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The Chinese People's Struggle Against Japanese Fascism In World War II: The Longest War; Supreme Victory

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Author's note: This article is dedicated to Li Baodong, China's Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, who inspired this work, and to Jeanette Himmel, China's brave, beautiful daughter. With special thanks to Mrs. Eleanor R. Seagraves, who encouraged me throughout these years.

INTRODUCTION

On August 24, 2015, Chinese Ambassador Wang Min introduced an extraordinary exhibit of photos at United Nations Headquarters, entitled: "Remembering for Peace, a Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression/The World Anti-fascist War and the Founding of the United Nations."

One of the most titanic achievements in the history of the world was the victory of China against Japanese fascism in World War II, a victory over almost insurmountable obstacles, and in the deadliest of circumstances.. But this almost superhuman triumph was won by the Chinese people, led by men and women of genius, inspired by the noblest humanitarian spirit, a heroic combination of combustible force which vanquished the most venal, sadistic and genocidal onslaught of the Japanese aggressors. During the course of their 14 year invasion of China, the Japanese military killing machine left millions of Chinese dead, human beings upon whom they inflicted hideous atrocities prior to murder. The death toll of Chinese in the war was 35 million.

China's victory against fascism in World War II was unique in many respects. The struggle was almost a decade longer than the war in Europe, and China was in the midst of a horrific civil war at the time of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931. The European nations overrun by fascist Germany and Italy were at least nominally intact at the time of the nazi invasion. Heroic partisan resistance in France, Italy, Spain, Greece, and elsewhere throughout Europe contributed to the nazi defeat, but it was the extraordinary power of the Soviet defense against the nazi invasion and the fierce indomitable spirit of the Soviet people that ultimately defeated the nazi war machine: the Soviet victory at Stalingrad broke the will of the Hitler coalition. At least 30 million Soviet citizens were killed in the war.

Part 1: The Split Within the Kuomintang, Sun Yat-sen Betrayed, the 1927 Massacre in Shanghai, the Long March

China, by contrast, was just emerging from the subjugation and humiliation of colonial

oppression by European powers, which had carved up China for centuries, deliberately degrading and further impoverishing the Chinese people by the enforced imposition of opium. The newly liberated Chinese Republic, established by the revolutionary leader Dr. Sun Yat-sen, was torn apart in 1927, after his death, when the right wing of the Kuomintang betrayed the principles of Dr. Sun, and slaughtered the emerging Communist party in a betrayal so unexpected and horrific that it contained the seeds of one of the deadliest civil wars in history. Few Communists survived the bloodbath, many of the victims were roasted to death in locomotive boilers. The Chinese Communist Party had deplored the destitution of the majority of the Chinese people, and sought to transform China into a more egalitarian society, restoring hope to a broken people. The decimation of the party hurled the Chinese people back into enslaving poverty, despair and rampant starvation. Chiang Kai-chek, was the Judas who betrayed the Communists in Shanghai in 1927, and then proceeded to betray China throughout the early years of the Japanese invasion.

The Communists who survived the Shanghai massacre began the famous Long March to the Northwest, led by Mao Tse-tung, Chou En-lai, Ju De, Ho Lung, Lin Piao, and so many others, and always with the support of the widow of Sun Yat-sen, the noble Soong Ching-ling, a woman of greatest personal and intellectual integrity, who remained in China, often at peril to her own life, throughout the decades of civil war and Japanese aggression. Madame Sun Yat-sen was the daughter of Charlie Soong, one of the richest men in China, and, indeed in the world. It was said of the three Soong sisters that "one loved money, one loved power and one loved China" Soong Ching-ling dedicated her life to the Chinese people, and to the progressive humanitarian ideals of her husband, China's first President.

Another feature unique to the Chinese war against fascism was the bitter hatred between two of the major protagonists: throughout the war and beyond, Soong Ching-ling, a brilliant political analyst, recognized that her brother-in-law, Chiang Kai-chek was plundering the Chinese economy and destroying the nation, and she expressed her disgust with her brother-in-law with ferocious courage. Indeed, her refusal to align herself with the psychotic anti-Communists earned her a large FBI file in the United States. She endured poverty, the danger of assassination by her own sister, but she never wavered in her passionate love for the great masses of the Chinese people, and for the leaders who were fighting to salvage China from subjugation by foreign invaders, and the degradation of horrific poverty. Although she protected Chou-En-lai (upon whose head a price of $60,000 had been placed by Chaing Kai-chek) by arranging for him to travel safely in her own limosine, knowing the anti-communists would stop short of blowing up her own car, and she helped innumerable others in this, and in many other ways, she was unable to prevent the torture and murder of some of her dearest friends, assassinated by her brother-in-law Chiang, and she was the victim of slander and vicious attacks on her impeccable character.

