# CIVIL-MILITARY CHANGE IN CHINA: ELITES, INSTITUTES, AND IDEAS AFTER THE 16TH PARTY CONGRESS

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# FOREWORD

In November 2002, the Chinese Communist Party held its 16th Congress and formally initiated a sweeping turnover of senior leaders in both the Party and the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The meeting heralded not merely a new set of personalities in positions of political and military power, but also the emergence of a new generation of leaders. Who are these individuals, and what does their rise mean for the future of China and its military?

The group of China specialists who have written this book have applied their research talents, intelligence, and hands-on experience to clarify and explain the most important issues of the day in China. China obviously matters to the United States because of its size, its spectacular patterns of growth, its profound problems linked to rapid growth, and its military intentions.

These specialists have avoided the diseases of bias, demagoguery, predispositions, and showmanship, which infect so many of the analyses of China. Rather, they have examined the facts and the trends to explain the divisions and cohesions in the Chinese leadership and their potential significance to the United States and the rest of the world.

These annual conferences have a long continuity stretching back to the early 1990s. Hence, there is a common database for the books produced each year. The writers revisit major problems in China's development, particularly in the military sphere. They also examine how Chinese policies have evolved over the years, and how important the United States has been in influencing China's strategy. What, for instance, will the emerging leadership with its factious differences do about Taiwan and North Korea?

The conference took place at the Carlisle Barracks in September 19-21, 2003, and was sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation and the Army War College. The exchanges were frank, the atmosphere was filled with camaraderie and tension. There were challenges, I understand, but there was no group-think. The depth of knowledge was astounding. I commend this book to all interested in China and to anyone who thinks about our future and China's role therein.

Ambassador James R. Lilley
Senior Fellow
American Enterprise Institute

# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

**Andrew Scobell**
**Larry Wortzel**

For more than a decade considerable attention has focused on the subject of leadership transition in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Who would succeed Deng Xiaoping (1904–97) and the other geriatric elites of the so-called "Long March Generation"? According to conventional wisdom, the reins of power in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and People's Liberation Army (PLA) were being transferred from poorly educated revolutionaries and guerilla fighters to technocratic bureaucrats and military professionals.[1] Since 2002, the PRC has experienced a "sweeping" turnover of Party, state, and military elites.[2] This volume examines in some detail the key personalities of the new crop of Chinese leaders both in and out of uniform—the so-called "Fourth Generation." Moreover, contributors analyze civil-military interactions in the wake of the CCP's 16th Party Congress held in November 2002 and the 10th National People's Congress (NPC) held in March 2003, and examine key trends in strategic thought and the role of national security research institutes.

The 16th Party Congress, 10th NPC, and subsequent personnel appointments brought about and revealed significant changes in both the civil and military leadership of the PLA. Former President Jiang Zemin relinquished all of the Party and State offices, except for the critical position of chief of the Party's Central Military Commission (CMC). The retention of this post by Jiang, mirroring earlier actions by Deng Xiaoping, has effectively denied the new General Party Secretary and President, Hu Jintao, effective control of the military, which in turn, has fostered uncertainty within China over the depth of his control of the Party and the PLA.

According to James Mulvenon, in his contribution to this volume, the PLA is caught in the middle of a power struggle between CMC Chair Jiang Zemin and President Hu Jintao, his CMC deputy. Official Chinese military newspapers have called the two leaders the

"two centers" (of power in the Party and Army). Mulvenon believes that the longer this situation persists, particularly if there are "tugs of war over policy," the more potential damage to the stability of the civil-military arrangement in China, the greater the chance of internal instabilities, and the less capacity in China to control any escalation of a crisis in the Taiwan Strait. Mulvenon argues that Hu must further consolidate his power in order to restore coherence to the civilian side of civil-military relations. Strong political control of the PLA, in Mulvenon's view, is important to preserve stability in the Western Pacific. Although still a Party army, the PLA is currently moving toward becoming a more modern national army. However, the deadlock between Jiang and Hu impedes military modernization in such areas as budget and equipment procurement, in addition to confusing the chain-of-command. As long as the PLA perceives itself to be caught in a struggle between the "two centers," the PLA will have difficulty in pushing for measures it needs to modernize through the CCP bureaucracy.

Parallel to Jiang Zemin and President Hu's competition for control of the military, and perhaps more important for the future of the PLA, is a second competition—that is between the "two centers" of China's "Fourth Generation." Premier Wen Jiabao, Hu's top political ally, and Vice President Zeng Qinghong, one of Jiang's top allies, are the two secondary figures now vying for preeminence in China's political structure. In the chapter on the "two centers" of China's "Fourth Generation," John Tkacik argues that the way Hu and Jiang manage their relationship with the PLA will greatly depend on the talents of their respective number two men: Premier Wen and Vice President Zeng. For their part, senior uniformed PLA leaders are uncomfortable with being caught between the "two centers." This uneasiness is evidenced by a number of quotes from senior PLA officers in the *Liberation Army Daily*. Both Major General Gu Huisheng, deputy director of the political department in the Nanjing region and Major General Ai Husheng, commander of the 39th Mechanized Group Army in the Shenyang region after listening to a speech given by Jiang Zemin, complained that "many centers means no center, which will lead to no achievement." These critical words came from two respected generals and are an example of the uneasiness of the PLA. Still, despite the tug of war for primacy,

Tkacik argues, it is unlikely that the PLA's influence over debates of national policy can be marginalized. It is likely that China's national priorities will remain military modernization and "increasing the comprehensive strength of the nation."

The 16th Party Congress also set into motion some significant changes in the Chinese PLA high command. The new group is younger, better educated, and more professional in comparison to past PLA leadership. Maryanne Kivlehan-Wise, Dean Cheng, and Ken Gause point out in their contribution that these new leaders will bear the responsibility of guiding and facilitating the PLA's adaptation to new challenges and a rapidly changing international security environment.

The changes in China's military high command included the replacement of the director of each of the four general departments of the PLA—the General Staff Department (GSD), the General Political Department (GPD), the General Logistics Department (GLD), and the General Equipment Department (GED). Liang Guanglie replaced Fu Quanyou as director of the GSD; General Xu Caihou replaced Yu Yongbo as director of the GPD. The current director of the GLD is Liao Xilong, who replaced Wang Ke, and Li Jinai currently holds the directorate of the GED that was formerly held by Cao Gangchuan.

Their chapter provides an in-depth look at who these military leaders are, their similarities to previous CMC leaders in their belief in the implementation of Jiang's long term vision for the PLA, their differences from previous CMC leaders with respect to age, education, and training, and their career experiences that will shape the way they meet the challenges that lie ahead. These three authors agree that amidst rapid change in the international security environment, the most striking aspect of the CMC leadership transition is the lack of surprises. This leads them to conclude that the new leadership was chosen to implement the long-term vision for PRC reform and modernization as defined by Jiang and the outgoing military leadership. This is a strong indicator that the course of the PLA over the coming years is continuity.

At the end of Hu Jintao's first year as General Secretary, Murray Scot Tanner looks at how well Hu has asserted himself as a policy leader in national security affairs, how effective he has been in obtaining a leading role in this area, and to what extent he

has articulated his own view of China's national security. Tanner believes that Hu has moved with caution on most significant policy issues, but, as demonstrated in the response to SARS, Hu is able to respond to crises with some boldness and can marshal political forces to overturn an existing policy consensus. Hu's greatest vulnerability, according to the author, is that his desire to paint himself as a pro-reform populist could backfire. Hu may be promising more than he really intends to, or can, deliver, which may engender greater internal dissent or unrest.

It is notable that military leadership within the CMC has passed to a new generation of generals who are more practical about military matters and less political. Perhaps the best way to describe China's new military leaders is as "Techno-Nationalists."[3] Formal institutional authority based on appointed position in the PLA hierarchy is slowly replacing the great personal influence historically wielded by the top levels of the Party, such as Jiang Zemin. Nonetheless, predicting who will be the PLA's future leaders, and how they will act, is still more of an art than a science, as Kenneth Allen and John Corbett, Jr., observe in their chapter. This is because the CCP's leaders still use many other factors outside of the formal bureaucratic structure when promoting PLA leaders. Allen and Corbett say that such factors as the *guanxi* system of interpersonal relationships that provide mentoring, patronage, and sponsorship, CCP Congress and NPC membership, education requirements, experience gained from foreign travel, place of birth, and political reliability all affect appointments. Nevertheless, the newly appointed generals of the CMC are younger, more experienced, better educated, and less involved in day-to-day national politics than their predecessors. They are quite capable of continuing the PLA along the path of military modernization established by their immediate predecessors. Yet, it is an open question as to whether they are capable of dealing with rapid changes in the international arena and national security threats facing China.

The characteristics of the PLA military leaders in the seven military region (MR) headquarters are also significant and worth studying. As Elizabeth Hague explains in her chapter, MRs are particularly important because they are where the PLA's modernization program is implemented at the operational level. In

many cases, mid- and senior-level promotions at this level reflect the operational priorities of the PLA. They reflect success in achieving the specific mission objectives of that military region. Hague examines how PLA leaders in an MR reflect PLA objectives and MR priorities. The selection of these leaders can be traced to the backgrounds of a few military leaders who have advanced from the MRs to the national level. A careful examination of senior leader backgrounds shows that MR leaders have a keen interest in and promote issues related to the PLA's modernization priorities—information warfare, mechanization, amphibious operations, mobile operations, realistic training, and equipment integration. Hague believes that it is difficult to point to an emphasis on any specific priority as one that the PLA is looking for in a future national-level leader. However, Hague finds that collectively the selection of new military leaders reflects the spectrum of PLA priorities, even in cases where a newly chosen leader offers continuity as major goals, instead of new techniques or ideas in a specific mission area.

In contrast, many of the new provincial Party secretaries selected at the 16th Party Congress were promoted "up through the ranks" through provincial levels. They often started their careers as local Party functionaries. Many of these newly appointed secretaries had their higher education interrupted by the Cultural Revolution, and their isolationism from being "sent down" often narrows their worldview. Thus, local and provincial politics in China are likely to be more conservative, and resistant to change.

Joseph Fewsmith, after researching the composition of China's ruling elite, agrees with Elizabeth Hague that the provincial Party secretaries are generally a conservative group. Fewsmith, therefore, dismisses the view that an increasingly well-educated and technocratic elite is governing China and cautions against expecting rapid political change. This conservatism, in Fewsmith's view, will slow political change in China and hence also affect the speed of PLA modernization and its tendency to perhaps distance itself from the provincial leadership, general public, and even industry. While it may be true that the Chinese political system is evolving, the process is not universal, as illustrated by the conservatism of the provincial Party secretaries.

Nonetheless, China's military continues to modernize. New concepts, currents, and debates in Chinese military thinking are common.[4] An example of this is the concept of obtaining a "silver bullet" technology to make the PLA more powerful. The term *shashoujian* (assassin's mace) now has currency. In classical Chinese military thought, "assassin's mace" is used to indicate a secret weapon or method used by a person or group to triumph over a stronger adversary. Demystifying *shashoujian* is both the topic and title of the chapter by Jason Bruzdzinski.

Whether this concept is the PLA's way of defeating a superior military force or a reference to a specific weapon or program within the Chinese military is not clear. In tactical and operational-level PLA literature, "assassin's mace" seems to refer to unconventional tactics, asymmetrical warfare, and even "miracle weapons" that could be used to negate the combat and technological advantages of a stronger adversary. However, several pronouncements by high-level PLA and Party leaders suggest that concrete "assassin's mace" weapons development programs exist. Although such weapons might give China a tactical advantage on the battlefield, Bruzdzinski is troubled by the possibility that Chinese leaders would be more willing to risk military action due to their belief that specific advanced weapons would give them a sudden victory. What worries Bruzdzinski is the notion that China's leadership could decide to order a PLA equipped with a few such advanced weapons into what would almost certainly be a disastrous conflict with the United States. He argues that not enough is known about the concept and possible weapons being developed to support it. Bruzdzinski says questions regarding the PLA's approach to such "silver bullet" weapons and their impact on the PLA need serious attention and further study by academic and governmental PLA watchers.

While the PLA continues to modernize, there are a number of factors that influence the pace at which this happens. The first is China's perception of the military threats it faces. As long as Sino-U.S. tensions about Taiwan continue, China's military will have a strong incentive to pursue its military modernization and a tangible scenario for which to train. A second influence comes from the Chinese economy. The money for PLA modernization requires

continued economic growth. Were this growth to drop from its current pace, so too would the money available to the PLA. Another factor that affects the pace of modernization is that Chinese leaders after Deng Xiaoping have emphasized concentrating on economic development in lieu of military modernization.

China's national security research institutes also influence the pace of modernization.[5] Evan Medeiros examines this topic in his chapter, arguing that in recent years, China has become much more internationally engaged in regional and multilateral organizations. This is a result of a worldview less influenced by history and ideology, China's classic insecurity, an "entitlement mentality," and pedantic moralism. In exploring the impact that Chinese think tanks have on policymaking, Medeiros finds that the quality of the research on international issues is improving, the research agendas are expanding, more analytical tools are used, and new ideas are being generated at Chinese think tanks. However, Medeiros cautions that there is no one think tank analyst or journal that indicates definitively the future direction of Chinese foreign policy.

The final chapter, a perceptive summation by Ellis Joffe, examines the future of PLA modernization efforts and what could affect its pace. Joffe believes that the achievements over the last two decades by Chinese leaders in transforming their armed forces from a backward, Maoist army into a more modern army are impressive. However, the Chinese are still a long way from achieving their fundamental objectives in dealing with the external world. According to Joffe, Beijing's external objectives are to deter, or defeat, U.S. intervention in a war with Taiwan, effectively challenge the U.S. military presence in the Pacific and to obtain the military power necessary for recognition as a great power in the long run. Although these external objectives will ensure that the PLA will continue its modernization program in the coming decades, the PLA, itself cannot set the pace, scope, nor content of military modernization. Joffe believes that external factors and economic realities, the civil-military relationship, and policy issues will influence the pace of modernization. Due to challenges in each of these areas, Joffe argues that the Chinese army is changing, but slowly—certainly not by "leaps and bounds."

Political maneuvering within the civilian leadership as well as PLA-CCP differences over the aim of military modernization also affect the pace of military modernization, even retarding that pace. The PLA does not currently have a unified chain of command: No one person is in charge of both the party and the army. This has increased tensions both within the CCP and between the civilian and military members of the CMC, and hampers communication between the two establishments. Under these circumstances, modernization will be a paced process, responding to domestic imperatives and hampered by domestic limitations. That said, the PLA remains a latent challenge in Asia that could be triggered by external factors such as pressure on sovereignty issues or a crisis in the Taiwan Strait.

The civilian and military leadership changes analyzed in this volume will have a significant impact on China's future. The impact will be felt in a number of ways including how individuals and groups interact with each other to formulate and implement policy on a wide range of issues. In contrast to earlier generations, the leaders of the PLA and the leaders of the CCP in the first generation of the 21st century are clearly differentiated and completely distinct from one another. We can discern tantalizing but incomplete hints about future dynamics from the way these elites handled episodes in 2003: the SARS crisis and the PLA Navy submarine disaster. It is unclear, however, how much we can generalize from these incidents because they took place during the twilight of Jiang Zemin.

Until Jiang's inevitable passage from the political scene, it will be difficult to extrapolate from such episodes. Moreover, it remains to be seen precisely how these new leaders in and out of uniform will view issues of national security and the challenges of military modernization. Will the emphasis be more on change or continuity with previous generations? What does seem likely is that strategic concepts and expert analysis are destined to play even more prominent roles in the future as this new generation of leaders seeks to make sense of an increasingly complex and uncertain world and China's role in it.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 1

1. See, for example, Hong Yung Lee, *From Revolutionary Cadres to Party Technocrats in Socialist China*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991; Cheng Li, *China's Leaders: The New Generation*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001; James C. Mulvenon, *Professionalization of the Senior Chinese Officer Corps: Trends and Implications*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1997; David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems, Prospects*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2002, chapter 2.

2. H. Lyman Miller, "The 10th National People's Congress and China's Leadership Transition," *China Leadership Monitor*, 7, Summer 2003, available at *www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org*.

3. This is the term Andrew Scobell coined at an unclassified seminar on China's leadership transition held at the Central Intelligence Agency on November 20, 2002—less than a week after the conclusion of the 16th Party Congress. He resurrected the term "techno-nationalist" at the September 2003 PLA conference at the U.S. Army War College to describe the new generation of PLA leaders. Of course, the twin themes of technology and nationalism have a glorious tradition in China's post-1949 military. See, for example, Evan Feigenbaum, *China's Techno-Warriors: National Security and Strategic Competition From the Nuclear to the Information Age*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.

4. See, for example, the range of Chinese strategic thinking outlined in Michael Pillsbury's books: *Chinese Views of Future Warfare*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1998; and *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2000.

5. For a thorough recent survey of these think tanks, see the collection of articles edited by Scot Tanner that appeared in *The China Quarterly*, No. 171, September 2002.

# CHAPTER 2

# PARTY-ARMY RELATIONS SINCE THE 16th PARTY CONGRESS THE BATTLE OF THE "TWO CENTERS"?

**James C. Mulvenon**

## INTRODUCTION

The 12 months between the 16th Party Congress in October 2002 and the party plenum in November 2003 provide a fascinating snapshot of party-army relations in China. Jiang Zemin's retention of the Central Military Commission in China (CMC) chairmanship at the 16th Party Congress, which most observers expect him to retain for 2-3 years, has set off a classic successor struggle with Hu Jintao, who is seeking to consolidate his own position with the military. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) finds itself in the middle of this muddle, looking for support for military modernization and concerned about clarity in the chain of command, especially during crisis. This chapter charts some of the most important episodes of this fluid party-army dynamic since October 2002, including the 16th Party Congress itself and the 2003 National People's Congress (NPC), as well as the party-army implications of the recent severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic and the *Ming* #361 submarine accident in late spring 2003. The current evidence suggests that Hu is consolidating his power more quickly than expected, though Jiang did not step down at the plenum in November 2003. As a result, the civil side of the civil-military arrangement is still frustratingly opaque, foreshadowing possible problems in both domestic and international realms, particularly an external crisis like a dispute in the Taiwan Strait.

## CHINESE CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK[1]

Currently, the best term to describe the civil-military arrangement, more accurately known as "party-military relations," in China

is Ellis Joffe's notion of "conditional compliance."[2] The Chinese military is compliant with civilian wishes in two critical areas. First, it actively supports the legitimacy of the single-party rule of the Chinese Communist Party with the full political and coercive weight of the military institution itself. Second, the PLA has accepted a more circumscribed role within the Chinese system, largely staying out of the management of nonmilitary policymaking areas, such as the economy, and focusing on professional development instead of factional conflict. In areas of corporate identity, such as military modernization or defense planning, the military seems to retain virtual autonomy, unfettered by civilian control. In areas of corporate interest, such as Sino-U.S. relations, Sino-Japan relations, Sino-Taiwan relations, South China Sea issues, and arms control, the military seeks to influence the process. In other nondefense, nonsecurity areas, the PLA appears to have ceded or lost the ability to influence policy.

The reasons for this compliance are complicated. Viewed in terms of the last 70-plus years, the major continuity is party domination of the military, manifested in the lack of a historical legacy of praetorianism or coup d'etats by the PLA. In the past, this relative quiescence could be explained largely in terms of personal and institutional variables. On the one hand, the Chinese military for decades was subordinated in a system dominated by powerful, paramount leaders with personal connections to the senior military leadership. To enforce that subordination, the military was penetrated from top to bottom by a political work system intent on maintaining the military's loyalty to the party. In recent years, however, there has been significant change in both of these areas. As Joffe has pointed out, the current leadership does not enjoy the same type of relationship with the PLA as Mao Zedong or Deng Xiaoping, giving the military a degree of leverage over the civilian leadership that it did not have with previous leaders. As a result, military legitimation of the leadership requires a complicated mix of formal institutional authority, patronage, and bureaucratic bargaining over resources and influence.[3] As Swaine writes,

> Senior party leaders undoubtedly play a complex and nuanced game in their policy interactions with the military leadership, seeking to retain

> the initiative and maintain overall flexibility by alternately placating, resisting, or diluting military views and pressures through a complex mixture of personal persuasion, balancing of bureaucratic interests, and direct control over formal organs and policy channels.[4]

From 1989 to 2002, Jiang Zemin spent a substantial amount of time cultivating a relationship with the PLA and catering to its interests. He regularly paid his respects to military elders, visited units, extolled military heroes, supported budget and procurement increases, honored PLA traditions, and listened to their concerns about issues related to internal and external affairs. Nonetheless, Jiang remained critically dependent on the political support of the military during his tenure.

At the same time, however, two important trends—the professionalization of the officer corps and an unprecedented generational shift that has led to an effective separation of military and civilian elites—have constrained the extent to which the PLA can exploit this leverage.[5] The latter variable is particularly important. China has witnessed a tectonic generational transformation of the civilian and military leaderships from a symbiotic revolutionary guerrilla generation to a technocratic pairing of bifurcated military and civilian elites. The deaths of the revolutionary military generation and changes in the political setting, especially the passing of Deng Xiaoping and the ascension of a collective leadership under Jiang Zemin, meant that the current generation of military leaders did not possess the same level of political capital as their predecessors, and therefore were less able to act as power brokers within the system. As a result, the institutional and individual opportunities and capacities for the military to intervene in the policy process have been reduced, and thereby strengthened civilian control of critical realms. Moreover, the military's intervention in politics in general, and the policy process in particular, has both narrowed and deepened, depending on the particular issue or individuals involved. The relative weakness of the collective civilian leadership means that bureaucratic wrangling is still required on key policy and resource distribution issues, but this bargaining should not be described as occurring between "equal" parties. Thus, it could be argued that the PLA's conditional compliance is as much a function

of the transitional trends in the Chinese system writ large as it is a result of the changing dynamic between the paramount leader and the military. Together, the interaction of these two structural changes produces the dynamic that we see in party-military relations.

The remainder of this chapter uses this framework to analyze civil-military relations from the 16th Party Congress in the fall of 2002 to the present day.

## THE 16TH PARTY CONGRESS: JIANG CONTROLS THE GUN?

### Introduction.

For western observers of the PLA, the 16th Party Congress offered a curious mixture of the past, the present and the future. Jiang Zemin's long-rumored and ultimately successful bid to retain chairmanship of the CMC brought back memories of party-army relations in the late 1980s before Tiananmen. At the same time, the new crop of PLA leaders elevated to the CMC represent the present and future PLA, possessing high levels of experience, training, education, and thus professionalism. This section explores the implications of Jiang's gambit, and analyzes the retirements of senior PLA leaders and the biographies of their replacements.

### Jiang Sticks Around.

If imitation is the highest form of flattery, then Jiang Zemin has given Deng Xiaoping's boots a real tongue-shine. Recall that in 1987, confident of his preeminence in the system, Deng at the 13th Party Congress retired from all formal positions save one, chairmanship of the Central Military Commission. His logic at the time was clear. The PLA was still subordinate to party control, but Deng believed that his continued personal control of the military was crucially important. Deng retained his position for 2 years, relinquishing his party CMC chairmanship at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 13th Central Committee in November 1989 and his state CMC chairmanship at the Third Session of the Seventh NPC in March 1990.

Leaks from Beijing suggest that Jiang will retain his CMC chairmanship for at least 2 years, and possibly 3.[6] The semi-official

explanation for his move was offered by an article in the PRC-owned mouthpiece newspaper *Wen Wei Po*, asserting that "Jiang Zemin's continuing to serve as chairman of the Central Military Commission is conducive to stabilizing the morale of the armed forces and the smooth transition from the old to the new generation."[7] Susan Lawrence of the *Wall Street Journal* asserts that Jiang will now be able to "lend his support to China's moderate policies towards the U.S. and Taiwan," as well as ensure the implementation of the reforms at the heart of his "Three Represents" concept (see below).[8] Willy Wo-Lap Lam from CNN takes a different, more pessimistic tack, asserting that the Politburo supported Jiang's retention of the position because of "uncertainties in the Taiwan Strait," particularly "unstable Sino-U.S. relations and Washington's increasing support for the Taiwan military."[9] Either way, Jiang's post-Congress coverage in the PRC media confirms his continued preeminence. On the November 15 evening news, Jiang was announced first, and dominated the post-congress media attention at the expense of a virtually-invisible Hu Jintao.

While the pattern looks familiar, the results and the long-term implications for the political system could be quite different. While Deng was initiating and overseeing the gradual implementation of radical new norms, particularly age-based retirement, to improve the health of the system, Jiang's move appears to be institutional retrogression driven by unattractive personal ambition. The scrambled party hierarchy, where the general secretary of the Party and the ranking cadre of the Politburo Standing Committee is nonetheless subordinate to a non-Standing Committee member as vice-chair of the CMC, throws a spanner into the evolving mechanisms of inner-party democracy, unless rumors are true that Jiang has also wangled a replica of Deng's special arrangement to attend Standing Committee meetings as an *ex officio* member or at least receive minutes of the meetings.[10]

*Jiang and the Three Represents*. At the close of the 16th Party Congress, a 14th Amendment was added to the Chinese state constitution, enshrining Jiang's "expositions" (*lunshu*) on the "Three Represents" (*san ge daibiao*). While Jiang's name does not explicitly appear in the key sentence[11] ("The Communist Party of China takes

Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, and the important thinking of the 'Three Represents as its guide to action"[12]), this adoption of the "Three Represents" as a set of formal guidelines is the culmination of a long and controversial process begun in the late 1990s at the behest of Jiang and developed by party theoreticians at the Central Party School and elsewhere.

The Chinese PLA has been one of the strongest institutional proponents of the "Three Represents," and the post-Congress lauding of the concept by the newly elected members of the CMC did not disappoint. Personal praise and loyalty to Jiang were in abundance in the military press, and the absence of references to Hu Jintao or the downplaying of his role were striking. On November 17, 2002, this split was highlighted by the *Jiefangjun Bao* "round-up report," which first pledged "absolute" loyalty to Jiang by name as chair of the CMC and then merely identified Hu Jintao as the leader (not "core") of the new Central Committee.[13] The article went on to mention Jiang by name twice more, thanking him for his "great inspiration and encouragement" and pledging to live up to his "expectations." The new heads of the four general departments (Chief of the General Staff General Liang Guanglie, Director of the General Political Department General Xu Caihou, Director of the General Logistics Department General Liao Xilong, and Director of the General Armaments Department Li Jinai) made their loyalty clear, each pledging publicly on the day after the close of the Congress to "resolutely heed the commands of the party central authorities and Chairman Jiang."[14] Other similar meetings had an identical tone, often effusively praising Jiang (most notably the Party committee of the Second Artillery[15]) and the "Three Represents," with only cursory mention of Hu Jintao.[16] The lack of reference in these meetings to General-Secretary Hu, who serves as vice-chairman of the CMC, was taken by some observers to mean that party control over the PLA has been split by Jiang's retention of his CMC position. If so, the 16th Congress was a stunning victory for Jiang Zemin. It is also possible that the effusive praise was an elaborate goodbye gift to Jiang, masking a desire to get rid of him. As shall be explored later in the chapter, reality will only be revealed through actions or lack of actions, not words.

**So Long, Farewell.**

The 16th Congress was marked by the orderly retirement of all members of the CMC over the age of 70, including Generals Zhang Wannian (74), Chi Haotian (73), Fu Quanyou (72), Yu Yongbo (71), Wang Ke (71), and Wang Ruilin (73). Because of the age limit of 70 for Politburo members, Generals Fu, Yu, or the two Wangs could not replace Generals Zhang and Chi as vice-chairs of the CMC. Some Hong Kong sources speculated that the retirement of so many "relatively young" PLA officers sets the stage for a round of PLA elder politics reminiscent of the 1980s, and this outcome may perversely have been furthered by Jiang's retention of the CMC chairmanship.

Of the pre-Congress CMC, only three officers—Generals Cao Gangchuan (67), Guo Boxiong (59), and Xu Caihou (59)—retained membership, with Cao and Guo both rising to CMC Vice-Chair and Xu promoted to director of the General Political Department. Following the pattern of the last two sets of Vice-Chairs, General Guo, whom one Hong Kong newspaper describes as a "noted military strategist" and "trusted aide of [outgoing GSD Director] General Fu Quanyou," is now the "chief warfighter" of the PLA in the tradition of past CMC vice-chairs Zhang Zhen and Zhang Wannian, though continued rumors about his ongoing battles with stomach cancer may elevate the importance of the new director of the General Staff Department, General Liang Guanglie.[17] General Cao is the "chief military politician" in the tradition of Admiral Liu Huaqing and General Chi Haotian, and, as discussed below, was therefore the obvious choice for Defense Minister.

**Say Hello to the FNGs (Filial New Guys).**

Forty-three PLA officers, including 26 new names, are members of the 16th Central Committee, comprising 22 percent of the overall body. Of these, three new officers were added to the CMC: Generals Liang Guanglie, Liao Xilong, and Li Jinai. All are incumbent Central Committee members and "fourth generation" cadres, and are therefore contemporaries of Hu Jintao. Indeed, the average age of the

incoming CMC has dropped from 68 at the 15th Congress to 63 for the 16th Congress, though the average age of the new CMC is 61, if one does not factor in its 76-year-old chairman, Jiang Zemin. The fact that the oldest military CMC member is now only 67 reinforces the "*qishang baxia*" ["above 7, below 8"] principle that was implemented on the civilian side.[18]

Looking at their backgrounds, the career officers on the CMC share many things in common, in particular professional backgrounds and outlook. First, at least three of the officers have combat experience. Generals Guo Boxiong, Liang Guanglie, and Liao Xilong all saw action in the 1979 war with Vietnam, and Liang and Liao were regimental commanders on the front lines. Second, all have received senior professional military education. Generals Guo Boxiong, Liang Guanglie, and Liao Xilong graduated from programs at the PLA Military Academy, Xu Caihou and Li Jinai graduated from the prestigious but since-disbanded Harbin Military Engineering Academy, and Cao Gangchuan studied at the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) Military Engineering School of the Artillery Corps. In addition, Liao Xilong even studied as a part-time student in a post-graduate program of social and economic development and management in Beijing University's Sociology Department, which is a manifestation of the PLA's renewed emphasis on "comprehensive" education.

Third, all of the officers have served in sensitive regions relevant to either Beijing's interest in counterterrorism or conflict with Taiwan. General Guo was 47th Army commander under Fu Quanyou during anti-separatist operations in Xinjiang between 1990-92. When martial law was declared in the Tibetan capital Lhasa in March 1989 during Hu Jintao's tenure as provincial first secretary, Liao was one of the commanders on the scene. General Liang commanded a unit in the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown. As for Taiwan, Generals Guo, Liang, and Liao have all served at one time or another as commander or deputy commander of military exercises directed against Taiwan. In 1994, Liao commanded the ground and air forces in taking over the "simulated Taiwan Qingquangang airfield" that was built in Gansu. Guo directed the PLA's Taiwan exercise in 2000. Liang, Liao, and Li have served in coastal regional commands in either the Nanjing or Jinan Military Region (MR) since 1996, where they gained experience

with joint operations. General Liang even oversaw the writing of a book entitled *Sea Crossings and Landing Operations* when he was commander of the Nanjing Military Region, and Cao Gangchuan and Li Jinai are very familiar with missiles and missile operations. All in all, this CMC is filled with men trained for modern war.

**Not So Fast, General Xiong.**

The new defense minister was not formally appointed until the NPC in March 2003 (see later section), but Chi Haotian's retirement assures that his term has ended. General Xiong Guangkai's failure to be elected to the full Central Committee resolutely ended speculation about his possible appointment. Xiong was merely elected to be an alternate Central Committee member, placing 148th out of 158 alternates. In retrospect, his audacious bragging about his chances to delegations of visiting foreigners should have been a huge red flag, despite his reported closeness to Jiang Zemin and unrivaled position in the intelligence apparatus as the interpreter of foreign affairs. His well-documented lack of respect among uniformed warfighters likely sealed his fate.

**Assessment.**

Post-Congress rhetoric in the PLA media about Jiang Zemin, however, raised troubling concerns about the state of party-army relations in China, particularly the re-personalization of army loyalty. This, combined with the PLA's less than desultory cooperation with the civilian apparatus during the EP-3A crisis,[19] strongly suggested that the system was becoming dangerously dysfunctional. This is not to say, however, that the PLA was abandoning conditional compliance in favor of greater political intervention. Instead, Jiang's retention of the chairmanship of the CMC raised serious questions about the chain of command, particularly in a crisis over Taiwan, where escalation control is made more difficult by the triangular dynamic between Washington, Taipei, and Beijing.

## THE 2003 NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS: GRUMBLING DOGFACES

The NPC meetings, particularly the publicized PLA delegate discussion sessions, are a consistently useful barometer of the state of party-army relations. This section examines the makeup of the delegation, outlines the issues highlighted in PLA leaders' speeches and delegates' comments, and analyzes the announced defense budget. Special attention is paid to an article in *Liberation Army Daily* by Wang Wenjie, particularly a cryptic comment made by a PLA delegate about the problems posed by "two centers," which some analysts took as a criticism of the divided leadership of Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin.

### PLA Leaders' Speeches.

The PLA delegation to the first session of the 10th NPC, which consisted of 268 deputies, was led by CMC Vice Chair Guo Boxiong (the PLA's chief warfighter), with fellow Vice Chair Cao Gangchuan and General Political Department Director Xu Caihou as deputy heads.[20] Leadership speeches at the NPC are important indicators of the priorities of different sectors of the military in the coming year. Guo's speech at the opening delegation session touched on the centrality of the theory of the "three represents" to the future development of China, the importance of generational change in the leadership, and the military's commitment to creating a "well-off society" (*xiaokang shehui*). Guo's second speech, following the First Plenary Session of the NPC, also identified four principles for implementation, suggesting that the PLA is focused on loyalty to the party and modernization rather than ideology.[21] First, the military must apply the theory of the "three represents," which does not have direct military relevance but instead should be seen as a statement of party orthodoxy. Second, and more substantively significant, the PLA must "take modernization as the central task and strengthen our sense of mission, of responsibility, and of urgency in building modernized armed forces." "Ideological" work comes in third, but Guo warns that personnel must assess the "appropriateness" and

"timeliness" of political activities, suggesting that political work must not get in the way of modernization. Finally, Guo leaves no doubt that professional concerns must trump all others, asserting that "combat strength" must be the "yardstick" and that "enhancing combat strength" must be the "starting and base point in all work." At a group discussion later in the week, Guo also delivered the predicted warning to Taiwan, calling the situation "complicated" and refusing to renounce the use of force.[22]

General Cao Gangchuan augmented these remarks by emphasizing innovation and high technology, though he made a point of lauding "Chairman Jiang Zemin's thinking on national defenses and armed forces building" without identifying any specific aspect of Jiang's military insights.[23] A later speech credited Jiang with "great foresight" that led to "eye-catching great successes," and joined Guo Boxiong in calling on PLA personnel to "obey the orders of the party Central Committee, the CMC, and Chairman Jiang in all their actions" without ever mentioning Hu Jintao by name.[24] Chief of the General Staff Liang Guanglie highlighted the need to develop "weaponry and command methods that meet the requirements of information warfare" and to "deepen . . . preparations for military struggle."[25] Director of the General Logistics Department (GLD) Liao Xilong repeated the recent mantra about building capabilities to "win battles," and called for "optimization" of the PLA's structure (usually a code word for reductions of personnel and headquarters) and acceleration of the "socialization of logistics support" (a code phrase for outsourcing to nonmilitary providers).[26] Director of the General Equipment Department Li Jinai reemphasized the slogan of "manufacturing a generation of weapons, developing a generation of weapons, and researching in advance a generation of weapons," calling for greatest attention to the last set of challenges.[27]

**PLA Delegates' Proposals and Complaints.**

Early reports from the NPC offered glimpses of the delegates themselves. Of 268 deputies, official media reported that the share of delegates with university educations was up from 32 percent to 64.2 percent, and the share of delegates with professional school educations was up to 37.7 percent.[28] Chen Yan, director of the Political

Department of the South China Sea Fleet speedboat detachment, has a doctorate in national defense economics, while 30-year-old Li Jun, who runs computer networks in the Guangzhou Military Region, has a master's degree in signals and information processing with four science and technology progress awards to her credit.[29]

Statements by PLA delegates at the NPC were equally diverse, touching on a wide variety of topics. A summary of PLA themes from the NPC included (1) implementing the "three represents," (2) acting according to the "five phrases" (Jiang Zemin's slogan for the military), (3) "fighting to win," (4) "guarding against degeneration," (5) "keeping pace with the times," (6) developing "fewer but better troops with Chinese characteristics," and (7) safeguarding "national security and unification" while building a "well-off society."[30] Echoing a line repeated since the intense international relations debate in summer 1999 following the Belgrade embassy bombing, delegates also stressed the continuing primacy of "peace, development, and multipolarity" as themes of the age, but warned of "new situations," "uncertainties," and "turbulence."[31] Senior Colonel Yao Yunzhu of the Academy of Military Sciences offered a Chinese proverb to support this position, invoking the adage that "a strong wind blowing in the tower heralds an impending storm in the mountains."[32] One delegate challenged the PLA to succeed in the "dual tasks of mechanization and informationization,"[33] while another called for the acceleration of national defense and military modernization according to "the principle of coordinating national defense construction with economic construction."[34] Many echoed the official party line about "developing the west," with a focus on Xinjiang,[35] while representatives of the personnel system called for greater emphasis on the recruitment of university students into the ranks.[36] Equipment and technology advocates demanded that the "national defense S&T [science and technology] industry . . . serve both military and civilian purposes,"[37] while one bold thinker called upon the PLA to "conduct exercises with live ammunition."[38]

As part of their official duties, PLA delegates to the NPC also submitted 23 proposals to the NPC, dealing with a national defense tax, information security for national defense, the protection of servicemen's civil rights, the management of frontier defense, amendments to Article 369 of Criminal Law, property management, and free compulsory education.[39]

**The Defense Budget.**

Minister of Finance Xiang Huaicheng announced on March 6 that defense spending would rise 9.6 percent to 185.3 billion yuan.[40] Official reasons for the increase included addressing "changes in the international situation, safeguarding China's national security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and raising the combat effectiveness of the armed forces in fighting wars using high technology."[41] Yet a 9.6 percent increase represented a significant drop-off in the rate of growth of the PLA budget, which had averaged well above 10 percent per year since the late 1980s. The 2003 increase also was well below the projected programming of the 10th five-year plan, which appeared to be averaging between 15 and 20 percent after inflation. One official source offered a reason for the smaller-than-normal increase, arguing that slower overall economic growth required caps on central budget spending.[42] Yet a hint of another reason can be found in the fact that only English-language official sources, such as *China Daily*, highlighted the drop in the rate of increase as the "lowest in 14 years,"[43] while Chinese-language sources simply stated the numbers without editorial comment. What is going on here? While the official budget numbers were already widely viewed as incomplete, it is entirely possible that the Chinese government, weary of the annual public relations debacle in the Western media over double-digit increases in the defense budget, decided to hide a greater share of the increase in other accounts. Using this logic, 9.6 percent was a reasonable mean between previous high-profile increases of nearly 18 percent and smaller increases, such as 5 percent, that would have been politically embarrassing to the important military constituency.

Nonetheless, numerous PLA officers publicly called the increase insufficient and argued for greater resources. PLA Air Force Lieutenant General Liu Cangzi allegedly told *South China Morning Post* that defense spending should be increased "many, many times,"[44] while his colleague Lieutenant General Zeng Jianguo told the same paper that the budget should be raised "even more in certain respects."[45] Even more shocking were the comments of Major General Ding Jiye, head of the General Logistics Department

Finance Department, who told the state-run Xinhua News Agency that the current level of defense spending was "barely enough to keep things moving."[46] One PLA delegate asserted that the level of military modernization was only "on par" with the capabilities of major countries in the 1970s and was "incompatible" with China's "comprehensive national strength" 20 years after reform.[47] To correct these deficiencies, delegates called on the leadership to "raise the welfare and remuneration of military officers and men, improve the living conditions of military officers on active duty, increase allowances for officers and men on active duty, and narrow the gap between military personnel on active duty and other civil servants in terms of welfare and wages."[48]

**The Mystery of the "Two Centers."**

Early reports from PLA delegates offered generic lauding of the "successful transition of the party leadership at the 16th Party Congress."[49] Yet a fascinatingly cryptic March 11 article in *Liberation Army Daily* written by Wang Wenjie, deputy director for reporting under the paper's editor-in-chief according to the *Directory of Military Personalities*, could be interpreted as an indirect but shockingly heterodox attack on divided civilian leadership in the CMC, as described in a previous section. The *Liberation Army Daily* article begins with a series of axioms of leadership followed by a rhetorical question:

> It is better to have a good general than 10,000 troops, and it is better to have a good policy than a good general. A person good at running an army cannot do without good generals, much less do without a good policy. What is the good policy for guiding the direction of the armed forces construction and the future development of the military?[50]

On their face, these comments seem deductively reasonable, and the question appears to be a standard Socratic way of initiating an argument. At the same time, the logical sequence could be interpreted to mean that bad policy at the top (i.e., from the civilians) can undermine even a professional military with good generals. A series of unanswered questions a few paragraphs later strongly suggests that something indeed is wrong at the policy level:

> Should the military choose to bypass or confront deep-level contradictions and problems encountered in the course of reform and development? Should the military try to avoid or confront "bottleneck problems" which produce constraining effects on our military's organizational structure, functioning mechanisms, and policy systems?

Note the emphasis on forces *outside* the military that are constraining structure and process. At this point, the article abruptly switches from a general, institutional focus to a tone that suggests a personal attack is afoot, without giving a hint as to who might be the target: "Should one emphasize the overall situation or fuss over small things when there is a conflict between the individual interest and the national interest?" The article does not immediately identify whose "individual interest" is trumping the national interest. Instead, the bombshell is dropped by two delegates named Gu Huisheng and Ai Husheng, who complain:

> Having one center is called "loyalty," while having two centers will result in "problems." Having multiple centers is the same as having no center, and having no center results in having no success in any area. Implementing the "Three Represents" will be an empty slogan and word in the absence of undiluted devotion, total concentration, enthusiasm for producing achievements and for pursuing exploration and advancement, and unyielding and unwavering convictions.[51]

This appears to be a clear attack on the divided leadership situation of Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, whereby Hu is general secretary of the party and state president but nonetheless subordinate to Jiang (who is not even a member of the Central Committee) on the CMC, thus creating "two centers" of power. An article in *Asia Times* about the essay highlights the clever wordplay behind the attack, which should be literally translated as "one *zhong* and one *xin* together make one 'loyalty,' but piecing two *zhongs* together to one *xin* gives one *chuan,* a problem." The key characters are *zhong* (center) and *xin* (heart). As separate characters in a compound they mean "center" (*zhongxin*), while the same two characters stacked on top of one another make the character for "loyalty," or *zhong.* In other words, one "center" means "loyalty." The character for "string together," or

*chuan*, consists of two "center," or *zhong*, characters stacked on top of each other, while the character for "problem" is composed of a *chuan* on top (two "centers") and a *xin*. So if you "string together two centers," it becomes a "problem."[52]

The article then goes on to outline the destabilizing consequences of selfish interests: "Correct guidance will make large numbers of people be of one mind and produce cohesion; incorrect guidance will inevitably result in people wanting different things and produce centrifugal effects."[53] As a corrective to this outcome, the author cites the ancients: "Li Bu of the Song Dynasty said in the *Book of Reflections*: 'Self-sacrifice produces support; tolerance wins people over; and taking the lead establishes leadership.' This statement addresses the power of example and the charismatic power of personality. 'When the dragon head moves, the dragon tail swings'."[54] Just to make the point further, the author points out the hypocrisy of the main proponent of intraparty reform via the three represents, Jiang Zemin, acting as an obstacle to intraparty reform, and exhorts him to practice what he preaches:

> Leading cadres are organizers of efforts to implement the "Three Represents," and should personally practice the "Three Represents." Leading cadres now should firmly remember the "two musts," and work hard to do a good job of serving as the "five models." It is necessary to dare to take the lead, to reach the level of ideological advancement characterized by not being vainglorious . . .[55]

In other words, Jiang should think less of his own ambitions and desires, and subordinate himself to the good of the future of the party.

All in all, the article presents a seemingly scathing attack on Jiang and the political outcome of the 16th Party Congress. Even more surprisingly, the article was still on the web site of *Liberation Army Daily* as of this writing in early December 2003.[56] The author certainly is too prominent within the newspaper's leadership and the General Political Department for this article to be ignored. How can we explain this hidden heterodoxy in the heart of the PLA propaganda apparatus, which was the most vociferous exponent of the "three represents" and of fealty to Chairman Jiang only 6 months

earlier? Such open splits and use of the media for attacks in the past have suggested much deeper disputes within the system, so they lead this author to conclude that dissension within the ranks over Jiang's retention of the chairmanship of the CMC is deep and real.

**Assessment.**

To sum up, the NPC revealed a PLA focused on its professional missions but also displayed potentially widening fissures in the superstructure of the conditional compliance arrangement. While the 16th Party Congress ushered in a new set of younger, more capable military leaders, the lines of authority and priorities among their civilian masters were much less clear. The "two centers" argument strongly suggested discomfort with the "split" leadership of Hu and Jiang over the army, which, like most military organizations, seeks clarity on issues related to chain of command and future planning and procuring capacities. Until this leadership situation is settled, the PLA can legitimately question whether civilian commitments for resources reflect consensus or factional jockeying, which in turn reduces the PLA's incentives to remain apolitical.

## THE PLA AND THE SARS CRISIS: HEAR NO EVIL, SEE NO EVIL

SARS emerged in China in November 2002. The story of civilian obfuscation, coverup, confession, and mobilization is well-known,[57] but the parallel events within the military, particularly in Beijing, require further exploration. This section will analyze the initial PLA coverup of SARS cases in Beijing, the saga of whistleblower Dr. Jiang Yanyong, PLA contributions to the fight against SARS, the PLA's continued stonewalling and opacity even after Hu Jintao's promulgation of the transparency policy, and the implications of SARS for the ongoing power struggle between Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin.

**The PLA Coverup in Beijing.**

According to a Western journalist, SARS in fact first appeared in

Beijing in the elite PLA #301 Hospital, spreading quickly to PLA #302 and #309 Hospitals, "though no one in the military reported these numbers to civilian authorities in the city."[58] Later official Chinese media confirmed that the first nonlocal resident SARS patient arrived at PLA #302 Hospital on March 7.[59] An article by a Western journalist, quoting a direct participant in the meeting, asserted that Premier Wen Jiabao told the Chinese Center for Disease Control on April 7 that the military was not reporting cases of SARS to the Beijing municipality government or the central government.[60] The chief of the CDC, Li Liming, reportedly told the Premier: "if we had controlled the military hospitals at the beginning, we never would have had this epidemic in Beijing."[61] This lack of communication was facilitated and exacerbated by Chinese bureaucratic politics, which separates military and civilian organs into opaque stovepipes that can only horizontally share information at the highest levels. In similar ways, PLA hospitals also resisted intrusive inspections by the World Health Organization as well. According to a Western newspaper, doctors at PLA #309 on April 15 moved 40 SARS patients to the Zihuachun Hotel on the hospital's grounds to prevent visiting World Health Organization (WHO) teams from finding them.[62]

**Dr. Jiang Yanyong, Whistleblower.**

But the PLA cover-up was not to last, and the revelation of unknown PLA cases was one of the most important impetuses for the civilian leadership to admit its previous obfuscation and begin cooperating more fully with the WHO. On April 4, Jiang Yanyong, 72, former director of PLA #301 Hospital during the 1989 massacre in Tiananmen, revealed in an email to China Central Television and Hong Kong-based Phoenix Television that the #309 Hospital had 60 cases of SARS, with six deaths. His revelation occurred on the same day that Health Minister and former military doctor Zhang Wenkang told a news conference that Beijing had 12 cases and three deaths. Neither media outlet broadcast the content of Dr. Jiang's email, but it was leaked to *Time*, which placed the information on its web site on April 9. Later, Jiang Yanyong told *Time* that three PLA hospitals in Beijing had at least 120 SARS patients, six of which by April 9 had died.[63] This contradicted the Health Ministry's tally of 22

cases in Beijing, with four dead.

Partially as a result of Dr. Jiang's whistleblowing, the Chinese leadership on April 18 reversed course and ordered officials to stop covering up the extent of the SARS outbreak.[64] After a Politburo meeting that "demanded the accurate, timely, and honest reporting of the SARS situation," Hu Jintao announced the mobilization of a nationwide anti-SARS campaign, "relying on science, effective prevention, and increased coordination."[65] On April 20, Vice Minister of Health Gao Qiang released a revised number of 346 SARS cases in Beijing, more than 10 times the number previously acknowledged by the Ministry.[66] On the same day, Health Minister Zhang and Beijing Mayor Meng Xuenong were both sacked. Zhang's removal was linked to his earlier false statements and the desire of the leadership to improve the Chinese government's credibility and international reputation, while Meng's dismissal appears to reflect the purely political calculation of balancing the loss of an official from the Jiang camp (Zhang) with one from the Hu camp (Meng).

**PLA Contributions to the Fight Against SARS.**

Most SARS-related activity in the military was focused on propaganda, mobilization, and security. On the propaganda side, the media was filled with laudatory stories about the military's scientific and medical role in combating SARS, as well as grandiose treatises on "national spirit"[67] and advice on how to use the theory of the "Three Represents" to improve military sanitation work (insert your own joke here).[68] Military researchers from the Microbe Epidemic Institute of the Military Medical Academy of Sciences "identified the pathogen and developed a technique for quickly testing" the disease.[69] The researchers also cooperated with the Beijing Genomics Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences to complete genome sequencing of the coronavirus. Medical staff were sent to rural areas to augment limited rural medical infrastructure.[70] The General Staff Department's Chemical Defense Command and Engineering College in Beijing was honored for its contributions to the fight against SARS, specifically the school's development of disinfectants and cooperation in sterilization campaigns in the city.[71]

Among the many identified "heroes" in the PLA was Jiang Suchun, 74, an infectious disease expert at PLA #302, a special hospital for people with infectious diseases. Jiang became infected soon after he began treating patients, and then used himself as a guinea pig by injecting blood serum from SARS patients who had recovered, getting well after 23 days.[72]

In terms of mobilization, Guangzhou Military Region's response to the new SARS policy was likely typical across of the PLA's regional commands.[73] Guangzhou set up a SARS leading group at the MR level, "plus an epidemic monitoring and managing group, technical guidance group, and clinic treatment group."[74] Units at or above the regiment level formed their own leading groups for preventing and controlling the disease, as well as special groups for dealing with emergencies.[75] All hospitals affiliated with the MR established special clinic teams for treating SARS patients. On the information side, MR political and health units cooperated to disseminate knowledge about preventing SARS, publishing and distributing pamphlets to the rank and file, organizing mobile exhibitions, and setting up a 24-hour hotline. Finally, all personnel movements were "strictly controlled" under a policy called "closed management," involving the rescinding of all leave and relatively complete isolation from the general population and even their dependents.[76]

The most important, or at least the most public, PLA contribution to the fight against SARS, however, involved the rapid construction and manning of the new SARS hospital in Xiaotangshan, a suburb of Beijing. On the approval of the General Departments "Circular on Transferring Emergency Personnel in Support of the Beijing Municipality Dedicated Hospital for Atypical Pneumonia" by CMC Chair Jiang Zemin on April 27, a total of 1,200 medical specialists (respiratory disease, contagious disease, and epidemic control) were transferred from major military units to Beijing's designated SARS patient reception hospitals.[77] By April 28, 333 military medical staff from the Beijing, Shenyang, and Jinan Military Regions (MR), as well as personnel from the #175 and #180 Hospitals in Nanjing MR, Changzheng Hospital under the No. 2 PLA Medical University, and No. 3 PLA Medical University, had arrived at the new SARS hospital, with the remainder expected to arrive by May 5.[78] The hospital accepted its first patients on May 1, treating them with 90 million yuan worth of medical equipment.[79]

## Continued Stonewalling and Opacity?

Despite these public efforts, however, there is some evidence that the military continued to be less than candid about the extent of the outbreak among the armed forces. While describing its multifarious efforts to combat the disease, Guangzhou Military Region also reported as of April 28 that no SARS cases had been discovered among its personnel, which stretched credulity to say the least.[80] In light of the deceptions among military hospitals in Beijing, the Ministry of Health in late April issued a circular on SARS data, and General Logistics Department Director Liao Xilong ordered all medical units to comply.[81] Yet the WHO in mid-May, according to a *Washington Post* article, criticized the military for continuing to limit information on SARS within its ranks.[82] Soldiers accounted for an estimated 8 percent of cases in China, but the PLA had heretofore released only scant information.[83] One member of the WHO expert team in Beijing, Keiji Fukuda, complained that "A lot of the key details about those cases . . . [are] not being shared with the civilian authorities. These numbers don't tell us anything." General Logistics Department Director Liao Xilong further obfuscated the situation by declaring on May 14 that the PLA was "safe" from SARS, arguing there were no cases of SARS in the ranks.[84] In perhaps the most counterproductive move of all, Hong Kong media reported that the PLA was censuring the "honest doctor," Dr. Jiang Yanyong of PLA #301 Hospital, surveilling his movements and banning his contact with foreign and domestic media without prior approval from the #301 Hospital Propaganda Department. An internal circular reportedly even criticized Jiang for providing the original information about the additional Beijing cases to foreign media while serving as a military doctor.[85] It was not until June, when *Beijing Weekly* placed him on its cover, that any official media in China acknowledged his contribution.

## Jiang, Hu, and SARS.

The SARS crisis revealed continuing strains in both the party-army dynamic and the leadership struggle between Jiang Zemin and

Hu Jintao. While they were guilty at a minimum of sins of omission and perhaps commission at the beginning of the crisis, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao took leading roles in pushing the transparency policy once the extent of the disease in PLA hospitals in Beijing became known in mid-April, appearing constantly on state media.[86] One Western journalist asserts that Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao "used the crisis to challenge the authority of parts of China's government, the military and the capital's administration, ultimately challenging the authority of their predecessor, former President Jiang Zemin."[87] The same article asserted that Hu Jintao, using his authority as vice-chair of the CMC, "persuaded the army to release statistics of SARS patients in its hospitals."[88]

For his part, Jiang Zemin and his allies remained silent on the epidemic until April 26, 2003, when Jiang told the visiting Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes at a meeting in Shanghai that China had "scored notable achievements in containing the disease."[89] His appearance in Shanghai reportedly left many Chinese with the impression that Jiang had fled the capital to escape the disease, and his statement, which directly contradicted the new openness and transparency of Hu and Wen's public statements, seemed to be out of touch or naïve. In the following weeks, Chinese sources cited in Western media reports strongly suggested that Jiang was opposed to Hu's transparency policy, and sought to use the military media apparatus to undermine the efforts.[90] At the same time, Hu began to make aggressive plays for an independent power base in the military, chairing a Politburo meeting on military reorganization that was reportedly not attended by Jiang.[91]

Public statements by senior civilian and military officials also hinted at the possible schism between Hu and Jiang. In a tour of the SARS hospital on April 28, General Logistics Department Director Liao Xilong tried to balance the situation by ordering the PLA to carry out the "instructions set forth by General Secretary Hu Jintao and CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin."[92] This equitable profession of loyalty was strikingly different than the language used by senior military leaders during and after the 16th Party Congress, when Jiang's name was prominently mentioned at the expense of Hu.[93] By contrast, CMC Vice-Chair Guo Boxiong used the opportunity of a SARS inspection meeting to flatter Jiang Zemin, mentioning

only Jiang by name and referring to "the party Central Committee" instead of mentioning Hu. Moreover, Guo found time to laud the "important thinking of the 'Three Represents'."[94] Likewise, Liu Qi, the Beijing Party Secretary and Politburo member who escaped punishment for the obfuscation of SARS cases in Beijing because of his close ties to Jiang Zemin, gushed over the latter's wisdom in deploying PLA personnel to aid in the battle against SARS.[95]

By June, when the disease appeared to be coming under control, Jiang Zemin took a belatedly active role, perhaps concluding that his previous reticence and nonchalance on SARS had undermined his standing. On June 6, Hu and Jiang appeared together at a meeting with delegates to a military personnel training seminar, and Jiang used the event to praise the PLA for its achievements in fighting SARS.[96] On June 22, Jiang signed a circular praising the PLA personnel who had served at the Xiaotangshan SARS hospital for "making great achievements in protecting people's health and safety."[97] The circular closed with a Jiang-friendly mantra, calling upon the PLA to "follow the correct leadership of the Party Central Committee and the CMC, hold high the banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory, earnestly study the important thinking of the 'Three Represents,' implement the general requirements of the 'five sentences,' and work hard to promote the development of our army's modernization by leaps and bounds."[98] Again, differences could also be seen in the speeches of other officials attending the event. Liu Qi continued his paean to Jiang, linking the victory over SARS to correct implementation of the Three Represents and mentioning only Jiang by name, while GLD Director Liao Xilong took the opposite tack, calling for the masses to "unite around the party Central Committee with Comrade Hu Jintao as the general secretary" and advocating Hu's signature policy of "building a well-off society [*xiaokang shehui*]."[99] The disparities in these statements, so different from the uniformity of the pre-16th Party Congress environment and the ceaseless lauding of the leadership "with Jiang Zemin at the core," highlights the continuing jockeying among the elites and the ongoing lack of clarity in the leadership.

## MING 361 ACCIDENT

Amidst the SARS crisis, the PLA's *Ming*-class submarine #361

was lost with 70 hands aboard. This section analyzes the public record about the causes of the accident, the competition between Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao to control the media campaign related to the tragedy, and the sensitive political debate over accountability.

**What Happened.**

In late April or early May 2003, diesel-powered, *Ming*-class submarine Number 361 experienced a "mechanical malfunction" during an exercise in the waters of the Yellow Sea between Korea and Shandong Province, killing all 70 crew members.[100] According to *Wen Hui Bao*, which is often used by Beijing as a channel for unofficial messages, the crippled, half-submerged boat was discovered by fisherman, who reported their findings to authorities.[101] Upon opening the hatch, all 70 personnel were found to have suffocated at their stations.[102] The submarine was towed from the accident site, east of the Neichangshan Islands, to its home port base at Qingdao.[103] The *Wen Hui Bao* article offered three possible reasons for the accident, speculating that (1) "a steersman mistakenly opened a discharge valve instead of an air inlet valve," or (2) "sea water mixed the submarine's batteries to produce a toxic gas," or (3) "a spark caused a big explosion" on board the boat. Western experts discount explanation #1 because the compartmentation of the submarine could have prevented the outcome, and argue that #3 can be ruled out because the submarine did not sink. A later article in the same newspaper claimed that an intake valve had failed to open during snorkeling with the diesel engines, which consumed the oxygen within the boat and causing acute suffocation of the crew within 2 minutes.[104] The lack of oxygen lowered the barometric pressure within the submarine, making it impossible to open the hatch covers from inside and preventing any escape by the crew.

**Battling Condolences.**

The *Ming* #361 accident provides revealing insights into the current party-military leadership dynamic between Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. Jiang appears from the outset to have sought to dominate the media coverage of the event and thereby project his authority

as head of the CMC. The original Xinhua report of the accident specifically mentions that "Jiang Zemin, chairman of the CMC, sent condolence messages dated May 2, to the family members of the dead Navy officers and seamen," with no mention of General-Secretary Hu. Later sources revealed the text of the message: "The officers and sailors of 361 remembered their sacred duty entrusted to them by the Party and the People. They died on duty, sacrificed themselves for the country, and they are great losses to the People's Navy."

One Hong Kong newspaper with a reputation for neutrality on China issues, citing sources in Beijing, also portrayed Jiang as the most important leader in the crisis. On May 4, *Dongfang Ribao* reported that Jiang had "personally made the final decision to quickly release the news" as well as ordering "senior officers in the military to go personally to the scene to direct rescue work and properly cope with the aftermath of the accident."[105] The newspaper opined that these moves were undertaken to "improve the international image" of China after the SARS debacle, were evidence of learning from the Russian *Kursk* experience, showed decisiveness on the part of Jiang, and highlighted an improved crisis management system, the latter of which was one of Jiang's stated reasons for retaining his leadership position.

By contrast, Hu Jintao's condolences to the families were not issued until May 3. In his message, he declared the accident as a great loss to the Navy of the PLA and extolled the patriotism and bravery of the sailors aboard. He also added that "people should turn their mourning into a source of strength by learning from the accident to advance the country's national defense capacity and speed the PLA's modernization drive."[106] This latter statement has been widely interpreted as Hu's attempt to turn the accident into an opportunity for reform, much as he has used SARS to force transparency on the government side. Moreover, Hu, unlike Jiang, called for an investigation of the accident, arguing that it was important to learn the lessons of the accident. Articles through May and June continued to remind readers of Jiang and Hu's condolences,[107] with some explicitly citing the different dates, as if to emphasis the point that Jiang's regrets were more important and more timely.[108]

**Comrades Are Seeing It for Themselves.**

On the night of May 5, state-run television showed both Jiang and Hu, in their capacities as chairman and vice-chairman of the CMC, meeting with family members of the dead sailors at the Lushun Naval Base in Dalian, sending the message that both men were involved in the investigation.[109] One Hong Kong newspaper reported that this was the first time Jiang and Hu had appeared together since the SARS outbreak.[110] *Xinhua* again reported Jiang in the lead, expressing "profound grief on the deaths of the officers and men and kind sympathy and solicitude for their families." His comments focused on emotional and ideological issues, referring to the dead as martyrs and calling on the party to take care of the men's dependents.[111] In Hu's comments, by contrast, the emotional rhetoric was followed by discussions of both military and nonmilitary policy issues, once again exhorting them to "turn grief into strength" and calling for "victory in the struggle to prevent and control" SARS, promotion of the "modernization of national defense and armed forces," and current developmental line of "building a well-off society in an all-around way."[112] The broadcast also showed the two men inside the crippled vessel and standing alongside the boat. According to the *Washington Post*'s John Pomfret, these latter images were unusual, as "Chinese leaders rarely if ever have appeared publicly at the scenes of disasters, especially those involving the military." Later reports asserted that the two leaders "entered each cabin, carefully examined each combat position, and inquired into relevant details."[113]

These accounts suggest that the civilian leadership structure did not apparently play a large role in the investigation. Given that the accident involved a military unit, the CMC was a natural choice to take the lead, though it was also a bureaucracy in which Hu Jintao is subordinate to Jiang Zemin. When Jiang and Hu visited Lushun Naval Base in Dalian, official media used their CMC titles and ranked them accordingly. Similarly, the memorial service on May 20 in Dalian was attended by the entire CMC, and the eulogy was given by General Guo Boxiong, the vice-chair of the CMC and the "chief warfighter." Interestingly, his brief comments echoed Hu Jintao's

earlier statements, urging "mourners to turn their grief towards building a powerful navy, and further revolutionizing, modernizing, and regularizing the armed forces."[114]

**Somebody Will Pay For This!**

Multiple sources report that the *Ming* #361 accident also quickly led to calls for accountability, suggesting that Hu Jintao's strategy had succeeded.[115] One PRC-owned news outlet in Hong Kong reported that CMC Vice-Chairman Guo Boxiong led a 30-member CMC work team to uncover the lessons from the *Ming* #361 accident.[116] By June, the Central Committee and the CMC dismissed four senior navy leaders, including Navy Commander Shi Yunsheng, Political Commissar Yang Huaiqing, North Sea Fleet Commander Ding Yiping, and North Sea Fleet Political Commissar Chen Xianfeng.[117] The officers were not only criticized for fostering an environment in which such an accident could happen, but also for the failure of the Navy to discover the accident in a timely manner.[118] On June 13, *Xinhua* reported that eight other "relevant personnel" were disciplined with either administrative dismissal or demotion.[119] The forcible retirement of Shi Yunsheng for "improper command and action"[120] was reminiscent of the removal of Health Minister Zhang Wenkang and Beijing Mayor Meng Xuenong for their mishandling of SARS, and was likely meant to send a signal that military leaders will assume responsibility for mistakes on their watch, whether they were directly responsible or not. A June 14 article in the PRC-owned Hong Kong daily *Ta Kung Pao*, citing an unnamed "expert," expounded on this theme at length:

> . . . the Navy personnel reshuffle reflects the modern leadership mentality of the central leadership in running the army strictly and according to law, adding that the only way to win the hearts of servicemen and the people is to be strict and fair on matters of merits and demerits, right and wrong, responsibility, and rewards and punishments . . . the resolute measures taken by the central authorities reflect that the Chinese government has steadily increased its transparency, acted strictly in accordance with the system of taking responsibility for accidents . . . This is in keeping with the international practice of offering to resign to show that one takes full blame, a practice that will win the support of people of all walks of life in the whole country.[121]

Moreover, it is significant that the official *Xinhua* announcement of the demotions began with the statement, "With the approval of the Central Committee of the CCP, the CMC recently issued an order . . .," possibly confirming Hu Jintao's role in ensuring accountability and reform in the PLA. Perhaps realizing that Hu had stolen a march on him, Jiang in late June reportedly gave a speech on the *Ming* #361 accident in which he emphasized similar themes of reform and military development.[122]

## CONCLUSION: A FINAL ASSESSMENT

By the end of 2003, Hu Jintao's successful capturing of political momentum in the SARS and *Ming* #361 crises, his media dominance during the recent *Shenzhou-5* manned space launch, as well as his surprise assumption of leadership of three of the key "leading groups" (foreign policy, cross-strait relations, and the economy) has led some outside observers to conclude that he has solidified his power more rapidly than expected.[123] Nonetheless, Jiang did not step down at the plenum in November 2003, leaving the chain of command in a muddle even if Hu does appear ascendant. The longer this situation persists, the more potential damage to the stability of the civil-military arrangement at the heart of conditional compliance. The real test, unfortunately, will be a crisis, and the most dangerous crisis would involve Taiwan and the United States, given continuing Chinese difficulties in institutionalizing crisis management mechanisms and the inherent challenges of escalation control in a triangular dispute. In such a situation, there will be precious little time for slow, collective decisionmaking of the sort displayed in the EP-3A crisis, much less the additional difficulty of coordinating policy with individuals like Jiang who are completely outside the formal party structure. For the sake of stability in the Western Pacific, one hopes that Hu accelerates his consolidation of power, restoring coherence to the civilian side of civil-military relations.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 2

1. For a fuller explication of this framework, see my chapter "Conditional Compliance," in Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Coercion and Governance: The Declining Political Role of the Military in Asia*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

2. Comments made by Ellis Joffe at the CAPS/RAND PLA conference, Washington, DC, 8-11 July 1999.

3. Ellis Joffe, "The Military and China's New Politics: Trends and Counter-Trends," in James Mulvenon and Richard Yang, eds., *The People's Liberation Army in the Information Age,* Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1999.

4. Michael D. Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policymaking,* Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996.

5. James Mulvenon, *The Professionalization of the Senior Chinese Officer Corps: Trends and Implications,* Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1997; Micheal D. Swaine, *The Military and the Political Succession in China: Leadership, Institutions, Beliefs,* Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1992.

6. Susan V. Lawrence, "Jiang Will Retain His Post as Chinese Military Head: President Shows He Will Remain a Force Well After Stepping Down," *Wall Street Journal*, November 28, 2002.

7. "Jiang Zemin's Control of Military is Conducive to Smooth Transition," *Wen wei po*, November 16, 2002, p. A4.

8. Lawrence, "Jiang Will Retain His Post."

9. Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "Taiwan Issues Keep Jiang in Army Role," *CNN.com*, November 22, 2002.

10. Lawrence, "Jiang Will Retain His Post."

11. Later in the Constitution, Jiang's names does appear during an explication of the "Three Represents":

> Since the Fourth Plenary Session of the 13th Party Central Committee and in the practice of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, the Chinese communists, with Comrade Jiang Zemin as their chief representative, have acquired a deeper understanding of what socialism is, how to build it and what kind of a party to build and how to build it, accumulated new valuable experience in running the Party and state and formed the important thinking of the "Three Represents." The important thinking of the "Three Represents" is a continuation and development of

> Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng Xiaoping Theory; it reflects new requirements for the work of the Party and state arising from the changes in China and other parts of the world today; it serves as a powerful theoretical weapon for strengthening and improving Party building and for promoting self-improvement and development of socialism in China; and it is the crystallized, collective wisdom of the Communist Party of China. It is a guiding ideology that the Party must uphold for a long time to come. Persistent implementation of the 'Three Represents' is the foundation for building our party, the cornerstone for its governance, and the source of its strength.

See "The Constitution of the Communist Party of China," *Xinhua*, November 18, 2002.

12. "The Constitution of the Communist Party of China," *Xinhua*, November 18, 2002.

13. Wan Yuan, Hu Chengshan, Wu Xudong, Jiang Boyou, Xu Yingyun, Guo Kai, Gong Xiling, Wang Mingjin, Cao Xiaoming, Shi Zhaodong, Xu Feng, Liu Tianhui, Zhu Peilun, Liang Xiliang, Lang Longxi, Zhou Xupeng, Zhang Hong, Fang Junzhong, Fang Lufeng, Guo Weihu, Zhu Guangzheng, Zhao Heng, Quan Zhixue, Yu Hongtao, Hou Xiaoqin, Deng Hongtao, and Lei Ziyuan, "Vast Numbers of Officers and Men of All Armed Forces and Armed Police Corps Resolutely Support New CPC Central Committee and Central Military Commission," *Jiefangjun bao*, November 17, 2002, p. 1.

14. *Jiefangjun bao*, November 20, 2002.

15. Qian Xiaohu, Xia Hongqing, Han Guoxian, Xu Feng, Guo Kai, Shen Jinke, Bao Guojun, Li Xucheng, Liao Weiwen, Liu Guoshun, Xu Qingyun, and Yang Hong: "Units Throughout the Military and Armed Police Force Conscientiously Convey and Implement the Guiding Spirit of the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China," *Jiefangjun bao*, November 20, 2002.

