together with his family, travelled to Moscow in August 1938 to pay homage to Stalin. Besides other things, this signified his willingness to accept Soviet discipline although he insists:

"I was acting in the genuine interests of new China and endeavouring to safeguard Sinkiang against all forms of control." (7)

In my opinion, this trip was closely related with his unsuccessful application for becoming a member of the Chinese Communist Party. In 1937, when Wang Ming (王明), a Communist representative, was on his returned journey from Moscow to Yen-an (延安), Shêng related to him, in one of their conversations, his wish



to join the Chinese Communist Party. He explained this action of his in a letter to Chiang Kai-shek in terms of his Marxist belief (8), but, in his memoirs, he gives a different story and states that this was done "to test the sincerity of Yen-an" (9). Defending himself, he writes:

"This was not so radical a decision as might appear, for after the Japanese attack on July 7, 1937, all China united under Chiang Kai-shek in defence of the homeland. As in 1924 - 1927, the Chinese Communists joined with the Nationalists in a common front, burying their long-standing feud and agreeing to merge forces against the enemy. My membership in the Chinese Communist Party under these circumstances would in no way be disloyal to the nation's leader, Generalissimo Chiang, for the Communists themselves were pledged to his support." (10) and was now prepared to

push the program to the hills." (11)

Notwithstanding his seemingly convincing argument, one tends to think, with sufficient justification, that his behaviour was guided by the desire to win the friendship of the Chinese Communists and, above all, the trust and therefore the unfailing assistance of the Soviet government. Should the matter be



viewed in this light, there is no wonder that he became desperate when his application for membership was turned down by the Chinese Communist Politburo, as this naturally aroused his fear of losing the favour of the Communists in China as well as in Russia. Hence, his visit to Moscow, with the purpose of assuring Stalin of his loyalty, became an absolute necessity. Indeed, the fact that this business was veiled in the greatest secrecy (11) proves the validity of this analysis.

At Moscow, after several prolonged conferences with Stalin, the details of which are recounted in Shêng's memoirs (12), he was finally admitted to the All-Union Communist Party. He was gratified and considered his trip a tremendous success. He takes pride in reporting:

"Apparently Stalin had resolved whatever doubts may have been in his mind about the wisdom of aiding my government and was now prepared to push the programme to the hilt." (13)

Later events show that he was grievously mistaken. It is true that China was too preoccupied with her problems to interfere (14), but Shêng was wrong to have taken the sincerity of Stalin for granted. Little did he realize that, in so doing,



he had given the Soviet leader an instrument of blackmail. As a member of the party, he was expected to be implicitly obedient and, at all times, the interests of China in the region should be considered as of secondary importance when they came into conflict with those of the party. In this way, he was robbed of whatever strength he might have in resisting any future demands, however unreasonable, made by Russia.

The blow finally came two years later. In November 1940, Bakulin, a high-ranking Soviet, arrived at Urumchi with two associates, and the purpose of their mission was to extract from the provincial government a fifty-year lease of the tin mines in Sinkiang for Russian exploitation. In a meeting between Shêng, who was at that time the civil as well as the military leader in the province (15), and the Russian emissaries, the former was given a copy of a document embodying the terms of the lease and was told to sign his name on it. Obviously, it had been prepared by the Soviet government before the departure of its representatives from Moscow. Shêng had never been consulted and when he informed Bakulin that, in a matter of this kind, the approval of the central government had to be sought, he was at once warned that Stalin would be furious should the document be submitted to the authorities at Chungking. Without question, the answer was a shocking one, and



Shêng was displeased to be treated with such scant respect.

Yet, one can hardly deny that the Soviet republic chose a very opportune moment to further her aggressive designs. In the latter half of 1940, Urumchi again became a centre of political intrigue. Early in September, there were marked signs of restlessness in the Altai Region, and this necessitated the dispatch of the provincial army to the area of turbulence. At almost the same time, when the province was militarily weak, a coup d'état, aimed at overthrowing the local government, was hatched. The leader of the coup, as related by Shêng, was Tu Chung-yüan, who was incidentally his personal friend (16). Tu later confessed that he was sent to Sinkiang by Chou En-lai (周恩來), who was accused, in this business, by Mao Tsê-min (毛澤民) of planning to expand his personal influence (17). Although Shêng succeeded in nibbling the coup in the bud, the insurrection in the Altai Region was however steadily spreading. At this critical moment, the Soviet representatives came to demand exclusive rights in the exploitation of tin mines in the province. Viewing the matter in this light, Shêng's suspicion that the revolt was actually instigated by Russia was well grounded. In a letter to Chiang Kai-shek, he wrote:



"At that time the Soviets had already instigated the rebellion of the Altai Mountain region. The presentation of the Contract immediately thereafter was no coincidence." (18)

At any rate, it is safe to state that, regardless of his membership in the All-Union Communist Party which demanded his absolute obedience to the orders of the party, Sheng was further restricted by environmental factors, which were most probably created by the Soviet republic, in his resistance against Russian aggression. As he points out in his memoirs:

"If I were to turn down the Soviet proposal and run the risk of war, only one fate lay ahead of Sinkiang as well as for myself. With only a meagre defence force of 10,000 men, counting infantry and cavalry, Sinkiang would soon become a Soviet satellite." (19)

As a result, he conceded to the Russian demands and signed the agreement on November 26, 1940, the terms of which are as follows:



**AGREEMENT OF CONCESSIONS SIGNED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF  
THE GOVERNMENT OF U.S.S.R. AND GOVERNOR OF SINKIANG**

In order to assist in the development of productivity in Sinkiang territory, the Government of the U.S.S.R. agrees to undertake the work of prospecting, investigation and exploitation of tin mines and its ancillary minerals in the territory of Sinkiang in accordance with the following provisions:

**Article I.** The Government of Sinkiang agrees to extend to the Government of the U.S.S.R. within the territory of Sinkiang exclusive rights to prospect for, investigate and exploit tin mines and its ancillary minerals.

**Article II.** The Government of the U.S.S.R. will enjoy in the territory of Sinkiang the following rights:

(a) To exploit and investigate deposits of tin and its ancillary minerals and to make adequate geological and geographical surveys and carry on other work;

(b) To exploit tin mines and its ancillary useful minerals and, through the application of appro-



private productive processing to the ores mined,  
to produce concentrates and products;

- (c) To build and equip mine shafts, washeries, foundries, machine shops, godowns, houses, dormitories, offices, hospitals, schools, etc.;
- (d) To utilize all natural resources to obtain power, with the right to install hydraulic power and other plants;
- (e) To construct power stations, including hydraulic power stations, and to erect networks of transmission lines, transformers, etc.;
- (f) To supply the needs of the concessions, the right to make use of all existing means of transportation in the territory of Sinkiang, the right to construct roads and necessary building equipment for the roads, including railways, and to organize and utilize all kinds of means of transportation of its own;
- (g) To make use of all kinds of means of communica-



tions and, to suit the needs of the concessions, to install telephone lines, telegraphic lines and to construct radio stations;

- (h) To import without hindrance into the territory of Sinkiang all necessary engineering equipment and material, to repair and rebuild all machines and equipment and parts thereof, and to transmit the same from one enterprise to another;

In the first ten-year period of validity of the present Agreement, imports of equipment and material into the territory of Sinkiang shall be free of customs duties and other imposts and taxes. Thereafter, imports of equipment and material for these concessions shall be liable for the payment of current customs duties of the territory of Sinkiang, provided that the sum of the customs duties and other imposts does not exceed twenty per cent of the value of the equipment or material.

Article III. The Government of the U.S.S.R. shall have the right. The equipment and material imported may be re-exported to the U.S.S.R. at any time and shall be free from customs duties and other imposts and taxes.

in mines and its auxiliary useful minerals.



(i) To supply the needs of the concessions, the right to procure local building materials (bricks, stones, lumber, limestone, etc.), coal and fuel wood, and to purchase and store all materials needed by the mining concessions;

(j) To employ labourers in Sinkiang and to employ engineers, technicians and workers from the U.S.S.R.; the Government of Sinkiang shall without hindrance grant them permits of entry into Sinkiang and freedom of residence in various places in Sinkiang;

(k) To supply the needs of the workers and staff employed by the concessions, the right to import into Sinkiang territory provisions and articles for normal daily use which are to be distributed through the trade network of the concessions.

Article III. The Government of the U.S.S.R. shall have the right to export without hindrance from the production centres in Sinkiang free from customs duties and other imposts and taxes the manufactured products or finished products of the tin mines and its ancillary useful minerals.



**Article IV.** For the implementation of the provisions of this agreement on Concessions, the Government of the U.S.S.R. will establish a trust to prospect for and exploit tin mines and their ancillary minerals, to be known as "Sin-tin," enjoying all the rights and privileges of an independent juridical person.

The operations of "Sin-tin" will be regulated by a constitution which will be enacted in accordance with the legislative procedures of the U.S.S.R. "Sin-tin" shall have the right to establish without hindrance branch offices, sub-branch offices, and agencies within the whole territory of Sinkiang.

**Article V.** During the period of validity of the present Agreement, the Government of Sinkiang shall guarantee the acquisition of lands, including the felling of timbers, the mining of coal and areas for the procurement of building materials which may be necessary for the carrying on of the various kinds of works referred to in this Agreement. The Government of Sinkiang shall remove all the population residing in such area as may have been allotted to "Sin-tin."

Such areas of land shall be allotted on the application



of "Sin-tin." In the allotment of such areas of land, there shall be no delay and shall be in strict conformity with the terms of the applications. The rental for such allotted areas shall be paid with the products of "Sin-tin" as provided for in Article VII.

"Sin-tin" shall pay the Government of Sinkiang the value of the buildings and abutments left on the areas of land allotted to "Sin-tin," the amount and conditions of such payment to be agreed upon between "Sin-tin" and the Government of Sinkiang.

Article VI. In addition to the areas of land allotted to "Sin-tin" in accordance with the provisions of Article V of this Agreement, "Sin-tin" shall have the right to purchase or to rent houses, buildings and godowns; and to supply the needs of the various enterprises of "Sin-tin" and the needs of provisions of the workers and staff of such enterprises, the right to rent land for agricultural and pasturing purposes. "Sin-tin," its workers and its staff, shall enjoy the right to fish for their own consumption in the rivers and lakes of Sinkiang.

Article VII. During the first five-year period, commencing



from the day of the signature of this Agreement, "Sin-tin" shall pay the Government of Sinkiang five per cent of the tin and its ancillary useful minerals mined in Sinkiang. Thereafter, during the period of validity, the rate of payment shall be six per cent. The time of payment shall be the first quarter of the ensuing solar calendar year after production. On the other hand, the products to be paid to the Government of Sinkiang in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article shall be sold to the Government of the U.S.S.R.; at the price of delivery at the Soviet-Sinkiang border, the said price to be at par with the average annual (the year preceding the sale) price of the principal centres of the world market for tin and its ancillary useful minerals.

In accordance with the wish of the Government of Sinkiang, the Government of the U.S.S.R. shall pay for the products sold to it by the former with commodities in kind; the price of such commodities in kind shall be the price of delivery at the Soviet-Sinkiang border of the respective commodities when imported into Sinkiang.

The Government of the U.S.S.R. shall have the right to have the tin and other useful ancillary minerals, sold to it by the Government of Sinkiang, exported without hindrance from Sin-



kiang, free of customs duties and other imposts and taxes.