Although the Chinese are charitable to Chiang Kai-chek, attributing to him some effort to repel the Japanese invaders, in fact, Chiang admired Hitler and Mussolini, and there was significant danger that he would join the Axis, allying with Japan to exterminate the Chinese Communists. It was the Chinese Communists who initially fought most fiercely against the Japanese invaders, and after 1936 joined together with the left-wing of the Kuomintang in the newly created United Front, while Chiang Kai-chek preferred "accommodation" with his country's invaders.

To understand the colossal scope of the victory, it is crucial to place the Chinese struggle against fascism in historic context, following their famous, epic "Long March," an almost 6,000 mile "strategic retreat," to sanctuary in the northwest, begun in 1928, following the

massacre in Shanghai. According to some estimates, of the 100,000 Communists who began the Long March, 90,000 perished, some were murdered, some died of illness, or starvation, and at one point, lacking water, the survivors had to drink their own urine. Heroism is not a strong enough word to describe these Chinese, determined to endure and prevail in the noblest cause, to raise the masses of Chinese people from the hellish depths of poverty and degradation, and endow their lives with human dignity. Throughout, they were barbarously attacked by the right wing anti-communist forces who had usurped the Kuomintang, ordered by Chiang Kai-chek to attack the Communists instead of fighting the Japanese invaders.

Edgar Snow's memorable description, from "Red Star Over China" is quoted here at length:

> "…suffering, sacrifice, and loyalty, and then through it all, like a flame, an undimmed ardor and undying hope and amazing revolutionary optimism of those thousands of youths who would not admit defeat by man or nature or God or death—all this and more seemed embodied in the history of an odyssey unequaled in modern times. The journey took them across some of the world's most difficult trails, unfit for wheeled traffic, and across the high snow mountains and the great rivers of Asia. It was one long battle from beginning to end. The crossing of the Tatu River was the most critical single incident of the Long March. Had the Red army failed there, quite possibly it would have been exterminated….the river flowed faster and faster. The crossing became more and more difficult…Chiang Kai-shek's airplanes had found the spot, and heavily bombed it. Enemy troops were racing up from the southeast, others approached from the north. A hurried military conference was summoned by Lin Piao. Ju De, Mao Tse-Tung, Chou En-lai, and P'eng The Huai had by now reached the river. They took a decision and began to carry it out at once. Some 400 li to the west of An Jen Ch'ang, where the gorges rise very high and the river flows narrow, deep and swift, there was an iron-chain suspension bridge called the Liu Ting Chiao—the Bridge Fixed by Liu. It was the last possible crossing of the Tatu east of Tibet….. If they captured the Liu Ting Chiao the whole army could enter central Szechuan. If they failed, they would have to retrace their steps through Lololand, re-enter Yunnan, and fight their way westward toward Likiang, on the Tibetan border – a detour of more than a thosand li which few might hope to survive…There could be no slackening of pace, no halfheartedness, no fatigue. "Victory was life," said Peng The-huai, "defeat was certain death."…The Bridge Fixed by Liu was built centuries ago, and in the manner of all bridges of the deep rivers of western China. Sixteen heavy iron chains, with a span of some 100 yards or more, were stretched across the river, their ends embedded on each side under great piles of cemented rock, beneath the stone bridgeheads. Thick boards lashed over the chains made the road of the bridge, but upon their arrival the Reds found that half this wooden flooring had been removed, and before them only the bare iron chains swung to a point midway in the stream. At the northern bridgehead an enemy machine-gun nest faced them, and behind it were positions held by a regiment of White troops….And who would have thought the Reds would insanely try to cross on the chains alone? But that was what they did."
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> "No time was to be lost. The bridge must be captured before enemy reinforcements arrived. Once more vounteers were called for. One by one Red soldiers stepped forward to risk their lives, and, of those who offered themselves, thirty were chosen. Hand grenades and Mausers were strapped to their backs, and soon they were swinging out above the boiling river, moving hand over hand, clinging to the iron chains. Red machine guns barked at enemy redoubts and spattered the bridgehead with bullets. The enemy replied with machine-gunning of his own, and snipers shot at the Reds tossing high above the water, working slowly toward them. The first warrior was hit, and

dropped into the current below; a second fell, and then a third. But as others drew nearer the center, the bridge flooring somewhat protected these dare-to-dies, and most of the enemy bullets glanced off, or ended in the cliffs on the opposite bank."