16. For a sample, see "Major Army Units Conscientiously Study the Spirit of the 16th CPC National Congress, Vow to Realize Leapfrog Development in Military Modernization," *Xinhua*, November 20, 2002; "Officers and Men of the People's Liberation Army and the Armed Police Forces Pledge to Deeply Study and Implement the 16th CPC National Congress Guidelines, Create A New Situation in Building A Modernized Defense and Army," *Xinhua*, November 16, 2002; and "PLA, Armed Police Officers, Men Profoundly Study Spirit of 16th CPC National Congress, Vow To Provide Crucial Guarantee for Defense of National Security, Reunification, Comprehensive Building of Well-Off Society," *Jiefangjun bao*, November 14, 2002, p. 1.

17. Vivien Pik-Kwan Chan, "PLA Faces Upgrade After New Top Brass Installed," *South China Morning Post*, November 16, 2002, p. 2.

18. Cadres aged 67 and below can be promoted to the Politburo and Politburo Standing Committee, while those 68 and older are too old to be considered for membership. For the Central Committee, candidates who are 57 or below are considered young enough, while those 58 and above are too old to be inducted into the body. One key principle is that appointees need to be able to serve two full 5-year terms.

19. See my contribution to the inaugural issue of *China Leadership Monitor*, entitled "Civil-Military Relations and the EP-3 Crisis: A Content Analysis," which can be found at *http://www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20011/20011JM1.html*.

20. Ding Haiming, "PLA Delegation to First Session of the 10th National People's Congress Formed; Guo Boxiong Is Head of the Delegation, Cao Gangchuan and Xu Caihou Are Deputy Heads," *Jiefangjun bao*, March 4, 2003, p. 1.

21. General Xu's speech at the same meeting reinforced this impression, focusing mainly on the "party's absolute leadership over the armed forces" without any specific reference to what the party currently believed in.

22. Gao Aisu, "Deputy Guo Boxiong Stressed: Inspire Enthusiasm, Innovatively Deal with Concrete Matters Relating to Work, Work Hard to Create New Situation for Army Building," *Jiefangjun bao*, March 7, 2003, p. 1.

23. Zhang Tao, Huang Guozhu, and Cao Zhi, "PLA Deputies Pledge to Quicken National Defense and Military Modernization in Line with Principle of Developing National Defense Building and Economic Construction in Coordination," Xinhua News Agency, March 6, 2003.

24. Cao's remarks can be found in Du Xianzhou, "Deputy Cao Gangchuan Stresses: Accelerate Advancement of National Defense and Army Modernization Building with Important Thinking of 'Three Represents' as Guide," *Jiefangjun bao*, March 7, 2003, p. 1. Guo's comment about obeying orders was offered in Gao Aisu, "Deputy Guo Boxiong Stressed: Inspire Enthusiasm."

25. Zhang Tao, Huang Guozhu, and Cao Zhi, "PLA Deputies Pledge to Quicken."

26. *Ibid*.

27. *Ibid*.

28. "Education Background of Army NPC Deputies Up," Xinhua News Agency, March 3, 2003.

29. *Ibid*.

30. Zhou Ben, "The PLA Delegation of NPC Deputies Pledges to Guide Itself with the Important Thinking of the 'Three Represents' and Strive to Bring About Leapfrog Development in the Modernization of the Army," *Jiefangjun bao*, March 6, 2003, p. 1.

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32. Cao Zhi, Xu Zhuangzhi, and Sun Yanxin, "PLA Deputies to the NPC Say Military Security Is Still Most Important to National Security," Xinhua News Agency, March 12, 2003.

33. "PLA Delegation: Push Forward Modernization of the PLA," *Jiefangjun bao*, March 6, 2003.

34. Zhang Tao, Huang Guozhu, and Cao Zhi, "PLA Deputies Pledge to Quicken."

35. Li Guoli and Liu Xin, "The Armed Forces Will Plunge into the Large-Scale Development of the Western Region with a More Active Posture," Xinhua News Agency, March 6, 2003.

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43. Xing Zhigang, "Military Budget Rise Lowest in 14 Years," *China Daily*, March 7, 2003.

44. Allen T. Chung and Fong Tak-ho, "Defense Outlay."

45. *Ibid*.

46. "Major General Ding Jiye Says Defense Spending Much Lower Than World Average," Xinhua News Agency (English), March 8, 2003.

47. Cao Zhi, "Proper Investment into National Defense Is Needed for Building Well-Off Society in All-Around Way," Xinhua News Agency, March 6, 2003.

48. *Ibid*.

49. "PLA Delegation: Push Forward."

50. Wang Wenjie, "Advance Development by Leaps and Bounds in Our Military Modernization under Guidance of 'Three Represents'—Report on Effort by the Military's Deputies to NPC to Study President Jiang's Important Speech at the Military's Delegation," *Jiefangjun bao*, March 11, 2003, p. 5.

51. *Asia Times* reports that "Major-General Gu is the vice chief of the political department of Nanjing Military Region, while Ai is now with the Information Technology Warfare Unit, but is far better remembered as the colonel who led the first regiment to occupy Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, and got rid of demonstrating students with bloodshed." See Xu Yufang, "Chinese Military Blasts Confusion at the Top," *Asia Times*, March 12, 2003.

52. The author would like to thank Chinese guru Cliff Edmonds for explaining the intricacies of this wordplay.

53. Wang Wenjie, "Advance Development by Leaps and Bounds."

54. *Ibid*.

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56. See *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2003/03/11/20030311001061_TodayNews.html*.

57. For an excellent account, see John Pomfret, "Outbreak Gave China's Hu An Opening; President Responded to Pressure Inside and Outside Country on SARS," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2003, p. A01.

58. John Pomfret, "China's Crisis Has A Political Edge; Leaders Use SARS to Challenge Recalcitrant Parts of Government," *Washington Post*, April 27, 2003, p. A33.

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61. *Ibid*.

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63. Taken from *www.time.com*. See also John Pomfret, "Doctor Says Health Ministry Lied About Disease; Chinese Military Physician Accuses Beijing of Hiding Extent of Outbreak to Promote Tourism," *Washington Post*, April 9, 2003, p. A26.

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70. Xu Jingzhang, "Jiang Zemin Approves Army Medics Setting Up Beijing SARS Hospital," *Xinhua*, April 28, 2003.

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74. Li Shiyuan and Li Jian, "Guangzhou Military Region Takes Measures Against SARS," *Xinhua*, April 28, 2003.

75. *Ibid*.

76. Hsiao Han, "Beijing Military Camps Practice Closed Management," *Wen wei po*, May 9, 2003.

77. Xu Jinzhang, Bao Ruixue, and Xu Zhuangzhi, "Designated Hospital for Atypical Pneumonia Patients Completes Preparations for Admitting First Group of Patients on 30 April," *Xinhua*, April 29, 2003.

78. "Jiang Zemin Approves Transfer of Military Doctors, Nurses To Fight SARS," *Xinhua*, April 28, 2003; and "Broad Masses of PLA Medical Personnel Vow to Support Beijing in Fight Against Atypical Pneumonia," *Jiefangjun bao*, April 30, 2003, p. 1.

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80. Li Shiyuan and Li Jian, "Guangzhou Military Region Takes Measures Against SARS," *Xinhua*, April 28, 2003.

81. Jiang Wanliu, "Liao Xilong Notes People's Army Must Be At the Front Line Against SARS," *Jiefangjun bao*, April 29, 2003, p. 3.

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83. Erik Eckholm, "China Issues Strict Rules on Reporting of Disease," *New York Times*, May 14, 2003.

84. "Director of General Logistics Department Liao Xilong Says China's Armed Forces Are Safe," *Zhongguo xinwen she*, May 14, 2003.

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87. John Pomfret, "China's Crisis," p. A33.

88. *Ibid*.

89. "CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin Meets Indian Defense Minister, Briefs on SARS," *Xinhua*, April 26, 2003.

90. John Pomfret, "Outbreak Gave China's Hu An Opening," p. A01.

91. John Pomfret, "Chinese Leader Solidifies Power."

92. Jiang Wanliu, "Liao Xilong Notes People's Army Must Be At the Front Line Against SARS," *Jiefangjun bao*, April 29, 2003, p.3.

93. For greater elaboration of this thesis, see my contribution to *China Leadership Monitor* 5 at *http://www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20031/jm.pdf*.

94. Cao Zhi, "Guo Boxiong Inspects Army's Anti-'Atypical Pneumonia' Work, Stresses Work on Anti-'Atypical Pneumonia' and on Army Building to Ensure Completion of All Tasks," *Xinhua*, May 11, 2003.

95. Huang Wei, "Liu Qi On 30 April Inspects Construction Site of Xiaotangshan Hospital, Expresses Gratitude to Medics from People's Army," *Xinhua*, April 30, 2003.

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99. Xu Zhuangzhi, "The People in the Capital Hold a Commendation and Farewell Meeting to Thank the People's Own Army for Triumphing Over SARS," *Xinhua*, June 22, 2003.

100. "70 Sailors Killed in Submarine Disaster," *Xinhua*, May 2, 2003; Among the Western reports of the accident, see John Pomfret, "Chinese Submarine Accident Kills 70; Report Offers Few Clues to What Caused Overcrowded Vessel to 'Malfunction'," *Washington Post*, May 2, 2003, p. A19; and John Pomfret, "Some Details of Sub Accident Disclosed; In Unusual Reports, Chinese Papers Say Crew Members Found Dead at Posts," *Washington Post*, May 6, 2003, p. A24.

101. "Experts Guess 70 Officers and Men Died Due to Lack of Oxygen; Call for Acceleration of Military Modernization," *Wen hui bao*, May 4, 2003, p. A5.

102. Observers quickly noted that the *Ming*-class has a standard complement of 55-59 sailors. Speculation centered on the question of whether the additional personnel were related to the accident, either signifying that the boat was engaged in more risky experimental training or was overmanned. A possibly authorized leak in *Wen Wei Po* on May 7 specifically addressed this issue, asserting that the complement of 70, including a professor from the Qingdao Submarine Academy, was "within its carrying capacity" for a "routine training mission." See Han Hsiao, "The Submarine That Had the Fatal Accident Was Not Overmanned and Overloaded," *Wen wei po*, May 7, 2003. An article in the same newspaper the next day provided further elaboration, revealing that 13 cadets from the Qingdao Submarine Academy had been aboard. See "Cause of Submarine Accident Has Been Found," *Wen wei po*, May 8, 2003, p. A12.

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# CHAPTER 3

# HU JINTAO AS CHINA'S EMERGING NATIONAL SECURITY LEADER

**Murray Scot Tanner**

## INTRODUCTION

The end of Hu Jintao's first year as general secretary marks an appropriate time to begin assessing what Chinese national security policy under Hu Jintao will look like. The purpose of this chapter is to assess Hu's emergence as a "national security leader." I will use the term "national security" not in the narrower U.S. conception, but conceived rather broadly, as the Chinese themselves do when they use the term "*guojia anquan*" to include Hu's leadership not only in foreign and military affairs, but also in internal security. More specifically, this chapter focuses on several interrelated questions: How well has Hu Jintao done in asserting himself as a policy leader in national security affairs? How effective has he been in obtaining a leading role in security-related policymaking—by gaining leadership over the key organizations involved in security policymaking, or by expanding the security-policy role of those organizations that he does lead, or by attempting to use policy issues to strengthen his influence in sectors where his organizational influence still lags? Finally, to what extent has Hu attempted, and succeeded, in articulating his own distinctive vision of China's national security?

## STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES TO HU JINTAO'S NATIONAL SECURITY POWER BASE

Two major institutional issues shape the political context within which Hu Jintao has come to power and help define the powerful challenges he faces as he tries to become a national security leader. The first of these concerns the structure of the leadership succession struggle, while the second concerns the evolving pattern of civil-military relations in China. Both present Hu with formidable challenges.

As I have argued elsewhere, Hu Jintao came to power under conditions of the "successor's dilemma"—a rational dilemma of power building that bedevils all designated successors in all authoritarian systems. The root of the "successor's dilemma" lies in an assumption about the power of the top leader in authoritarian systems; that this power is not—and cannot—be fully institutionalized independent of the individual who holds it. Otherwise, these would be "constitutional" rather than "authoritarian" systems. Thus, the personal power relations among the current leader, the designated successor, and the other top leaders in the system become crucial. Since Hu began his rise to power while his predecessor was still alive, as long as Jiang Zemin retains a major share of informal political power, Hu must struggle to keep Jiang's trust and support for fear that Jiang will feel threatened by Hu's rise and turn on him. But even if Hu succeeds in winning Jiang's support, Hu must work to secure his power for after Jiang is gone by simultaneously building his own sources of power that are ultimately independent of Jiang. In doing so, however, Hu must be careful not to make his predecessor feel threatened—something that even heavyweight political operators like Liu Shaoqi, Lin Biao, Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang failed to do.

As successor, Hu can attempt to build his independent power in many ways, most of which are not mutually exclusive. Most obviously, Hu can pursue the traditional "circular theory" of a Leninist general secretary's powerbase by striving to promote his personal supporters and clients to the Politburo, the Central Military Commission (CMC), the Central Committee, and the other bodies that, in turn, help define a general secretary's power. Second, and relatedly, since power in the Chinese system is certainly not entirely uninstitutionalized, Hu Jintao can seek the leadership of key organs of power for himself and his allies, or conversely try to expand the influence of the organs which he and his followers do command. Third, Hu can attempt to take advantage of the political issues and crises that arise in the system to assert his leadership and try to demonstrate to his colleagues that he is "indispensable" as a leader. Fourth, and relatedly, since Hu Jintao accedes to power in a reforming Leninist system where the very nature of power is

undergoing gradual change, Hu can try to create new sources of power that can persuade or compel his colleagues to embrace or at least accept his leadership. In other reforming Leninist systems, the most obvious—and most perilous—paths to creating new sources of power have been through direct appeals to mass support, either through informal populist appeals or through formal efforts to build a plebiscitary or proto-democratic power base for the executive. But since this last involves guessing both the direction and timing of truly historic change, it requires remarkable political timing (and no small amount of luck!). Thus, for every Boris Yeltsin or Eduard Shevardnadze who successfully timed their leap from a Leninist power base to an electoral one, the ground is strewn with dozens of political corpses of those who—like Zhao Ziyang—made their mass appeals too early and were crushed by the remaining power of the old system—or those who—like Mikhail Gorbachev—waited too long to transform their base of power from Leninism to electoralism and found themselves rudely shut out of the new sources of power.

But the superficial smoothness of Hu Jintao's accession to official power at the 16th Party Congress and the subsequent National People's Congress (NPC) session has sparked a debate among our best analysts of the Chinese leadership that raises the question of whether the classic "successor's dilemma" has been rendered obsolete by the gradual institutionalization of leadership politics. In their widely read study, *China's New Rulers: The Secret Files*, Andrew Nathan and Bruce Gilley argue that the accession of Hu Jintao and the new Politiburo Standing Committee marks the culmination of a 10-year leadership selection, winnowing, and succession process begun by Deng Xiaoping that gradually gathered so much institutional momentum that Jiang Zemin—even if he had wanted to—was unable to stop it, notwithstanding the fact that Deng has been dead since 1997.[1] To be fair to Nathan and Gilley, they do not speak in terms of the "successor's dilemma" I have discussed. But the implication of their work is clear: Chinese leadership succession politics are now sufficiently institutionalized that even a powerful ex-leader like Jiang Zemin lacks the informal influence to threaten his successor after the successor holds the reins of formal institutional power—and what informal power Jiang still holds will atrophy rapidly now that

he is no longer General Secretary or President. Thus, one half of the danger the successor faces in his "dilemma" appears to be gone.

But Joseph Fewsmith and many other analysts are having none of this characterization of institutionalization and the Hu succession. These analysts may be willing to concede that Jiang was either unwilling or unable to block Hu's path to the General Secretary's position. But Jiang has succeeded in surrounding Hu with a Politburo overwhelmingly stacked with Jiang's clients, and almost devoid of leaders who primarily owe their careers to Hu. Despite forecasts to the contrary by those who see the system as more institutionalized, Jiang has thus far clung to the chairmanship of the CMC. So effective has Jiang been in caging Hu that Fewsmith labels the 16th Congress "the succession that didn't happen."[2]

Hu Jintao's second institutional challenge derives from longstanding changes in China's civil-military relations. The erosion of what David Shambaugh has labelled the old "interlocking directorate" among Party and People's Liberation Army (PLA) leaders has, in one sense, facilitated Hu Jintao's rise, but will also cause Hu problems as he tries to assert his leadership over the PLA in the years to come. On the one hand, all reporting to date suggests that, in contrast to all of his predecessors as the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) top leader, the PLA played virtually no role as "kingmaker" in Hu's selection and promotion. The other side of this equation is that Hu Jintao, like Jiang himself, has no experience as a military leader, and therefore lacks the sort of ready-made support base that earlier CCP leaders could count on.

While there is some disagreement among analysts about the allegiances of a few members of the new Politburo and CMC, I am more impressed by the evidence that Hu Jintao took over leadership bodies far more dominated by Jiang's followers than his own. But for the narrower purposes of this chapter, the key point is that the identifiable network of Hu Jintao's associates who were promoted are concentrated in Party and government sectors that are not related to national security (e.g., propaganda, united front work, provincial leadership).

Virtually all of the new civilian security leaders owe their careers far more to Jiang and other leaders than to Hu. Luo Gan,

who has replaced Wei Jianxing as the Political Bureau's Standing Committee (PBSC) member in charge of political-legal (*zhengfa*) affairs, has historically been associated with Li Peng. New Politburo member and Minister of Public Security Zhou Wenkang emerged from China's northeastern petroleum sector, and at first blush, Zong Hairen's claim that he owes his rise first to the patronage of Yu Qiuli and later of Zeng Qinghong and Jiang seems to fit the available career data. Minister of State Security Xu Yongyue was also promoted under Jiang, not Hu, and according to some Hong Kong and Taiwan press sources, owes his career more to the fact that his father was a personal secretary to Chen Geng, one of the mythic founding members of the Chinese Communist intelligence services.

Hu's influence within the PLA remains plagued by "unknowns" and is difficult to assess. Based on previously available information, I have argued elsewhere that it was difficult to identify even one top-ranking PLA officer who probably owes his career more to Hu than to Jiang. Recently, moreover, Jiang was reportedly able to reassert the residual power over military personnel that some forecast would wane by promoting ally Jia Ting'an within the CMC. But there is still much we do not know about Hu's military support network, for example, which officers Hu Jintao worked most closely with when he chaired the politically sensitive drive to get the PLA out of business. Moreover, the network of senior officers with whom he enjoys good relations may be a bit better than I (and others) originally assessed. One of the key "unknowns" here seems to be the state of Hu's relationship with former Chief of General Staff (COGS) Fu Quanyou. The ties between the two men go back at least a decade and a half, to when Fu commanded the Chengdu Military Region (MR) and Hu was Tibetan Party Secretary during the difficult days of the suppression of the 1989 Tibetan uprising. Among Fu's numerous subordinates who received senior promotions last year, many reportedly served in Tibet during the suppression, including CMC Vice Chairman Guo Boxiong and General Logistics Department Chief Liao Xilong. Thus, if Hu enjoys Fu Quanyou's active support, he may after all have the beginnings of a ready-made PLA influence network. But assuming an alliance from past leadership ties is risky. And it has also been reported that that Fu Quanyou was one of the

senior military leaders who suggested that Jiang Zemin should continue in his current post.[3] Thus the relationship between Hu and Fu, about which we know little, must still rank very high on our leadership politics research agenda.

Hu's lack of an impressive personnel base coming out of the Congress has shaped and limited his strategic options for establishing himself as a national security leader. His approach to the internationally-oriented aspects of national security have been far more cautious than his policies on domestic security-related issues. As this chapter will argue, Hu has worked with care to expand the national security impact of those decisionmaking bodies where he is strongest, in particular laying down markers that the Politburo could become a greater actor in military issues. Relatedly, Hu and Premier Wen Jiabao have also tried to manipulate key issues to strengthen his authority among the leadership. There has been a strong populist flavor to this strategy (the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) crisis and the crackdown on law enforcement abuses, both discussed below, are the clearest examples).

Despite widespread press rumors of backstage disagreements between Hu and Jiang, however, the available evidence suggests Hu has tried to maintain a solid relationship with Jiang—remaining publicly deferential and respectful (though far less obsequious than in recent years). Jiang, for his part, has mostly reciprocated by assuming a lower profile. But this does not mean Hu has refrained entirely from policy disagreements with Jiang and Jiang's allies. Hu has not picked many issue battles in his first year, and he has picked them very carefully for maximum political effect. As I will try to demonstrate below, on most foreign policy, military affairs, and internal security issues, Hu has remained scrupulously "on message" during his first year, and embraced policy lines well-established by his colleagues in recent years. There have been a few noteworthy exceptions—regarding SARS and the Korean issue, for example—and Hu apparently flirted with a more institutionalist response to China's growing crisis of internal stability, though he was ultimately forced to back down for the time being.

For the most part, however, Hu's strategy has been to embrace existing policy lines while taking over leadership of several key policymaking bodies,[4] and cautiously reasserting the role of his

Politburo in military affairs—raising for some the spectre of "two centers" in military leadership. Hu has also emphasized and insisted upon the use of formal rather than informal avenues of power, apparently trying to dilute Jiang's remaining influence by decreasing the number of arenas in which he can exercise it. The most prominent example was Hu's reported decision to end the annual leadership summer confab in Beidaihe—historically one of the key venues through which retired elders exercised great influence over key leadership personnel and policy decisions.[5]

Also, while such things are virtually impossible to measure reliably, Hu seems to have used his command of political issues to strengthen his personal popularity among the broader Party elite and general citizenry. To his advantage, Hu seems to have enjoyed greater popularity within the broader Party elite than within his own Politburo. Since the mid-1980s, one useful measure of such support has been the vote totals leaders received for state positions at the quinquennial National People's Congress (NPC) session. Hu received a notably higher vote for President at the NPC session than Jiang Zemin did for reelection to the State Military Commission chairmanship, and indeed, some delegates even wrote in Hu's name for the latter post. Hu's putative rival, Zeng Qinghong, received something of an electoral raspberry from the assembled NPC delegates.

Hu effectively built on that popular base with a series of seemingly low-risk efforts to portray himself as a clean leader close to the people. Most prominent—and most bold—was of course his highly public engagement of the SARS crisis, including potentially risky visits with Wen Jiabao to supervise anti-SARS operations "at the front." Hu also gave major addresses on surefire populist themes—pledging to strengthen "rule by law" and calling for an end to corruption and a return to plain living by Party officials. While these speeches were all notably short on specific policy proposals, they helped buttress Hu's image.[6]

I will argue at the end of this chapter, however, that some of Hu's efforts to strengthen his mass support by portraying himself as a responsive, populist, clean government reformer are riskier than they might first appear. As a national security leader who has not yet come to grips with how he wants to respond to growing protest

and unrest in Chinese society, Hu must be cautious not to create unrealistic images of himself and expectations among disgruntled groups in Chinese society.

## RELATIONS WITH JIANG

Except for the SARS case (see below), Hu's desire to maintain strong positive relations with Jiang has caused him to show his predecessor deference, but hardly obsequiousness. An excellent example was Hu's July 1 speech on the Party, which affirmed Jiang's contributions, but can hardly be described as effusive personal praise. Hu began by lauding the theory of "The Three Representations" as "one of the three great theoretical products of the Chinese Communist Party" in its historical effort to integrate communist theory with Chinese reality—placing Jiang's pet theory in the pantheon alongside Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory.[7] But in crediting Jiang and his contributions by name, Hu described him merely as "the main representative, along with contemporary Chinese Communists" in building this theoretical decision. Likewise in his March 11 major speech on Taiwan, Hu gave extensive credit for strong leadership to the third generation leadership with Jiang as core—again crediting him as leader, but within a collective context.

## EMERGING FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS

### Less Victimhood.

Reflecting a broader trend that predates his presidency, Hu Jintao has largely resisted portraying China as a victim on the world stage.[8] For some, this may represent something of a surprise. Before his accession, Hu's most famous foray into foreign policy was his speech giving China's official response to the U.S.'s bombing of the Belgrade embassy.[9] More than one analyst, drawing upon this speech, anticipated a prickly nationalism to Chinese foreign policy under Hu. Since his election to General Secretary last November, Hu has not even mentioned the Belgrade bombing once in public.[10]

**Taiwan.**

Hu Jintao's first year in office, particularly the latter months, was of course marked by gradually increasing tension in cross-straits relations, which tested the entire leadership's willingness to maintain its low-key patient approach. In his early meetings with senior U.S. officials from President Bush, Secretary Powell, and Senator Frist to former President Carter, Hu has reportedly been restrained, meticulously "on message," and even formulaic about Taiwan—typically noting China's "appreciation" of U.S. repeated assurances that it will adhere to the one-China policy, abide by the three joint communiqués, and oppose Taiwan independence. Hu invariably asks each to avoid sending the wrong signals to independence advocates, and play a constructive role in peaceful reunification.[11]

Hu's real coming out party on Taiwan was his March 11 speech to the Taiwan delegation at the NPC.[12] The very fact that Hu got to deliver the speech is probably more important than its content. Beijing officials had already signaled that there would be continuity in Taiwan policy after Jiang stepped down,[13] and Hu's remarks reaffirmed recent policy statements. Hu's speech was officially billed as "important" by a spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office. Coupled with Hu's meeting with President Bush and the lack of any public statements on Taiwan by Jiang since his 16th Congress report, the speech clearly marked Hu as the authoritative face of Chinese foreign policy, especially Taiwan policy.[14]

Hu's speech hit all the major points, calling for steadfastly upholding the basic principles of peaceful reunification, "one country two systems" as well as Jiang's 8-point proposal. Hu put great stress on economic and cultural exchanges and personal visits, and vigorously promoting the direct three links across the straits. He held out to the Taiwan people an offer of strengthening protections for them and their investments on the mainland.[15] Hu repeatedly invoked the importance of reunification through peaceful means, and generally characterized the cross-straits situation as positive and progressive. Hu gave no indication of desperation or a belief that time is on the side of independence.

Hu's speech was largely upbeat and assured. His remarks

greatly elaborated on Jiang's much briefer comments on Taiwan at the 16th Party Congress, and he reflected the general confidence of those remarks.[16] Hu characterized the current situation as one in which the number of Taiwanese who support reunification is expanding—a "win-win" situation for both sides. Hu also expressed a firm belief that with their efforts, the Taiwan situation could be resolved at an early date. Hu's speech was strong on carrots, with little or no reference to sticks. With no sign of desperation, Hu stated a strong belief that time was on the side of reunification. Certainly Hu was addressing multiple audiences—trying at one time to talk past or disarm independence sympathizers, strengthen the hand of Taiwanese who are more receptive to a deal, reassure U.S. authorities about China's intentions, and provide little public intellectual justification for People's Republic of China (PRC) leaders who might argue that more forceful tactics to pressure Taiwan are necessary or justified at present.[17]

Hu's disciplined quality of staying on message and refusing to rise to the bait of provocative statements coming out of Taiwan makes it virtually impossible to discern any personal impact he may have on the shaping of Taiwan policy. Still, despite official assertions that Taiwan policy would not change under Hu, at least some Taiwan analysts claim to see signs that Hu may handle Taiwan issues with greater deftness and flexibility, particularly after he has established his power. According to Andrew Yang of the Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies (CCAPS), after China initially embarrassed itself by petulantly opposing World Health Organization (WHO) observer status for Taiwan during the SARS crisis, Chinese officials changed their behavior at the Kuala Lumpur conference. They were "quite low-profile in . . . its approach to Taiwan's representatives . . . [and] did not emphasize that Taiwan is part of China . . . [and were] . . . very approachable in terms of communication with the Taipei representative."[18] Yang reportedly sees Hu's influence in this change of style.

**Sino-U.S. Relations.**

Some analysts also hypothesize an emerging security debate between Jiang and Hu over how to deal with the United States, with

advisors to Hu arguing that China has put too much emphasis on maintaining good relations with the United States, even to the point of paralyzing itself in dealing with Third World countries or the Iraq war.[19] These authors contend that Hu Jintao is concerned about appearing weak, and may move to be a bit tougher on the United States than Jiang Zemin has been. As part of this line, these analysts expect Hu to push for an even stronger relationship with Russia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries as a counterbalance to the United States, particularly in Central Asia.

Whatever Hu may be thinking privately, his public remarks on Sino-U.S. and Sino-Russia relations have not validated this view. During his trip to Russia, Hu's comments on the U.S. war on Iraq, though critical, were indirect and low-key. Hu rarely mentioned the United States publicly by name, and insisted that the war cannot change the emerging multipolar global architecture.[20] Hu's remarks on relations with Russia were similarly generic and mainstream, seeming to betray no special urgency about deepening the relationship.[21]

**North Korea.**

Hu's most surprising—and apparently personal—foreign policy departure has been his activism on the Korean issue, in which he has shown strong personal engagement as an intermediary between the United States and North Korea,[22] as well as a willingness to use China's economic leverage to pressure North Korea. Symbolizing a major evolution in China's policy, Hu has resisted becoming paralyzed by the prospect of a North Korean rebuff to its efforts, or by the very real prospect of an even greater refugee problem on the border of China's depressed and unstable Northeast.

Publicly, Hu has shown China's strong interest in the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and perhaps a slightly more equivocal commitment to the security of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).[23] In his May Interfax interview, for example, he noted that China and Russia are "friendly neighbors of the *Korean peninsula*" (emphasis added) with no particular reaffirmation of the DPRK per se. He noted much more clearly that China stands "for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, and

we are *against either side . . . developing or possessing nuclear weapons,*" while stating much less definitively China's belief that "the concerns of the DPRK for its own security *must receive proper consideration*."[24]

While we cannot say what role Hu may have played in some of China's stronger actions, such as the reported 3-day cutoff of oil to the DPRK or the recent substitution of regular PLA for People's Action Party (PAP) forces on China's Korean border, Hu's personal initiatives have apparently been very important in arranging talks with the DPRK. On July 12, 2003, Hu dispatched Dai Bingguo to deliver a letter to Kim, urging the necessity of talks. The exact contents of the letter have not been released. But according to an article by Zong Hairen, Hu personally made three promises to Kim: that "China is willing to help resolve this crisis, mediate, and facilitate negotiation with the greatest sincerity; China is willing to offer the DPRK greater economic aid than in previous years (without mentioning specific numbers); and China will resolutely persuade the United States to make a promise of nonaggression against the DPRK, in exchange for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula."[25]

## GROWING INVOLVEMENT IN MILITARY AFFAIRS

As with Taiwan affairs and Korea, Hu's approach to military issues provides an example of his strategy of embracing well-accepted policies while trying to establish his authoritative position as a national security leader. In May Hu hosted a policy study session for the Politburo on military modernization and gave the opening speech. According to *Nanfang Zhoumo*, Hu's speech emphasized the need for "developing by leaps and bounds . . . national defense and military modernization on the basis of the development of the national economy and science and technological progress."[26] Hu was followed by presentations from military researchers Qian Haihao and Fu Liqun. The seminar reportedly stressed two particular aspects of the new transformation in military affairs. First, with the end of the cold war and bipolarity, the prospect for the outbreak of world war has greatly diminished, but smaller scale wars persist, sometimes on the rise, sometimes on the decline. So the military system designed to deal with a large war must be readjusted to fit the new situation of numerous smaller wars. The second is the rise of advanced new

technologies, with information technology as the core, which dictate the need for readjustments in construction, size, and structure of the armed forces.[27] Hu's comments are in keeping with a long series of recent authoritative CCP and Defense documents calling for increased coordination of military and nonmilitary science and technology to accelerate defense modernization. This development, however, is to be conditioned by and promoted on the basis of the China's continued overall economic development.

The *South China Morning Post* characterized the meeting and Hu's speech as an effort to encroach on Jiang's territory, even though several analysts agree that Hu's speech did not contradict Jiang's military policy.[28] Whether one characterizes it as cautious encroachment, creating "two centers," or a completely defensible assertion of prerogatives by the Party's top body, Hu was clearly asserting cautiously his authority as Party chief to involve himself in military policy. At a minimum, by arranging a small dose of military education for the Politburo, Hu seemed to serve notice that under his leadership the Politburo would not merely be an "agenda taker" on military issues.

Nor was this Hu's only effort to involve himself in military issues during the year. Later Hu effectively used the SARS crisis to press the military for greater transparency about the cases in their hospitals. The *South China Morning Post* article also charges that it was Hu who promoted publication of information on the accident aboard a Chinese *Ming*-class submarine in which all souls aboard were lost. This last allegation cannot be confirmed, however, and must be treated with some skepticism.[29]

## EMERGING INTERNAL SECURITY VIEWS: HOW TO HANDLE RISING UNREST

Hu Jintao comes to power as China's internal security specialists are engaged in a major debate over how to handle social unrest, sparked by the terrific increase in mass protests since the early 1990s. In their efforts to better understand the roots of rising protest, many senior police officials and analysts have increasingly discarded the conspiracy-based explanations of unrest that were officially imposed after Tiananmen. In their place, most official

analyses are now debating competing explanations of unrest and the implications that these competing explanations have for the best way of handling unrest. In particular, debate has centered on how much China should rely on coercion, economic buyoffs, or more fundamental political concessions in dealing with protestors. Many are attracted to theories explaining unrest almost solely as the result of shifting economic interest and suggesting that if China can keep a lid on long enough, it can eventually "outgrow" the problem. But growing numbers of analysts contend that such economic theories are inadequate, and rising unrest reflects either a permanent shift toward a more assertive mass political culture, or is the result of fundamental failures in China's political and legal institutions to rein-in corruption and abuses by cadres. These latter two explanations suggest that much bolder and more far-reaching political and institutional reforms will be necessary if China is to successfully handle unrest.[30]

As Hu establishes himself in office, his emerging understanding of the origins of, and optimal strategies for, dealing with unrest will likely have a major impact on how the leadership responds to unrest—in particular, whether or not China considers more fundamental reforms in political institutions. If Hu's views become at odds with Jiang and other senior leaders, it could also be a major source of leadership disagreement.

**Jiang Zemin on Handling Unrest.**

Jiang Zemin's thinking on the origins of unrest ("contradictions among the people" and "mass incidents") and the proper strategies for handling it seems to be a mixture of rather traditional conspiratorialism, mixed with a strong streak of economism, and simple moral appeals to errant local cadres. Innumerable times he has reminded listeners that "in the course of reform, opening up, and the development of the socialist market economy, contradictions among the people are obviously increasing." These tensions are exacerbated by abuses, mishandling, and corruption by local cadres. But Jiang also frequently reminds Party and security officials to be vigilant against a wide array of unspecified "enemy forces" (*didui shili*) who lie poised to take advantage of these tensions (and turn them into "antagonistic contradictions").

Absent from Jiang's thinking about unrest seems to be any deeper institutional or cultural analysis. He typically has called on local cadres to mend their ways, become closer to the people, and take concrete steps to ease popular anger. But despite voicing these criticisms for a decades, Jiang usually seems to stop just short of drawing the (seemingly obvious) policy conclusion that without significant political institutional reforms, China cannot establish a self-sustaining system to impose accountability on the Party cadres who are angering the people. Nor can it establish adequate institutional channels for aggrieved citizens to voice their complaints peacefully. As a matter of strategy, Jiang seems to believe that through a mixture of strong selective repression of dissident protest leaders and periodic high profile crackdowns on selected corrupt officials, the CCP can muddle through—keeping unrest manageable until China reaches a high-enough level of economic growth to cure what he believes is the true root cause of most unrest. Indeed Jiang's mostly economist views seem to describe the post-Tiananmen mainstream analysis of unrest.

**Hu Jintao: New Departures?**

To date Hu Jintao's official pronouncements primarily show an embrace of this mainstream viewpoint, tinged with a few intriguing hints of bolder thinking about how China should confront its growing problem of unrest. But many have looked to Hu rather expectantly for bolder ideas, and a number of unconfirmable Hong Kong sources report a much wider gap separates Hu and Jiang on these issues.

Few CCP leaders come to power with more direct experience in dealing with unrest, and Hu's pre-2002 record is littered with interesting and contradictory hints about his thinking on the problem. The pivotal incident, of course, came in 1989 when Hu was the front-line leader in suppressing the Tibetan uprising. Unfortunately, Western experts still know virtually nothing about Hu's personal role in the decisionmaking process leading up to the suppression. The scant available public evidence shows no hesitation on the young Party secretary's part in leading martial law locally. Hu gave a number of firm, decisive speeches supporting the

repressive actions at the time,[31] and I have encountered no evidence published since then to suggest that Hu regretted or felt forced to take these actions.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to infer Hu's contemporary attitudes toward suppressing protest from 1989 Tibet—Hu is now general secretary, not China's most junior provincial secretary, and Chinese leaders have, in any case, long been quicker to use force against protests in minority regions than in the Han heartland. More recent press reports, based on conversations with Hu's advisors and his responses to the protests after the Belgrade embassy bombing, suggest Hu will be more willing to tolerate social unrest and protest as a "safety valve," or attempt to turn such unrest to the CCP's benefit.[32]

In recent years, Hu has often invoked Deng Xiaoping's conservative dictum that "Stability is of overriding importance. Without a stable environment we can accomplish nothing, and may even lose what we have gained. This is a major principle for running the country, which overrules many minor principles."[33]

While quoting Deng, however, Hu has also suggested a tantalizing willingness to consider more sophisticated approaches toward social control and stability. He has argued that the leadership needed to "*keep a cool head . . . and enhance its political flair and acuity in handling contradictions among the people* . . . particularly ones that emerge as a result of economic development."[34]

**Hu's July 1 Speech.**

As a step forward in Hu's development as a national security leader, Hu's heavily anticipated July 1 speech on the state of the party provided the ideal opportunity for Hu to explicate the intellectual roots and justification of his own internal security strategy and how he will handle "contradictions among the people." The annual July 1 "state of the Party" speech represents the ideal venue for laying out an explanation of the growing sources of tension and unrest in Chinese society—tracing their roots to the spin-offs of economic growth, cultural change, institutional failure, enemy instigation, or so on. Such an interpretation would logically be followed by the

general secretary's vision of the Party's proper role in dealing with social tension, plus a series of specific policies for managing conflict, deterring or containing unrest, and reaffirming the Party's leading place in society.

In the weeks running up to Hu's July 1 speech, it was widely reported that Hu would take advantage of his faster-than-expected consolidation of power to put forward a major institutional critique of Party-society relations, and float a number of trial proposals for intra-Party and constitutional reforms. So many different Beijing-based correspondents reported these rumors that one strongly suspects they were more than just smoke.[35] Some cite an article in *Qiushi* as setting the stage by arguing that the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics demonstrated that the failure to reform the political system was as much of a dead end as the failure to reform and develop the economy. Among the reforms Hu was rumored to be considering were expanding experiments with competitive elections for some Party posts, revising the constitution to give greater protection to private property, loosening control over mass media to encourage their active supervision of politicians (including authorizing greater foreign investment), strengthening the autonomy of the democratic parties (for example, by no longer having CCP members serve on their leadership bodies), and perhaps considering means to permit dissidents self-exiled after 1989 to return home to live and work without punishment.[36] In Party journals such as *Qiushi* and mass press outlets such as *Ta Kung Pao*, the institutional reform proposals of several Party intellectuals received the kind of prominent attention that typically precedes the embrace of these ideas by senior leaders.

In the end, however, Hu's speech provided no hint of his future internal security strategy. Several Hong Kong sources contend that allies of Jiang forced Hu to beat a strategic retreat. Other Chinese analysts argued that Hu Jintao's overall vision was to increase state efficiency rather than promote a more fundamental democratization.[37] Whatever the explanation, Hu's speech was not only devoid of specific reform proposals, but even of language hinting that the Party urgently needed significant institutional reforms to save its hold on power.[38] Rather, Hu delivered a rather general gloss on

the alleged virtues of the Three Represents ideal. The speech took virtually no note of the growing tensions, conflicting interests, or unrest in the society the CCP rules. Nor did he try to provide any explanation for social tensions and unrest, except to make a vague suggestion that he subscribes to Beijing's current mainstream theory that contradictions in economic growth are the major sources of social unrest. Among the Party's three major tasks, for example, was to "properly understand and handle the main social contradictions created by the people's growing material and cultural needs and backward social production."

Nor did Hu annunciate any vision of how the Party could contain, suppress, cope with, or manage unrest to help preserve its leading position. The speech was also shorn of any of the rumored institutional or legal reforms to revive the CCP as a ruling Party, or provide better avenues to allow citizens to voice complaints and peacefully defuse tensions and unrest.[39] Hu only noted very generally that one key aspect of the Three Representations was *properly handling the relationship between reform, development, and stability,* and building a socialist country ruled by both law and ethical conduct. In the end, although Hu called for building a stronger Party of members better able to govern well, resist corruption, and "rally and lead the people," he offered no credible analysis of how the CCP can confront its problems, overcome growing social tensions, and reach this goal.

Although Hu has failed since becoming general secretary to annunciate a more general vision of or approach to unrest, his response to specific cases of unrest suggests more flexibility (some might even say indecisiveness) in responding to protests. The BBC, citing Chinese press reports, indicated in January that Hu personally intervened to try to end the large student demonstrations in Hefei, Anhui. Hu reportedly ordered that local officials accede to a key student demand that a truck driver who ran down a student be severely punished. Hu's handling of this incident does not yet indicate any particularly clear set of views about the origins of unrest, but it shows a willingness to order concessions in the face of demonstrations. This may encourage demonstrators like the students to perceive Hu as a potential benefactor. At the same time,

it risks creating dangerous incentives by encouraging citizens to believe that protests get results.[40]

Hu also gave ambivalent signals on protest in his response to the controversy over the Hong Kong government's proposed National Security Bill. After the unexpectedly massive protests forced Tung Chee-hwa's government to reconsider the bill, Hu and Wen Jiabao initially responded with a fairly tough line. In their July 19 meeting with Tung, Hu politely but forcefully reminded Tung of the importance of "maintaining social stability." Hu also pointed out that "for the Hong Kong SAR to draw up itself law for safeguarding national security and unity is the inevitable demand of implementing the Basic Law, and is also the responsibility that Hong Kong must undertake as a SAR of the People's Republic of China."[41]

But despite this seeming unwillingness to back down in the face of protest, Hu apparently acquiesced shortly thereafter when Tung decided to table the draft law for the foreseeable future. While it is very difficult to extrapolate Hong Kong experiences to the mainland, in this case at least, Hu and the rest of the leadership seemed willing to compromise in the face of popular protest.

As an internal security leader, Hu has also tried quietly to step up pressure for ongoing efforts to rein-in law enforcement abuses that undermine the government's legitimacy and fan unrest. One focus has been increased pressure for police professionalization. Zhou Yongkang, in a major speech to public security officials, revealed that Hu Jintao and unspecified other Central leaders had issued a series of directives designed to rectify police work and limit abuses. In his speech, Zhou suggested that these moves were motivated by a series of recent high-profile incidents of police malfeasance and brutality. Although he did not specify these cases, they very likely included the widely publicized death in March of a 27 year-old student, Sun Zhigang, who was detained for failure to show adequate identification and was subsequently beaten to death by one of his cell-mates.[42] Another widely publicized case was that of the 3 year-old daughter of Li Guifang, a Chengdu heroin addict. Li was arrested by Chengdu police, but despite her persistent pleas, she was not permitted by police to return to take care of her daughter, nor did the police send anyone to look after

the child, who subsequently starved to death and was discovered by neighbors. Beijing soon responded to these tragedies with a reform of the regulations for police handling of migrant workers. To put his personal stamp on the changes, in September Hu Jintao made a personal inspection tour of local police stations in Jiangxi, during which police press reports indicate he quizzed street-level police on the new regulations and their meaning for the rights of citizens.

## HANDLING THE SARS CRISIS

On the face of it, Hu's boldest leadership departure of the year was only tangentially related to national security issues—specifically his relationship to the military, and the prospects for social instability.[43] This was, of course, his early-mid April effort with Wen Jiabao to force the government and military to take the SARS epidemic more seriously, and release the kind of accurate information necessary for China to cooperate effectively with the WHO and the international community in reining-in the disease. Hu appears to have responded to international pressure, in particular business concerns, criticism from the WHO and other international organizations, as well as the prospect of a potentially destabilizing social panic and economic downturn caused by the government's inevitable loss of control over information about the epidemic.[44] All of these forces underscored dramatically the increasing impact of new technologies—in this case, text-messaging in particular—on the government's capacity to control information and keep issues off the political agenda. They also demonstrated Hu's willingness, at least sometimes, to take bold action in response to such pressures.

Hu reportedly began pushing for greater reporting of information on the disease as early as late February, when he overrode Guangdong CCP Secretary Zhang Dejiang and sided with Governor Huang Huahua in permitting provincial media to report more detailed information on the spread of the virus. It is not clear that Hu by this date had already decided to push for a widespread opening up of information, and it seems that he hesitated and attempted to rein-in the reporting in mid-March, when the Politburo reportedly directed the Propaganda Department to order China's media not to report WHO warnings about the virus. But it seems

clear that by early April—particularly after Dr. Jiang Yanyong publicly criticized Health Minister Zhang Wenkang's prevarications that China was safe and that SARS had been placed under effective control—Hu saw the game beginning to slip away, and became more strongly committed to changing the Politburo's handling of SARS. This clearly placed Hu at loggerheads with several officials allied with Jiang Zemin who opposed more open admissions about the virus. Soon thereafter, Wen Jiabao on April 7 and Hu Jintao on April 11, criticized the army and the Party for lying about the scale of the epidemic and urged more honest reporting, greater openness, and stronger cooperation with international health authorities. They then fired the Health Minister and Beijing Mayor Meng Xuenong. Some sources report that Jiang took the firing of Zhang—reportedly his former personal physician—badly, and made efforts to rehabilitate Zhang's reputation.[45]

The move demonstrated that despite his well-deserved reputation for caution, Hu is capable of bold action in a crisis, even at some risk to his relationship with Jiang.[46] Jiang and his allies, moreover, obliged Hu by sticking to dangerously stale "deny everything" tactics in their initial response to SARS, even long after popular alarm had reached high levels. In the end, the move redounded to Hu's benefit politically, and proved to be the turning point in China's handling of the epidemic as well as international perceptions of China's willingness to admit the scope of the problem. China's subsequent success in controlling SARS made Hu and Wen's actions look even wiser in hindsight.

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: HU JINTAO AS NATIONAL SECURITY LEADER IN YEAR ONE

Coming to power with a weak personnel base in nearly all sectors of China's national security system, Hu Jintao apparently has moved with expected caution on most—but by no means all—significant security policy issues. In foreign and military affairs in particular, Hu has focused on securing for himself as many of the key authoritative positions as possible, trying to supplant Jiang as the authoritative public voice of Chinese foreign policy on key issues such as Taiwan and Korea, while subtly reasserting the role of the

Politburo (vs. the CMC) as a venue for discussing military affairs. On substantive issues, however, Hu remains solidly on-message and in the mainstream, and has given observers little evidence from which to infer his personal vision of national security policy (his personal activism on Korea is the main exception here).

Hu came to office with far more experience in internal security, based on his days in Guizhou and Tibet, and his record suggested both that he was willing to use repression, but also that he might consider bolder, more sophisticated strategies for internal security than Jiang. In the end, however, in his July 1 speech he missed his major opportunity of the year for annunciating a personal vision of internal security policy—perhaps because of opposition among Jiang supporters within the leadership. Instead, his handling of specific cases—Hefei, Hong Kong—suggests a leader who is still reactive and a bit ambivalent when faced with mass protest.

The SARS case, however, raises interesting questions about Hu, and suggests a little about his crisis decisionmaking style. It is unclear how deeply committed Hu really is to greater transparency in government, in particular a truly free flow of policy-related information. Some of his public statements in this regard are clearly designed to create a powerfully reformist image.[47] Hu has indeed pushed to have Chinese authorities release more information, but still at the government's discretion. On Hu and Wen's watch, Chinese police arrested large numbers of citizens for "spreading rumors" about SARS via cell-phones and there is no sign that Hu and Wen have criticized these arrests, ordered these persons released, or directed that the Implementing Regulations of the State Secrets Law that make such actions a crime be revised or repealed. So for now it appears that Hu and Wen's preference is not necessarily for a much freer flow of information. It is possible they prefer a regime of greater information and transparency, but one in which the government is able to get out ahead of information flows rather than being manipulated by them and placed in a passive position.

This case merits closer scrutiny as we consider how Hu might respond to future crises. The case also makes clear that, despite his well-deserved reputation for caution, Hu is able to respond to crises with some boldness and marshal his forces to overturn past policy consensus. In the SARS case, Hu's relative boldness was rewarded

handsomely—Hu seems to have won increased popular support, and soon after the policy shift, China began to see greater success in its handling of the disease. Perhaps more importantly, by the sheer popularity of their demarche, Hu and Wen were able to compel the more recalcitrant members of the Politburo—most of whom did not owe their promotions to them—to embrace their position. The impressive payoffs from this early test may encourage him to respond in similar fashion in future crises.[48]

But Hu's efforts to portray himself as a leader who is more in favor of public discussion, reform, openness, transparency, and accountability is also potentially very risky. In particular, it risks sending many disgruntled citizens in Chinese society a possibly mistaken message—that Hu Jintao is significantly more liberal than Jiang Zemin—an assertion for which we have very little hard evidence as yet. Such a public perception risks creating false perceptions of a reformer/conservative split in the leadership and unrealistic public hopes that might encourage greater dissent or unrest. Moreover, Hu's apparent willingness to respond to protests with concessions certainly risks creating incentives for more protests. These could place Hu Jintao in a dangerous situation (the overly effusive, populist, and reformist wording used by some official media outlets in describing Hu is, in this respect, risky and perhaps even unwise). If Hu is attempting to paint an image of himself as more populist and pro-reform than he is in order to broaden his popular base of support (perhaps as compensation for his weak personnel base in the top leadership), he needs to proceed with greater caution, lest he seem to promise more than he really intends to deliver.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 3

1. Andrew J. Nathan and Bruce Gilley, *China's New Rulers: The Secret Files*, New York, New York Review Books, 2002. See especially chapter 2, pp. 36-73.

2. Joseph Fewsmith, "The Sixteenth National Party Congress: The Succession that Didn't Happen," *The China Quarterly*, No. 173, pp. 1-16.

3. For an article that stresses the large number of Fu allies in the new leadership, see Oliver Chou, "PLA's Old Guard Makes Sure the New Faces Fit," *South China Morning Post*, internet version, December 2, 2002.

4. According to various press sources, by mid-year Hu was reportedly the secretary of the Central Leading Groups for Foreign Affairs, National Security, and Taiwan Affairs. Like other Party leaders before him, he has not chosen to chair the Leading Groups on Political-Legal Affairs (Luo Gan does). I have no sources on the current chair of the Leading Group for the Protection of State Secrets.

5. See, for example, "Beijing Bids Farewell to Beidaihe," *Japan Times*, July 29, 2003.

6. A May 23, 2003, Xinhuanet report claims that Hu Jintao has ended the practise of giving leaders big airport sendoffs when they go overseas, beginning with his first foreign trip to Russia, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia, to make the leadership appear more professional and less distant and regal.

7. The text of the speech was published by Xinhua, July 1, 2003, BBC translation, accessed on Lexis-Nexis.

8. On this trend, see Evan Medeiros and Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs,* November 2003.

9. "Mr. Hu, 59, is the enforcer who was the top official in Tibet when China imposed martial law in 1989 to quell unrest. He is the nationalist who supported anti-American protesters after a United States bomb destroyed the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia in 1999." Joseph Kahn, "Mystery Man At the Helm: Hu Jintao," *New York Times*, November 15, 2002, p. A-1.

10. Based on a Lexis-Nexis world news search by the author.

11. See, for example, Xinhua's April 21, 2003, report on Hu's meetings with Senator Frist.

> Hu Jintao said: The nature of the Taiwan issue is an issue of sovereignty which involves the question of China's reunification or separation. The Chinese government's position on the Taiwan issue has been consistent and clear. We appreciate the U.S. side's reaffirmation on several occasions of adherence to the one-China policy, of abiding by the three Sino-US joint communiqués, and of opposing "Taiwan independence." It is hoped that the U.S. side will keep its commitments, not send wrong signals to the "Taiwan independence" forces, and play a constructive role in China's peaceful reunification. It is also hoped that friends in the U.S. Congress and senators will exert a positive impact to this end.

12. Xinhua Domestic Service, March 11, 2003, translation BBC/SWB.

13. See the statement by Taiwan Affairs Office spokesman Zhang Mingqing, AFP, November 27, 2002. Also, at a January 2003 Hong Kong symposium

commemorating the eighth anniversary of Jiang's "eight point proposal," Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (H.K. S.A.R.) Taiwan Office Director General Xing Kuishan reaffirmed the continuity and stability of the policy.

14. Xinhua Domestic Service, March 11, 2003, translation BBC/SWB.

15. *Ibid*. Hu announced "four viewpoints on work toward Taiwan in the new situation," though it was unclear what was "new" about the situation, especially given that he has endorsed the success of policies in the past. The four viewpoints were (1) always uphold the one China principle; (2) vigorously promote cross-strait economic and cultural exchanges; (3) thoroughly implement a policy of placing our hopes on the people of Taiwan; and (4) uniting compatriots on both sides of the straits in joint effort for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

16. Jiang actually said little about Taiwan at the Congress.

> Fresh progress has been made in the great cause of national reunification. The Chinese Government has resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Macao. The principle of "one country, two systems" has been implemented, and the basic laws of Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions have been carried out to the letter. Hong Kong and Macao enjoy social and economic stability. Personnel, economic and cultural exchanges across the Taiwan Straits have kept increasing. The fight against "Taiwan independence" and other attempts to split the country has been going on in depth.

He went on to say:

> Here, on behalf of the CPC Central Committee, I wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the people of all our ethnic groups, the democratic parties, people's organizations and patriots from all walks of life, to our compatriots in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Macao Special Administrative Region and Taiwan as well as overseas Chinese, and to our foreign friends who care about and support China's modernization drive.

"Full text of Jiang Zemin's report at 16th Party congress," Xinhua, November 17, 2002, accessed on Lexis-Nexis.

17. Xinhua Domestic Service, March 11, 2003, translation BBC/SWB.

18. *South China Morning Post* web site, June 19, 2003.

19. Leslie Fong, *The Straits Times*, May 24, 2003.

20. Interview with Interfax, May 22, 2003.

21. *Ibid*.

22. In their February meeting, Hu tried to reassure Secretary Powell that China was working through private channels to deal with the North Korean government and urged the United States to hold direct dialogues with the North as soon as possible. *Washington Post*, February 25, 2003, p. A-19; *New York Times*, February 25, 2003.

23. Interview with Interfax May 22, 2003.

24. *Ibid*.

25. Zong Hairen: "Hu Jintao Writes to Kim Chong-il To Open Door to Six-Party Talks," Hsin Pao, Hong Kong, BBC translation accessed on Lexis-Nexis.

26. Wu Chenguang, "China Pushes forward Military Transformation," *Nanfang Zhoumo*, internet version, June 12, 2003, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) translation.

27. *Ibid*.

28. *South China Morning Post*, online edition, May 26, 2003; also *Nanfang Zhoumo*, June 12, 2003.

29. *South China Morning Post*, online edition, May 26, 2003.

30. I have analyzed this debate in a forthcoming chapter in a book on law and society in China, edited by Kevin O'Brien, Stanley Lubman, and Neil J. Diamant (Stanford University Press).

31. Hu's comments at the time are nicely summarized in Richard Daniel Ewing, "Hu Jintao, the Making of a Chinese General Secretary," *The China Quarterly*, No. 173, March 2003, pp. 22-25.

32. Susan Lawrence, "Primed for Power" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 22, 2001.

33. Xinhua, March 6, 1997.

34. *Ibid*.

35. Note, for example, the unusual publicity given by the PRC-owned HK daily, *Ta Kung Pao*, to an August forum in Jilin on intra-Party democracy featuring several Party academics.

36. For a sample of these rumored reforms, see John Pomfret, "Chinese Leader Solidifies Power," *The Washington Post*, June 28, 2003, p. A18; Luo Bing, "Hu Jintao Promises 'Reforms in Four Fields'," Zhengming, June 1, 2003, pp. 11-13.

37. John Pomfret, "Chinese Leader Solidifies Power," *The Washington Post*, June 28, 2003, p. A18.

38. This lack of even a strong statement on the need for reform is striking. Willy Lam, writing on the eve of the speech, reported that Hu had dropped his reform proposals, but would at least say that "there is no way out for the Party save political reform." "China's Conservative Backlash," *CNN.com*, June 24, 2003.

39. On p. 6, however, Hu discusses at some length the need to build a Party *that serves the interests of the people, and rules the country* ***for*** *the people*—that this is an essence of the Three Representations. But the speech says nothing about the desirability of involving the people more in their own government—an omission that may undermine the justification for any such institutional reforms for the time being.

40. *BBC.co.uk*, January 9, 2003. This report notes the PRC-owned *Wen Wei Po* as one source.

41. *Xinhua Domestic Service*, July 19, 2003, FBIS translation.

42. Yao Ye, "Child's Death Turns Up Heat on China's Police," A*siatimes online*, June 28, 2003.

43. John Pomfret, "Outbreak Gave China's Hu an Opening," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2003, p. A-1.

44. *Ibid*.

45. Jonathan Ansfield of Reuters reports that in late May when Hu Jintao was overseas, Jiang lunched with Zhang in Beijing, and Zhang's former deputy, Vice Minister Gao Qiang, made a public statement defending Zhang, which he was forced to retract under intense media criticism. "Hu, Jiang Intrigue Clouds China's Reform Outlook," Reuters, June 29, 2003.

46. Rupert Wingfield-Hayes, "Hu Jintao and the Handling of the SARS Epidemic," *BBC.co.uk*.

47. Note, for example, the widely quoted statement, attributed to Hu and Li Changchun, that the press must be "closer to life, closer to reality, and closer to the people," and must honour the people's "right to know" (*zhiqingquan*). Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "China's Conservative Backlash," *CNN.com*, June 24, 2003.

48. The case, of course, still leaves open the question of just what types of issues and problems make Hu seize the initiative and what types of policy actions he might consider in a crisis.

# CHAPTER 4

# CHINA'S RULING ELITE: THE POLITBURO AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE

**Joseph Fewsmith**

The 16th National Party Congress met in Beijing on November 8-14, 2002, to select a Central Committee consisting of 198 full members and 158 alternate members (very close in size to the 193 full members and 151 alternate members named to the 15th Central Committee in 1997). When the first Plenary Session of the new Central Committee met on November 15, it named 24 people to be full members of the Politburo and one person to be an alternate member of the Politburo. It also named seven people to the party's Secretariat, the body that assists the Politburo in its day-to-day work by overseeing propaganda and the general flow of documents that implement policy decisions; and it appointed eight people to the Central Military Commission (CMC), which oversees the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The Politburo, in turn, named nine people to the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC), which makes up the heart of China's political system. Collectively, these people can be considered China's ruling elite.[1] Who are they, and what does their composition tell us about contemporary Chinese politics?

The focus of this chapter is on the 198 full members of the Central Committee; it is doubtful that alternate members of the Central Committee can be considered a part of the ruling elite, or even the ruling elite in waiting. Of the 151 alternate members of the 15th Central Committee, only 30 (19.9 percent) were elevated to full membership in the 16th Central Committee. Interestingly, the one place in which being named an alternate member of the Central Committee is suggestive of future advancement is among the provincial cadres—22 of the 30 alternate members of the 15th Central Committee who were promoted to full membership were provincial cadres. That is just over one-third the number of provincial cadres named to full membership in the 16th Central Committee (65). In contrast, only 3 (12.5 percent) of the 24 military personnel who were

alternate members of the 15th Central Committee were advanced to full membership in the 16th Central Committee. There were 40 alternate members of the 15th Central Committee who continued on as alternate members of the 16th Central Committee, but judging by age (most were born in the early 1940s), few are likely to be named full members of the 17th Central Committee. Fully 53.6 percent of the alternate members (81 people) of the 15th Central Committee were retired from membership at the 16th Party Congress.

We do know that there was a lot of fresh blood injected into the 16th Central Committee. Of the 198 full members, 112 were new, a turnover rate of 56 percent, just about the same as 5 years ago when the turnover rate was 57 percent. Since 30 were elevated from alternate membership in the 15th Central Committee, that means 81 were promoted without prior experience in the Central Committee. The number of provincial representatives (65) was very close to the number in the 15th Central Committee (61), and the number of State Council seats was up somewhat from 5 years ago (60 compared to 51). The number of national minorities (15) was about the same as last time (14). The number of women decreased from seven to five (2.5 percent).

Military representation was nearly equal to 5 years ago. Whereas there were 42 PLA representatives (22 percent) on the 15th Central Committee, there were 45 (23 percent) on the 16th Central Committee. At least in formal terms, the makeup of the Central Committee appears increasingly institutionalized. That is to say, people occupying certain positions in the central government, military, and provinces are routinely appointed to the Central Commission—but that observation does not answer the crucial question of who gets appointed to those positions.[2]

There were a few surprises in the selection of the 16th Central Committee. Hua Guofeng (born in 1921) was finally retired, despite Deng Xiaoping's apparent promise that he would have a life-time appointment. Two members of the new Central Committee were born in 1937, though they should have retired if the retirement age of 65 was strictly adhered to. One was Li Guixian, the former head of the People's Bank of China, and the other was Xu Kuangdi, who was unceremoniously dismissed as mayor of Shanghai in May 2002 (and appointed head of the Chinese Academy of Engineering).

Some limitations of the data should be acknowledged at the outset. Even a year after the convening of the 16th Party Congress, Xinhua News Agency has still not published standard biographical information on the full (or alternate) members of the Central Committee (though most are available from the Xinhua website). Apart from knowing in greater detail the career paths of the members of the Central Committee, one would ideally like to know about the pool of people these people were picked from. After all, focusing on the biographies of those that were picked tells us something about the makeup of China's political elite, but it does not say anything about those *not* selected. If one wants to make more definitive statements about institutionalization, we will need much greater biographical information. Alas, this chapter can only "select on the dependent variable," as the social science literature would put it.[3]

Other chapters in this volume deal with the top civilian and military leadership, so this chapter will look at the demographic and career paths of the ruling elite more broadly. Overall, the Central Committee draws its membership from four broad constituencies: Central Party cadres, the State Council system, the provincial elite, and the military. This chapter will look at each of these constituencies in turn.

## THE CENTRAL PARTY CADRES

### The Politburo.

The Politburo and its Standing Committee stand at the apex of the political system. The only member of the Politburo of the 15th Central Committee to retain a seat on the new standing committee was Hu Jintao, who was named as General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), as expected. The retirement of the other six members of the standing committee was largely anticipated, though Li Ruihuan was only 68 at the time of the congress and by past precedence could have anticipated another term on the PBSC. One explanation for his retirement was that he had already served over two full terms (Li was elevated to the Politburo after the Tiananmen debacle), though his notoriously bad relationship with Jiang Zemin

appears to be the reason the "two term" rule was invoked (such term limits had not been in evidence in the past).

Rumors in the summer of 2002 had raised the possibility that Jiang Zemin might stay on the PBSC and continue to serve as general secretary. Such rumors were probably always intended as leverage in inner-party negotiations; if so, they worked. The PBSC has never exceeded seven members in size during the reform era, but the First Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee named nine members to it. At least five, and perhaps six, of the nine members had close personal relations with Jiang Zemin, thus ensuring him influence over party affairs.

Of the other 15 full members of the 15th Central Committee Politburo, seven moved up to the PBSC of the 16th Central Committee (Huang Ju, Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Luo Gan, Wen Jiabao, Wu Bangguo, and Wu Guanzheng). Of the other eight originally appointed in 1997, one (Xie Fei) had died and the other seven all retired—including Li Tieying, the then 66 year-old son of Party elder Li Weihan. Again, one could invoke the "two term" rule to explain Li's retirement, though it is more likely that Li's clashes with Jiang Zemin over ideological issues (particularly the admission of private entrepreneurs into the Party) account for his early departure.

How institutionalized was this transfer of power? The retirement of all those 70 or older suggests an incremental institutionalization of binding norms. But the increased size of the PBSC, the apparent stacking of it with Jiang's protégés, the early retirement of two Politburo members, and the leap frogging of Zeng Qinghong from alternate status on the Politburo to Standing Committee status (as well as being named head of the Secretariat) point both to the arbitrariness left in the process as well as the success Jiang had at the 15th Party Congress in getting so many of his followers onto the Politburo.

Much has been made of the number of provincial leaders who made it onto the Politburo.[4] Ten of the 24 people named to the Politburo were serving as provincial leaders when they were named, and 20 have experience as provincial leaders. It appears at first glance that provincial influence is growing at the expense of central authority. There are, however, several reasons to be skeptical of this thesis. First, throughout the reform era, certain seats on the Politburo

have been reserved for leaders of important provincial-level areas, most notably Beijing and Shanghai. Other Politburo seats have been given to the leaders of Sichuan, Henan, Tianjin, and Guangdong, though not all at the same time. So it is normal to have four or five sitting provincial leaders serving concurrently on the Politburo. This local representation perhaps injects consideration of local reality into central discussions but it also, and more importantly, ensures central control over the localities. Second, a distinction must be made between officials whose careers have been primarily at the center but have been "sent down" for tempering (a trend that has increased in recent years) and those whose careers have been primarily in the provinces. Thus, Hu Jintao, He Guoqiang (head of the Organization Department), and Zhou Yongkang (named Minister of Public Security shortly after the Congress) have served primarily as central officials who have gained local experience before being brought back to the center. Third, a considerable portion of those with provincial administrative experience who were named to the Politburo appear to have been brought in as supporters of Jiang Zemin, and reflect Jiang's career path, particularly his time in Shanghai. Such leaders include Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, Zeng Qinghong, Huang Ju, Li Changchun, Chen Liangyu, Liu Qi, and maybe Zhang Dejiang. The promotion of such figures reflects less provincial influence than it does the personal influence of Jiang Zemin. Fourth, several provincial leaders named to the Politburo quickly exchanged their provincial portfolios for posts at the center, where they will no doubt look out for the center's interests. Such leaders include Wu Bangguo, who became head of the National People's Congress (NPC); Jia Qinglin, who was named head of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC); Huang Ju, who became a vice premier; Li Changchun, who took over the ideology portfolio; He Guoqiang, who became head of the Organization Department; Hui Liangyu, who became a vice premier; Liu Yunshan, who became head of the Propaganda Department; and Zhou Yongkang, who became minister of public security. When such changes are taken into account, only six of the 24 full members of the Politburo "represent" provincial interests. While provincial experience may become a more important criterion for promotion to the highest levels, it is evident that the interests of the center still prevail.

**Other Central Party Cadres**.

Other than the 25 full and alternate members of the Politburo, there are 27 members of the 16th Central Committee who oversee important Party organs, two less than the number in the 15th Central Committee. Even a cursory look at the functions of these Central Party cadres suggests the functions that the Party feels are most critical to its political control: Organization, propaganda, security, and united front work of various sorts. Thus, although Politburo members direct the departments of organization and propaganda as well as the Ministry of Public Security, other full members of the Central Committee include two deputy heads of the Organization Department (Huang Qingyi and Li Tielin), the editor-in chief of People's Daily (Wang Chen), the head of the Xinhua News Agency (Tian Congming), the head of the State Press and Publication Administration (Shi Zongyuan), the director of the Central Office for Overseas Propaganda (Zhao Qizheng), the Minister of State Security (Xu Yongyue), and a vice minister of public security (Liu Jing). Wang Huning, the newly promoted head of the Central Policy Research Office, was also named to the Central Committee, while the former head, Teng Wensheng, remained on the Central Committee and took over as director of the Central Party Literature Research Center (which overseas such things as the compilation of the collected works of senior leaders).

Foreign affairs (although primarily under the State Council—see below) is also another area of Party concern. Liu Huaqiu, head of the Party's General Office for Foreign Affairs, is one of these central Party cadres, as are Dai Bingguo (head of the International Liaison Office), Gao Siren (director of the Liaison Office of the Central Government in Hong Kong), and Bai Zhizhen (director of the Liaison Office of the Central Government in Macao). United front work is represented by Liu Yandong (director of the United Front Work Department), Zhang Junjiu (first secretary of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions), Zheng Wantong (secretary general of the CPPCC), and Bai Lichen (Vice Chairman of the CPPCC). One might note in passing that sports are also important to the CCP; Yuan Weimin, Executive President of the 29th Olympic Games Organizing Committee (under

the overall direction of Politburo member and Beijing CCP secretary Liu Qi) made the Central Committee.

This group is a generally well educated group. The diplomats—Dai Bingguo and Liu Huaqiu—are both graduates of the Foreign Affairs College in Beijing. Lu Yongxiang, the President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, obtained a Ph.D. degree from Aachen Industrial University in East Germany in 1981 and taught at Zhejiang University through the 1980s. Wang Huning attended Fudan University as a "worker, peasant, soldier" student during the Cultural Revolution, but was able to overcome this to become dean of the School of International Relations at Fudan. Zhao Qizheng graduated from Chinese University of Science and Technology in Anhui in 1963, but his career then went in decidedly untechnical directions (e.g., heading the Organization Department in Shanghai). Liu Jing, the vice minister of public security, graduated from Beijing Polytechnical University, but did so only in 1968, presumably after his college education had been disrupted for 2 years.

Others are less well educated, at least in a formal sense. Shi Zongyuan, the Director of Press and Publication Administration, spent most of his career in the propaganda and party school apparatus of Gansu and Jilin provinces. Bai Lichen, a member of the Hui minority, graduated from Shenyang Agricultural College, but then rose through organization and personnel work to be vice governor of Liaoning and Chairman of the Ningxia Autonomous Region before being named to the CPPCC.

At least two members of this group—Liao Hui (director of the Hong Kong and Macao Office) and Zhang Junjiu (First Secretary of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU)—have extensive military backgrounds. Liao graduated from the Military Engineering Institute of the PLA, and Zhang spent most of his career in the ordnance industry.