**Article VIII.** In compensation for its privileges of exemption from customs duties, "Sin-tin" shall contribute annually to the Government of Sinkiang a sum equivalent to two per cent of the price of the products exported by "Sin-tin," the price to be fixed in accordance with the provisions of Article VII of this Agreement.

The contribution due in any one year shall be paid in January of the ensuing year.

Except the said contribution, "Sin-tin" shall not be liable to the payment of any imposts or taxes.

**Article IX.** The Government of Sinkiang shall assist "Sin-tin" in the attainment of its objectives as stated in this Agreement; and shall not interfere in the operations of "Sin-tin"; especially the Government of Sinkiang shall not inspect, supervise, investigate, or audit the various operations of production, finance and commerce of "Sin-tin." The administrative technical personnel of "Sin-tin" shall have the right of movement without hindrance through Sinkiang territory in the performance of their duties.



The various enterprises, buildings, houses, means of transportation, products and other properties of "Sin-tin" within the scope of this Agreement shall not be subjected to conscription. The means of transportation of "Sin-tin" shall not be subjected to any mobilization order of the Government of Sinkiang. The workers and staff of "Sin-tin" who are citizens of the U.S.S.R. shall be exempt from personal labour service; their property shall not be subjected to conscription.

Article X. "Sin-tin" shall have the right to deal with all its capital, to raise loans, to have current accounts with banks in either local or foreign currencies, to carry on within or without the territory of Sinkiang remittance and exchange operations; to exchange foreign currencies into Sinkiang currency, et vice versa.

Article XI. "Sin-tin" shall have the right to sell in the territory of Sinkiang after fulfilling the needs of its basic enterprises, the surplus products of its auxiliary enterprises.

Article XII. For the protection of its houses, buildings, factories, plants, godowns, etc., and to ensure the security of its transport services, "Sin-tin" shall have the right to establish armed guards.



Article XIII. Any damages suffered by the "Sin-tin" trust as a result of the violation of any provision of this Agreement on the part of either the provincial or the local political authorities of Sinkiang or, as a result of illegal acts of the said political authorities, shall be compensated for by the Government of Sinkiang.

Article XIV. The Government of U.S.S.R. agrees to train a skilled cadre from amongst the citizens residing in the territory of Sinkiang, the number and types of technical skill to be agreed upon between the representatives of the U.S.S.R. and the Government of Sinkiang.

Article XV. The period of validity of this Agreement shall be fifty years, commencing from the date of signature.

On the expiration of the period of validity of this Agreement, all the buildings and equipment of the various enterprises of the concessions shall be transferred without compensation to the Sinkiang Government. The products, materials, commodities, provisions, supplies, cash, capital and claims against third parties shall remain the assets of "Sin-tin" and shall be exportable or transportable without hindrance from Sinkiang.



The Government of Sinkiang agrees to be responsible not to transfer or alienate the buildings and equipment of the various enterprises to any foreign person, natural or juridical, and not to permit under whatever conditions foreign capital to participate in the exploitation of the tin mines and its ancillary minerals in Sinkiang.

Article XVI. This Agreement shall enter into force immediately upon its signature.

Article XVII. This Agreement is signed in quadruplicate, two in the Russian language, two in the Chinese language, all equally authentic.

Done on the Twenty-Sixth Day of November, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty at Tihua (Urumchi).

Representatives of the Government of the U.S.S.R.

(signed) Bakulin

(signed) Kaproov

Representative of the Government of Sinkiang

(signed) Sheng Shih-ts'ai

(From: Allen S. Whiting & Sheng Shih-ts'ai,

Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, Michigan: Michigan

State University Press, 1958)



More than once, Shêng emphasized his reluctance in granting the Soviet neighbour these concessions. Indeed, he states:

"Although I had no choice but to sign this agreement, I determined to destroy its consequences at the earliest moment and to break Sinkiang away from the ever-tightening grip of the Kremlin."

(20)

To give himself a chance to do so, he refused to affix on the contract, in addition to his personal signature, either the seal of the Border Defence Commission or that of the provincial government. This, he argued, would enable him, in the future, to question the validity of the agreement. Nevertheless, such a line of reasoning is not accepted by his political opponents who insist that, in signing the agreement, Shêng was irrevocably guilty of treason — a crime which deserves no less punishment than a death sentence (21). Admitting that this act betrayed the interests of China, I am in no way inclined to believe that Shêng did it at his own free will. As a matter of fact, I am willing to go so far as to say that this was partly responsible for his final break with the Soviet Union two years later. By forcing the contract upon Shêng, the



Russians disclosed their ulterior purposes in Sinkiang. Consequently, he became disillusioned and, thenceforth, the two governments maintained but a cold relation with each other.

In 1942, the matter was again brought to a pitch. On March 29, Shêng's fourth brother, Shih-ch'i, was murdered. Shêng claims that his brother was victimized by a conspiracy, the ultimate aim of which was to overthrow his government. This is verified by Ch'ên Hsiu-ying (陳秀英), the wife of the victim, who confessed to have been induced by Latoff, Chief Soviet Military Adviser of the Border Defence Commission, to shoot her husband to death (22). This unfortunate incident had the effect of urging Shêng to abandon his allegiance to the Soviet Union. Shortly afterwards, he publicly doubted the infallibility of Marxism and Leninism and declared that he had been converted into a faithful disciple of the Three Principles of the People (23). Thus, the path was open for the Chungking government to step in and resume control over the province.

It should be pointed out that, besides the above-mentioned causes, Shêng's shift of loyalty was also guided by opportunism. 1942 was an extremely unfavourable year for Russia who suffered severe losses in her struggle against German invasion. Indeed, it seemed as if her defeat was merely



a matter of time. As far as China was concerned, this would mean that her Soviet ally was unable, at least for the time being, to render any assistance. Yet this news hardly affected the government at Chungking, because the Japanese activities in the Pearl Harbour in the fall of 1941 had resulted in the participation of the United States in the war, and the American commitment in the Pacific against Japan relieved China from the pressure of Japanese aggression. With this background, Shêng naturally thought that it was more advisable to turn to Chungking, as the Soviets could no longer be helpful.

On the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek was gratified to have an opportunity of extending his influence to the long-forsaken province. As early as March 1942, he had sent General Chu Shao-liang (朱紹良) to Sinkiang. The effect of his visit was quick to be felt. In the following month, the radical monthly magazine, Anti-Imperialist War Front, ceased to be published. At almost the same time, a purge was organised, arresting and subsequently executing quite a number of the Communists in the province. Mao Tsê-min, the brother of Mao Tsê-tung (毛澤東), was among the victims. This, above all, "signalled an initial willingness to collaborate with Chungking" (24). In May, Chu Shao-liang revisited the province and on August 29, Sinkiang was honoured by the arrival



of Madame Chiang Kai-shek who brought with her a personal letter from her husband which, besides offering forgiveness for Shêng's past deeds, vowed to accept full responsibility of whatever consequences that might arise. This was more than what Shêng could have asked for. The dice was cast, and he began to adopt a firm attitude in pressing the Soviet representatives to evacuate from the territory. Having achieved this, on January 16, 1943, he re-established a branch office of Kuomintang in the province. Soon after this, representatives came from Chungking to fill the positions in the provincial government which had been left vacant after the purge of 1942. Troops were sent there as well. Gradually, Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in regaining his control over the province and, in 1943, to all intents and purposes, the period of Soviet domination came to an end, and Chinese influence once again reigned supreme.



## NOTES

- (1) The complete text of the Treaty is found in Appendix A of this dissertation.
- (2) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 176. However, Allen S. Whiting claims that Shêng and his Soviet advisers thought that Japan and British India, instead of Japan and Germany, were at the back of the uprising, see Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 50.
- (3) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, pp. 176 - 178.
- (4) Ibid., p. 178.
- (5) Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 52.
- (6) Ibid.
- (7) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 191.
- (8) Shêng Shih-ts'ai to Chiang Kai-shek, July 7, 1942. See Appendix E of this dissertation.



(9) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot? p. 186.

(10) Ibid.

(11) While his associates were informed that the trip was made on medical grounds, every precaution was taken to keep the central government in the dark. In his memoirs, he recalls:

"My visit escaped general notice and even the Chinese ambassador to Russia apparently did not learn of my pilgrimage to the Kremlin."

See Ibid., p. 197.

(12) Ibid., pp. 191 - 208.

(13) Ibid., p. 204.

(14) The following quotation, from Ibid., p. 207, shows how much Shêng had slighted the authority of the central government:

"My independent thinking was tolerated by Nanking,



for the simple reason that Nanking lacked the power to remove me. This was true of many so-called war lords who ruled their provinces as virtual satrapies, granting only token allegiance to the central government during this period."

(15) Li Yung died on March 21, 1940. On April 4, Shêng was appointed Chairman of the Provincial Government by the central government, then at Chungking. Hence, in Sinkiang, the civil and military affairs were placed under the charge of one single man.

(16) In the written confession of Tu, he states that Shêng "was not only my friend but also my former schoolmate and a compatriot of my native province." For the complete text of the confession, read Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., pp. 291 - 292. This document is also found in Appendix B of this dissertation.

(17) See the written confession of Mao Tse-min, which is included in Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., pp. 287 - 290. It is also found in Appendix D of this dissertation.

(18) Shêng Shih-ts'ai to Chiang Kai-shek, November 24, 1946.



See Su-lien tui Sinkiang ohih ching-ohi oh'in-lüeh,  
p. 75. The letter, in full, is found in Appendix F  
of this dissertation.

(19) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 226.

(20) Ibid., p. 227.

(21) Kuang Lu and other, op. cit., p. 1.

(22) The confession, included in Allen S. Whiting, op. cit.,  
pp. 293 - 301, is also found in Appendix C of this  
dissertation.

(23) Wei Chung-t'ien, op. cit., pp. 20 - 24.

(24) Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., pp. 83 - 84.



CHAPTER SIX  
TERRORISM AND THE NEW SINKIANG

During my stay in Taiwan, I chanced to gain possession from a reliable source a letter signed by a Mrs. Frieda Blasch, now a resident at Cabarita, New South Wales, Australia. This letter which has not yet been published is addressed to Shêng Shih-ts'ai. It reads as follow:

Mrs. Frieda Blasch,  
53 Cabarita Road,  
Cabarita, N. S. W.,  
Australia.

July 15, 1963.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai,  
ex-Governor-General of Sinkiang, China,  
c/o Post Office General,  
Taipei,  
Formosa.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO CAN'T TALK FOR THEMSELVES

June 8, 1962 I forwarded through the courtesy of the General Consulate of the Republic of China, Sydney, to the



appropriate Authorities in Taipei a request of inquiry into the arrest, treatment and deportation of my husband Hugo Blasch, while residing in Sinkiang during the years of your Governorship of the said Province.

On October 26, 1962 I received a reply stating:

"... inasmuch as a period of twenty three years has elapsed, it is not possible now to ascertain the facts of the case. Furthermore, it would appear that, because of the lapse of time, no judicial action can be taken."

I do hope that you never had the illusion that such an answer would be satisfactory to me.

Before going into details I wish to make it clear to you that I am not thirsting for revenge. But, inasmuch as you are enjoying freedom I am reminding you of your duties towards those who have and still are suffering from the seeds you sowed.

I agree that a considerable time has passed since your reign. So I offer some help to refresh your memory.