"Probably never before had the Szechuanese seen fighters like these –men for whom soldiering was not just a rice bowl, and youths ready to commit suicide to win. Were they human beings or madmen or gods? Was their own morale affected? Did they perhaps not shoot to kill? Did some of them secretly pray that these men would succeed in their attempt? At last one Red crawled up over the bridge flooring, uncapped a grenade, and tossed it with perfect aim into the enemy redoubt. Nationalist officers ordered the rest of the planking torn up. It was already too late. More Reds were crawling into sight. Paraffin was thrown on the planking, and it began to burn. By then about twenty Reds were moving forward on their hands and knees, tossing grenade after grenade into the enemy machine-nest."

"Suddenly, on the southern shore, their comrades began to shout with joy. 'Long live the Red Army! Long live the Revolution! Long live the heroes of Tatu Ho!' For the enemy was withdrawing in pell-mell flight. Running full speed over the remaining planks of the bridge, through the flames licking toward them, the assailants nimbly hopped into the enemy redoubt and turned the abandoned machine gun toward the shore."

"More Reds now swarmed over the chains, and arrived to help put out the fire and replace the boards. And soon afterwards the Red division that had crossed at An Jen Ch'ang came into sight, opening a flank attack on the remaining enemy positions, so that in a little while the White troops were wholly in flight—either in flight, that is, or with the Reds, for about a hundred Szechuan soldiers here threw down their rifles and turned to join their pursuers. In an hour or two the whole army was joyously tramping and singing its way across the River Tatu into Szechuan. Far overhead angrily and impotently roared the planes of Chiang Kai-shek, and the Reds cried out in delerious challenge to them. For their distinguished bravery the heroes of An Jen Ch'ang and Liu Ting Chiao were awarded the Gold Star, highest decoration in the Red Army of China."

"According to data furnished to Edgar Snow by Commander Tso Ch'uan, the Reds crossed eighteen mountain ranges, five of which were perennially snow-capped, and they crossed twenty-four rivers. They passed through twelve different provinces, occupied sixty-two cities and towns, and broke through enveloping armies of ten different provincial warlords, besides defeating, eluding, or outmaneuvering the various forces of Central Government troops sent against them. They crossed six different aboriginal districts, and penetrated areas through which no Chinese army had gone for scores of years….However one might feel about the Reds and what they represented politically, it was impossible to deny recognition of their Long March—the Ch'ang Cheng, as they called it—as one of the greatest exploits of military history… The Communists rationalized, and apparently believed, that they were advancing toward an anti-Japanese front, and this was a psychological factor of great importance. It helped them turn what might have been a demoralized retreat into a spirited march of victory. History has subsequently shown that they were right in emphasizing what was undoubtedly the second fundamental reason for their migration: an advance to a region which they correctly foresaw was to play a determining role in the immediate destinies of China, Japan and Soviet Russia. The Reds passed through provinces populated by more than 200,000,000 people., freed many slaves, preaching 'liberty, equality, fraternity'. Millions of the poor had now seen the Red army and heard it speak, and were no longer afraid of it. The Reds explained the aims of agrarian revolution and their anti-Japanese policy." (1)

Finally established in their base at Yenan in the northwest, by 1935 Mao Tse-tung's Communists organized anti-Japanese resistance, and their heroic patriotism inspired nationwide adulation and support. By this time, the Kuomintang, originally founded by Sun Yat-sen as a progressive, revolutionary party, had been split apart along the lines of the civil war, with a right wing, reactionary faction led by Chiang Kai-chek, who had usurped ledership of the party, and an increasingly embittered and humiliated progressive left wing of the party, ashamed of its passivity and capitulation to Japan.

At the beginning of the split in the Kuomintang, Madame Sun Yat-sen scathingly denounced her brother-in-law's usurpation of the party, stating:

> "Some members of the party executive are so defining the principles and policies of Dr. Sun Yat-sen that they seem to me to do violence to Dr. Sun's ideas and ideals….all revolution must be based upon fundamental changes in society; otherwise it is not a revolution, merely a change of government. In Dr. Sun's Third Principle we find his analysis of social values and the places of the labor and peasant classes defined. These classes become the basis of our strength in our struggle to overthrow imperialism, and cancel the unequal treaties that enslave us, and effectively unify our country. They are the new pillars for the building of a new, free China….Dr. Sun's policies are clear. If certain leaders of the party do not carry them out consistently then they are no longer Dr. Sun's true followers, and the party is no longer a revolutionary party, but merely a tool in the hands of this or that militarist…a machine, the agent of oppression, a parasite fattening on the present enslaving system. Revolution in China is inevitable."

Later Madame Sun Yat-sen, in even more searing words continued:

> "The reactionary Nanking Government is combining forces with the imperialists in brutal repressions against the Chinese masses. Never has the treacherous character of the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang leaders been so shamelessly exposed to the world as today. Having betrayed the Nationalist revolution, they have inevitably degenerated into imperialist tools and attempted to provoke war with Russia. But the Chinese masses, undaunted by repression and undeceived by lying propaganda, will fight only on the side of revolution. Terrorism will only serve to mobilize still broader masses and strengthen our determination to triumph over the present bloody reaction."