**The State Council System.**

Of the 198 people named full members of the Central Committee, 45 had posts in the State Council system at the time of being named. Because the State Council system is responsible for overseeing the administration of the country, including the economy, one would

expect to see the highest concentration of technocrats here. Of course, not all posts in the State Council system require technical expertise. The Foreign Ministry requires professionalism, but not technical proficiency. The Ministry of Supervision, the State Nationalities Commission, the Ministry of Culture, and similar posts similarly require competence and experience, but not a technical background. Altogether, 23 of the 45 postings of those named to the Central Committee seem to require, or at least would benefit from, technical expertise (these include the People's Bank of China, the Auditor General, Ministry of Finance, the State Administration of Environmental Protection, and so forth). Nevertheless, only about half of these posts—12—are filled by people who could be considered real technocrats (as opposed to those who might have had technical training but have long since gone onto other fields of endeavor). At least one of these, Xiang Huaicheng, has since given up his portfolio as minister of finance to become mayor of Tianjin, a position that certainly requires administrative ability but not technical expertise.

Overall, this is a very well educated group. Six attended Qinghua University; three, Beijing University; and others attended the Tongji, Fudan, and Nanjing Universities. Central leaders tend to be somewhat older than provincial leaders (see below), so most who attended college were able to graduate prior to the start of the Cultural Revolution. Still, 11 of the 45 people had their educations curtailed in some way by the Cultural Revolution, including three who graduated in the 1970s and must have attended college as "worker, peasant, army" students (one of whom, Zhou Xiaochuan, then attended Qinghua University after the Cultural Revolution). Three of these cadres have no college background; one (Du Qinglin) appears not to have attended college but nevertheless attained an M.A. degree in law through correspondence. Others appears to have followed less than rigorous academic paths. For instance, Tian Fengshan, who was arrested on corruption charges shortly after the 16th Party Congress, attended the PLA's Second Artillery Technical College. Similarly, Li Dezhu, of Korean nationality, attended Yanbian University before taking up a career in nationalities work; and Mou Xinsheng, the director of the General Administration of Customs, attended Northwest China Institute of Politics and Law to prepare himself for a career in public security.

Of these 45 people, 6 have spent their careers primarily in the provinces, coming to Beijing in recent years to take up central administrative posts. It is not apparent from their official biographies why these people were able to make the jump from what appeared to be successful, but limited, provincial careers to high-level central administrative positions. For instance, Jin Renqing, the director of the State Taxation Administration, attended the prestigious Central Institute of Finance and Banking (as did Dai Xianglong, Jia Chunwang, and Li Jinhua), but then spent 23 years in Yunnan, rising to vice governor before being promoted to vice minister of finance in 1991. Tian Fengshan spent his whole career in Heilongjiang, rising to be governor (1995-2000), before coming to Beijing (and was subsequently arrested for corruption). Wang Zhongfu graduated from the Changsha Institute of Railway Construction and then served 20 years in Hunan before becoming vice-mayor of Shenzhen and then coming to Beijing as director of the State Administration of Industry and Commerce. What accounts for the sudden promotion of such people, when others in similar positions did not get promoted, is not clear.

**Provincial Leadership.**

For at least a decade-and-a-half, it has been apparent that China has been moving toward a system in which membership in the Central Committee would be determined by position in China's political hierarchy; model workers and others selected because of age or personal favoritism would be eliminated in favor of "rational" criteria of position. In the past, it has been the general practice that all provincial Party secretaries and about half of provincial governors were selected to the Central Committee. At the 16th Party Congress, for the first time, all provincial party secretaries and all provincial governors were named to the central committee. Although this indicates progress toward institutionalizing the allocation of seats on the Central Committee, it is premature to conclude that it indicates a growing clout of the provinces.

Looking at those who rose to positions of provincial leadership and thus were qualified to be named to the Central Committee suggests that some correction is in order in our usual characterizations of the

Chinese leadership. It is often agued that China's leadership is better educated, technocratic, and increasingly institutionalized. I would suggest that a close look at the career paths of China's provincial leadership suggest that there are very different career paths, which may suggest a lower degree of institutionalization than sometimes depicted; that the leadership is, on the whole, not as well educated as often thought, and that despite technical education, most have not followed what might be considered a technocratic path.

**Education**.

Those who lead China's provinces are generally in their late 50s (provincial Party secretaries averaged 58 years old in 2002; provincial governors, 56 years old), and so were born in the mid-1940s. The oldest was Wu Guanzheng, born in 1938, who was also named to the Politburo and as head of the Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC), thus removing him from the ranks of provincial leaders. The youngest was Li Keqiang (governor of Henan at the time of the congress, and since elevated to Henan Party secretary), who was born in 1955. (Subsequently, Zhao Leji, born in 1957, was named Party secretary of Qinghai, becoming the youngest provincial leader.) Of the 31 provincial party secretaries, only 8 were able to finish college before the Cultural Revolution.[5] Three others were young enough to attend college after the Cultural Revolution, and the education of these three appears to be much superior to that of their elders.[6] Of the other 20 provincial party secretaries, 4 appear to have no college education,[7] and 1 (Zhang Dejiang, Guangdong Party Secretary) has the dubious distinction of having studied economics at Kim Il-sung Comprehensive University. The other 16 are credited with having gone to college, but in each case their higher education was disrupted to one degree or another by the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, some of these colleges must have been somewhat limited in their focus. For instance, Zhang Lichang, Tianjin party secretary, is credited with gaining a college degree by correspondence with Beijing Economic University. One wonders what sort of an education Wang Taihua, Anhui Party Secretary, received at Jiangxi Teachers College: he graduated in 1968, 2 years after the Cultural Revolution

disrupted higher education. Wang Xiaofeng, Hainan Party Secretary, received a college education at Beijing Mining Institute, graduating in 1969. Even Xi Jinping, Xi Zhongxun's son who studied at Qinghua University, received his education 1975-1979 as a "worker, peasant, PLA" student (*gongnongbing xuesheng*). It was probably a decent education, but not as good as he would have received prior to, much less after, the Cultural Revolution.

Governors, being on average 2 years younger than provincial party secretaries, were even more affected by the Cultural Revolution. Only six governors made it through college before the onslaught of the Cultural Revolution.[8] Only two (Bo Xilai and Lu Hao) have completed college since the end of the Cultural Revolution. Three (Han Yuqun, Han Zheng, and Lu Zhangong) show no evidence of college, and eight had their college careers interrupted by the Cultural Revolution.[9] Many others followed less orthodox patterns of achieving higher education. Six attained college degrees from the Central Party School.[10] Jia Zhibang, governor of Shaanxi received a college education through correspondence with Chinese People's University. Xiang Bapingcuo, named to the Central Committee at the 16th Party Congress and then elevated to be chairman of Tibet, has 2 years of tertiary education at the Chinese Nationalities Institute in Beijing.

In short, 19 of the 63 provincial leaders named to the Central Committee have a 4-year college education. Others may have patched together something resembling a college career in the course of their careers, but it is difficult to say that they are "college educated" in the normal sense of that term. Many, including those with degrees from the Central Party School, appear to have been sent for further education as they rose in party ranks and were picked as potential future leaders. This may be a smart group, but their formal education is limited.

**Career Patterns**.

If the provincial political elite turns out to be less well-educated than Xinhua statistics of the number "college educated" (*daxue xueli*—a vague term), then that seems to be a function of their career patterns. Looking at the career pattern of provincial party secretaries

and governors, they seem to fall logically into fairly distinct groups: Those who have worked their way up from the bottom, those who have received a college education (even if interrupted by the Cultural Revolution) and have subsequently advanced quickly, a few who have worked in the military or military industry, a few who have "parachuted" in from the center, and those whose careers can only be described as "blessed," usually because of their parents' political standing. On balance, however, provincial political leadership is dominated by those who have spent long periods of time at the grass roots; roughly half of the 63 provincial leaders selected for Central Committee membership fits into this category. Even if some of these people received technical educations while young, they quickly followed political paths and can hardly be considered "technocrats." They are politicos.

A couple of examples will illustrate this point. Meng Jiangzhu, who was appointed Jiangxi Party secretary in April 2001, is a case in point. Meng joined the CCP in 1968 (which, at the age of 21 was a fairly early date), and then spent almost the next 20 years in various capacities at the Qianwei farm in suburban Shanghai. It was not until 1986 that he was promoted to Party secretary of Chuansha county (also in Shanghai). And it was only in 1991 that his career began to take off when he became secretary of the rural work committee in the Shanghai Municipal government. The following year, he became deputy secretary-general of the Shanghai municipal government, and the following year (1993) he was named vice mayor of Shanghai and head of the Economic Reform Commission. Obviously he had caught someone's eye.

Similarly, Zhang Lichang, Party secretary of Tianjin Municipality, spent a long time at the grass roots. Zhang graduated from the Tianjin Matellurgical Industry School in 1958, and then spent the next 22 years in various capacities in the seamless steel industry in Tianjin. It was not until 1980, when he was named as deputy director general of the National Metallurgical Industry Bureau in Tianjin, that his career began to take off. Yet it was only 2 years later when he was named an alternate to the 12th Central Committee, and only 3 years later when he became deputy general director of the Municipal Economic Commission in Tianjin. In 1985 he was named vice mayor.

Those with a greater pretense to a college education generally moved along faster, and their jobs tended to be more urban. For instance, Li Jianguo, Shaanxi party secretary, graduated from Shandong University in 1970. He then worked in a number of positions, perhaps simultaneously (his biography is not clear) including the Culture and Education Bureau of Ninghe County in Shandong, the propaganda department of the county, then to the propaganda department of the Agricultural Committee of Tianjin, and, most important, as a worker in the general office of the municipal government. He had not yet joined the Communist Party, though he did so the following year (1971). In other words, Li was already working in key organizations in the Tianjin municipal government only a year after graduation, whereas Zhang Lichang, rising in the same municipality, spent 22 years reaching roughly the same level.

Although few provincial leaders—with the notable exception of Song Defu, Party secretary of Fujian—have had military careers, quite a few have experience in military industries. Examples of such cadres would include Bai Keming, who studied missile engineering at the Military Engineering Institute of the PLA; Chen Liangyu, who studied at the PLA Institute of Logistics Engineering and served 2 years in the military upon graduation; and Yu Zhengsheng, who studied missile engineering at the Harbin Institute of Military Engineering along with Bai Keming. In addition, quite a number of provincial leaders studied at technical institutes, where the study may have been oriented toward military needs (e.g., Cao Bochun, who studied at the Zhuzhou School of Aeronautics Industry and then worked as Deputy chief of No. 331 Factory, which made aircraft engines). Thus, although one generally thinks of the provincial leadership as civilian, there is some overlap with the military. The gap between civilian and military cultures may not be as large as sometimes supposed.

Finally, there is a small group who have led charmed careers due to their fathers' influence. Some of these had careers stall in the Cultural Revolution, but others were largely able to avoid that fate. For instance, Hong Hu, Hong Xuezhi's son who is currently governor of Jilin, worked at the Liming Chemical Industry Factory in Qinghai during the Cultural Revolution, but once that cataclysm was over,

he was able to move back to Beijing, taking up responsible positions as head of the Comprehensive Planning Division of the Ministry of Chemical Industry, as Vice Minister of the State Commission for Restructuring the Economy, and as member of the CDIC. Bo Xilai, Bo Yibo's son who is now Minister of Commerce, worked in a factory during the Cultural Revolution, but was able to enter Beijing University in 1977 (where he studied history). His first real job was as a staff member at the Research Office of the Secretariat, followed by a stint as a staff member of the General Office of the Central Committee. In short, he started by getting a first hand look at policy and power.

**The Military Leadership.**

The 16th Party Congress saw 45 PLA cadres named as full members of the Central Committee, including three leaders of the People's Armed Police (PAP). Of these 45 people, two (Cao Gangchuan and Guo Boxiong) serve on the Politburo, though not on its Standing Committee. It has become the practice in recent years for the PLA to be "represented" on the PBSC only by the CCP general secretary, although the fact that Hu Jintao is only a vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) while Jiang Zemin, who is not a member of the Central Committee, continues to head the CMC makes this an awkward, uninstitutionalized relationship.

Born in 1935, Cao Gangchuan is the oldest member of the 16th Central Committee, and he serves as a vice chairman of the CMC as well as Minister of Defense (as of March 2003). He is also the only military leader who has studied overseas. Cao spent 1957-63 in the Soviet Union studying at the Leningrad Advanced Artillery Military Engineering School. As observed elsewhere in this volume (see Chapter 6 by Kivlehan-Wise, Cheng, and Gause), Cao has spent his career as a military modernizer. From a political perspective, it is important to note that his big promotion came in November 1992 when, in the wake of the purge of Yang Shangkun and Yang Baibing, Cao was made Deputy Chief of Staff under Zhang Wannian. Thus, Cao was very much part of the effort to bring new leadership to the PLA as Jiang Zemin tried to consolidate his power. Cao was

promoted to lieutenant general in 1993, a decision that would have been made personally by Jiang, and then to general in 1998.

Guo Boxiong, the other military vice chairman of the CMC, has focused much of his attention on fighting under high technology conditions and indeed edited a volume that the General Staff Department distributed to the PLA for use. Guo, too, was promoted in the shake-up following the removal of the Yang brothers, albeit a bit later; in December 1993 he was made deputy commander of the critical Beijing Military Region (MR). In 1997 he took over as commander of the Lanzhou MR, and the following year he was promoted to lieutenant general.

A third PLA leader, Xu Caihou, is a member of the seven-person Secretariat and a member of the CMC. Although a graduate of Harbin Military Engineering Academy, Xu has specialized his whole career in political work. He started as a political cadre in the Jilin provincial military district in the 1970s, attended the PLA Political Academy (*Jiefangjun zhengzhi xueyuan*) 1980-82, and in November 1992 became an assistant to the chairman of the General Political Department. This was, of course, the time when Yu Yongbo replaced Yang Baibing as head of the General Political Department and helped Jiang Zemin gain control over the military. Xu is from the same county in Liaoning as Yu Yongbo (Xia county). In May 1993, Xu took over as head of *People's Liberation Army Daily*, a position he held for 5 years. A tour as political commissar in the Jinan Military Region qualified him to become brigadier general (in 1990) and lieutenant general (in 1993).

The other three members of the CMC—Li Jinai, Liang Guanglie, and Liao Xilong—are director of the General Armament Department, Chief of the General Staff, and director of the General Logistics Department, respectively. Li is a graduate of Harbin Institute of Technology and has spent much of his career in the Second Artillery, where he did political and organization work. In the mid-1980s, he worked in the General Political Department (rising to become deputy director), before moving to the Commission on Science, Technology and Industry (COSTIND). Liang worked his way up through the ranks, attending PLA Military Affairs Academy in 1982 and National Defense University in 1987 and 1991. In December

1993, Liang became chief of staff of the Beijing MR—the same time Guo Boxiong became deputy commander. Liao rose through the ranks quickly, becoming deputy commander of the Chengdu Military Region in 1985 and commander in 1995.

These six military members of the CMC are better educated and more professional than their predecessors, but at least four of them advanced their careers in the wake of the removal of the Yang brothers. All were promoted to their current ranks in the mid-1990s by Jiang Zemin. Although no doubt professional soldiers, their career paths suggest that they were all hand picked by Jiang and remain an important source of Jiang's influence.

Of the other 39 military members of the 16th Central Committee, Xinhua has published biographical information on 15 of them (the other 24 were neither members nor alternate members of the 15th Central Committee). Almost all of these 15 people were born in the early 1940s, suggesting that this will be their last term on the Central Committee. One, Air Force Chief of Staff Xu Qiliang, was born in 1950 and thus is likely to serve another term. All are lieutenant generals, except for Wen Zongren, who is a brigadier general. Like the provincial officials, these are people who spent long years working their way up through the ranks. Only 1 of these 15 is identified as having a college education, and only 1 is identified has having only a junior high school education. The others received specialized training (*dazhuan*), though all have gone through one or more military academies. All received their highest promotions in the mid-1990s, and so they were picked for promotion by Jiang Zemin.

**Conclusion.**

We often think of China as being governed by an increasingly well-educated and technocratic elite. Such generalizations may be true of the higher reaches of the political system (e.g., six of the nine members of the PBSC graduated from Qinghua University) and (partially) of the State Council system, but as a characterization of the overall political system it seems exaggerated. Indeed, as the examination above suggests, much of the current Central Committee

is not that well-educated. Many had their educations interrupted by the Cultural Revolution, others attended undistinguished universities, and many others substituted professional education (in the military), correspondence school, or the Central Party School for a real 4-year education. This does not mean that they are not well-trained at what they do, but they are not, by and large, a meritocracy. Those people who received technical educations rarely used them, switching quickly to political tracks. Some pursued careers in the Communist Youth League, others in the Organization bureaus at different levels, others in the propaganda sector, and many (of the provincial cadres) as regional administrators. There are few examples of economic or other administrative specialists who have risen to the top ranks of China's political system by plying their trades.

Most of the provincial political elites spent roughly 2 decades at lower administrative levels, some working in factories, others rising in county and the prefectural hierarchies. These are people who know local-level power, and appear to have been promoted because of their understanding of local power (and, no doubt, connections with higher levels). In short, they are more politicos than technocrats.

This finding should not be surprising. Jiang Zemin had a decade to promote those he felt were loyal to him and administratively competent. At local levels, those who have succeeded are adept at dealing with social and political difficulties—and at cultivating relations. In the military one sees a combination of long service at lower levels, professional military education, and—at the highest levels—political loyalty to Jiang.

This finding should caution us against expecting rapid political change in China. Jiang had 10 years to build his network, and the 16th Party Congress only represented the beginning of a process of generational succession. Although Hu Jintao has succeeded to political power, the process of political transition is by no means over. This hybrid political system is likely to surprise us over the coming years, either moving quickly or suffering from immobilism, depending on the situation. Those people who made their way to the top at the 16th Party Congress are no doubt willing to tackle problems of economic development and perhaps address some popular complaints. But overall, this looks like a fairly conservative group of people in political terms.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 4

1. Joseph Fewsmith, The 16th National Party Congress: The Succession that Didn't Happen," *The China Quarterly*, No. 173, March 2003, pp. 1-16.

2. Li Cheng and Lynn White, "The 16th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party: Hu Gets What?" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 43, No. 4, July/August 2003, pp. 553-597.

3. Data in this chapter is drawn primarily from the Xinhua News Service biographies of Chinese leaders posted both on the *www.xinhuanet.com* and the *People's Daily* website at *www.people.com*. I have also consulted the biographies on *www.chinavitae.com*. For the military leadership, Ling Haijian, *Zhonggong jundui xin jiangxing* (*New stars in the CCP military*), Hong Kong: Pacific Century Press, 1999, has been useful. For biographies of full and alternate members of the 15th Central Committee, see *Zhonggong di shiwu jie zhongyang weiyuanhui, zhongyang jilu jiancha weiyuanhui weiyuan minglu* (*Names of members of the 15th Central Committee and Discipline Inspection Committee*).

4. Cheng Li, "A Landslide Victory for Provincial Leaders," *China Leadership Monitor*, Vol. 5, Winter 2003, available at *www.Chinaleadershipmonitor.com*.

5. Bai Keming, Cao Bochun, Huang Zhendong, Liu Qi, Song Fatang, Wang Yunkun, Wen Shizhen, and Zhang Xuezhong.

6. Li Keqiang attended Beijing University; Li Yuanchao attended Fudan University and later received an MA degree in economic management from Beijing University; and Zhao Leji attended Beijing University, where he studied philosophy.

7. Song Defu, Su Rong, Yu Zhengsheng, and Wang Lequan.

8. Hong Hu, Huang Zhiquan, Ji Yunshi, Liu Zhenhua, Shi Xiushi, and Zhang Zuoji.

9. Dai Xianglong graduated in 1967; Liang Baohua, Lu Bing, Ma Qizhi, Wang Hongju, Wang Jinshan, Wang Xiaofeng, and Wang Qishan, who studied at Northwest University 1973-1976, but is credited with having studied economic management at Qinghua University and finance at China Institute of Finance, albeit on a part-time basis.

10. Huang Huahua, Li Chengyu, Lu Zhangong, Luo Qingquan, Zhang Zhongwei, and Zhou Bohua.

# CHAPTER 5

## PREMIER WEN AND VICE PRESIDENT ZENG: THE "TWO CENTERS" OF CHINA'S FOURTH GENERATION

**John Tkacik**

Those who thought China's politics would finally settle down into something more recognizable to Westerners with the putative ascendance of the a pro-reformist "Fourth Generation" of leaders in November 2002 must be disappointed. As China moves into the 21st century, Chinese politics continue to be bedeviled by the traditional "Struggle Between Two Lines." In the past, the two lines were Maoists and Rightists, or the Cultural Revolution Group and the Old Party, or the Gang of Four and everyone else. Now, the struggle is between the reformist line and the Communist Party apparatchiks' line. Beijing's leadership factions are centered on China's outgoing and incoming general secretaries of the Chinese Communist Party, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.

Historically, communist China could not be governed effectively unless the paramount leader has full control of the Army. And historically, the Army has made itself subservient to the dictates of the Party. But the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is now split between two rival, though not necessarily hostile, leadership factions. And both camps see the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) as the strategic pivot of their political competition.

No sooner had the new general secretary of the CCP, Hu Jintao, been named on November 15, than Jiang Zemin, the outgoing general secretary, had himself renamed to a fourth term as chairman of China's all-powerful Central Military Commission (CMC). Jiang's insistence that he remain as military commander while nominally relinquishing his political authority to the nine-member Standing Committee of Hu's Politburo was a blunt political maneuver designed to buttress the Old Man's tight but indirect grip on the Politburo with a tight and direct grip on the military.

In the Politburo, five, perhaps six, of the nine Standing Committeemen are Jiang's hand-picked cronies. In fact, in China's supreme governing body, the Politburo Standing Committee (SC),

incoming Party chief Hu Jintao (the top ranked member of the SC) can only count on Premier Wen Jiabao, the SC's third-ranking member, for consistent support. By contrast, in the previous Politburo, perhaps only one of Jiang's colleagues on the seven-man standing committee could be counted on to vote solidly with Jiang. In short, the retired Jiang is much more influential in the current 16th Party Congress Politburo than he ever was in the 15th Congress leadership.

Can President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao break Jiang's grip on power? Do they have what it takes to maneuver Jiang out of the Central Military Commission? Have they already tried? Are they succeeding? As one wag puts it, "Hu and Wen are the main questions of China's politics."[1]

## INTRODUCTION: CHINA'S "TWO CENTERS"

At the close of the CCP's 16th Party Congress in November 2002, the Party/Government leadership center of power (now with "Comrade Hu Jintao as its General Secretary") was left without control of the military for the first time since Mao Zedong wrested power from the Party Center in 1930. Aligned against President Hu and Premier Wen are Jiang's people in the Party/Government and Jiang himself as military commander-in-chief in the CMC.

The five major figures of the SC Jiang camp include Wu Bangguo, the new chair of the National People's Congress (NPC) (and second-ranking to Hu in the party hierarchy) who was Jiang's vice mayor in Shanghai during the 1980s and Jiang elevated him to Party chief/mayor in 1991. Fourth-ranked Politburo member, Jia Qinglin who chairs China's "second legislature," the powerless Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), is another Jiang loyalist. In 1995, Jia was chosen by Jiang to replace Beijing's corrupt but powerful mayor Chen Xitong, but Jia has his own unsavory reputation.[2]

Zeng Qinghong, the fifth ranking member of the SC and successor in Hu Jintao's ceremonial position as vice president, had also been with Jiang continually since the 1980s and remains Jiang's most trusted confidant. Huang Ju, Jiang's hand-picked successor to Wu

Bangguo as Shanghai party boss, was as colorless and unimaginative an apparatchik as Shanghai had seen in decades.[3] And the former Guangdong Party chief, Li Changchun, was Jiang's choice to be premier rather than Wen Jiabao—a decision that not even Jiang could push through, given Li's own shady reputation.[4] The two others in the SC are Central Discipline Inspection Commission chair, Wu Guanzheng—also thought by some to be a Jiang protégé[5]—and Luo Gan, a co-factionalist of outgoing NPC Chairman and former Premier Li Peng, have less loyalty to Jiang, but are hardly stalwart supporters of the Hu/Wen reformist line. By all accounts, Luo was not chosen to help Hu and Wen balance Jiang Zemin's influence on the SC, but rather to look after former Premier (and orthodox hardliner) Li Peng's affairs.

In this context, when the smoke-filled rooms of the 16th Party Congress had cleared, Jiang Zemin was in a far more powerful position than he was before his retirement from the Party and State chairmanships.[6] Most of his traditional rivals and opponents in the top leadership (Li Ruihuan, Qiao Shi, and even the long-suffering Zhu Rongji, to name a few) were gone.[7]

In short, Jiang Zemin has not even pretended to transfer power to the rising and young(ish) "Fourth Generation." Instead, he plans to rule through them. But just in case his protégés prove not to be as loyal as he might want, Jiang decided to retain his control of the PLA by keeping his CMC chairmanship. This was a certain disappointment to Hu Jintao and about-to-be Premier Wen Jiabao who had reportedly plotted through the summer of 2002 to maneuver Jiang into retirement.[8] But both of those gentlemen are well-tempered in the twilight struggle of Beijing's internecine power plays, and both are by all accounts superbly intelligent, so they must know their limits.

Their stratagem in a subtle campaign to pry Jiang's fingers from the reins of power is to to play along for the time being. Immediately upon being named CCP Party head on November 15, 2002, Hu Jintao pledged fealty to Jiang's "Three Represents" theory and quickly assured the elder leader that in all "important matters" he would see to it that the Politburo sought Jiang's guidance and leadership before a decision is reached.[9] Of course, this raised the embarrassing

possibility that Hu might not take power at all, but rather cede it by default to Jiang and his cohorts.

Then came the first clear evidence of "Two Centers." On Saturday, November 17, 2002, the military's propaganda organ, the People's Liberation Army Daily (PLAD), proudly declared the loyalty of the "broad mass of the officers and ranks of the entire army" to the new Party Center and to the CMC with "Comrade Jiang Zemin as core of the collective leadership of the Third Generation." "We absolutely and unwaveringly adhere to the principle of the Party controlling the Army, and will resolutely obey the commands of the Party Center and Chairman Jiang Zemin."[10] "Chairman Jiang" was mentioned six times in the editorial, and only once was Hu Jintao mentioned by name—and then only in the context of "the Party Center with comrade Hu Jintao as its secretary general" which will unswervingly hold high the banner of the "important theory of the Three Represents." (The "Three Represents," of course, are Jiang's signature contribution to the ideology of Chinese communism.) By Monday, November 18, two Taiwan newspapers reported on the anomalous split loyalty.[11]

Fast forward to March 2003 and the eve of the NPC which—some observers devoutly but vainly prayed—might see CMC Chairman Jiang finally relinquish leadership of the military and turn over this final, essential rein of power to the younger, fresher, more reformist Hu Jintao. But it was not to be. The NPC merely reaffirmed Jiang as the chairman of the state CMC, a protocolary nicety for the already incumbent Party CMC chair.

What was odd, however, was the appearance in print—in the PLAD, no less—of a number of comments and quotable quotes from upper ranking PLA officers in the Army's NPC delegation.

After listening to a speech given by Jiang Zemin (reported by the March 4 PLAD), generals Gu Huisheng and Ai Husheng serving as PLA deputies to the NPC, complained that "many centers means no center, which will lead to no achievement." They then explained the metaphysical truth behind the Chinese characters for "center" (zhong), "loyalty" (zhong), and "disaster" (huan). "One 'zhong' (center) and one 'xin' (heart) together make one loyalty, but piecing two 'zhongs' together to one 'xin' gives one 'huan', a disaster." They explained that "having 'two centers' means no center at all."[12]

These were not just your average PLA malcontents speaking, either. Major-General Gu was deputy chief of the Nanjing Military Region (MR) political department and General Ai ran the PLA's Information Technology Warfare Unit, although he is "far better remembered as the colonel who led the first regiment to occupy Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, and got rid of demonstrating students with bloodshed."[13]

What makes this "struggle between two lines" different from those of the past, is that the PLA doesn't seem to have the same reverence for their chairman, Jiang Zemin, that they had for his predecessors, Deng Xiaoping and Mao Zedong. As of September 2003, as a clear dividing line emerged between the inchoate Hu Jintao faction and the firmly-established "Shanghai Faction" (or the "Shanghai Gang" as the Hong Kong press irreverently calls them) under "Chairman Jiang," there are signs that the military leadership may actually prefer Hu Jintao's competent leadership to Jiang's. How Hu and Jiang manage their relationship with the PLA will depend greatly on the talents of their top political allies: Premier Wen Jiabao and Vice Premier Zeng Qinghong.

## WEN AND ZENG: FACTION LEADERS

This chapter contrasts these two secondary figures at the top of the two Beijing leadership factions now vying for preeminence in China's political structure. Wen Jiabao is the urbane, intellectual, "reformist" and self-effacing premier of China who has been at the center of power in Beijing for nearly 15 years. Zeng Qinghong is the ambitious, canny, determined *capo de capo* of Jiang's Shanghai Gang who is China's titular vice president. Premier Wen has quietly built up a base of support among Beijing's party and government bureaucracy over a decade-and-a-half of competent management in the CCP Politburo Secretariat. Vice President Zeng's influence, on the other hand, has come with a decade of service as Chairman Jiang Zemin's chief of staff in both the Party and the Army.

Wen's ties with the bureaucracy are bolstered by a reputation for scholarly and serious analysis of issues, proven leadership in crises and genuine consideration of all sides of a policy debate. Zeng's ties

with the party and military come from a career of recommending suitable promotions and appointments for Jiang loyalists during a period when Jiang's leadership suffered from sniping and harassment from other Politburo heavyweights. But more importantly, Zeng's ties with the military are the rightful legacy of a man to the revolution born. His father, Zeng Shan, headed the CCP's main base area before the legendary "Long March," his mother was one of only 27 female cadres to survive the March, two of his brothers are generals, and his sister, Major General Zeng Haisheng, is apparently the highest-ranking woman in the PLA.

Both Premier Wen and Vice President Zeng are technocrats of a sort. The premier is a published geologist with the equivalent of a doctorate, while the vice president graduated from an aeronautical college with a degree in automated systems and served as a rocket engineer with the military in the 1960s. But they are completely different creatures in every other way.

Given these contrasting figures holding rival positions in the Chinese leadership, what are the implications for China's economic future if either gains ascendancy—or if both manage to coexist in separate leadership spheres for an extended period?

**Wen Jiabao: The Early Years.**

As Chinese politicians go, Wen Jiabao is an attractive figure. He is fit and trim, with a well-chiseled face; he is from humble origins, and by all accounts he is personable and engaging. He is also an avowed reformist with a feeling of dedication for China's common people, a policy trait that is far less obvious in Zeng Qinghong, or indeed anyone in the "Shanghai" camp. Premier Wen's policy focus since his promotion to vice premier in 1998 has been China's financial crisis—perhaps the single biggest challenge facing China's economic planners in the early 21st century. But when he appeared at the Great Hall of the People on March 18, 2003, for his inaugural press conference with foreign reporters, he promised to narrow China's widening income gap and make rural and urban development a "priority of priorities."[14] A look at Wen's background may help to illuminate his policy predilections.

Wen Jiabao was born in the outskirts of Japanese-occupied Tianjin in September 1942 to a rural school teachers' family. His father, Wen Gang, was a geology instructor at a Tianjin middle school and his mother, Yang Xiulan, taught grammar at a Tianjin elementary school. Young Jiabao's grandfather, Wen Yingshi, ran a rural schoolhouse at the Wen family home at No. 8 Wenjia Hutong, in the village of Yixingfu just north of the city. Jiabao thrived in a simple brick and adobe compound, taught by his grandfather during the days and by his parents in the evenings. Though impoverished, young Jiabao absorbed an appreciation for Chinese calligraphy and painting that has lasted his lifetime.

Another thing that served him well in later life was his grandfather's passion for Tang Dynasty poetry. Young Jiabao was said to have memorized half of the ancient classic *300 Tang Poems*, roughly the equivalent of memorizing three Shakespeare plays.[15] In addition to his innate intelligence, Jiabao's excellent memory made him a star pupil. His interest in geology came at his father's knee. In addition to gaining a deep appreciation for literature and science early in life, Wen also got his first taste of war and the value of family. Certainly, one of the most traumatic experiences of his early childhood was the sacking of his village, the torching of the family compound and school, and the murder of his grandfather at the end of 1948 during the civil war.[16] In January 1949, the Tianjin area was occupied by the PLA's Fourth Field Army, and finally Jiabao's granduncle, Wen Pengjiu, an aide to Zhou Enlai, turned up to help the family of his dead brother along the road to recovery.

Premier Wen hasn't been shy about describing his early childhood to American audiences. He told an audience at Harvard University:

> As you probably know, I'm the son of a schoolteacher. I spent my childhood mostly in the smoke and fire of war. I was not as fortunate as you as a child. When Japanese aggressors drove all the people in my place to the Central Plaza, I had to huddle closely against my mother. Later on, my whole family and house were all burned up, and even the primary school that my grandpa built himself all went up in flames. In my work life, most of the time I worked in areas under the most harsh conditions in China. Therefore I know my country and my people quite well, and I love them so deeply.[17]

To an audience in Washington, DC, Wen confided:

> My childhood was spent in hardships of war. Even today, I still could remember that. Because even a child had to face the bayonets of fascist aggressors, and he huddled against his mother. And I still remember how it felt, and I personally experienced that. And my family's and my house was all burned up in the war, and even the school, the modest school that my grandfather built with his own hands, was all destroyed.[18]

With his family tutelage in literature and science, and a wartime child's determination to survive, Jiabao was a precocious student. In 1954 he was admitted into Tianjin's prestigious Nankai middle school, the *alma mater* of China's revered Premier Zhou Enlai. Middle school must have been a glorious time for the youth. His teachers remember him fondly—but Wen is now Premier, so that is to be expected. Still, Wen has made three unannounced private trips back to the Nankai campus since 1990, where he called on his old teachers and gave encouraging talks to the startled youngsters who hadn't been notified of the old boy's appearance. The dean of Nankai's junior class in 1959 claims to have a clear memory of young Jinbao's "focus, discipline, and firm-study habits," but she also recalled Wen as being introverted and "frustrated if he wasn't quickly able to 'eat up' what he read."[19]

Upon graduating from Nankai and getting top marks in the national university exams, Wen was guaranteed acceptance to any of China's most impressive schools, and certainly nearby Beijing or Tsinghua universities must have been attractive. But Wen chose his father's profession and took a place at Beijing Institute of Geology, the country's top geology school, which boasted a teaching staff with American and European (rather than Soviet) training. Again, Wen performed superbly, and on the eve of his May 1965 graduation, the institute's party organization approved Wen's membership in the Chinese Communist Party. Immediately, he was accepted as a research student in the institute's graduate program to study "sectoral" geology, with a concentration on mining. The graduate program exposed him to scholarly journals from a broad range of foreign countries—mostly in English, a language in which he is said to have a fairly advanced reading facility.

An unhappy drawback of the Beijing Geology Institute was its centrality in the bloody Red Guard rivalries in Beijing during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) which exploded on the scene in May 1966. As a "red and expert" student, Wen penned a big character poster urging the school's party committee to "shake up a revolution" (*nao geming*) and attacking the school's "bourgeois educational mindset." But it didn't insulate Wen from being attacked by his fellow students for his dubious class background. Wasn't his grandfather a *petit bourgeoise*, after all? Perhaps so, but fortunately his grandfather's elder brother, Pengjiu, had also been a roomate of Premier Zhou Enlai's top aide [later foreign minister] Qiao Guanhua and was a senior Tianjin cadre in his own right.[20] Pengjiu's influence was not enough to save Wen's parents from doing an obligatory year in the countryside for their pre-revolutionary sins of capitalism, but Jiabao himself suffered little. Little, that is, until 1968, the year of the cataclysmic July 27 Red Guard battles in Beijing, when screaming fanatics from the Geology Institute's "Earth Faction" and the Aeronautical University's "Heaven Faction" (all joined by co-factionalists from Tsinghua University) butchered and maimed each other in fighting that lasted the entire day. The "7-27 Incident" was the breaking point for Mao Zedong who finally ordered the PLA to clean out the city of students and ship them all off to the countryside to cool off—forever, as far as he was concerned.[21] But Wen missed the July violence because he was already off in the western deserts.

**In the Gansu Wilderness.**

Up to the previous February, Wen Jiabao remained at the Institute, unable to continue his studies but already finished with the equivalent of a doctoral program. That month he received his orders to serve as a "technician" with the Gansu Provincial Geodynamics Unit in Jiuquan—a Gobi Desert town near "Jade Gate" at the distant extremity of the Great Wall of China. Shivering in the late winter winds on the platform at Beijing Station, he didn't realize how fortunate he would be to miss the upcoming violent climax of political radicalism at his *alma mater*. As his granduncle, Wen Pengjiu, saw him off at the train station, the words of a Tang poem beclouded him: "The Spring Breezes never reach Jade Gate Pass."

Winds came with a vengeance during one of his first field studies that summer. In the wastes of Gansu, he and three fellow cadres were caught in a black-night rainstorm which collapsed their tents three times before it was over. The rains flooded their camp, and Wen is credited with saving the lives of his colleagues that night. Wen later came to be an expert in flash flooding, something that came in handy later in his life when he was put in charge of relief work for the once-in-a-century Yangtze basin deluge of 1998.

One account says that young Wen hadn't been in Gansu long before "factional struggles" sent him to a farm to do manual labor. Nearly two decades later, after Wen had been named deputy director of the Central Office, "some people in Jiuquan sent a letter to Beijing accusing Wen of being in the "vanguard of the 'Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius' movement" in the town, and said that he was a "ardent critic of Deng Xiaoping," and had "destroyed old cadres." In an attempt to get to the bottom of the matter, the Central Organization Department sent inspectors to Jiuquan four separate times, and in the end gave Wen a thumbs-up.[22]

After a decade working as a field geologist in outback Gansu, Wen amassed an encyclopedic knowledge of the province's geoforms and used his superior analytical and literary skills to produce volumes of valuable and unprecedented scientific reporting for the Ministry of Geology in Beijing.

"Spring Breezes" eventually came to "Jade Gate Pass" when Jiabao met a young female gemologist from the 1966 class of the Lanzhou University geology department, Zhang Peili.[23] In Beijing, Wen had been seeing one young woman, but she was assigned away from Beijing after graduation. Wen is also said to have had three co-eds eyeing him while he was in Jiuquan, but Zhang Peili "took the most initiative," often volunteering to do his laundry and "snagging his heart."[24] Zhang is considered an extrovert, nicely balancing Wen's natural reticence.

Two children (a son, Wen Yunsong, and a daughter, Wen Ruchun) eventually came to the couple—both of whom reportedly studied in the United States.[25] And eventually a promotion came to Wen as well. In 1978, after a decade of mapping geologic outcroppings and tapping at rocks and crystals in the Gansu desert, Wen was appointed as "Member of the SC of the Party Committee of the

Geomechanics Survey Team under the Gansu Provincial Geological Bureau and Deputy Team Chief." His service as part of the Team's party committee must have convinced higher-ups in Lanzhou that Wen Jiabao had what it took to be a management-level cadre, because in 1979 he was promoted to be a deputy section head in the Gansu Provincial Geological Bureau and given the academic title of "engineer." In 1981 he was promoted yet again as deputy executive director of the provincial geology bureau.

It was also fortunate for Wen's career that the Communist Party Chief in Gansu Province happened to be Song Ping, a former secretary to Zhou Enlai. In August of 1980, Song mulled a new directive from Beijing ordering the retirement of overage cadres and their replacement with significantly younger ones. A seasoned veteran of Beijing's intrigues, Song also knew that the Beijing was going to need a new generation of cadres to fill slots in the central party and government bureaucracy that had been decimated in the Cultural Revolution. He began to look around his Gansu domain for likely candidates. His first choice was an obvious one—one young Hu Jintao who was a graduate of Tsinghua University (Song's alma mater of sorts) and a protégé of Song's wife, Chen Shunyao, who had been the University's deputy Party chief in the early 1960s when Hu's application for Communist Party membership was approved. There is no doubt that Mrs. Song knew and liked young Jintao.[26]

But Song's other choice for promotion to Beijing was Wen Jiabao, although Song apparently did not know Wen personally. Rather, visiting Beijing Minister of Geology Sun Daguang made the recommendation to Party Chief Song Ping after a particularly successful visit to Gansu in early spring of 1982. Minister Sun had been impressed by the quality of reporting from Gansu and went out to see the province himself. He was also in the process of hacking away the ministry's deadwood and was on the lookout for new talent. A few days with Wen Jiabao convinced him that he had found a good prospect. "Wen Jiabao, that's the man I want, bring him to Beijing, he has the makings of a minister," is how Sun approached Song Ping with the idea.[27] Song then canvassed the provincial geology bureau with a questionnaire—"who would be best suited for a job in Beijing?" and the answer was pretty unanimous—"Wen Jiabao."

According to the Yang Zhongmei biography, Song then did his own background check. Satisfied that Wen had the right stuff, he gave Wen's transfer his personal seal of approval.[28] And by October 1982, just as the 12th Party Congress was ending, Wen arrived in Beijing to take up his post as director of mining policy and a member of the geology ministry's party committee.

**Wen Jiabao in Beijing.**

The scholarly and thoughtful Wen Jiabao continued to impress his colleagues and after a certain probation period, Minister Sun Daguang promoted him to vice-minister of Geology and Mineral Resources, deputy secretary of its "Leading Party Members Group," and director of the ministry's political department where Wen served for two years overseeing the ministry's planning and financial policies.

By this time, Song Ping had been transferred to the Party Center in Beijing where he took over the all-powerful State Planning Commission. When Wen's boss, geology minister Sun Daguang, heard through the grapevine that the Party's general secretary, Hu Yaobang, was looking for a bright young candidate to be deputy director of the CPC Central Committee's General Office, he immediately called Song Ping and suggested they push to get Vice Minister Wen into the job. Other candidates for the slot were a deputy party secretary in Shanghai, Wu Bangguo, and State Council Secretary General Wang Zhongyu. And in October 1985, after all the dossiers were reviewed, Wen Jiabao got the job.

It was the first completely nontechnical job Wen had ever had. Again, Wen apparently fit right in with Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang's frenetic, avuncular, and free-wheeling style on the party side and Premier Zhao Ziyang's worried, methodical, and theoretical reformism on the government side. In 1987, after Hu Yaobang's fall from grace and Zhao's appointment as Party Chief, Wen was put on Zhao's "Political Structural Reform Small Group" and also had a hand in economic reform policies. Zhao also placed Wen as deputy director of the preparatory commission for the 13th Party Congress in October, and Wen is said to have ensured that Zhao's policies survived the debates of that seminal meeting.

Zhao also rewarded Wen Jiabao with a seat on the Communist Party's Central Committee and was made the only alternate member of the influential party center's Secretariat. It is notable that at this time, although Hu Jintao was the Party's youngest provincial leader, Wen Jiabao ranked well ahead of Hu in the party structure—and was a scant three months older. But China was going through a rough adjustment to Deng Xiaoping's capitalistic reforms. Not only was inflation nearing 40 percent at one point in 1987, but political relaxations had released an extravagance of new thinking among intellectuals. There was a clamor to re-impose the discipline of central planning structures to stabilize commodity pricing and a howl for "spiritual civilization" to counteract political forces that undermined the Party's legitimacy.

**Tiananmen Boils Over**.

This reactionary countercurrent was resisted by China's young intelligentsia, and their frustrations erupted in mass demonstrations on April 17 when their patron saint, Hu Yaobang, died unexpectedly. The demonstrations grew and expanded and accreted all manner of sympathizers—students, laborers, government bureaucrats, even police. Housewives, shopkeepers, private entrepreneurs, taxi drivers, all joined in. The demonstrations moved early on to Central Beijing's 98-acre Tiananmen Square and there they stayed, day and night, drawing masses of over a million to tell the central authorities they were fed up.

By the evening of May 19, 1989, Wen Jiabao had become known in Party circles as General Secretary Zhao Ziyang's man in the Secretariat and the Central Office. So it was unsurprising that Wen accompanied Secretary Zhao in the persistent drizzle that night to Tiananmen Square for a call on hunger-strikers. As Wen somberly held an umbrella over Zhao's head, Zhao choked out a rambling apology that the students did not quite understand. That day, unbeknownst to the demonstrators in the Square, the Party Center had approved the use of force in the Square. As Zhao spoke, hundreds of thousands of PLA troops were mobilizing for deployment to Beijing.

On May 23, Deng Xiaoping summoned Shanghai's party secretary Jiang Zemin to Beijing to inform him that he was to replace Zhao Ziyang as the CCP's general secretary. Deng then ordered Jiang to return to Shanghai and detain NPC Chairman, Wan Li, on his emergency return to China from the United States. Jiang was gentle in his detention, placing Wan in a local hospital to help him recover from the stresses of the demands of the Tiananmen demonstrations. Of course, some believed that Wan would have mobilized the NPC to support Zhao Ziyang had he been able to return to Beijing, but fortunately, his plane was scheduled to arrive in Shanghai first.[29]

Wen's survival of the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre is a case study in communist party ethics. Shortly after the June 4 disaster, Wen remained prominent in the media, while Zhao Ziyang became a nonperson. A bit tardily, on June 8, Wen wrote on behalf of the "Labor Committee of Central Government Agencies" to congratulate the Party Center for crushing the Tiananmen "turmoil" and returning the country to stability, and signed as the committee chief.[30] On June 12, Wen accompanied CCP Central SC Member Qiao Shi to call on the martial law troops and a number of People's Armed Police (PAP) units which had participated in the Tiananmen operation, followed by a visit to wounded soldiers being cared for in Beijing's hospitals. On June 19, he accompanied Premier Li Peng on calls to family members of PLA and PAP soldiers killed in the action.[31]

Despite Wen's outward expression of support for the Tiananmen action, there were those in the leadership who wanted a thoroughgoing housecleaning of all Zhao Ziyang factionalists. Li Xiannian and Wang Zhen, among others, called for Wen's removal explicitly, and Li Peng and the Executive Vice Premier Yao Yilin seconded the motion. The Hong Kong press was rife with rumors that the head of the young, intelligent, attractive reformist of the Zhao camp was on the chopping block.

I remember asking knowledgeable party cadres in Guangzhou about Wen Jiabao in September 1989, with the thought that if Wen went, reformism in China was dead. But I was universally assured that Wen would not only endure, he would prevail.[32] I did not know that party leaders in Beijing had already decided to keep Wen Jiabao on the job. Wen's guardian was retired Geology Minister

Sun Daguang who sent a note to the Party Center declaring that he had nominated Wen for the Central Office director's job only after a rigorous review of his political background. He was certain that Wen was sound. Sun, a reliable "old revolutionary" sent his report to Party elders Peng Zhen and Bo Yibo, both of whom had also dealt with Wen. They, too, seconded Sun's testament.

Perhaps Wen's most important post-Tiananmen support came from Song Ping who had just been named as one of the six top Party leaders in the Politburo SC. Although Song had not directly recommended Wen for any positions, he had signed off on all of them, and even he agreed that Wen Jiabao's credentials as a reliable communist were impeccable. By accompanying Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang to Tiananmen Square on the night of May 19 and holding his umbrella in the drizzle, Wen was only doing his job. It demonstrated "loyalty to the organization," he said, not to the man.[33] Wen has since put the Tiananmen issue behind him, at least in public.[34]

Wen remained in the central office, but had to deal with a new reality. Incoming Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin had arrived in Beijing with only one assistant, Zeng Qinghong from Shanghai. All Jiang asked was that Zeng be placed in the CCP's Central Office as a deputy to Wen Jiabao. Whether this reflected Jiang's or Zeng's appreciation of the importance of the CCP Central Office in shaping political agendas is unknown, but it is clear that from the beginning, Wen expected Zeng to replace him as the policy traffic-cop in the CCP's Central Committee. Wen apparently got along splendidly with newcomer Zeng.[35]

**Reform, PLA Infighting and the 14th Party Congress.**

In January 1992, Deng Xiaoping was frustrated by the lack of progress on economic reforms at the hands of Premier Li Peng and the central planners of the CCP's orthodox wing. Time was running out for Deng. He was becoming ever more frail, and the 14th Party Congress to be held that October would be his last chance to leave his imprint on Marxist thought. Forging a coalition that would pay obeisance to reforms and establish "Deng Theory" in the canon of

Socialism with Chinese Characteristics became a desperate priority for him. He launched the so-called "Southern Progress" (*Nanxun*) in Guangdong to popularize his new ideology—"whatever benefits increasing the comprehensive strength (*zonghe liliang*) of the socialist state, whatever benefits the improvement of the people's standard of living, that is socialism." He urged the Party to reject its obsession with "rightist" tendencies, and instead focus on the "important thing, to oppose 'leftism'."[36]

Jiang's aide Zeng Qinghong was instrumental in getting Jiang to buy on to this vision, and Wen Jiabao aided Zeng in this effort. With a bit of maneuvering, Zeng and Wen managed to put Jiang Zemin in Deng Xiaoping's camp—in opposition to Li Peng and Li's mentor, Chen Yun, who was Deng's rival in the top ranks of China's powerful but rapidly aging ranks of "Old Revolutionaries." But more importantly, Deng had the unswerving loyalty of the PLA. Jiang's chief rivals, President Yang Shangkun and his "half-brother," Yang Baibing, hoped to gain Deng's acquiescence in their bid to supplant Deng as the paramount force in the military. In the Byzantine machinations of Beijing's factional struggle, the "Yang Brothers" were on the verge of outflanking Jiang Zemin's titular role as CMC chair by offering Deng Xiaoping the PLA's support of Deng's reforms in marked contrast to Jiang's evident lack of enthusiasm for ideological battles.

Instead, Zeng (with Wen Jiabao's help) convinced Jiang not only to support the reforms against the Old Revolutionaries but also to enlist the sympathies of Old Soldiers who implacably hated the "Yang Brothers" and their bald-faced attempt to consolidate their hold on PLA promotions.

By September 1992, an impressive phalanx of old generals wrote an open letter to Deng Xiaoping and the CPC Central Committee hinting, in the words of one Hong Kong journal, that the "Yang Brothers" were "left one moment, and right the next," and "feigning compliance with Deng Xiaoping." The old generals had no beef with Deng, but their real targets were the Yangs.[37] In the end, Deng determined that the "Yang Brothers" were a divisive force in the military and ordered that they be removed from authority in the PLA. With them gone, Jiang Zemin was the undisputed chief civilian leader in the CMC, and the way was open for him to exert his

influence in the Army ranks by virtue of his prerogative in general rank promotions.

In the run-up to the 14th Party Congress in October 1992, Wen worked closely with Zeng, as well as with Song Ping (in charge of CCP organization work) and Song's protégé, then-Tibetan Party Chief Hu Jintao, to map out the blueprint for the Congress.[38] The Party Charter (*Dang Zhang*) for the 14th Congress also did something remarkable—it elevated "Deng Xiaoping Theory" to equal status with "Mao Zedong Thought."[39] At the same time, Jiang Zemin read the Party Work Report to explain what it meant for him to be the "Core of the Third Generation of Leaders."[40] The term "core" had little meaning in the CCP glossary until it was defined formally in Jiang's Political Report to the 14th Congress: "the central leading collective of the first generation, with comrade Mao Zedong as the core . . . [and] the central leading collective of the second generation, with comrade Deng Xiaoping as the core. . ."

In the process, Hu Jintao managed to snag himself a prize—a seat on the CCP Politburo SC, leap-frogging into the top council of China's leadership at the age of 49. Wen was just as happy to be promoted to an alternate Politburo position and retain his seat in the CCP Secretariat.

Truth be known, Wen was in line for a vice premiership. Jiang Zemin hoped to buy Wen's loyalty by putting him in charge of the State Council's agricultural policy, but the ardent lobbying of Premier Li Peng turned a vice premiership over to Jiang Chunyun, a Li Peng partisan, and the Agricultural portfolio went to new executive Vice Premier Zhu Rongji. Although Zhu had been Jiang's successor as Shanghai Party chief, he owed little (or nothing) to Jiang. Rather, his ascent to the senior vice premiership was at the insistence of Deng Xiaoping who had been consistently impressed by Zhu's capable management of Shanghai's reforms following Jiang's promotion to the top spot in Beijing.

**Premier Zhu's Idea Man on Agricultural Policy.**

But Zhu seemed to appreciate Wen Jiabao's talents as much as Jiang, and Zhu named Wen to be his deputy in the Party's newly created "Leading Group on Agriculture."[41] In January 1993, Zeng

Qinghong formally replaced Wen Jiabao as Central Office director, and Wen was left with little else to do but assist Vice Premier Zhu in agricultural policy as an alternate member of the Politburo. It was a daunting task. At first, the vice premier focused on the plight of the peasant, viewing rural poverty and the growing income gap with the urban coastal regions as a potential source of catastrophic instability. Throughout 1993, Wen Jiabao penned all central-level directives and media commentaries on rural policy. Moreover, agricultural issues were a back-burner case for Jiang Zemin, and Wen's task rapidly became a thankless one—one for which he would bear the responsibility if rural development suddenly were to become a crisis. Jiang was becoming adept at giving hard tasks to cadres outside his own faction. They were, after all, expendable.

Even so, Wen Jiabao had nothing else to do, so he took it as his own. Over the coming months and years, Wen successfully kept agricultural issues on Vice Premier Zhu's radar screen, drafting a five-point policy directive in May 1993 calling for reductions in the peasants' growing tax burdens, opening credit channels via state banks, and slamming local cadres who levied arbitrary and (more often) capricious fees on the already poverty-stricken farmers. Vice Premier Zhu, who by this time had taken over the most substantive economic portfolios from Premier Li Peng, was impressed by Wen's tenacity. Zhu himself declared that "Agriculture is the foundation of the nation, without the farmers there is no stability." Wen accompanied the vice premier on an inspection tour of rural Hunan in May, and was shocked to learn of the dire straits the locals had landed in. At Wen's suggestion, Vice Premier Zhu ordered the locals in Changde district to get development capital via the state banks and said "here's my telephone number, call me when you get the money." Zhu wanted to know if his orders would be followed.

With the full backing and authority of the vice premier (though perhaps without his constant attention), Wen Jiabao pushed ahead with agricultural policy development. In June 1994, Wen penned a major commentary in *Qiu Shi* (Seek Truth), the Party's most prestigious theoretical journal. The Party's policy goals in the rural areas included efficient distribution of farm inputs and produce, stable prices for inputs but steadily increasing prices for farm outputs, the development of rural industries and services, expansion

of market structures, and extended land use contracts. Wen called for increased government investment in the agricultural sector and a systematic reform of the pricing structures.

In March of 1995, Wen wrote another commentary for *Qiu Shi* outlining the "Seven Major Problems In Agriculture" and discussed their remedies in terms of creating an exchange market for land use rights, vastly improved rural education, relaxing rural labor mobility, developing the light industrial potential of the farm sector, strengthening political supervision at the basic levels, and finally deepening "spiritual civilization" in the countryside with an emphasis on "democratic rule of law."

By the time of the CCP's 15th Party Congress in October 1997, Wen Jiabao's stock had risen so high that he was finally put in charge of the Central Committee Secretariat, and in 1998 he was appointed to a vice premiership—that year, he was the only new vice premier. For the rest of his 5-year tenure as vice premier, Wen made agricultural reforms the centerpiece of his accomplishments.

**Wen Jiabao and the Floods of 1998.**

In April 1998, he was also made head of the emergency flood task force, and in May he was named head of the State Council's "Leading Small Group on Agricultural Poverty."[42]

August 1998 saw the heaviest floods in recent Chinese memory. On August 1, the Jiayi Levee in Hubei burst its banks killing and injuring several thousand PLA troops assigned to engineering work on the structure. On August 4, the Jiangzhou levee collapsed, making 40,000 homeless in the rains. On August 5, the Hubei provincial government reported that waters from the Yangtse river had challenged the lip of the Xingzhou Levee two or three times. If the Levee were breached, it would endanger the entire Wuhan municipal region. According to the Yang Zhongmei book, the summer leadership meeting at Beidaihe on August 7 placed all the responsibility for flood emergency operations and relief on Vice Premier Wen Jiabao (though it seems that the Center had taken its sweet time about even calling a meeting to address the issue).

The vice premier finally arrived in Xingzhou on August 9 to take charge of the engineering work and ordered up 4,000 troops from the

15th Airborne Army and the Guangzhou MR. For the next several days, state television repeatedly aired footage of the vice premier directing rescue efforts while, in the words of the *Los Angeles Times*, "treading through muddy waters and shouting through bullhorns in the rain."[43] It's hard to see what Wen actually did, however. The Yang Zhongmei biography essentially had Wen ordering the PLA engineers not to take action that might exacerbate flooding in other areas, but not doing anything at the scene that actually helped the situation.[44] In the months following the flood, however, Wen turned his attention to avoiding the problems that magnified the disasters of the August 1998 floods and promulgating relief and insurance policies that would aid the victims.[45]

Nonetheless, Wen once again snatched success from the jaws of a very nasty mess. Had the Xingzhou levee disintegrated and the floodwaters inundated Wuhan, vice premier Wen would probably have been forced to resign. As it was, he gave every appearance of being a cool, intelligent, take-charge leader.

**Learning the Complexities of State Finance.**

As if Wen didn't have enough to do in 1998, he was named to the "CCP Central Financial Work Committee" in June to help cope with the growing dislocations sparked by the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98. He also held the posts of secretary general Central Financial and Economic Leading Group and deputy head of the State Scientific and Technical Leading Group, the highest decisionmaking body on China's economic and financial policies. Jiang Zemin chaired the task force, with Zhu Rongji and Wu Bangguo as deputies, but Wen was the workaday chief, backed up by China's central bank (People's Bank of China or PBOC), governor Dai Xianglong as his deputy, and a dozen or so other members, including the governors of four state-owned commercial banks, i.e., the Bank of China, China Agricultural Development, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, and China Construction Bank—all concerned with banking sector reform, specifically the management of nongovernmental deposits, credits, enterprise financing, current account settlements, foreign exchange transactions, and other activities. Over the next 5 years, China would confront a series of highly complex adjustments

in its financial structures, including developing institutionalized financial oversight and supervision, resolving the nonperforming loan and bad asset crisis in the state-owned commercial banks, marketizing interest rates, and creating a competition environment for the financial industry.

Although Vice Premier Wen Jiabao was seen as an intelligent and organized man, his appointment as the primary manager of China's financial reforms "astonished the outside world." Wen, after all, had never been involved in financial policies before. But he had a knack for pulling teams of experts together and coming up with effective strategies. Together with PBOC Governor Dai, Bank of China Governor Wang Xuebing, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Governor Liu Tinghuan, China Construction Bank Governor Zhou Xiaochuan, China Agricultural Bank governor He Xianglin, and PBOC South China chief Wang Qishan, Wen formed a very influential policy team, though it is debatable how well they worked together. Certainly, Zhou Xiaochuan and Wang Qishan were—and remain—part of Jiang Zemin's Shanghai faction and are more influenced by the central planning policies of their respective mentors than by the reformist views shared by Wen Jiabao and Premier Zhu Rongji.[46]

Nonetheless, by working painstakingly for a consensus, Wen was effective in moving financial reforms ahead and gaining general acquiescence that China's membership in the World Trade Organization was essential to economic growth. Wen argued that acceding to Western demands for access to China's financial markets meant that China's banks had to be competitive before foreign banks were allowed entry, and that meant that financial reforms had to come sooner rather than later.

By December 2000, Vice Premier Wen Jiabao was considered a lead-pipe cinch to replace Zhu Rongji as premier. He had proven his talents to relieve the two biggest headaches in the Chinese economy, agriculture and finance, but he had served three CCP general secretaries loyally and, in the end, even Jiang Zemin was said to have "basically accepted" Wen.[47] If so, Jiang continued to play hard-to-get with Wen's promotion to the premiership. In the Spring of 2002, several Hong Kong and Japanese media reports suggested that Wen Jiabao had submitted his resignation to the Politburo after a

particularly fractious session of the Central Financial Work Group which had been wrestling with China's accession to the World Trade Organization. One account said "Jiang Zemin openly censured Wen Jiabao for not doing his best in his work." But other analyses from Hong Kong indicate that, if Jiang really had made a scene about Wen's financial work, it was in the context of assuring that Zeng Qinghong would be guaranteed to join Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao in "fully taking over the reins of power."[48]

In January 2003, after his elevation to the Politburo SC assured his appointment as Premier, Wen Jiabao outlined views on the changes in the international economic systems and his vision for China's place in them. China must make better headway in dealing with international financial risk and competition, while at the same time protecting financial stability and security at home. He then listed the five priorities for financial policy over the coming year: 1) cut bank bad debt ratios; 2) implement continued financial reforms in a "stable" manner; 3) improve and perfect financial statistics data collection and monitoring, raise the overall standard of financial supervision, and perfect the institutions administering the financial sector; 4) gradually expand the opening of financial markets to foreign banks; and, 5) raise the standard of financial services.[49] Rather than present a comprehensive reformist outlook, it was clear that the new premier-designate foresaw a movement toward marketization of China's financial sector with "all deliberate speed."

**Wen Jiabao as Premier.**

Wen was finally named Premier at the March 2003 NPC, elected with the largest vote total of any candidate—2,906 or 99.4 percent of the ballots, with three against and 16 abstentions, comparing favorably to Zhu Rongji who "only" got 97.9 percent in 1997.[50] But despite having been in the central government for over two decades, including 15 years at the absolute center of power, he did not bring into his cabinet a coterie of like-minded reformists. In fact, the Jiang faction surrounded him with Shanghai Gang figures which promised to rein-in any move by the new Premier—or new President Hu Jintao, for that matter—to exercise real power.[51] A good chunk of the new State Council are Jiang faction appointees, and Secretary

General of the State Council Hua Jianmin is a long time Jiang loyalist who served as Jiang's chief confidential secretary in Shanghai and came to Beijing in 1994 to work with Zeng Qinghong.[52] At least two of Wen's four vice premiers are direct Jiang loyalists, senior vice premier Huang Ju and junior vice premier in charge of agriculture Hui Liangyu. Zeng Peiyan reportedly has been a Jiang aide since 1992. Meanwhile, Vice Premier Wu Yi is a protégé of outgoing vice premier Li Lanqing—sympathetic with Wen's situation, but no one believes she will fall on her sword for the new Premier.[53] Most key State Council ministers are also Jiang partisans.[54]

It is debatable, however, how much Premier Wen's agenda differs from the Jiang faction's. "Stability is the Mission that Supercedes All Others" was the mantra of the more conservative wing of the Party, and by definition "stability" in China means dealing with unemployment in the cities and poverty in the countryside. Premier Wen Jiabao proposes to tackle these issues by buoying state enterprises as long as possible through state financial support, and addressing the heavy fiscal burdens placed on the farmers by rapacious local cadres, hog-tied distribution systems, security-constrained labor mobility, and inadequate returns on farm outputs. He will probably also resist efforts by U.S. and other agricultural trading partners to open China' farm markets to international competition.

One top farm lobbyist in Washington complained in March 2003 that "at the end of [WTO] negotiations, China was a $2 billion market. We expected substantial growth, but we haven't seen that growth because China hasn't done what it's supposed to." U.S. exports like cotton, grains, and vegetable oils have had particular trouble getting through China's opaque quota system and into China's domestic markets. On the other hand, China is now a net exporter of cotton, maize corn, honey, and apples, and has become a major competitor in international markets with U.S. producers.[55] Moreover, China is utilizing a number of pseudo-quarantine measures to exclude other U.S. farm products, particularly soybeans. Given his sympathy for the average Chinese peasant, Premier Wen Jiabao can be expected to continue a policy of stubborn resistance to agricultural imports. But his first order of new business will be to cut taxes on farmers and his

second order of business will be to vastly reduce the size of the rural cadre bureaucracy.[56]

Wen pointed out that despite Premier Zhu's attempts to cut the governmental bureaucracy by 50 percent, the vast proportion of those officials stayed on in local offices. Altogether, there were about 45 million bureaucrats in China, with an average of 28 peasants feeding "imperial grain" (i.e., grain intended for the welfare of the empire) to each one of them. Wen explained that "in Chinese history, the average has surely been less than 1 official per 100 farmers in the Two Han dynasties, the ratio was one to 945; while in the Tang dynasty, it was 1 to 500, and even in the early stages of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the ratio was about 1 to 600, but that slipped to 1 to 50 by 1978." Wen is convinced that the present situation is untenable, an attitude that may win him great adulation in the countryside from everyone but the bureaucrats and officials who run things.[57]

One thing that Premier Wen is highly unlikely to do is acquiesce to Western (especially American and Japanese) pressures to revalue upward China's renminbi currency.[58] On technology policy and the development of an advanced defense industrial infrastructure, Wen is likely to be supportive of the PLA's priorities. A scientist himself, Wen is convinced that technological transformation holds the key to unlocking China's vast production potential.[59] By July 2003, Premier Wen had also seized on the idea that internet commerce was a promising way to encourage better distribution networks in China.[60]

**SARS: Showdown with the PLA—and Jiang.**

The outbreak of a particularly virulent strain of "atypical pneumonia" (*fei dianxing feiyan*) in South China, perhaps as early as November 1, 1992, surprised nobody. South China has been the human race's perennial stewpot for new strains of influenza. What is surprising is that the Chinese government treated it as a state secret shortly after its recrudescence. Public health authorities in Beijing knew that a new killer disease—soon to be dubbed "sudden acute respiratory syndrome," or "SARS" by the World Health Organization (WHO)—was gripping Southern China as early as January 27 when,

according to the *Washington Post*, the Guangdong provincial health department received a "top secret" document from Beijing which outlined the extent of the contagion. Unfortunately, no one in the Guangdong health department had the security clearances to read the document, so it remained unopened until the department chief returned from holiday some time later.[61]

There has been some finger-pointing about what Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao knew and when they knew it—*Washington Post* reporter John Pomfret says "from the start, Chinese sources said, the new government of President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao, who formally took power in March, approved the coverup."[62] But the sequence of events leading up to Pomfret's story indicates that both the President and the Premier already had blown the top off the cover-up, while Jiang Zemin's crony, PLA general Zhang Wenkang (China's feckless and pompous minister of public health,) was still spreading lies.

There are other indications that Hu and Wen discovered the PLA to be Jiang's "Achilles' heel" in the SARS crisis. As early as March, SARS patients began appearing at the PLA's 301 Hospital in Beijing for treatment and were then shipped over to the 302 Hospital, infecting scores of hospital staff on the way. Minister Zhang Wenkang, a former vice president of the Second Military Medical University in Shanghai still holding the rank of major general, was a typical cadre of the old school—"submit meaningless reports of political accomplishments, report only happy things, don't report worrisome things" is the way Zhang is described by Yang Zhongmei.[63]

Yang Zhongmei also reports that the ministry of health had coordinated their SARS research with PLA medical hospitals as early as February, but declined to publicize their findings because of objections from the military. (In April, the WHO reported that about 8 percent of SARS victims in China were in the PLA, but the figure was certainly higher.) On March 2, the PLA had already begun its in-depth investigation of the SARS etiology, and by March 21 had discovered it emanated from a "coronavirus." But the results of this research was classified "top secret" (*ji mi*) and was never shared with the government to help with SARS control,[64] although the military

health system did report up its own chain of command—directly to Jiang Zemin—according to the *Washington Post*.[65]

The Chinese leadership was acutely aware that SARS was beginning to spread international alarm. Surely, SARS had been identified first in South China, and the Guangdong provincial medical authorities were providing what statistics they had (on a low-keyed basis) to the WHO.[66] Moreover, Hong Kong and Taiwan were both suffering from a fearsome spread of the disease, and Singapore was also hard hit. Canadian and European health authorities reported numerous cases and some deaths. SARS was not a mystery in Beijing. But President Hu and Premier Wen probably only began to focus on the issue in late March. Yang Zhongmei reports that there was a directive from the Ministry of Public Health in mid-March directing that operations preventing SARS should not impact the smooth progress of the NPC, and that SARS information must not be disseminated abroad.[67]

On April 3, the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs issued a formal Travel Warning to U.S. citizens advising that all nonessential official personnel and dependents at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing and the Consulates General in Chengdu, Shanghai, Shenyang, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong SAR, were being evacuated "as a precautionary measure due to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) situation."

In an attempt to assuage international (and domestic) criticism over Beijing's official cover up of the epidemic, Minister/General Zhang Wenkang briefed foreign reporters on April 3; but rather than admit the disease was still on a rampage, he insisted the "epidemic is effectively under control."[68] Moreover, he declared "China is a safe place to work and live, including to travel." It wasn't safe for Pekka Aro, a Finnish staffer with the United Nations's (UN) International Labor Organization office in Beijing. He died of SARS on April 7. Even Chinese physicians were outraged at Minister Zhang's effort to downplay the seriousness of the ongoing health crisis. Retired senior military surgeon Colonel Jiang Yanyong, who worked one day a week with patients at the 301 hospital, tried to tell China Central Television network about the cover-up but was ignored.

On April 7, Premier Wen and Vice Premier Wu Yi inspected the national center for disease control where Minister/General

Zhang gave them the same happy-faced reports he had been giving foreigners all along. In private, according to the *Washington Post*, the Chinese CDC workers at that meeting were encouraged that the scales were finally falling from Premier Wen's eyes. "He talked about the military," said a witness, "he said it was wrong that the military was not reporting cases of SARS. He said we have to start telling the truth to the people. He asked us how many people had SARS in Beijing. We couldn't tell him."[69]

Nonetheless, Premier Wen himself told the foreign press that same day that China had "cooperated closely" with international and foreign health centers to control the outbreak. This was too much for Colonel Jiang Yanyong. He tracked down National Public Radio's correspondent in Beijing, Rob Gifford, and gave tape-recorded interview saying that "This is a matter of life and death, it is very irresponsible what the Health Minister did." Jiang cautioned "if you deliberately give fake numbers and play down the situation, more might die who shouldn't die and more might be infected who shouldn't be infected."[70]

Still, that same day, April 9, Vice Premier Wu Yi continued to give assurances that SARS was not a problem in Beijing to foreign diplomats and senior international civil servants resident in Beijing. On April 12, the WHO finally lost patience with the PRC government and issued a SARS travel warning for Beijing.