Surely you have not forgotten names like Magutnoff, Pappenghut, Bekteleff, Vojekoff, Budaeff, Antonoff; you could not have forgotten the names of your top advisers from the U.S.S.R. — Obuchoff and Salamachin; nor their helpers Stupkin in Urumchi and Uglin in Kuldsha. Just to mention a few. Those are names closely connected with the beginning of your reign.

Of course, considering the enormous number of prisoners from among the White Russian Emigrants, the Chinese population, the various tribes who adhere to the Moslem faith, it is possible that you may not remember "a particular case"! Therefore I waited for the twenty-fourth anniversary and to send you the letter in a most memorable month.

July — should be an outstanding month in your life and memories of Sinkiang.

July — the month when the mass-arrest of the foreigners at that time residing in Sinkiang, took place. From missionary to the simple man, even a woman among them, was flung into prison.

Presently, when you see a missionary or a priest in the streets of Taipei — don't you then remember the arrest



of priests and foreigners in Sinkiang?

Does not every sound of a bell remind you the turning of the church in Urumchi into a torture chamber?

Do you remember that the streets to the vicinity of the Urumchi Catholic Mission were out of bounds to the public?

Will you say that you never heard that the Catholic Mission in Kuldsha was the jail for prisoners held in solitary confinement?

If ever again a Catholic church should be established in Sinkiang it should be dedicated to "The Martyrs".

Churches -- Schools! Every day at school our children had to chant your praises. Yet, you considered it necessary to surround yourself with heavy guard even on such an innocent occasion as a visit to the Urumchi Institute of which you were Head.

You can't tell anyone that you forgot the high-light of your arrests -- one which you performed in person -- the mass-arrest of tutors and students alike -- on the occasion



, of the ending of the school-year 1944. Just a few months before you quit the province.

Don't forget that some of those prisoners are in the Free World -- just as you are!

Think of the women and children you have left without a father. The broken home!

The children are now grown up. Like my own son, they have brought forth a new generation and now I can tell my grandchildren about the past.

"Once we lived in Sinkiang, a province of China. A man called Shêng Shih-ts'ai was reigning then. Terror and anguish was the lot of all people. He turned this beautiful land into one great, big jail. Some lived behind the prison walls. Others lived outside the prison walls; yet, they were regimented just like prisoners.

We had no newspapers, no telephones, no radios, no photo-apparatus -- all those things were counted treason. Not one day passed without arrests. One



night all foreign men were taken; your grandfather too.

They were flung into prison and kept there for two long years. There were no accusations, no trial, no judgment. After two years they were deported to the U.S.S.R. — there death ended their anguish."

And when they will be able to read I can show them the proof — the Death Certificate of their grandfather.

What heroic stories do you tell your grandchildren?

So, if you can't remember the consequences of your reign in Sinkiang — this letter may be of some help.

The generation following our line carry the stamp of innocent victims, to what past does your line point?

(In reference to the past of Sinkiang)

For further proof I have in my possession a copy of the Six Great Principles issued by you in Sinkiang. It is a translation from Chinese into Russian made by Mr. Diakoff, while in prison.



I also have a copy of the speech on the occasion of Peace in Sinkiang; it also was the day of amnesty for political prisoners. The speech was delivered by Chang Chih-chung on July 1, 1946. Here are some extracts:

(in reference to the 1944 revolts):

"The Kuldsha incident was settled by peaceful means. We all know that, from the beginning until the present time, one year and eight months have elapsed, and that during that time both sides and tens of thousands casualties ...

The incident came to a peaceful settlement, of course, because of the anxiety of the Central Government about its people. ... But primarily we must thank our friendly neighbour -- the Soviet Union -- for acting as our mediators ...

(in reference to the past of Sinkiang):

They say that in the past Sinkiang was a large prison. From now on we must make Sinkiang a place of Freedom and equality. They say that in the past



the people of Sinkiang spent their life in unrest and fear. From now on we must strive that everyone in Sinkiang can lead a peaceful and happy life ...."

What comment could be made? The wounds were too great to heal.

Now that you have a clear picture of the past I am proposing four points:

(1) An apology for the past actions committed towards my own family and every other of the foreign community in Sinkiang.

Here is the list:

To the Head of the former Catholic Mission of Sinkiang.

To the relatives of: Mrs. Daus; Messr. H. Blasch, M.

Kloo, Konestschny, Strach, A. Fluch, H. Leeb, A.

Hoeflinger, J. Wiebe, Goossen (three brothers),

Meyer, Kotik, Nachtigal (Among this group is at

least one who, after two years in jail in Urumchi,

was sent out with a group towards the border of



Sinkiang and left on their own to find the way towards Lanchow. That was a journey not forgotten even after twenty-four years).

To Messr. Wiebe sen., Wiebe jun., and Blasch who died in prison in Urumchi.

In fact the list should include: Dr. Jankovsky, Messr. Unger, Heberlein (two brothers), Pfliegel, Fuchs, Mosco (two brothers) and Eisenbrown, but I would be unable to contact their relatives.

(2) Compensation for the loss of the head of the family.

(3) To me personally -- compensation for the plans of the Kash project which my husband made but never was paid a cent.

(4) That you give an account of the sell-out of Sinkiang and so redeem some of the hardships by helping to rebuild China and bring Sinkiang in its proper perspective.

Actually the Chinese in Sinkiang were a minority. 80% of the population of Sinkiang adhere to the Moslem faith. A



fact which was used and played out times and again. But never was the game played harder than during the years 1933 - 1944. Those years were years of anguish, tears and prison.

You know that the consequences were far reaching. That those years were the moulding years for future communistic expansion — not only in China, but were to lead to the insecurity in the whole of Asia.

I hope that you never forget Sinkiang again. May each drop of rain remind you of the tears shed in Sinkiang.

Each time you use you seal — remember how many lives you have sealed away.

May the red ink used remind you of the innocent blood shed in Sinkiang.

Shortly after his re(signed) Frieda Blasche into conflict with Liu Sheng-long who insisted on arranging a peaceful This message, written in a most accusing tone, shows that, despite the material benefits which the people of Sinkiang enjoyed as a result of Shêng's work of reconstruction, they did not lead a happy life there. Obviously, Shêng had relied



too much on terrorism in governing the province. Indeed, no description on him would be complete without a detailed account of this phenomenon.

In order to do Shêng justice, it is necessary to begin the account by mentioning that he was certainly not the first ruler in Sinkiang to resort to terrorist measures. Yang Tsêng-hsin, for instance, is well-known for his practice of assassinating political opponents at banquets. Yet, in this affair, he was excelled by Shêng who made skilful use of terrorism for definite political reasons.

In 1933, Shêng made his initial attempt at terrorising the province by executing T'ao Ming-yüeh, Ch'ên Chung and Li hsiao-t'ien in the presence of Huang Mu-sung, the Pacification Commissioner. The political significance of this has been examined in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

Shortly after his rise to power, Shêng came into conflict with Liu Wên-lung who insisted on arranging a peaceful settlement with Ma Chung-ying. Upon the arrival of Lo Wên-kan, whose duty as a Pacification Commissioner was to bring peace to the border-land, it seemed as if Liu's peaceful policy would prevail over Shêng's desire to exterminate Ma's influence



in the province. However, this was not so. In September 1933, without any fore-warning, Shêng gave order for the arrest of his colleague. Later, he explained this action in detail in the magazine, Anti-Imperialist War Front, Vol. 6, No. 6. He charged Liu for allying with Ma and Chang P'ei-yüan against the Urumchi government. In this connection, he put the blame on Lo Wen-kan. He writes:

"Lo Wen-kan came to Sinkiang under the order of Wang Ching-wei, an agent of Japanese imperialism ... In the province, besides getting in league with Liu and accepting bribes, he was busily engaged in destructive conspiracies. After negotiating with Ma Chung-ying at Turfan, and Chang P'ei-yüan at Ili, he succeeded in urging them to enter into alliance with Liu. With the help of this Tripartite Alliance, he was able to proceed with his anti-revolutionary activities." (1)

Although this accusation failed to convince many people in the province, it served Shêng's purpose. For one thing, Liu was removed, and his position in the provincial government was taken over by Chu Shui-ch'ih, a person with a more submissive character.



The next blow fell on the leaders of the Northeast National Salvation Army. They were arrested upon the charge of instigating conspiracies against the government, and some of them, notably Chêng Jun-oh'êng, were executed. In this case, Shêng's purpose became more evident. Surely, it was not coincident that all the victims of these three incidents, which took place in the same year, were in one way or another connected with the coup d'état of April 12, 1933. There is only one explanation for this. Shêng was elected Tupan by the anti-Chin clique because they needed his military support. This was, as I have pointed out, all in all a compromise. The clique had no intention whatsoever of giving Shêng an opportunity to extend his personal influence, fearing that he might one day turn out to be difficult to control. When Liu Wên-lung insisted on a peaceful policy towards Ma Chung-ying, he had certainly considered the likelihood that continual warfare might work to the advantage of Shêng, whose prestige could easily be enhanced by repeated successes in battles. On the other hand, Shêng, a very ambitious man, was the last person willing to work in a government dominated by a group of people with whom he had no common interest. Only after the anti-Chin clique had been got rid of could he govern the province in his own way. Thus, the three incidents mentioned above were merely his attempts to grasp control over the provincial government. In



this, he was very successful.

In 1937, Shêng organised a purge which, as stated in his memoirs, resulted in the conviction of 435 persons, among whom 33 were sentenced to death (2). However, it is generally believed that the number of victims was much greater. Regardless of the number, the purge was still a striking one, since the leaders of this alleged Trotskyite-Fascist conspiracy were among the important military and political figures in the province. A few names would suffice to illustrate this. The following list is included for this purpose:

Ma Hu-ti (麻木提),

Divisional Commander

Ma Hu-shan,

Divisional Commander

Fan Liang (馮樑),

Chief of the Judge Advocate General's

Department in the Border Defence Commission

Polinoff (波里諾夫),

Major-General

Khodja Nias,

Vice-Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial

Government



**Chang Hsin,**

**Education Commissioner,**

**Ma Chao-wu (馬紹武),**

**Civil Affairs Commissioner,**

**Yu Wen-ping (郁文彬),**

**Reconstruction Affairs Commissioner,**

**Huang Han-chang (黃翰章),**

**Secretary-General of the Sinkiang**

**Provincial Government,**

**Ch'en Tê-li,**

**Administrator of the Ili Region,**

**Burhan (訖爾汗),**

**General Manager of the Sinkiang Local**

**Products Company,**

**Kuang Lu,**

**Former Chinese Consul-General in Russia.**

In the opinion of Allen S. Whiting, the aim of this purge was "to destroy rival centres of potential power" (3). Nevertheless, in so doing, Shêng suffered a very unfortunate consequence, which is pointed out by Whiting as follows:

"One effect of the purge was to weaken his ability to resist Soviet penetration. Leadership was al-



ready scarce in Sinkiang. A purge decimated the ranks of those trained during the first three years of his new regime." (4)

In his memoirs, Sheng claims that he succeeded in 1940 in destroying another scheme of seizing control over the provincial government. In the purge that followed, 481 persons were arrested and, out of this number, 59 were executed (5). The leading conspirators were as follows:

**Tu Chung-yüan,**

Chancellor of Sinkiang College,

**Chang Hung-hsin (張宏興),**

Finance Commissioner,

**Li Pei-k'o. (李佩柯),**

General Manager of Sinkiang Pharmacy,

**Wang Chao-ch'ing (王兆慶),**

Regimental Commander of Tihua Garrison

Forces,

**Yao Hsiung,**

Garrison Commander and Administrator of

the Ili Region,

**Ch'ên Pei-sheng (陳培生),**

Director of Border Affairs,



Tsui Jun-chang (崔榮昌),

Battalion Commander,

Yang Tê-hsiang (楊德祥),

Garrison Commander of the Altai Region,

Chiang Tso-chou (姜作周),

Principal of the Sinkiang Provincial

Middle School,

Liu Kuei-ping (劉貴斌),

Friend of Tu Chung-yüan,

Hsin Kuo-wên (邢國文),

Friend of Tu Chung-yüan,

Abutu (阿不都大毛拉),

Reconstruction Affairs Commissioner,

Kuerpan Niaz (庫爾班尼牙孜),

Vice-Director of the Police Department,

Sarifuhan (沙里夫汗),

Administrator of the Altai Region,

Blakdiyev (別克迭也夫),

Director of the Bureau of Highways.