Soon afterward, Tai Ch'i-tao, one of the leaders of the party's hard right-wing faction confronted Madame Sun, who retorted: "rest assured that no one considers the Nanking Government as representative of the Chinese people! I speak for the suppressed masses of China and you know it. Is it not disgraceful to set foreign spies against me? …the Kuomintang was created as a revolutionary organization. It was never meant to be a Reform Society, otherwise it would be called that."

Tai asked her: "May I ask what is your idea of a revolutionist? There seem to be various definitions."

Madame Sun replied:

> « One who is dissatisfied with the present system and works to create a new social order in the stead that will benefit society at large….I have noticed

> nothing but the wanton killing of tens of thousands of revolutionary youths who would one day replace the rotten officials. Nothing, but the hopeless misery of the people, nothing but the selfish struggling of the militarists for power, nothing but extortion upon the already starving masses, in fact, nothing but counter-revolutionary activities.....Do you suppose for one moment that Dr. Sun organized the Kuomintang as a tool for the rich to get still richer and suck the blood of the starving millions of China? There is only one way to silence me Mr. Tai. Shoot me or imprison me. But whatever you do, do it openly like me, don't surround me with spies. »

Tai replied: "If you were anyone but Madame Sun, we would cut your head off."

Madame Sun retorted: "If you were the revolutionaries you pretend to be, you'd cut it off anyway."

According to Sterling Seagrave, in "The Soong Dynasty,":

> "When Hitler came to power in 1933, Chiang asked for military help. Hitler sent von Seeckt and Lieutanant General Georg Wetzell. The Generalissimo's determination to fight communists rather than the Japanese was to Hitler's liking.....Von Seeckt's strategy brought famine to the mountain populations and his scorched earth tactics devastated the towns and villages. Estimates of the dead varied widely. Edmund Clubb said 700,000 KMT troops participated against 150,000 Communist guerrillas. Edgar Snow said the Communists suffered 60,000 casualties, and that in all a million people were killed or starved to death. 'Of that million dead, therefore, at least 940,000 were not 'Communist bandits.'"

Following the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, according to Seagrave:

> "The Chinese were outraged when Chiang Kai-shek inexplicably refused to take arms against the Japanese invaders, merely exhorting his people to 'maintain a dignified calm.' Rioters in Shanghai attacked Japanese business establishments and demanded that war be declared. The Generalissimo's standing sank to an abysmal low. There was unsavory gossip that a secret 'deal' existed between Chiang and Tokyo—possibly a pact struck originally at the time of the Shanghai Massacre to assure Japanese support for Chiang's takeover. According to this rumor, Chiang could not act against Japan, or Tokyo would reveal the secret pact. Other gossip singled out Chiang's Defense Minister, General Ho Ying-chin, and Chiang's chief political advisor, Tai Ch'i-tao, as leaders of a pro-Japanese faction with a suspiciously strong hold on the Generalissimo. It was also whispered that Chiang and members of Madame Chiang's family were linked to powerful Japanese cartels with industrial and busness holdings in Shanghai....At no point did Chiang Kai-shek challenge the Japanese, although his armies vastly outnumbered the invaders. He simply cabled an appeal to the League of Nations, then withdrew his government from Nanking to Loyang for safety.... T.V. Soong (Madame Sun Yat-sen's brother), shaken by what he had observed of the Japanese assault of Chapei, began to draw some dangerous conclusions. 'If China is placed before the alternative of communism and Japanese militarism with its military domination, then China will choose communism.' (March, 1932)
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> "While T.V Soong was tryng to persuade Chiang to forget the Chinese Communists and defend China against Japanese aggression, the Japanese, Germans, and Italians were all encouraging Chiang to love Japan and kill Reds. Both Italy and Germany were anxious to cultivate allies. China was particularly

> important because it formed the eastern border of Soviet Russia. It was axiomatic that if Russia could be kept busy on the East, she was less of a threat on the west. The Generalissimo daily became more enamored of the Nazi military and police state." (2)

Part 2: The Xian Incident, The United Front, The Japanese Invasion, The Mobilization of a Nation, Mao Tse-tung, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, The Ultimate Victory of China

The Japanese committed a fatal error early after their invasion of Manchuria, an error so costly it contributed significantly to their ultimate defeat. Japanese assassins murdered Old Marshal Chang Tso-lin, father of the Young Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, a fascinating, progressive and extremely intelligent leader of the patriotic left-wing of the Kuomintang.