**Jiang Zemin Evacuated from Beijing.**

The WHO travel warning was a wake-up call to President Hu and Premier Wen. They immediately began to reassess the situation.[71] On April 11, President Hu made an emergency visit to Guangdong in an attempt to publicize the gravity of the SARS epidemic—outside Beijing. And at about the same time, CMC Jiang Zemin decamped to Shanghai.[72] Later in April, Jiang Zemin's faction tried to explain the evacuation as a prudent step to ensure leadership continuity in "wartime."

> As Beijing's SARS crisis drags on, knowledgeable sources in Beijjng report that the leadership, in order to avoid a situation where the leadership is affected by the SARS infection, the Party Center and the

> State Council has in recent days launched an official mobilization of the "Wartime Leadership Structure." This is the first time that Zhongnanhai has had such an emergency structure in 50 years.
>
> Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao,and Public Health Minister Wu Yi will remain in Beijing as the "A Team Leadership" in work against the disease.
>
> The "B Team," consists of Zeng Qinghong, NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo, Executive Vice Premier Huang Ju, *et al*. "The B Team" officials will make all arrangements possible to lessen the chance that SARS infections will impact open governmental actions.
>
> The Central Office of the CPC has arranged for leadership families to depart the crowded leadership compound at Zhongnanhai and go to other areas to live, or to go stay with relatives.
>
> News has it that Shanghainese like Jiang Zemin and Huang Ju have evacuated themselves to Shanghai. But this was the first time since the founding of the nation that the wartime leadership structure has been so mobilized.[73]

Whether Hu and Wen—and the doughty female Vice Premier Wu Yi—were flattered to be China's "A Team" is unknown, but they quickly began to take charge. The entire Jiang Zemin faction had abandoned Beijing, leaving them in charge. While Hu was still in Guangdong, Premier Wen chaired an emergency meeting of the State Council on April 13. He warned that the country's economy, international image, and social stability could be affected and that "the overall situation remains grave."

For some reason, Beijing's mayor must not have been clued in on the decision. On April 13, Beijing mayor Meng Xuenong (one of President Hu Jintao's few allies in Beijing) adamantly insisted that "Beijing City's atypical pneumonia epidemic situation has already been effectively controlled and suspect cases are currently decreasing . . . Six atypical pneumonia patients have to date been discharged from hospital after recovery, and a Canadian among them continues his normal work in Beijing."[74] Also on April 13, as if to make a liar out of the hapless mayor, WHO scientists in China complained bitterly that they still were not getting the cooperation they needed from the Chinese authorities, especially from China's military hospitals in the Beijing area.[75]

On April 16, something totally separate from the SARS epidemic shook the PLA high command. Diesel-powered PLA Navy submarine No. 361 suffered an accident while on exercises in the Yellow Sea between the Shandong and Korean peninsulas when a "mechanical malfunction" killed all 70 crew members on board.[76] It is likely that the PLA command did not brief anyone outside the military or the CMC on the accident at the time, although certainly President Hu Jintao, vice chairman of the CMC, must have been informed.

Whether the submarine disaster was on his mind or not, the president and the premier may have made up their minds at that time to fire Minister Zhang, but given his support from both CMC Chairman Jiang, as well as his putative support in the PLA, they had to plot their strategy carefully. On April 17, Party General Secretary Hu Jintao called the full Politburo together in an extraordinary session in Beijing. According to the *Washington Post*:

> Hu and Wen had spent more than 10 days preparing for the confrontation. Hu ordered China's officials to stop lying about the extent of the SARS epidemic sweeping the country and vowed an all-out war against the disease. The orders appeared on the front page of every Chinese newspaper the next day.[77]

**The April 20 Storm**.

In addition to the April 17 meeting recorded by the *Washington Post*, Yang Zhongmei describes an "expanded session of the Politburo" on April 19 that was full of "acrimony and argumentation" but which finally passed three resolutions:

1) Zhang Wenkang and Meng Xuenong would be removed from their Party positions (only the NPC could remove them from their government offices). And they would be replaced by Vice Health Minister Gao Qiang and Hainan Party chief Wang Qishan, respectively. Because Comrade Liu Qi had been remiss in his work directing the Beijing effort at combating SARS, his case must also be looked into.

2) As the SARS situation had become the gravest of the grave, Premier Wen Jiabao would be given plenipotentiary powers to deal with it.

3) The full extent of the government's SARS information will be made public, and the government will cooperate fully with the WHO in an effort to ease the flow of information.

On April 20, the sackings were announced, and Vice Chairman of the CMC Hu Jintao, accompanied by PLA Chief of General Staff General Guo Boxiong, inspected the PLA Institute of Military Medical Sciences' Institute for the Study of Infectious Microorganisms to express his deep appreciation for their work.[78]

The heat was building on Jiang Zemin. On April 24, he greeted visiting Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes in Shanghai, thus reminding everyone that he wasn't in Beijing. While meeting with Fernandes, Jiang remarked "The Party Center and the State Council are responsible to the people," pointedly neglecting any mention of the Army's responsibilities.[79] Neither NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo nor CPPCC Chairman Jia Qinglin had appeared in public in weeks. Executive Vice Premier Huang Ju, Wen Jiabao's deputy, was nowhere to be seen. And Beijing's people noticed. College students (naturally) were the most cynical.

Beijing University's web site has a "student's internet news" page and on April 26, students posted a number of articles pointing out with considerable irony that Jiang's Shanghai appearances were evidence that "Shanghai should be safer than Beijing, since our Military Committee Chair Jiang Zemin is in Shanghai."[80] Another student noted that "(Jiang) didn't even set an example and ran away to seek shelter in Shanghai! (He) fears death! No wonder the Party Central Committee asked the nation to guarantee (the safety of) Shanghai with all one's strength!"[81]

Other internet articles noted with gratification the visits of "brother Bao" (Wen Jiabao) and "sister Wu" (Wu Yi) who dined with students in Bei-Da's cafeteria on April 26.[82]

On April 28, Jiang Zemin signed an order assigning 1,200 military medical service personnel to aid Beijing in SARS control, placing for the first time in the SARS crisis the General Logistical Department's medical services units under the unified leadership of the National SARS Control Command Center. Within 7 days, these troops managed to construct a 1,000 bed SARS quarantine facility in Xiaotangshan on the outskirts of Beijing.[83]

**SARS Aftermath: Jiang Struggles to Maintain Prestige.**

The SARS experience was an unhappy one for the PLA. The Army ranks certainly knew that the PLA had failed the people by withholding vital public health information, and the officers and commanders certainly felt vulnerable without a leadership capable of meshing the requirements of the military with the exigencies of public emergencies. The entire episode must have been adequate proof to the High Command that the PLA cannot function effectively under "Two Centers." Had Jiang Zemin taken it upon himself to coordinate what the PLA knew and when they knew it with the civilian leadership—primarily under Premier Wen Jiabao—the PLA would have wound up being a positive force in Chinese life—similar to their influence in the disastrous floods of 1998. As it was, CMC Chairman Jiang was apparently asleep at the switch and became more disengaged when he decamped to Shanghai with his coterie of hangers-on.

On May 2, two weeks after the fact, Xinhua wire service finally reported the April 16 submarine disaster. "The most startling thing about this episode is that they issued a public report," Rand Corporation China specialist Evan Medeiros told the *Washington Post*. "Maybe Jiang Zemin just judged that, in this crisis of faith and accountability, it would be better to get out in front of something like this."[84]

Indeed, for the rest of May, Jiang Zemin appeared off-balance, while the national media extolled the capacities of President Hu Jintao as he prepared for his state visits to Central Asia and the G-8 Summit in Evian les Bains, France. Indeed, for about a week prior to his travel to Europe and a week thereafter, Hu Jintao's photographs graced the front pages, every day, of all China's major newspapers, including the PLAD. Perhaps Chairman Jiang got tired of seeing Hu's picture on the front page of his morning PLAD every day and ordered additional coverage of his "Three Represents."[85] But if coverage in the PLAD is any indication, Hu's own stock seems to have firmed up among the military.

## ZENG QINGHONG, A CONTRASTING LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Over drinks in Beijing in early November 2003, a prominent U.S. journalist gave me his impression of Zeng Qinghong, whom he had seen once or twice playing tennis at the China World Hotel. Zeng is an outgoing, affable man of supreme confidence. "There was a rumor going around that while Hu Jintao was preparing to leave the country for the Central Asia and G-8 tour, a proposal was raised in the Politburo SC that Vice President Zeng Qinghong should take over the reins of power while President Hu Jintao was out of the country." The vote was two for and six against, with Zeng recusing himself for the obvious reasons. Rumors had it that the only two SC members supporting Zeng were CPPCC Chairman Jia Qinglin and executive vice premier Huang Ju—the core of the Jiang Zemin faction.

Whether the story is true or not is less relevant than it is as a parable of Zeng Qingong's position in the Communist Party hierarchy. Zeng increasingly sees himself as a separate center of power in the Party, both as Jiang's representative and as a principal actor in his own right. He does not see himself as an ideologue or a member of the Party's orthodox faction. Rather, he considers himself a reformist, a far-thinking visionary, and a generally good old boy.

But others apparently don't see him in quite the same light. Older cadres in the Party and the Army openly call him a "conspirator" and a power-seeker. Several years ago, for example, some unauthorized biographies of Zeng were floating around Hong Kong, and Zeng's sister, PLA Major General Zeng Haisheng, found one for him to read. After reading it, Zeng had only one comment: "Am I that bad?" and he threw it back at her.[86]

It doesn't seem that Zeng is as bad as all that. In 1999, an exiled Chinese writer in the United States named Li Jie wrote a futuristic fantasy about Chinese politics entitled "The Last Struggle in Zhongnanhai" (*Zhongnanhai Zuihoude Douzheng*) in which a figure named "Zheng Qingshan" was the real power behind the throne for a feckless Party general secretary modeled on Jiang Zemin. Li Jie portrayed the Zheng Qingshan figure as a democratic reformist struggling against Party ideologues. To make a long story short, a heroic figure is assassinated after forming a Democratic Chinese

Federation, leaving Zheng Qingshan to take up the mantle of leadership and undertake the daunting and complex task of turning a democratic Chinese Federation into the reality of a future Chinese democracy.[87]

Li Jie admits he patterned "Zheng" on Zeng Qinghong. Li, a former professor at Huadong Normal University, was a supporter of the Tiananmen Student Movement, spent some time in a lockup, and had his career ruined because of it. In disgust with China, Li emigrated to the United States in 1998. But Li tells a story that when he was released from jail after serving his Tiananmen time, Zeng Qinghong sent for him via an intermediary. Li Jie showed up for the meeting but sat in sullen silence as Zeng spoke. Zeng pleaded for understanding about the Tiananmen suppression—it had to be done, the government was disintegrating. Li Jie left without responding, but evidently was left with a favorable impression of Zeng. While Li Jie didn't know Zeng well, he felt well-disposed enough to base a sympathetic and heroic character in his novel on Zeng.[88]

Zeng Qinghong, it seems, strives to be all things to all men. He plays the reformist to the reformers, the nationalist to the military, the technocrat to the scientists, and all the while plays the Machiavelli to Prince Jiang Zemin.

In the tumultuous, unpredictable, and capricious world of Chinese politics, Zeng seems miraculously to have avoided being purged, struggled, or criticized or being related to anyone who was. He grew up in an environment of privilege (if not wealth) and superlative connections. He is the son of a revered Red Army general, the aide to a top PLA general, and the older brother to three other mid-ranking PLA generals—who, for some reason, didn't progress quite as smoothly as their elder brother did.

**His Father's Son.**

Qinghong is the son of the late Zeng Shan, former minister of commerce who passed away at the age of 72 in April of 1972, just a few months after the purge of Lin Biao. Zeng Shan was a member of the Maoist faction during the Cultural Revolution, and in fact had been a protégé of Chairman Mao's since the earliest days of the

Jiangxi Soviet. The elder Zeng was born in 1899 in Ji'an county in isolated Jiangxi province, and was a well-known local butcher. He "joined the peasant movement in 1925" and in 1926, Zeng Shan joined the Chinese Communist Party.[89] He was named party secretary for the base area in Jishui county in the winter of 1928. In June of 1929 he was named chairman of the West Jiangxi Soviet Government. Within a year he was running the entire CCP operation in Jiangxi province under Mao Zedong,who was chairman of the CCP Front Party Committee and the Jiangxi-Fujian regional committee.

After the break between Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang (KMT) Party and the Communists in 1927, intense sweeps of Shanghai by Chiang's secret police in 1930 and 1931 made the city too hot for the Communist Party Central Committee Office, which disbanded and migrated secretly to the party's Jiangxi base areas. At this point, perhaps, Zeng Shan's pre-revolutionary career experience came in handy. As the Central Office cadres arrived in the base areas from Shanghai, Mao felt his authority eroding and in November 1930 ordered Zeng Shan to arrest 4,400 officers and men of the Red Army who were under the command of General Peng Dehuai. The arrestees were dubbed the "A-B corps" (for "anti-Bolsheviks"), and those who weren't killed during arrest were held in stockades in the hamlet of Futian. On the evening of December 7 or 8, one of Peng's subcommanders launched an unsuccessful counterattack against the prison, and in the gun-battles that persisted for days after the "Futian Incident," the hapless anti-Maoists were eliminated. For at least a year afterwards, Zeng was one of the Party's three top officials in the Jiangxi Base Area—ranking after Mao himself and General Zhu De.[90] According to one communist not murdered by Mao, "the Fu–T'ien Incident was entirely a plot on the part of Mao Tse-tung to kill off the southwest Kiangsi Leadership and to bring about his own personal counterrevolution." Zeng Shan was the manager of "Mao's machine within the Party" and served as a member of the nine-man Soviet Area Central Bureau chaired by Zhou Enlai.[91]

Zeng was Party Chairman for Jiangxi and ran the Front Party's internal affairs ministry until Chiang's Fifth Encirclement Campaign finally forced the bulk of the Communist Party's structure onto the Long March. Zhou Enlai, however, ordered Zeng Shan, Marshal

Chen Yi, and Qu Qiubai to remain in the base areas and organize a guerrilla movement. And at some point, Zeng Shan's father, Zeng Caiqin, was arrested and ultimately died in a KMT prison, and two of Zeng's brothers and their wives were killed by KMT forces.[92] At some point after the Long March, Mao dispatched Zeng Shan off to the Soviet Union where he studied at Moscow's Lenin Institute. It is possible that Zeng's reputation as Mao's hatchet-man had generated bitterness in the Party and Mao wanted to remove Zeng from the scene until the heat was off. In any event, Zeng returned to China in 1937 and was promptly sent back to the newly reconstituted East China Bureau in Southern Anhui where he was the director of the Bureau's Organization Department.

Comrade Zeng probably met his bride-to-be before the Long March. Zeng's Fujianese comrade Deng Liujin was a mere child of 20 when she joined the Communist Party in 1931, and by 1934 Zeng had appointed her director of the Fujian Party Committee Women's Affairs office. The Elder Zeng, half Hakkannese, may have been attracted to Ms. Deng by her full-blooded Hakka heritage.[93] She was attached to the Red First Front Army when the Army pulled out of Jiangxi to join the Long March in 1935. Several accounts have her as one of only 27 women to have survived the March, but by 1938 she was back in East China where she married Zeng Shan. Her first born son, Qinghong, appeared unexpectedly on August 29, 1939, as she marched through the countryside in the South Anhui Base Area.[94] Ms. Deng had no time to get back to her camp and instead sought out a peasant home in "Ding Family Mount" (*Dingjiashan*)—where she gave birth to "Li'l Ding" (*Ding-er*), her pet name for baby Zeng Qinghong.[95]

After a month, when she had recovered sufficiently from the birth at the peasant home, Comrade Deng carried her babe back to the South Anhui Base Area and presented him to a very happy General Zeng. Before long, Japanese pressure on the Base Area made it an unsuitable place for an infant, and in April 1940, Ms. Deng took the child to General Zeng's home village in Ji'an, Jiangxi, where he lived with Zeng's mother, sisters, and Zeng's first wife who had borne Zeng two other children. In the spring of 1941, Deng Liujin bore the general another son, Qinghuai, who was also sent back to the

village. One story says that Chiang Kai-shek's soldiers surrounded the village, and brutally interrogated Zeng's grandmother. Infant Qinghong escaped with some relatives and literally spent two nights in a nearby tree to avoid capture. At least four or five of Zeng's relatives had been killed by Kuomintang troops during the first Chinese Civil War—including Zeng's grandfather.[96] Female Comrade Deng must have missed her toddlers terribly, because in a short time she pleaded with the Base Area leadership—of which her husband was organization chief—to let her open a nursery for cadre children in South Anhui, and the two children returned to live with their parents.[97]

Zeng Qinghong may already have started networking in nursery school. One account reveals that Qinghong's younger brother Qinghuai shared a wet nurse with Chen Haosu, the infant son of the Chairman of the East China Bureau, General Chen Yi.[98] In any event, several biographers of Zeng assert that Zeng's mother cared for virtually all the younger children of the East China Bureau leadership in the years before the formation of the PRC.[99] Meanwhile, Zeng Shan had become a financier of sorts, having received orders from the Party Center to set up the Central China Bank which subsequently opened a branch in Shanghai. Among the young cadres he recruited for the Party's financial and banking work in East China were Fang Yi, Li Renju, Chen Guodong, Wang Daohan, Sun Yanfang, and Xu Xuehan. The Elder Zeng himself even served as a vice mayor of Shanghai until 1949. Chen Guodong, Wang Daohan, and Hu Lijiao, who all had held the top government and party posts in Shanghai in the 1980s, had been protégés of Zeng Shan at one time or another. In his financial career, Zeng *pere* was said to have had "excellent ties with Chen Yun," Deng's major rival in the elder hierarchy during the 1980s and 1990s.[100]

**Zeng's Early Career**.

When the communist bureaucracy moved to Beijing, Zeng Shan went with it to serve in a variety of upper-level party and state council jobs, eventually topping out as commerce minister. His son, Qinghong, continued to be with the scions of Chinese Communism's leading families at Beijing's 101 Middle School, graduating in 1958.[101]

He evidently was not a very serious student because, even with his father's prestige, his grades weren't good enough to gain entry to Beijing or Tsinghua university. Instead, he entered the Beijing Industrial Institute, matriculated in the automated controls department, and entered the Communist Party in his second year. His biographer, Zong Hairen, notes that "at the time he was not seen much among his fellow students."[102]

Upon graduating, probably in 1962, Zeng joined the PLA and was assigned to the PLA's 743 Unit where he served for two years probably as a missile technician. Zeng is the oldest of five children, three of whom are apparently still in the PLA. Qinghong's next brother is Qinghuai, originally a driver for the Cultural Ministry, and is now a bureau chief in charge of major national artistic performances and competition. Next is Zeng Qingyang, initially a corps level cadre in the Academy of Military Sciences and now a major general. Third is Zeng Qingyuan, once a lieutenant colonel at the Air Force Command School (*Kongjun Zhihui Xueyuan*), and now a major general serving as deputy director of the Air Force logistics department. Then comes younger sister Zeng Haisheng, recently promoted from director of the PLA personnel files office (*Jiefangjun Dangan Guan Guanzhang*) to be cadre director in the General Staff Department of the PLA, and is also a major general.[103]

In 1965 Zeng Qinghong apparently left the PLA to join the Seventh Ministry of Machine Building (also known as the Ministry of Aeronautical Industry) that had responsibility for the PLA's rockets and missiles, where he continued to work with rockets in Laboratory Six of the Second Department in the ministry's Second Institute.

Zeng was at the Seventh Ministry in August 1966 at the start of the *Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* and soon found himself in the throes of political violence. By September, the Seventh Ministry was split between the "915 Faction" from the ministry's administrative offices and the "619 Faction" dominated by engineers. By January 1968, a young missile engineer forcibly overthrew Minister Wang Bingzhang and the other senior cadres and paralyzed the ministry for nearly two years. In June 1968, a mob murdered one of China's foremost missile designers, Yao Tongbin, obliging then-Premier Zhou Enlai to intervene to protect China's top minds in rocketry.[104]

It would be interesting to know which faction Zeng joined, but whatever one it was, he paid for his sins in 1969 when he was sent off to Chikan Naval Base near Zhanjiang in Guangdong province, and thence to a production base in Hunan's Xihu county to do a year's manual labor.[105]

A year was enough. In 1970 Zeng returned to the Second Institute in the Seventh Ministry and resumed his work. He was in the Institute when his father, a long-time Mao loyalist, died in April 1972 unscathed by the GPCR. At his death, Zeng Shan was "one of the few old cadres not to have been purged by Mao in the Cultural Revolution."[106] Zeng Qinghong left the Seventh Ministry in 1973 for another technical assignment in the military's Commission on Science and Technology for the National Defense (COSTIND) office in Beijing. He apparently remained at COSTIND for 6 years until 1979.

When one of old General Zeng's comrades in arms from the Jiangxi Soviet days, General Yu Qiuli, was appointed vice premier and chairman of the State Planning Commission in 1979, Zeng Qinghong's mother interceded. She asked the vice premier to hire her son away from the COSTIND Beijing office to be his aide in the State Planning Commission. By September 1980, the transfer was finalized and Zeng Qinghong, aged 41, became Vice Premier Yu's personal secretary with the title of deputy office director in the State Energy Commission and later as chief of liaison in the Ministry of Petroleum's Foreign Affairs Office. Dr. Cheng Li, an astute chronicler of China's leadership dynamics, notes that Vice Premier Yu was one of the many in China's leadership who were proponents of having the "children of old leaders" move into top-tier positions (*tixie lao shouzhangde haizi*), and Yu's sentiments probably predisposed him to take on Qinghong as his protégé.

In July 1982, Deng Xiaoping, as chair of the CMC, ordered Vice Premier Yu back into uniform to take over the PLA's Political Department, a top military slot that also included seats on the CMC and the Politburo's Secretariat. Zeng Qinghong once again put on a uniform and followed General Yu over to the PLA High Command. Zeng soon figured out that his prospects for improvement were somewhat greater if he could return to the Petroleum Ministry than

at PLA headquarters. After assisting General Yu to settle in, Zeng asked to go back to the Ministry. Yu was amenable, and that was that. Back at the Ministry, under Yu's continuing patronage, Zeng was promoted to deputy foreign affairs chief, then to Party secretary of the South Yellow Sea Oil Corporation at a fairly senior cadre grade of bureau director (*Juji*).[107]

**In the Shanghai Party Committee**.

Zeng Qinghong's rank of Bureau Director now made him eligible for a serious provincial-level leadership job. In late 1984 and after importuning his late father's protégés at the old Central China Bank, Chen Guodong and Wang Daohan, respectively Party Chief and Mayor of Shanghai, Qinghong was appointed deputy organization chief in the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee. Within 6 months, he was promoted again to organization chief, just in time to welcome Jiang Zemin, who was appointed mayor of Shanghai that June.

Interestingly, once Zeng gained a real leadership position—and a seat on the Shanghai Party's SC—he didn't just focus on feathering his own nest, but became intent on making a reputation for himself as a reformer. Deng Xiaoping's motto for his new agenda to reform the Party was "more revolutionary, younger, more educated, and more professional" (*geminghua, nianqinghua, zhishihua, zhuanyehua*). Zeng made it his motto, and ordered sweeping new party recruitment and personnel requirements on age and education levels. He launched China's first journal for the Party organization sector, *Organizational and Personnel Information News* (*Renshi Zuzhi Xinxi Bao*). He ordered the young general editor of the paper to maintain daily contact with the Party Center's Organization Department and prepare information reports on the latest directives from an increasingly reformist party and governmental leadership. Soon, Zeng had made a reputation for himself as Shanghai's most dynamic reformer.[108]

Zeng also had a softer side—for old Maoists. When Qi Benyu was released from 18 years in Beijing's Qincheng prison in 1985 and was sent back to Shanghai to live out his days, Zeng interceded to make his life easier. Qi was a radical protégé of Mme. Jiang Qing and a Cultural Revolution Group polemicist who penned vituperative attacks on Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai and had been arrested in late

1968 and thrown in jail. In 1983, he was finally convicted in a Beijing court of "counterrevolutionary propaganda incitement to violence" and sentenced to time served plus two years.[109] When the middle-aged Qi finally wandered into Shanghai with nothing but a Beijing cadre stipend, Zeng Qinghong took up his cause, declared that the cost of living in Beijing was considerably lower than Shanghai and poor Mr. Qi, now at the ripe age of 54, was entitled to a cost of living increase. For some reason, Zeng's pseudonymous biographer Zong Hairen seems to believe that Zeng's advocacy on the part of a true Gang of Four criminal from the Cultural Revolution is evidence of a humanitarian streak, because the incident warrants nearly a full page in *Di Si Dai* and prominent mention in the Nathan-Gilley book.[110] It could just as easily demonstrate Zeng's continued affinity for Maoist loyalties. But that may be another story.

In any event, Zeng got along famously in Shanghai with his boss, Party Chief Rui Xingwen, and after a year Rui promoted Zeng to be a deputy Party secretary for the Shanghai Party Committee (with oversight of organization and propaganda work), joining the more senior deputy Party secretaries Wu Bangguo and Huang Ju, both native Shanghainese. Both Rui and Zeng were outsiders, neither could speak the city's distinctive dialect, and the two men tended to look out for each other. At the time, Zeng did not come into close contact with his future patron Jiang Zemin, because Zeng worked the Party structure and Jiang was mayor of the city's governmental organs.

Finally, in the summer of 1987, as the city prepared its delegation to the Reform-or-Retrenchment 13th Party Congress in Beijing, Jiang and Zeng began to consult closely on who would be in the delegation, and how to prepare Jiang to take over the Shanghai Party Secretary slot—and a seat on the Central Politburo.[111] In the interregnum between 1987's 13th Congress and 1989's Tiananmen incident, Zeng oversaw Shanghai's newspapers and media—and for a while was particularly fond of Shanghai's edgy, outspoken, and market-oriented *World Economic Journal* which he saw as a useful tool to ingratiate the city with the Reformist Faction in Beijing headed by Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang.[112]

But by the end of April 1989, after the death of the sainted

(but ousted) former Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang sparked massive demonstrations in support of drastic political reforms, the Party Center had split. Zeng Qinghong was in Beijing sounding out his contacts in the military, the party and the media, and came to the conclusion that the demonstrations would soon be labeled as "counterrevolutionary turmoil." He sent word back to Shanghai that his favorite newspaper, the *World Economic Herald*, had to be watched. On April 20, Zeng and Shanghai city's propaganda chief, Mme. Chen Zhili (now state councilor and education minister) met with the *Herald's* editor-in-chief, Qin Benli, demanding that the municipal party have the right to clear articles calling for a reassessment of the "mistaken" purge of the late Hu Yaobang. Although Qin agreed to delete problematic portions, the April 22 issue of the *Herald* included the offending paragraphs.[113] Sure enough, on April 24, Jiang Zemin announced to a plenary meeting of several thousand Shanghai Party cadres that the *Herald* was closed for investigation and Qin Benli had been removed from his position. The *Herald's* transgression was to publish a lengthy and laudatory report on a symposium entitled "Comrade Hu Yaobang Still Lives in our Hearts" attended by 40 of Shanghai's most noted scholars.[114]

Shanghai Mayor and Party Secretary Jiang Zemin, working off Zeng's reports from Beijing, took immediate steps to defuse growing demonstrations in the city and ordered that all city officials "support order." The move drew Deng Xiaoping's attention and convinced Deng that Jiang was a capable administrator. On May 21, when the Deng family convened a meeting in Beijing of the so-called "Eight Immortals,"[115] Chen Yun and Li Xiannian both recommended that Jiang replace Zhao Ziyang as general secretary, a nomination that Deng finally confirmed on May 27, a week before the June 4 massacre at Tiananmen. Zeng Qinghong's part in Jiang's rise was the deciding factor.[116]

**Jiang Moves to Beijing.**

When Jiang finally moved his offices to Beijing, the stories go, he only brought one Shanghai aide with him, one of the Shanghai Communist Party Committee's deputy secretaries, Zeng Qinghong. To be perfectly honest, Jiang hadn't a clue about how politics

worked in Beijing, while Zeng had his father's friends, his high-school buddies, and fellow cadre-kid connections to serve as his eyes and ears in the capital. Jiang was reluctant to take his position as the Communist Party's new general secretary too seriously lest he run up against a phalanx of resistance. So Zeng Qinghong, a lofty man in the Shanghai Party structure, was taken over to the Central Office of the CCP and introduced to his new boss, Central Office Director Wen Jiabao. Wen himself was in a precarious position and was seen as part of the disgraced pre-Tiananmen Zhao Ziyang clique. Still, Wen Jiabao was amenable to according his new deputy senior protocolary rank (over another sitting deputy office director), while keeping Zeng's duties light enough to give him time to work with Jiang Zemin.[117]

Zeng was also given responsibility for Central Office personnel issues, and it seems that he was quite happy with this key portfolio. Given that Zeng's father was adept at party organization work, it is not too much of a stretch to imagine that Zeng inherited a knack for it. Did he talk with his father about his work? Did his mother's skill at networking influence him? Did his father's friends give him advice? Probably all of the above. Zeng's biographer Zong Hairen says:

> Qinghong, who didn't go for reading books, found himself forming a deep interest in the intrigues of the Ming and Qing courts, and read vast volumes of Ming and Qing files, focusing on the lessons of how to protect oneself, attack the enemy, how to gain the upper hand in complex situations, resolve contradictions, how to consolidate one's power, and how to advance oneself a step higher when one's base is consolidated.[118]

There was a problem with Jiang Zemin, however. His first three springs in Beijing were rather passive as Premier Li Peng took the lead in economic policy, making "Rectification and Control" (*zhili zhengdun*) the guiding catch-phrase, eclipsing Deng Xiaoping's "Reform and Opening" (*gaige kaifang*). Nonetheless, as Deng Xiaoping continued his habit of wintering in Shanghai and in the winter/springs of 1989-90 and 1990-91, Zeng took over all advance work for Deng's Shanghai vacations. From his office in Beijing, Zeng arranged for Deng's visit to the flat rice paddies of Shanghai's

Pudong development zone on January 21, 1991, where he got a briefing from Shanghai's mayor Zhu Rongji on plans to develop the real estate into a financial and commercial base. Maintaining some influence on Shanghai's media, Zeng arranged for the city's *Liberation Daily* to publish a series of lengthy articles entitled "Reform and Opening need a new way of thinking."[119] In attempt to keep up the momentum of his reforms, Deng made a series of tours in the summer and fall of 1991 to Hubei and Jiangxi where he was quoted several times as vowing that "anyone who doesn't reform must step down from power" *(shei bu gaige, shei jiu xiatai*).[120]

The following year, when Deng Xiaoping made his now-famous "Southern Progress" (*Nanxun*)[121] of Guangdong's special economic zones, Zeng saw to it that Deng's visit concluded in Shanghai. Zeng, at least, seemed to sense whither the wind was blowing, even if Jiang was a bit timid to get involved. During the *Nanxun*, the key meeting was an informal gathering of top PLA leaders in the Zhuhai Special Economic Zone for an audience with Deng, including CMC vice chairman (and State President) Yang Shangkun, Politburo Politics and Law Czar (and Jiang rival) Qiao Shi, the PLA's senior military commander Liu Huaqing, himself a CMC vice chairman. Also present were CMC Secretary General General Yank Baibing, four other generals from the PLA high command, and the commanders of the top military regions. Missing from this meeting was CMC chairman Jiang Zemin himself![122]

The spring and summer of 1992 proved to be the turning point for Jiang Zemin, whom Deng Xiaoping considered weak on reform and more afraid of "peaceful evolution" than of China's faltering economy. Zeng could see trouble brewing a mile away, and hastily arranged a series of meetings between Jiang and Premier Li Peng to convince them that Deng's handwriting on the wall would spell the downfall of both if they didn't mend their ways. Over a span of several months, Jiang and Li issued over 20 articles from both the Party Center and the State Council, urging the entire bureaucracies of both to study Deng's speeches in the South and boldly implement "Reform and Opening." It was a 180-degree turn for both men, which gave them some breathing space to prepare for the 14th Party Congress scheduled for October.

With Jiang and Li now toeing the Reformist line, Zeng began working on "turning the spear point at Deng's own supporters."[123] A quick survey of the situation led Zeng to conclude that the only way Jiang could survive the 14th Congress preparations would be to engineer the removal of Deng's closest comrade-in-arms, President Yang Shangkun. But how?

**"The Hundred Generals List."**

President Yang Shangkun's influence in the party came from his service as Deng's top aide in the Communist Party leadership in the 1950s and 60s. His influence in the army came from his close ties to the families of revered PLA generals Liao Hansheng, Xiao Ke, and He Long, all of whom had suffered or been killed in the Cultural Revolution. With Deng's rehabilitation in 1977 and the consolidation of his power from 1979 through 1982, Yang maneuvered to get the scions of the old generals' families into top PLA posts. And for a decade thereafter, Yang Shangkun and his younger half-brother, Yang Baibing, began to use their influence to affect general officer promotions.

Then came the break Zeng Qinghong needed. In the summer of 1992, Yang Baibing (then secretary general of the CMC) prepared a list of 100 general officer promotions that had to be rubber-stamped by CMC Chairman Jiang. The promotees were generally supporters of the Yang brothers,[124] and their movement into ever higher PLA command positions would consolidate the Yangs' grip on the military.

Normally, Jiang would have felt obliged to pass on them, but Zeng prevailed on him to hold up for a few days and seek counsel of a top general who was not a fan of the Yang faction, General Yu Yongbo, vice director of the PLA's General Political Department. General Yu was director of the Nanjing Military Region political department when Jiang and Zeng were in the Shanghai Party leadership, and Yu was considered Jiang's sole ally in the CMC.

When General Yu saw the 100-name promotion list, he was dumbstruck. CMC Secretary General Yang Baibing had drawn up the list and had the temerity to submit it to General Liu Huaqing

(then the top ranking military officer) and then to CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin without running the names through the PLA's political department for vetting. Yu told Jiang and Zeng that it was clear that the names were all "pro-Yang," and the action was designed to "completely supplant Deng Xiaoping's men in the central military organs with Yang family horse-holders."[125]

Zeng Qinghong took this information to two of his "princeling" comrades (Yu Zhengsheng and Liu Jing) who had solid ties with Deng's son, Pufang.[126] These two friends arranged for Zeng Qinghong to meet face-to-face with Deng Pufang in the midst of a whispering campaign in Beijing suggesting that "Yang Shangkun seeks to replace Deng Xiaoping," "Yang wants to be CMC Chairman," and "Yang Baibing will launch a bloodless coup." Whether Zeng Qinghong was behind this rumor mongering is conjectural, but the message Zeng passed to Deng Pufang was that "Jiang wasn't disloyal to Deng, Jiang had been muzzled by Yang Shangkun." Zeng insisted that "Jiang Zemin was wholly loyal to the Old Man."[127]

Zeng then explained the problem of the 100-man promotion list, and warned that the Yang family's power was growing. Zeng also suggested that Yang was considering the rehabilitation of disgraced General Secretary Zhao Ziyang. This, he said, would be a disaster and would be an admission that Deng Xiaoping had been wrong about the June 4 decision.

Pufang then arranged a meeting for Jiang Zemin and General Yu Yongbo to brief his father directly about their concerns. When they arrived, General Liu Huaqing was sitting at Deng's side, and the two men said they were ready to hear the Chairman Jiang's concerns. At the end of the conversation, General Liu nodded sagely and confirmed to Deng the substance of the complaints, that CMC Chairman Jiang had been frozen out of virtually all CMC decisionmaking, and that the Yang Brothers had been acting suspiciously.[128]

All this transpired behind President Yang Shangkun's back, and he must have been getting uneasy. A few days later, Yang asked Jiang what had happened to the promotion list, and was startled to hear Jiang was "holding it up subject to Deng Xiaoping's guidance."

As whispers of Yang's troubles with the "Hundred Generals" promotion list spread among the leadership, former Chinese

president Li Xiannian (whom Yang Shangkun had replaced when Li "became too old"—despite the fact that Li was only a year older than Yang) was seized with an acute bout of *schadenfreude*. Other elders, including Chen Yun and Peng Zhen were simply delighted at the Yang brothers' predicament. They freely offered their separate advice to Deng that the Yang Family's scheming "was unhelpful to [army] unity." Deng's old Third Field Army comrade and former defense minister Zhang Aiping urged Deng to put his foot down and then went directly to Jiang Zemin to offer his wholehearted support.[129]

Deng still was disinclined to forsake his loyal friend Shangkun, but a steady drumbeat of criticism and a heavy lobbying campaign from the elders obliged him to set up a "leading small group to prepare for the 14th Party Congress" that would include Jiang, Li Peng, Song Ping (a mentor to both Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao), and Party elder Bo Yibo.

When the backroom smoke had cleared, the Yang brothers had been removed from all PLA positions. And in the end, the only officer on the 100-names list to be promoted was general Xiong Guangkai—who has ever since been a sworn follower of the Jiang camp. To call the dismantlement of the "Yang Family Army" a victory for Jiang Zemin or Li Peng, says Zong Hairen, "is to misunderstand what happened." Zeng Qinghong orchestrated the effort on Jiang's behalf, and "without Zeng to put together this enterprise, it would never have happened, and as a result the Jiang-Zeng relationship cannot be supplanted by any other."[130]

**The Chen Xitong Affair.**

Jiang Zeming was acutely aware that getting through the 14th Party Congress unscathed and visiting confusion upon his enemies was Zeng's doing (although Jiang's victory in getting himself named as the successor "generational 'core'" to Mao and Deng was probably Hu Jintao's doing). But Jiang still had a number of formidable rivals and foes in the leadership, all vying for Deng's blessing and all trying to maintain the loyalties of their own factions.

One such figure was Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong who had long used his position to ingratiate himself both to Deng and to Deng's

elder comrade and chief rival in the ideological debate, Chen Yun. Chen Xitong had become such a force in the capital, Zong Hairen says, "that Jiang Zemin's writ didn't run in Beijing City."[131]

With the *Nanxun* of early 1992, as Chen Xitong quickly got on Deng's good side by arranging for the old man to tour Beijing's Capital Steel Factory in late spring where Deng gave a speech praising vice premier Zhu Rongji for "really understanding economics" and supporting Capital Steel chief Zhou Guanjun's reformist innovations at the plant. It was only after Deng had gone that Mayor Chen notified the Politburo (of which he was a member) of Deng's speech and issued press releases under the Beijing Party Committee's name. Two years later, in 1994, Chen Xitong was quoted as questioning Jiang's authority well after Jiang had been named "Core of the Third Generation" at 1992's 14th Party Congress. "The core is not bestowed," Chen reportedly told Beijing cadres, "it is something you have to live up to, you have to rely on everyone to support you."[132]

For Jiang Zemin, this was the last straw. Chen had to go, and once again Zeng was put on the case. He set aside his General Office duties and began to study the problem—which turned out to be easier than the Yang Family affair. Chen Xitong, it turned out, was notoriously corrupt. Zeng began to collect reports on Chen's behavior, as well as stories that Chen's top aides, vice mayors Zhang Baifa and Wang Baosen, regularly took bribes. After a while, Zeng began dispatching agents to report on every speech Chen Xitong gave, every meeting he had, and every inspection tour he made.[133]

At last, Zeng discovered a massive corruption case in the East China metropolis of Wuxi whose threads led back to Beijing. Despite "seven degrees of separation," the web of corruption was traced to the Beijing mayor's doorstep. Big-ticket real estate deals, billion-yuan insider trading, and a host of other unsavory practices enmeshed Capital Steel's chief Zhou Beifang—with the money coming from one of the world's wealthiest men, Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing. Li Ka-shing seems to have been well-connected with Jiang Zeming's rivals in Beijing—but had little use for Jiang, probably because Jiang had little influence over municipal affairs in the capital.

That was all well and good from Zeng Qinghong's point of view. As Zeng was mulling his catch, another fish swam into his net. Deng

Zhifang, Deng Xiaoping's younger son, was involved in several shady business deals with Capital Steel and Li Ka-shing's real estate empire, including a land development operation in Hong Kong called "Capital Steel Four Corners."

This all began to mesh nicely with a growing scandal surrounding Li Ka-shing's shakedown of McDonald's Restaurants, which happened to occupy a prime bit of real estate on Wangfujing Street in bustling downtown Beijing. Li's land developers lusted after the land for a mega-mall shopping site to be called "Oriental Plaza" and by liberally greasing several very influential palms—including some in the Deng Xiaoping family and no doubt Chen Xitong's as well—Li Ka-shing's land developers persuaded the Beijing municipal government to renege on a 20-year land lease that McDonald's had on the Wangfujing parcel. McDonald's, accustomed to dealing with crooks worldwide, knew how to protect itself. They went to the press, and behind the scenes to the Chinese Communist Party's corruption watchdogs and blew the whistle. By the end of 1994, the McDonald's affair had become a major embarrassment for the Chinese government, with senior trade officials pleading that McDonald's would be well-compensated.[134]

But the dice were cast—snake-eyes for Chen Xitong. The Central Discipline Inspection Commission's investigation into McDonald's scandal and Chen Xitong's Capital Steel connections sealed his fate. Chen was detained on April 26, 1995, and the next day senior Poliburo member Hu Jintao announced the purge to a gathering of Beijing municipal officials. As Jiang's biographer described the scene, on one side of Hu sat discipline czar Wei Jianxing, and on the other sat Zeng Qinghong. "If there was any doubt that Jiang was behind the move, it was dispelled by the prominent and unexplained appearance of Zeng, who was called a 'responsible person from the relevant central department'."[135]

No doubt the Deng family was also somewhat shaken. And Zeng personally reassured them that China's new leader would take measures to keep their black sheep out of trouble. Zeng wrestled with "whether or not to arrest Zhou Beifang, and if Zhou was arrested would that implicate members of Deng Xiaoping's family?" "How to dissect the Zhou Beifang-Deng Zhifang relationship?" These issues were all handled by Zeng Qinghong and not by the party

investigation team. Zeng was said to have "called on Deng Pufang several times, and even personally interviewed Deng Zhifang." In the end, Zhou Beifang was in jail, while Deng Zhifang sold all his shares in "Capital Steel Four Corners" for one yuan, and "the Deng family continued to live in peace."[136] Zeng even saw to it that the Deng family's retainer, General Wang Ruilin, was put on the CMC, and Jiang's ally from Fujian, Jia Qinglin, was transferred to Beijing to replace Chen Xitong as mayor.

But Zeng's real stroke of genius was to take advantage of the Chen Xitong purge to consolidate Jiang's power in the provinces. Zeng proposed a five-point program of political oversight that involved regularizing Central Party inspection missions to the provinces, permitting all provincial units to report discipline violations of other units at an equal level, requiring that all provincial discipline inspectors immediately inform the next highest level of all discipline complaints they receive, making discipline inspection units part of all personnel appointments processes, and finally, requiring that all personnel moves get the approval of the discipline inspection unit at the next higher level of the party bureaucracy.

The effect was to put the entire governing cadre of all 32 provinces on notice that Jiang would be watching personnel appointments very closely—through Zeng Qinghong, and over the coming years, Zeng's reform resulted in the arrests of hundreds of upper level officials, dozens of vice-governor level officers, and in the case of Cheng Kejie, a vice chairman of the NPC, his trial conviction and execution for his corruption when he was Party secretary of Guangxi. In the meantime, Zeng seemed to show due solicitude of the views of the Deng Xiaoping family—which, no doubt, remains eternally grateful. The purge of Chen Xitong demonstrated that Jiang was ready and willing to play hardball in the cutthroat jungle of Beijing politics, and Zeng Qinghong was Jiang's strategist.[137]

**National Security and Foreign Affairs.**

There is no question that economics, agriculture, and finance were the thorniest problems facing China in the 1990s, and they were issues in which Zeng Qinghong had no expertise. Moreover, should the country suffer an economic downturn, no doubt Zeng Qinghong

wanted Jiang Zemin to have a plausible deniability of responsibility. Instead, fault for a sputtering economy could be laid at Zhu Rongji's and Wen Jiabao's feet, and they could be sacrificed.

On the other hand, Jiang consolidated his power base in the military. The episode with the "hundred generals" promotion list certainly taught Zeng Qinghong that there was considerable potential to leverage general officer promotions into influence with the PLA. Military budgets, equipment technology, procurement strategies, personnel downsizing, and reorganization of military units into efficient fighting machines were all issues that had to be addressed by the CMC, of which Jiang was Chairman. And these were issues that could be addressed fairly easily by throwing money at them. Of course, these issues would be much more easily addressed if the PLA were to have a specific mission to focus on.

*Taiwan*. By December 1990, defense against the Soviet hegemon had disappeared as a mission. And Zeng Qinghong no doubt set about coming up with a mission that could crystallize Jiang's authority in the PLA. By the end of 1991, Taiwan appeared to be that mission. Jiang authorized the purchase of 48 Soviet-built SU-27 jet fighters and signed options for 24 more. The sale sparked an American election year decision to sell 150 F-16 fighters to Taiwan, and a French commercial decision to sell 60 Mirage 2000-5 fighters to Taiwan as well. This demonstration that the Western democracies were still committed to supporting Taiwan in the aftermath of the Tiananmen crisis inclined Beijing to follow a two-pronged strategy of wooing Taiwan with kindliness and accelerating the purchase of advanced Soviet weaponry. In November 1992, China acknowledged the so-called "One China, different interpretations" formula (except that Taiwan didn't immediately respond with an interpretation), and in April 1993 Taiwanese representatives met with Chinese counterparts in Singapore to start the so-called "Koo-Wang Talks."

Because national security and Taiwan are central to military policy, Jiang and Zeng gravitated toward a strategy of seizing the high-ground in those areas. Early on, Jiang sought to place his loyalists in key foreign affairs slots, and Zeng apparently took on the job as Jiang's alter-ego in Taiwan affairs, Hong Kong and national security strategies.

Zeng may have coveted control of Taiwan Affairs because up to 1992, Taiwan had been the province of Jiang's nemesis, President Yang Shangkun. Indeed, Taiwan's President Lee Teng-hui considered his contacts with Beijing via "secret envoys" Su Chih-ch'eng and Cheng Shu-min to have been a direct link to Yang Shangkun via Yang's envoy Yang Side.[138] The contacts between Lee Teng-hui and Yang Shangkun were intermediated by a Hong Kong-based "Qigong Master" cum Zen philosopher named Nan Huaijin who had a considerable following among neo-Confucian elites in both Taiwan and the PRC. In early 1988, Master Nan claimed very high level interest in the Chinese communist hierarchy in establishing a direct channel of communications to Taiwan's new president, and over the following 6 years hosted nine separate meetings between emissaries from the presidents of Taiwan and China. This channel facilitated the opening of public contacts between Taipei and Beijing via unofficial instrumentalities deputized to discuss practical ways to deal with notarial, immigration, criminal, and other administrative issues. But those talks were not authorized to discuss political differences. Politics, however, were the subject of the secret meetings.

As Taiwan had become dominant focus of the PLA's mission after the fall of the Soviet Union, Zeng and Jiang Zemin may have presumed that President Yang Shangkun somehow gained leverage in the PLA through his influence on Taiwan policy. By the end of 1992, although Yang Shangkun had lost his authority in the military and Master Nan had lost the honor of hosting the secret cross-Strait liaisons (much to Master Nan's chagrin), Yang still managed to maintain his presence in Taiwan affairs by continuing the contacts with Lee Teng-hui via another aide, Xu Mingzhen. Throughout these early talks, Taiwan's President doggedly pursued the idea of signing a cross-Strait nonaggression pact as the first step to opening direct transportation links between Taiwan and China. After Jiang Zemin succeeded Yang Shangkun as China's president in 1993, Jiang's representative, former Shanghai mayor Wang Daohan, continued as the main interlocutor with Lee Teng-hui's secret envoy, but Xu Mingzhen still reported to Yang and other Jiang rivals.

In January 1994, Wang Daohan informed his Taiwan counterpart that "Jiang Zemin had named a new representative and hoped that

Su Chih-ch'eng would meet with him." But Wang declined to say just who this "new representative" was. President Lee was obliged to send his junior envoy, Ms. Cheng, to Beijing to learn the identity of the new man, and "after being lead down dark alley after dark alley, she finally came upon a room in which she met the new counterpart, the director of the Central Office of the Chinese Communist Party, Zeng Qinghong." Zeng informed her that "henceforth, the two sides need not use any other channel for direct liaison."[139]

Taiwan's President Lee Teng-hui was now confident that he had a direct line to China's President Jiang Zemin and eagerly agreed to the new contact. Zeng's first meeting with Su Chih-ch'eng came on the not-very-auspicious date of April 4, 1994, after much haggling about the venue, at a discreet villa in the sleepy Zhuhai Special Economic Zone abutting the equally sleepy Portuguese enclave of Macau. Su presented Zeng with a rustic ceramic with a crystalline glaze crafted by one of Taiwan's foremost artists. In return, Zeng presented Su with a gigantic flower vase that was so big that it had to be FedEx-ed to Taiwan a week later. Lee's biography doesn't say what else happened at that first meeting, but confirms that Lee agreed that his emissary could "have deeper discussions" at their next meeting, which took place on November 25, 1994, again in Zhuhai.

Again, Su Chih-ch'eng proposed a peace agreement, but Zeng demurred that a peace pact "is state-to-state behavior." Su then explored the idea of a three-way joint-venture cross-Strait airline service, with Taiwan and China each holding 45 percent of the shares and Singapore holding a 10 percent share to avoid any political implications. Again, Zeng demurred.

Then Zeng broached the idea of arranging for a "spontaneous meeting" (*buqi er dai*) between Lee Teng-hui and Jiang Zemin at some "third place"—which, however, could not be an international forum (*guoji changhe*). Both men agreed that this should be further explored, and would help stabilize the situation in the Taiwan Strait.

On the eve of the announcement of President Jiang's "Eight Points" (*Jiang Ba Dian*) on Taiwan policy just before Lunar New Year in January 1995, word got back to Taipei that it would mark a turn in relations and hoped that Taiwan would respond with goodwill.

The word, unfortunately, didn't get to Lee's aides in time, and the next day Taipei dismissed Jiang's "Eight Points" as "nothing new." By the end of the Lunar New Year celebrations, President Lee issued his own observation that "the Eight Points are worth our careful attention." Within a week, Lee had prepared his "Lee's Six Conditions" (*Li Liu Tiao*) as a concrete response to the "Eight Points" in hopes of reminding the PRC side "to be a bit more attentive to Taiwan's sensitivities."

In March 1995, Su Chih-ch'eng again met Zeng Qinghong face-to-face in Zhuhai where he gave Zeng a head's-up that President Lee was planning visits to the Middle East and the United States, and hoped that the other side could countenance the trips. "This is something we must do, and must do successfully." At the time, the PRC believed that there was no possibility that the United States would approve Lee's visit—after all, Foreign Minister Qian Qichen had already reported to the Party Center that the U.S. administration had turned down Lee's request. So Zeng's response to Su was "you have your own position, we have our position, so when the time comes, if there's to be criticism from our side, we'll still have to criticize" (*dao shihou piping, hai shi yao pipingde*).

It was to be the last meeting with Zeng. On April 4, 1995, Lee Teng-hui completed his visit to the United Arab Emirates and Jordan. At the end of his visit to Amman, Lee's motorcade drove out to Mount Nebo overlooking Galilee. Lee trudged to the top of Nebo's ridge and looked into the ancient land of Canaan and stared quietly into the Promised Land. He returned to Taipei the same day, and told the waiting press that

> I saw the place where Moses died on Mount Moses. I know the story. Where did Moses and Joshua go after their departure? It is unclear. Later on, Joshua went to the Jordan River to develop the area and rebuild his homeland. We must understand two things in this segment of history. First, it is about the place where Moses died; this is not clearly mentioned in history. People say that he died on the mountain. Second, the mountain is a nice place. Looking down from it, we can see the Dead Sea; looking across, we can see the entire area occupied by the Jordan River plain. It is a very interesting place. I approach this matter from various angles, not from biblical or religious viewpoints.[140]

Zeng Qinghong was good to his word. The PRC press and the PRC-controlled press in Hong Kong published a number of scathing articles haranguing Lee for his messianic delusions, and excoriating his independentist proclivities. And when Lee actually did manage to wangle an invitation to speak at Cornell University and gain White House approval (announced on May 21), the Chinese reaction was initially confined to propaganda hot air. In fact, the chief of the PRC State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office, Tang Shubei, arrived in Taipei on May 24, to do advance preparations for a scheduled visit of PRC negotiator Wang Daohan.

But it is doubtful that the Lee Teng-hui visit to Cornell in June 1995 had anything to do with the interruption of the "secret envoy" channel with Zeng Qinghong. Zeng's meetings with Su Chih-ch'eng were halted in April—apparently because their existence was leaked by pro-China legislator Yok Mu-ming during a session of Taiwan's Legislative Yuan. When news appeared in the Taiwan press, Su received notification from "the other side" that "hereafter, it is inconvenient to see each other." Legislator Yok seemed to have had ties with the Yang Shangkun "Anti-Jiang Faction" in Beijing, and according to the Lee Teng-hui biography, the leak was inspired by their desire to undermine Jiang—aided and abetted by pro-China politicians in Taiwan who wanted to wound Lee.[141]

There are also rumors that Jiang himself was criticized by the PLA for allowing the Lee visit to Cornell to take place and for being "soft-hearted" on the Taiwan issue.[142] Zeng apparently used the incident to discredit the foreign ministry bureaucracy and, in a deft move designed to protect foreign minister Qian Qichen from excessive attacks, Zeng coopted Qian into becoming a pliant member of the Jiang camp.[143]

China responded to the Taiwan president's visit to Cornell University in June 1995 with a series of missile tests in the Taiwan Strait in late July that closed the Strait to international merchant shipping for nearly 2 weeks and obliged an estimated 14,000 cargo ships to be re-routed around Taiwan's eastern coast. It is uncertain whether Zeng Qinghong had a hand in the decision to go ahead with the missile tests. One might expect that it would take perhaps two weeks from decision-time to launch for such a symbolic show

of force, and if so, Zeng and Jiang Zemin were on an official visit of Europe during the time the missile threats were being debated. It is possible, therefore, that the PLA hatched the idea, and ran it through the CMC bureaucracy with only minimal involvement from CMC chairman Jiang and his closest advisor. Similarly, in March 1996, after weeks of signaling that Beijing was unhappy with the prospect of 4 more years for incumbent Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, the PLA launched at least three (though some news report say four) missile tests into the Taiwan Strait which hit waters just a few miles off Taiwan's coast. Again, international maritime traffic was disrupted. But, again, it is not clear that Zeng had anything to do with the missile tests.

Nonetheless, it seems likely that Zeng Qinghong has been intimately involved in all other aspects of Taiwan policy from the time of the "secret envoy" meetings until this day. By September 1996, it was widely assumed that Zeng had been named to the "Central Leading Group for Taiwan Affairs." Jiang headed the Group which also included Minister of Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen, Zeng Qinghong (as director of the CCP General Office), Wang Zhaoguo (director of the Taiwan Affairs Office under the State Council), Xiong Guangkai (assistant chief of the PLA General Staff), Jia Chunwang (Minister of State Security). When Zeng joined the Taiwan leading group, the Hong Kong press revealed that the leading group decided to "slightly readjust its policy"—primarily with regards to the impact of the PLA on Taiwan policy. Said one Hong Kong paper: after reviewing "both the positive and negative impact of the PLA military exercises during [Taiwan's] presidential election period, a new framework has thus been established for the policy toward Taiwan."

Zeng's appearance on the Taiwan Group was not a surprise. No doubt Zeng identified Taiwan policy as critical to the PLA's mission and was determined that Jiang Zemin must maintain control of the Taiwan Group in order to enhance his leverage over the generals.[144] At a meeting of the Central Leading Group for Taiwan Affairs in August of 1998, Zeng was appointed to "take charge of the routine work of the group," and Wang Zhaoguo was reportedly "relieved from his post as the secretary general of the group" when "the Central Committee decided to abolish the post of the secretary general of the

group."[145] The Taiwan press was certain that Zeng would take over the day-to-day running of Taiwan work when the Politburo name list for the 16th Party Congress was published.[146] And, judging from the names of those on the Taiwan Work Group when a more or less authoritative list was published in December 2003, Zeng certainly was in a position to exert control on the group—because they were mostly Shanghai factionalists.[147]

Most analysts see Zeng's fingerprints on Taiwan policy, but it is evident that Zeng hopes to keep his name out of it. As the grass-roots movement among Taiwan's people for ever greater "national identity" spreads, Taiwan policy now has the potential to turn into a major disaster for China. True to form, Zeng is perfectly happy with Hu Jintao as chairman of Taiwan affairs, and hence liable for blame if the policies backfire. But Zeng wants his own people running Taiwan decisionmaking.[148]

*Hong Kong*. Jiang Zemin not only trusted Zeng Qinghong's instincts in domestic affairs and Taiwan, but from a fairly early stage, Zeng seemed to have Jiang's ear on Hong Kong's transition. Hong Kong, of course, was Deng Xiaoping's crowning foreign policy achievement and, until Deng's passing in February 1997, Jiang was reluctant to make any obvious move to bring Hong Kong policy under his direct control by assigning it to Zeng. Nonetheless, as early as January 1994, Zeng, as director of the CCP Central Committee's General Office, reported to Deng that two opinion polls in major urban areas and cities showed that, while "99 percent of the people supported the Central Government's policy on the Hong Kong issue," there were still "some people who thought that the central government was not tough enough toward Britain" and "even criticized the central government for being 'rightist' on this issue." Deng reacted defensively, and called on the PRC's "Preliminary Work Committee" on Hong Kong negotiations to "quicken its work and . . . work in a down-to-earth manner." Britain's political attempts would not be allowed to succeed, Deng said, "because Hong Kong belongs to China."[149]

Deng also acquiesced in Jiang's selection of Hong Kong tycoon C.H. Tung as the territory's first post-British leader, a choice that Zeng Qinghong no doubt had a hand in. In the early 1980s, when Tung's "Orient Overseas Line" ran into financial troubles, the

Chinese government bailed it out. Hence, Tung was beholden to Beijing. Tung, who spent his youth working in the Shanghai headquarters of his father's extensive shipping company, could speak Shanghainese, had impressed Jiang as a loyal Chinese subject, and has since been considered a Jiang man.

After Deng's death, Zeng ensured that all the "advance" planning of Jiang's central role in the July 1, 1997, handover ceremonies required his personal attention. Ten days before the reversion, State Council Secretary-General Luo Gan and Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office Director Lu Ping were obliged to complete their consultations in Hong Kong and return to Beijing, and three days later, Zeng, in his capacity as director of the General Office of the CCP Central Committee, arrived in Hong Kong to personally manage the details of Jiang's visit. Zeng Qinghong informed the Hong Kong government that he was the senior Chinese official responsible for the Central Party Security Bureau and proceeded to review Jiang's motorcade routes, protective coverage, guest lists, speeches, hotel and housing for the delegation, and all information related to foreign participants in the festivities.[150]

For the next 6 years, Zeng apparently maintained considerable, albeit discreet, influence over Hong Kong policy. Zeng's prominence in Hong Kong affairs became visible after the Hong Kong government's attempt to push through harsh sedition laws (known as "Article 23" legislation) prompted a series of gigantic street protests beginning with a march that drew more than 500,000 people on July 1. Within days, the Politburo had convened an "enlarged" meeting to study the situation. By July 6, reports out of Hong Kong indicated that there was a split in the Chinese leadership over how to handle the situation.[151] On July 14, Beijing's official English language newspaper *China Daily* slammed the demonstrations and the official Xinhua news agency insisted that Hong Kong must go through with legislative consideration of the Sedition Law "as scheduled."[152]

All evidence pointed to Beijing's propaganda arms gearing up for major pressure on Hong Kong's government to push through the legislation. The Politburo's Propaganda Chief was Liu Yunshan—a protégé of Jiang Zemin's and Zeng Qinghong's.[153] Meanwhile, James Tien of Hong Kong's pro-business (and Pro-Beijing) Liberal Party, and a key legislative ally of the SAR's Chief Executive C.H. Tung,

made an emergency visit to Beijing on July 3 and was immediately seen by Liu Yandong, the head of the Chinese Communist Party United Front Work Department and "a known protege of President Hu Jintao."[154]

There was no question that the CCP Center—under Hu Jintao—found it necessary to open an alternative dialogue channel in Hong Kong instead of relying solely on Tung. In a move that further undermined C. H. Tung (presumably to the delight of the Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao faction), James Tien resigned from the Hong Kong SAR Executive Council. Tien indicated he was getting signals from Beijing that the PRC government wanted a "hands-off" stance in an effort to assuage democratic sentiments in the Hong Kong public. The Chinese government, he said, had no particular interest in either the "content or the timing" of the Article 23 legislation.[155]

The information dissonance coming from Beijing alarmed Tung, who flew to Beijing on July 19 to brief the leadership on the situation in Hong Kong. After meetings with C. H. Tung, President Hu and Premier Wen issued statements of somewhat faint praise for the SAR chief, and Hu Jingtao even directed Tung to "once again seek the advice and consent of the general public" (*zaici xunwen gongzhong*) on the Article 23 legislation. Hu also warned against "foreign powers or other outside forces interfering in Hong Kong's internal affairs." Premier Wen Jiabao vowed to speed up "arrangements to establish even closer economic and trade ties between the interior and Hong Kong" in an effort to improve the SAR's stagnant markets.[156] But Wen Jiabao's comment to the press, that he "as usual" (*yiran*) had full faith in Hong Kong, and its government "with C. H. Tung as head" was commented upon as a weak endorsement of the embattled SAR head.[157]

Tung also met with Jiang Zemin, and interestingly, Vice President Zeng Qinghong, the "influential ally of the former president" (as the *Washington Post* put it) participated in that meeting, not in Tung's session with President Hu.[158] On July 22, Hong Kong's *Economic Daily* reported that Vice President Zeng had taken over the central task force on Hong Kong policy from State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan, fearing that Beijing's handling of the territory's affairs was being conducted at too low a level.[159] Shortly afterwards, a "well-placed

source" in Beijing confided to a Singapore reporter that "Vice-President Zeng Qinghong, now head of a special task force on Hong Kong, agreed the top priority was to stabilise the situation."[160]

By September 16, Zeng had made an emergency inspection tour of South China to explore ways of "deepening" the economic interdependence of Hong Kong and neighboring Guangdong province. He then "summoned" Hong Kong's beleaguered Chief Executive, C. H. Tung, to an audience in the East China city of Hangzhou where Zeng was "vacationing" and impressed on Tung the "importance of stability" to the situation in the former British Colony.[161]

As this paper was undergoing its final proof-read, there were indications that Zeng had remained at the center of Beijing's strategic planning for Hong Kong, but that President Hu Jintao seemed less agitated about local agitation for democratization. It appeared, then, that Hu and Premier Wen Jiabao may have adjudged that there was a good chance Zeng Qinghong's hardline stance against Hong Kong democratization may backfire and thus discredit Zeng and the Shanghai Gang.

*Zeng's Other Foreign Policy Involvement*. Beginning in 1997, before that autumn's 15th Party Congress, Zeng had already begun to maneuver his way into foreign policy. His *modus operandi* was Machiavellian. Basically, Zeng made the foreign ministry look incompetent, and then, rather than punish the fools, he would appear to intercede in their defense. But he also used foreign ministry gaffes to justify the reinvention of the "Central Foreign Affairs Leading Group" as a national security council directly under Jiang Zemin (with, of course, Zeng maintaining control of the agenda on Jiang's behalf). Through 1997, Zeng accompanied Jiang on his ground-breaking visits to Russia and the United States and was described as Jiang's "special assistant" with protocolary rank higher than the foreign minister. I recall that during Jiang's October 1997 trip to the United States, Jiang made a special point of introducing Zeng to President William Clinton in such a way as to lead the American side to assume that Zeng was an especially important influence on Jiang's thinking. Zeng also made his own trips abroad in 1997 and 1998, covering countries in Europe, North America, and Asia—all

greeted with raised-eyebrows from China-watchers who interpreted them as evidence of Zeng's special interest in foreign policy.[162]

One example of Zeng's tactics came during President Clinton's visit to China in June-July 1998. Unbeknownst to either Beijing's foreign ministry or the American president's advance team, Zeng secretly ordered China Central Television to prepare live televised coverage for Clinton's two scheduled speeches. But the foreign ministry was ordered to refuse the Clinton advance team's requests for TV time. On both occasions, it was Zeng's own CCP General Office official who approved the television broadcasts of Clinton's speeches—and then only on the eve of the events. The effect was to make Jiang look reasonable and moderate to the Clinton people, while humiliating the foreign ministry.[163]

Zeng's most remarkable foreign policy maneuver came in November 1998 surrounding Jiang Zemin's state visit to Japan. China's new foreign minister Tang Jiaxuan, a Japan hand, had somehow been led to believe that the Japanese government would make two historical concessions: that Japan would issue a written apology for invading China in World War II, and that Japan would explicitly commit to President Clinton's so-called "Three No's" on the issue of Taiwan. Even before President Jiang embarked on his travels to Tokyo, Zeng was "already very much aware" that Japan had no intention of budging on these points. Yet, Zeng kept Beijing's foreign ministry in the dark, and apparently allowed Minister Tang to brief Jiang that the concessions were achievable. At the conclusion of Jiang's Japan visit, most observers counted it an utter fiasco and seemed to lay blame for the poor coordination on Minister Tang.[164]

Which is probably what Zeng Qinghong intended. Wounded by the debacle, Tang the Japan-hand was no doubt grateful that Jiang (and Zeng) kept him on the team. Within two years, Zeng was seen exercising his influence on diplomatic personnel and training, and was generally considered to have established his primacy over the foreign affairs bureaucracy.[165]

Another way Zeng seems to have gained influence in foreign affairs after 1997 was to serve as the advance man for Jiang Zemin on important visits abroad. In March 2001, for example, Zeng spent two days in Pyongyang conversing with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il as well as with the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea's (DPRK) top military leader, Jo Myong Rok. Zeng's mission apparently was focused on planning for Jiang Zemin's September 2001 visit to Pyongyang. But Zeng's mission was also to encourage the DPRK to move toward economic reforms with offers of "China's free assistance." Kim Jong Il had been in Shanghai just two months prior to Zeng's Korean visit, and the Chinese press was filled with hope that the spectacle of Shanghai's transformation since Kim's previous visits of over a decade earlier would convince the DPRK's god-king that the North had to change. In consideration whereof, Zeng reportedly offered to increase aid supplies of Chinese foodstuffs, crude oil, and coking coal.[166]

To be sure, a key topic of Zeng's talks was the incoming Bush administration's reassessment of America's permissive stance on North Korean nuclear and missile development "and also reconfirmed their position on firmly opposing the so-called strategy of hegemonism, such as the National Missile Defense (NMD) system, pursued by the Bush administration."[167] As it happened, Jiang's visit (with Zeng prominently figuring in the entourage) took place the week before the September 11 terror attacks in the United States and repeated the same themes of Chinese aid to the DPRK and Chinese hopes that the North would reform its economy.

During his two-day March visit, Zeng—at the time the 20th ranking member of the CCP Politburo—met five or six times with Pyongyang's Dear Leader Kim. Dear Leader could no doubt overlook Zeng's comparatively junior Politburo standing since Jiang himself reportedly had described Zeng as one of China's "core leaders" of the next generation together with Vice President Hu Jintao.[168]

That Zeng was still very much in the center of North Korean policy issues on the eve of his ascension into the CCP's nine-man SC of the Politburo in October 2002 was evident when Zeng took over the infamous "Yang Bin" case. Yang was a big-time tycoon-cum-con man from China who has wormed (or bribed) his way into the favor of Kim Jong Il and with his considerable wealth had managed to become named "governor" of the DPRK's Potemkin-style "special economic zone" on the Chinese border. Apparently, the Chinese had advised Kim not to have anything to do with Yang Bin, but were ignored. Yang was then arrested on fraud and tax evasion charges and eventually tossed into prison with an 18-year sentence

and a $300 million dollar fine.[169] According to the Hong Kong press, Zeng coordinated the Yang Bin affair with the foreign minister, the tax bureau, the public security ministry, the Liaoning provincial government, and a host of lesser offices.[170]

Given Zeng's central role in China's relations with North Korea, it was not surprising when Hong Kong analyst Willy Wo-lap Lam reported in March 2003 that China's new Vice President Zeng Qing Hong was a member of a newly formed Leading Group on the North Korean Crisis headed by President Hu. As recently as August 2003, Zeng was freely expressing himself on the North Korean nuclear crisis. Zeng evinced a sympathy with North Korea's security concerns that seemed co-equal with any desire he may have had about a nuclear-free Korean peninsula.[171] Without knowing the identities of the others on the "North Korean Crisis" leading group, it would be difficult to judge whether Zeng's influence on North Korean policy is greater than Hu Jintao's, but Zeng's grip on the foreign ministry bureaucracy (through Tang Jiaxuan) and the military (via Jiang's CMC chairmanship) suggest that whatever influence he cares to exercise would be decisive.