Tu Chung-yüan, the alleged leader of the conspiracy, later confessed that, in this business, he had received instructions from Chou En-lai (6). But when Shêng reported the matter to Moscow, Tu was termed an agent of Wang Ching-wei (7). In



analysing the objects of the conspirators, Shêng writes:

"Their initial aim was to overthrow the provincial government. After securing their foothold in the province, they would use it as a base for their anti-Soviet activities. In the future, Sinkiang would become a front-post in their invasion of Russia." (8)

The purges of 1937 and 1940 had one point in common: the victims were accused by Shêng as being either Trotskyites or Fascists, who were not only enemies of Sinkiang, but also enemies of the Soviet Union. To understand this, one has to bear in mind that these purges took place when Soviet influence dominated the province. Moreover, in those years, the movement against Trotskyites was in full swing in Russia. By claiming that he had stemmed a Trotskyite-Fascist conspiracy, Shêng killed two birds with one stone. Besides getting rid of the unfriendly elements in the provincial government, he won the approval of the Soviets who were definitely pleased to be informed of the doom of the Trotskyites. After all, it was extremely convenient for him to label those who resisted his pro-Soviet leanings Trotskyites.



The purge of 1942 can be viewed in the same light. The fact that the victims of this purge, which took place almost immediately after the visit of General Chu Shao-liang to the province as a representative of Chiang Kai-shek, were mostly Soviets and Chinese Communists is exceedingly suggestive. Evidently, it represented Shêng's willingness to shift his loyalty from Russia to China. But before he could do this, the Russians, together with their sympathizers, had to be removed. Once again, mass-arrest and mass-slaughter became an instrument for his political manoeuvre. As he relates in his memoirs, 656 persons were arrested in this purge, and 88 of them were eventually executed (9). The key figures of the victims are listed in the following:

**Bakulin,**

**Soviet Consul-General in Tihua,**

**Latoff,**

**Chief Soviet Military Adviser of the**

**Border Defence Commission,**

**Tsêng Ku-fêng (成谷華).**

**Finance Commissioner of the Sinkiang**

**Provincial Government,**

**Li I-ou (李一歐),**

**Education Commissioner,**



**Mao Tse-min,**

**Civil Affairs Commissioner,**

**P'an P'o-nan (潘柏年),**

**Garrison Commander of Hojen & member of the  
Chinese Communist Party,**

**Lu Yu-ling (盧毓慶),**

**Administrator of the Hojen Region,**

**Ch'ên Fan-po (陳方伯),**

**Administrator of the Karashar Region,**

**Yu Teh-yi (于德一),**

**Administrator of the Yenchi Region,**

**Chao Chien-fêng (趙劍峰),**

**Administrator of the Tacheng Region,**

**Liu Hsi-p'ing (劉西屏),**

**Administrator of the Hami Region and member  
of the Chinese Communist Party,**

**Wang Pao-ch'ien (王寶乾),**

**Publisher of the Sinkiang Jih Pao and  
member of the All-Union Communist Party,**

**Meng Yi-ming (孟一鳴),**

**Chairman of the Sinkiang Translation and  
Compilation Commission and member of the  
Chinese Communist Party,**

**Wang Tsi-hsiung (王齊勳),**



Chairman of the Sinkiang Finance Supervisory Commission.

The last of the purges organised by Shêng in Sinkiang took place on August 11, 1944. A detailed account of it is given in Chapter Seven of Shêng Shih-ts'ai tsen-yang t'ung-ch'ih Sinkiang. This section of the book contains much valuable, though biased, material on the purge, in which most of the authors, being then representatives of the Chungking government in the province, were victimized. Besides, Lin Pê-ya, who has given me a lot of help in the writing of this dissertation, was among the victims. Indeed, he suffered so greatly from the torture that he once tried to kill himself with a broken piece of a rice bowl. As for the cause of the purge, it is believed that, after the Soviets had succeeded in repelling the invasion of the German forces, Shêng regretted to have severed his connection with Russia. Hoping to regain Stalin's friendship, he gave orders for the arrest of the Chinese officers who had been sent there by Chiang Kai-shek since 1942. Accepting the validity of this argument, I however tend to place greater importance on Shêng's growing dissatisfaction with the arrangements made by Chungking in the province. As I have repeatedly stated, many of Shêng's actions in Sinkiang were guided by the desire to maintain his personal power. When



he vowed to be loyal to Chungking, he had no idea that Chinese influence could be extended to this part of the border-land at such a rapid speed. By 1944, representatives from the interior had filled most of the important positions in the provincial government, and Chinese troops had been stationed at various parts of the province. He was frightened to discover that, in a short span of two years, he had become practically powerless, though nominally he was still the civil and the military leader. In his fright, he resorted to the desperate measure of throwing himself once again to the embrace of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, he was shocked to realise that Stalin was no more interested. Moreover, taking this opportunity to avenge the treacherous defection of Sheng, the Soviet leader informed Chungking of this. Most probably, Chiang Kai-shek had expected something of this kind. Prompt action was taken and, on August 29, Sheng was notified of his transfer to Chungking, where he was offered a sinecure. On September 11, accompanied by Chu Shao-liang, he bid farewell to Sinkiang.

(Sinkiang Year of Birth, p. 272), the actual figure should be much greater.

(6) The confession is found in Appendix 3 of this dissertation.

(7) Cited in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, p. 203.



## NOTES

- (1) Quoted in Su-shih-nien tung-luan Sinkiang, p. 94. However, in the same book, p. 95, the author, Chang Ta-chün, quotes a part of Shêng's report to Stalin, which stated that Liu was arrested because of his opposition to the policy of pro-Russianism adopted by the new Sinkiang government. The Tripartite Alliance was not mentioned in this report.
- (2) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 179.
- (3) Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 53.
- (4) Ibid.
- (5) These are only figures given in Shêng's memoirs (Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 270), the actual figures should be much greater.
- (6) The confession is found in Appendix B of this dissertation.
- (7) Quoted in Su-shih-nien tung-luan Sinkiang, p. 103.



(8) Ibid.

(9) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 240.



## CONCLUSION

In the first half of the twentieth century, Sinkiang, constantly <sup>e</sup>manacled by internal chaos and external threat, was in a very insecure position. Consequently, the main concern of its local rulers was to strive to bring to the people peace and order. They never dreamed of the necessity of doing anything else. Nor were they expected to do so. Yang Tsêng-hsin, who succeeded in giving the province a period of comparative stability, was highly extolled, despite the fact that, under his governorship, this frontier territory suffered from backwardness and stagnation. Indeed, under such adverse conditions, it taxed a man of remarkable ability and political insight to embark upon a policy of reconstruction.

Undoubtedly, Shêng Shih-ts'ai excelled both of his predecessors — Yang Tsêng-hsin and Chin Shu-jên — in ability and training. In the twelve years of his rule, he rendered invaluable services to Sinkiang. Having brought order out of chaos, he introduced a programme of reforms which, if successfully carried out, would transform the originally backward province into what he termed a "New Sinkiang". His work in this field has been examined in detail in Chapter Four of this dissertation. Nevertheless, it is discouraging



to note that his labour is not sufficiently compensated by favourable response from those who display considerable interest in this part of the Chinese border-land.

It is contended that, during Shêng's rule, peace and order were attained at the cost of too many lives. Moreover, in spite of his terrorist measures, the peacefulness of the province was still disturbed by occasional outbreak of conspiracies. Although I am inclined to think highly of Shêng's achievements, I have to admit the justification of this criticism, as his actions in this respect can hardly be defended.

In history, terrorism has frequently been practised, particularly in totalitarian states, as a tool of government. The following quotation from Chou-li (周禮) is often used by totalitarian autocrats in defence of their actions:

"In a nation which is newly established, laws should be lenient; in a normal country, they should be moderate; and in a state which is in grave turmoil, they should be severe."

However, in my opinion, even if the country is extremely chaotic, there should still be a limit to such practice.



because disturbing conditions are no excuse for human slaughter. Besides, it is always difficult to tell whether this is executed in the interest of the country concerned, or purely in the interest of the ruler himself, as in most cases, the ruler, spurred by selfish motives, is tempted to resort to terrorist measures in the name of the government. To a certain extent, this is applicable to some of Shêng's actions in Sinkiang.

In his memoirs, Shêng states that only about two hundred people were punished with death under his rule (1). The following is a table illustrating this point:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ARRESTS</u>	<u>EXECUTIONS</u>
1933	...	3
1934	142	30
1937	435	33
1940	481	59
1942	656	88
1944	220	0

He further asserts that, when the decisions were made, he had only the welfare of the province in mind. According to him, these two hundred odd culprits were, without exception, conspirators plotting to overthrow his "enlightened" government



and, by executing them, he protected the territorial integrity of the province (2). More than once, he makes excessive effort to stress his leniency and magnanimity in this matter (3). Nevertheless, one wonders how far this policy was actually followed. Indeed, much of what has been said by Shêng is open to query. The book, Shêng Shih-ts'ai tsen-yang t'ung-ch'ih Sinkiang, includes a list which gives the names of those killed in the years when Shêng was Tupan of the province (4). Its authors insist that this list, with as many as 895 names, represents only a small portion of the total number, which comes to well over eighty thousand. The figure is, in every way, terrific, considering the fact that Sinkiang was at that time very sparsely populated. When the above-quoted letter is studied together with this, one can hardly give any weight to Shêng's statement that he had only executed two hundred people. In my discussion with H.T.D. Prince of Torghut, I was informed that many of the executions were done without Shêng's knowledge. Even if this is true, the figure of eighty thousand is still too big to allow any place for justification.

Shêng's policy of pro-Russianism forms another target of criticism. While maintaining that pro-Soviet leanings are treasonable, his political opponents attack his work of re-



construction as serving only the interests of Russia. This accusation, much less justified, in my opinion, than the previous one, is often motivated by personal prejudice.

I am convinced that Shêng, imbued with radical ideas, had a genuine desire to improve the abject conditions of Sinkiang. His Six Great Policies outlined his plan of reaching this goal. Without question, this programme was an ambitious one, and it stood little chance of success if the provincial government was left to undertake the work alone. Unfortunately, Nanking was at that time unable to offer any help. Anxious to put his ideas into practice, Shêng was forced to avail himself of the other alternative. Consequently, Soviet assistance was sought. Any one who is willing to approach this matter objectively would inevitably conclude that, in making this decision, Shêng acted in the manner of a realist who faced his problems boldly.