By 1935 the Young Marshal recognized that the humiliation of his patriotic soldiers and of a great part of the Chinese people, who were shamed by Chiang's capitulation to the Japanese invaders, and his plundering of the treasure of the nation, was increasing the strength and credibility of the Communists, who, almost alone were fighting the Japanese invaders. The Young Marshal secretly met with Chou-En-lai to organize the United Front alliance, and he ordered his troops to stop fighting the Communists.

Finally, a strategy which promised to repel the Japanese invaders had been adopted by the alliance between the Communist Party, represented by Chou en-lai, and the Kuomintang, represented by the Young Marshal. But Chiang Kai-chek raged against this only hope of freeing China. With no alternative to the total enslavement of China, Chang Hsueh-liang executed an action of supreme audacity, a brilliant manoeuver that significantly contributed to turning the tide of battle against Japanese fascism. On December 12, 1936, the Young Marshal, together with General Yang Hu-cheng, kidnapped Chiang Kai-chek, to compel him to stop killing the Communists, who were the only force resisting Japan, and to order all the guns of the Kuomintang to be turned, instead, against the Japanese invaders.

It is one of the great paradoxes of history that it was the Chinese Communists who saved the life of Chiang Kai-chek, who could so easily have been killed in Xian in 1936, in reprisal for the many thousands of Communists hideously tortured to death at the order of Chiang Kai-chek in 1927 in Shanghai. But the Communists were, first, humanists, and secondly, perhaps anticipated that the death of Chiang could precipitate a takeover of the Kuomintang by an even more extreme reactionary faction. Recognizing that the progressive faction of the Kuomintang, represented by the Young Marshall Chang Hsueh-liang would be important allies in combatting the Japanese, they not only spared Chiang's life, they agreed to set him free, and to allow him to continue as head of the government at Nanking. General Yang Hu-cheng, who had helped the Young Marshal throughout this momentous "Xian incident" was promised safety by Chiang, but, in violation of this promise, Chiang ultimately ordered the murder of General Yang and his entire family.

1937: Nanking

As described by Iris Chang in "The Rape of Nanking,":

> "In November 1937, during several high-level military conferences on the issue of defending or abandoning Nanking, Tang, virtually alone among Chiang's advisers, spoke up in support of providing a strong defense. …Perhaps Chiang knew that his adviser was in no shape to do battle with the seasoned Japanese

military and had appointed him merely to make it appear as if the Chinese were really going to put up a strong defense. What we do know is that during the latter half of November..Chiang ordered most government officials to move to three cities west of Nanking –Changsha, Hankow, and Chungking—stoking rumors among the few officials left behind that they had been abandoned to whatever fate the Japanese planned for them……On December 8, Chiang Kai-shek, his wife and his adviser fled the city by plane. There was no longer any doubt. The Japanese siege of Nanking was about to begin……Even a bad air force is better than no air force. And that was the situation presented to Tang. On December 8, the day Chiang and his advisers left the city, so too did the entire Chinese air corps. Tang fought the next four days without the benefit of any strategic aerial data on Japanese movements, rendering even the expensive Chinese fort guns on the hills and mountains around Nanking much less effective. Second, the government officials who moved to Chungking took with them most of the sophisticated communications equipment; thus, one part of the army could not talk to another….. But worse news awaited Tang, and this time the bad news would come not from the enemy's successes but from Chiang himself…..Orders had come directly from Chiang, General Gu Zhutong informed Tang, for a massive retreat of Tang's Forces. Unable to hold the line and under pressure, Tang complied. It was a decision that resulted in one of the worst disasters of Chinese military history."

"Even by the standards of history's most destructive war, the Rape of Nanking represents one of the worst instances of mass extermination….The Rape of Nanking should be remembered not only for the number of people slaughtered but for the cruel manner in which many met their deaths. Chinese men were used for bayonet practice and in decapitation contests. An estimated 20,000-80,000 Chinese women were raped. Many soldiers went beyond rape to disembowel women, slice off their breasts, nail them alive to walls. Fathers were forced to rape their daughters, and sons their mothers, as other family members watched. Not only did live burials, castration, the carving of organs, and the roasting of people become routine, but more diabolical tortures were practiced, such as hanging people by their tongues on iron hooks or burying people to their waists and watching them get torn apart by German shepherds. So sickening was the spectacle that even the Nazis in the city were horrified, one proclaiming the massacre to be the work of 'bestial machinery.'"…The Japanese not only disemboweled, decapitated and dismembered victims but performed more excruciating varieties of torture. Throughout the city they nailed prisoners to wooden boards and ran over them with tanks, crucified them to trees and electrical posts, carved long strips of flesh from them, and used them for bayonet practice. At least one hundred men reportedly had their eyes gouged out and their noses and ears hacked off before being set on fire. Another group of two hundred Chinese soldiers and civilians were stripped naked, tied to columns and doors of a school, and then stabbed by zhuizi – special needles with handles on them – in hundreds of points along their bodies, including their mouths, throats and eyes.. The incidents mentioned above are only a fraction of the methods that the Japanese used to torment their victims. The Japanese saturated victims in acid, impaled babies with bayonets, hung people by their tongues. One Japanese reporter who later investigated the Rape of Nanking learned that at least one Japanese soldier tore the heart and liver out of a Chinese victim to eat them. Even genitals, apparently were consumed…" (3)