**Zeng's Interest in Military Policies**.

Most of the Chinese language press in Hong Kong and Taiwan has speculated that Jiang has intended to move Zeng Qinghong into the CMC at least since 1999.[172] And it has been an open secret since Zeng's selection in November 2002 for a seat on the CCP Politburo SC that his ambitions include a seat on the CMC. Jiang Zemin himself counted heavily on support from the PLA to tighten his grip on political power, and one report from Hong Kong indicated that Zeng Qinghong personally huddled with outgoing PLA chief, General Zhang Wannian, for over an hour in October to map out Jiang's continuation as chairman of the CMC.[173]

Shortly after Zeng's appointment as China's vice president, informed observers in Beijing opined that "Jiang Zemin has the major power, Hu Jintao has the position, and Zeng Qinghong holds real power."[174] Speculation in Beijing calculated that Jiang Zemin could hold on to the CMC chair as long as the world was gripped by a series of crises from the Iraq war to the North Korean crisis

and from the Taiwan issue to unsettled relations with the United States, all compounded by the leadership transition, but that Jiang would be loath to abandon his CMC chair to Hu Jintao without some confidence that his influence would remain strong. As such, Jiang could only rest easy if Zeng Qinghong were on the CMC running day-to-day affairs. By the end of 2003, it was clear that Jiang had no plans to depart the CMC anytime soon, and perhaps would even stay on until the 17th CCP Party Congress in 2007. If so, Zeng still plans to be a CMC vice chairman—despite the fact that he would be over 68 years old.[175] Through 2003, Zeng had already given outward appearances of being interested in defense affairs. In September he conferred with visiting defense ministers from Uganda, Canada, and Australia, and met with the Vietnamese defense minister in October.[176]

It may also have been that Zeng sought to take advantage of his early career in the military missile program to enhance his reputation as the Politburo's expert on space technology and policies. In March of 2002, Zeng accompanied Jiang Zemin to China's space center in Jiuquan to observe the launch of the unmanned *Shenzhou-3* space capsule, and in November Zeng and other Politburo and military figures apparently visited the Second Astronautical Institute to offer their congratulations.[177] In early 2003, Zeng toured several missile component factories in Jiangxi, his father's old bailiwick, and in Guizhou province.[178]

**Zeng Haisheng, Sister of the Revolution.**

Zeng Qinghong's sister must certainly be one of Zeng's primary conduits for inside scuttlebutt within the PLA bureaucracy. She has come up through the ranks, but her promotion into the PLA's general personnel files office to the office of the Chief of General Staff seems to have coincided with her brother's increasing prominence on the national scene.

General Zeng Haisheng is a close aide to General Liang Guanglie, chief of the PLA General Staff Department. She was also a member of the PLA's 268-person delegation to the Tenth National People's Congress in March 2003.[179] On April 3, 2003, "Major General Zeng Haisheng" was identified as deputy director of Chief of General Staff

office (*Zong Can Bangongting fuzhuren*) when she saw off General Kui Fulin at the airport as he departed on a visit to three African countries, and a few days later she saw off General Xiong Guangkai on his trip to South Africa.[180] Naturally, she was at the airport when the delegations returned.

A name search of the PLAD website turned up at least 20 news articles that included General Zeng Haisheng's name, mostly blurbs about General Zeng greeting or sending-off various PLA delegations.[181] In January 2003, General Zeng gave at least four military, security, and information related briefings to the tenth session of the Beijing Municipal Political Consultative Conference.[182] From September 29 to October 1, 2002, General Zeng Haisheng led a team of four from the PLA General Staff Department to inspect the city of Jinggangshan, which she called the "cradle of the revolution."[183] No doubt because of her paternity and her brother's senior status in the Politburo, General Zeng was treated with the greatest of deference in Jiangxi as she traveled with several other military officers from the Jiangxi Military district, touring such landmarks as Mao's old house in the Ruijin base area.

Clearly, General Zeng is in a position to know just about everything that is going on in the PLA, and certainly must share that information freely with the vice president—her brother.

## CONCLUSION: PROSPECTS FOR THE "TWO CENTERS"

The careers of Premier Wen Jiabao and Vice President Zeng Qinghong are emblematic of the two very different world views of China's "two centers," the Party/Government and the PLA. Not since the early 1930s when Mao Zedong leveraged his control of the Red Army "gun" in the Jiangxi Base area to gain leadership in the Party, has the Army's top leadership been seen as a competing center of power to the Party Center. The "Futian Incident" of 1930 established Mao as the preeminent leader of the Party for nearly three decades, and in 1959, following his humiliation at the Lushan Plenum and his retirement from the policy work, Mao was determined to maintain his control of the Army. Indeed, Mao used the Army as his power-base to undermine and then destroy his political rivals during the

Cultural Revolution, and the Army remained a separate center of power until the Third Plenum of the 11th Party Congress when both political and military power were again concentrated in the hands of one person, Deng Xiaoping. Control of the Army was essential to Deng's ability to defeat the most serious challenge to the power of the Party since the Cultural Revolution—the Tiananmen Demonstrations.

Since 1989, Jiang Zemin and Zeng Qinghong have seen the PLA as a vital part of their own power base. But it remains to be seen whether China's army wants to continue in the role as the Praetorian Guard for an unpopular leadership. Political dynamics in China are already undergoing profound changes, and the SARS fiasco may have begun a process in the Army that inclines it toward a leadership with proven political competence. As the sentiments against the "two centers" expressed by senior PLA generals during the NPC session in March 2003 indicate, the PLA is somewhat uncomfortable with the existing situation—a civilian leadership focused on economic (and perhaps even eventual political reforms) vying with Jiang Zemin's "Shanghai Gang," which sees the PLA's role as bolstering their personal influence. But as long as the PLA has its own agenda—to transform itself into a fighting force befitting a global superpower—the PLA's top military commanders may well be inclined to go with the political leadership that promotes their goals.

If, in the long-run, both the economic reformists and Zeng Qinghong's Shanghai faction continue to see the PLA as the strategic center of power in China, there is little likelihood that China's national priorities will shift away from military modernization and "increasing the comprehensive strength of the nation." On the other hand, if the Hu Jintao/Wen Jiabao leadership faction can successfully undermine Jiang Zemin's prestige in the military—as they tried to do in the SARS crisis—there is a chance that the PLA's influence over debates of national policy can be marginalized. At this juncture, the latter scenario seems unlikely.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 5

1. I blame former State Department China Hand, Ambassador Harvey Feldman, with this unforgivable pun.

2. Jia Qinglin suffers from a universally bad reputation. Reports from Agence France Presse, Reuters, and The Associated Press shortly after his appointment to China's leadership also included commentary on his wife's reputed links with massive corruption and smuggling schemes. My own recollections of his promotions in Fujian were that they were the result of having impressed Jiang Zemin with his personal loyalty to Jiang. His loyalty to Jiang is an accepted factor in Chinese politics. For example, see *China News Digest* at *http://services.cnd.org/CND-Global/CND-Global.02-10-25.html*.

3. Even the normally hagiographic Chinese leadership profile of Wu that appeared in the Hong Kong PRC press was unable to list many of Wu's accomplishments in Shanghai—other than attributing to Wu credit for the success of the Shanghai stock exchange and the development of the Pudong Zone, both of which seem to have been the result of Zhu Rongji's policies, not Wu's. See Tseng Hua, "Wu Bangguo Studies Treaties on Financial Affairs Intensely—brief biography of the Shanghai CPC Committee secretary," Hong Kong TA KUNG PAO in Chinese, June 22, 1994, p. A1, translated by *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS) at FBIS-CHI-94-137.

4. Tamora Vidaillet, "'Young' Guangdong chief joins China powerful," Reuters English News Service, November 15, 2002.

5. See Tamora Vidaillet, "China's Mr Integrity picked to weed out party graft," Reuters English News Service, November 15, 2002. Vidaillet refers to Wu's "unswerving support for Jiang," but cites Hamilton College professor Cheng Li's opinion that "Wu Guanzheng has been a rising star because he is a capable leader. He's also someone the different factions can accept." For a broader view of Wu, see Cheng Li, *China's Leaders, The New Generation*, Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2001.

6. John Pomfret, "New Guard In China Marks No Clear Path," *Washington Post*, November 16, 2002; p. A01, *http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A61554-2002Nov15.html*.

7. For a plausible discussion of the Politburo Standing Committee rivalries, see a collection of articles under the general title of "Si Changwei fan Jiang Lianren" (Four Standing Committee members oppose another term for Jiang), Hong Kong *Kaifang* magazine, September 2002, pp. 10-23.

8. See, among others, Xu Xiangli, "Beidaihe Huiyi Wei 16 Da Yicheng Dingdiao" (Beidaihe Conference sets agenda for 16th Party Congress), Taipei *China Times*,

July 9, 2002, at *http://news.chinatimes.com/Chinatimes/newslist/newslist-content/0,3546,110505+112002070900063,00.html*; and Zhu Jianling, "Beidaihe Huiyi 16 Da Feng Xiang Qiu" (Beidaihe Conference and the 16th Party Congress to have far-reaching impact), Taipei *China Times*, July 19, 2002, at *http://news.chinatimes.com/Chinatimes/newslist/newslist-content/0,3546,110505+112002071900088,00.html*. In English, see Charles Hutzler, "China Party Chief Could Cling To Post Leaving Less for Hu," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 2, 2002, *http://online.wsj.com/article/0,,SB1025546134720334600.djm,00.html*; John Pomfret, "Chinese Leader Throws a Curve Jiang's Reluctance to Retire Could Spark Power Struggle," *Washington Post*, July 21, 2002, p. A01, *http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A38286-2002Jul20.html*.

9. See Erik Eckholm, "China's New Leader Promises Not to Sever Tether to Jiang," *The New York Times*, November 21, 2002, p. A16. This is wholly plausible. It mirrors the loyalty oaths sworn to Deng Xiaoping by the Politburo in the 1980's that "on most important issues, we still need Deng Xiaoping at the helm." Clearly, Jiang saw himself as Deng's successor, and no doubt insisted on similar deference.

10. "Quan Jun he Wujing Budui Guangda Guan Bing Jianjue yonghu xinde Dang Zhongyang he Zhongyang Junwei" (The Broad Mass of Officers and Ranks of the Entire Army and Armed Police are determined to support the new Party Center and the New CMC), *People's Liberation Army Daily* (hereafter PLAD), p. 1, at *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2002/11/17/20021117001004.html*.

11. See Wang Zhuozhong "Dang, Jun Ge you zhongyang, Gong Jun Liangtou Yucheng" (Party and Army each have their own center, PRC Army must be loyal to two chiefs), Taipei *China Times*, November 18, 2003, at *http://news.chinatimes.com/Chinatimes/newslist/newslist-content/0,3546,110505+112002111800077,00.html*.

12. See "Xue 'Sange Daibiao' Zhen Zhua Shi Gan" (Studying the 'Three Represents' truly is acting according to reality), PLAD, March 4, 2003, at *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2003/03/11/20030311001061.html* and *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/item/lianghui/rdzz/009.htm*.

13. See Xu Yufang, "Chinese military blasts confusion at the top," *Asia Times*, March 11, 2003, at *http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/EC12Ad01.html*.

14. Ching-Ching Ni, "New Premier in China Has Gone Along to Get Along," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 18, 2003, at *http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-wen18mar18,1,5650141.story?coll=la percent2Dheadlines percent2Dworld*.

15. Unless otherwise noted, all other information relating to Wen's career prior to his return to Beijing comes from Yang Zhongmei, *Pingbu Qingyun, Zhonggong Xin Zongli Wen Jiabao* (Striding Along with Destiny, the PRC's New Premier Wen

Jiabao), Taipei: China Times Cultural Publishers, 2003. This is a comprehensive and readable (but neither footnoted nor indexed) biography, which includes details from Wen Jiabao's early career that appear nowhere else in open sources. All the events, however, seem plausible, and the narrative is consistent with other reporting of Wen's career. The author was raised and educated in the PRC and apparently takes much of the hagiography of Chinese media leadership profiles at face value.

16. Yang Zhongmei, p. 28. Yang doesn't say which warring side burned the town.

17. See "Remarks of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao 'Turning Your Eyes to China'" given at Harvard University on December 10, 2003, at *http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2003/12.11/10-wenspeech.html*.

18. See Premier Wen's speech "Working Together to Write A New Chapter In China-US Relations" at the website for the National Committee on US China Relations, *https://www.uschina.org/public/documents/2003/12/09-jiabao_dc.html*.

19. See "Tianjin Nankai Zhongxue Chule Liangge Zongli" (Tianjin's Nankai Middle School produces two Premiers), New York *World Journal*, March 19, 2003, p. 6.

20. One source says Wen Pengjiu was the PRC Consul General in Geneva during the 1960s. Zhang Weiguo, "Zhongnanhai Budaoweng Wen Jiabao" (Zhongnanhai's 'Bounce-back doll' Wen Jiabao), Hong Kong *Kaifang* (Open Magazine), July 2002, p. 34.

21. The Geology Institute was very much in the camp of the Cultural Revolution Group, later infamous as the "Gang of Four," while the "Heaven Faction" supported Premier Zhou Enlai. See David and Nancy Dall Milton, *The Wind Will Not Subside, Years in Revolutionary China 1964-1969*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1976, pp. 206, 240-1.

22. Wang Haitao, "Wen Jiabao he tade Jiating" (Wen Jiabao and his family), Hong Kong *Kaifang* (Open Magazine), April 2003, pp. 29-30.

23. "Wen Jiabao Qi Shi Baoshi Jianding Zhuanjia" (Wen Jiabao's Wife Zhang Peili is expert gemologist), New York *World Journal*, March 20, 2003. Yang Zhongmei says Ms. Zhang was in the 1976 class at the geology institute, but I assume that is a misprint because Zhang is a year older than Wen.

24. Wang Haitao, "Wen," p. 31.

25. Yang Zhongmei, p. 24; Wang Haitao (Wen, p. 31) says that Yunsong is a computer prodigy, and tried to get a job in Beijing with a foreign firm after

graduating from a U.S. school. The firm wouldn't hire him, fearing repercussions of having a leader's son, so Yunsong started his own firm in Beijing called UNIHUB. UNIHUB now has major contracts with Dell and Northern Telecom, and maintains offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Wuhan. Yunsong also conducts business under the alias, "Chen Song." The March 20, 2003, issue of Hong Kong's *Yi Zhoukan* (Next magazine) says that in 1999, Wen Yunsong formed a venture in Hong Kong called "Unihub Global Network," with tycoon Li Ka-shing as his partner. Wen's daughter, Ruchun, is a graduate student at the Nanjing International Relations Institute where she "buries her head in books," and basically treats everyone with respect—"not like most children of high cadres."

26. Cheng Li, pp. 117-118.

27. Yang Zhongmei, p. 55.

28. *Ibid*., p. 55.

29. This narrative is essentially taken from *Ibid*., pp 70-72. However, the Poliburo apparently did not confirm Jiang's appointment until May 27. See footnote 115.

30. *Ibid*., p.71. The earliest congratulatory letters to the Center came between June 5 and June 12. Hu Jintao's letter of support—one of the earliest—apparently came on June 7. See "Tibet Supports Central Policy on Crackdown" broadcast on Lhasa Tibet Regional Service in Mandarin, 1330 GMT, June 9, 1989, transcribed in the FBIS Green Book for June 13, 1989, at FBIS, p. 57.

31. Yang Zhongmei, p. 71.

32. The author was deputy consul general at the U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou from August 1989 to July 1992.

33. Yang Zhongmei, p. 74.

34. "Zeng shi Zhao Zong Shuji Deli Zhushou, Ru Jin Bi Tan Zhao Ziyang" (Once a powerful Zhao Ziyang Aide, Wen Jiabao now avoids discussing Zhao Ziyang), New York *World Journal*, March 19, 2003.

35. Andrew J. Nathan and Bruce Gilley, *China's New Rulers: The Secret Files*, London: Granta Books, 2002, pp. 96-97. This book is remarkable for how much of its prognostication about the outcome of the 2002 16th party congress was dead wrong—and that only serves to bolster the view that it incorporates the tendentious views of partisans of the Politburo's reformist maverick, Li Ruihuan. Nonetheless, the raw material used by the pseudonymous "Zong Hairen" is fully plausible and in the end accurate, and includes details unavailable in open sources.

36. Yang Zhongmei covers this aspect of Deng's new ideology succinctly at p. 78.

37. See Guan Juan, "Deng Personally Mediated Disputes Between Qin Jiwei and Yang Baibing," Hong Kong *Cheng Ming* magazine, No. 180, October 1, 1992, pp 19-20, translated in FBIS, pp. 27-28. This article was viewed in the U.S. intelligence community as the first indication of a major revolt among the old soldiers and a harbinger of Yang's demise. Yang Zhongmei says on page 81 that 103 senior general officers wrote the letter to Deng, warning that the "Yang Brothers" were violating the dictum that "the party should control the gun."

38. For a full biographic review of Hu Jintao's career, see John J. Tkacik, Jr., Joseph Fewsmith, and Maryanne Kivlehan, "Who's Hu? Assessing China's Heir Apparent, Hu Jintao," *Heritage Lecture* #739 available at *http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/HL739.cfm#pgfId=1010175*.

39. While "Deng Xiaoping Theory" was not explicitly named in the Party Charter, it is clear that the revisions were adopted wholly from Deng's policies. The best analysis of this is contained in "Revised Party Constitution Strengthens Reformers' Cause," published in *FBIS TRENDS* of November 12, 1992, pp. 1-6. All other Congress documents, however, explicitly linked the wording of the CCP constitution amendments to "Deng Xiaoping Theory."

40. Jiang Zemin was first identified as the "core" of the leadership by Premier Li Peng in a meeting with "democratic and nonparty personages" on June 28, 1989 (see "Li Peng Admits that Jiang Zemin is the Core of the New Leading Body," *Wen Wei Po*, June 29, 1989, p. 1, transcribed by FBIS, p. 17). The term came from Deng Xiaoping's speech to the new Politburo Standing Committee on June 16 when he declared "In the leadership of the third generation, there should also be a core . . . this leadership core is Comrade Jiang Zemin, whom we agreed to select." The title stuck, and had been an official part of Jiang's leadership roles ever since. See "'Full Text of Gists' of Deng Xiaoping's Speech to Members of the New Political Bureau Standing Committee" given on June 16, 1989, *Tung Fang Jih Pao*, Hong Kong, July 15, 1989, p. 6, transcribed in FBIS, p. 13.

41. Nathan and Gilley, p. 97.

42. Yang Zhongmei, p. 103.

43. Ching-Ching Ni, "New Premier in China Has Gone Along to Get Along," *Los Angeles Times*, March 18, 2003.

44. Yang Zhongmei, pp. 108-109.

45. "Special dispatch: Wen Jiabao Puts Forward Principles for Rebuilding Disaster Areas," Hong Kong *Ming Pao* in Chinese, October 22, 1998, p. B18.

46. "Wen Jiabao To Head Central Financial Work Group," Hong Kong *Hsin Pao* (Hong Kong Economic Journal) in Chinese, March 12, 1998, p 1. Zhou is now Governor of the People's Bank of China. Zhou was born in 1948 in Jiangsu. Zhou replaced Dai Xianglong, who was named mayor of Tianjin in an effort to remove Zhu Rongji's influence from policies after the 10th NPC in March 2003. Zhou is a protégé of Jiang Zemin, Zhou's father, Zhou Jiannan, was Jiang's mentor at the Ministry of Machine-Building in the 1970s. Wang, now mayor of Beijing, is of the "princeling" faction, his father-in-law was the late Yao Yilin, a very conservative Politburo Standing Committee member and State Council vice premier under Li Peng. In 1998, he was a former governor of China Construction Bank recently transferred to Guangdong to take over South China operations for the People's Bank of China. In November 2002, Wang was appointed CCP Party chief in Hainan, and in April 2003, Wang was named mayor of Beijing replacing Hu Jintao's ally, Meng Xuenong.

47. Lu Ru-lue: "Wen Jiabao Is Almost Certain to Be the Next Premier," Hong Kong *Hsin Pao* (Hong Kong Economic Journal) in Chinese, December 04, 2000, p. 24, translated by FBIS.

48. "Process of Speculation About Wen Jiabao Offering Resignation," Hong Kong *Ming Pao*, May 2, 2002 p. B12, translated by FBIS.

49. (citing Beijing Xinhua) "Wen Jiabao ti Jinrong Gongzuo Wu Renwu" (Wen Jiabao outlines five points for financial reforms), New York *World Journal* internet edition, January 28, 2003.

50. Ruan Leyi et al, "Wen Jiabao Gao Piao Dang Xuan Zhonggong Zongli" (Wen Jiabao elected PRC Premier with top vote), *China Times* Internet Edition, March 17, 2003. Notes that Hu Jintao got 99.7 percent of the votes for MAC vice chairman, while Jiang Zemin's successful bid for a second term as MAC Chairman received "yes" votes from 92.5 percent of the NPC delegates.

51. Wang Zhuozhong, "Wen Jiabao Neige, Caijing Renma duo Jiang Pai" (In Wen Jiabao Cabinet Finance Experts mostly JZM cronies), *China Times* Internet Edition, March 9, 2003, *http://news.chinatimes.com/Chinatimes/newslist/newslist-content/0,3546,110505+112003030900053,00.html*

52. "Hua Jianmin jiang ren Guowuyuan Mishuzhang" (Hua Jianmin to be State Council Secretary General), New York *World Journal* internet edition, March 9, 2003.

53. "Siwei Fu Zongli dou shi Zhengzhi Ju Chengyuan" (Four new Vice Premiers are all Politburo members), New York *World Journal* internet edition, March 20, 2003.

54. Among Jiang's factionalists are State Councillor and Public Security Minister Zhou Yongkang, Minister of National Defense Cao Gangchuan, Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, State Councillor Chen Zhili, and Personnel Minister Zhang Bolin who was Zeng Qinghong's aide in the Central Organization Department. See "Wen Neige Renshi, Jiang Xi reng ju Yaojin" (In Wen's cabinet, Jiang people hold strategic positions), New York *World Journal* internet edition March 18, 2003.

55. Jeffrey Sparshott, "China to feel farm trade pressure," *The Washington Times*, February 15, 2003, *http://www.washtimes.com/business/20030215-69329136.htm*.

56. "Jie Zongli hou, Wen Jiabao jiang dajian Nongye shui" (After ascending to the Premiership, Wen Jiabao will grant huge cuts in agriculture tax), New York *World Journal* internet edition, March 11, 2003.

57. "Shang ren di ba dao, Wen Jiabao qian xiang chi 'Huangliang Rongguan'" (First to get the knife after his appointment, Wen Jiabao takes aim at 'supernumerary officials who eat imperial grain'), Taipei *China Times* internet edition, March 10, 2003, *http://news.chinatimes.com/Chinatimes/newslist/newslist-content/0,3546,110505+112003031000076,00.html*.

58. "Wen Jiabao: Dangqian Jingji Renwu, Shouzhong Fang Tongsuo" (Wen Jiabao: Deflation Fight is Biggest Economic Mission at Present), New York *World Journal* internet edition, July 18, 2003.

59. "Wen Jiabao Gua shuai, Zhiding Keji Fazhan Zhan lue" (Wen Jiabao Takes Command, Sets Strategy for Science and Technology Development), New York *World Journal* internet edition, June 19, 2003.

60. "Wen Jiabao Qianchang Xinxihua Lingdao Xiaozu" (Wen Jiabao takes over E Commerce Leading Small Group), New York *World Journal* internet edition, July 6, 2003. See also "Wen Jiabao zu Kaichuang Xinxihua Xin Ju" (Wen Jiabao urges informationalization of new bureaus), New York *World Journal* internet edition, July 24, 2003.

61. John Pomfret, "China's Slow Reaction to Fast-Moving Illness, Fearing Loss of Control, Beijing Stonewalled," *Washington Post*, April 3, 2003, p. A18, at *http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A14967-2003Apr2.html*.

62. John Pomfret, "SARS Coverup Spurs A Shake-Up in Beijing," *Washington Post*, April 21, 2003, p. A01, at *http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A64440-2003Apr20.html*.

63. Yang Zhongmei, p. 187.

64.*Ibid*., p. 196.

65. John Pomfret, "President Responded to Pressure Inside and Outside Country on SARS," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2003, p. A01, at *http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A47408-2003May12.html*.

66. *Boxun.com* (at *http://www.peacehall.com/hot/feiyan.shtml*) has provided a running tab of SARS reporting from Guangdong since February 10. See *http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2003/02/200302102341.shtml*. As late as April 2, the Guangdong provincial government was reporting the alarming figures it had, but maintained political correctness by couching them in soothing terms. See Shen Gan, "Wo Sheng Feidianxing Feiyan 3 Yuefen Bingli Mingxian Xiajiang" (The Number of New SARS Cases in Guangdong Province Show Clear Decline During March), *Nanfang Daily*, Guangzhou, China, April 2, 2003. Text available at *http://www.nanfangdaily.com.cn/nf/20030402/jywz/200304020033.asp*.

67. Yang Zhongmei, p. 191.

68. Zeng Liming, "State Council Information Office Holds Press Conference on Prevention and Control of Atypical Pneumonia," Zhongguo Xinwen She, April 3, 2003, translated by FBIS.

69. John Pomfret, "President Responded," May 13, 2003.

70. Rob Gifford, "China and SARS," audio broadcast report for *National Public Radio*, April 9, 2003. Audio portion available at *http://discover.npr.org/features/feature.jhtml?wfId=1225737*. Jiang sought out several foreign reporters on April 9 and 10, giving each separate interviews.

71. According to John Pomfret's May 13 report, the wake-up call came earlier. "Hu and Wen's push for change began gathering momentum. On April 9 and 10 they arranged for experts and respected nonmembers of the party to meet with senior government and party officials to discuss the crisis. The consensus from those meetings, according to participants, was that China should stop covering up its epidemic and begin working closely with WHO and other agencies to deal with the virus."

72. "Jiang Zemin dao Shanghai bi SARS? Bei Da Xuesheng Bu Man" (Did JZM go to Shanghai to escape SARS? Beijing University Students Unhappy), New York *World Journal* internet edition, April 27, 2003.

73. "Baozhang Lingdao Ceng, Zhanshi Lingdao Tizhi Qidong" (To ensure the leadership levels, the wartime leadership structure is mobilized), New York *World Journal* internet edition, April 27, 2003.

74. See Chang Fan, Chung Hsueh-ping, "Meng Xuenong: Capital's Epidemic Situation Under Control," Hong Kong *Wen Wei Po* internet edition, April 14, 2003, translated by FBIS.

75. Charles Hutzler, Karen Richardson, and Todd Zaun, "Beijing Authorities Grant Slow Access to WHO Team, China's Limited Response Could Hinder Global Effort To Control SARS Outbreak," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 14, 2003, p. A-17.

76. Erik Eckholm, "China Said to Take 2 Weeks to Disclose Sub Disaster," The *New York Times,* May 5, 2003 at *http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/05/international/asia/05CHIN.html*.

77. John Pomfret, "President Responded," May 13, 2003.

78. Yang Zhongmei, p. 199.

79. *Ibid*., p. 202.

80. See *http://www.pku.edu.cn/news/xiao_kan/pkunews03/news4.html*.

81. See Tang Qing, "Jiang Zemin 'flees to Shanghai' Internet-ers bombard Jiang and his cast for being 'ignominious'," Association for Asian Research (AFAR), May 04, 2003, at *http://www.asianresearch.org/articles/1337.html*. I have not been able to locate these postings on the Beijing University site.

82. See *http://www.pku.edu.cn/news/xiao_kan/news/304/04-123.htm*.

83. "Jiang Zemin Qin Pijun Ji Diao Junyi Yuan Jing" (Jiang Zemin Personally OKs Emergency Detail of Military Doctors to aid Beijing), New York *World Journal* internet edition, April 29, 2003. Also see Yang Zhongmei, P. 202.

84. John Pomfret, "Report Offers Few Clues to What Caused Overcrowded Vessel to 'Malfunction'," *Washington Post,* Saturday, May 3, 2003, p. A19, at *http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A5037-2003May2.html*.

85. See image files of the PLAD front pages at *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2003/05/23/1.html* through *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2003/06/08/1.html*. For 2 full weeks, Hu Jintao dominated the LAD to the exclusion of Jiang Zemin. Jiang returned on June 7, and Hu was little seen until June 19. From June 19 through June 28, Jiang and Hu share the front pages of the LAD more or less equally. Random checks for July and August seem to bear this out. I strongly recommend anyone with access to hard copies of the LAD to riffle through them for a better idea of LAD coverage of Hu in recent days.

86. Liu Tong, "Wei Jiang Zemin Shinian Ding Qiankan" (A Decade of Deciding Heaven and Earth for Jiang Zemin), Hong Kong *Kaifang* (Open magazine), July, 2002, p. 30.

87. Wang Haitao, "Da Nei Quan Mo Gaoshou Zeng Qinghong" (The Great Internal Puppetmaster Zeng Qinghong), Hong Kong *Kaifang* (Open Magazine), July, 2002, p. 31.

88. *Ibid*.

89. Lu Fei-lang, "Zeng Qinghong: 'the King's Man, Zeng Qinghong'," *Chiu-shih Nien-tai* magazine, January 1, 1998, No 1, pp 53-55, translated by FBIS. See also Zong Hairen, *Di Si Dai* (The Fourth Generation), Hong Kong Mirror Books, 2002, p. 332. Zong doesn't mention Zeng Shan's father's pre-revolutionary career.

90. John E. Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition: 1927-1935*, Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1966, pp. 231-240.

91. *Ibid*. Zeng Shan is also cited as a key Mao aide in at least two accounts of the Futian Incident. Benjamin Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1951, pp. 174-177. See also Otto Braun, *A Comintern Agent in China 1932-1939*, London, C. Hurst & Company, 1982. p. 57.

92. Cheng Li, p. 160. Li cites Klein and Clark, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism,* and private correspondence with Dai Qing.

93. Ting Wang: "'Sunset Group' Strong Man Zeng Qinghong Has Great Potential," Hong Kong *Hsin Pao* (Hong Kong *Economic Journal*) in Chinese, May 31, 2000, p. 30, FBIS.

94. Wang Zhuozhong, "Changzheng Nyu Hongjun Zeng Qinghongzhi Mu Deng Liujin Bingshi Beijing" (Female Red Army Veteran of the Long March, and Zeng Qinghong's Mother, Deng Liujin dies in Beijing), Taipei, *China Times* internet edition, July 24, 2003.

95. Zong Hairen, p. 263.

96. Wang Haitao. p. 32.

97. Zong Hairen, p. 263.

98. Ting Wang. It is interesting to note that Chen Yi was Mao's chief military lieutenant at the Futian Incident. See Howard L. Boorman, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1967, p. 256. It is also interesting to note that Hu Jintao apparently alienated Chen Haosu when Hu served as Party Secretary of the Communist Youth League. See Yi Ming, "The Logical General Secretary Designate, Among the Seven CPC Politburo Standing Committee Members, Hu Jintao Ranks Fifth and Is the Youngest, At 54," *Chiu-shih Nien-tai* (The Nineties), Hong Kong in Chinese, No. 1, January 1, 1998, pp. 50-52.

99. Wang Zhuozhong.

100. "Yi Ren Zhixia, Wan Ren Zhishangde 'Jiuqian Sui' Zeng Qinghong" (Second to One, Lord of the multitudes, May Zeng Qinghong have a 'pretty long life'), *Secret China*, July 16, 2002, at *http://www.secretchina.com/news/articles/2/7/16/21099b.html*. See also Liu Fei-lang.

101. Zeng was said to have helped his former 101 Middle School classmate, Bai Keming, get appointed as CCP party secretary in Hainan in August 2001. Bai was general manager of *Renmin Ribao*, and was considered wholly incompetent. His father was Bai Jian, the former No. 1 Machine Building deputy minister, who was once Jiang Zemin's superior. See Zong Hairen, "Declining Hainan: Part 2," Hong Kong *Hsin Pao* (Hong Kong *Economic Journal*) January 22, 2003, p. 22, translated by FBIS.

102. Zong, p. 264.

103. See *Secret China*.

104. Mark A. Stokes, "The People's Liberation Army and China's Space and Missile Development," Chapter 6 of Burkitt, *et al.*, eds, *The Lessons of History: The Chinese People's Liberation Army at 75*, Carlisle: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2003, pp. 197-198.

105. Zong, pp. 264-265.

106. See *Secret China*, July 16, 2002.

107. Zong, p. 266. Liu Fei-lang says Zeng "politely demurred" when invited to "put on the uniform again." Cheng Li says that Zeng did not rejoin the PLA at this point, p. 162.

108. Zong, p. 269-270. See also Nathan and Gilley, p. 85.

109. David and Nancy Milton, pp. 114-115, 183, 196, 240, 244, 311-312. For the conviction, see Zong, p. 334.

110. Zong, p. 268; Nathan, p. 85.

111. Zong, p. 270.

112. Liu Tong, p. 28.

113. For an account of the official reaction to the *World Economic Herald's* excesses, see Zhang Liang, Andrew Nathan, and Perry Link, *The Tiananmen Papers*, New York: Public Affairs, 2001, pp. 91-94.

114. Liu Tong, p. 28.

115. Eight of the Communist Party's top old revolutionaries were commonly referred to as the "Eight Immortals" (Bage Yuanlao), but no two lists of the eight is the same. My sense is that they included Zhou Enlai's widow, Deng Yingchao, Bo Yibo, Peng Zhen, Wang Zhen, Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian and Yang Zhangkun. They all had their own offices and staff and corresponded on official stationery that bore the logo "The Office of . . ."

116. Liu Tong, p. 29. The PRC-owned press in Hong Kong reported in June 1989 that "Jiang Zemin had left Shanghai and worked in Beijing for several weeks." See "Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee to Undergo a Major Reshuffle," *Wen Wei Po*, June 23, 1989, p. 1, transcribed by FBIS, p. 7.

117. Nathan and Gilley, pp. 96-97.

118. Zong, p. 273.

119. Liu Tong p. 29.

120. Zong, p. 275.

121. "Nanxun," literally, "Southern Progress," refers to the ancient imperial tradition of an emperor's royal tour through his domain ("progress"). Deng's visit also was dubbed the "Southern Whirlwind" (Nanxuan) because of its profound political impact.

122. Zong, p. 276. At the time, the official PRC press was coy about reporting the meeting. Qiao Shi's presence in Zhuhai as the chair of a public security and legal affairs conference was reported in "Qiao Shi Zai Zhuhai Zhichu Zhengzhi Tizhi Gaige - Zai Jingji Tequ ye xuyao xian xing yi bu" (Qiao Shi points out: Reform of Political Structure requires the Special Economic Zones to be one step ahead), *Shenzhen Tequ Bao*, January 29, 1992. See also "Qiao Shi dui Jingji tequ Zhengfa Gongzuo tichu Yaoqiu, Wei Quanguo Shuli Bangyang Tigong jingyan" (Qiao Shi demands that the Special Economic Zones' Politics and Law work set a model that will avail the entire nation of its experience), *Nanfang Ribao*, January 29, 1992. On the same page, the *Nanfang Ribao* also reported "Liu Huaqing kaocha Guangzhou Junqu shi qiangdiao Liyong Gaige Kaifang Youli tiaojian quanmian jiaqiang budui zhiliang jianshe" (During an inspection tour of the Guangzhou military region, Liu Huaqing stresses the need to utilize the beneficial conditions of Reform and Opening to establish a strenthened quality among the troops). President Yang Shangkun's inspection of Zhuhai was reported by Xinhua. See "Yang Shangkun Kaocha Zhuhai Zhongshan" (Yang Shangkun Inspects Zhuhai and Zhongshan), *Nanfang Ribao*, February 2, 1992. The Hong Kong press noted

Qiao's—though not Deng's—meeting in Zhuhai with top CMC and PLA figures at the time; see Chu Chan-kang, "Major Military Officials Visit Zhuhai," Hong Kong *Ming Pao*, transcribed by FBIS, February 10, 1992. My recollection was that at least one Guangdong newspaper published a photograph of the meeting. Deng's January 25 meeting with Qiao and the CMC leadership (sans Jiang) was reported in Lin Wu, "Inside Story of Central Military Commission's Meeting in Zhuhai's Yuanlin Guest House," Hong Kong *Cheng Ming*, No. 183, March 1, 1992, pp. 15-16, 89, transcribed by FBIS on March 6, 1992. *Cheng Ming* said that President Yang Shangkun proposed to Deng that Qiao Shi "take part in the work of the Central Military Commission's leading body in his capacity as a member of the Political Bureau's Standing Committee, and for him to be in charge of the armed police force and the PLA's secret service troops."

123. *Ibid*., p. 277.

124. Including General Xiong Guangkai—who was the only general on the list who was finally promoted.

125. Zong, p. 280.

126. *Ibid*. Yu was mayor of Qingdao (and is now a Politburo member and CCP Party Secretary for Hebei), and Liu was mayor of Kunming and was later vice governor of Yunnan.

127. *Ibid*., p. 281.

128. *Ibid*.

129. *Ibid*.

130. *Ibid*., p. 282.

131. *Ibid*. (Shi Beijing Shi chengwei Jiang Zemin Shui Pobujin.)

132. Bruce Gilly, *Tiger on the Brink: Jiang Zemin and China's New Elite*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998, p. 243. Gilley cites a Reuters wire service report of April 30, 1995.

133. Unless otherwise noted, all information on the Chen Xitong affair is from Zong, pp. 285-288; and Nathan and Gilley pp. 154-157.

134. Marcus W. Brauchli, "Beijing and McDonald's Settle Location Dispute," *The Asian Wall Street Journal*, December 14, 1994, p. J.1; Peggy Sito, "Work stopped on troubled McDonald's site Li Peng steps into plaza row," *South China Morning Pos*t, December 22, 1994, p. 1. See also the description of the threat in Gilley's *Tiger*, pp. 242-245.

135. Gilley, *Tiger*, p. 245.

136. Zong, p. 286.

137. *Ibid*., pp. 287-289.

138. A long account of the "secret envoy" talks from 1988 to 1995 held under the auspices of a Hong Kong-based, Rasputin-style "Qigong Master" and Zen philosopher named Nan Huaijin, is related in Lee Teng-hui's authoritative (if not wholly "authorized") biography. See Zou Jingwen, *Li Denghui Zhizheng Gaobai Shilyu* (A True Account of Lee Teng-hui's Tenure), Chengyang Chuban She, Taipei 2001, pp. 192-214.

139. Zou Jingwen, p. 201. All other information about the "secret envoys" is from Zou's book unless otherwise noted.

140. See "Li Teng-hui News Conference on Mideast Trip," Taipei *China Times*, April 5, 1995, pp. 1-2, transcribed by FBIS.

141. Zou Jingwen, p. 204

142. Qu Tao, "Jiang Zemin Promotes Hong Hu," Hong Kong *Chengming* magazine, November 1, 1997, No. 142, pp. 41-43, translated by FBIS.

143. Ling Chen, "When Has Zeng Qinghong, Jiang Zemin's Ambitious Top Advisor, Emerged From Behind the Scenes?" Hong Kong *Kai Fang* magazine, No. 145, January 3, 1999, pp. 35-38.

144. Hao Xinyi, "CPC Comprehensively Readjusts Its Policy Toward Taiwan," Hong Kong *Ming Pao*, September 10, 1996, p. A12, transcribed by FBIS.

145. Xiao Peng, "Zeng Qinghong Joins Central Leading Group for Taiwan Affairs," Hong Kong *Sing Tao Jih Pao*, September 7, 1998, p. A7, translated by FBIS.

146. Wang Zhuozhong, "Zeng Qinghong, Chen Yunlin jiang zhang dui Tai Gong zuo" (Zeng Qinghong, Chen Yunlin to run Taiwan Work portfolio), Taipei *China Times*, November 15, 2002.

147. See Wang Zhuozhong, "Zhonggong dui Tai Juece Xin Ban di, Yi zhiwu Gongneng Kaoliang" (The CCP's new cadre of Taiwan Policymakers, Professional Capacities is main consideration), Taipei *China Times*, December 26, 2003. Author cites Hong Kong's *Wen Wei Po* as reporting that the CCP Central Taiwan Task Force (Zhong Yang Dui Tai Gong Zuo Xiao Zu) had been reshuffled and formally announced on December 25. The new nine-man Task Force includes one more

member than the previous group. They are Hu Jintao (replacing Jiang Zemin, as chief), Jia Qinglin (replacing Qian Qichen as deputy), Tang Jiaxuan (state councilor, replacing Zeng Qinghong, as secretary general), Wang Gang (director of General Office of the CPC Central Committee, new), Liu Yantong (Head of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee, replacing Wang Zhaoguo), Wang Daohan (president of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait, remains), Chen Yunlin (Director of Taiwan Affairs Office of China's State Council, remains), Xu Yungyao (National Security Minister, remains), Xiong Guangkai (Deputy Chief of General Staff of PLA, remains). Aside from Hu Jintao himself, only Minister of State Security Xu Yunyao is clearly not a Jiang Zemin protégé, and consequently may not be inclined to seek Zeng Qinghong's guidance. Zeng kept Tang Jiaxuan on the job even after the fiasco of Jiang Zemin's Tokyo visit of 1998 (see below), Wang Gang is also considered a "brother and faction member of Zeng Qinghong" (Wang was in the Seventh Ministry of Machine Building with Zeng for 10 years).

148. At the end of December 2003, the removal of a key Shanghai man from the Taiwan Affairs Office indicated that Zeng Qinghong may be losing his grip on Taiwan policy. See "Zhuan Zhou Mingwei bei diaoli Guotaiban 'Shanghai Bang' Zaici Shoushang" (Zhou Mingwei transfer from the State Council Taiwan Office said to be another blow to the 'Shanghai Faction'"), Singapore *Asia Times* (in Chinese), December 29, 2003, at *http://www4.chinesenewsnet.com/MainNews/Forums/BackStage/2003_12_29_8_43_39_511.html*.

149. Chen Weiming, "Deng Xiaoping Requires the Preliminary Work Committee to Do Down-to-Earth Work," in the Pro-PRC Hong Kong magazine, *Ching Pao*, No. 1, January 5, 1994, pp. 18-19, translated by FBIS.

150. "Jiang Zemin's Assistant Zeng Qinghong Arrives in Hong Kong to Make Arrangements for Reversion," Hong Kong *Ming Pao,* June 23, 1997, p. A2, translated by FBIS. Liu Fei-lang (cited earlier) also says that before the 15th party congress (1997) Zeng was "given another title, that of first political commissar of the Central Guards Regiment" the unit that is responsible for the protective security of the central leadership.

151. Zheng Hanliang, "23 tiao zenma xiu? Zhongyang liang tiao luxian?" (How to revise Article 23? Are there Two Lines at the Center?), Taipei *China Times*, July 7, 2003.

152. The *China Daily* headline read "Conspiracy to Subvert," and the editorial accused the democratic camp of trying to transplant "Western political systems to Hong Kong." "Hong Kong Democrats Attacked in Editorial in China-Owned Paper," Bloomberg wire service, July 14, 2003, at *http://quote.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000080&sid=ajFWimtYe80M&refer=asia#*.

153. Even the English language press was sensitive to Liu's patrimony—see Joseph Kahn, "Analysts See Tension Among Chinas Leaders," *New York Times*, July 1, 2003. Liu Yunshan is a rigid party ideologue on propaganda matters according to Charles Hutzler, "Beijing Strives to Match Changing Nation's Pace," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 20, 2003, at *http://online.wsj.com/article/0,,SB106658495545149000,00.html*.

154. Wong Kwok Wah, "ANALYSIS: HK leader loses the mandate of heaven," Singapore, *Asia Times*, July 9, 2003, at *http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/EG09Ad03.html*.

155. Hamish McDonald, "Hong Kong protesters to keep up the pressure," Melbourne, *The Age*, July 7 2003, at *http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/07/06/1057430073927.html*.

156. Chen Jingxin, "Beijing Si Jutou, Gao Zitai Yan Dong" (Four Beijing Heavyweights give high profile support to Tung), New York *World Journal*, July 20, 2003.

157. "Wen Jiabao Hui Dong, Xian Paiding Xinwan," (Wen Jiabao sees C. H. Tung, first prescribes a dose of digitalis), New York *World Journal*, July 21, 2003 (citing Taipei Central News Agency).

158. Philip P. Pan, "China's Leaders Show Support for Hong Kong's Chief Executive," *The Washington Post*, Sunday, July 20, 2003, p. A28, at *http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A17238-2003Jul19.html*.

159. See "Zeng Qinghong fenguan Xianggang shiwu" (Zeng Qinghong assigned to handle Hong Kong Affairs," New York, *World Journal*, July 23, 2003. See also Ching Cheong, "Beijing may shelve new HK law," Singapore, *The Straits Times,* August 15, 2003.

160. Ching Cheong, "Beijing may shelve new HK law," Singapore, *The Straits Times*, August 15, 2003, p. 1.

161. "Zeng Qinghong fan Yue shicha, Zhaojian Dong Jianhua, liaojie Gangfu chehui guoan tiaoli hou zhuangkuang, qiangdiao wending dui Xianggangde zhongyaoxing," (Zeng Qinghong returns from inspection of Guangdong, Summons C. H. Tung for an appreciation of the situation in the wake of the recall of National Security legislation, Stresses the importance of stability to Hong Kong), New York, *World Journal*, September 17, 2003, p. 2.

162. Ling Chen.

163. *Ibid*.

164. *Ibid*. The most scathing commentary came from the Hong Kong press. See Wang Ziyan, "Jiang Zemin's Visit to Japan Premature, Ill-Timed," Hong Kong *Hsin Pao*, November 30, 1998, p. 20, which said all the visit did "was to expose the weakness of the Japan policy of the Chinese government" and called it "Jiang Zemin's worst diplomatic failure since he assumed office."

165. Wang Ziyan (above), see also "Twelve Senior Diplomats Who Were Promoted Through Open Selection Have Recently Gone To Their Posts—Zeng Qinghong Demands Stepping Up The Reform of The Personnel System Of Cadres Dealing With Foreign Affairs," Beijing Xinhua Domestic Service, in Chinese, 1348 GMT, March 19, 2003, translated by FBIS.

166. The reporting of Zeng's "secret" visit was quite public, and references to "free assistance" were replete in the Chinese press. See Kwon Kyong-pok, "Background Behind CPC Organization Department Director's Visit to DPRK," Seoul Yonhap, 0108 GMT, March 20, 2001, FBIS translated text. Zhang Jinfang and Li Zhengyu, "Kim Chong-il, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and Chairman of the DPRK National Defense Commission, Meets With Zeng Qinghong," Beijing, Xinhua 1513 GMT, March 22, 2001, FBIS translated text. Kim Jong Il Meets CPC Leader," Beijing Xinhua 1555 GMT, March 22, 2001, FBIS transcribed text.

167. Kwon Kyong-pok: "Director Zeng Qinghong's Visit to North Korea, What Did it Accomplish?," Seoul Yonhap (Internet Version-WWW), 1517 GMT, March 25, 2001, FBIS translated text.

168. See Wen Yu, "Zeng Qinghong: A Potential Challenger To China's Heir Apparent," The Jamestown Foundation's *China Brief* Vol. 1, No. 10, November 21, 2001. Jiang had been making a habit of lavishing particular attention on Zeng in the presence of foreign leaders. In a meeting with Russian President Putin at the October 2001 APEC summit in Shanghai, Jiang introduced Zeng to Russian president Putin as "Qinghong, our director of the Organization Department and a member of the Secretariat." Most analysts saw Jiang's reference to Zeng simply as "Qinghong" as implying an extremely close relationship, at *http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=17&issue_id=638&article_id=4589*.

169. See *Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Press Conference on July 15, 2003*, at *http://www.china-un.ch/eng/52865.html*.

170. "Chuli Yang Bin An, Chuan you Zeng Qinghong Fuze" (Zeng Qinghong said to handle Yang Bin Case), Taipei *China Times*, October 8, 2002 (cites Hong Kong's *Jingji Ribao*).

171. Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "China looks ahead to Korea crisis," CNN International (internet report), March 18, 2003, at *http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/*

*03/18/willy.column/n policies*. See also Joseph Kahn, "Six Party Talks U.S. Set to Take a Hard Line in Talks on Korean Arms," the *New York Times*, August 27, 2003, at *http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/27/international/asia/27KORE.html*.

172. Wu Su-li, "'Shenzhou' Space Strategy," Hong Kong *Kai Fang* magazine, No 156, December 5, 1999, pp. 15-16, FBIS.

173. "Kaifang Zazhi: Jiang Zemin Kao Juntou ji zhang Jun quan" (Kaifang Magazine says Jiang Zemin relies on Military chiefs for hold on Military power), New York *World Journal*, December 6, 2002.

174. "Zeng Qinghong mingnian keneng ren Junwei Fuzhuxi" (Zeng Qinghong could be named CMC Vice Chairman next year), New York *World Journal*, April 3, 2003 (citing Hong Kong *Kaifang* [Open] magazine). See also Wang Zhuozhong, "Jiang Zemin Ji Zhang 'Guofang Waijiao Liangan' San Daquan" (Jiang Zemin maintains grip on authority in three priority areas, 'Defense, Foreign Affairs, Cross-Strait'), Taipei *China Times*, February 17, 2003.

175. Ruan Leyi, "Zeng Qinghong Shiqi Da ren Junwei fuzhuxi?" (Will Zeng Qinghong wait for 17th CPP Congress before being CMC Vice Chairman?), Taipei *China Times*, December 15, 2003, at *http://news.chinatimes.com/Chinatimes/newslist/newslist-content/0,3546,110505+112003121500066,00.html.*

176. See "China's Zeng spreads wings, gains power with military post," based on Reuters dispatches, Taipei *China Post*, November 4, 2003, at *http://www.chinapost.com.tw/p_detail.asp?id=42807&GRP=A&onNews=*.

177. "Hangtian Er Yuan Jianyuan 45 zhou nian, Li Lanqing, Wu Bangguo, Zeng Qinghong, deng biaoshi zhuhe" (Li Lanqing, Wu Bangguo, Zeng Qinghong and others offer congratulations on the 45th anniversary of the Second Astronautical Institute), Press Release, China National Space Administration, November 28, 2002, at *http://www.cnsa.gov.cn/brow.asp?id=1154.*

178. News release, "Jiang Zemin Xianchang Guankan 'Shenzhou"Sanhao Feichuan Fashe Chenggong" (Jiang Zemin observes the successful launch of the 'Shenzhou-3' Spacecraft at the launch site), China National Space Administration, March 25, 2002, at *http://www.cnsa.gov.cn/brow.asp?id=725*.

179. "Zhonghua Remnin Gonghe Guo Di Shijie Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui daibiao Mingdan (2982 ming)" (Namelist of delegates to the Tenth Session of the People's Republic of China National People's Congress [2982 names]), *People's Daily* Information Database, at *http://www.people.com.cn/GB/shizheng/252/9667/9685/20030315/944408.html*.

180. "Kui Fulin shuai Junshi Daibiaotuan Chufang Feizhou san guo" (Kui Fulin leads a military delegation to three African nations), Beijing *People's*

*Liberation Army Daily*, April 3, 2003, at *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2002/04/03/20020403001090_army.html*. Fu Zong Canmozhang Xiong Guangkai Shangjiang Qicheng fan Nanfei Chuxi Huiyi, (Vice Chief of General Staff General Xiong Guangkai Embarks on trip to South Africa to attend conference), April 6, 2003, at *http://jczs.sina.com.cn/2003-04-06/119324.html*.

181. Among them were: *www.english.peopledaily.com.cn/200304/06/eng20030406_114633.shtml*, *http://www.people.com.cn/GB/shizheng/252/9667/9685/20030315/944408.html*,*http://www.people.com.cn/GB/junshi/60/20021028/852180.html*, *www.jiaodong.net/2003/2/68203.htm*, *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2002/10/27/20021027001043_world.html*, *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2001/12/12/20011212001112_army.html*, *http://mil.21dnn.com/5051/2002-10-27/186@486760.htm*, *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/big5/pladaily/2002/04/20/20020420001067_army.html*,*http://jczs.sina.com.cn/2003-04-06/119324.html*, *http://www.pladaily.com.cn/gb/pladaily/2002/04/03/20020403001090_army.html*.

182. See the Beijing PCC web site at *http://www.beinet.net.cn/bjzx2003/overture/index.jsp*. In 1998, Zeng Haisheng was awarded a Science and Technology Progress Prize, Third Class, possibly for her work in computerizing the General Staff Records Office, see *http://www.chinatech.com.cn/aspx/kejiziliao/kejijiangxiang/jinbujiang/jinbujiang202.htm*.

183. See the Jiangxi Agricultural and Economic Net at *http://www.jxagriec.gov.cn*.

# CHAPTER 6

# THE 16TH PARTY CONGRESS AND LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN THE PLA

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## INTRODUCTION

The 16th Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), held November 8-15, 2002, set into motion significant changes in the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) high command. In a single re-shuffle, the directorship of each of the four general departments of the PLA was replaced, ushering into power a group who, most concur, are younger, better educated, and more professionalized than any previous PLA leadership. At the same time, Jiang Zemin retained the position of Central Military Commission (CMC) chairman although giving up all his other Party (and later State) positions.

This transition takes place at a critical moment in China's history. China's new military (and political) leadership is faced with a rapidly changing international security environment, radically different from those facing its predecessors. The current leadership must adjust to the new demands brought about by the U.S.-led Global War on Terrorism, even as it is responding to transnational issues that had previously been given less attention (everything from issues of emerging diseases to emerging terrorism threats). Moreover, it must do so in the context of latent domestic upheaval. China's internal situation is undergoing tremendous change as well, partly as a consequence of two decades of economic reform, and there are a host of burgeoning social, economic, and political problems.

Finally, these new leaders have come into power at an important phase in PLA reform and modernization. They will be charged with implementing many of the reforms first developed before or during Jiang's tenure as paramount leader of the PRC. These challenges go

beyond simply the acquisition of weapons and technology and span the spectrum of institutional and systemic reforms that will enable the PLA to professionalize, modernize, and realize the aspirations Jiang laid out in his "Two Transformations" program of reform and modernization.

Who are these military leaders? Who are the key staff members that will support them in this effort? What experiences in their careers have prepared them to meet the challenges that lie ahead? The following paper will attempt to answer these questions.

## CAREER PATHS IN CONTEXT OF PLA DEVELOPMENT AND REFORM

Before looking at the biographies of these new military leaders, it is useful to review some of the key events that have shaped the recent history of the PLA in order to better understand their impact on this new CMC. For example, one would want to know where, institutionally, these new leaders sat during previous periods of crisis or tension. This would include understanding what positions these leaders held during the summer of 1989 or as the crisis evolved during the Taiwan Straits missile tests in 1995-96.

Other events deal more directly with the reform and modernization of the PLA. The new members of the Central Military Commission were not mere spectators to the dramatic changes that have taken place within the PLA over the past two decades. In many cases they were active participants, implementing military policies and responding to national crises. And, their involvement in these changes was deemed to be successful. These events shaped their careers, defined what were seen to be their professional accomplishments, and make up the experiences that they will draw upon when leading the People's Liberation Army in the coming years.

Some key events include:

### Development of the New Strategic Assessment of "Peace and Development."

In 1985 Deng Xiaoping provided an assessment of the international security environment that has since provided a

rationale for the basic direction of China's domestic policies, foreign policies, and defense policies. Key to this was the belief that "peace and development" was the keynote of the times—that China would enjoy a relatively long lasting peaceful environment in which it could concentrate on economic development. With this assessment, Deng determined that what had previously been considered the most likely PLA contingency—fighting an imminent war, total war, and nuclear war—was no longer applicable and that the PLA should instead train and prepare for a more limited, locally-oriented war. This fundamental shift in assumptions made PLA reform and modernization possible.

Quite simply, when the PRC was working under the assumption that total war was imminent, the PLA could only rely on the weapons and techniques it had on hand to defend China. With war no longer considered to be imminent, and with two decades of predicted peace in which to reform, modernize, innovate, and experiment, the door was now open for doctrinal adjustment based on new military developments. It was possible for the PLA to plan for the future as well as deal with the present.[1] As a result the PRC leadership made a decision to modernize the PLA while at the same time carrying out a program of economic development.

The definition of this most likely type of conflict for which the PLA was preparing to fight has changed several times since this first groundbreaking change: from Local Wars to Local Wars Under Modern Conditions, to Local Wars Under Modern High Tech Conditions. Each change has brought with it some adjustment to PLA military doctrine. These changes in turn have had to be internalized by PLA leaders, passed down through the ranks, and utilized in training. Rising officers in the PLA were called upon to master these changes and further implement them over the course of their careers.

**Downsizing and Force Restructuring.**

Concomitant with the decision to reform and modernize the PLA while focusing on economic development was the conclusion that PLA restructuring was necessary, as well. This involved downsizing

the PLA, both in terms of manpower and organizational structure. Thus, in 1985 the PLA was reduced by a million in personnel, and the number of Military Regions (MR) went from eleven to seven. This was followed by later force reductions of 500,000 (announced in 1997) and 200,000 (announced in 2003).

Although a critical move necessary in order to promote modernization and professionalization in the PLA officer corps, implementing this decision presented a host of challenges for officers in the PLA. This was particularly true for those working in the headquarters of military regions and in the General Staff Department (GSD) and those working on personnel related issues. As provincial and local governments worked with appropriate military counterparts to provide newly demobilized soldiers with appropriate jobs and housing, PLA officers developed a more nuanced appreciation for the evolving relationship between the PLA and society. Officers assigned to various military regions were able to see how this restructuring was affecting the PLA and were given an opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation for the limits and challenges downsizing presented. They also were afforded an opportunity to see the potential for professionalization and reform such polices provided.

**Operation Desert Storm.**

U.S. operations during the 1991 Gulf War left a deeper impression on the leadership of the Chinese military than virtually any previous military action. Most were shocked and stunned by the highly televised U.S. victory; more to the point, they were surprised by what this victory indicated about the state of modern warfare, including the role of joint operations in modern warfare.

The Gulf War resulted in a PLA "study campaign" to understand the operational significance of the event. Upon assessing the rapidly changing nature of modern warfare, China's leadership apparently drew two important conclusions. First, it revised its conception of the most likely types of wars and campaigns its military would be called upon to prosecute. Second, it concluded that the armed forces of China were ill equipped to fight and win these new, most likely campaigns, which they termed "Local Wars Under Modern High Tech Conditions."

**Two Transformations Program of Reform and Modernization.**

Based upon the conclusions the PLA leadership drew from the 1991 Gulf War, the PLA set upon a course of thorough and comprehensive reform—cutting across virtually every conceivable facet of activity within the PLA and seeking measured leaps in the intellectual, professional, and conceptual outlooks of its defense establishment and virtually every member of its military.[2]

In December 1995, at an enlarged meeting of the CMC chaired by Jiang Zemin, China's military leaders put forth a new policy for "army building" or defense modernization to guide all aspects of PLA reform.[3] Known as the "Two Transformations," it calls for the Chinese armed forces to undergo a metamorphosis, transforming:

- From an army preparing to fight local wars under ordinary conditions to an army preparing to fight and win Local Wars Under Modern High Tech Conditions.
- From an army based on quantity to an army based on quality.

Although a holistic endeavor, the true scope and breadth of these reforms is best understood by considering them as three separate vectors aimed at the same objective. [4] (See Figure 1.)

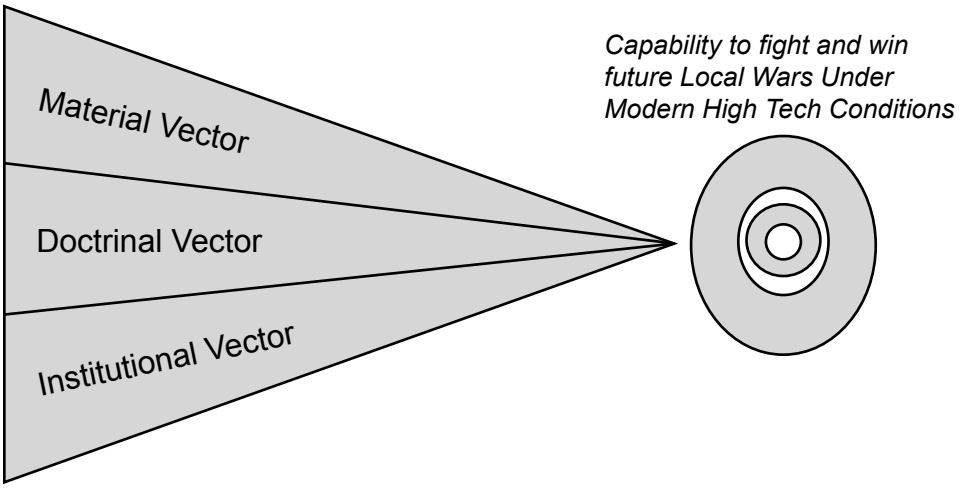


**Figure 1. Three Vectors of PLA Reform and Modernization.**

- **Material vector—weapons, equipment, and new age systems**. Reforms in this area are aimed at improving the weapons and equipment that the PLA will use to wage a campaign. They involve the development, procurement, acquisition, and fielding of new weapons systems, technologies, command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) assets and architectures, and both combat and combat support technologies.

- **Doctrinal vector—operational concepts and warfighting techniques**. Reforms in this area are aimed at improving *how* the PLA will fight. It consists of the new operational concepts: strategic guidelines, campaign methods, and tactics.

- **Institutional vector—systemic underpinning, organizations, and processes.** Reforms in this area are aimed at improving the institutions that enable the PLA to fulfill its national security objectives. It includes reforms to the systemic underpinnings, organizations, and processes that support and enable the first two vectors of reform. Examples include the personnel system, military education system, training regimens, force structure, command and control relationships, logistics structure, defense research and development complex, standardization processes (the codification of regulations and standard operating procedures), and military legal system.

It would be difficult to overstate the degree to which the PLA has focused on this program of reform and modernization in recent years. Reforms occurring along each of these vectors have been repeatedly emphasized in PLA discussions during the bulk of the past 10 years.

Progress along the material vector is comparatively easy to measure. Leaders engaged in these sorts of reforms include those engaged in weapons procurement and those participating in or guiding the development of new types of weapons and equipment.

Military leaders engaged in work along the doctrinal vector would include those involved in the formulation, vetting, and implementation of new operational concepts and techniques. At various phases in the process, this would include researchers at military science research and teaching institutions such as

the Academy of Military Science and China's National Defense University. It would also include operators, such as leaders in experimental units that are charged to test and evaluate new tactics and operational concepts and those working in the headquarters departments of Military Regions who might be charged to incorporate these concepts in large-scale military exercises.

Military leaders engaged in work along the institutional vector focus on improving the systemic underpinnings supporting PLA reform and modernization. Often this work supports activities occurring along the other two vectors of reform. Officers engaged in this work can be found both "at the center" working within the four general departments, and at the headquarters departments of military regions throughout China.

In light of all these changes, the PLA is therefore in flux. That is, it is operating in the midst of both internal evolution (covering institutions and doctrine, as well as equipment), as well as national-level changes (in terms of the ongoing process of economic reform and the building of a "socialist market economy") and a global security environment that has seen, since at least 2001, enormous shifts.

## LEADERSHIP CHANGE IN THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION

It is in this context that the 16th Party Congress met in 2003. In the course of that Party Congress, there was an almost complete personnel overhaul in the composition of the CMC, the highest military body (see Table 1). The overall number of CMC members was reduced from eleven to eight and the heads of each of the four PLA General Departments changed. [Note: In April 2004, the Hong Kong newspaper *Wen Wei Po* reported that the membership of the CMC would soon expand from eight to eleven. The three new members would be Vice Admiral Zhang Dingfa, commander of the PLA Navy, General Qiao Qingchen, commander of the PLA Air Force, and Lieutenant General Jing Zhiyuan, commander of PLA Second Artillery. If true, this change would establish a Central Military Commission that is remarkably "joint" in its composition. At the time of this writing, however, such a change has not been formally announced.]

| Position | Previously held by | Currently held by |
|---|---|---|
| Chairman | Jiang Zemin | Jiang Zemin, *no change* |
| Vice Chairman | Hu Jintao | Hu Jintao, *no change* |
| Vice Chairmen | Zhang Wannian<br>Chi Haotian | Guo Boxiong<br>Cao Gangchuan |
| Director of the General Staff Department (GSD) | Fu Quanyou | Liang Guanglie |
| Director of the General Political Department (GPD) | Yu Yongbo | General Xu Caihou |
| Director of the General Logistics Department (GLD) | Wang Ke | Liao Xilong |
| Director of General Armament Department (GAD) | Cao Gangchuan | Li Jinai |

**Table 1. Changes in Make-up of the CMC Resulting from 16th Party Congress.**

Six individuals retired. These were:

- Zhang Wannian, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission
- Chi Haotian, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission and concurrent Minister of Defense
- Fu Quanyou, chief of General Staff Department (GSD)[5]
- Yu Yongbo, director of the General Political Department (GPD)
- Wang Ke, director of the General Logistics Department (GLD)
- Wang Ruilin, deputy director of the General Political Department (GPD).

Five individuals retained their membership. Chairman Jiang Zemin and Vice Chairman Hu Jintao each retained their original CMC positions. In addition to their non-CMC posts, Cao Gangchuan, former director of the General Armament Department (GAD) and Guo Boxiong, former executive deputy chief of the GSD were both promoted to vice chairmen of the Central Military Commission.[6] Xu Caihou, former CMC member and executive deputy director

of the General Political Department retained his membership and was appointed director of the GPD. Although this was not a change in military grade (CMC members that are not vice chairmen are all grade three), Xu Caihou was also made a member of the CCP Secretariat. As he was the only member of the PLA to hold such a position, the 16th Party Congress personnel shuffle established Xu as a critical link between the Party and its military for issues of day-to-day Party affairs.

Three new individuals were added: Liang Guanglie, Liao Xilong, and Li Jinai. In addition to being made members of the CMC, Liang Guanglie, former commander of the Nanjing Military Region was made the head of the General Staff Department; Liao Xilong, former commander of the Chengdu Military Region, was made director of the General Logistics Department; and Li Jinai, former Political Commissar of the General Armaments Department was made Director of the GAD.

## MILITARY MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION

The civilian leaders on the CMC have been the subject of much research and discussion already. This paper will focus instead on the new *military* members of the CMC and the background and experiences they bring to bear on the challenges the PLA will face in the coming decade.[7] Key aspects of their background are outlined in table two.

### CMC Vice Chairman Guo Boxiong.

During the 16th Party Congress, Guo Boxiong was made vice chairman of the CMC and a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Prior to this, he held the positions of CMC member and executive deputy director of the General Staff Department.

Guo Boxiong was born in 1942. He joined the PLA in 1961 at age 19 and joined the CCP in 1963 at age 21.[8] He received military training at the Xian Army Academy, at the PLA Military Academy, and at China's National Defense University.[9]

Guo has been a member of the PLA for over 43 years. He spent the first two decades of his career (from 1961 to 1982) with the 55th Division of the 19th Army, rising from enlisted soldier to chief of staff of the division.[10] He also served as both a staff member of the Propaganda Group of the Political Section in one of the 55th Division's regiments, as well as in the Combat Training Group of the headquarters of the same regiment (the 164th Regiment).

Guo has spent the bulk of the second half of his career in military region headquarters positions gaining expertise in military operations and command issues. From 1983-1985, Guo was the chief of staff of the PLA's 19th Army. In 1985, as the PLA began its dramatic shift from a wartime to a peacetime footing, Guo was deputy chief of staff of the Lanzhou MR. This was followed by a three year stint as commander of the 47th Group Army. In 1993, Guo was made deputy commander of the Beijing MR—a position he held during the Taiwan Straits missile tests of 1995-96. This was followed in 1997 by an appointment to be commander of the Lanzhou MR.

Guo is also experienced in issues related to military training. During the 1979 Sino-Vietnam border war, for example, he served as the deputy head of the Combat Training Section of the 19th Group Army. He also has a reputation in the PLA for developing innovative tactics. During the Western '93 and '94 war games, he is said to have earned the esteem of the CMC by orchestrating exercises featuring live mobile rapid response operations, frontier defense bolstering, and border counterattack. He also is credited with introducing new tactics for mobilizing elite forces for air/land attacks and integrated mobile strikes against key targets.[11] While serving as deputy commander of Beijing Military Region and commander of Lanzhou Military Region, he was credited with introducing "quality management initiatives" in an effort to improve combat effectiveness.[12]

After serving as commander of the Lanzhou MR for two years, Guo was made a member of the CMC, GSD executive deputy chief, and deputy secretary of the Party Committee of the PLA General Staff Department. In 2002, Guo was made a member of the Politburo as well as CMC vice chairman.

**CMC Vice Chairman and Minister of Defense Cao Gangchuan.**

Like Guo Boxiong, as a result of the 16th Party Congress, Cao Gangchuan was made vice chairman of the CMC and a member of the Politburo. During the subsequent National People's Congress (NPC) in March of the following year, he was made Minister of Defense.

At age 68, Cao Gangchuan is the oldest military member of the new CMC. General Cao's career in the PLA spans five decades. He joined the PLA in 1954 and joined the CCP in 1956.

Seemingly marked early on for advancement, Cao spent virtually the first decade of his military career in training. First, he attended the Nanjing No. 3 Artillery Ordnance Technical School and the No.1 Ordnance Technical School (1954-56). He next went to Dalian for Russian language training, and then went to the Soviet Union to train at the Leningrad Advanced Artillery Military Engineering School (a.k.a. the Soviet Army Artillery Academy), where he majored in missile design. He returned to the PRC in 1963.

During his lengthy career, Cao has gained a substantial level of experience on issues related to equipment. Cao spent over two and a half decades focused on issues of ordnance and military equipment. He served in a variety of positions first within the General Logistics Department and then in the Military Equipment Department of the GSD.[13] These positions ranged from working in the Ammunition Division of the GLD Ordnance Department (1963) to serving as deputy director of the GSD Military Equipment Department (1989).