After all, pro-Russian inclination was not Shêng's creation. In 1924, Dr. Sun Yat-sen and members of the Kuomintang found it necessary to enlist the help of the Soviets in the reorganisation of the Nationalist government. Shêng was a man of progressive thinking, and it is impossible that he, so much interested in the study of political science,



could be immune from the influence of Soviet philosophy. Should he truly be affected, he had every reason to be guided in his actions by his political belief. He correctly writes in his memoirs:

"Faith and truth are the very foundations upon which the conduct of one's whole life is based, however. Only by taking a doctrine which embodies truth and by joining a political party which fights for fulfillment of truth is there any prospect of realizing the welfare of the people, the country, and humanity. Only then will a democratic world based upon equality, mutual help, freedom, and happiness come into being." (5)

Furthermore, pro-Russian leanings were required, even if the matter is viewed in a practical way. In the days of Chin Shu-jên, Sinkiang had already been dominated by Soviet economic influence and, in the fall of 1933, Shêng found out from his own experience that, in the event of an internal revolt, Russian military assistance was indispensable. Since the help of this Soviet neighbour was needed in more ways than one, it is but natural that he should try to win her friendship.



In addition, in the era of warlordism, it was a common phenomenon for local leaders to take up an independent foreign policy. Before Shêng came to Sinkiang, he had participated in the struggle of warlords by helping Kuo Sung-ling against Chang Tso-lin. As he had become familiar with their ways, it is not surprising that he should behave like one himself.

Yet, Shêng was different from most of the warlords. Besides working for his self-interest, he sincerely attempted to do good to his people by introducing cultural and educational reforms. After being indoctrinated with new ideas, they were given the impetus for self-expression and autonomous development. For this, they were grateful. A refugee from the Ili area is reported to have said:

"It is true that those of our people who lived in Russia suffered from collectivization. It is also true that many of my subjects were killed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai and by the Chinese Communists after him. Yet is this entirely bad? I remember as a child how my father's household was the only one which could read. The rest of our people lived in darkness and ignorance. Then Soviet help and Shêng's rule enabled them to read. Now they



can hope to improve their way of life. Can we deny our people progress for the sake of the few who die?" (6)

Lastly, in the study of the history of Sinkiang under Shêng Shih-ts'ai, one has to bear in mind that Shêng's independence of the central government was a sign of the failure of the traditional policy of China over her frontier territories. Nevertheless, in face of numerous problems, the local government could rarely survive independently. Reliance on a foreign neighbour was an alternative. But in doing so, a price, a very high one, had to be paid. Shêng's shift of allegiance in 1942 shows his difficulty in adjusting this Sino-Soviet-Sinkiang relation, and his final transfer in 1944 proves that personal rule, however powerful it might be, collapsed without the support of a foreign power.



## NOTES

- (1) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, pp. 270 - 271.
- (2) Compare Ch'ên Chi-ying, op. cit., p. 4.
- (3) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, pp. 161, 179, and 271.
- (4) Kuang Lu and others, op. cit., pp. 35 - 48.
- (5) Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, p. 247.
- (6) Ibid., p. 132.



## APPENDIX A

### TREATY OF NON-AGGRESSION BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The National Government of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, animated by the desire to contribute to the maintenance of general peace, to consolidate the amicable relations now existing between them on a firm and lasting basis, and to confirm in a more precise manner the obligations mutually undertaken under the Treaty for the Renunciation of War signed in Paris on August 27, 1938, have resolved to conclude the present Treaty and have for this purpose appointed as their plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

His Excellency the President of the National Government  
of the Republic of China:

Dr. Wang Chung-hui, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics:

Mr. Dimitri Bogomoloff, Ambassador Extraordinary  
and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of China.

who having communicated their full powers, found in good and



due form, have agreed upon the following Articles:

Article I. The two High Contracting Parties solemnly affirm that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and that they renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with each other, and in pursuance of this pledge, they undertake to refrain from any aggression against each other either individually or jointly with one or more other Powers.

Article II. In the event that either of the two High Contracting Parties should be subjected to aggression on the part of one or more third Powers, the other High Contracting Party obligates itself not to render assistance of any kind, either directly or indirectly, to such third Power or Powers at any time during the entire conflict, and also to refrain from taking any action or entering into any agreement which may be used by the aggressor or aggressors to the disadvantage of the party subjected to aggression.

Article III. The provisions of the present Treaty shall not be so interpreted as to affect or modify the rights and obligations arising, in respect of the High Contracting Parties, out of bilateral or multi-lateral treaties or agreements of



which both High Contracting Parties are signatories and which were concluded prior to the entering into force of the present Treaty.

Article IV. The present Treaty is drawn up in duplicate in English. It comes into force on the day of signature by the above-mentioned Plenipotentiaries and shall remain in force for a period of five years. Either of the High Contracting Parties may notify the other, six months before the expiration of the period, of its desire to terminate the Treaty. In case both parties fail to do so in time, the Treaty shall be considered as being automatically extended for a period of two years after the expiration of the first period. Should neither of the High Contracting Parties notify the other, six months before the expiration of the two-year period, of its desire to terminate the Treaty, it shall continue in force for another period of two years, and so on successively.

In witness whereof the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty, and have affixed thereunto their seals.

Done at Nanking, the Twenty-first day of August, 1937.



Wang Chung-hui.

D. Bogomoloff.

(From: Aitchen K. Wu, China and the Soviet Union: A Study of Sino-Soviet Relations,  
London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950).



## APPENDIX B

### CONFESSION OF TU CHUNG-YUAN

Acting on the orders of Chou En-lai, the Chinese Communist Party's chief representative in Chungking, I came to Sinkiang to seek an expansion of the Communist organization here by taking full advantage of my personal relations with Commissioner Shêng. According to Chou's instructions, my work was to be carried out in two stages. During the first stage, every means were to be taken to win Commissioner Shêng over to the side of the Chinese Communists. If this proved a success, Commissioner Shêng and I were to join hands in making Sinkiang a Chinese Communist base for the sovietization of China. If this proved a failure, I should proceed to the second stage of my work. During this stage, a revolutionary force was to be secretly organized and a Communist regime was to be instituted at the opportune moment to replace the administration headed by Commissioner Shêng.

When Chou En-lai dictated his orders to me, I told him that I would try my best in carrying out the mission of the first stage. But it seemed improper for me during the second stage to plot against Commissioner Shêng, who was not only my



friend but also my former schoolmate and a compatriot of my native province. I therefore begged him to send another person to carry out the mission of the second stage. Chou was very much displeased with my request. "It is a surprise to me that you are still full of feudalistic thoughts," he said. "How can you neglect the orders of the party? If you are a faithful follower of the teachings of Marx and Lenin, you should absolutely obey the orders of your party. If it is the order of the party, you can even plot against your brother, and certainly against your friend or schoolmate or a compatriot of your native province."

"Please don't be angry at my words," I said. "As a member of the Party, I shall obey its orders. I must admit that I am not a well-trained member of the party. Therefore I beg your pardon for making the request."

At the first stage of my interview and proceeded at once to the

At this point Chou En-lai changed his tone and spoke softly to me. "I am glad that you have realized that you are sent by the party for this specific mission because of your intimate relations with Commissioner Shêng."

I then told Chou En-lai that I was a cultural worker and had no experience in instigating riots and uprisings. I asked



for instructions as to how to proceed to the second stage of my mission in case the first proved a failure.

"The difficult and dangerous mission of organising the rioters and instigating the uprisings does not rest with you alone," Chou said. "There will be others to help you. Comrades Sheng Yen-ping, Shih Mei, Sa Kung-liao and Chang Chung-shih will come to your aid. Moreover, the experienced staff members of the Soviet Consulate will give you all the necessary assistance."

After I arrived in Sinkiang, I found out that Commissioner Sheng is well versed in political theories and philosophy and therefore I did not dare to persuade him to go over to the side of the Communists. Upon the pressure of the Chinese Communists and the staff members of the Soviet Consulate, I skipped over the first stage of my mission and proceeded at once to the second stage. I regret having done such a thing to my old friend. If Commissioner Sheng should commute the sentence in consideration of our past friendship, I would strive to requite his kindness.

(signed) Tu Chung-yüan

June 20, 1942.



(From: Allen S. Whiting & Shông Shih-

ts'ai: Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?

Michigan: Michigan State Univer-  
sity Press, 1958.)

I made the acquaintance of the author of this book  
in 1948 when he was in the U.S. Army. At that time  
relations were even colder. During the war, I had  
known three months before he came to the U.S. and  
that the reason for Chang's leaving China was to go  
for a Russian girl. I had also learned that the  
Government had tried to persuade him to return; yet he  
had stayed in Moscow because of his Russian girl. I was  
not only angry but also hated him. Once I said, "As your  
husband is in love with somebody else, your future is quite  
hopeless. Your husband is a college graduate, while you have  
not even graduated from a middle school. So ride a gay cat  
between you with respect to your position that he would  
eventually take a college graduate as his wife, even if he  
does not bring the Russian girl with him to Sinkiang. It will



## APPENDIX C

### WRITTEN CONFESSION BY CHIEN HSIU-YING

After his graduation from the Red Military Academy in Moscow, Sheng Shih-ch'i originally planned to return to China together with me and our children. As he could not leave within a short period, he asked me to return to Tihua first with our children. I made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Latoff in Moscow, and we were on very good terms. After my return to Tihua, our relations were even closer. There was no news of Sheng's homecoming three months after my return. One day Latoff told me that the reason for Sheng's lingering in Moscow was his love for a Russian girl. I was seriously perturbed at the time. I learned that the Commissioner had cabled his brother urging him to return; yet he still did not come. I thought he must have lingered in Moscow because of that Russian girl. I was not only angry but also hated him. Once Latoff said, "As your husband is in love with somebody else, your future is quite hopeless. Your husband is a college graduate, while you have not even graduated from a middle school. So wide a gap exists between you with respect to your education that he would eventually take a college graduate to be his wife, even if he does not bring the Russian girl back to Sinkiang. He would



never want you again." On hearing Latoff's words, I was very much disheartened, believing that my future was all over. I wept for a whole day and slept two days.

On another occasion Latoff asked me whether I knew anything that had happened recently. I replied that I did not, and asked him what he had heard. He said that he had better keep his mouth shut for fear that I might either tell other people or report to the government. I said I would not do this. He replied that, if I could keep a secret, he would take me into his confidence. "As a young Communist in the All-Union Communist Party, I have to keep secret whatever a Russian has to say to me," was my reply. Then Latoff laughed and said, "I can tell you now." He added that within Sinkiang all peoples as well as government and military officials were against Commissioner Shêng, while both the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communists were dissatisfied with him. There was a plan afoot to unite all the forces, both internal and external, to overthrow Commissioner Shêng. "You know well that I am deeply concerned over your welfare," Latoff said. "However, no matter how bright is the future of Commissioner Shêng and your husband, it makes very little difference to you. The brighter is their future, the higher will be your husband's position and the more anxious will he be to marry a girl of higher education. From



this perspective, the future of Shêng's family has nothing to do with you. On the other hand, if everything does not go well with Shêng's family, you will be involved. As you are a member of the Shêng family, those who are against the government will never forgive you. For this reason, I hope you will plan everything beforehand for yourself." I was seriously agitated and could not go to sleep that night.