Japan's barbarism was universal throughout China. The account given by Iris Chang in "The Rape of Nanking" is corroborated by the American journalist Harrison Forman, in his "Report From Red China," published in 1945. (Pages 118-119):

"Several of the Japanese admitted candidly that they had killed civilians, and

for this they blamed their army training: they had been taught that the Chinese were little more than animals and that they themselves were superior beings. An account ran as follows: 'In July, 1941 I was assigned to the Military Dog-Training Institute at Changsintien, southwest from Peiping. One day they brought about fifty Chinese civilians into a high-walled courtyard. Major Kato ordered us to take positions along the wall, and when we were settled he cried, 'Sergeant Oisi, begin the attack!' A little door on the far side of the courtyard opened and a pack of sharp toothed dogs came bounding out and made straight for the throats of the screaming Chinese, who tried to beat them off with their fists. The spouting blood only made the dogs more ferocious, and they literally tore their victims to pieces. Eventually all the Chinese lay dead of their mutilations, and the glutted dogs were led away.'"

"Such episodes are terribly hard to read, I know but because they are a part of every soldier's knowledge in invaded China I continue to quote them."

"Another account: 'In May 1940 the Third Company of the 39th Battalion, Ninth Independent Mixed Brigade, was garrisoned at Sanchio in Chihsien, Shansi Province. One day Second Lieutanant Ono said to us: 'You have never killed anyone yet, so today we shall have some killing practice. You must not consider the Chinese as a human being, but only as something of rather less value than a dog or a cat. Be brave! No one moved. The lieutenant lost his temper. 'You cowards!' he shouted. 'Not one of you is fit to call himself a Japanesee soldier. So no one will volunteer? Well then, I'll order you.' And he began to call out names: 'Otani—Furukawa—Ueno—Tajima!'(My God—me too!) I raised my bayoneted gun with trembling hands, and—directed by the lieutenant's almost hysterical cursing—I walked slowly toward the terror-stricken Chinese standing beside the pit—the grave he had helped to dig. In my heart I begged his pardon, and—with my eyes shut and the lieutenant's curses in my ears—I plunged the bayonet into the petrified Chinese. When I opened my eyes again, he had slumped down into the pit. 'Murderer! Criminal! I called myself.'

"There were many more such stories. That such things have occurred not once but thousands of times, I know." (4)

Among the war crimes committed by Japan during the World War II invasion of China was the establishment of Unit 731, a germ warfare development facility in operation from 1937-1945. Grotesque experiments of the effects of various germ warfare substances were tested on human prisoners of war from China, Korea, and the USA, who were used as human guinea pigs. These experiments led to the agonized deaths of many thousands of victims of these monstrous experiments by the Japanese fascists, experiments which had their counterpart in similar sadistic nazi "medical" experiments on human prisoners (called the "Lapins") in the Ravensbrueck concentration camp, and other barbarous facilities in Germany and their conquered territories.

The unifying leader of China's resistance to Japan was Mao Tse-tung, one of the greatest political and military strategists in history. A study of the military writings of Mao Tse-tung from 1928-1949 reveals a brilliant intelligence and a personality of enormous psychological strength. From May 1938 his focus is exclusively on mobilizing the entire Chinese people to resist the Japanese aggressors, and his writings are concentrated on "Problems of Strategy in Guerrilla War Against Japan," "The Central point of the problem is the unity of the entire Chinese people and the building up of a nation-wide anti-Japanese front. This is what we have long been advocating."

"Question: If the war drags on for a long time and Japan is not completely defeated, would

the Communist Party agree to the negotiation of a peace with Japan and recognize her rule in Northeastern China?"

> "Answer: 'No. Like the people of the whole country the Chinese Communist Party will not allow Japan to retain an inch of Chinese territory.'"

Mao consistently recognized China's anti-fascist struggle as an integral part of the world anti-fascist war, a life and death struggle between reactionary fascist imperialism and the progressive forces of humanity. His extraordinary insight into the significance of developments at every stage of the war, and the amazing accuracy of his analysis of events during each battle proved of vital importance both tactically and strategically in planning successful military campaigns against the Japanese. His profound understanding of the needs and the will of the Chinese people enabled him to win the allegiance of hundreds of millions of Chinese patriots, to coordinate the struggle effectively with the progressive and patriotic sectors of the Kuomintang, and ultimately to lead the Chinese nation to victory against the Japanese invasion.