Thirty-five years into his military career, Cao Gangchuan was made, first, director of the Military Affairs office in the GSD, and later director of the CMC Office of Military Trade. In 1992, as the PLA began to digest the lessons it had learned from its observations of U.S. operations during Operation DESERT STORM, Cao was appointed to the position of GSD deputy chief. He was reportedly the first person without any combat experience to hold this position.[14]

In many ways, General Cao has been one of the critical leaders in the PLA's efforts to advance the modernization of its weapons and equipment. In 1996, Cao left his position in the GSD and was appointed minister of the Commission of Science, Technology,

and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND). This transfer from a GSD position to a position that was under the dual jurisdiction of the PLA and the State Council was considered unusual. Many concluded that this was an indication of Jiang's renewed interest in reforming the national Chinese military industrial complex as part of his ongoing program of reform and modernization known as the "Two Transformations."[15]

During his tenure in this position, Cao repeatedly pressed for modernization in the face of resource constraints. He is reported to have publicly argued for increases in the PLA military budget, particularly in the area of research and development. For example, in 1997, after learning that the projected budget increase was 12.7 per cent (6.6 per cent above inflation) he is reported to have complained that the PLA had no choice but to postpone many research and development projects, stating, "We have to feed and clothe three million-odd soldiers. What's left after that?"[16]

In 1998, General Cao became the first director of the newly formed General Armament Department—a position he held until his promotion to vice chairman at the 16th Party Congress. As director of the GAD he continued his work of promoting scientific and technological innovation as a means of improving the PLA's military capabilities, i.e., advancements on the material vector of PLA reform.

Cao is reportedly trying to foster innovation in the PLA weapons development process through the introduction of such measures as competition.[17] One can expect Cao to continue to advocate innovation and reform during his tenure as vice chairman, as he helps to guide the PLA in its ongoing program of reform and modernization.

**CMC and CCP Secretariat Member Xu Caihou.**

Prior to the 16th Party Congress, Xu was a CMC member and held the post of executive deputy director of the General Political Department. In addition, he held the position of secretary of the PLA Discipline Inspection Committee—a post that gave him a great deal of influence over promotions and other PLA personnel moves. At the 16th Party Congress, Xu maintained his membership

in the CMC as well as his position as secretary of the PLA Discipline Inspection Committee, and was further promoted to director of the General Political Department. At the same time, Xu was also given membership in the CCP Secretariat.[18] As the only PLA officer serving in this body, he is a critical figure in Chinese civil-military (or at least Party-Army) relations.

Xu Caihou was born in Liaoning in June 1943. He joined the PLA in 1963, and spent the bulk of his career in the Shenyang MR working on personnel and political issues. Soon after enlisting, Xu became a student in the Electronics Engineering Department of the prestigious Harbin Institute of Military Engineering. He graduated in 1968—just as the Cultural Revolution was reaching its height.

Immediately thereafter, he was sent to a farm controlled by the 39th Army. Subsequently, he was sent, as a soldier, to the Jilin Provincial Military District. There, he began as a deputy company political instructor, then became a deputy political instructor in an artillery regiment in the Shenyang MR.

Xu has spent the bulk of his career in the Shenyang MR working on personnel and political issues. From 1972 to 1982, he was secretary and deputy chief in the Personnel Division of the Political Department of the Jilin Provincial Military District. During this time, he also studied at the PLA Institute of Political Sciences (October 1980-August 1982). He rose to become chief of the Personnel Division of the same Political Department, then became deputy director of that Political Department in 1983-1984.

For the next decade, Xu held a series of positions of increasing responsibility in military region and group army commands. He served as director of the Mass Work Section of the Shenyang MR's Political Department (1984-85), director of the Political Department of the 16th Group Army (1985-1990), and then was promoted to political commissar of the 16th Group Army.

Xu digested the PLA's lessons learned from the 1991 Gulf War while serving in the position of assistant to the director, and then deputy director, of the GPD. He remained in the GPD throughout a series of dramatic events for the PLA, including the purge of the Yang brothers and Jiang's announcement of the "Two Transformations" program of reform and modernization.[19] For a portion of this time he

also served as director of the Liberation Army Publishing House and served as co-editor of *Liberation Army Daily*.[20] Xu remained deputy director of the GPD until 1996, when he became political commissar for the Jinan MR.

In 1999, Xu became a member of the CMC and executive deputy director of the PLA GPD. In 2000, he also gained the position of secretary of the Discipline Inspection Committee of the CMC, as well as deputy secretary of the Party Committee of the PLA GPD. He continued to hold all these positions in 2002 when he succeeded his old boss, Yu Yongbo, as CMC member and director of the GPD and became a member of the CCP Secretariat.

**CMC Member and Director of the General Staff Department Liang Guanglie.**

At the 16th Party Congress, Liang Guanglie was promoted from commander of the Nanjing Military Region to member of the Central Military Committee and director of the General Staff Department.

Liang Guanglie was born in December 1940. He joined the PLA in 1958 and the CCP in 1959. He attended the Xinyang PLA Infantry School, the Military Academy in Nanjing, and the Chinese National Defense University and has a degree from Henan University, where he completed a political theory correspondence education program.

Liang worked his way up from the lowest ranks in the PLA. From 1958-1963, Liang was in the First Army, first as an enlisted soldier and squad leader and subsequently as commander of an engineer company and staff officer of the operations and training branch, Headquarters (HQ), 2nd Regiment, 1st Division of the First Army. In 1966, he became a staff officer of the engineering branch. In 1970 he held that same position in the operations and training branch of that same headquarters. It was in this field, operations, that he then spent the bulk of his military career.

From 1970 to 1979, he was in various positions in the Wuhan Military Command HQ, including as a staff officer in the Operations Department, deputy chief of the first section of the Operations Department, then deputy head of the Operations Department.

Liang gained combat experience during the Sino-Vietnam War of 1979. From 1979 to 1981, Liang was the deputy commander of

the 58th Division of the 20th Army, before rising to command of the same division from 1981 to 1983. Liang was promoted to deputy commander of the entire 20th Army in 1983 and rose to command that Army in 1985, a position he held for the next five years. It is reported that at the time Liang was serving in these positions, the 20th Army was a test unit for new concepts in organization. He is rumored to have played a hand in the formation of the first mechanized brigades in the Chinese military and the formation of the PLA's first emergency response unit.[21]

Next, Liang became the commander of the 54th Group Army. According to his official biography, this event occurred in 1990. However, as David Shambaugh has pointed out in previous work, one should note the existence of unverified news reports in the Hong Kong press asserting (1) that Liang actually took up the position in 1988 and (2) that the 54th Group Army played an unspecified role in enforcing martial law in Beijing in 1989. [22]

In 1993, he was promoted to chief of staff of the Beijing MR—crossing career paths with Guo Boxing.[23] He then became the Beijing MR deputy commander in 1995 and held this position during the PRC's Taiwan Straits missile tests of 1995-96. In 1997, Liang rose to command of the Shenyang MR.

In 1999, Liang was made both commander and deputy Party committee secretary of the Nanjing MR. During his tenure as commander of the Nanjing MR, he spent a great deal of time focusing on sea-crossing and landing operations of both Chinese and foreign armies (with a clear eye on a possible Taiwan contingency). While commanding the Nanjing MR, he oversaw a series of increasingly elaborate exercises directed at Taiwan. He has since published a book on the subject of landing operations. [24]

His expertise in these areas mark him as the CMC's point man on Taiwan. His selection as director of the General Staff Department clearly signals the continued importance of Taiwan to the PLA. However, one should note that Taiwan expertise is not Liang Guanglie's only attribute, but was instead probably only one of several factors that played a role in his selection to this position. For example, although in some ways he has spent comparatively little time "at the center," one should note that he has been involved with

the CCP Central Committee longer than any of the current members of the CMC. Liang was an alternate member of both the 13th and 14th Central Committees.[25]

Furthermore, Liang comes to the General Staff Department with significant command experience drawn from a number of different regions. His early experiences in Wuhan, combined with his headquarters-level command experiences in the Beijing, Shenyang, and Nanjing MRs have likely exposed him to a range of PLA conditions, and given him a deep understanding of the on-the-ground realities throughout the PLA. This breadth of expertise will likely prove valuable as he continues to lead the PLA down its path of reform and modernization.

**CMC Member and Director of the General Logistics Department Liao Xilong.**

During the 16th Party Congress, General Liao Xilong was promoted from commander of the Chengdu MR to CMC member and director of the General Logistics Department.

Rising quickly through the ranks, Liao is said to have had the quickest path to general of all of the current members of the CMC.[26] He has attended the PLA Military Academy, China's National Defense University, and has done some part-time post-graduate studies with the Sociology Department of Beijing University.

Liao was born in 1940. He joined the PLA in 1959 and the CCP in 1963. He spent a little over the first decade of his career in rising from enlisted soldier to company commander in the 49th Division of the Guizhou Provincial Military Command.

In 1971, he became deputy head of the operations and training branch in the HQ of the 91st Regiment, 31st Division of the 11th Army, and then became the deputy head of the Military Affairs section and Operations and Training Section in the HQ of the 31st Division. By 1978, he had risen to be deputy commander of the same regiment, and in 1981, he was further promoted to commander of the regiment.

Liao is a combat veteran who gained fame in the Sino-Vietnam War of 1979. According to Hong Kong news reports, he gained a reputation for command during his efforts in the Basha mountain

pass and in the capture and occupation of Fengtu. He was commended by the CMC for his "combat effectiveness" and his ability to win military victories with minimal casualties and using few resources[27]

In these experiences, he had an opportunity to gain appreciation for the critical role logistics and support play in planning successful military campaigns. As important, he experienced, first-hand, PLA weakness in this important aspect of modern warfare.

In 1984, Liao was once again involved in combat with Vietnam, where he commanded the 31st Division when it captured Zheyinshan on April 30, 1984. In the course of this campaign, Liao again was praised for his effective use of forces and low casualties. As a result, he was reportedly handpicked for promotion by then-chairman of the CMC Deng Xiaoping from division commander to deputy army commander of the 11th Army. Six months later, Liao Xilong was promoted to commander of the 11th Army. At that time, Liao Xilong was 44 years old, the youngest army commander in the entire PLA.[28]

In 1985, he rose to become deputy commander of the Chengdu MR, a post he held for the next ten years—after which he was promoted to the post of commander of the same MR. [29] He held this post until the 16th Party Congress.

In his 17 years in the headquarters of the Chengdu MR, Liao saw the PLA face challenges and adapt to change. From this vantage point, he heard Deng announce that "Peace and Development" was the new keynote of the times, witnessed dramatic downsizing and force restructuring in 1985 with a 1 million-man force reduction (followed by a later reduction of 500,000) and a consolidation of Military Regions from eleven to seven. In 1989, it was troops from his MR that enforced marital law in Tibet. Liao saw the PLA digest its lessons from the 1991 Gulf War and worked to implement Jiang Zemin's Two Transformation's program of reform and modernization

Little is known about his opinions of the United States. However, it should be noted that during the period of tension that eventually led to the Chinese missile tests in the Taiwan Straits in 1996, Liao was a voice of hawkish sentiments. According to one Hong Kong report:

> When asked: "If the United States gets involved when the cross-strait situation becomes precarious, what changes will take place?" Liao responded without hesitation: "Why should we be afraid of the United States?" Liao said: "In the past the Japanese troops could be considered powerful, but they were defeated. The Kuomintang troops could also be considered strong, but they were no match for the Communist troops. The relative strength of the opposing sides cannot be judged solely by several planes or a specific weapon; the people's will plays a more important role. Sensible people should understand this."[30]

## CMC Member and Director of the General Armament Department Li Jinai.

At the 16th Party Congress, General Li Jinai was made CMC member and director of the General Armament Department.

Li Jinai is the nephew of the PLA's former GSD chief Li Jing.[31] Li Jinai was born in 1942. Unlike the other members of the CMC, Li actually joined the CCP *before* joining the PLA. He joined the CCP in 1965 and the PLA in 1967. Prior to joining the PLA, he was a student of missile design at the Engineering Mechanics Department of the Harbin Institute of Technology.

Li spent much of the early part of his career doing political work in Second Artillery Corps (China's missile forces). After serving for a brief period as an enlisted soldier in a construction regiment, Li, in 1969, became a clerk and deputy platoon leader in the Second Artillery. From 1970 to 1977, he rose steadily, becoming a deputy head and deputy political commissar of the Propaganda Branch within his regiment.

By 1977, Li had become head of the Youth Section and head of the Organization Section, in the Organization Division of the Political Department of the Second Artillery. After serving there for six years, he went on to become the deputy political commissar of the 54th Base, Second Artillery. For much of that time, he was also working at the Party Consolidation Office of the PLA. In 1985, Li became head of the Cadres' Department within the PLA GPD. From there, he was promoted to be deputy director of the GPD, a post he held for two years.

During the PLA's reforms of the 8th and 9th Five Year Plans (1991-2000), Li served as the deputy political commissar, then political

commissar of the Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND). In this position, he played a role in guiding the PLA in its efforts to move from a personnel intensive force to a military that relied more on technology and professional expertise. It was also in this position that, in 1996, he first began to work side by side with the then new minister of COSTIND—current CMC vice chairman Cao Gangchuan.

When COSTIND was reorganized in 1998, Li became the political commissar and deputy secretary of the Party committee of the newly formed General Armaments Department. There he continued to work with Cao—who was serving as GAD director.

An engineer by training and a political officer by practice, during his tenure at COSTIND and at the GAD, Li took a keen interest in various major research projects. It has been reported that at major tests, both he and Cao Gangchuan would be personally involved in the oversight and direction of major tests.[32] This has remained true for China's space program. A December 2002 report from China's official *Xinhua* news service identifies him as the commander and chief of China's space program—a position he likely inherited when assuming the duties of director of the GAD.

Li has also gone on record calling for qualitative improvements in the capabilities of the PLA, including incorporating greater informationization and mechanization into the PLA's equipment. And, according to the Hong Kong press, like his colleague Cao Gangchuan, he has actively petitioned the CCP to increase PLA budgets in an effort to enhance and implement its modernization program.[33]

In 2002, in addition to taking over directorship of the GAD, Li joined Cao as a second member of the CMC with an S&T background. This personnel move highlights the fact that technical innovation and reform are seen as issues of critical interest to the PLA. Given their shared professional history, one can expect to see more continuity than change in the pace or direction of the PLA's approach to material vector modernization in coming years.

**Table 2. Military CMC Members Career Paths at Key Moments in Time.**

| Member/ Event | Border War With Vietnam (1979) | PLA shifts from wartime to peacetime footing (1985) | Tiananmen Square (1989) | Gulf War (1991) | Taiwan Straits Missile Tests 1995-96 | Kosovo (1999) | Present |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Guo Boxiong** | Served as staff officer & head of combat training section of the PLA 19th Army | Appointed deputy chief of the Lanzhou MR | Deputy chief of the Lanzhou MR<br>Later appointed commander of the 47th Group Army | Commander of the 47th Group Army | Deputy commander of the Beijing MR | CMC member<br>Executive deputy chief of the GSD | Politburo member<br>CMC vice chairman |
| **Cao Gangchuan** | Served in General Planning Division of the GSD Military Equipment Department | Deputy director of the GSD Military Equipment Department | Deputy director of the GSD Military Equipment Department<br>After Tiananmen appointed director of GSD Military Affairs Department and director of CMC Office of Military Trade | After Gulf War appointed deputy director of the General Staff Department | Began as this period as deputy chief of General Staff<br>In 1996 was appointed minister of COSTIND | CMC member<br>Director of the GAD | Politburo member<br>CMC vice chairman<br>Minister of Defense |
| **Liang Guanglie** | Deputy Division Commander (58th Division, 20th Army) | Commander, 20th Group Army | Commander, 20th Group Army<br>Commander 54th Group Army<br>*Note: start date uncertain, may have played a role in enforcing martial law in Beijing* | Commander, 54th Group Army | Deputy commander of the Beijing MR | Commander of the Nanjing MR | Member CMC<br>Director of GSD |
| **Xu Caihou** | Various positions in personnel and political departments in Jilin | Director of the political department of the 16th Group Army | Director of the political department of the 16th Group Army | Political commissar of the 16th Group Army | Began this period as deputy director of GPD<br>Later appointed political commissar of Jinan MR | CMC member<br>Executive deputy director of GPD | CMC member<br>Director of GPD |
| **Liao Xilong** | Commander, 91st Regiment, 11th Group Army | Deputy commander of Chengdu MR | Deputy commander of Chengdu MR<br>*Note: troops from his MR enforced martial law in Tibet* | Deputy commander of Chengdu MR | Commander of Chengdu MR | Commander of Chengdu MR | CMC Member<br>Director of GLD |
| **Li Jinai** | Various positions political departments of the Second Artillery | Head of GPD Cadres Department | Head of Cadres Department, GPD<br>Later appointed deputy director of GPD | Deputy director of GPD | COSTIND political commissar | GAD political commissar | CMC member<br>Director of GAD |

## DEPUTY DIRECTORS OF THE GENERAL DEPARTMENTS

In addition to the individuals who hold the positions of directors, each of the four general departments (GSD, GPD, GLD, GAD) has a group of deputy directors that comprise a second tier of leadership over these organizations. Those who hold these positions are of interest for two reasons. First, in many ways, these are the individuals who manage the more day-to-day implementation of Chinese defense policy. Second, deputy directorship can be indicative of future CMC membership. At some point in their careers, for example, four of the six current military members of the CMC have served as deputy directors of a general department. [34]

The following section identifies the deputy directors of the four general departments and, where possible, lists some of their concurrent positions, areas of expertise, and previous posts. Biographical information on these individuals is not generally as detailed as that available for the full members of the CMC. In some cases, even identifying the individuals who hold these positions can be a challenge. Furthermore, at the time of this writing, reports of a December 2003 personnel reshuffling are still being evaluated. Therefore, this listing should be viewed as preliminary, possibly incomplete, and not necessarily reflecting the final outcomes.

### General Staff Department.

*Ge Zhenfeng*. Ge Zhenfeng currently serves as executive deputy chief in the PLA General Staff Department, a position previously held by current CMC vice chairman Guo Boxiong. He is also a full member of the CCP Central Committee and is rumored to be deputy secretary of the General Staff Department's Party Committee.[35] Prior to assuming the position of GSD executive deputy chief, Ge served as commandant of the PLA Academy of Military Sciences, an institution intimately involved with the PLA process of formulating and testing new doctrinal concepts. He has authored articles on the role of education in military reform.

Ge currently serves under GSD Director Liang Guanglie. This is not the first time their career paths have crossed. When Liang Guanglie held the position of commander of the Shenyang Military

Region from 1997-1999, Ge served as the military region's chief of staff. There, among his other duties, he was actively involved in managing the Shenyang MR's response to the 1998 floods.[36]

*Wu Quanxu*. Wu Quanxu currently holds the position of deputy chief of the General Staff Department. He is an alternate member of the Central Committee. Wu was promoted to GSD deputy chief in 1995 after serving as an assistant in the same general department. He was promoted to the rank of general in June 2000, a date common to several individuals currently serving at the deputy director level in the four general departments.

Wu is well traveled. During his tenure in the GSD, he has visited numerous countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. He has also helped receive delegations visiting from the U.S. and Canada.

According to some Hong Kong reports, Wu has served as both the commander and commissar of the First Group Army—a unit that is known in China for its achievements in the 1984 border battle to recover strategic Zheyin Mountain from Vietnamese forces.[37]

General Wu has had a series of positions and career experiences of interest:

- He is currently the deputy director of the Military Encyclopedia Compilation Committee.
- He served as chairman of the State Council's first ever committee on the accreditation of military science academic degrees.
- He served as a member of the "21 February" security group responsible for overseeing security in Beijing during President George Bush's 2002 visit to Beijing.
- In April 2001, he oversaw the PLA's first ever disaster response drill dealing with potential accidents in nuclear power stations.

*Qian Shugen*. Qian Shugen is currently a deputy chief of the General Staff Department. He is a full member of the CCP Central Committee. He also serves as a member of the NPC Committee for Overseas Chinese Affairs and the NPC People's Liberation Army Election Committee.

Significantly, much of Qian's previous work on the GSD appears to revolve around mobilization issues, including PLA reserve units, conscription issues, and inspection tours. Qian now holds the position of secretary general of the National Defense Mobilization Committee (NDMC). This is a position of growing importance, as mobilization planning assumes a larger role in PLA concepts of future warfare. In that context, the NDMC is a critical nexus, linking the State, the Party, and the Army. The NDMC, which includes the head of the State Council, as well as the leadership of the CCP and the CMC, is responsible for planning (and, in event of war, executing) mobilization plans. It therefore has enormous purview; included in its brief are economic, social, and political missions, as well as military ones.

Qian is also fairly well traveled. In addition to trips around Asia, to Europe, and Africa, he has also visited the U.S. Pacific Command, Russia, Cuba, and Iran.

*Zhang Li***.** Zhang Li currently serves as deputy chief of the GSD and as deputy secretary of the CMC Discipline Inspection Committee. He is an alternate member of the Central Committee and a member of the NPC Army Election Commission.

Zhang is fairly new to his position and served as assistant to the GSD chief until late 2000 or early 2001. He has traveled to India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Finland, and Greece.

*Xiong Guangkai***.** Xiong Guangkai currently serves as deputy chief of the General Staff Department. He is also an alternate member of the Central Committee. Xiong is involved with many PLA foreign exchanges, as well as Chinese intelligence.

Prior to the 16th Party Congress, there were rumors that Xiong would rise though the ranks and could possibly become the next PRC Minister of Defense. This did not happen. Xiong, and his post 16th Party Congress fate, have been discussed at length in Hong Kong news reporting and by other U.S. scholars. [38]

**General Political Department.**

*Tang Tianbiao***.** Tang Tianbao currently serves as deputy director of the General Political Department. He has held this position since 1995. Prior to this time he held the position of assistant to the

director. He has held full membership in both the 15th and 16th Central Committees. He is also an NPC delegate and member of the NPC Credentials Committee. Like Wu Quanxu, he was promoted to the rank of general in June of 2000.

Tang is also fairly well traveled. He has been on military delegations to Africa, South Asia, North Korea, and Latin America. During the 2001 EP-3 crisis, he traveled with Zhang Wannian to Australia and New Zealand.

Over the course of his career, Tang has worked on many of the institutional and systemic challenges facing the PLA as it carries out its process of reform.

- He has experience with the PLA's ongoing work in "regularization" and the development of military laws and regulations. For example, he worked under Luo Gan as a member of a CCP commission on political science and law.

- He has experience with ongoing PLA efforts to streamline and downsize its personnel. In 1999 he served on a State Council working group focusing on the placement of demobilized military officers.

- He has experience with ongoing PLA efforts to reform its approach to professional military education. He served under GSD Deputy Chief Wu Quanxu as deputy chairman of the State Council's first ever committee on the accreditation of military science academic degrees.

*Yuan Shoufang*. Yuan Shoufang currently serves as deputy director of the GPD. He has been listed as an alternate member of both the 15th and 16th Central Committees. Born in Jilin in 1958, he was promoted to the rank of major general in 1988 and was made a full general in June 2000. Like several other General Department deputy directors, he first served as assistant to the director of the GPD and was promoted to deputy director in 1996.

Among the GPD deputy directors, Yuan appears to hold the propaganda portfolio. He often attends and speaks at meetings for military newspapers and publishing houses. He also holds the post of Director of the Military Sports Committee and served as the head

of a leading group in charge of the PLA's participation in the PRC's Ninth National Games.

Yuan Shoufang has paid special attention to developing methods to use technology to improve the GPD's approach to propaganda work. Since 1999, he has worked with relevant departments in the GSD to develop an "all army " propaganda and cultural information network. The purpose of this project was to make available a special network where officers could obtain detailed and current information directly from the General Political Department. This network is reported to have been in operation since 2000, and Yuan has been reported as being an important voice in promoting its use.[39]

Yuan has traveled within Asia, but does not appear to have had as many opportunities to interact with foreigners as other deputy directors of the GPD.

*Zhang Shutian***.** Zhang Shutian serves as deputy director of the GPD. He was promoted to general in June of 2000. He has comparatively limited experiences abroad, although it should be noted that he did travel with Chi Haotian to the DPRK in October of 2000.

Zhang Shutian currently serves as secretary of the CMC Discipline and Inspection Committee and as deputy secretary of the CCP's Central Discipline and Inspection Committee. He is the only current member of the PLA appointed to this position on the Central Discipline and Inspection Committee. He is also currently serving as an NPC deputy.

**General Logistics Department.**

Leadership in the General Logistics Department has undergone some turnover in recent months. At the time of this writing, reports on these changes are still surfacing. This has made identifying the current deputy directors of this department difficult. The following list should be considered preliminary.

*Wen Guangchun***.** Wen Guangchun is currently serving as deputy director of the GLD. He has held this position since 1996 when he was promoted from "assistant to the director" to deputy director. He is currently a vice chairman of the State Council's committee

regarding accreditation of military science academic degrees. He is a deputy of the 10th National People's Congress.

Wen has chaired and attended several meetings focusing on "socializing" logistics (i.e., relying more on civil and commercial providers to meet military needs in such areas as housing and fuel) and appears to have some interest in mobilization issues. He has accompanied Zhang Wannnian on several inspection tours and has traveled to Macau and Morocco.

*Sun Zhiqiang*. As of December 2003, Sun Zhiqiang was serving as deputy director of the GLD. He is a member of the 16th Central Committee and a deputy to the National People's Congress.

Sun Zhiqiang appears to be an understudied, but important, player in the PLA bureaucracy. Within the GLD, he appears to play a key role in managing the PRC defense budget. He is frequently quoted in news stories explaining military budgets and especially their increases, and appears have been occasionally tasked to explain military budgetary matters to the NPC. Xinhua lists him as holding the position of director of the GLD finance department in 1999.

Sun is also frequently quoted in articles discussing budgetary implications of PLA personnel reforms such as pay and housing reform. He appears to have experience in this area as well. For example, in 1998, he was listed as the head of the new PLA Military Insurance Office, which was set up to provide, for the first time ever, a mechanism to insure all members of the PLA against injury or loss of life. This program was approved by the State Council in 1998.

*Wang Qian*. As of October 2003, Wang Qian was serving as deputy director of the GLD. He is also an alternate member of the Central Committee. He has served as deputy director of the General Logistics Department since April 2001

Wang has experience with health and sanitation issues. Prior to moving to the GLD, Wang was the commandant of the No 3 Military Medical University in Chongqing. Recently, he has been active in the PLA's efforts to combat SARS (atypical pneumonia). In the spring of 2003, he was appointed Deputy Head of the Beijing Joint Working Group for Atypical Pneumonia Prevention and Treatment.

*Zhou Youliang*. As of July 2003, Zhou Youliang was deputy director of the GLD. He also held the concurrent post of director of the Capital Construction Department and was vice chairman of the

Beijing Commission on Urban Planning.

Some Hong Kong news reports, as of November 2003, indicated that Zhou Youliang had left these positions and had taken on a new post as a full-time member of the NPC Standing Committee.[40] Su Shuyan is said to have assumed at least a portion of Zhou's responsibilities.

*Su Shuyan***.** Su Shuyan currently holds the position of deputy director of the GLD.[41] He is a member of the 10th National People's Congress and currently holds the position of deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning.

His previous positions include: director of the GLD Vehicles and Vessels Department and director of the GLD Materials and POL Department.

*Tan Xuexin***.** As of late December 2003, Tan Xuexin was serving as deputy director of the GLD. Prior to taking up this position, Tan served as the long time director of the CMC General Office. He is seen to be close to CMC chairman Jiang Zemin.

At the time of this writing, little data is available regarding Tan's duties in his new position.

*Wang Tailan***.** As of March 2003, Wang Tailan has been listed in Hong Kong and Taiwan news reports as a former deputy director of the GLD. He was last identified in the Chinese press as a deputy director of the GLD at around this same time.

His is currently serving as an NPC deputy and a member on the NPC Committee for Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

**General Armament Department.**

As with the General Logistics Department, identifying deputy directors of the General Armament Department was challenging. The following list should be considered preliminary. Individuals are not listed in protocol order.

*Li Andong***.** Li Andong currently serves as deputy director of the General Armament Department. He is also a member of the 16th CCP Central committee and is a military delegate to the 10th NPC.

Li accompanied Cao Gangchuan on his trip to the United States in 2003.

Like GSD Deputy Chief Wu Quanxu, Li is a member of the current PLA Military Encyclopedia Compilation Committee.

*Chu Hongyan*. Chu Hongyan is currently serving as deputy director of the General Armament Department. He is a deputy for the 10th NPC. He was promoted to the position of deputy director in early 2002. Prior to this time he served as the GAD director for Comprehensive Planning.

Chu Hongyan participated in some planning meetings for the Chinese space program in early 2000. These meetings were supposed to have outlined the PRC's space exploration goals for the coming decade, which were laid out in the PRC Space White Paper of November 2000.

*Zhang Shiming*. Zhang Shiming is currently serving as deputy director for the GAD. He was promoted to this position in the spring of 2002. Prior to this time, he served as the director of the armament department in the Nanjing Military Region. At this time, he would have crossed career paths with then-Nanjing MR commander and current chief of the General Staff Department, Liang Guanglie.

Zhang was reported to have participated in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's historic counterterrorism exercises in the summer of 2003.

*Hu Shixiang*. Hu Shixiang currently serves as deputy director of the GAD. He has held this position since the GAD was founded in 1998.

He is an NPC deputy, and currently serves as deputy director of China's manned space program (Xinhua lists Li Jinai, the current director of the GAD, as the director of this program.)

*Zhu Fazhong*. As of October 2003, Zhu Fazhong was deputy director of the GAD.[42] He is an alternate member of the Central Committee.

Zhu was promoted to GAD deputy director in the spring of 2002 (at the same time as current GAD deputy director Zhang Shiming). Prior to taking up this position, he is reported to have served as the director of the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center.

## CMC GENERAL OFFICE

In addition to examining the background of the individuals that comprise the new CMC and the general department deputy directors

that support these leaders, it is also useful to look at the CMC as an institution to the extent that it is possible, given the limits of publicly available data. One office that demands particular attention is the General Office (GO) of the CMC.[43]

The General Office of the CMC serves as the nexus of Party-Army relations. The General Office's main functions are to provide secretarial, administrative, and personnel support for the CMC leadership.[44] It packages and passes information to the senior leaders. It assists CMC leaders in digesting the material, some of which may reflect debates and interpretations that were worked out at lower levels.[45] It also facilitates and supervises personal interactions among the senior members of the PLA leadership, manages the external activities of the MND, coordinates bureaucratic interactions among the core PLA agencies and their subordinate systems, and supervises the daily operations of CMC departments. It is the key coordination and evaluation point for strategic research and assessments developed within the PLA bureaucracy.[46]

A critical function of the General Office is to maintain routine communications with the CCP via the latter's own General Office.[47] This allows the party to have input into the CMC's deliberations and supplements information and influence that comes from CMC membership ties to the Central Committee apparatus, namely Cao Gangchuan and Guo Boxiong, who sit on the Political Bureau, and Xu Caihou, who is a member of the Secretariat.

The General Office's influence is generated through controlling the flow of information and documents, as well as the organization and agendas of the CMC meetings.[48] It therefore has the potential to exert significant, albeit usually indirect, influence on the CMC leadership and over many aspects of PRC military policy.

**General Office Personnel.**

The General Office is overseen by a director and several deputy directors. Prior to the 16th Party Congress, the director of the GO was Tan Yuexin. He assumed the post in 1999, having come from the Second Artillery, where he headed the logistics department.[49] In January 2004, he was replaced by Jia Tingan, the head of Jiang

Zemin's personal office since 1994 and former deputy director of the General Office.[50]

The staff of the CMC General Office is rumored to have undergone changes in recent years. The most current available reference on Chinese military leadership lists the deputy directors of the CMC General Office as follows (see Table 3).[51]

| Member | Position | Appointment |
|---|---|---|
| Jia Tingan | Director | December 2003 |
| Xu Changyou | Deputy Director | 1996 |
| Sun Fengshan | Deputy Director | 1997 |
| Yang Fukun | Deputy Director | 1997 |
| Wang Guanzhong | Deputy Director | 2002 |
| Cai Hongshuo | Deputy Director | 1997 |
| Cao Yumin | Deputy Director | 2003 |
| Hu Hanlin | Director, Comprehensive Bureau | 1990 |

**Table 3. CMC General Office.**

**General Office and Elite Politics.**

The General Office has been a major bureaucratic focal point to key figures in the CMC leadership ever since its establishment, in the early 1950s.[52] Its first director, Xiao Xiangrong, for example, reportedly had links to both Lin Biao and Luo Ronghuan (each of whom was partly responsible for CMC daily operations). [53]

The strong patronage link between the secretary general and the GO became clear in the Deng Xiaoping era when Yang Shangkun/ Yang Baibing played a pivotal role in directing the daily operation of the General Office. For most of this period, Major General Li Jijun was critical. In the 1980s, he headed the GO's policy research section, which he used to put forth papers—via the patronage of Yang Shangkun and Zhao Ziyang (first vice chairman of the CMC)—

advocating a new local war strategy.[54] Later, Li was picked to head the GO, but was replaced in 1996 by Dong Liangju, whose political loyalties are unclear. Two years earlier, however, Jiang Zemin began to place his stamp on the GO with the 1994 appointment of ***his*** personal secretary, Jia Tingan, as a deputy director.[55]

At the time of this writing, much remains unclear about the post-16th Party Congress make-up of the CMC General Office. In December 2003 a host of changes in PLA leadership positions were announced. Among them, a change in the leadership of the CMC General Office was announced. In what some might argue was an elite political power play, Jiang's former secretary and then deputy director of the CMC General Office was appointed director. Rumors abound of a further reaching personnel reshuffling within CMC General Office, but concrete data are not yet available. Whether they are later determined to be seen as Jiang loyalists, politically neutral, or close to Hu Jintao, the individuals taking up these new positions of leadership will be well positioned to influence the day to day activities of the CMC and, through them, indirectly influence defense policy in the PRC. For this reason, such changes should be watched with interest.

## CONCLUSION

As noted earlier, the CMC installed after the 16th NPC will be confronted with a range of issues, both within the PLA, as well as for the PRC as a whole. Given the personages involved, what can be said about their ability to successfully handle the myriad issues that are arising?

On the one hand, the various members of the new CMC exhibit an array of skills that are likely to serve them in good stead. For example, given the range of reforms (material, doctrinal, and institutional) that the PLA is seeking to undertake, there are CMC members who appear to have experience in each facet. Some, such as Cao Gangchuan and to some extent Li Jinai, are familiar with the new technologies involved in the modern weapons necessary for fighting wars under "high-tech conditions." Indeed, relative to the PLA as a whole, they are downright open to technological innovation. Others,

such as Liang Guanglie and Liao Xilong, are military operators with first-hand knowledge of tactics and operational concepts. Finally, the new CMC contains institutional reformers, seeking to manage, track, and improve the systemic underpinning that supports the PLA's ongoing program of reform and modernization. Xu Caihou and to some extent Li Jinai are responsible for ensuring that these programs are "regularized" and continue to support the PRC and the Party's larger political goals. Thus, when viewed from a larger perspective the new CMC's members bring with them significant experience in implementing systemic reforms and enhancing the PLA's capability to create an army that can fight Local Wars Under Modern Conditions, and which emphasizes quality over quantity.

Nor is that array of experiences necessarily limited to only the senior members of the CMC. At the deputy director level, for example, one finds a similar mix of functional experts. There are a number of deputy directors who come from either the military regions or various PLA institutions of military research and education. The latter includes the new GSD executive deputy chief, Ge Zhenfeng, and deputy director of the GLD, Wang Qian.

At the same time, however, there is also a striking degree of continuity within the top leadership at deputy director level. Chinese reports, for example, suggest that some of the deputy directors within the General Armaments Department were first appointed when it was founded in 1998. More to the point, after the Party Congress, each of the other general departments has at least one current deputy director that has held this position since 1996. Moreover, many of these long time deputy directors obtained these positions after serving for a number of years in the same department as assistant to the deputy director.

Although not unusual in China, when looking back at some of the events that took place prior to the Party congress, this continuity is even more striking. Given the upheavals and changes indicated earlier, including 9-11 and increasing domestic problems, it is noteworthy that the central political leadership did not in any significant way alter the anticipated make up of its CMC. In particular, there is a distinct paucity of expertise within the CMC in the area of counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism. Indeed, with the arguable exception of Liao Xilong's experience with martial law

in Tibet, the new military leadership—at both the CMC member and GSD deputy director level—does not appear to contain anyone with experience or expertise in non-traditional security threats. Although it would be difficult to make the argument that the pool of potential CMC members contained any candidate with this type of expertise, one cannot help but wonder about what sorts of efforts the current military leadership is making to elevate this issue within the General Departments.

Instead, in selecting its new generation of military leadership, the PRC appears to have hewed steadfastly to its long-held goals, such as reform and modernization and reunification with Taiwan. The individuals selected for these key leadership positions have advanced their careers by implementing a vision for modernization and national defense laid out by Jiang Zemin over the course of a decade. Change and reform, it appears, will primarily involve only those areas that were previously set forth.

This apparent paradox of both welcoming and discouraging significant change suggests several issues that need to be addressed in studying the CMC.

First, there is the issue of civil-military relations within the CMC. With Hu Jintao now apparently in control, it remains to be seen whether he will have a new perspective on PLA military reform. Will he echo Jiang Zemin's line of reform and modernization, or introduce a new guiding concept? Might he have an alternative interpretation of what Jiang's views on reform and modernization mean? Whatever Hu's line will be, how the CMC, comprised of officers whose careers have been shaped in part by Jiang and *his* interpretation of reform, will be worth watching.

Then, there is the question of institutional memory within the CMC and how that affects the larger PLA. Even if Hu does not provide a radically different perspective on how PLA reform should proceed, how the CMC itself evolves, in light of ongoing changes in the Chinese foreign and domestic security environment, remains open to analysis.

Moreover, those who hold such positions serve not only as institutional memory for their respective organizations, but as important, are often apparently themselves being groomed for top spots. How well such officers interact with other members of the

larger CMC structure, and especially those who are "imported" from the MRs and the group armies is likely to have a major impact on the course of reform.

Indeed, the case of Li Jijun, who successfully incorporated his own views on future warfare into ongoing reform programs for the PLA, raises the concomitant question of how the CMC, as well as the PLA as a whole, manages the entire issue of reform, beginning with where concepts of reform originate, through how it is shepherded to broader acceptance. Within that process, what role does the CMC play?

As the strategic situation confronting the PRC continues to evolve, the CMC will have a steady stream of new issues to consider. At the same time, as PLA reform advances, the CMC will have to balance those concerns with accommodating changes and evolution within the military. Close observation of the CMC, in terms of its personnel and its reactions, will provide valuable indicators for how the PLA, and indeed the top Chinese leadership, ultimately respond, including the likely limits and boundaries of discussion.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 6

1. When assessing the need for change, the PRC leadership also made several judgments about the nation's internal capacity. For example, it determined how many economic, societal, and political resources the PRC had the capacity to earmark for military purposes. These judgments in turn functioned to define the type of military the nation developed by bounding the nation's options with regard to PLA's force structure and the type of weapons and equipment the military predicted it would have at its disposal. For further discussion of the significance of "Peace and Development" see Yao Yunzhu, "The Evolution of Military Doctrine of the Chinese PLA from 1985-1995," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis,* Winter 1995 and David M. Finkelstein, *China Reconsiders Its National Security: "The Great Peace and Development Debate of 1999,"* The CNA Corporation, Alexandria, VA 2000.

2. For a more detailed discussion of this reform program, please see Kenneth Allen, Dean Cheng, David Finkelstein, and Maryanne Kivlehan, *Institutional Reforms of the Chinese People's Liberation Army: Overview and Challenges*, Alexandria, VA: The CNA Corporation, 2002.

3. Xiao Yusheng (Deputy Director of the Military History Department of the PLA Academy of Military Science), "Building a Strong People's Army," *Liaowang*, No. 31, July 29, 2002, pp. 7-9.

4. For a more detailed discussion of this parsing of reform, see please see Allen, *et al.*, *Institutional Reforms of the Chinese People's Liberation Army.* Also see Finkelstein's "Thinking About the PLA's Revolution in Doctrinal Affairs" in David M. Finkelstein and James C. Mulvenon, *The PLA's Revolution in Doctrinal Affairs*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, Forthcoming conference volume.

5. This position also is referred to as GSD director.

6. This was a change from a grade two to a grade one position. For explanation of the PLA grade system, see Chapter 8 by Kenneth Allen and John Corbett.

7. The background of these new leaders has also been subject to a fair amount of research. In particular, see David Shamabaugh, "China's New High Command," in Stephen Flanagan and Michael Marti, eds., *The People's Liberation Army and China in Transition*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2003; and James Mulvenon's numerous contributions to the online journal, *China Leadership Monitor*, which can be found at *http://www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org.*

8. Prior to joining the PLA, he had been a factory-worker.

9. Bi Jianxiang, *Reforging the Sword: New Leaders, New Roles*, unpublished paper.

10. Although he officially held this position until 1982, Guo was separated from the 55th Division from September 1981 to July 1983, when he attended the PLA Military Academy.

11. Bi Jianxiang,. *Reforging the Sword.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. His positions in the GLD were from 1963-1975. His positions in the Military Equipment Department of the GSD were from 1975-1989.

14. There is conflicting data on this point, however. Some scholars have referenced unconfirmed reports that Cao was sent to the frontlines during the 1979 Sino-Vietnam border conflict to coordinate artillery assets. See Shambaugh's "China's High Command," p. 52.

15. See, for example, Kuan Cha-chia "New Personnel Changes at Senior Military Hierarchy; Jiang Zemin's Call for Administering the Army With Strict Discipline; Major Decisions of Central Military Commission," *Hong Kong Kuang Chiao Ching*, December 16, 1996.

16. Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "Jiang Zemin To Mobilize Army Support To Be Next

Helsman," *Hong Kong South China Morning Post*, March 5, 1997, p. 19. Other reports about his comments that PLA's current defense spending is "still insufficient and is far from meeting actual needs," can be found in Hong Kong press articles such as Liu Yue-ying's "Why Finance Minister Has Become Angry--Liu Zhongli Analyzes Increase in Defense Spending" *Hong Kong Ta Kung Pao*, March 3, 1997.

17. Xinhua, "Navy To Develop More High-Tech Equipment, " 10 Jun 99.

18. The CCP Secretariat is the body responsible for running the day-to-day affairs of the Chinese Communist Party. It currently consists of seven members: Zeng Qinghong, Liu Yunshan, Zhou Yongkang, He Guoqiang, Wang Gang, Xu Caihou, and He Yong.

19. In 1992, in the wake of Tiananmen and a renewed commitment to the economic reform process (after his "southern tour"), Deng Xiaoping engaged in a major reshuffling (if not purge) of the top Chinese leadership, focused on President Yang Shangkun and his half-brother, General Yang Baibing (who was both secretary-general of the CMC and head of the GPD). The Yangs were reputed to be intent on blocking Jiang Zemin's accession to the top of the Chinese leadership. Furthermore, both were reported to have started repoliticizing the PLA, with perceived loyalty to the Yangs being a factor in promotions. Indeed, in the wake of the fall of the Yang brothers, a significant portion of the PLA's senior officers were reportedly transferred or retired. (Lena H. Sun, "Deng Completes Major Army Purge," *Washington Post*, February 12, 1993).

20. Tieh Yun-cheng, "Latest Developments With China's Military Leadership," *Hong Kong Kuang Chiao Ching* [Wide Angle ], No. 364, January 16, 2003, pp. 12-15. Also see Shambaugh, p. 52.

21. Shigeo Hiramatsu, "Characteristics of the New Chinese Military Leadership Structure," *Tokyo Chian Foramu*, June 1, 2003.

22. Shambaugh, "China's New High Command," p. 54.

23. According to their official bios, both Liang Guanglie and Guo Boxiong were serving in the Beijing MR headquarters from 1993 to 1997. Moreover, during the 1995-96 Taiwan missile tests, both were serving as deputy commanders of the Beijing MR.

24. Tieh Yun-cheng, "Latest Developments With China's Military Leadership," pp. 12-15.

25. According to their official bios, Liang is the only CMC member who is listed as an alternate member of the 13th Central Committee. The only other current CMC member who can even claim alternate membership to the 14th Central Committee is Li Jinai.

26. Hiramatsu, "Characteristics of the New Chinese Military Leadership Structure."

27. Liu Bafu, "Liao Xilong is Rising Star in Military," *Kuang-Chiao Ching [Wide Angle*], No. 278, November 16, 1995, pp. 64-66.

28. *Ibid*.

29. In 1995, in addition to being promoted to commander of the Chengdu MR, he also was made deputy secretary of the Party Committee.

30. "Chengdu Military Region Is Prepared for Actual Combat; Liao Xilong Says: Why Should We Be Afraid of the United States?" *Hong Kong Sing Tao Jih Pao*, March 6, 1996, p. A3.

31. Lin Chieh "Jiang Zemin Forms a New Central Military Commission Aimed at Operations Against Taiwan," *Hong Kong Hsin Pao* (Hong Kong Economic Journal), December 5, 2002, p. 34 .

32. Yu Bencheng and Su Kuoshan , "An Account of How Jiang Zemin Shows Concern for the Building of Units Under the State Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense," Beijing *Liaowang*, No. 30, July 28, 1997, pp. 4-6.

33. Li Tzu-ching, "The Military Presses Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji To Increase Military Funding" *Hong Kong Cheng Ming*, April 1, 1999, No. 258, pp. 19-20.

34. Cao Gangchuan and Guo Boxiong served as deputy directors in the GSD and Xu Caihou and Li Jinai served as deputy directors of the GPD.

35. *Hong Kong Commercial Daily,* "Reports Say Three Major Military Regions Will Carry Out Top-Level Adjustments," September 16, 2003, p. B2.

36. Xinhua "200,000 Soldiers Fight Floods In Northeastern China," August 13, 1998.

37. Oliver Chou, "PLA's Old Guard Makes Sure the New Faces Fit," *South China Morning Post*, December 2, 2002.

38. For a more detailed discussion, see Shambaugh, "China's New High Command," pp. 46-47.

39. *Xinhua*, December 26, 1999.

40. "Tong Shiping Is Appointed Deputy Political Commissar of the Guangzhou Military Region," *Oriental Daily News*, November 9, 2003.

41. Unlike Zhou Youliang, PRC news reports list him as having attended public Spring Festival events in early 2004.

42. Note, he has not been listed in news reports discussing public PLA Spring Festival related events.

43. The name of the GO of the CMC has changed several times. The original GO of the CMC became the Office Group of the CMC and then the Office Meeting of the CMC, and now the name is again the GO of the CMC.

44. Tai Ming Cheung, "The Influence of the Gun: China's Central Military Commission and Its Relationship with the Military, Party, and State Decision-making Systems," in David Lampton, ed., *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy: 1978-2000*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 2001, p. 70.

45. David Shambaugh, "The Pinnacle of the Pyramid: The Central Military Commission," in James C. Mulvenon and Andrew N. D. Yang, *The People's Liberation Army as Organization: Reference Volume v1.0*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2002, p. 105.

46. The offices of the CMC have undergone several changes in the 50-year history of the CMC. Currently, the General Office is composed of several subordinate bureaus and offices, including: the Comprehensive Investigation and Research Bureau, the Legal Bureau, the Audit Bureau, the Military Trade Bureau, the Communications War Readiness Office, and the Political Office. The GO also has two fewer functional departments, the Services Department and the Guard Department. These offices were developed over time to coordinate policy with regard to emerging issues that did not easily fit into the portfolios of the PLA general departments. A discussion of the role and function of many of these departments can be found in David Shambaugh, *ibid*.

47. Nan Li, "The Central Military Commission and Military Policy in China," in Mulvenon and Yang, p. 77.

48. Tai Ming Cheung. The General Office's functions were likely expanded in 1992 with Yang Shangkun/Yang Baibing's ouster and the disbanding of the functioning CMC Secretariat.

49. *Directory of Military Personalities,* U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Intelligence Agency, October 2000, p. iii.

50. Major General Tan Yuexin was appointed deputy director of the General Logistics Department.

51. *Directory of PRC Military Personalities*, November 2002. This chart represents the last known senior membership of the CMC General Office. With the replacement of the director in January 2004, there is widespread speculation that many other portfolios have changed. But, as of this writing, no other changes have been made public

52. Nan Li's article, cited earlier, provides a detailed analysis of the CMC's history, which provided background material for parts of this section.

53. *Ibid*.

54. Shambaugh, "The Pinnacle of the Pyramid," p. 105.

55. Jia is part of Jiang's "Shanghai gang," which originated when he was first mayor and then party chief in Shanghai in the mid-1980s. When Deng Xiaoping promoted Jiang to become party general secretary after the 1989 Tiananmen crisis, Jiang brought Zeng Qinghong (his chief-of-staff), You Xigui (his bodyguard), and Jia Tingan (his personal secretary) to Beijing with him. You was later appointed director of the Bodyguards Bureau and deputy director of the CCP General Office. Jia served Jiang as director of the office of the PRC president. You and Jia also have the military ranks of lieutenant general and major general, respectively. Jia's influence within the CMC comes from his access to Jiang. It is rumored that he acts as Jiang's surrogate in military matters. The nature of his role became even more defined in 2000, when he coordinated the investigation into party and military wrong doing related to the Yuanhua smuggling scandal. It was even rumored that he had been implicated in the scandal and was removed from his post, an allegation that was personally refuted by Jiang Zemin. See Tai Ming Cheung, *op cit*.

# CHAPTER 7

# PLA LEADERSHIP IN CHINA'S MILITARY REGIONS

**Elizabeth Hague**

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the characteristics of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) military leaders in the seven military region (MR) headquarters. A study of leaders at the military region level can provide critical insight into how PLA modernization is being implemented at the operational level. The PLA has moved away from the field army model described by William Whitson in the 1970s, where field army affiliation played a key role in building contacts for promotion. While the PLA Group Army (GA) is a new organizational basis for forming contacts that can enhance a PLA officer's career, professional experience becomes an increasingly important factor for promotion as the PLA modernizes.[1] New assignments can be vertical (promotions) or lateral (often offering fresh experience within one's current rank or grade). First, the chapter will begin by identifying some key characteristics of MR leaders, and, where possible, potential turnover in the MRs based on criteria such as age, time in position and grade, and promotion potential.[2] It will focus on leaders at the deputy commander level and below, rather than on the commanders of the MRs. While in some cases promotions and assignments are based on connections, age, and timing of open positions, in many cases, the selection of key military leaders in MR headquarters reflects operational priorities of the PLA or specific mission objectives of that military region. Second, the chapter will examine how, collectively, PLA leaders in a MR reflect PLA and MR priorities. Finally, just as the provinces are training grounds for national-level civilian leaders, military regions are training grounds for national-level military leaders.[3] The chapter will conclude by examining the backgrounds of selected military leaders who have been transferred or promoted from the MRs to the national level in the past two years, reflecting

PLA priorities where possible. It assumes that the collective makeup and characteristics of military leaders in an MR are more important for that MR's missions than the promotability of a few individuals. In this context, promotability is not treated as a factor in itself, but rather as a signpost for gauging the priorities of the PLA and the MR. To narrow the scope, this chapter focuses on ground force leaders in the MRs. An additional article could be written on Air Force and Navy leaders.

## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF MILITARY REGION PERSONNEL

The MRs include individuals with a variety of different backgrounds who collectively meet the MR's or the PLA's needs. Typically, the mix includes, on the one hand, MR leaders who have served for many years in the MR, provide continuity or connections to provincial and local governments, and often serve MR political functions. On the other hand, it also includes leaders who have been promoted recently and in many cases occupy their current positions to gain experience prior to further promotion. The MR leaders also have a mix of diverse Group Army (GA) or MR experience and have distinct portfolios. Finally, MR personnel turnover will continue at a rapid pace.

1. **A mix of MR leaders who provide continuity in the MR and "fast burners" who are expected to move on to higher commands.** MRs usually include at least one individual who serves the important function of representing continuity in the MR. This individual usually has been in the MR or the MR system for a number of years and actively contributes to the working operations of the MR. He serves political functions such as attending ceremonies; offers functional expertise; and coordinates relations between MR headquarters, different MR units, and local or provincial governments. In many cases, despite his important contributions at the MR level, the individual will not be further promoted before retirement, though he has a better chance for promotion if he still has two or more years left at the deputy commander level before mandatory retirement at 63 years old.[4] Every MR

also has more than one "fast burner"—a comparative newcomer with desirable experience, who often has been promoted at least once in the last two years and is a year or two younger than his colleagues. Due to his age and experience in operational areas of interest to the PLA, this individual's promotion potential is often greater. He often is assigned to his current position for a relatively short period to gain experience before being further promoted.

2. **Rapid Expected Turnover.** The military regions will continue to experience a great deal of turnover because most military region leaders are relatively close in age (within five years of each other) and have usually 1-3 (up to 5) years before retirement.[5]

3. **Diverse GA and MR experience**. MR headquarters include deputy commanders and a chief of staff who have spent their careers in the MR, ensuring an understanding of the MR within the MR headquarters. However, all MRs have fairly diverse representation of group armies in the headquarters and more than one chief of staff or deputy commander (not including the Navy and/or Air Force representative) from other MRs.[6] Most MR leaders have group army backgrounds, but a few also have general department experience at the national level or experience as military district commanders.

4. **Diversity in portfolios**. MRs have always included a diversity of portfolios, with deputy commanders at a minimum dividing responsibility for training and operations; political, personnel and troop welfare; logistics and budget; and armaments.[7]

   - *Training and Operations*. In many cases, it is difficult to tell who is driving training and operations in the MR. It seems that, as in the past, the ranking deputy commander—the number one ranking deputy commander in official protocol—is in charge of training and operations. Often this individual is an established military leader with strong training in a conventional field such as infantry. However, some MRs—such as the Beijing and Chengdu MRs—also have a more recently promoted deputy commander with operational experience in a more "cutting edge" GA—one of the GAs which has received priority equipment and training to carry

out PLA modernization objectives—than that of the ranking deputy commander. It appears these deputy commanders (Beijing's Gao Zhongxing and Chengdu's Gui Quanzhi) also may play some role in training and operations. All MRs have at least one individual with cutting edge experience; it seems that many do not yet have the portfolio for training and operations.

- *Political issues*. While political commissars are not the focus of this paper, the political commissar, deputy political commissars, and head of the MR political department play an important role in MR political, personnel, and troop welfare issues.
- *Logistics*. One deputy commander holds the logistics portfolio, which includes supply, transportation, ordnance, medical services, housing, and finance. He is responsible for ensuring the sustainability of MR forces during operations and developing a more effective joint logistics capability in the MR, in support of the PLA's objectives to develop improved power projection, rapid reaction, and flexibility.[8] In addition, the individual in charge of logistics generally takes the working-level lead for the MR's national defense mobilization committee, established to cope with mobilization for war. The chairman of the MR's national defense mobilization committee is the MR commander. Multiple deputy commanders and the chief of staff also are involved in mobilization issues.
- *Armaments*. MR-level armament departments were established following the 1998 creation of the national-level General Armament Department and oversee unit-level equipment management and maintenance.[9] In the last couple of years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of deputy commanders or chiefs of staff with a strong armaments background, as the PLA attempts to integrate new equipment into its training and operations. Four of the seven MRs now have at least one chief of staff or deputy commander with strong experience in weapons and technology integration.
- *Air Force*. In each military region, at least one deputy commander also commands the military region air force.

There were three new military region air force commanders in 2003.

- *Navy*. In three MRs, at least one deputy commander commands the fleet associated with that military region: the North Sea Fleet (Jinan MR); East Sea Fleet (Nanjing MR); or South Sea Fleet (Guangzhou MR).
- *National-level experience*. Four of the seven MR headquarters include one or two individuals with known experience in the General Staff Department.[10] These individuals have national-level experience in national defense mobilization, operations, and equipment integration and probably act as a link in their areas of expertise between the General Staff Department and their MR. They include Beijing MR's Su Rongsheng, Chengdu MR's Fan Xiaoguang and Lu Dengming, Nanjing MR's Liu Shenyang, and Shenyang MR's Mao Fengming.
- *Ethnic Minorities and Internal Stability*. At least two MRs—Chengdu and Lanzhou—include one deputy commander with a portfolio for an ethnic minority military district or handling internal unrest. While the People's Armed Police (PAP) has taken over most responsibilities for internal unrest, the PLA maintains an active role in some sensitive regions. The Beijing Garrison commander concurrently is a deputy commander of the Beijing MR—the only municipal garrison commander who is also a MR deputy commander. The continued importance of the PLA's role in ethnic and sensitive areas, and the strong local ties that MR leaders foster, are one argument for sustaining the current MR structure, in contrast to an argument made mostly by military academics to abolish the system on grounds of modernization and "jointness."[11]

**Military Region Leaders Representing Continuity in the MR.**

The MR headquarters include military region leaders who have worked in the MR system for a number of years and demonstrated strong ability and contributions to their military regions. Many are the ranking deputy commander for their region. Some retire after

years of solid contributions, such as Ranking Deputy Commander Gong Gucheng of the Guangzhou MR, who retired in January 2004. Many do not rise further in the chain before retiring.

- **Chen Xitao**, Ranking Deputy Commander, Beijing MR (BJMR). Chen has been a Beijing MR deputy commander since around march 1998; before that, he was a chief of staff in the Nanjing MR and a 31st GA commander. Chen was born in 1943 and has a couple of years left at the deputy commander level.
- **Chen Shijun**, Ranking Deputy Commander, Chengdu MR (CDMR). Chen has been a Chengdu MR deputy commander since January 1995 and ranking deputy commander since at least July 2001. He is very active and visible within the MR, speaking at a variety of events in support of PLA and MR initiatives. Chen still has two or three years left at the deputy commander level.
- **Zheng Shouzeng**, Ranking Deputy Commander, Lanzhou MR (LZMR). Deputy commander of the Lanzhou MR since 1999, Zheng Shouzeng seems to have spent his whole career in the Lanzhou MR and currently is the deputy commander with the longest experience in the Lanzhou MR. He has the portfolio for training and operations. He wrote on information operations as early as 1996.[12] He has conducted a number of exercises in the Lanzhou MR, to include a "4-level headquarters" long-range on-line communications exercise in November, 1999 as deputy commander of the military region, and the 1998 "WEST-EX" exercise, as 21st GA commander in the Lanzhou MR. Both exercises featured prominently in national-level newspapers.[13] Zheng's age is unknown, making it difficult to calculate how many years he has left in his career.[14]
- **Dong Wanrui,** Ranking Deputy Commander, Nanjing MR. Dong Wanrui has been Nanjing MR deputy commander since September 1996. Dong is in charge of national defense mobilization and logistics for the military region. He has made a strong argument that economic development should consider national defense needs, a potent argument in the

Nanjing MR, which has experienced both strong economic growth and infrastructure development that would support a Taiwan contingency. Lt Gen Dong has an infantry background and was a 31st GA commander in the Nanjing MR. He was born in 1943 and still has a couple of years left before retirement.

- **Ding Shouyue,** Deputy Commander, GZMR. Ding replaced ranking Deputy Commander Gong Gucheng when Gong retired in January 2004; it is unclear whether Ding also is the ranking deputy commander. Although Ding is new to the GZMR, he had been a deputy commander in the Jinan MR since at least July 1999. He reportedly is a specialist in urban warfare—of probable use in Taiwan contingency planning—and was a 21st GA commander. He was born in November 1944 and still has at least four years left at the deputy commander level.

**Expected Turnover.**

A lot of turnover is expected in the military regions in the next several years. This should allow younger officers with more operational experience in recent PLA modernization to enter the leadership ranks more quickly and will probably help with PLA modernization. Based on the "Law of the People's Republic of China for Active Duty Officers" and "PRC Amendment to Officer Enlistment Regulations" implemented in 2001, the following are mandatory retirement ages, based on position.[13]

| | |
|---|---|
| Military Region Commander<br>Military Region Politiical Commissar | 65 years old |
| Military Region Deputy Commander<br>Military Region Chief of Staff<br>Military Region Headquarters Department Directors<br>(Political, Logistics, Armament) | 63 years old |
| Group Army Leader<br>Military Region Headquarters Department Deputy Directors[14] | 55 years old |

Li Cheng has used similar methodology to demonstrate the narrow band of ages within the military regions and the resulting expected high turnover.[15] Table 1 below demonstrates that most leaders are expected to retire within five years if they remain at their current level and do not get promoted.

**ABBREVIATIONS: CDR: Commander; PC: Political Commissar; DCDR: Deputy Commander; MRAF: Military Region Air Force; COS: Chief of Staff; J Log Dept: Joint Logistics Department; BJ Gar=Beijing Garrison; Pol Dept=Political Department; Arm Dept=Armament Department; GA=Group Army; Tib MD=Tibet Military District; SSF=South Sea Fleet; NSF=North Sea Fleet; ESF=East Sea Fleet; AF=Air Force. MRs are listed in alphabetical, rather than protocol, order.**

| **Beijing MR (BJMR)** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Max age 65 years old** | **Name** | **DOB** | **Probable Year of Retirement** |
| **Position** | | | |
| CDR | Zhu Qi | 1942 | 2007 |
| PC | Fu Tinggui | 8/44 | 8/09 |
| **Max age 63 years old** | | | |
| DCDR | Chen Xitao | 1943 | 2006 |
| DCDR | Zang Wenqing | 12/40 | *Ready to retire* |
| DCDR/CDR, BJ Gar | Liu Fengjun | 10/42 | 10/05 |
| DCDR | Su Rongsheng | 10/42 | 10/05 |
| DCDR/CDR, MRAF | Li Yongjin | 1941 | 2004 |
| DCDR | Gao Zhongxing | 12/43 | 12/06 |
| COS | Chang Wanquan | | ? |
| Dir, Pol Dept | Dong Wancai | | ? |
| Dir, J Log Dept | Guo Fengqi | 7/45 | 7/08 |
| Dir, Arm Dept | Qiu Jinkai | 7/46 | 7/09 |
| **Max age 55 years old** | | | |
| CDR, 27th GA | Wang Xibin | | ? |
| CDR, 38th GA | Li Shaojun | 1949 | 2004 |
| CDR, 65th GA | Feng Zhaoju | 9/49 | 9/04 |
| **Chengdu MR (CDMR)** | | | |
| **Max age 65 years old** | **Name** | **DOB** | **Probable Year of Retirement** |
| **Position** | | | |
| CDR | Wang Jianmin | 11/42 | 11/07 |
| PC | Liu Shutian | 12/40 | 12/05 |
| **Max age 63 years old** | | | |
| DCDR | Chen Shijun | 1942 or 1943 | 2005 or 2006 |
| DCDR | Gui Quanzhi | 1943 | 2006 |
| DCDR/CDR,Tib MD | Meng Jinxi | 9/44 | 9/07 |
| DCDR | Fan Xiaoguang | | ? |

**Table 1: MR Leaders Probable Year of Retirement from Their Current Positions (January 2004).**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DCDR/CDR, MRAF | Fang Dianrong | | ? |
| COS | Lu Dengming | | ? |
| Dir, Pol Dept | Hu Yongzhu | 7/44 | 7/07 |
| Dir, J Log Dept | Zeng Jianguo | | ? |
| Dir, Arm Dept | Dong Guishan | | ? |
| **Max age 55 years old** | | | |
| CDR, 13th GA | Zhang Youxi | 7/50 | 7/05 |
| CDR, 14th GA | Xia Guofu | 11/51 | 11/06 |
| **Guangzhou MR (GZMR)** | | | |
| **Max age 65 years old** | **Name** | **DOB** | **Probable Year of Retirement** |
| **Position** | | | |
| CDR | Liu Zhenwu | 4/44 | 4/09 |
| PC | Yang Deqing | 9/42 | 9/07 |
| **Max age 63 years old** | | | |
| DCDR | Ding Shouyue | 11/44 | 11/07 |
| DCDR/CDR,SSF | Wu Shengli | 8/45 | 8/08 |
| DCDRCDR, MRAF | Lu Denghua | 12/41 | 12/04 |
| DCDR | Gao Chunxiang | | ? |
| DCDR | Ou Jingu | 8/44 | 8/07 |
| COS | Fang Fenghui | | ? |
| Dir, Pol Dept | Zhou Yuqi | | ? |
| Dir, J Log Dept | Tang Xinqiu | | ? |
| Dir, Arm Dept | *unknown* | | |
| **Max age 55 years old** | | | |
| CDR, 41st GA | Jia Xiaowei | | ? |
| CDR, 42nd GA | Liu Yuejun | 1954-1955 | 2009-2010 |
| **Jinan MR (JNMR)** | | | |
| **Max age 65 years old** | **Name** | **DOB** | **Probable Year of Retirement** |
| **Position** | | | |
| CDR | Chen Bingde | 12/40 | 12/05 |
| PC | Liu Dongdong | 1945 | 2010 |
| **Max age 63 years old** | | | |
| DCDR | Zhong Shengqin | 1943 | 2006 |
| DCDR | Ye Aiqun | 10/45 | 10/08 |
| DCDR/CDR, NSF | Zhang Zhannan | | ? |
| DCDR/CDR, MRAF | Liu Zhongxing | | ? |
| COS | Li Hongcheng | | ? |
| Dir, Pol Dept | Kou Xianxiang | 11/44 | 11/07 |
| Dir, J Log Dept | Zhang Zhende | | ? |
| Dir, Arm Dept | Hu Renhai | | ? |
| **Max age 55 years old** | | | |
| CDR, 20th GA | Yuan Jiaxin | | ? |
| CDR, 26th GA | Feng Yujun | | ? |
| CDR, 54th GA | Huang Hanbiao | | ? |

**Table 1: MR Leaders Probable Year of Retirement (Continued).**

| LZMR | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Max age 65 years old** | **Name** | **DOB** | **Probable Year of Retirement** |
| **Position** | | | |
| CDR | Li Qianyuan | 1942 | 2007 |
| PC | Liu Yongzhi | 11/44 | 2009 |
| **Max age 63 years old** | | | |
| DCDR | Zheng Shouzeng | | ? |
| DCDR | Zou Gengren | | ? |
| DCDR/CDR, Xinjiang MD | Qiu Yanhan | 2/44 | 2/07 |
| DCDR/CDR MRAF | Huang Hengmei | 12/40 | *Ready to retire* |
| DCDR | Song Caiwen | | ? |
| COS | Wang Guosheng | | ? |
| Dir, Pol Dept | Kong Ying | | ? |
| Dir, J Log Dept | Guo Hongchao | | ? |
| Dir, Arm Dept | Long Dawei | 3/45 | 3/08 |
| **Max age 55 years old** | | | |
| CDR, 21st GA | | | *Unkown* |
| CDR, 47th GA | Xu Fenlin | | ? |

| NJMR (Nanjing MR) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Max age 65 years old** | **Name** | **DOB** | **Probable Year of Retirement** |
| **Position** | | | |
| CDR | Zhu Wenquan | 3/43 | 3/08 |
| PC | Lei Mingqiu | 6/42 | 6/07 |
| **Max age 63 years old** | | | |
| DCDR | Dong Wanrui | 1943 | 2006 |
| DCDR | Ma Diansheng (AF) | 3/42 | 3/05 |
| DCDR | Lin Bingyao | | ? |
| DCDR/CDR, ESF | Zhao Guojun | | ? |
| DCDR/CDR, MRAF | Liu Chengjun | | ? |
| COS | Xu Chengyun | | ? |
| Dir, Pol Dept | Sun Dafa | | ? |
| Dir, J Log Dept | Zhong Minghui | | ? |
| Dir, Arm Dept | Liu Shenyang | | ? |
| **Max age 55 years old** | | | |
| CDR, 1st GA | *Unknown* | | |
| CDR, 12th GA | Qi Jianguo | | ? |
| CDR, 31st GA | Zhao Keshi | | ? |

| Shenyang MR (SYMR) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Max age 65 years old** | **Name** | **DOB** | **Probable Year of Retirement** |
| **Position** | | | |
| CDR | Qian Guoliang | 12/39 | 12/04 |
| PC | Jiang Futang | 10/41 | 10/06 |
| **Max age 63 years old** | | | |
| DCDR | Wu Yuqian | | ? |

**Table 1: MR Leaders Probable Year of Retirement (Continued).**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DCDR/CDR, MRAF | Xu Qiliang | 1950 | 2013 |
| DCDR | Liu Yahong | 2/46 | 2/09 |
| DCDR | Mao Fengming | | ? |
| COS | Li Shiming | | ? |
| Dir, Pol Dept | Pan Ruiji | | ? |
| Dir, J Log Dept | Hou Shusen | | ? |
| Dir, Arm Dept | Xun Zhenjiang | | ? |
| **Max age 55 years old** | | | |
| CDR, 16th GA | Guan Kai | | ? |
| CDR, 23rd GA | Kou Tie | | ? |
| CDR, 39th GA | Ai Husheng | | ? |
| CDR, 40th GA | | | *Unknown* |

**Table 1: MR Leaders Probable Year of Retirement (Concluded).**

**Assorted Backgrounds.**

Most MRs include personnel from a variety of backgrounds. The diversity of backgrounds of personnel in the MRs enhances the MRs' ability to deal with a variety of operational issues and expand the MRs' contacts with officers outside of the MR. The Beijing Military Region is a good example. In the Beijing MR, only two key leaders with known GA affiliation share that affiliation with another member—Deputy Commander Zang Wenqing (expected to retire soon) and Logistics Department Director Guo Fengqi, who both were 65 GA commanders in the Beijing MR. Four MRs, at least nine group armies, two general departments, and the Air Force are represented among twelve of the top military leaders (not including deputy political commissars). While the exact command backgrounds of many of these individuals is unknown, collectively their experience includes former service in group armies associated with infantry, mechanized, amphibious and armor; chief of staff experience in three military regions; administration and enforcement of regulations; army aviation; and Blue Army opposing force (OPFOR) exercises.