Since then I did not take good care of my children but spent my time in riotous living. It was in this period of great anxiety that Shêng Shih-ch'í returned to Tihua from Moscow. He did not bring home his Russian wife and was as kind to me as he had ever been. Gradually, I became my normal self, taking good care of our children. Everything went on well until after quite a while after my husband's return, when my sister-in-law, Shih-tung, spoke ill of me to him. He began to get angry with me, accusing me of having neglected the children and having fooled around most of the time. I was very unhappy and could not help deluding myself into thinking that he must have become tired of me and planned to take a college graduate to be his wife.

Seeing that I was in very good mood since the return of Shêng Shih-ch'í, Latoff, whenever I saw him, did not say any-



thing more to me. When I said that my husband did not bring home the Russian girl, he replied that it was not because he did not want to bring her home but that the Soviet Union would not let him. One day he saw that I was very much depressed. Taking advantage of this opportunity, he said, "Everything is not going on well. You should make your own plans. Or you will simply sacrifice yourself for the Shêng family."

"Did you hear something bad recently?" I asked.

He replied, "I cannot tell you, because you will tell your husband."

"I shall not, because our relations now are far from good. Please tell me!" I entreated.

Then he said that on the occasion of the April Uprising anniversary, the revolutionary organisation which had among its supporters all important government and military officials both within and without the province would assassinate Commissioner Shêng and seize the political power of the province. At the time of the riot the Eighth Regiment of the Red Army stationed at Hami and the Red forces at the aircraft factory, assisted by formations of Red airplanes from Alma-Ata, would



participate in the fighting. In the light of the present situation, there was a fair chance for the revolution to succeed. The fate of members of the Shêng household was doomed.

I then said, "I am scared. As a young Communist in the All-Union Communist Party, can you and Consul General Bakulin help me?"

To this he answered, "Of course, we can find ways and means to save your life, but it is very difficult. You being the wife of the Commissioner's brother, people would not believe you, even if you tell them that you are against Commissioner Shêng."

"What can I do then?"

"If you obey the order of the All-Union Communist Party and do something for the cause of the revolution, then the Consul General may be able to say something on your behalf and help you."

"What can I do?"

"What I am afraid of is that you may not have enough



determination and courage. You women cannot be trusted. If I tell you, you will tell your husband. Then everything would be finished."

"Please tell me. I only care for my own safety and shall not tell my husband what you say."

He then said, "If the party orders you to kill Commissioner Shêng and your husband, can you do that?"

To this I answered, "I cannot. First, I have no such courage. Secondly, how can I be so hardhearted as to do so?"

"If so, you have no way for salvation, and you are not even a member of the All-Union Communist Party. You have to take the order of your party, even if it were to kill your own parents and brother. Only then are you a good and devoted party member. You had better think it over and we shall discuss it again. What I have said to you today should be kept as an absolute secret from your husband. If you tell him tonight, that means the end of your life by tomorrow."

"I shall not tell him. Don't worry. Please think over if there is any other way to save my life," was my answer.



Le Mo was then sick and lay on bed crying. It further depressed my gloomy mood. One day, just after my husband had gone to office, Hsiao Tso-hsin came to see me, saying that Latoff wanted me to go to his house at once. He warned, "I cannot think of a good way to save your life. The All-Union Communist Party, with a view to saving your life, orders you to assassinate your husband." I readily said, "I cannot take this order. First, I have no such courage to kill him. Secondly, even if I could kill him, his brother would surely beat me to death. Should I sacrifice my life just because I try to save it?"

Latoff, in obvious displeasure, replied, "If you would not do so, we have no way to save your life. If you disobey the order of the party, it will also wash its hands of your affair." Seeing that I was frightened, he continued, "The party has thoroughly considered your case, trying to save your life in every conceivable way. Because of your close connection with the Shêng family, it cannot save your life unless you render some meritorious service for the cause of the revolution. If you can carry out your mission as directed, there is no danger whatsoever for the following reasons. First, Commissioner Shêng and all your family members would never suspect that you are the culprit, causing the death of your



husband. Secondly, even if Commissioner Shêng suspected that you had killed your husband, he could not beat you to death on the spot and would probably send you to the court for trial. The uprising would have broken out at the time of trial. The first thing for the revolutionaries to do would be to release all political prisoners. The time of assassination would be in close co-ordination with the revolutionary uprising on April 12. In other words, even if you were arrested and tried, the time of trial would not be far away from that of the uprising."

"Furthermore, your father-in-law, mother-in-law, and sister-in-law may possibly let you live to take care of your children -- one boy and two girls -- even after the death of your husband. They would not put you to immediate death. In view of the above, you will not run danger of any kind. So I advise you to take the order of the party. As to the details of your mission, I shall tell you later. If you obey the order of the party, it will be responsible for the protection of your life. Otherwise, it can do nothing for you."

Under the inducements and threats of Latoff, I accepted the mission to kill my husband. Latoff then said that he would report to the party authorities my acceptance of this



order. I regretted having promised to take the order of the party after returning home, and felt very sad. When my husband came home for lunch, seeing that I was fidgeting, he asked me what was wrong. I replied that I did not feel well because He Mo was sick. In the evening he asked me where I went during the day. To this I answered that I had been to Latoff's home. He advised me to stay at home to look after the children and not to go to see Latoff so often. I could not go to sleep that night when I thought of that terrible mission. I was dejected and prone to beating and scolding the children. For almost one week I did not go out. One day Hsiao Tso-hsin called on me, saying that Latoff wanted to see me immediately for some important matter. Next day, when I saw Latoff he told me that the situation was getting tense and that the revolution would come around after one month. He further said that I should do the preparatory work for the mission I had promised to carry out. I begged him to reconsider whether it was possible to have a man to undertake this task. Being a woman, I was not fitted to do this work. Should it fail, to sacrifice my own life would be quite immaterial, but it would upset the whole plan of the party.

Latoff did not try to conceal his displeasure. He said, however, that he had already reported to the party authorities



regarding my acceptance of the mission. Should I fail to carry out the order, the party would expel me. Furthermore, it would notify my husband in this connection. As both my husband and Commissioner Sheng did not know that I had joined the All-Union Communist Party, it would be very bad for me, because I had joined without the permission of my husband. Furthermore, my husband was not a member of the All-Union Communist Party. I replied that everything would not be so serious as it might seem. In fact, I had not disobeyed the party's order. What I had said was simply to ask him to report to the party authorities on my behalf that I was not a suitable person to carry out this mission. Should they insist on my doing the work, I would still do it. But I would not be held responsible, should I fail to carry out the mission.

Latoff then said, "This is not at all necessary, because the party believes that you are the most suitable person to do the work. Now that you are willing to undertake this task, you just go ahead and do it." He asked me further whether I had had the experience of shooting a pistol. My reply was in the negative. He then said, "This is what I think. Ask your husband for a pistol under the pretext that Ke Mo was afraid of ghosts — that with a pistol placed under his pillow he would sleep more peacefully." I told him that I doubted whether



he would give me the pistol. Then Latoff said that in this case he would give me one. He said further that if my husband consented to give me the pistol, I had to have it tested to see whether it was good. Finally he again warned me to make due preparation for the mission I had undertaken and at the same time to be as submissive and kind to my husband as I could, so that members of my family would not suspect me. He also told me that my brother Chen Yu-chang had joined the All-Union Communist Party and taken active part in the revolutionary organisation headed by Bakulin, Hsu Chieh, and Chou Ping. The revolutionary strength was very great.

I immediately called on my brother and asked him if he knew what Latoff has asked me to do. His reply was that he had known it long ago. Bakulin had told him that he would give me such a work. He did not quite agree with it, for fear that I might not be equal to such a task. Now that I had promised to take it, he advised me to go ahead and do it. I asked him whether they would save me should I be arrested and put into prison. My brother answered, "The revolutionary strength is tremendous. The uprising scheduled to take place on the April 12 Anniversary is bound to succeed. Even if you were unfortunately imprisoned, they will surely do everything possible to save you." With such an assurance given by my



brother, I was greatly encouraged.

I went ahead with my preparations exactly in accordance with the instruction given by Latoff. Hsiao Tso-hsin called on me after a few days, asking me how far I had gone with my preparatory work. I pretended not to understand him. He then said, "Don't conceal it from me. I know everything. Both your brother and I have taken part in the revolutionary organisation." I asked him who sent him here to make the inquiry. He whispered that he was sent by Consul General Bakulin. I frankly told him that I had completed all necessary work. He wished me success, but cautioned me that I should carry out my mission two weeks before the April 12 Anniversary.

As soon as I had completed my preparatory work, I reported to Latoff. He was very much satisfied but said, "You should best carry out your mission either in late March or early April. When you shoot, shoot right through the head of Commander Sheng. In case it is discovered by your family members, you may say that it was an accident caused either by the children when they played with a pistol or by your husband when he taught the children how to shoot. If you are unfortunately placed under arrest, you should under no circumstances make a confession. If this cannot be avoided, you can give any



other reason you can think of than that you are ordered to do so by the revolutionary organisation through me. If you can hold out until April 12, you will be saved from the very moment of the outbreak of the uprising." He paused for a while and continued, "If Commissioner Shêng comes to the South Garden, you can kill him first, if possible." I replied that I dared not shoot him.

Everything was then set in readiness to carry out the plot at the end of March. My husband did not suspect me, because I was particularly good to him and did everything as he told me. However, I overheard a talk exchanged between my mother-in-law and sister-in-law one day. The latter said, "It is funny that Chen Hsiu-ying has entirely changed in the past two weeks. She is no longer her former self with respect to her conduct. She is particularly good to my fourth brother." The old lady replied, "The younger people are always like that. When they have patience, everything would be all right. I have the same feeling about my fourth daughter-in-law. She is more amiable now."

Hsiao Tso-hsin came again on March 27 and said in an undertone, "I am instructed by Consul General Bakulin and Adviser Latoff to inform you that you should carry out your



mission within three days." Thus, I assassinated my husband at around 8 o'clock at night on March 29.

Being an ignorant woman, I was victimized by Latoff under his dual tactics of inducement and pressure. I am deeply grieved at having committed such an unpardonable sin. If the government and Commissioner Shêng would not sentence me to death, in consideration of the fact that I committed the crime not on my own free volition but through the insinuation and pressure of others, I would henceforth take good care of my children, and be filial to my father-in-law and mother-in-law. When the children grow up, I shall together with them wreak my vengeance on Bakulin and Latoff for my husband, so that he may lay in peace. If the government and Commissioner Shêng cannot forgive me and sentence me to death, it is what I deserve and I have no grudge against anyone. All that I ask of Commissioner Shêng is to give a copy of my written confession to my children, so that they will know that I killed my husband, because I had been intimidated, and cheated by the Soviet Communists, Bakulin and Latoff. When they grow up, I hope they will kill the enemies of my husband and myself. If so, even if I die, I can rest in peace.

However, the root of all mistakes was my having joined



the All-Union Communist Party in Moscow, and my belief in communism, thus giving them a chance to exercise their pressure over me, and leaving me no other alternative than to take their orders. I hope with all my heart that my children will be anti-Communist and take upon themselves the duty to extinguish the Communists.

Chen Hsiu-ying

April 14, 1942.

(From: Allen S. Whiting & Shêng Shih-ts'ai, Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?

Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1958.)



## APPENDIX D

### CONFESSION OF MAO TSE-MIN

Before I write my confession, I must offer my apology to Commissioner Shêng who has been very kind to me and the other Chinese Communists.