In a series of lectures he delivered at the Yenan Association for the Study of the War of Resistance against Japan, Mao Tse-tung delivered a relentlessly honest appraisal of the war being confronted, and with perfect dialectic clarity described and predicted the course of the war:

> "41. In the three stages the changes in relative strength will proceed along the following lines. In the first stage the enemy is superior and we are inferior in strength. With regard to our inferiority we must reckon on changes of two different kinds from the eve of the War of Resistance to the end of this stage. The first kind is a change for the worse. China's original inferiority will be aggravated by war losses, namely decreases in territory, population, economic strength, military strength and cultural institutions. Toward the end of the first stage the decrease will probably be considerable, especially on the economic side. This point will be exploited by some people as a basis for their theories of national subjugation and of compromise. But the second kind of change, the change for the better must also be noted. It includes the experience gained in the war, the progress made by the armed forces, the political progress, the mobilization of the people, the development of culture in a new direction, the emergence of guerrilla warfare, the increase in international support, etc. What is on the downgrade in the first stage is the old quantity and the old quality, the manifestations being mainly quantitative. What is on the upgrade is the new quantity and the new quality, the manifestations being mainly qualitative. It is the second kind of change that provides a basis for our ability to fight a protracted war and win final victory." (5)

On October 12, 1942 Mao Tse-tung wrote: "The battle of Stalingrad is not only the turning point of the Soviet-German war, or even of the present anti-fascist world war, it is the turning point in the history of all mankind." By this point Soviet soldiers, American soldiers, Canadian soldiers, and what was virtually an international brigade had joined the Chinese resistance.

This year, on May 8, 2015, The New York Times published a disgraceful falsification of the reality of the Chinese struggle against fascism, stating: "it was not the Communists who bore the brunt of the fighting against the Japanese during World War II, when 14-20 million Chinese died. Rather, it was the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek backed by the United

States and General Joseph W. Stilwell who deployed most of the troops against the Japanese." The New York Times' fraudulent allegation is refuted by General Joseph Stilwell, himself, in two words: when asked how much Chiang Kai-chek had contributed to the war against Japan, General Stilwell replied that Chiang Kai-chek's contribution to the struggle against Japanese fascism was "practically zero." General Stilwell's words are corroborated by virtually every major Western reporter in China during the war, as well as most Chinese. (The sole exception is the Luce publications, which are outrageous propaganda organs which fired some of the most brilliant and knowledgeable journalists who were courageous enough to confront Luce with the truth). It was almost universally recognized that only after Chiang Kai-chek was kidnapped by the Young Marshall Chang Hsuieh-liang in Xian, in 1936, and forced to fight against the Japanese invaders, that Chiang grudgingly turned his guns, at least temporarily, against the Japanese, diverting them from targeting the Chinese Communists, who were, until Xian, the only ones fighting the Japanese invaders.

In fact, the Communists wholeheartedly honored their commitment to the United Front, changing their name to the Eighth Route Army, and on September 25, 1937 defeated the Japanese in Pinxinguan, Shanxi, winning the first major battle against the Japanese aggressors.

By November, 1937 Shanghai fell to Japan, and by March 1940 a puppet government allied with Japan was established in Nanjing, with Wang Ting Wei as president, taking command of millions of Kuomintang troops. In August, 1940, the Eighth Route Army fought the puppet government in Nanjing, for six months, and sent a half-million men to battle the Japanese in North China, where they fought 1,824 battles against the Japanese invaders. By September 1940, Japan, Germany and Italy formed the Axis, and following the Japanese attack against Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Franklin Delano Roosevelt committed the United States to supporting China against Japan. World War II had exploded, threatening to enslave the world by fascism, jeopardizing the very survival of humanity.

Throughout these years, Japan had continued their onslaught against China, from the Marco Polo Bridge Incident that "officially" began the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, to the occupation of Shanxi, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Hebei, meeting fierce resistance by United Front forces, and especially the Eighth Route Army. The atrocities perpetrated by the Japanese in Nanking in 1937 were systematically inflicted upon the Chinese in the other territories invaded by the Japanese military.