**(CDR=Commander; PC=Political Commissar; DCDR=Deputy Commander; COS=Chief of Staff; BJMR=Beijing MR; CDMR=Chengdu; SYMR=Shenyang MR; Pol Dept=Political Department; GA=Group Army; NJMR=Nanjing MR; LZMR=Lanzhou MR; GSD=General Staff Department)**

| Name and Position | Current Portfolio | Past Experience (most recent first) |
|---|---|---|
| Zhu Qi<br>CDR, BJMR | Commander, Beijing MR. | • COS, BJMR<br>• COS, CDMR<br>• CDR, 14th GA CDMR (minorities, mountain areas, large MR with complex logistics due to size and varied terrrain) |
| Fu Tinggui<br>PC | Political Commissar, Beijing MR. | • Dir, BJMR Pol Dept<br>• PC, 39th GA, SYMR |
| Chen Xitao<br>DCDR | Probably operations and training. | • COS, NJMR<br>• CDR, 31st GA, NJMR (amphibious, armor, artillery, and Taiwan-related exercises) |
| Zang Wenqing<br>DCDR | Unknown but has been involved in mobilization issues.<br>Will retire soon. | • DCOS, BJMR<br>• CDR, 63rd GA<br>• CDR, 65th GA |
| Liu Fengjun<br>DCDR | Commander, Beijing Garrison. | • COS, unknown GA, BJMR; Infantry background.<br>• Beijing experience since at least 1995. |
| Su Rongsheng<br>DCDR | Executive Vice Chairman, MR National Defense Mobilization Committee. | • CDR, 24th GA<br>• DDir, Dir, Military Affairs Department, GSD (administration, regulations, enforcement)<br>• Prominent princeling. |
| Li Yongjin<br>DCDR | Commander, Beijing MR Air Force | • CDR, BJMR AF since at least 1997<br>• Previously a DCDR, probably in BJMR; exact background unknown. |
| Gao Zhongxing<br>DCDR | Military affairs portfolio; possible training and operations and probable civil-military issues. Excellent promotion potential. | • COS, BJMR<br>• CDR, 38th GA, BJMR (elite rapid reaction unit, mech, first army aviation, Taiwan-related exercises) |

**Table 2: Beijing Military Region (BJMR): An Assortment of Backgrounds.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Chang Wanquan<br>COS | Coordinates MR Headquarters training, logistics, equipment. Excellent promotion potential. | • COS, LZMR<br>• CDR, 47th GA, LZMR (OPFOR army/innovative exercises; 47th GA has produced many generals) |
| Dong Wancai<br>Dir, MR Pol Dept | Coordinates/oversees political, welfare, and discipline issues for MR | • Dir, Pol Dept, General Armament Department (GAD)<br>• (national-level experience) |
| Guo Fengqi<br>Dir, MR Joint Logistics Department | MR logistics; has argued for improved personnel, a joint logistics system, and better logistics management. | • CDR, 65th GA, BJMR |
| Qiu Jinkai<br>Dir, MR Armament Department | MR armament and equipment integration and management. | • CDR, 27th GA, BJMR (Rapid reaction, all brigades. Probably will get more equipment instead of downsizing. Possible involvement in 1989 Beijing Tiananmen protests) |

Sources: Military Databases, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS).

**Table 2: Beijing Military Region (BJMR): An Assortment of Backgrounds (Concluded).**

## OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES IN THE PLA AND THE MILITARY REGIONS

The PLA's attempts to modernize are focused on fighting and winning a local war under modern, high-tech conditions. Although PLA modernization has been ongoing since 1985, since the 1990s the PLA has identified several key priorities for doing so based on lessons learned since the Gulf War in 1991; Operation ALLIED FORCE in Serbia; Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan in 2001; and the War on Iraq in 2003. Some of the priorities for which the PLA military is training include:

- combined and joint operations;
- PLA equipment upgrades and integration;
- more realistic training;
- improving command and control;
- logistics reform;
- amphibious operations;

- special operations and rapid deployment;
- countering precision guided munitions;
- countering electronic interference;
- information warfare (gaining information dominance);
- improving air combat operations;
- blue water navy;
- national defense mobilization.[18]

While the above are PLA-wide priorities, within each military region, training priorities reflect the primary strategic direction and operational focus of the MR. For example, the Chengdu MR has issues with internal stability related to Tibet; the Lanzhou MR has issues with internal stability related to Xinjiang. These two military regions are the only two military regions with deputy commanders in their headquarters who are also the commanders of military districts (Tibet Military District—Chengdu MR; Xinjiang Military District—Lanzhou MR). Military Region priorities include:[19]

- Beijing MR: Beijing Garrison; capital air defense; Gobi Desert training; electronic warfare; demobilization of two group armies in January 2004.
- Chengdu MR: Minority restiveness; mountain/border/high altitude combat.
- Guangzhou MR: South Sea Fleet; Hong Kong/Macau/ proximity to Special Economic Zones; amphibious operations; equipment upgrades; flood fighting.
- Jinan MR: North Sea Fleet; different weather conditions.
- Lanzhou MR: Minority restiveness (Like Tibet Military District commander, Xinjiang Military District commander is also MR deputy commander); "high tech" training; blue forces; India; cooperation with Central Asia ( two strategic-level concerns).
- Nanjing MR: equipment integration; Taiwan contingency-related tactics; missiles; East Sea Fleet; air; Shanghai Garrison; amphibious operations; combined air-ground-naval operations; information warfare. While national

defense mobilization receives attention in all MRs, Nanjing MR appears to place great public emphasis on this issue, perhaps because the Nanjing MR has benefited from major infrastructure upgrades and is an area that leaders likely fear could be attacked in a Taiwan contingency.

- Shenyang MR: Severe winter conditions; North Korean refugees; demobilization of one group army.

Not surprisingly, collectively these are the priorities that most of China's military leaders concentrate on, especially younger leaders equipped with better education and experience.[20] I do not have space to address all of these issues—particularly those relating to the Air Force and Navy—and instead will limit my discussion to a few. Overall, however, as younger leaders come into important positions in the military regions or are promoted to national-level positions, they are often tasked to work on these issues or are promoted based on their experience or background. Because the PLA's operational doctrine and plans for modernization have evolved significantly over the last several years, some of the older leaders attempt to catch up with new operational developments and equipment acquisition through intensive training in "high technology" concepts. As alluded to earlier, predicted continued turnover in the next few years increasingly will bring in leaders with greater career experience implementing PLA modernization concepts from the 1990s onwards. Already, current MR leaders, like their Central Military Committee (CMC) counterparts, have more operational experience as a group in target areas of the PLA's post-1990 modernization. These areas include amphibious operations; combined operations; national defense mobilization; weapons integration; mobile warfare; logistics; command, control, communications, computers and intelligence (C4I); and more realistic training, in many cases to include Taiwan scenarios.[21]

**Equipment Upgrades and Integration: An Increased Emphasis on Experience in Armament Departments.**

At least four out of seven of the MRs (Nanjing MR, Guangzhou MR, Lanzhou MR, and Jinan MR) have deputy commanders or chiefs

of staff with known former MR Armament Department experience, indicating a new trend towards prioritizing having a knowledgeable leader with experience with equipment. This trend reflects 1998 changes in the PLA's organizational structure that added equipment departments at the national and MR levels, as well as an increasing emphasis on integrating new equipment into the MR's operations and training, particularly in MRs receiving a lot of new equipment. For example, the Guangzhou and Nanjing MRs both are receiving a lot of new equipment. Each has two individuals with extremely strong backgrounds in equipment. Guangzhou MR has two deputy commanders who were former Armament Department directors—Gao Chunxiang, former Jinan MR Armament Department Director; and Ou Jingu, former Guangzhou MR Armament Department director.

The Nanjing MR's Chief of Staff since January 2003, Xu Chengyun, also is a former Armament Department director and even as chief of staff may continue to hold the MR headquarters' portfolio for armament issues. As Armament Department director, he had been responsible for integrating the equipment that the Nanjing MR has acquired in the last several years. Some of this equipment, such as the *Sovremenny* Class destroyers and some advanced fighter aircraft from Russia, were assigned to the Nanjing MR theater but in fact are national-level assets. Much equipment, however, has gone to the Nanjing MR itself.

Additionally, then-Armament Department Director Zhang Shiming was promoted to a deputy director of Beijing's General Armament Department (GAD) in January 2002, providing a national-level link between the MR's equipment department and the General Armament Department. Current Nanjing MR Armament Department Director Liu Shenyang provides a second national link. Before becoming Nanjing MR Armament Department director around July 2003, Liu was the director of the Armored Force Bureau, Armed Services Department, General Staff Department (GSD). Liu had rotated to the Nanjing MR's 31st GA a year earlier, possibly to work with the armored forces in the 31st GA. His appointment as Nanjing MR Armament Department director probably indicates the Nanjing MR is working on its armored equipment. The links Zhang Shiming and Liu Shenyang provide between the Nanjing MR and the general department offices dealing with armament issues probably

ensure that the national level leadership in charge of armaments are able to provide guidance and oversight to equipment integration in the Nanjing MR.

**Amphibious Operations.**

Amphibious operations receive particular attention in the Guangzhou and Nanjing MRs across from Taiwan. The 1st, 12th, and 31st GAs in the Nanjing MR and the 41st and 42nd GAs in the Guangzhou MR likely all train for amphibious operations. Elements of these GAs reportedly have participated in Dongshan exercises across from Taiwan.

In the Nanjing MR, Commander Zhu Wenquan is the best known example of an individual with a background in amphibious operations. Zhu probably had experience with amphibious operations as 1st GA commander, before becoming chief of staff and later commander of the Nanjing MR. He was a deputy compiler of a joint Nanjing MR-National Defense University publication on amphibious operations.[22] Other current Nanjing MR members of the compilation committee for that publication include current 12th GA Commander Qi Jianguo and 31st Group Army Commander Zhao Keshi. Both group armies exercise for amphibious operations. In addition, Qi was the former commander of the 1st GA's amphibious mechanized infantry division and wrote an article in the PLA flagship publication, *Jiefangjun Bao*, "Amphibious Operation: Three-Dimensional Rushing to Seize the Beaches" in August 2002.[23]

Several others in the Nanjing MR headquarters can be deduced to have experience with amphibious operations by background: Dong Wanrui, Ranking Deputy Commander, Nanjing MR, and Lin Bingyao, Deputy Commander, Nanjing MR, were both previous 31st GA commanders. As current Nanjing MR armament director and former director of the Armored Force Bureau in the General Staff Department's Armed Services Department, it is probable, though not certain, that Liu Shenyang has experience working on amphibious tanks in the Nanjing MR order of battle. The same is true of Chief of Staff Xu Chengyun, who was also a former Armament Department director and former 12th GA commander.

In the Guangzhou MR, current 41st GA Commander Jia Xiaowei has the most certain interest in amphibious operations. The 41st GA is

involved in amphibious training, and Jia reportedly led a "realistic" "sea crossing" amphibious exercise in September 2003 as a result of years of training. He also wrote an article in *Jiefangjun Bao* on shock amphibious landing tactics in 1996.[24] Deputy Commander Ou Jingu likely has experience with amphibious operations as former 41st GA commmander. Moreover, as former director of the Armament Department, he likely had a role in incorporating new equipment into the GZMR, including possible amphibious equipment. However, no specific information is available on his connection to amphibious operations. As commander of the 42nd GA, which includes the 124th Amphibious Mechanized Division, Liu Yuejun is certainly familiar with amphibious operations, though he does not appear to have direct experience commanding amphibious units. Before becoming 41st Group Army commander, he was the Macau Garrison Commander. His probable prior background is as former 123rd Motor Infantry Division Commander, 41st GA.

**National Defense Mobilization**.[25]

The PLA first renewed its emphasis on national defense mobilization efforts in 1987. These efforts accelerated in 1995, following the post-Tiananmen retrenchment period due to increased concern over the implications of rapid economic growth and an uncertain security environment. Since at least the Kosovo War in 1999, the PLA has further increased its civil and air defense efforts, one component of which is its "three attacks, three defenses" campaign (three attacks are against stealth aircraft, cruise missiles, and armed helicopters. The three defenses are against reconnaissance, precision weapons, and electronic interference).[26]

Every MR headquarters has a National Defense Mobilization Committee and dedicated MR leaders handling national defense mobilization issues and coordinating national- and provincial-level national defense mobilization. The likely mission of these committees is to set goals for mobilization of resources in that military region, to include working with military leaders in units and military districts and with civilian authorities to mobilize resources or civil defense in case of war. In peacetime, the MR National Defense Mobilization

Committee organizes, directs, and coordinates provincial mobilization committees within a theater. During wartime, it would manage the war zone's "Joint Military-Civilian Command Center." Membership consists of the chairman (the MR commander); the MR political commissar; an executive vice chairman; and vice chairmen. As the concurrent MR commander, the chairman has the authority to garner resources within the MR. A deputy commander with a strong background in logistics or administrative issues is the executive vice chairman. Two additional deputy commanders are vice chairmen. Other participants or members likely include other deputy commanders, deputy political commissars, chiefs of staff, deputy chiefs of staff or directors of logistics departments, who work on mobilization issues at the working level, to include coordinating with military districts. Provincial governors and mayors of large municipalities may also be members of the committee. Officials in charge of national defense mobilization issues at the national level, the State National Defense Mobilization Committee secretary general and/or General Staff Department Comprehensive Office director, often attend MR mobilization committee meetings.

The MR-level National Defense Mobilization Committees share common characteristics in the types of personnel selected.

- Membership of the committees is based on position and portfolio, and includes: the MR commander, deputy commander in charge of military affairs, logistics, and lower-level mobilization committee members.
- At least two individuals on National Defense Mobilization Committees, Beijing MR Deputy Commander Su Rongsheng and Shenyang MR Deputy Commander Mao Fengming, have previously served as directors of the General Staff Department Military Affairs Department, giving them important insight into national-level regulations and personnel issues.
- Several members have had long-term experience in the MR in which they serve, providing them with contacts and experience in areas such as logistics, relations with local provincial authorities, and operations. They often have both MR headquarters experience and MR unit (for example,

former MR group army commander) command experience. Former chiefs of staff of the MR are common members, and chiefs of staff, who as part of their duties coordinate issues between the MR headquarters and MR operational units, are frequently involved in mobilization-related activities. Other members likely include Logistics Department directors.

- Several members or suspected members have had prior experience in military districts because MD commanders are responsible for reserve forces and mobilization preparations in their province.[27] They thus have the experience and contacts with both military and civilian leaders in military districts, which they can draw upon as members of an MR Mobilization Committee.

| **Beijing Military Region (BJMR)** |
|---|
| • Chairman—Zhu Qi, Commander, BJMR |
| • Executive Vice Chairman—Su Rongsheng, Deputy Commander, BJMR. Background: former director and deputy director of the General Staff Department's Military Affairs Department and former Commander, 24th GA, BJMR. His experience and contacts in the Military Affairs Department likely ensures that BJMR properly implements new regulations on national defense mobilization.[28] Su brings experience in national-level administration, regulation, enforcement, and personnel issues and years of command and headquarters experience in the BJMR. |
| • Vice Chairman—Chen Xitao, Deputy Commander, BJMR. Background: COS, BJMR; COS, Nanjing MR; former Commander, 31st GA. Brings managerial skills and operational training skills to the table. Probable conventional ground forces/armor background. |
| • Vice Chairman—Zang Wenqing, Deputy Commander, BJMR (expected to retire soon; he was 63 in December 2003). Deputy chief of staff in BJMR before becoming deputy commander. Presided over a session on information technology and gave a speech on national defense mobilization at the National People's Congress, 03/03. Brings long term understanding of BJMR operations, a possible understanding of information technology, and an understanding of national defense mobilization issues (he has been on the committee since May, 2001) to the table. |

**Table 3. Estimated Members of Military Region National Defense Mobilization Committees.**

| **Chengdu MR (CDMR)** |
|---|
| • Chairman—Wang Jianmin, Commander, CDMR |
| • Other probable members include ranking Deputy Commander Chen Shijun; Deputy Commander Fan Xiaoguang; Deputy Commander, CDMR and Commander, Tibet Military District Meng Jinxi; Chief of Staff Lu Dengming; and Director, Joint Logistics Department Zeng Jianguo. |
| **Guangzhou MR (GZMR)** |
| • Chairman—Liu Zhenwu, Commander, GZMR |
| • Before he retired in January 2004, Gong Gucheng, former GZMR Deputy Commander, was probable executive vice chairman of Guangzhou's National Defense Mobilization Committee. His replacement, Ding Shouyue, is likely at least on the National Defense Mobilization Committee but probably does not act as executive vice chairman because he is new to the GZMR and not familiar enough with the MR. Deputy Commander Ou Jingu is likely a member. Chief of Staff Fang Fenghui is probably also involved, though he also is new. The MR chief of staff is frequently involved in mobilization issues as part of his responsibilities for coordinating between MR headquarters and units. |
| • Tang Xinqiu, Director, Joint Logistics Department, is almost certainly involved in the National Defense Mobilization Committee. |
| **Jinan MR (JNMR)** |
| • Chairman—Chen Bingde, Commander, JNMR. |
| • Zhong Shengqin, Deputy Commander, JNMR, is likely involved. He has spent his entire career in the Jinan MR. Chief of Staff Li Hongcheng and Joint Logistics Department Director Zhang Zhende also likely are involved due to their positions and long experience in the JNMR. |
| **Lanzhou MR (LZMR)** |
| • Chairman—Li Qianyuan, Commander, LZMR |
| • Executive Vice Chairman—Zou Gengren, Deputy Commander, LZMR. Zou Gengren has participated extensively in MR and Military District mobilization meetings. He was a former GA commander in the LZMR. |
| • Vice Chairman—Uncertain. Formerly Deputy Commander Qu Fanghuan, who retired in 1/04 and was an expert in training issues probably worked on mobilization, particularly related to training of reserves. Qu's replacement, Song Caiwen, an expert on armaments, may also have taken over his probable responsibilities for mobilization. |

**Table 3. Estimated Members of Military Region National Defense Mobilization Committees (Continued).**

| |
|---|
| • Secretary General—Liu Dengyun, Deputy Chief of Staff, LZMR. As secretary general, Liu Dengyun works on border defense and mobilization issues, with a particular focus on militia and reserves. He often acts as the MR representative at Military District meetings on militia issues. In August 2003, he had a high visibility profile in border defense issues as the "director of the Chinese military specialists group" during "joint" exercises with several countries from the Shanghai Cooperation Group. He has many years of expertise in mobilization issues: as deputy commander of the Gansu Military District in at least 1996-1997, he was also executive vice chairman of the Gansu Military District's national defense mobilization committee. |
| **Nanjing MR (NJMR)** |
| • Probable Chairman—Zhu Wenquan, Commander, NJMR |
| • Vice Chairman—Dong Wanrui, Deputy Commander, NJMR. Not surprisingly, Dong Wanrui also has responsibility for logistics issues in the MR. He brings long experience in the NJMR to the table: he was a former commander of the 31st GA and deputy chief of staff, NJMR. |
| • Probable member- Zhong Minghui, Director, Joint Logistics Department, NJMR. While Zhong is not listed as being a member of the National Defense Mobilization Committee, he is almost certainly involved. As former Anhui MD commander and vice chairman, MD National Defense Mobilization Committee, he established reserves and worked hard on national defense mobilization issues, to include people's air defense and "three attacks, three defenses." Extremely frequent press coverage of his activities suggests that his was a model effort. Zhong was also a deputy commander of the Jiangsu MD, where he worked on PLA business diverstiture issues. His experience in the MDs makes him a valuable link to the MDs. *Note*--NJMR has made an especially concerted effort to fuse economic development and national mobilization efforts (including building highways) and has had especially vigorous campaigns on air defense and the "three attacks, three defenses" due to its proximity to the Taiwan Strait and its probable involvement in any Taiwan-related contingency. An important lesson from NATO strikes on Yugoslavia was that China needed to learn to better defend its territory against precision guided munitions (PGMs). |
| **Shenyang MR (SYMR)** |
| • Chairman—Qian Guoliang, Commander, SYMR |

**Table 3. Estimated Members of Military Region National Defense Mobilization Committees (Continued).**

| |
|---|
| • Probable Executive Vice Chairman or Vice Chairman—Wu Yuqian, Deputy Commander with the probable portfolio for logistics and may be the executive vice chairman of the National Defense Mobilization Committee also. Wu has worked on air defense, logistical support, MR housing reform, and sanitation and health issues. Like other executive vice chairmen or vice chairmen, he was chief of staff, SYMR, before becoming deputy commander and has extensive experience coordinating issues in the SYMR. Wu Yuqian also has a strong political record: He has been an alternate member of the Central Committee since the 15th and was reelected at the 16th Party Congress in November 2002. |
| • Vice Chairman—Mao Fengming, Deputy Commander, SYMR. Like Su Rongsheng of the Beijing MR, Mao Fengming was once the General Staff Department Military Affairs Department director. His experience and contacts in the Military Affairs Department likely ensures that SYMR properly implements new regulations on national defense mobilization. Mao was also the former vice president of the National Defense University. He brings experience in national-level administration, regulation, enforcement, and personnel issues. |

**Table 3. Estimated Members of Military Region National Defense Mobilization Committees (Concluded).**

**Internal Stability/Ethnic Unrest.**

The military district commander of sensitive ethnic minority areas in the Chengdu and Lanzhou MRs, is also a MR deputy commander. The Tibet Military District Commander, Meng Jinxi, is also a deputy commander of the Chengdu MR; the Xinjiang Military District Commander, Qiu Yanhan, is also a deputy commander of the Lanzhou MR. As reflects the sensitivity of these positions, Meng Jinxi is a full member of the 16th Party Congress Central Committee, and Qiu Yanhan is an alternate member of the 16th Party Congress Central Committee. In Chengdu MR, two other leaders in the MR headquarters also have extensive experience in Tibet. Deputy Commander Gui Quanzhi reportedly led the 13th GA's 149th Motor Infantry Division during the 1989 crack down in Tibet. Armament Department Director Dong Guishan began his career in the Tibet Military District, including a stint as the deputy commander in charge of training. He has written articles on using equipment in icy conditions, which could apply to many areas of the Chengdu

MR but certainly applies to Tibet. The Beijing Garrison Commander is also simultaneously a deputy commander of the Beijing Military Region—not the case with any of the other Garrison Commands.

**Up and Coming Leaders and Other PLA Priorities.**

Some leaders in the MRs in the "Chart: Time Remaining for Current MR Leaders, as of 1/04" are likely to be promoted from their current positions once their time is "up" in the current position, extending the number of years remaining in their careers. As they move on, other rising stars within the military regions will emerge to take their places. The chart below lists some leaders who have been promoted since the pre-16th Party Congress January 2002 round of promotion. Some of these leaders have been promoted twice or even three times. Short assignments offer them a breadth of experience in a condensed time period. Those who are promoted often are because their skills or operational backgrounds are sought after. A glance at their backgrounds suggests a variety of operational experiences that match up to a great extent with the PLA's modernization priorities. Areas in which these particular leaders excel include:

- information-ization and mechanization;
- training and operations; operations in difficult (here, cold) climates;
- Blue Army (OPFOR) exercises and training;
- armaments/equipment integration;
- logistics, including "precision" logistics;
- information operations;
- rapid reaction/mobile operations;
- communications;
- amphibious operations;
- air defense, flexible command, and lessons learned from Operation ALLIED FORCE in Serbia;
- transformation of divisions to brigades; tactics against aircraft carriers and other asymmetric tactics;
- national defense mobilization; and
- border defense.

This impressive array of experience on issues directly related to PLA modernization priorities suggests future leaders will be increasingly well qualified to steer the PLA's modernization. Table 4 is intended to act as a sample of potential future leaders and not as a complete inventory.

| Name/ MR | Date of Birth | Promotions or changes between 1/02 and 01/04 | Specialty | 16th Central Committee member |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Deputy Commanders* | | | | |
| Gao Chunxiang, GZMR | ? | Three | Armaments. Advocates "leap-frog technology" but also weapons integration and equipment/tactics for asymmetric warfare; former COS, 54th GA, which has aviation, "rapid reaction" unit, and good equipment; DDir and Dir, Arm Dept, JNMR; COS, JNMR; COS, GZMR[29] | No |
| Liu Yahong, CDMR | 2/46 | Two (COS, DCDR) | Former CDR, 14th GA; background otherwise unknown. | No |
| Song Caiwen, LZMR | ? | Two (Dir, GZMR Arm Dept, DCDR, LZMR) | Armaments; Dir, Arm Dept, GZMR; DCOS, GZMR; DCDR, 41st GA; probably transferred to LZMR due to strong armaments background (GZMR already has two DCDRs with arm experience). Studied at NDU Research Department. | No |
| Gui Quanzhi, CDMR | 1943 | One | Former 13th GA CDR; former CDR, 149th Motor Inf Div, "rapid reaction" troops, cold mountainous areas, 13th GA; in 1989, led 149th to enforce crackdown in Tibet[30] | No |
| Zhong Shengqin, JNMR | ? | One | Training portfolio, MR discipline; COS, JNMR; CDR, 26th GA | No |

**Table 4. Up and Coming Leaders: A Sample.**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ye Aiqun, JNMR | 10/ 45 | Two (COS, DCDR) | COS, GZMR; CDR, 42nd GA; as 42nd GA CDR, initiated discussion on lessons learned from NATO bombings of Yugoslavia; better training, "flexible command" (to Yug credit), and air defense measures needed.[31] Son of a general. | No |
| *Chiefs of Staff* | | | | |
| Fang Fenghui, GZMR | ? | One | Former 21st GA CDR; advocates better logistics support, improving fighting capability; prob work on comms; army management; probable exercises in Western China (WEST-EX) | No |
| Li Hongcheng, JNMR | ? | One | Armaments, Blue Army training. Dir, JNMR Arm Dept; DCOS, JNMR; CDT, Army Academy (featured in interview on his academy's "Blue Army" training). | |
| Wang Guosheng, LZMR | ? | One or two | Training and operations; 64th GA and 40th GA, SYMR. Praised consistently early in career ex & training; headed a small group to transform 40th GA's inf div to motor inf bdes (significant: the 40th was the first GA to experiment with transforming divisions to brigades). Likely co-authored an article on threats to aircraft carriers.[32] MA, Military Studies, NDU. | No |
| Xu Chengyun, NJMR | ? | Two | Armaments. Was Dir, Arm Dept during critical period of equipment integration for NJMR (2002-2003). 12th GA CDR (amphibious operations; rapid reaction, and lots of new equipment: leaps in technology, information-ization; armaments as a whole system—need to take into account repair, personnel, comms, information/intell, and integration). [33] | No |

**Table 4. Up and Coming Leaders: A Sample (Continued).**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Department Leaders* | | | | |
| Zhong Minghui, Dir, Log Dept, NJMR | ? | One | Logistics, National Defense Mobilization, Air Defense ("3 attacks, 3 defenses"); former Anhui MD CDR and Exec VC National Defense Mob Cte for MD; extremely frequent press appearances suggest he was a model on these issues. For NJMR, which assesses it might be struck in a Taiwan conflict, his portfolio very important. Background suitable for MR Log Dir. | No |
| Zhang Zhende, Dir, Log, JNMR | ? | One | "Precision logistics" and lessons learned from Iraq War, U.S. logistics.[34] | No |
| Liu Shenyang, Dir, Arm Dept, NJMR | ? | One | Armaments, Armor; probable NJMR link to GSD's Armament Department; former Dir, Armored Force Bureau, Service Arms Dept, GSD. Also just over one year's experience as former DCDR, 31st GA, NJMR, likely a rotation to obtain one year's experience in a GA with armored component.[35] Liu's appointment and his background further indicates the NJMR is working hard to develop tactics, training, and integration/ weapons systems for armor forces in the NJMR. | No |
| Zeng Jianguo, Dir, Log, CDMR | ? | None | Logistics in CDMR and 13th GA (female general). | Alt memb, 15th and 16th Central Committee (CC) |
| Xun Zhenjiang, Dir, Arm, SYMR | ? | None | Armaments and logistics. Former DDIR, Log, SYMR and COS, Jilin MD. Has written a couple of articles on armament research and development.[36] | No |

**Table 4. Up and Coming Leaders: A Sample (Continued).**

| *GA Commanders* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Qi Jianguo, 12th GA, NJMR | ? | One | Information operations; amphibious operations; communications. Previous CDR, amphibious mechanized division, 1st GA. Published on amphibious operations to seize beaches and was on compilation committee of publication on "Sea Crossing Landing Operations" with NJMR CDR Zhu Wenquan. Similar background to Zhu. | No |
| Li Shaojun, 38th GA, BJMR | 1949 | One | 38th GA CDR. Prominent proponent of mechanization (has spoken at the National People's Congress and a well publicized forum). Interested in informationization—Information Warfare (IW), Electronic Warfare (EW) concepts. 38th GA was the first GA to have army aviation units in 1988; 54th GA followed shortly. | No |
| Liu Yuejun, 42nd GA, GZMR | 1954 or 1955 (48 in 01/03) | One | 42nd GA known for amphibious ops, rapid reaction, and good technology. CDR, Macau Garrison; Dir, Shenzhen Base, HK Garrison Unit; probable CDR, 123rd motor infantry division, 42nd GA. Son of a general. | Youngest alt member, 16th CC |
| Jia Xiaowei, 41st GA, GZMR | ? | One | Amphibious operations; information technology; Information Operations (network warfare).[37] | No |
| Xu Fenlin, 47th GA, LZMR | ? | One | Training and operations. Rose through 47th GA. Was Director, Training and Operations, when the 47th deployed to near the border with Vietnam, late 1980s. The 47th has produced many generals. | No |

**Table 4. Up and Coming Leaders: A Sample (Concluded).**

## MOVING ON: WHAT SELECTED FORMER MR LEADERS BRING TO THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Table 4 maps out some up and coming leaders who likely will influence PLA modernization in the MRs and, eventually, at the national level. Several of those leaders are "up and coming" precisely because of their experiences working in priority areas of PLA modernization. The PLA also appears to try to distribute promotion opportunities among the many GAs, and recent promotions at both the MR and national levels reflect this trend. It is only over a longer period of time that certain GAs demonstrate a pattern of consistent promotion.[38] Over the past several years, several military region leaders have been promoted or transferred to the national level. In the case of transfers, these have not always involved a promotion, but in all cases they involve a candidate whose credentials gained in the MRs are viewed as valuable for a national-level position – *even when other factors, such as connections, were a strong factor in a promotion*. Some examples include:

- **Central Military Commission and General Staff Department**. Chief of the General Staff of the PLA (or Director of the General Staff Department) Liang Guanglie was deputy commander of the Beijing MR and commander of the Shenyang and Nanjing MRs and before becoming chief of the General Staff Department in November 2002. Early in his career, Liang Guanglie was commander of the 20th and 54th GAs in Jinan MR. As chief of staff, he is responsible for PLA-wide operations; therefore, his familiarity with several military regions would be essential during a major military campaign. Moreover, as former Nanjing MR commander, Liang is familiar with some of the PLA's most innovative training, best high technology equipment, and Taiwan-related operations.
- **Fan Changlong, Assistant Chief of the General Staff Department (Former COS, SYMR)**. Fan Changlong was promoted to assistant chief of the General Staff Department in January 2004, after two years as the Shenyang MR chief of staff. Fan had previously spent his entire career in the SYMR

and was former 16th GA commander. Fan Changlong seems to have a strong training background and wrote an August 2000 article in *Jiefangjun Bao* on new training concepts. Fan has spoken about "army building" at the National People's Congress on several occasions. Fan Changlong is an alternate member of the 16th Party Congress, an early indicator that he would be promoted. Fan Changlong was born in March, 1947. He is a key example of an early "fast burner" and likely has a strong career ahead.

- **General Political Department**—no recent known promotions.
- **Central Military Commission and General Logistics Department**. General Logistics Department Director Liao Xilong was deputy commander of the Chengdu MR for ten years and commander of the Chengdu MR for seven years before he was appointed to his current position in November 2002. General Liao could have been appointed for a number of reasons. First, he was a well-seasoned commander of a MR with complicated logistics issues. The Chengdu MR is the PLA's largest and includes difficult terrain such as Tibet. Liao's strong operational credentials date back to his early career, when he was a war hero from China's "defensive" border war with Vietnam in 1979 and, later, 14th GA commander. Second, he has probable connections with General Secretary, State President, and CMC Vice Chairman Hu Jintao, a likely factor in his promotion.
- **General Armament Department**. Zhang Shiming, Deputy Director of the General Armament Department since January 2002, was the former director of the Nanjing MR Armaments Department. Nanjing MR, directly across from Taiwan, is the MR receiving some of the PLA's most advanced high technology equipment and weapons acquisitions in recent years. Zhang's knowledge of Nanjing MR equipment issues therefore is valuable at the national level. His expertise could be particularly useful in overseeing the Nanjing MR's equipment integration and development and in planning for a Taiwan Straits contingency.

- **Air Force Headquarters**. Four new leaders were appointed to the Air Force Headquarters in July 2003, at least three of whom came directly from the military regions: Deputy Commanders Ma Xiaotian and Wang Chaoqun, and Chief of Staff He Weirong. Ma Xiaotian was a Nanjing MR Air Force commander until July 2003. The Nanjing MR's air force is arguably one of the most advanced in the PLA Air Force. Wang Chaoqun was the Chengdu MR Air Force commander, and He Weirong was Jinan MR Air Force commander, giving the Air Force Headquarters a breadth of experience from the MRs. Furthermore, Shenyang MR Air Force Commander Xu Qiliang is rumored to become the next Air Force commander, in part because of his status as only one of two full members of the 16th Party Congress Central Committee from the Air Force.
- **People's Armed Police**. Xi Zhongchao, Deputy Commander of the People's Armed Police since January 2004, was the former commander of the 63rd GA in Shanxi Province, BJMR since at least November 1997. His promotion probably is due mostly to good timing; his GA was abolished in January 2004 as part of PLA downsizing. Xi Zhongchao is an alternate member of the 16th Party Congress, an early indicator that he would be promoted.
- **Academies**. National Defense University (NDU) Commandant Pei Huailiang and Academy of Military Sciences (AMS) Commandant Zheng Shenxia (Air Force) both have extensive experience in the military regions. Pei Huailiang was the deputy commander of the Jinan MR for nine years before he became the NDU commandant in 2003. While it is unclear why he was promoted over others, his long field experience will probably be valued at a time when the NDU is attempting to break down (with limited success) the gap between classroom and field experience. Zheng's experience in the MRs was not as recent. Zheng was a 7th Air Army commander in Guangzhou MR and Shenyang MR Air Force commander before becoming first chief of staff of the Air Force and then commandant of the AMS. Zheng also

was the commandant of the Air Academy in Beijing. He is a proponent of air power and precision guided munitions—both areas of PLA interest. As the PLA attempts to move towards combined arms and joint operations and the Air Force and Navy become increasingly important in shaping the PLA's evolving doctrine, Zheng's selection as commandant of the institution that shapes PLA doctrine, following that of the Navy's Zhang Dingfa, fits the PLA's needs.

## CONCLUSIONS

Examining the backgrounds of military region leaders reveals a keen interest amongst those leaders in issues related to the PLA's modernization priorities—information warfare, mechanization, amphibious operations, mobile operations, realistic training, and equipment integration are just a few examples. This is especially true of the younger leaders such as GA commanders and recently promoted leaders, who tend to be more vocal and more recently involved at the operational level in PLA modernization. Due to expected continued high rates of turnover at the MR level, we should expect to see an increasing influx of highly qualified personnel enter the MR, and eventually, national-level leadership.

There will be several challenges for PLA leaders attempting to meet the PLA's goals at the military region level. While this chapter has not discussed joint operations, the drive for increased joint operations is one such example. While the military regions with Air Force and Navy components have representatives for those services serving as deputy commanders, the majority of military region headquarters staff are army. The chief of staff, a key position in the military region headquarters is always an army officer,[39] and the distribution of power in the chain of command does not reflect the growing emphasis on the importance of the Air Force and Navy in operations and doctrine.

It would be difficult to point to any one area as being an area of expertise that the PLA is looking for in a future national-level leader. Collectively, however, the military leaders reflect PLA priorities, even in some cases when what the leader has to offer is continuity rather than new ideas or techniques.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 7

1. See Li Cheng, "The New Military Elite: Generational Profile and Contradictory Trends," a talk given at a conference on "Swimming in a New Sea: Civil-Military Issues in Today's China," The CNA Corporation, March 22-23, 2004. This article will be published in a conference volume by M.E. Sharpe. See also William W. Whitson, *The Chinese High Command*, New York: Praeger, 1973; and James Mulvenon, *The Professionalization of the Senior Chinese Officer Corps*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1997.

2. See Kenneth Allen and John Corbett's chapter in this volume for more on predicting turnover based on position and grade.

3. The sections of this article dealing with the characteristics of military region leaders rely heavily on the methodology and research of Li Cheng, throughout. See, for example, Li Cheng, "The New Military Elite"; Li Cheng, *China's Leaders: The New Generation*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001; Li Cheng and Lynn White, "The Army in the Succession to Deng Xiaoping: Familiar Fealties and Technocratic Trends," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 33, No. 8, August 1993, pp. 757-786. See also Li's articles in the *China Leadership Monitor*. For reference to provincial leaders as a training ground for national leaders, see Li Cheng, "After Hu, Who? China's Provincial Leaders Await Promotion," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 1, Winter 2002, p. 1. While the coalition-building that Li refers to in his article certainly is one factor for becoming national-level military leaders, this article will focus more on the skills and knowledge cultivated at the military's equivalent of Li's "provinces," the military regions. Also, this chapter will not focus on characteristics of military leaders such as birthplace, educational level, or transfers between military regions as a means of preventing "warlordism" in the military regions. It mainly will focus on how career patterns, background, and expertise in the context of their current positions reflect PLA operational objectives.

4. Probably the best example of such a leader representing continuity in a military region who was later promoted is current Central Military Commission (CMC) member and General Logistics Department Director General Liao Xilong. Liao had been the commander of the Chengdu MR for seven years, 1995-2002) and deputy commander of the Chengdu MR for a decade, 1985-95) before he was selected for his current position.

5. The author is grateful to Li Cheng for making this point. While provincial leaders seem to have a wider "age band," Li discusses the importance of age to turnover, due to regulations mandating retirement at 65 for top-level provincial leaders, in "After Hu, Who?" pp. 5-6.

6. With some exceptions—for example, there are two former 31 GA deputy commanders of the Nanjing MR and two former 65 GA commanders in the Beijing MR.

7. See Kenneth Allen, "Introduction to the PLA's Administrative and Operational Structure," in James C. Mulvenon and Andrew N. D. Yang, *People's Liberation Army as Organization*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002, pp. 42-43, for an organizational breakdown of the responsibilities of operations, political, logistics, and armaments. This breakdown of responsibilities begins at the national General Department level (General Staff Department, General Political Department, General Logistics Department, and General Armament Department), and is replicated at the MR level, both in MR-level deputy commander "portfolio" responsibilities and in MR-level headquarters (operations), political, logistics, and armament departments.

8. See Susan Puska, "The People's Liberation Army (PLA) General Logistics Department (GLD): Toward Joint Logistics Support," in Mulvenon and Yang, pp. 247-271, for a good discussion of PLA logistics.

9. See Harlan Jencks, "The General Armament Department," in Mulvenon and Yang, pp. 273-308, for a discussion of armament reforms in the PLA and an overview of the General Armament Department. Unit-level armament departments are covered on pp. 298-299.

10. This does not include Air Force or Navy now serving in MR headquarters. Many Air Force and Navy officers have had experience in service headquarters - Shenyang MR Air Force Commander Xu Qiliang is one such example. This also includes the Nanjing MR Armament Department Director.

11. The author is grateful to David F. Helvey for making this point and other valuable points in this chapter.

12. Zheng Shouzeng, "Article on Information War, Training," in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (*FBIS*), *Jiefangjun Bao*, July 9, 1996.

13. For the WEST-EX exercise, see "Group Army Stages 'West-98' Exercise," in *FBIS*, *Beijing Zhongguo Qingnian Bao*, November 1, 1998, p 4; for the "four-level" on-line command post exercise, see Zhang Feng, "Army Presses Toward Virtual Battlefield," in *FBIS, Beijing Jiefangjun Bao*, November 24, 1999, p. 5. The "four levels" are the MR headquarters, group army, division, and regiment.

14. The PLA's 2001 Active-Service Officers law states that there are maximum term service limits on officers serving in peace time at the Division level and above. Presumably the term limit is around five years; this would explain one reason for Ding Shouyue's transfer to the Guangzhou MR after at least four and a half years of service in the Jinan MR. However, it is unclear what the term of service is at the MR deputy commander level and the extent to which this regulation is enforced. For example, this does not explain how Chen Shijun could serve at his current post since 1995, particularly when he still has two or three years left in his career. Regulations concerning retirement ages are enforced. "PLA General Political

Dept's Explanations on PRC's Active-Service Officers Law," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao* (Internet Version-WWW), January 18, 2001, p. 2.

15. See "'Full Text' of PRC "Officers on the Active List" Law," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Xinhua*, December 28, 2000; and "'Full Text' of PRC Amendment to Officer Enlistment Regulations," in *FBIS*, Beijing Xinhua, December 28, 2000. Other scholars have used the information from these laws for analysis, including Kenneth Allen, John Corbett, and Cheng Li (see notes 16 and 17).

16. The matrix as structured here also appears in Kenneth W. Allen and John F. Corbett, Jr., "Predicting PLA Leader Promotions" in this volume.

17. Li Cheng at Hamilton College has commented that high turnover is expected to continue in the PLA due to the small band of age differences amongst leaders in the MRs. Based on the requirement that deputy commanders retire at 63, most leaders will retire within 5 years or be promoted to the next level, where they can remain in their posts until 65 years old.

18. David L. Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems, and Prospects*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2002, pp. 69-87, 94-107; Department of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China: Report to Congress Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act," July 30, 2003, *www.defenselink.mil/pubs/20030730chinaex.pdf*, pp. 5-9.

19. Based on Shambaugh, pp. 100-106; Dennis J. Blasko, "PLA Ground Forces: Moving Toward a Smaller, More Rapidly Deployable, Modern Combined Force," in Mulvenon and Yang, pp. 309-345; research on GAs (mainly press reports); and a scan of GA order of battle.

20. The extent to which the PLA is succeeding in achieving its priorities, or how it is attempting to do so, is beyond the leadership and intentions focus of this paper.

21. Department of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," p. 5.

22. "Sea Crossing Landing Operations—Chinese and Foreign Sea Crossing Landing Operation Revelations Put Out by Nanjing MR and NDU," on Topcool Forum (an unofficial website), 01/29/2002. The source is not official, but the individuals selected as committee members and compilers of this publication have the backgrounds to be plausibly involved in a joint publication put out by the Nanjing MR and National Defense University (NDU). Those committee members include: Zhu Wenquan, Deputy Compiler; Compilation committee members: Qi Jianguo; Zhao Keshi; and Xi Zhongchao.

23. " On-Site Report on Sci-Tech Training Drills in Nanjing Military Region," in *FBIS,* Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao (*Internet Version-WWW), August 10, 2000, p. 2.

24. "PRC: Guangzhou MR 7-Day Amphibious Exercise Enhanced Coordination," in *FBIS*, *Guangzhou Zhanshi Bao*, September 13, 2003, p. 1; Jia Xiaowei, "Article on Shock Landing Tactics," in *FBIS, Jiefangjun Bao*, July 2, 1996.

25. I am indebted to Mr. David F. Helvey for much of the information in this section.

26. Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military*, pp. 87-88.

27. Blasko, "PLA Ground Forces," p. 313.

28. David Finkelstein, "The General Staff Department of the Chinese People's Liberation Army: Organization, Roles, and Missions," in Mulvenon and Yang, pp. 171-173.

29. Gao Chunxiang's articles on equipment clearly point to the PLA concept of "defeating the superior with the inferior." For example, see two articles from January, 2003 and December, 2000: Gao Chunxiang, "Article on Dialectics of Superior Weapons Versus Inferior Ones in Modern Warfare" in *FBIS*, *Zhongguo Guofang Bao* (Internet Version-WWW), January 6, 2003, p. 3; Gao Chunxiang, "Scientific View of PRC Weapons' Capabilities Urged," in *FBIS*, *Jiefangjun Bao* (Internet Version-WWW), December 5, 2000, p. 6.

30. For reference on Gui's role in Tibet, see: "PLA Reshuffles Said Part of Power Play in Lead-up to PRC Leadership Transition," in *FBIS, Hong Kong South China Morning Post* (Internet Version-WWW), March 27, 2002.

31. Reference found in "PLA Unit Takes Warning From NATO Bombing," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao,* April 20, 1999, p. 6. Presumably this "unit" holding a discussion on lessons learned from Yugoslavia for training is the 42nd GA, which was headed by Ye Aiqun at that time.

32. The article appeared in Feng Changson, Xu Jiafeng, and Wang Guosheng, "China: Article Discusses Six Threats Faced by Aircraft Carriers," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Zhongguo Guofang Bao,* March 5, 2002, p. 4. His name, Wang Guosheng, is common in Chinese, and it could be a different author. However, it is most likely that Wang co-authored this with two others who, like Wang, were working on their MA in Military Studies at the National Defense University (NDU) or associated with NDU at the time of the article (Wang received his degree in 2003). The six "threats" noted are submarines, sea mines, anti-ship missiles, fighter aircraft, surface-to-surface missiles, and electromagnetic pulse (EMP). Two years earlier, there had been an article in the Hong Kong press (March 2000) on the 40th GA (along with

other GAs) participating in exercises targeting aircraft carriers. The content of this article also is unconfirmed. "PLA Stages War Maneuvers to Deal With US Aircraft Carriers," in *FBIS*, Hong Kong *Tai Yang Pao*, (Internet Version-WWW), March 1, 2000, p. A18.

33. Xu Chengyun has written several articles on "army building," framed in terms of Jiang Zemin thinking, but really addressing some of the PLA's shortcomings. See Xu Chengyun, "JFJB Article on Studying Jiang Zemin Thinking on National Defense and Army Building," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao, (*Internet Version-WWW*)*, October 27, 2003, p. 9; Xu Chengyun, "JFJB: Reform is Impetus for Development of PLA" in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao* (Internet Version-WWW), October 14, 2003, p. 6; Xu Chengyun, "JFJB Article Discusses New Ways of Speeding Up Development of PLA Weaponry," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao, (*Internet Version-WWW), July 30, 2002 p. 6.

34. Zhang Zhende, "JFJB Article on Ways for PLA to Accomplish 'Precision Logistics,'" in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao* (Internet Version-WWW), September 23, 2003, p. 6.

35. See Finkelstein, pp. 196-201, for information on the GSD Service Arms Department. This is a technical division of the GSD in charge of the ground forces. The armored forces bureau is one of several bureaus; the others include army aviation; artillery; anti-chemical warfare; special operations; armament; and so on.

36. See Major General Xun Zhenjiang and Captain Geng Haijun, "Chinese General Recommends R&D Strategy for Weapons and Equipment," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, June 20, 2002, pp. 50-55; Author of *Guan Yu Zhuangbei Jianshe De Lilun Sikao, (*Theoretical Considerations Regarding the Buildup of Weapons and Equipment). See also Xun Zhenjiang, "Jiefangjun Bao Discusses Armament, Equipment Issues," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao* (Internet Version-WWW), June 4, 2002, p. 6.

37. Jia Xiaowei seems sharp on a number of issues of importance to the PLA. He reportedly led the "Sea Crossing" amphibious exercise, "realistic" training culminating supposedly several years of training in September 2003. See "PRC: Guangzhou MR 7-Day Amphibious Exercise Enhanced Coordination," in *FBIS*, Guangzhou *Zhanshi Bao*, September 13, 2003, p. 1. For Major General Jia on amphibious operations, see Jia Xiaowei, "Article on Shock Landing Tactics"; for Jia on Information operations, see: Jia Xiaowei, "Jiefangjun Bao Article on Network Warfare," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Jiefangjun Bao,* August 24, 1999, p. 6. Jia was also quoted on information technology in "Liaowang Article on Need for PLA To Mechanize, Informationize Concurrently," in *FBIS*, Beijing *Liaowang,* No. 20, May 19, 2003, pp. 34-35. He commented on the use of command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) platforms and electronic weapons to fundamentally transform combat operations.

38. Some of these include the 1st GA, 12th GA, 20th GA, 47th GA, and 54th GA. This could be the subject of another paper. Li Cheng and others equate these emerging promotion trends (best viewed by examining the backgrounds of national-level leaders, MR commanders, service commanders, and major military academy commandants over time) to a new version of William Whitson's field army groupings. These promotion trends are due to a number of factors, including both connections and operational experience gained in these MRs.

39. Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military*, p. 149.

# CHAPTER 8

# PREDICTING PLA LEADER PROMOTIONS

**Kenneth W. Allen**
**John F. Corbett, Jr.**

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses regularization of the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) promotion process for its flag-rank officers and the various analytical tools that can be used to predict the PLA's future senior leaders. The chapter begins by providing an historical context for the PLA officer grade and rank system. It then examines "formal factors" of the current promotion criteria that are mandated by regulations, such as officer grades, ranks, retirement-age requirements, and billet minimum and maximum terms of service. This section also provides some specific examples of current senior PLA leaders and the promotion squares they have filled. The chapter concludes by looking at "other factors," such as the *guanxi* system of relationships, Chinese Communist Party Congress and National People's Congress (NPC) membership, education requirements, foreign travel, place of birth, and political reliability, as well as limiting factors and other possible "tickets" that must be punched as the officers climb the promotion ladder.

## PLA OFFICER GRADE AND RANK SYSTEM

The terms "rank" and "grade" are basically synonymous in the U.S. military. In the PLA, however, grades, which are based on an officer's position, are more important than ranks. As a result, PLA writings usually refer to officer positions or grades and have few references to ranks.

Within the PLA, an officer's grade, not the rank, reflects authority and responsibility across service, branch, and organizational lines. Thus, while rank is a key indicator of position within the hierarchy of foreign militaries, grade is the key indicator within the PLA. For

example, PLA commanders and political commissars (PC) are co-equals and hold the same grade, but they often do not have the same rank due to time-in-grade (TIG) requirements.[1]

It is helpful to look back at the PLA's history to understand how the grade and rank system evolved. The Red Army, which was formed in 1927, and the PLA, which was formally established in the late 1940s, have always had an officer (cadre) grade system (*ganbu dengji zhidu*).[2] However, the rank system was not introduced until the 1950s. These grade and rank systems, which have evolved over the years, consist of four basic components: grade categories, grades, rank categories, and ranks. The Chinese use four terms to describe the components: *zhiwu*, *jibie*, *dengji*, and *junxian*. These terms do not always translate directly into English, but their meaning is usually clear from the context.

*Zhiwu* or *zhiwu dengji* is translated as position or post and indicates the specific position someone holds. *Jibie* is translated as grade. These two terms are used interchangeably and refer to a specific position such as regiment commander. The third term, *dengji*, which means rank, is used more in the sense of an organizational level, such as division level, rather than a rank such as colonel. The fourth term is *junxian*, which means the military ranks, such as company grade (second lieutenant through captain), field grade (major through senior colonel), and flag grade (1-star major general, 2-star lieutenant general, and 3-star general).

Prior to 1952, cadre in the Red Army and PLA were assigned grades that were based on their position (*zhiwu*), such as regiment commander or operations department director. In 1952, the PLA established a formal unified grade system which consisted of 10 grade categories and 21 grades (10 *dengji* 21 *jibie*).[3] In 1955, the "Central Military Commission (CMC) member" grade category was abolished, leaving 9 categories and 20 grades.

In 1955, the PLA combined its existing grade system with a new military rank system (*junxian zhidu*) based on the Soviet rank system. As shown in Table 1, the new combined system included five rank categories (*dengji*) and fifteen ranks (*jibie*).[4] Each grade was assigned at least one rank. However, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1965, the PLA abolished all ranks and did not reintroduce them until 1988.[5]

| Rank Categories | Ranks |
|---|---|
| Company grade (*weiguan*) | Warrant Office (*zhunwei*)<br>2nd Lieutenant (*shaowei*)<br>1st Lieutenant (*zhongwei*)<br>Captain (*shangwei*)<br>Senior Captain (*dawei*) |
| Field grade (*xiaoguan*) | Major (*shaoxiao*)<br>Lieutenant Colonel (*zhongxiao*)<br>Colonel (*shangxiao*)<br>Senior Colonel (*daxiao*) |
| Flag grade (*jiangguan*) | Major General (*shaojiang*)<br>Lieutenant General (*zhongjiang*)<br>General (*shangjiang*)<br>Senior General (*dajiang*) |
| Marshal (*yuanshuai*) | Marshal (*yuanshuai*) |
| Generalissimo (*dayuanshuai*) | Generalissimo (*dayuanshuai*) |

**Table 1. PLA Ranks: 1955-65.**

In 1988, the PLA established ten ranks in three categories as shown in Table 2. All three of the services--army, navy, and air force--use ranks associated with the ground-forces, but the terms "Navy," "Air Force," or "Special Technical" are placed in front of the ranks for those officers. When PLA Navy ranks are referred to in English, however, they are usually *translated or spoken* using Western terms such as ensign, commander, and admiral. For example, a PLA flag rank naval officer is called a "Navy general (*haijun shangjiang*)" in Chinese but an "admiral" in English.

| Categories | Ranks (Chinese) | Army, Air Force, Special Technical Ranks (English) | Navy Ranks (English) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company grade | *Shaowei*<br>*Zhongwei*<br>*Shangwei* | Second lieutenant<br>First lieutenant<br>Captain | Ensign<br>Lieutenant junior grade<br>Lieutenant |
| Field grade | *Shaoxiao*<br>*Zhongxiao*<br>*Shangxiao*<br>*Daxiao* | Major<br>Lieutenant colonel<br>Colonel<br>Senior colonel | Lieutenant commander<br>Commander<br>Captain<br>Senior captain |
| Flag grade | *Shaojiang*<br>*Zhongjiang*<br>*Shangjiang* | Major general (1 star)<br>Lieutenant general (2 star)<br>General (3 star) | Rear admiral (1 star)<br>Vice admiral (2 star)<br>Admiral (3 star) |

**Table 2. Current Rank Categories and Assigned Ranks.**

## THE PLA OFFICER PROMOTION SYSTEM TODAY

### Grades and Ranks Today.

In 1988, the number of grades was reduced from 21 to 15. Since then, all officers, regardless of service or position (e.g., command, political, staff, combat support, researcher, or professor), have been assigned one of the 15 grades. From 1988 to 1999, most grades had three ranks.[6] However, the NPC issued revised active duty service regulations in 1999 that reduced the number of ranks per grade to two--a primary rank and a secondary rank.[7] For example, the current regulation stipulates, "Military region (MR) leaders shall be either general or lieutenant general, with general as the primary military rank."

Between 1955 and 1965, China promoted a total of 1,614 senior officers to a rank at or above the major general rank, including 10 marshals, 10 senior generals, 57 generals, 170 lieutenant generals, and 1,360 major generals.[8] When the PLA reinstituted ranks in 1988, it conferred ranks on 17 3-star generals/admirals, 146 2-star lieutenant generals/vice admirals, and 1,251 1-star major generals/ rear admirals.[9] The ranks of generalissimo, marshal, and senior general were not reinstituted.

The PLA has not provided any figures for the total number of flag rank officers promoted since 1988, but a 2002 Hong Kong newspaper report noted the PLA promoted about 100 officers to 1-star and 2-star in 2002 and had a total of about 1,500 1-star to 3-star generals and admirals on active duty.[10] The 7 officers promoted in 2002 averaged 62 years of age and had been lieutenant generals from 6 to 9 years. Following the 2004 promotions to 3-star general in June 2004, a total of 96 flag officers had received their third star, 32 of whom were still on active duty as of December 2003 (see the appendix). Of the 96, Deng Xiaoping promoted 17 and Jiang Zemin promoted 79.[11]

Of note, officers must have a minimum amount of time in a particular grade before they receive the primary rank. This is why various military region and service commanders and political commissars received their third star 2 to 4 years after they assumed their positions. Furthermore, while promotions to 1-star and 2-star

rank occur annually, it appears that 3-star ranks, generally, have been handed out every 2 years since 1994--with the one exception being the 1999 promotions of Guo Boxiong and Xu Caihou. It must be remembered, however, that it is the grade, not the rank, that defines the person's authority.

## Officer Retirement Ages.

PLA officers serve until they reach mandatory retirement ages based on their grade level. Prior to 1994, the PLA had mandatory retirement ages only for platoon through army leaders (age 30 for platoon, 35 for company, 40 for battalion, 45 for regiment, 50 for division, and 55 for army-level).[12] It was not until May 1994 that mandatory ages were established for grade 3 MR leaders and grade 4 MR deputy leaders (65 and 63, respectively). There are no mandatory retirement ages for grade 1 and 2 officers (i.e., CMC members and heads of the four general departments).[13] That is why most of the CMC members prior to the 16th Party Congress were over 70 years old. Table 3 shows the current retirement ages.

With the restoration of ranks in 1988, the PLA went through an incremental process to bring active-duty general officers into compliance with the retirement-age regulations. First major generals, then lieutenant generals, and finally full generals were brought into compliance--with the more senior generals who exercised greater political leverage being the hardest to place into retirement. The process was completed, for the most part, by the 14th Party Congress in 1992, when President Yang Shangkun and his half-brother General Yang Baibing were purged from the CMC. Since then, there have been few, if any exceptions to the retirement-age standards. In the one notable case, Deng Xiaoping's assistant, Yang Ruilin was promoted to full general and--as an exception to past precedents--made a member of the CMC (grade 2), despite holding only the grade 3 position of Deputy Director of the General Political Department. To the extent the information can be tracked, lieutenant generals and full generals, since the early 1990s, have retired soon after they reached their mandatory retirement age.[14]

| Grade | Retirement Age | Position | Primary Rank | Secondary Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | CMC Chairman (*junwei zhuxi*)<br>Vice Chairmen (*junwei fuzhuxi*) | NA<br>General | |
| 2 | | CMC Member (*junwei weiyuan*) | General | |
| 3 | 65 | MR Leader (*daqu zhengzhi*) | General | Lieutenant General |
| 4 | 63 | MR Deputy Leader (*daqu fuzhi*) | Lieutenant General | MG |
| 5 | 55 | Army Leader (*zhengjun*) | MG | Lieutenant General |
| 6 | | Army Deputy Leader (*fujun*) | MG | SCOL |
| 7 | 50 | Division Leader (*zhengshi*) | SCOL | MG |
| 8 | | Division Deputy Leader (*fushi*)<br>Brigade Leader (*zhenglü*)) | COL | SCOL |
| 9 | 45 | Regiment Leader (*zhengtuan*)<br>Brigade Deputy Leader (*fulü*) | COL | LTC |
| 10 | | Regiment Deputy Leader (*futuan*) | LTC | COL |
| 11 | 40 | Battalion Leader (*zhengying*) | MAJ | LTC |
| 12 | | Battalion Deputy Leader (*fuying*) | CPT | MAJ |
| 13 | 35 | Company Leader (*zhenglian*) | CPT | 1LT |
| 14 | | Company Deputy Leader (*fulian*) | lLT | CPT |
| 15 | 30 | Platoon Leader (*zhengpai*) | 2LT | 1LT |

Note: Noncommissioned officers are squad leaders.

**Table 3. PLA Officer Grades, Ranks, and Retirement Ages.**

## Regularizing Officer Billet Terms of Service.

The PLA has made a concerted effort to promote younger officers while at the same time standardizing the job qualifications and establishing the minimum and maximum time officers can be assigned in different billets. To regularize qualifications, the PLA issued "Provisional Rules on Appointment and Dismissal of Leading Cadres at the Regiment or Above." Factors considered include an officer's job experience, years of service, educational levels, school training, and health. These standards have become

important as a force management tool during the PLA's periodic streamlining and reduction-in-force programs conducted since the 1985 reorganization.[15]

One negative aspect of the provisional rules was that age requirements and minimum terms of service for certain positions could leave younger officers in the same post for several years. As a result, the December 2000 "Active-Service Officers Law" attempted to adjust existing rules and regulations so as to create an environment in which an accelerated career path is possible for "fast burners" at all levels. Under this law, most officers are still required to fill the minimum service requirement for each of their postings before being transferred laterally for career broadening or promoted to the next grade and move up one grade at a time through the ranks. In special cases--where an officer is characterized as possessing outstanding ethical conduct, talent, and possessing prominent performance achievements and is needed to fill a higher post--it is possible to relax some of the minimum-service terms and level-by-level promotion requirements.[16]

The PLA has made an effort to increase rotation and turnover of leadership positions in order to bring up new leaders and broaden officer opportunities for growth and development. As a result of various decisions by the CMC, the Active-Service Officers Law promulgated provisions creating a maximum term for an officer to remain at a specific post during peacetime to avoid "homesteading." Upon the expiration of this term, if not promoted, an officer is removed from the current post. At that time, if the officer does not meet the retirement requirements, he or she is transferred to a different lateral post. Currently, the PLA has instilled maximum terms of service for all positions above the regiment level. Officers at the regiment level and below do not have maximum service terms, but they do have specified retirement ages. Meanwhile, transfers can take place as needed and are not limited to officers who have reached their maximum term of service.[17]

For the most part, the PLA continues to retain officers in the same organizational chain until they reach the division-leader level (grade 7). At that time, and apparently assuming the officer has future promotion potential, he will be transferred to a different unit.

This can be within the "army-level" unit organization, to another "army-level" unit in the same military region, or to a different military region or national-level organization. There are exceptions at the regimental level where rising stars are moved to regional or national headquarters staffs, major military schools, or other specialty organizations and functions, such as attaché duty.

## Flag Rank Officers: Filling the Squares.

As the PLA continues to standardize its promotion system, it should become easier to predict, at least in a gross manner, who potential senior leaders will be several years in the future. This section examines how flag-rank officers move laterally and up the promotion ladder from grade 6 (army deputy leader) to grade 1 (CMC vice chairman).

| **Grade** | **General Departments** | **Military Regions, Service Hqs, NDU, AMS** | **Command Colleges & Engineering Universities** | **Army-Level** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2<br>CMC Member | • Principal Leaders | | | |
| 3<br>MR Leader | • Deputy Leaders | • Principal Leaders | | |
| 4<br>MR Deputy Leader | • Sub-Department Directors | • Deputy Leaders<br>• Chief of Staff<br>• 1st Level Department Directors | | |
| 5<br>Army Leader | • Bureau Chiefs | • 2nd Level Department Directors | • Principal Leaders | • Principal Leaders |
| 6<br>Army Deputy Leader | • Bureau Chiefs | | • Deputy Leaders | • Deputy Leaders<br>• Chief of Staff |

Note: Principal Leaders = Commander and Political Commissar
Deputy leaders = Deputy Commanders and Deputy Political Commissars
Chief of Staff = Director of the Headquarters Department
1st Level departments = Headquarters, Political, Logistics, and Armament
2nd Level Departments (often identified in English as sub-departments) = Operations, Intelligence, Communications, Training, Military Affairs, etc.

**Table 4. Flag Rank Grades and Billets.**

*Flag Rank Matrix*. Table 4 provides a matrix depicting command and administrative billets for flag-rank officers in grades 2 to 6. The matrix does not show every billet, but is representative of the primary positions. Note that the PLA's colleges are also assigned grades 3 through 7, with the appropriate flag officers assigned as the leaders and department directors. Note also that deputy commanders and the chief of staff, who is the director of the Headquarters Department, are the same grade at each level.

*Using the Matrix*. The matrix allows analysts to see on a gross basis roughly who is moving up through the system as shown in the following examples of some current Army, Navy, Air Force, and Academy of Military Science leaders. It should be noted that many "promotions" are actually lateral moves in the same grade, but some positions on the same level include greater responsibilities. For example, the PLAAF chief of staff is the same grade as a PLAAF deputy commander and an MRAF commander--grade 4. In the past, officers have moved among these three positions in different order.

## Other Factors Affecting Promotions.

*The Guanxi System*. *Guanxi*, or the system of interpersonal relationships that provides mentoring, patronage, and sponsorship during the course of an officer's career, is commonly accepted as a major factor in an officer's rise to the top positions. Politics and personalities play a major role in breaking into the flag-level ranks, as well as the process of continuing the climb up the promotion ladder. Conceivably, if one could ascertain who are the trusted underlings tied to the PLA's senior officers, observers would have a good idea of the pool from which the next generation of leaders will emerge.

However, our lack of understanding of this informal, mostly hidden system limits this type of analysis. This has been the case, for the most part, since the demise of the major field army system. Up to the early 1990s, the field armies provided an indication of professional association and interpersonal relationships, but

**Army General Liang Guanglie: Born in 1940, Sichuan Province.**

- Grade 2 billets
  - Chief of the General Staff and CMC Member (2002-Present)
  - Promoted to general in 2002
- Grade 3 billets
  - Commander, Nanjing MR (1999-2002)
  - Commander, Shenyang MR (1997-1999)
- Grade 4 billets
  - Deputy Commander, Beijing MR (1995-1997)
  - Chief of Staff, Beijing MR (1994-1995)
  - Promoted to lieutenant general in 1996
- Grade 5 billets
  - Commander, 54th Group Army (1990-1994)
  - Commander, 20th Group Army (1985-1990)
  - Received the rank of major general in 1988

**Army General Qian Guoliang: Born 1939, Jiangsu Province.**

- Grade 3 billets
  - Commander, Shenyang MR (1999-Present)
  - Commander, Jinan MR (1996-1999)
- Grade 4 billets
  - Student, National Defense University (1995-1996)
  - Chief of Staff, Jinan MR (1993-1995)
  - Promoted to lieutenant general in 1995
- Grade 5 billets
  - Commander, 26th Group Army (1990-1993)
  - Commander, 27th Group Army (1985-1990)
  - Received rank of major general in 1988

**PLA Navy Vice Admiral Zhang Dingfa: Born in 1943, Shanghai.**

- Grade 3 billets
  - Commander, PLA Navy (2003-Present)
  - Commandant, PLA Academy of Military Science (2002-2003)
- Grade 4 billets
  - Deputy Commander, PLA Navy (2000-2002)
  - Commander, North Sea Fleet (1997-2000)
- Grade 5 billets
  - Deputy Commander, North Sea Fleet (1996-1997)

**PLA Air Force General Qiao Qingchen: Born in 1939, Henan Province.**

- Grade 3 billets
  - Commander, PLA Air Force (2002-Present)[18]
  - Political Commissar, PLA Air Force (1999-2002)
  - Promoted to general in 2002
- Grade 4 billets
  - Deputy Commander, PLA Air Force (1997-1999)
  - Commander, Beijing MR Air Force (1996-1997)
  - Promoted to lieutenant general in 1996
- Grade 5 billets
  - Deputy Political Commissar, Jinan MR Air Force (1993-1996)
  - Political Commissar, Xian Command Post (1992-1993)
- Grade 6 billets
  - Student, Central Party School (1990-1991)

**Table 4. Flag Rank Matrix.**

| |
|---|
| o Director, Political Department, 8th Air Corps, Fuzhou (1985-1990)<br>o Deputy political commissar, 4th Air Corps in Shanghai (1983-1985)<br>o Received rank of major general in 1988 |
| **PLA Air Force Lieutenant General Zheng Shenxia: Born in 1942.** |
| • Grade 3 billets<br>o Commandant of the Academy of Military Sciences (AMS) (2003-Present)<br>• Grade 4 billets<br>o Chief of Staff, PLAAF Headquarters (1999-2003)<br>o Commander, Shenyang MR Air Force (1997-1999)<br>• Grade 5 billets<br>o Commandant, PLAAF Command College (1995-1997)<br>o Commander, 7th Air Corps (1990-1995) |

**Table 4. Flag Rank Matrix (Concluded).**

multiple reforms and restructuring, as well as the passing of the revolutionary generation, have reduced the effectiveness of this tool. Current military region, group army, naval base, and air corps structures do not provide the cohesiveness of cliques around certain leaders that the old field armies provided.

Further, more regularized promotions and transfers among general officers work to prevent such interpersonal relationships and alliances from forming--or at least that is the way it appears from the outside.[19] For example, in 1990, 10 of the 14 military region commanders and political commissars were shuffled--a move designed clearly to break links between local political leaders and their military counterparts following the debacle at Tiananmen. Since then, senior changes at this level have occurred on a routine basis.[20]

*Party Congress and NPC Membership*. PLA officers throughout the ranks are selected as delegates to the major Party and National Party Congresses (NPC) held every 5 years. Selection is an indication of seniority or future potential, but it is not a good predictor of promotion except at the very senior level of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee (CCPCC). Selection as an alternate CCPCC member at a relatively junior level or young age--in the context of rank--is a positive indicator; however, if the officer is already at a very senior level and near mandatory retirement, selection as an alternate generally indicates the officer is near the end of his career.

The career of General Xiong Guangkai, a 3-star or full general who first became an alternate CCPCC member at the 14th Party

Congress in 1992, provides an example of both cases. When first elected, he was a major general and Director of the General Staff Department (GSD) Intelligence Department. Immediately following the Congress, he was promoted to lieutenant general and Assistant to the Chief of the GSD, a staging position for eventual promotion to full Deputy Chief of the GSD--which happened in 1996. Xiong was reelected as an alternate at the 15th Party Congress in 1997, signaling he was still a "player." Consistent with his continued importance, Xiong was promoted to full general (3-stars) in 2000. In the lead-up to the 16th Party Congress in 2002, rumors were rampant that Xiong would be promoted to Minister of National Defense, a position that would include promotion to the Central Military Commission and signal extension of his career beyond age 65. However, at the 16th Party Congress, Xiong was re-elected as an alternate and not to the full Central Committee. At age 63, with mandatory retirement as a full general looming at age 65 or March 2004, his selection as only an alternate signaled Xiong had reached the peak of his military career. The CMC appointments at the end of the Party Congress reinforced this point.

Nonselection to the Central Committee of a serving member further demonstrates how the CCPCC works as a predictive tool. For example, another Deputy Chief of the GSD, General Kui Fulin, as well as the Commander of the Second Artillery, General Yang Guoliang, were both full members of the 15th CCPCC. They were not reelected to the 16th CCPCC, thus indicating imminent retirement. Yang retired in January 2003, and Kui retired by August 2003.