I believe it is the Soviet Union, rather than Sinkiang and the Chinese Communist Party, who should be chiefly responsible for the worsening of Sinkiang-Soviet and Sinkiang-Yenan relations. It is my firm belief that Commissioner Shêng is a faithful follower of Marxism-Leninism. His book entitled The Six Great Policies is proof of his profound understanding of the ideologies of Marx and Lenin. His policy of kinship to sovietism and his aid and assistance to the Chinese Communist Party is proof of his ability to put these ideologies into practice.

Two reasons accounted for the worsening of the relations between Sinkiang on the one hand and the Soviet and Chinese Communists on the other. First, Moscow and Yenan thought that Commissioner Shêng distrusted the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party. Second, Commissioner Shêng thought that the



policy of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party was to undermine Sinkiang. When I was in Moscow under medical treatment, I had more than once advised the Soviet policy-makers to give up temporarily their policy of undermining Sinkiang. I suggested that they should instruct Miss Liu Yen to take every possible means to win the Sinkiang authorities over to the Communist side. I told them that the policy of "undermining" and the policy of "persuading" are contradictory to each other. If both policies were adopted at the same time, they were doomed to failure. They concurred with me in my opinion, but they never took my advice in practice.

Two other errors have been committed by the Soviet Union. First, she insisted on leasing the Sinkiang tin mines for a period of fifty years. This was considered by Commissioner Shêng as an act of aggression. Second, she prevented Commissioner Sheng from becoming a member of the Chinese Communist Party and insisted that he could only join the All-Union Communist Party, thus creating the impression that she has territorial ambitions towards Sinkiang. Because of these mistaken policies on the part of the Soviet Union, Commissioner Shêng lost his confidence in Stalin and in Marxism-Leninism,

The Chinese Communists had no other alternative but to



follow the course of the Soviet Union. The idea of assassinating Brigade Commander Shêng Shih-ch'i originated not from Yen-an, but from Moscow. Moreover, it was the errors of Comrade Fang Lin alone, and not the errors of the Chinese Communist Party, that made Commissioner Shêng distrust the Chinese Communists. Comrade Fang Lin intended to make a hero of himself by getting rid of Commissioner Shêng and taking the political power into his own hands. The mistakes committed by Fang Lin had put the Chinese Communist Party at a great disadvantage.

Fang Lin had also brought me into serious trouble. He first created a dissension between me and my wife, resulting in our divorce. Then he caused Miss Chu Tan-hua to marry me. Through Miss Chu, he attempted to win me over his side — a fact which I did not find out until after our marriage. He wanted to win me over to his side because he knew that I was the one who reported his misdeeds to Commissioner Shêng and who suggested that he should be replaced. (I made the suggestion because I believed at that time that Fang Lin's leaving Sinkiang would help to maintain Sinkiang-Yenan relations and enhance the personal friendship between Commissioner Shêng and Chairman Mao Tse-tung). Fang Lin also knew that Commissioner Shêng once advised me not to marry Miss Chu Tan-hua



in order to avoid the criticism of others. For this reason Fang Lin always entertained the suspicion that Commissioner Shêng and I were on very intimate terms. Apparently he wanted to drive a wedge between me and Commissioner Shêng by urging me and Miss Chu Tan-hua to unite in matrimony. I deeply regret that I ignored Commissioner Shêng's kind advice and allowed myself to be allured into a snare.

The Chinese Communists should be sorry for Tu Chung-yüan's subversive activities in Sinkiang in 1940. However, Tu was not instigated by my brother, but by the well-known conspirator, Chou En-lai, to undermine Sinkiang. On the surface, Chou's purpose of undermining Sinkiang was to control the land route to Russia. As a matter of fact, his real motive in seizing Sinkiang was to expand his own influence. It must be noted that Tsou Tao-feng and Hu Yü-chih of the Life Book Store were Chou En-lai's intimate friends. It was through the recommendation of Tsou Tao-feng and Hu Yü-chih that Tu Chung-yüan and Kao Tsung-ming became members of the Chinese Communist Party. In the end, Tu Chung-yüan was closely connected with the Chou En-lai clique. My brother always said that Chou En-lai was one of few Communists who like to create dissension among his fellow party members. He was chiefly responsible for the strifes within the party during the early period of



the Communist movement in Kiangai.

The policy of the Chinese Communists towards Sinkiang was carried out in three stages. During the first stage, every possible means was taken to win Commissioner Shêng over to the side of the Communists and to help him build up a New Sinkiang. During the second stage, the Communist position was consolidated and preparations were made to undermine the local government. During the third stage, all measures were taken to overthrow the existing administration that advocated the six great policies and to replace it with a Soviet regime independent of the Chinese government.

I was always of the opinion that the policies of both the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communists towards Sinkiang were mistaken. As a member of the Chinese Communist Party, however, I could not raise objections to them. Both the Soviet and Chinese Communists have failed to understand the character and the extraordinary tact of Commissioner Shêng. The more Moscow and Yanan attempted to undermine Sinkiang, the closer was the province to the Kuomintang and farther away from the Chinese Communists. I know long ago that if the situation remained unchanged, grave consequences would follow. It was for this reason that in the past I often asked leave of absence



from Commissioner Shêng and went to Moscow for medical treatment. It was also for this reason that in the past I often advised Commissioner Shêng to join the Chinese Communist Party and then either to leave Sinkiang for Yenan or bring his army to the interior part of China and make it a strong anti-Japanese force. I also told him that if his troops could leave Sinkiang, I would be willing to work in the political department of the army under his command. Unfortunately I could not tell him the reason for my giving such advice and thus increased his suspicion against me. As a matter of fact, in giving Commissioner Shêng the advice, I had no other purpose than to protect him.

There is nothing more I want to put down in my confession. In a word, as a member of the Chinese Communist Party, I had to obey its orders and to take part in the plot prepared jointly by the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communists against Sinkiang, no matter how strongly I was opposed to it. If the Sinkiang court should pronounce the death sentence on me, I would die a martyr to Marxism-Leninism. If Commissioner Shêng should commute the sentence in consideration of our past friendship as well as his political future, I would strive to requite his kindness.



(Signed) Mo Yun-min, alias Moou Ping

June 25, 1942.

(From: Allen S. Whiting & Sheng Shih-  
ta'ai, Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?

Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1958.)



APPENDIX E

GOVERNOR SHENG SHIH-TS'AI'S LETTER TO  
CHAIRMAN CHIANG KAI-SHEK, JULY 7, 1942

July 7, 1942.

Mr. Chairman,

General Chu Shao-liang, Minister Wang Wen-hao, and Area Commander Mao Pang-chu, C. A. F., were good enough to hand to me on their arrival in Sinkiang your personal letter. I am deeply grateful to you for the advice and counsel you gave me. From a frank exchange of views with General Chu, I also learned of your great concern and solicitude for Sinkiang and myself personally. To show my gratitude, I can do no better than by adhering to and obeying your instructions.

I have talked freely and frankly with General Chu Shao-liang on all phases of the Sinkiang question, and have asked him on his return to Chungking to convey to you in detail my position and my impressions. From his reports you will no doubt be able to gather for yourself a comprehensive picture of the difficult conditions in which Sinkiang has



been placed, as well as to have a knowledge of my firm loyalty to yourself and the Central Government.

1. For a long time I had cherished a fond belief for Marxism, and at one time I was convinced that as a faithful follower of Marx, the Soviet Union would in all earnestness try to help the backward countries and peoples uplift themselves. Accordingly, from the very beginning of my admiration of Sinkiang, I had embarked on two policies which I considered to be fundamental, namely, pro-Soviet and anti-imperialist. Therefore, when I went to the Soviet Union in 1938 for medical treatment, I joined the U.S.S.R. Communist Party, hoping that the Soviet Union would actively assist Sinkiang, thereby accelerating the construction of national defences in the rear and strengthening our power in our war of resistance and national reconstruction. For the above reasons, I could not but entertain friendly feelings towards the Chinese Communists, to the end that we might present a united front against the Japanese aggressors, until final victory was won. Herein lay the motivation of my pro-Soviet inclinations during the last ten years.

Unfortunately, the sincerity of my motives was not only unrewarded, on the contrary my close affinity with them



had been used, wherever possible, as a means to bring destruction to Sinkiang.

The many sporadic and abortive uprisings were cases in point. After investigation, every one of them was found to be a result of Soviet machination. The insurrection scheduled to take place at the time of the April 12th Conference was to me the most malicious and heart-rending of all. It was well timed and planned and participated in by a greater number of important politicians and soldiers than had even taken part in any uprising before, by all the Soviet nationals in Sinkiang, including consuls, advisers, and instructors, as well as by all the Chinese Communist workers in Sinkiang. Its programme was an extremely ambitious one. The black list not only included myself, but also all the important faithful political and military leaders. We were all to be assassinated. The existing administration was to be overthrown and a Soviet regime, independent of the Chinese Government and under the wings of Soviets and the Chinese Communists, was to be instituted. That some of our own people should have participated in such a heartless and crazy action, aiding and abetting the enemy's aggression, was truly to be deprecated. Fortunately, as a result of investigation following the assassination of Brigade Commander Shêng Shih-chih



the plot was nibbed in the bud. This is the one bright spot in a very dark picture.

As a consequence of the above facts, I have now become thoroughly convinced that the Soviet Union has already forsaken Marxism and embarked upon the road of imperialist aggression. She is advancing her aggressive designs by posing themselves as Marxists and friends of the oppressed peoples. She is thus more dangerous than all the other imperialists. The Chinese Communists have not only fallen in step with the Soviets, they have also seized upon the close relations existing between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union as a means to destroy Sinkiang and to expand their own power, with the intent to make Sinkiang a base for their own activities. Being personally involved in the experiences of the past ten years, I can vouch for the absolute accuracy of my account.

*Twenty and twenty. The ending of your statement to the effect that at 2.* I was deeply grateful for the audience granted and warm reception extended by you to my brother, Shih-yih, when he went to Chungking some time ago to see you. On his return to Sinkiang, he told me that you told him that the Three People's Principles was another form of socialism. I was very animated to hear of this, because in book two of my humble writing, "The Six Fundamental Policies," I pointed



out; that the first step of the Chinese Revolution should be to put into practice the Three People's Principles, and the second step the principles of socialism. This proves that my thoughts are very much akin to yours.

3. Due to my poor knowledge and lack in experience, I have in the past been fooled by those who falsely labelled themselves Marxists. What was the more malignant on their part being that they have resorted to all kinds of means to alienate friendly feelings between Your Excellency and myself and to put a wedge between the close relationships between Sinkiang and the Central Government, in order to destroy Sinkiang and to further their designs upon our territorial integrity. I have, therefore, decided hereafter not to cooperate with them and sworn to be faithful to you, and, under the leadership of the Kuomintang, to be loyal to the Party and country. The truism of your statement to the effect that at this juncture, when our national existence is in the balance, it is imperative for us to pull together in order to overcome the manifold difficulties confronting us is once again confirmed.