In a remarkable new book entitled "Roosevelt and Stalin," written by the Bennington College graduate Susan Butler, she documents:

> "Stalin now voiced doubts about the question of Chinese participation. Roosevelt answered to Stalin that he recognized China's weakness. (No one knew better than he just how unstable China was, or how weak Chiang's government. In 1938 Roosevelt had arranged to give Chiang a $100 million loan because his government had run out of money. Things had not improved at Cairo, Chiang had just asked him for a $1 billion gold loan.) FDR was concerned that if he pushed Chiang too hard, and didn't give him enough support, the generalissimo might make a deal with Japan. (He wasn't worried that the Chinese Communists would ever surrender.) But it was the future of the United Nations—always uppermost in his mind—that most worried him, for if the United Nations was to work, it needed China. As Roosevelt wrote, 'I really feel that it is a triumph to have got the four hundred and twenty-five million Chinese in on the Allied side. This will be very useful 25 or 50 years hence, even though China cannot contribute much military or naval support for

> the moment.' He now told Stalin he was thinking of the already astoundingly large Chinese population, whose sheer numbers would ensure it a major role no matter what its government; 'After all China was a nation of 400 million people, and it was better to have them as friends rather than as a potential source of trouble.'...Roosevelt touched on other subjects he had discussed with Chiang, most notably that there had been a promise that Chinese Communists would be taken into the Chinese government before there were national elections and that elections would take place as soon as possible after the war." (6)

After the war, Chiang violated his promise to Roosevelt. As Sterling Seagrave comments: "Chiang was husbanding his resources for a renewal of his war with the Communists. By 1940-1941 Chiang's sphere of influence had shrunk while the Communists' area had expanded at the expense of the Japanese. In the Red area soldiers, guerrillas and peasants were fighting furiously against Japan, and with results. But each time the Reds enlarged their perimeter and repelled the Japanese, Chiang had his army attack the Communists instead of the Japanese. It was a war within a war."

In 1941 the Communist New Fourth Army, under Kuomintang command, was planning to retake control of the Japanese-held railway from Nanking to Shanghai. General Ku Chu t'ung, a collaborator with the Japanese, sabotaged this plan, arrested the Kuomintang general in command of the New Fourth Army, and the butchery of 5,000 Kuomintang soldiers ensued, resulting in the de facto collapse of the United Front.

By 1943 many Chinese and Americans protested that Roosevelt's lend-lease assistance to China was being diverted and stolen, from the war against Japan, by reactionaries. Among the voices of protest were Madame Sun Yat-sen, John Service, John Gunther, and other reliable witnesses. The Luce publications were simultaneously feeding the American public the drivel of anti-Communist propaganda, deceiving the American public about the reality of the Sino-Japanese war, and thereby undermining the effectiveness of the remaining United Front resistance to Japanese aggression. But through it all, despite the de-facto resumption of the civil war and the attempted demolition of China from both without, and collaborators within, the Chinese people, led by the United Front of Communists with the Progressive faction of the Kuomintang, and supported by the huge majority of impoverished, patriotic Chinese, endured the impossible and the overcame the unthinkable, and ultimately victoriously celebrated the end of the war against Japanese fascism when, on September 9, 1945 in Nanjing, Yasuji Okamura, representing Japan, signed the "instrument of surrender" to China.

CONCLUSION

Following the defeat of Japanese fascism, the civil war in China resumed on a scale of ferocity and horror seldom matched in human history. Finally, ultimate victory was won by the Communists, whose humanitarian policies and arduous commitment to justice won them the loyalty of the masses of the Chinese people. On October 1, 1949 the People's Republic of China was established, completing the work of Sun Yat-sen begun a half century before. Dr. Sun's widow, Soong Ching-ling stood on the Gate of Heavenly Peace in Beijing, celebrating the Liberation, next to Mao-Tse-tung, Chou En-lai, Ju De, and the other heroes who fought for "liberty, equality, fraternity," hailed by hundreds of millions of Chinese. It was a celebration of almost a century of virtually superhuman struggle and dedication to social and economic justice. The dream of Sun Yat-sen. that China would emerge from the enslavement and shame of colonial domination, and the impoverishment of millions of its

citizens, to hold the status of a great world power has today become a reality

NOTES

(1) Edgar Snow, “Red Star Over China,” Published by Grove Press, Inc. Bantam Edition, March 1978, excerpts quoted from Snow’s account of the Long March, pages 186-206.

(2) Sterling Seagrave, “The Soong Dynasty,” Published by Harper and Row, 1986, excerpts quoted from pages 290, 303-304, 320.

(3) Iris Chang, “The Rape of Nanking,” Published by Penguin Books, 1998, excerpts quoted from pages 68-74, 87-88.

(4) Harrison Forman, “Report From Red China,” Published by Henry Holt and Company, 1945, excerpts quoted from pages 118-119.

(5) Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung, Published by Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1972, excerpt quoted from page 215.

(6) Susan Butler, “Roosevelt and Stalin,” Published by Alfred A. Knopf, 2015, excerpts quoted from pages 95-96.

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