4. As early as the beginning of our war of resistance when a representative of the Chinese Communists, Mr. Wang Ming



together with Messrs. Kang Sang, and Tong Hwa, passed through Sinkiang on their way to Yen-an, I, as a believer in Marxism, availed myself of the opportunity to express to them my willingness to join the Chinese Communist Party. They promised at that time to transmit my wish to the Central Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party. Subsequently, when Mr. Jen Jih, an important member of the said Bureau, passed through Sinkiang on his way to the Soviet Union, I was told that my application for membership in the Chinese Communist Party had already been approved by Mao Tsé-tung, Chu Teh, Chen Shao-yu, Kang Sen, Peng Teh-huai, himself and others, and that they considered it an honour that I should join their Party. At the same time, I was given to understand that because of my position they could not admit me into the Party immediately. This he averred was a decision of the Third International, which was of the opinion that, although I was long qualified to be a member of the Party, yet, in view of the cultural backwardness of Sinkiang, it was feared that should my membership become known to the British imperialists and the Kuomintang, it would work to the disadvantage of Sinkiang. The institution of party headquarters here in Sinkiang and the recommendation that I be admitted into the Party should therefore be postponed.



Later in September, 1938, when I went to the Soviet Union and saw Stalin, I again brought up the question of my joining the Party. They were agreeable, however, that I should become a member of the U.S.S.R. Communist Party first and then have my membership transferred to the Chinese Communist Party. At that time I was highly hopeful and confident that the promised transfer of my membership would be carried out, because I was a Chinese and was willing to work for the Chinese Revolution. But for a long time afterwards no one attended to the transfer, and I could not help becoming suspicious.

Unexpectedly, in November 1940, the Soviet Union sent an emissary to Sinkiang with a most confidential document addressed to me concerning the lease of the Sinkiang tin mines, the terms of which were most ridiculous and unreasonable, and most aggressive in character. At that time, I demanded that the terms be revised and that the duration of the lease be shortened. I was told by the emissary, however, that not a single word was alterable and that, being a member of the U.S.S.R. Communist Party, I should obey the orders of the Party and should struggle the more vigorously for the interests of the Soviet Union.



The Altai rebellion was then in the making. Further, I was ill. Under the circumstances, I was obliged to affix my seal to the document. In addition, they wanted me to have the seals of the Provincial Government and the Border Defence Commissioner's Office attached to it. But I refused. This agreement was initiated and presented to me by the Soviet Government. It was, however, stated in the document that it was concurred to by the Provincial Government of Sinkiang, which of course was contrary to the facts. I demanded a correction, but was told that I should let it go and that I would understand the whole thing when I saw Stalin later on. I also demanded that the exploitation of the tin mines be made a joint Sinkiang-Soviet enterprise. To this the emissary said, I ought to remember, on the one hand, that I was a member of the U.S.S.R. Communist Party, and that on the other during the rebellion of Ma Chung-ying much of Soviet blood was shed in Sinkiang for which she had not yet been compensated.

Some time later, the Soviets presented me with another secret document concerning the joint exploitation of the Tu-shan-tze oil mine and ordered me to sign it. I refused.

From the above facts, it is obvious that the motive



of the Soviets in inducing me to join the Party was to compel me to sign the secret agreements by which the way for their aggression against Sinkiang would be paved. About this there cannot be the slightest doubt.

The contents of the Soviet Government handed to me this time by the Soviet Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs were the more ridiculous and unprecedented, revealing clearly their ulterior motives. An example the assassination of Brigade Commander Sheng was definitely designed and executed by the Soviet diplomatic representative and military adviser, and yet it was alleged in the document that his death was caused by the rivalry existing between me and the Brigade Commander. Such an unfounded allegation could not but reveal the baseness of their motives.

Furthermore, it was alleged that, in 1934, I proposed to the Soviet Government that Communism should be put into practice in Sinkiang. The fact was at that time Tihwa was besieged by the bandit Ma Chung-ying, and I was compelled by the then Soviet Consul General, Mr. Abullesoff to advance such a proposal. At the instigation of the Japanese militarists Ma Chung-ying was bent on organizing a Moslem state in North Sinkiang, and there was the danger of all the people of Chinese



racial origin being exterminated in South Sinkiang. Abitedamo-  
la, at the instigation of the British imperialists, was at-  
tempting to organise an East Turkistan state. The whole of  
Sinkiang was then in danger of being detached from the Chinese  
domain. Isolated as was Sinkiang, the possibility of her then  
receiving assistance from the Central Government was remote.  
Under the circumstances, the only way open to me was to ask  
for friendly help from the Soviet Union. At this critical  
moment, as a trial of my attitude, Abuliesoff publicly made  
it known that should Soviet assistance be forthcoming, there  
should be the most sincere and unequivocal manifestation of  
friendship on the part of Sinkiang for the Soviet Union. For  
the sake of our national existence and the maintenance of our  
territorial integrity, I could not but resort to such unwar-  
ranted means in order to meet the demands as called for by  
the threatening situation then existing.

With regard to the Sian Incident of 1936, it was alleged  
in the document referred to above that "Chang Hsueh-liang's  
action had my full connivance and support". This was evidently  
a malicious fabrication. The fact was that after the Sian In-  
cident took place, I not only telegraphed to my representative  
in Nanking about my attitude that "I would not participate in,  
nor was I sympathetic to it". I also replied to Chang Hsueh-



liang's telegram, stating my attitude in exactly the same words. This is attested to by the telegrams exchanged. The motive of the Soviet allegation was none other than to alienate our feelings and to intimidate me on my close relations with the Chinese Communists.

The Sian Incident, according to my knowledge, was in reality promoted by the Third International. The Chinese Communists and the Third International had hoped that public reaction would be favourable to their action. Unfortunately, the public reacted adversely to what they had done. Meanwhile, the Japanese militarists seized the opportunity to push their attack on Suiyuan, and public opinion in China, especially among the armed forces, had turned from one of disapproval to indignation. The Chinese Communists and the Third International had to call off their malicious designs and the Incident was speedily settled.

Again, with reference to my 1941 proposal that the Soviet Government institute a Soviet regime in Sinkiang, as brought out in the secret Soviet document referred to above, I really did not mean it. I advanced it simply as a camouflage to find out whether the Soviet Government had any territorial designs upon Sinkiang, and whether they were real followers



of Marxism. Between 1940 and 1941, there was discovered a big plot undertaken by the Uighurs, Tartars, Mohammendans and assimilated Mohammendans in Sinkiang. The aim was to detach Sinkiang from China and institute a Uighur state. It was participated in by some of the various racial groups in Sinkiang. The man who engineered the plot was none other than the former Soviet Consul-General in Tihwa, Mr. Auchisyang. The insurrection was quashed following the arrest of a score of assassins and some hundred would be sympathizers. It was not clear to me at the time whether it was the Trotskyists or the Soviet Union that was behind the whole scheme. It was with a view of finding out whether the Soviet Union was the real author of the plot or not that I wrote the above mentioned letter and keenly awaited a reply. Being aware that my proposal was but a feeler, the Soviets failed to reply to my letter.

It is clear from the above facts that the real motive of the Soviets in sending me the said document was on the one hand to intimidate me, and on the other to prevent me from getting closer to you.

Yours respectfully,

(signed) Shêng Shih-ts'ai.



(From: Wai-chiao Fu Su-lien tui Sinkiang

chih ching-chi oh'in-lloh,

Taipei, 1950.)



APPENDIX F

GOVERNOR SHENG SHIH-TS'AI'S LETTER TO  
CHAIRMAN CHIANG KAI-SHEK, NOVEMBER 24, 1946

November 24th, 1946.

Mr. Chairman,

I trust my telegram dated November 15th which I asked Governor Chu to forward to you must have received your attention. I have now the honour to present to you once again in more detailed the attendant circumstances both preceding and after the conclusion of the Tin Mine Contract as follows:

1. It may be recalled that some time in July 1942, I petitioned you to send General Chu Shao-liang to Sinkiang. At that time, having made up my mind to forsake Marxism, and to embrace the Three People's Principles, I pledge myself to uphold the Central Government, and be loyal to you. Subsequently, in a written statement submitted to you, I bared to you in all frankness my Pro-Soviet inclinations during the past ten years of my administration of Sinkiang. The conclusion of the Tin Mine Contract under Soviet pressure formed one of the important



part of that report.

2. In the report just referred to, aside from stating in detail the actual facts of my Pro-Soviet administration during the past ten years, I begged you to be magnanimous enough to forgive me. Later, I asked General Chu to fly to Chungking to explain to you on my behalf the circumstances attending my becoming a member of the Communist Party and the conclusion of the Tin Mine Contract, with a view to soliciting your understanding and pardon. When General Chu on his return to Sinkiang handed me a personal letter written in your own hand, and told me that on account of my sincerity you would not only forgive me for what was past but would also bear responsibility for what I had done, I was deeply grateful.

have some ulterior designs upon Sinkiang.

3. With regard to the conclusion of the Tin Mine Contract, I was compelled to do so as the only way out of the difficulty. At the time of its signing I had already in mind the future necessity of declaring it null and void. So I refused to have the seal of the Border Defence Commissioner's Office, nor that of the Provincial Government, affixed thereon to. The document only bore my own signature. Subsequently, when the Soviets took to the most aggressive course of actions and



when our relations were strained to the breaking point, I informed the Soviet Consulate that I considered the said Contract as abrogated and demanded the withdrawal of the whole Soviet staff connected with the exploitation of the mine. As a result of my insistent demand the said staff was completely withdrawn by the end of 1942.

4. Since 1942, four years have elapsed. During this interval the Soviets have not made any new demand to exploit the mines. Now the question has suddenly been revived. It is within reason to suppose that having withdrawn their staff the Soviets had tacitly consented to the abrogation of the Contract, and there is no reason whatsoever why we should concede to their demand. In highhandedly sending men to Sinkiang to exploit the mines at this time, the Soviets must have some ulterior designs upon Sinkiang.

*In my humble opinion, we may in the meantime say that*

(a) In my humble opinion we might offer the following arguments to refute the Soviet demands:

(a) The said Contract was signed by me personally and bore no seal of the Border Defence Commissioner's Office, nor that of the Provincial Government;



(b) The said Contract was declared abrogated by me in 1942 and the withdrawal of the Soviet staff sent for the exploitation of the mines was demanded by me;

(c) At the end of the same year the said staff was completely withdrawn, which was a tacit agreement to the abrogation of the Contract;

(d) Four years having elapsed, the Contract ipso facto lost its validity;

(e) According to the stipulation of the contract, the exploitation is confined to the tin mines and ancillary products. There is no mention of wolfram. It may be well to consult mineralogists to ascertain whether wolfram is an ancillary product of tin.

In my humble opinion, we may in the meantime use (a), (b), (c), and (d) as arguments to reject the Soviet demand or to revise the articles of the Contract.

I have the honour to state further that the said Contract was signed in 1940. At that time the Soviets had already instigated the rebellion of the Altai Mountain region. The pre-



sentation of the Contract immediately thereafter was no coincidence. Simultaneously, Soviet aggression was being directed against Eastern Europe. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, one after another, were annexed by Russia. I was then under the apprehension that, Soviet attitude being so ruthless and aggressive, a rejection of the Contract on our part would not only result in the Altai rebellion spreading, but would also seriously endanger the position of Sinkiang as a whole. In order to protect our territorial integrity I was forced to choose the lesser of two evils, and, with suppressed agony, attached my own signature to the document.

I had made known to you the predicament in which I was placed in my typewritten report in 1942 and through General Chu verbally as well as during the audience which you gave me when I flew to Chungking to report in person.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) Sheng Shih-ts'ai.

Hankow, December, 1934.

(From: Wei-chiao Pu, Su-lien tui Sin-

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