On the other hand, selection to full membership in the CCPCC is a near-absolute indicator of imminent promotion to a senior position. New full members of the 16th CCPCC included Lieutenant General Jing Zhiyuan, later promoted to Commander, Second Artillery; Lieutenant General Ma Xiaotian, Commander of the Nanjing Military Region Air Force (MRAF) until he moved laterally to Air Force Deputy Commander in August; and Lieutenant General Chi Wanchun, who was soon promoted from Political Commissar of the National Defense Science and Technology University to be Political Commissar of the General Armament Department (GAD). New alternate member, Lieutenant General Pei Huailiang, was also later promoted to Commandant of the National Defense University. Some of the other newly selected full CCPCC members were also

promoted in rank to lieutenant general, including Sun Zhiqiang, Deputy Director of the General Logistics Department (GLD), and Chang Wanquan, Chief of Staff of the Lanzhou MR.[21]

## Education Requirements.

Basic education--civilian and/or military--plus professional military education (PME) are requirements for promotion and, increasingly, have become discriminators in that officers without proper educational credentials, particularly PME, will not get promoted. Since its establishment in 1985, the National Defense University has become a key PME step for promotion to flag rank. Attendance in the full 1-year program appears mandatory. In addition, the short 3- to 4-month-long senior officer course appears to be required for new lieutenant generals and senior major generals. Attending, however, does not guarantee promotion. Professional skill certification--prior to attaining flag or general officer rank--in the form of exams, tests, peer reports, or similar management tools also likely serve as similar prerequisites for promotion as well as discriminators against those who do not meet the evaluation standards.

## Foreign Travel.

Foreign travel has not been clearly established as an indicator of future promotion potential. On one hand, the PLA is making a deliberate effort to expose senior officers to the world outside China, either as members of a delegation led by a CMC leader or service leader, or by leading their own lower-level delegations.[22] For example, as a PLAAF deputy commander, Liu Shunyao accompanied Defense Minister and CMC Vice Chairman Chi Haotian to the United States in November 1996 and became the commander the next month. In September 1998, PLAAF Deputy Political Commissar Qiao Qingchen accompanied CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Wannian to the United States and became the political commissar 3 months later.

In some cases, however, a major trip abroad in the last 1 or 2 years of service serves as a retirement gift and perk. For example, Second Artillery Commander General Yang Guoliang accompanied

General Zhang Wannian on a visit to Australia in April 2001; he retired in late 2002. Another example is the visit by General Wang Zuxun, then Commandant of the Academy of Military Sciences, to the United States in August 2000, near the end of his career[23]

## Place of Birth.

Place of birth has long been cited as contributing to an officer's ability to gain sponsorship and assistance along the promotion track. References to the "Shandong" clique surrounding former Minister of National Defense Chi Haotian exemplify this association. The lack of detailed biographic information, however, makes it difficult to authoritatively address this factor. Common birthplaces may be more a coincidence and a reflection of history's circumstances than a major contributing factor to the likelihood that a general will be promoted to a top position.

## Political Reliability.

Political reliability is one of the absolute prerequisites for promotion to and within the flag officer ranks. The system of party committees, political departments, and political officers from the company level through the four general departments supports the core fabric of the political vetting and loyalty assurance process. The party committees at each level play a key role in selecting or recommending an officer for promotion by attesting to the political qualifications of an officer.[24] Then, other factors such as technical proficiency, tactical skills, and meritorious performance come into play. However, for the outside observer, this aspect of the selection process is opaque. Further, biographic information on officers below the top ranks is almost nonexistent, making it next to impossible to judge and rank potential senior leaders from outside the PLA system.

## Limiting Factors.

Although we focus our analysis on those factors that would enhance our ability to predict promotion, there are also variables

that would enable the observer to eliminate certain individuals from consideration. This is an area for further exploration, but at least one career track--logistics--provides an example with an apparent cap on how far an officer can progress during a career. Officers on the professional logistics career track peak at the GLD deputy level. Since at least 1980 when General Hong Xuezhi became a Director of the GLD, no career logistics officer has been promoted to military region or general department head. Hong's successor in 1987, General Zhao Nanqi, was a political commissar, not a logistician. Since then the Directors of the GLD have all come from military region commands while the career deputy directors went on to retirement.[25]

## Other Possible "Tickets."

The PLA apparently has other "tickets" to be punched on the way up the promotion ladder. The role of combat experience as a factor contributing to promotion to the senior-most levels of the PLA is not as clear as with the previous generations of leaders who were "blooded" in full-fledged wars against the Japanese in World War II, during the civil war against the Nationalists, and then in the Korean War. Preliminary research using limited resources indicates some of the six members elected to the 16th Party Congress Central Committee's Military Commission have limited combat experience based on the 1979 border war with Vietnam and the decade-long series of clashes along the border that followed. But more study is needed to determine the extent such experience was a primary factor in their rise up the promotion ladder. As with many of the other factors that go into defining the qualifications and potential of an officer, such experience helps but is not sufficient to facilitate predicting future promotions.[26]

Yet another "ticket" for promotion to certain positions could be attendance at the Central Party School, but not enough is known about who attends this course.

### Future Developments Impacting General Officer Promotions.

As the PLA continues to modernize, standardize its structure, and regularize its administrative and officer management processes, further changes will affect our ability to predict the rising stars. Reductions in force and streamlining, obviously, will reduce the overall number of flag-rank officer billets. More importantly, however, restructuring of headquarters organizations and command levels will reduce the proportion of flag-rank billets. On one hand, observers should be better able to identify the flag-level positions—and maybe track the occupants—but, on the other hand, little is being done to increase the amount of biographic information or openness that would be necessary to assess the candidates for promotion to senior ranks.

Also, as reform accompanies restructuring and streamlining, it is reasonable to anticipate that age limitations for various flag ranks and grades will be further reduced. Shorter careers, with less history, will continue to limit biographic information needed to predict promotions.

## CONCLUSIONS

Predicting the PLA's future leaders is more of an art than a science. However, as the PLA continues to regularize its promotion system and the number of flag officer billets decreases, it should be easier to use the tools laid out in this chapter to help accomplish this task. For example, tracking lateral and vertical movement through the grade system for as many officers as possible beginning at the grade 6 army deputy leader level should provide a better understanding of the entire promotion process. As noted, there are also many "other factors" such as *guanxi* and Party positions that must be taken into account, but this information is more difficult to attain and quantify. Therefore, greater access to public information in China about the PLA's leaders and discussions with the leaders themselves during their travels abroad will be necessary to gather enough data to make accurate predictions.

# APPENDIX

## ACTIVE-DUTY FULL GENERALS AND POSITIONS (32 AS OF 20 JUNE 2004)

**Promoted 27 March 1998**

| | |
|---|---|
| Cao Gangchuan | Vice Chairman of the CMC and Minister of National Defense |

**Promoted 29 September 1999**

| | |
|---|---|
| Guo Boxiong | Vice Chairman of the CMC |
| Xu Caihou | Member of the CMC and Director of the GPD |

**Promoted 21 June 2000**

| | |
|---|---|
| Liao Xilong | Member of the CMC and Director of the GLD |
| Li Jinai | Member of the CMC and Director of the GAD |
| Wu Quanxu | Deputy Chief of the GSD |
| Qian Shugen | Deputy Chief of the GSD |
| Xiong Guangkai | Deputy Chief of the GSD |
| Tang Tianbiao | Deputy Director of the GPD |
| Yuan Shoufang | Deputy Director of the GPD |
| Zhang Shutian | Deputy Director of the GPD |

**Promoted June 2002**

| | |
|---|---|
| Liang Guanglie | Member of the CMC and Chief of the GSD |
| Qiao Qingchen | Commander of the Air Force |
| Wen Zongren | Political Commissar of the Academy of Military Sciences |
| Qian Guoliang | Commander of the Shenyang MR |
| Jiang Futang | Political Commissar of the Shenyang MR |
| Liu Shutian | Political Commissar of the Chengdu MR |

**Promoted June 2004**

| | |
|---|---|
| Ge Zhenfeng | Deputy Chief of the GSD |
| Zhang Li | Deputy Chief of the GSD |
| You Xigui | Director of the Central Guards Bureau |
| Zhang Wentai | Political Commissar of the GPD |
| Hu Yanlin | Political Commissar of the Navy |
| Zheng Shenxia | Commandant of the Academy of Military Sciences |
| Zhao Keming | Political Commissar of the National Defense University |
| Zhu Qi | Commander of the Beijing MR |
| Liu Zhenwu | Commander of the Guangzhou MR |
| Yang Deqing | Political Commissar of the Guangzhou MR |
| Liu Dongdong | Political Commissar of the Jinan MR |
| Li Qianyuan | Commander of the Lanzhou MR |
| Lei Mingqiu | Political Commissar of the Nanjing MR |
| Wu Shuangzhan | Commander of the People's Armed Police |
| Sui Mingtai | Political Commissar of the People's Armed Police |

# ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 8

1. The PLA's time-in-grade requirements for officer promotions in rank are not specified in the various service laws and are not readily available to the public.

2. The CMC began using the terms Liberation Army (*jiefangjun*) and People's Liberation Army (*renmin jiefangjun*) as early as 1945 to identify the concept of a single armed forces. These terms, however, were not formally used with unit designations (i.e., the PLA 32nd division) until the CMC issued a general order to this effect on 1 November 1948. *Zhongguo Renmin Jiefang Jun Da Shiji 1927-1982* [*People's Liberation Army Chronicle 1927-1982*], Beijing: PLA Academy of Military Science, November 1983, pp. 83, 285.

3. The 10 grade categories and corresponding grades were as follows: Category 1 (CMC) included grade 1 chairman and vice chairmen; category 2 (military region) included grade 2 leaders (e.g., commander and political commissar); category 3 (CMC member) included grade 3 members; category 4 (*bingtuan*) included grade 4 leader, grade 5 deputy leader, and grade 6 who was the number 3 leader; category 5 (army/corps) included grade 7 leader, grade 8 deputy leader, and grade 9 the number 3 leader; category 6 (division) included grade 10 leader, grade 11 deputy leader, and grade 12 the number 3 leader; category 7 (regiment) included grade 13 leader, grade 14 deputy leader, and grade 15 the number 3 leader; category 8 included grade 16 leader and grade 17 deputy leader; category 9 (company) included grade 18 leader and grade 19 deputy leader; and category 10 (platoon) included grade 20 leader. *Zhongguo Junshi Baike Quanshu* [*Chinese Military Encyclopedia*], Beijing, Academy of Military Science Publishers, July 1997, Vol. 4-40.

4. *Ibid*.

5. From 1965 to 1988, the only way, visually, to tell the difference between enlisted troops and officers was that the officers had four pockets on their jackets and enlisted troops had two. When two officers from different units met, they would identify themselves by saying, "I'm deputy regiment commander Zhang," and "I'm division commander Li." It was not readily apparent who outranked whom until they established their grades verbally. "Regulations for PLA Officers' Ranks," *British Broadcasting Corporation*, 20 July 1988, *Xinhua*, July 2, 1988; *Zhongguo Junshi Baike Quanshu*, Vol. 4-392.

6. "Regulations for PLA Officers' Ranks." National People's Congress (NPC) adopted the "Regulations for PLA Officers' Ranks in accordance with relevant provisions of the Military Service Law of the People's Republic of China," effective October 1988.

7. *Zhongguo Junshi Baike Quanshu*, Vol. 4-392.

8. Chang Ching-Erh, "Jiang Zemin Promotes 10 Senior Officers, Generals," *Foreign Broadcast Information Servicei* (FBIS)-CHI-98-128, May 8, 1998, from Hong Kong Kuang Chiao Ching in Chinese, No. 307, April 16, 1998, pp. 50-53. For the complete list of generals and flag officers promoted between 1955 and 1965, see the

three volume set, *Zhongguo Renmin Jiefangjun Jiangshuai Minglu* [*Chinese PLA List of Generals and Marshals*], PLA Press, 1986.

9. According to the 1989 issue of *Shijie Junshi Nianjian* [*World Military Yearbook*], published by PLA Press, Beijing, p 6.

10. "Jiang Zemin Signs Order to Promote More Than 100 Generals," *Hong Kong Wen Wei Po* (Internet Version-WWW) in Chinese, August 2, 2002, in *FBIS*. From 1988 to 2000, China promoted 81 senior military and armed police officers to 3-star flag rank as follows: September 1988 (17); June 1993 (6); June 1994 (19); January 1996 (4); May 1998 (10); September 1999 (2); June 2000 (16); and 2002 (7). Chang Ching-Erh, "Jiang Zemin Promotes 10 Senior Officers, Generals," *FBIS*-CHI-98-128, May 8, 1998, from *Hong Kong Kuang Chiao Chin*g in Chinese, No. 307, April 16, 1998, pp. 50-53; "Sixteen Chinese Military, Police Officers Promoted to General," *Xinhua*, June 21, 2000. For the list of names of all full generals, see Xiao Tian: "Inside Story of Communist China Military's Promotion of Seven Generals"; *Hong Kong Ching Pao* in Chinese, July 1, 2002, No. 300, pp. 38-40, in *FBIS*.

11. Xiao Tian, "Inside Story of Communist China Military's Promotion to Seven Generals," Hong Kong *Ching Pao*, July 1, 2002, translated by *FBIS*. The total number of full generals has been updated to reflect the June 2004 promotions; the list of active duty full generals is the authors' compilation.

12. *Shijie Junshi Nianjian* [*World Military Yearbook*], Beijing, PLA Press, 1995-1996, p 76. The Chinese term *jun* is translated as either army or corps.

13. *Zhongguo Junshi Baike Quanshu*, Vol. 7 and 9.

14. Authors have tracked PLA general officer retirements since 1986 using the *Directory of People's Republic of China Military Personalities*, published annually. Based on this experience, it appears that the PLA may also have specific retirement limits for certain ranks based on the grade, particularly for major generals holding deputy army-level (*fujun*) positions. However, available references for the PLA's organizational system (*zuzhi tizhi*) address only the full army-level (*zhengjun*) positions.

15. The PLA announced a 1,000,000-man reduction in 1985, and a 500,000-man reduction in 1997. See China's National Defense, Beijing: Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, July 1998. A further 200,000-man reduction was announced in 2003. See "Chairman Jiang Zemin Speech at Anniversary Meeting of Defense S&T University," in *Xinhua Domestic Service*, September 1, 2003, in *FBIS*; see also Peng Guangqian and Zheng Yanping, "The Strategic Significance of Reducing 200,000 Troops," *Liaowang*, September 15, 2003, pp. 30-31, in *FBIS*.

16. "Explanation on the Active-Service Officers Law of the People's Republic of China," *Liberation Army Daily*, January 18, 2001, in *FBIS*.

17. "Explanation on the Active-Service Officers Law of the People's Republic of China," *Liberation Army Daily*, January 18, 2001, in *FBIS*.

18. Qiao will reach age 65 in 2004 and must retire at that time unless he is promoted to the CMC..

19. The field army system is described in William Whitson, *The Chinese High Command: A History of Chinese Military Politics, 1927-71,* New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973. The situation at the beginning of the 1990s when the field army system was in its final stages is described well in Michael D. Swaine, *The Military & Political Succession in China: Leadership Institutions Beliefs,* Santa Monica: RAND, 1992.

20. *Directory of PRC Military Personalities,* USDLO Hong Kong, June 1990. pp. ii-iii. There were no military region level changes reported in the annual *Directory* in 1991. Since then, the *Directory* reported the following changes in military region commanders and political commissars: one in 1992; eight in 1993; four in 1994; four in 1995; four in 1996; three in 1997; three in 1998; four in 1999; four in 2000; one in 2001; and six in 2002. There should be at least two changes in 2003 or early 2004 when General Chen Bingde, Commander, Nanjing Military Region, and General Du Tiehuan, Political Commissar, Beijing Military Region, reach their mandatory retirement age.

21. Sun Zhiqiang and Chang Wanquan were major generals at the time of the Party Congress; both have since been promoted to lieutenant generals. See also: Tieh Yun-cheng: "Latest Developments With China's Military Leadership," *Kuang Chiao Ching (Wide Angle),* January 16, 2003, No. 364, pp. 12-15, in *FBIS*.

22. Kenneth W. Allen and Eric A. McVadon, *China's Foreign Military Relations,* Report 32, The Stimson Center, October 1999, describes in detail how the PLA uses foreign travel and military diplomacy to further national interests and to expose senior officers to the world outside China.

23. For Yang Guoliang, see Qi Zijian, "Zhang Wannian Meets Australian Defense Minister" in *Xinhua Domestic Service* in Chinese, April 2, 2001, in *FBIS*. For Wang Zuxun, see "Chinese Military Academy Delegation Leaves for US." *Xinhua* in English, August 18, 2000, in *FBIS*.

24. Larry Wortzel, "The General Political Department and the Evolution of the Political Commissar System, in James C. Mulvenon and Andrew N.D. Yang, eds., *The People's Liberation Army as Organization,* Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002, pp. 237-238.

25. General Fu Quanyou, from Commander, Lanzhou MR replaced Zhao in 1992. General Wang Ke, from Commander, Shenyang MR, replaced Fu in 1995, and General Liao Xilong, from Commander, Chengdu MR, replaced Wang in 2002. General Li Jiulong, in the early 1990s spent a brief stint as Deputy Director of the GLD, following serving as Commander of Shenyang MR, and before returning to MR command in Lanzhou. Several deputy directors have been transferred, but not necessarily promoted out of the GLD, but they have not yet made it to the top rung of leadership. Examples include now Vice Admiral Shen Binyi, Deputy PLA Navy Commander, who was promoted from rear admiral, and MG Zong Shunliu, who was actually demoted to Deputy Chief of Staff of Shenyang MR in 1990.

26. Edward C. O'Dowd and John F. Corbett, Jr., "The 1979 Chinese Campaign in Vietnam: Lessons Learned," in Laurie Burkitt, Andrew Scobell, and Larry M. Wortzel, eds., *The Lessons of History: The Chinese People's Liberation Army at 75,* Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, July 2003, pp. 364-366.

# CHAPTER 9

# AGENTS OF INFLUENCE: ASSESSING THE ROLE OF CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS AFTER THE 16TH PARTY CONGRESS

**Evan S. Medeiros**

## INTRODUCTION

China's foreign policy has emerged in recent years as a fast moving axis of transformation. Although numerous international scholars have already chronicled the reform-era evolution in Chinese foreign policy and foreign relations, the pace of change has been particularly rapid in recent years. China has become much more engaged in the activities of regional and multilateral organizations, including shaping their agendas in limited ways. Chinese policymakers pay attention to a more diverse set of international issues. Moreover, China's senior leaders have begun to look at the world through a set of lenses which are far less tinted and jaded with the vestiges of history and ideology than in past years.[1] China's classic insecurity, overconfidence, entitlement mentality, and pedantic moralism no longer dominate Chinese interactions with the international community. These changes beg the question: where are these new and "correct" foreign policy ideas coming from?[2]

Chinese think tanks and research institutes serve as a central source for the collection and formulation of information, analysis, and intelligence on foreign policy issues. Their influence has grown in the last 10-15 years as foreign affairs decisionmaking has pluralized, demand for regional and functional expertise has grown, and access to information has increased. Thus, Chinese foreign policy think tanks are one important window through which to understand more clearly the changes in Chinese perceptions and policies on current foreign policy challenges. Examining these organizations sheds light on the genesis and evolution of the newest and most novel Chinese thinking on foreign affairs.

The existing literature on Chinese foreign policy and national security research institutes essentially is built around three analytical pillars: institutions, processes, and content. Past and recent research by Bates Gill, Bonnie Glaser, James Mulvenon, Michael Pillsbury, Phillip Saunders, and David Shambaugh, among others, is focused heavily on, first, mapping the structure and regional/functional expertise of the various organizations in the foreign policy think tank community; second, identifying the processes that govern think tank interactions; and, third, identifying and analyzing the content of think tank debates.[3] These analytical foci are the hallmark of these scholars' collective effort to assess the roles and influence of the numerous think tanks that populate the skylines and *hutong*s of Beijing and Shanghai.[4]

Their approach leaves additional questions unanswered, however. Do these think tanks and research organizations simply feed information, analysis and intelligence to ministerial leadership or do they also possess the intellectual capabilities and political space to offer new ideas and novel approaches to foreign policy problems? How do they do this? Furthermore, to what extent do these think tanks shape both the content of government policy as well as the ways in which policymakers think about foreign policy? How have these organizations changed in recent years and how has this affected Chinese discourse on foreign policy.

In an attempt to get at these "second order" questions, this chapter explores several new trends in the roles and functions of China's community of foreign policy research organizations. The most prominent trends include the emergence of new actors, new debates, and new venues/forums for discussing foreign policy. To what extent do these phenomena tell us about changes in think tank research agendas, the political space think tanks now inhabit and, ultimately, the impact of their work on actual policymaking? To be clear, this is an exploratory exercise. The goal of this chapter is to determine how much one can learn about foreign policy think tanks by analyzing these new phenomena. This research does not aim to supplant existing work on institutions, processes and content, but rather to build on it in an effort to elucidate further the roles and influence of foreign policy think tanks in recent years and especially in the post-16th Party Congress environment.

This chapter begins with an assessment of the major organizational characteristics of China's community of foreign policy think tanks in order to provide a necessary empirical baseline for further analysis. The second section details some of the newest trends among the foreign policy think tank community that are affecting its ability to influence policymaking. The third section explores the relative importance of key foreign policy journals to determine what, if any, additional information *about think tanks* (vice broader Chinese debates) can be gleaned from analyzing these periodicals.[5] The fourth section describes new characteristics of foreign policy decisionmaking in the post 16th Party Congress environment to explore whether and how new ideas are being operationalized in actual foreign policy. The paper ends with tentative conclusions about the changing influence of foreign policy think tanks in China.

## REVIEWING THE LANDSCAPE OF CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY THINK TANKS

In China, there exists a rich assortment of research institutes focused on foreign policy research, analysis, and intelligence. Most are based in Beijing, with a few notable ones in Shanghai. Most of these organizations have been in existence for decades and were set up in the 1950s to provide analytical support to ministries involved in the formulation of national security and foreign policy positions. Most of these were closed during the Cultural Revolution and then reopened (and began rebuilding) in the late 1970s and early 1980s as China under Deng Xiaoping re-engaged the international community. A few research organizations were established in the 1980s when certain institutions, such as the People's Liberation Army (PLA), sought to create organizations or "cut-outs" to bolster their interactions with international analysts and policymakers. A list of the main foreign policy and national security think tanks is provided below. (A detailed description of their structure and areas of expertise can be found in numerous recent publications).[6]

**Foreign Policy Research Institutes**:

- Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)
- China Institute for Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)

- China Institute of International Studies (CIIS)
- Foreign Affairs College (FAC)
- Xinhua Center for Foreign Affairs
- Institute for International Strategic Studies, Central Party School
- Institute for World Information
- China Society for Strategy and Management
- Shanghai Center for International Studies (SCIS)
- Shanghai Institute of International Studies (SIIS)
- Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS)

**Military-linked Research Institutes**:
- Academy of Military Sciences (AMS)
- China Institute for International Strategic Studies (CIISS)
- Center for Peace and Development Studies (CPDS)
- Foundation for International Strategic Studies (FISS)
- Institute for National Security Studies, National Defense University (INSS/NDU)
- China Defense Science Technology Information Center (CDSTIC)

China's foreign policy research institutes share many attributes related to organizational structure, function, and lines of authority. Most, though not all, have a single line of authority to a ministry under the State Council, the Central Committee, or the PLA. The China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) and the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), for example, are supervised by the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, respectively. As an outgrowth of the Soviet model, this system had a strong bias toward stove-piping; requests flowed downward from ministerial leadership and research products and reports flowed upward. Moreover, ideology was a major constraint on the quality of research. For decades, most of the research and analysis of foreign policy institutes clearly reflected a Marxist-Leninist view of the world.[7] The vast majority of reports were produced to support China's ideologically motivated foreign policy positions. Chinese analysts interpreted information and events through the thick lenses of Mao's three world's theory, the inevitability of great power war thesis, and the belief that China was a revolutionary power combating the "imperialism" and "revisionism" of the

United States and the Soviet Union. In this sense, think tank analyses produced in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and most of the 1980s may have been "correct" but not necessarily accurate. According to Lu Ning, a former Foreign Ministry official, most think tank reports were useless given the strong ideological bias, absence of analysis, and lack of quality information.[8]

The quality of the research and analysis of these think tanks was further limited by organizational attributes of the bureaucracy. For decades most foreign policy research institutes were compartmentalized due to a highly vertically integrated bureaucracy. As a result, analysts with similar expertise seldom talked with one another and often produced redundant research. The high degree of secrecy surrounding foreign policy and national security research until the 1990s further inhibited sharing of information and ideas among Chinese analysts. These barriers were especially strong on sensitive security issues such as arms control and nonproliferation where the foreign policy analysts seldom talked with scientists from the ultra-secretive nuclear and aerospace establishments.

Beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the outlooks, operations, and skills of these research institutes and their analysts began to shift. Prior to this period, they were heavily focused on classic security issues and area studies. They possessed little expertise on functional topics in the late 1980s. Chinese foreign policy think tanks started evolving in terms of their "functions, responsibilities, and influence."[9] Foreign policy and national security specialists moved away from interpreting global events using Marxist syllogisms; they started drawing on analytical and theoretical tools from Western teachings on foreign policy analysis and international relations (IR). Indeed, many now talk about foreign policy and international security using Western IR terminology as their *lingua franca*. This is reflected in the broadening of research agendas beyond classic security issues and areas studies, which were analytical preoccupations for decades.[10] Chinese scholars and analysts now focus on the importance of multilateral organizations, the links between domestic and foreign policy, and a whole range of functional foreign policy issues such as nonproliferation, regionalism, multilateral organizations, energy security, and counterterrorism. In the late 1990s, the use of IR theory to analyze problems became a

growing tendency among Chinese foreign policy scholars as well. In more recent years, Chinese IR specialists have demonstrated a particular penchant for non-state centric approaches in analyzing foreign policy and international affairs.[11]

Some of the most salient changes have been in the type and nature of interactions *within* the community of foreign policy research analysis.[12] In the 1990s, horizontal interactions among government think tanks proliferated; exchanges among analysts within *and* outside the same bureaucratic system (*xitong*) became increasingly common. Scholars and analysts would regularly meet at ministry-sponsored conferences convened to gather opinions on pressing foreign policy issues such as a pending trip abroad of a senior official. Other key changes in the foreign policy think tank community included: a growing competition for getting information and analysis to senior leaders; an expanding cadre of better informed and educated analysts; a broadening of research agendas; the use of more and better research materials; and dramatically increased contacts with foreigners. In the 1990s in particular, Chinese think tank analysts regularly attended conferences and seminars in foreign countries. These trips were used to gather information and opinion as well as to influence the views of foreigners. Indeed, in recent years, Chinese think tank delegations to the United States are on the rise. Many are often self-funded, and their purposes range from fact-finding to message dissemination.[13]

Most of these trends resulted from a gradual liberalization of the political environment in which think tanks operate. As China's interaction with the international community expanded and a host of new functional issues (i.e., environmental degradation and energy security) jumped onto its foreign policy agenda, the government's demand grew for accurate information and quality analysis. Similarly, a demand for expertise on functional foreign policy issues emerged. A far greater premium was placed on experience and expertise over ideological purity and political correctness. In this sense, the political environment became far more conducive to higher quality research on a broader set of foreign policy topics.

In sum, one can conceive of the evolution of China's foreign policy research community as having evolved in roughly three related stages. These stages reflect changes in the *capabilities* of Chinese

foreign policy analysts and the *political space* for participation in foreign policy decisionmaking. First, from the late 1950s to the mid-1980s, their research focused mainly on general assessments of the international security environment, specific bilateral relationships and classic security issues (e.g., arms races and alliances). There was minimal public debate about the implications of these trends for China's foreign policy. As argued above, the vast majority of the work was ideological and the community was compartmentalized.

In the second stage, from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, interactions among the members of the community proliferated, and foreign policy specialists began to interact more regularly with the transnational community of foreign policy analysts. Ideology dissipated from their work, which showed greater attention to and interest in a wider mix of policy and theoretical IR issues. Public discussions about the implications of various trends for China also increased.[14] A third stage began in the mid-1990s, when Chinese scholars and analysts demonstrated a willingness to debate in public not only various international trends but also importantly the implications of these trends for Chinese foreign policy. As of 2003, a nascent marketplace of ideas (albeit a regulated one) on foreign policy is developing. Scholars and analysts now openly disagree with one another about Chinese policy options, and in some cases they express disagreement with China's official policy.[15] In addition, in this environment of active discourse on foreign policy, the debates often cut across organizational lines and coalesce around ideas *rather* than institutions.

## THE CHANGING CONTOURS OF CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY THINK TANKS

Some of the most unique and interesting changes in the community of foreign policy research institutes emerged in the last few years. Whereas the 1990s saw a broadening of China's foreign policy interests, more active participation in various multilateral forums and a gradual improvement in the quality of foreign policy research, analysis, and intelligence, the early part of this decade is witnessing an acceleration and qualitative evolution of these phenomena. These trends suggest that the political space for these

think tanks to broaden their research agendas and to propose innovative ideas is expanding. As a result, their relevance to both public and internal/governmental debates and policymaking is increasing.

First, university based foreign policy research programs are rapidly growing in capabilities and importance. As the *danwei* system and its cumbersome social trappings (i.e., provision of housing) have begun to dissolve in recent years, there is far greater employment mobility within China's labor markets, including among foreign policy research organizations. A direct result of this enhanced mobility is the migration of scholars and officials toward university-based IR research programs.[16] Qinghua University has been one of the greatest beneficiaries of this trend to date. Both Yan Xuetong and Chu Shulong, prominent former scholars from CICIR, moved in 2001 to Qinghua University. Similarly, Li Bin, a nuclear physicist and arms control expert, moved from a Beijing-based nuclear weapons research institute to Qinghua's Institute for International Relations and started a robust and active arms control research and teaching program. Li's move is particularly unique given the secretiveness and insularity of China's nuclear weapons community. Yan Xuetong, in establishing Qinghua University's first Institute for International Relations, is building an active program by recruiting government experts to join the academic world. In addition to hiring Li Bin, Yan recently acquired a Japan specialist from the Central Committee's Foreign Affairs office. Furthermore, Niu Jun, a well-known expert of U.S. foreign policy and Cold War history, recently left the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Institute for American Studies for Beijing University. People's University recently reinvigorated its international relations program with the addition of Shi Yinghong (formerly of the PLA's Institute for International Relations), Jin Canrong (formerly of CASS's Institute of American Studies), and others. University employment provides greater intellectual freedom, more opportunities to interact with international scholars and the national and international media, and greater freedom to solicit funding from international foundations and entrepreneurs.[17]

There are also a limited number of examples of movement from academia to the government. Su Ge, a dean from the Foreign Affairs

College, became a vice president at CIIS in 2000 and then recently moved again to the Chinese Embassy in Washington. To be sure, China is still far from the "revolving door" model (common in the United States, for example), which allows so many U.S. academics and think tank analysts to serve temporarily in government posts in Washington.[18] However, should more Chinese foreign policy specialists begin to enter government, this mobility would give them new and direct channels to influence China's foreign policy decisionmaking.

As a result of the above trend, the relevance and impact of university-based research and commentary on foreign policy has increased dramatically in the last few years, especially given that such scholars were nonplayers in the policy process in past years.[19] This trend also interestingly coincides with a more open political environment to discuss foreign policy and national security topics and a more robust public debate on them. Scholars from Qinghua University, Beijing University, and People's University are increasingly active in public debates and have been at the forefront of new thinking in Chinese foreign policy. Shi Yinghong at People's University initiated a robust debate among analysts about changing China's bilateral policy toward Japan. Shi has also been one of the most outspoken critics of North Korea's nuclear program and a vocal advocate of China's need to stop North Korea at all costs. Indeed, Shi wrote articles which went farther than China's official policy by advocating that China support regime change in Pyongyang.[20] Beyond Shi's work, other scholars have written similarly provocative articles on the North Korean nuclear issue.[21] Ye Zicheng from Beijing University has written some of the most provocative and innovative articles on China's need for both a great-power mentality and China's need to adopt great-power diplomacy.[22] Li Bin has consistently been at the forefront of Chinese research on responses to missile defenses and is currently leading a task force on this issue under the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association (CACDA). Through his teaching at Qinghua, he is also training students in the technical and policy intricacies of arms control and nonproliferation. Many of these students end up in government agencies, the military, or Chinese defense industry corporations.[23] Scholars from the newly

invigorated Institute for Strategic Studies at the Central Party School have also produced articles with innovative themes on controversial topics such as Taiwan and the future of Chinese diplomacy.[24]

In addition to the emergence of university based foreign policy programs, a small number of private (nongovernment funded) foreign policy-related think tanks have sprouted up in recent years. They are also new actors in China's community of foreign policy research organs. Prominent examples include the Beijing Pacific Institute for International Strategic Studies, Ding Xinghao's new Institute on American Studies in Shanghai, and Chen Qimao's Shanghai Center for Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) Strategic and International Studies, which is also based in Shanghai. These organizations get much of their funding from wealthy entrepreneurs seeking access to channels of influence on governmental foreign and economic policy.[25] This provides them with greater flexibility in choosing research topics and articulating innovative and provocative views. Their board members can include senior Party and State Council officials who provide a degree of status, authority, and political cover for the organization's work. Given the lack of institutional affiliation of these organizations, they rely solely on personal relationships to ferry their ideas to senior policymakers. By contrast, on economic issues, there are several prominent, independent think tanks; examples include Lin Yifu's Economic Research Center at Beijing University, Mao Yushi's Unirule Institute and Hu Angang's National Conditions Research Institute at Qinghua University.[26]

Another prominent trend among foreign policy research institutes is the rise of a punditocracy and the use of the media by foreign policy specialists. In the last 3 years, Chinese foreign policy and national security experts have ramped up their interactions with both print and broadcast media—domestic and international. Scholars now regularly use the pages of *Southern Weekend* (*Nanfang Zhoumo*), *Global Times* (*Huanqiu Shibao*), and *21st Century News* (*Ershiyi Shiji Baodao*) to debate current foreign policy issues.[27] These venues are particularly suitable to rapidly unfolding debates such as the one in 1999 and 2000 over the continued relevance of "peace and development" or more recent ones about China's Japan policy and North Korea's nuclear program.[28] The first articles about the

need to develop a "great power mentality" (*daguo xintai*) were published in these newspapers and websites. The debate on China's policy toward Japan regularly appeared in the pages and websites of *Renmin Wang* and *Nanfang Zhoumo* in addition to China's major IR journals. In addition, scholars from major think tanks like CICIR, CIIS, and CASS, analysts from the PLA National Defense University, and academics from universities like Beijing University and Qinghua regularly appear on CCTV talk shows. Some scholars, such as Yan Xuetong, have become virtual talking heads given the frequency of their appearances. Chinese scholars were relatively free to comment on CCTV during the war in Iraq and only received very general guidance on the boundaries of acceptable punditry.[29] Perhaps most interesting, some scholars strategically use the media, and specifically TV appearances, to articulate new ideas which otherwise would not get a hearing among senior policymakers.[30]

In this sense, the media in China have become a new arena for the growing competition for influence among foreign policy think tanks. Scholars can use the media to grab the attention of senior leaders and also to shape the general contours of the public debate on foreign and security policy issues. This growing interaction and exploitation of media outlets serves as an important indicator that the political space for new ideas and opinions on sensitive foreign policy issues has expanded in recent years.

## A Curious Contrast: Foreign Policy and Economic Policy Think Tanks.

In assessing the role and influence of foreign policy think tanks, one of the most curious dimensions is how they differ—as political entities—from some of China's economic policy research institutes. The majority of China's foreign policy research institutes were traditionally far more static, less politicized, and thus less volatile than some of China's economic think tanks. (Though, as argued above, the foreign policy think tank community appears to be changing, albeit in different ways from some of China's more dynamic economic think tanks.)[31] Over the past 25 years, Chinese political leaders have from time to time established research

organizations under the State Council to do research they could trust (i.e., not from the bureaucracy) and use as the basis for sound policymaking. Similar entities never existed on foreign policy. As early as the mid-1970s Deng Xiaoping set up the Political Study Office (*Zhengzhi Yanjiu Shi*) in the State Council to compete with the Gang of Four on ideological issues. When Deng was purged in 1975, the office staff disbanded due to the unfavorable political environment for their continued work. Following the demise of the Gang of Four, the office was reconstituted and served as one of the mechanisms for Deng's third and final ascent to power.[32]

The 1980s saw the establishment of a few *ad hoc* economic think tanks to support reform-oriented policies. (These were in addition to the several main-line economic research institutes linked to ministries and government organs such as CASS). The aim of the former was to conduct systematic investigations which reflected the on-the-ground economic realities in China and not to selectively interpret data to fit predetermined, ideologically influenced policymaking. Chen Yizi set up the Agricultural Development Group to report on and assess the effect of the household responsibility system. Zhao Ziyang formed a similar organization, the Institute for Economic Structural Reform (*Tizhi gaige yanjiusuo*), in the mid-1980s to evaluate the success of his efforts to move China away from planned economics.[33] This think tank and a few others were opened by Zhao in the 1980s but were quickly closed after the Tiananmen incident in 1989.

The origins, functions, and ultimate political fate of some of China's economic think tanks stand in contrast to China's foreign policy research institutes. There is no evidence that senior Chinese leaders in the 1980s or 1990s established their own foreign policy think tanks to provide them with informed, unbiased, accurate and nonideological reports on foreign affairs.[34] Possible explanations may be that foreign policy was not seen as an area in need of great reform; it was already heavily controlled by the most senior leaders; or that China's policymakers in the 1980s and 1990s may have been comfortable with the reports they were receiving from the bureaucracy. The gradual emergence in recent years of some semi-independent foreign policy think tanks in Beijing and Shanghai suggests that this may be changing.[35]

## PARSING CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY JOURNALS

To further assess the roles and influence of foreign policy think tanks, this author examined a variety of journals published by key Chinese research institutes. The aim of this effort was to see what could be gleaned about specific foreign policy research institutes from examining the content of their journals. The author looked at four journals: *International Studies* (*Guoji Wenti Yanjiu*) published by CIIS, *Contemporary International Relations* (*Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*) published by CICIR, *World Economics and Politics* (*Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi*) published by the Institute for World Economics and Politics at CASS, and *International Strategic Studies* (English edition) published by CIISS.[36] The author focused on issues from 2000 to 2002, but also looked at journals during specific past time periods to see the degree of correlation of journal content with the release of specific policy initiatives.[37] In examining these journals, I looked at three factors: authors and affiliation, article topics, and research approach/methodology. The examination of journal articles yielded some general insights about foreign policy research organizations. However, my overall conclusion is that these journals are of limited value *in evaluating and specifying the roles and influence of specific foreign policy research organizations*. While it is generally accepted that these institutes have influence and that journals communicate debates, more specific claims beyond this general understanding are hard to make. Yet, at the same time, these journals offer rich details on a plethora of current debates on foreign policy and national security topics and, as such, are a useful resource for analysts.

First, my analysis of the content of these journals further confirmed many of the key trends in the evolution of China's foreign policy research establishment that were identified above. These include diversification of expertise; development of substantial functional specialization on numerous issues; greater transparency on sensitive foreign policy topics and a corresponding willingness to address the implications of these for China's interests; consistent horizontal interactions among scholars from different organizations; more attention to IR theory; and dramatically improved methodological approaches to research and writing. The last point is evidenced most directly by the prominent use of extensive sourcing and footnoting in a growing proportion of journal articles.

The journals are of greatest assistance in mapping and evaluating the functional expertise of various foreign policy research organizations. For example, the numerous trans-organizational discussion forums (such as the *zhuanti yanguo* and *redian duihua* sections in the CICIR journal *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*) provide a guide to the scholars and organizations working on specific topics. Journals also help in assessing the general political disposition of think tanks. CIISS's *International Strategic Studies*, for example, offers some of the most pessimistic assessments of the international security environment and can be considered one of the most conservative voices in the think tank community. This is consistent with its affiliation with the Chinese military. Scholars and analysts can then use this information to conduct interviews and in-country research based on the data and insights gleaned from these journals. Much of the existing research on Chinese foreign policy by Bonnie Glaser, David Shambaugh, and others has used this technique of pairing analysis of journal articles with interviews to elucidate the range of Chinese views on foreign policy issues.

There is little indication that these journals serve as the primary venue for formulating, incubating, articulating, and debating issues which could end up as official government policy. They should not be viewed as such tools. Based on the author's conversations with Chinese scholars from several foreign policy research institutes, the primary role of these journals is to function as an intellectual outlet for scholars, to generate a marketplace for ideas "with Chinese characteristics," to propagate official Chinese policies to readers, to justify policy positions, and for foreign consumption. While some of the broader ideas and discussions in these journals may *inform* policymaking (and increasingly so in recent years), it is difficult to evaluate the extent to which the journal content reflects nascent policy without knowing a journal's specific editorial policies (e.g. what makes it in and why). Policy relevant research most commonly takes the form of internal research reports (*diaoyan baogao*) that are sent up the organizational food-chain to policymakers; though there are several channels and mechanisms that a Chinese analyst can use to transmit research to policymakers.[38]

Furthermore, Chinese foreign policy journals are not a consistent

or reliable source of "early warning indicators" of pending policy decisions, as some have argued. There are limited instances in which articles in these journals have been used as venues to publicize ideas before the emergence of a new policy decision.[39] My research found that, more often than not, the articles in these journals are an indication that a *policy* debate has finished. The articles function more as an ex-post facto indicator or a signal of a policy decision than an early warning indicator of a pending one. In this sense, such articles often serve as signaling devices to both Chinese and foreigners. China's "great debate on peace and development" in 1999 serves as one recent example. Following a volatile period in U.S.-China relations, the debate did not occur in journals but rather in closed meetings (*neibu huiyi*) and to a limited extent in print media. It was not until after the debate concluded that Chinese foreign policy journals were filled with articles about the issues that *were* debated. As such, these articles provide a rough guide to the general consensus opinion about Chinese views on the international security environment in 1999.[40]

Other examples suggest a closer relationship between journals and the policymaking process. Prior to China's March 1997 articulation of its New Security Concept (NSC), there was literally no discussion of the intellectual content of the NSC or the need for such a policy gesture in major foreign policy journals. Yet, in 1995 and 1996 there was a burgeoning body of writings arguing that China needed to be more aware of the perception by its neighbors that China's rise could threaten their economic and security interests. This suggests a broad—but still significant—linkage between journal publications and policies to come. The content of journal articles, when examined *over a long time period*, may presage an evolution in certain aspects of China's foreign policy. Alastair Iain Johnston argues that journal arguments themselves are not epiphenomenal to the policy change, but often only when looked at over a long time interval.[41] A similar, broad correlation likely exists between Chinese writings about the value of multilateralism and changes in China's participation in Asian multilateral forums. In this sense, journal articles play a role in the policy *evolution* process but not necessarily in the policymaking process *per se*.

Beyond using articles for signaling purposes, the appearance of certain articles following internal discussions may importantly indicate a deliberate decision by the government to allow greater public discussion of certain topics, possibly to explore future directions for China's policies. The current discussion in Chinese journals and newspapers about Beijing's policies toward Japan and North Korea may be a recent manifestation of this. This phenomenon may become increasingly common in the coming years if the political space for public foreign policy debates continues to expand.

To be sure, this chapter is not arguing that these journals lack value for international scholars and analysts trying to understand better Chinese foreign policy. Rather, this chapter maintains that their value is limited to trying to *elucidate the degree of influence of foreign policy research organizations*. Some of the most useful and instructive content in these journals are the debates among scholars.[42] The occurrence of debate on a particular issue, the frequency of debate, the participants, and the arguments put forward all provide insights into general thought trends. They also serve as a general barometer of political environment for foreign policymaking in China. Perhaps, in this sense, these debates indicate the general parameters (e.g., wide or narrow) of the accepted discourse on a specific topic and as such offer indications of the types of policies Beijing will *not* adopt, as these presumably would lie outside the parameters of the prevailing discussion.

Interestingly, much of the current discourse on policy and theoretical issues does not occur within the pages of a specific journal but rather across journals. Key debates in recent years have included China's response to U.S. missile defense policies; whether a security dilemma exists in U.S.-China relations; China's advocacy of mulitpolarity; and China's need to assume a great power diplomacy.[43] These intellectual exchanges tend to be broad and provide a sense of the political environment and guide to the parameters of intellectual discourse among analysts and scholars. They offer minimal insight into actual policies, however. To delve into the policymaking process, scholars of Chinese foreign policy must complement the analysis of journal articles with interviews. Discussions with the authors of key articles are often the only channel

that provides the context necessary for understanding the origins of particular articles and any connections that may exist between those articles and internal policy decisions.

## A NEW ERA: FOREIGN POLICY AFTER THE 16TH PARTY CONGRESS

From the vantage point of late 2003, it is far too early in the tenure of Hu Jintao and the new Politburo Standing Committee to distinguish their foreign policy preferences from those of their predecessors. Yet, based on events in recent months and emerging intellectual trends in China, there are a number of new themes that may come to define the foreign policy of China's new leadership. Many of these themes importantly represent some of the newest and most innovative thinking among university-based scholars and analysts in key foreign policy research institutes.

China's diplomatic response to the outbreak of SARS, while admittedly delayed, signals a recognition by China's most senior leaders that they too need to pay attention to nontraditional security challenges (such as large scale health threats) as well as the implications of such crises for China's foreign policy. As noted above, Chinese foreign policy specialists have been writing about both these issues for years, in particular the dangers posed by transnational security threats.

The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in China and the international community's reaction to its spread represented not only an early domestic challenge, but also the first major foreign policy crisis for the Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao administration. The rapid spread of SARS to the Asia-Pacific region (Singapore and Vietnam, among other nations) threatened to undermine China's decade-long effort to charm Southeast Asian nations and address the growing perception that China's rise (as an economic and military power) threatened their interests. Similarly, in the Western world, China's initially lax treatment of SARS renewed latent Western concerns about the volatility and instability of the political and economic environment for business development in China. Some commentators claimed that SARS was more destructive to China's image than the Tiananmen incident.[44] These

reactions rapidly alerted China's new leaders to the real impact of globalization on Chinese security and economic interests. Up to this point, debates about globalization had largely been a theoretical issue about sovereignty. In addition, for most Chinese strategists globalization for China was mainly an economic phenomenon commonly linked to questions of World Trade Organization (WTO) accession and the value of China's currency. The SARS episode was the first time that security aspects of globalization had a direct, material impact on Chinese foreign policy. Chinese strategists and policymakers are beginning to realize the dangers associated with health threats and recognize the need to be transparent in order to limit the proliferation of such dangers. Following SARS, Foreign Ministry practitioners now publicly discuss the value of openly, frankly, and immediately addressing such threats with the international community, as noted in a recent article by Foreign Ministry officials.[45] Stressing the role of globalization in China's foreign affairs is also consistent with Hu Jintao's and Wen Jiabao's broader effort to create a populist identity that demonstrates greater concern for the socio-economic challenges facing all Chinese—not simply the elites and wealthy business constituents in the coastal provinces.

Hu Jintao's decision to attend the G-8 meeting in May 2003 symbolizes another emerging foreign policy preference: China's identification with major power interests. Jiang Zemin in his work report to the 16th Party Congress placed "great power relations" (*da guo guanxi*) as a top priority for China's foreign relations, and thereby relegated China's ties with its neighbors and developing nations as secondary and tertiary concerns.[46] There are strong indications that Hu has picked up this mantle. Chinese leaders increasingly see their foreign policy interests as more akin to those of the major powers (the United States, Russia, Japan, India, and Europe) and less associated with the developing nations. As a result, Chinese academics and analysts openly talk about the need to assume a "great power mentality" (*daguo xintai*) and "great power consciousness" (*daguo yishi*) in China's interactions with the international community.[47] This shift in mentality manifested itself in the decision to participate in the G-8 meeting as well as to be active in various Asian regional forums.[48]

Moreover, new thinking has emerged which argues that China needs to pay attention to not only its rights, but also its responsibilities as a major power. As Beijing's influence increases, Chinese analysts argue that more nations will call upon China to shoulder its global responsibilities. Although many Chinese foreign policy mavens for years have emphasized Deng Xiaoping's aphorism "hide our capabilities and bide our time" (*tao guang yang hui*), a growing school of thought emphasizes Deng's related claim about the need "to do some things" in foreign affairs (*you suo zuo wei*).[49] China's prominent role in addressing the North Korean nuclear crisis provides the most immediate evidence of an embrace of the latter aphorism. China has worked both behind the scenes and publicly to help deescalate the crisis. Senior Chinese political leaders such as Qian Qichen and Wu Bangguo have traveled to Pyongyang to help bring the North to negotiations. Chinese diplomats such as Dai Bingguo and Wang Yi have shuttled between Pyongyang, Beijing and Washington to ensure the first three–party talks, the first round of six-party talks, and a second round of the latter discussions. China has also used coercive measures. Beijing suspended crucial oil shipments to the North, detained a North Korea ship over a "business dispute," and shifted troops to the China-Korean border.

A related trend in Chinese foreign policy is increased emphasis on transnational/nontraditional security issues. Following 9/11/01, counterterrorism and nonproliferation appear to have become central issues in Chinese diplomacy. Beijing has made consistent (albeit limited) efforts to support the war against terrorism. Chinese diplomats tout the renewed emphasis on preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, though the government's effort to implement its formal commitments has been spotty. Just as 9-11 catalyzed shifts in China's approach to international terrorism and greater vigilance on nonproliferation, the SARS incident sensitized Chinese leaders to the dangers (to China's image and its material interests) posed by nontraditional security issues as disease and environmental degradation. The United States and China have also cooperated fairly extensively in counternarcotics and antismuggling operations; the degree of information sharing and joint operations on this issue between the law enforcement establishments in the United State and China is unprecedented.[50]

In the vein of the classic Marxist dialectic and the embrace of contradictions, there is continuity within change in China's current foreign policy. China's new senior policymakers will no doubt continue to emphasize the classic, well-worn themes of "building a favorable international security environment for domestic development" (*wei guo nei jingji jianshe chuangzao yi ge youli de guoji huanjing*) and viewing the next 20 years as a strategic opportunity to accomplish many things (*da you suo zuo wei de zhuyao zhanlue jiyuqi*).[51] Chinese diplomats will continue to build China's soft power in the international community. Gone are the days of Maoist advocacy of proletarian internationalism and calls for a radical restructuring of an international system designed to keep China down. Currently, China has far too much staked in the international system of economic and security roles, norms, and institutions to maintain such anachronisms. In this sense, China is a status quo power. That said, Beijing is decidedly uncomfortable with the current US role in international politics. Chinese policymakers grudgingly accept that the U.S. unipolar status will continue for decades, and there is little that China can do about it.[52] This accommodation to geopolitical realities facilitates a stability of sorts in U.S.-China relations. In this context, Chinese diplomats continue to hail the dual virtues of globalization and multipolarity in international relations. They also call for the construction of a "new international political and economic order that is stable, just, and rational." For Beijing, this is code language for their discomfort with a U.S. dominated system. China's accelerating integration into the current international system, paired with its obvious discomfort with a system currently dominated by U.S. economic and military power, is a prime tension that will continue to influence Beijing's foreign policy decisions in the decades to come.

## PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Several preliminary conclusions about the changing roles and influence of foreign policy research organizations emerge from the preceding assessment. The Chinese marketplace of ideas on foreign policy is undergoing an important evolution. The quality

of research produced by foreign policy think tanks is improving and new institutional players are becoming prominent competitors. Main-line think tanks, like the CASS institutes, CICIR and CIIS, have expanded their research agendas, are using a bigger analytical tool box, and are generating new ideas. One of the most novel features of this period is that foreign policy research centers at universities such as Beijing University, Qinghua University, and People's University are emerging as active players in China's increasingly robust public discourse on foreign policy. University-based institutes have morphed into active sources of new thinking on foreign affairs. This suggests that international analysts should increase their interactions with Chinese academic specialists in IR, security studies, and foreign policy. Focusing primarily on the traditional foreign policy and national security research institute community risks overlooking some of the most provocative, cutting-edge academic and policy-relevant research which is occurring in China today.

Even as the methodological skills and quality of analysis of Chinese foreign policy specialists improve, however, an important caution is in order. There is no magic bullet in the study of Chinese foreign and national security policy. No one think tank analyst or journal indicates definitively the future direction of Chinese foreign policy. Furthermore, the major Chinese foreign policy journals are of limited value as early warning indicators of imminent changes in Chinese foreign relations and foreign policy. While journal articles have most commonly served as signaling devices, their roles have broadened. They can indicate a willingness to allow public debate to further elucidate general policy positions, and these publications can offer signposts to gradual changes in foreign policy. The articles are of maximum value when they supplement the type of contextual and background information that often can be gleaned from interviews with the authors.

This chapter has presented an exploratory assessment of new trends in foreign policy research organizations in China. It also importantly leaves the door wide open for further research. Little remains known about the actual operations of these research organizations; and how and when they are best able to shape actual policymaking. Has the new leadership changed the ways that it uses these research organizations? Which ones wield the most influence

on particular issues? Our understanding of China would significantly benefit from further elucidating the relationship between broad policy debates among analysts and internal deliberations about specific policy proposals. Along these lines, it is not clear what role is played by quasi-private foreign policy think tanks and how they fit into the changing landscape of foreign policy discourse in China. These questions are ripe for future research as U.S. and international analysts make further efforts to reduce misunderstanding and prepare for the diplomatic challenges posed by China's rise.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 9

1. See Evan S. Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December, 2003, p. 22-35; also see Avery Goldstein, "The Diplomatic Face of China's Grand Strategy: A Rising Power's Emerging Choice," *China Quarterly*, 2001, p. 835-864.

2. This question is a variation on a similar theme in Joseph Fewsmith, "Where do Correct Ideas Come From," in David M. Finkelstein and Maryanne Kivelhan, eds., *China's Leadership in the 21st Century*, Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, 2002, pp. 152-164.

3. The classic article on this issue is David Shambaugh, "China's National Security Research Bureaucracy," *The China Quarterly*, June 1987, pp. 276-304. Several important articles are included in a special edition of *The China Quarterly*, September 2002: David Shambaugh, "China's International Relations Think Tanks: Evolving Structure and Process," pp. 575-596; Bonnie S. Glaser and Phillip C. Saunders, "Chinese Civilian Foreign Policy Research Institutions," pp. 597-616; Bates Gill and James Mulvenon, "Chinese Military Related Think Tanks," pp. 617-624. The classic work on the military is Michael Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policymaking*, Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation, 1998. Additional important sources include Michael Pillsbury, "China's Research Institutes," paper commissioned by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2002, *http://www.uscc.gov/cri.pdf*; He Li, "The Role of Think Tanks in Chinese Foreign Policy," *Problems of Communism*, March/April 2002, pp. 33-43.

4. The majority of foreign policy and national security research organizations are located in these two cities. However, certain specialized think tanks are not based in Beijing and Shanghai. These include the Institute for Taiwan Studies at Xiamen University in Fujian and the Military Economics Research Institute in Wuhan.

5. In doing this, I fully recognize the extensive past use of journals by Western scholars to understand Chinese debates on issues such as U.S.-China relations, China's regional diplomacy, arms control and nuclear doctrine, PLA threat perceptions, and other issues. Rather, my explicit effort is to explore what can be learned about the far more narrow issue of foreign policy think tanks by examining the content of foreign policy journals.

6. David Shambaugh, "China's International Relations Think Tanks"; He Li, "The Role of Think Tanks in Chinese Foreign Policy."

7. David Shambaugh, *Beautiful Imperialist*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991.

8. Lu Ning, *The Dynamics of Foreign Policy Decisionmaking in China*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 2000, p. 34.

9. David Shambaugh, "China's International Relations Think Tanks," p. 581. This point is also made in Bonnie S. Glaser and Phillip C. Saunders, "Chinese Civilian Foreign Policy Research Institutions."

10. See Alastair Iain Johnston, *The State of International Relations Research in China: Considerations for the Ford Foundation*, unpublished manuscript, January 2003.

11. In recent years, a growing number of articles in *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi*, one of China's top nonpolicy IR journals, have reflected not only a growing interest in IR theory but also a nonstate centric approach to interpreting global tends such as constructivist theories of IR. This represents a further evolution in Chinese interest in Western IR literature.

12. On these trends, see Bonnie S. Glaser and Phillip C. Saunders, "Chinese Civilian Foreign Policy Research Institutions."

13. Presumably, another purpose of overseas research trips is that they also serve to enhance the reputation, status, and influence of institutions and individual analysts; though this is probably less of a factor today then it was in past decades when such trips were less commonplace and were typically reserved for senior scholars from the most well-connected organizations.

14. David Shambaugh, "China's National Security Research Bureaucracy"and Glaser and Saunders.

15. One of the most active debates to emerge in the last two years has been on China's Japan policy. Scholars have openly debated such issues as the role of "history" in China-Japan relations and the extent to which power transition

dynamics will influence the future of the relationship. See Liu Xiaobao, "Where are Sino-Japanese Relations Heading: A Commentary on Observations by Scholars and Concerns Among People," *Renmin Wang*, August 13, 2003, as translated in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (*FBIS*).

16. This argument is not meant to suggest that China's main-line foreign policy think tanks are hollowing out as a result of the migration of some experts to universities. Think tanks such as CICIR still have active staffs who are writing about the most pressing foreign policy and national security issues. The CICIR journal has significantly improved the quality of its content in recent years.

17. This conclusion is based on numerous discussions with many university-based researchers since 2000.

18. The Foreign Affairs College is in the same bureaucratic *xitong* as the Foreign Ministry, so this example is limited in its value, though the Foreign Ministry in the past has sent officials to Beijing University for graduate degrees, after which they returned to the Ministry for career postings.

19. This point is made in Shambaugh, *Beautiful Imperialist*.

20. Among Shi's recent articles, see Shi Yinhong, "The Arms Control Mechanism and Nonproliferation Issues in East Asia: Current Status and Dangers," *Zhanlue yu guanli*, No. 5, October 2002, pp. 29-33, in *FBIS*, October 2002; Shi Yinhong, "How to Understand and Deal with the DPRK Nuclear Crisis," *Ta Kung Pao*, January 15, 2003, in *FBIS*, January 2003; and Shi Yinhong, "The DPRK Nuclear Crisis: New Turn for the Better and the Still Existing Dangers," *Ta Kung Pao*, August 1, 2003, in *FBIS*, August 2003.

21. Xu Weidi, "Resolving the Korean Peninsula Nuclear Crisis and Moving the Korean Peninsula out of the Cold War," *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi*, September 14, 2003, p. 59-64.

22. See Ye Zicheng, "Zhongguo shixing daguo waijiao zhanlue shizai bixing: guanyu zhongguo waijiao zhanlue de jidian sikao" [Adopting a Great Power Diplomatic Strategy is Imperative for China: Several Considerations Concerning China's Diplomatic Strategy], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* [*World Economics and Politics*], No. 1, 2000, pp. 5-10; Ye Zicheng and Li Ying, "Zhongguo Suoyi Bixu Jian Daguo Waijiao Xintai," *Huanqiu Shibao*, July 20, 2001; and Ye Zicheng, "Guanyu taoguang yanghui he yousuo zuowei: zai tan zhongguo de daguo waijiao xintai" [Concerning Hiding One's Capabilities and Biding One's Time and Doing Something Worthwhile: Revisiting China's Great Power Diplomatic Mentality], *Taipingyang xuebao* [*Pacific Journal*], No. 1, 2002, pp. 62-66. See also Jin Xide, "Zhongguo Xuyao Daguo Xintai," *Huanqiu Shibao*, September 12, 2002 p. 4.

23. See Li Bin, "The Impact of NMD on China's Nuclear Modernization," *Pugwash Online*, April 2001; and Li Bin, "Absolute Gains, Relative Gains, and U.S. Security Policy on China" Qinghua University website as translated in FBIS, November 2002. Li Bin's Arms Control Program at Qinghua operates a website full of data and opinions on arms control and nonproliferation issues in Chinese. These can be found at *http://learn.tsinghua.edu.cn/homepage/S00313/archive.htm*.

24. Liu Jianfei has written some of the most provocative articles about Taiwan and U.S.-China relations. See Liu Jianfei "The Building of Democratic Politics In China and Sino-U.S. Relations," *Strategy and Management*, March 2003, pp. 76-82, as translated in FBIS, March 2003. Also see Liu Jianfei, "China-U.S. Relations and the Taiwan Question in the Post-Cold War Era—Basic Characteristics and Development Trends," *Strategy and Management*, December 2003, pp. 102-109.

25 The Shanghai Center for RimPac Strategic and International Studies, it is funded by media such as *Jeifang Daily*, *Wenhuai Daily*, and *Xinmin Daily* and local large enterprises including Bao Steel Group, Shanghai Port Construction Corporation, Orient International Co. Ltd., Shanghai Airlines, Shanghai Dongmao Import Export Company, Shanghai Asia Business Consulting Co. Ltd., and Shanghai East Best International Co. Ltd. The new Shanghai Institute of American Studies is funded by grants from the Huajin Real Estate Company, Ltd. This information was drawn from the official publication of both these organizations.

26. Fewsmith, "Where do Correct Ideas Come From," p. 159.

27. For example, *Global Times* (which is part of the People's Daily Group) has a weekly column called International Forum (*Guoji Luntan*) which regularly includes op-ed articles from well known foreign policy specialists. See Niu Jun, "Zhongguo de Jueqi, Zhong-Wai Lijie Bu Tong," *Huanqiu Shibao*, November 15, 2003.

28. Liu Xiaobao, "Where are Sino-Japanese Relations Heading," and Sun Yafei, "Is New Thinking Needed on Japan?" *Nanfang Zhoumo*, June 12, 2003, as translated in *FBIS*. On North Korea, see citations in note 21 and 22.

29. Scholars reportedly received general guidance that their comments should be "comprehensive" (*quanmian*) and "objective" (*keguan*), and that they should "keep some distance" (*chaotuo*). More specifically, the guidance indicated that they were free to criticize the policies of the U.S., UK, or Iraqi governments, but they should refrain from personal criticism of foreign leaders, including President Bush, Prime Minister Blair, and Saddam Hussein. Conversations with Chinese scholars, Washington, DC, May 2003.

30. The author is grateful to David Finkelstein for pointing this out to him.

31. Data on economic think tanks is drawn from Joseph Fewsmith, "Where Do Correct Ideas Come From"; also see Barry Naught, "China's Economic Think Tanks: Their Changing Role in the 1990s," *The China Quarterly*, September 2002, pp. 625-635.

32. Deng fell from power three times, and each time returned to political prominence, hence Chinese analysts often describe his remarkable resilience with the phrase "*san xia, san shang*."

33. According to Joe Fewsmith, the *Tigaisuo* was the first research organization in China to use the term "think tank" (*sixiang ku*) to refer to itself.

34. One possible exception to this is when Jiang Zemin invited Wang Huning, former head of the International Politics office of Fudan University, to head the Political Section of the CCP's Policy Research Office. Yet, since the latter organization is a key part of the Party bureaucracy, the analogy to Zhao Ziyang's efforts in the 1980s is a weak one.

35. To be sure we are not suggesting that the rise of independent foreign policy think tanks in China is the same phenomenon as the rise of economic ones in the 1980s; the rise of this new type of foreign policy think tank is largely due to personal initiative and the availability of funds from entrepreneurs as opposed to senior leaders setting up these research organs to circumvent the bureaucracy.

36. These periodicals were chosen because they represent the different "types" of journals in the foreign policy community. The first two journals published by CIIS and CICIR, respectively, are policy journals; the IWEP journal is one of China's most prominent nonpolicy, theoretical IR journals, and the CIISS journal represents military viewpoints exclusively.

37. This time period was chosen for two reasons: first, it was the most recent time period that would allow for reading of 2 years' worth of journals; second, during this time period there were substantial changes in international relations, U.S.-China ties, and Chinese perceptions of the latter two factors. Chinese think tanks actively debated these issues. Thus, this time period provides numerous opportunities for exploration of the roles and influence of think tanks.

38. Bonnie S. Glaser and Phillip C. Saunders, "Chinese Civilian Foreign Policy Research Institutions," p. 597-616.

39. David Shambaugh makes this claim in his 2002 *China Quarterly* article on page 581; this claim would benefit from further empirical testing.

40. David Finkelstein, *The Great Debate on Peace and Development of 1999*, The CNA Corporation, 2000.

41. Personal communication with author, November 2003.

42. Two of the most interesting sets of debates have centered on China's international security environment and China's foreign policy response to it. An overview of these debates is presented in a series of articles published in CICIR's journal, *Xiandai guoji guanxi* [*Contemporary International Relations*], No. 11, November 2002. Among the most interesting of these articles are the following: Dao Shulin, "Some Reflections on China's Peripheral Security Environment," p. 9-10; Gao Haikuan, "Viewing China's International Environment from the Asia-Pacific," p. 10-11; Jin Canrong, Beijing University, "An Assessment of Two Types of New Factors in China's International Environment," p. 7-9; Ye Zicheng, "Adopting a Diplomatic Strategy that Adapts to Changes in the Environment," pp. 24-25; and Zhang Baijia, Party History Research Center, "Seeking Progress in Stability, Smoothly Passing Through the 'Security Bottleneck,'" p. 20-22.

43. On China's response to U.S. missile defense policies, see Shi Yinghong, "Meiguo Guojia Daodan Fangyu Jihua yu Zhongguo ke you de he yinggai you de duice," [U.S. Missile Defense Plan and the Countermeasures China Could and Should Take], *Harbin Gongye Daxue Xuebao* [*Harbin Industrial University Journal*], No. 3, 2000, pp. 12-16. For discussion of China and security dilemma dynamics see Tang Shiping, "Zai Lun Zhongguo de Da Zhanlue," [Reconsidering China's Grand Strategy], *Zhanlue yu Guanli* [*Strategy and Management*], No. 4, 2003. For a survey and assessment of the debate over China's advocacy of multipolarization, which draws on a rich array of Chinese-language journal articles, see Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?" p. 25-38. Finally, on whether China needs to assume a great power diplomatic strategy, see Ye Zicheng, "Zhongguo shixing daguo waijiao zhanlue shizai bixing: guanyu zhongguo waijiao zhanlue de jidian sikao," *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* [*World Economics and Politics*], No. 1, 2000, pp. 5-10; Ye Zicheng, "Guanyu taoguang yanghui he yousuo zuowei: zai tan zhongguo de daguo waijiao xintai," *Taipingyang xuebao* [*Pacific Journal*], No. 1, 2002, p. 62-66; Xiao Huanrong, "Zhongguo de daguo zeren yu diquzhuyi zhanlue" [China's Great Power Responsibilities and the Strategy of Regionalism], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* [*World Economics and Politics*], 2003, No. 1, p. 46-51; and Liu Shengxiang, "Zhongguo shixing daguo waijiao zhanlue weishi shangzao: yu Ye Zicheng shangque" [It's Still Too Early for China to Have a Great Power Diplomatic Strategy: Response to Ye Zicheng], *Shijjie jingji yu zhengzhi* [*World Economics and Politics*], No. 7, 2000, p. 76-80.

44. John Pomfret, China Orders End To SARS Coverup; Officials Begin Belated Campaign Against Disease," *Washington Post*, April 19, 2003, p. A08; John Pomfret, "Outbreak Gave China's Hu an Opening; President Responded to Pressure Inside and Outside Country on SARS," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2003, p. A01.

45. "Waijiao: Zouxing Kaifeng, Touming yu Hezuo," *Shijie Zhishi*, June 16, 2003, pp. 12-13; the article was written by the staff of the MFA Policy Planning

Department. The Policy Planning Department is currently headed by Cui Tiankai.

46. To be sure, China's relations with neighboring nations is a very close second priority for Chinese policymakers as they realize the importance of a stable regional security environment for domestic development. In fact, some Chinese commentators argue that China's ties with its neighbors should be the top foreign policy priority. There is much agreement, perhaps except among dedicated leftists, that ties with developing nations is a distant third priority.

47. Ye Zicheng, the most prominent advocate of this position, argues that China must adopt a great power diplomatic strategy to cope with the new challenges it faces in international politics. He asserts that the principal elements of this strategy are focusing on great power relations and assuming responsibilities and obligations in promoting multipolarization and solving global problems that accord with China's status as a major power. In addition, Ye holds that the first step in adopting a great power diplomatic strategy is adjusting China's foreign policy mentality. This means emerging from the shadow of the "diplomacy of humiliation" (*quru waijiao*) and escaping from the trappings of a traditional "victim mentality' (*shouhaizhe xintai*). See Ye Zicheng, "Zhongguo shixing daguo waijiao zhanlue shizai bixing: guanyu zhongguo waijiao zhanlue de jidian sikao" [Adopting a Great Power Diplomatic Strategy is Imperative for China: Several Considerations Concerning China's Diplomatic Strategy], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* [*World Economics and Politics*], No. 1, 2000, pp. 5-10. For a response that is critical of Ye's position, see Liu Shengxiang, "Zhongguo shixing daguo waijiao zhanlue weishi shangzao: yu Ye Zicheng shangque" [It's Still Too Early for China to Have a Great Power Diplomatic Strategy: Response to Ye Zicheng], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* [*World Economics and Politics*], No. 7, 2000, pp. 76-80.

48. On this latter point, see Evan S. Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2003, pp. 22-35.

49. Ye Zicheng is also a forceful proponent of this related argument. He contends that Deng Xiaoping's famous maxim, "hide one's capabilities and bide one's time, do something worthwhile" (*taoguang yanghui, yousuo zuowei*), was raised in a specific historical context and cannot serve as the long-term strategic guideline for Chinese foreign policy. Now that China is a maturing great power (*chengzhangzhong de shijie daguo*), Ye writes, that approach to diplomacy is no longer appropriate. See Ye Zicheng, "Guanyu taoguang yanghui he yousuo zuowei: zai tan zhongguo de daguo waijiao xintai" [Concerning Hiding One's Capabilities and Biding One's Time and Doing Something Worthwhile: Revisiting China's Great Power Diplomatic Mentality], *Taipingyang xuebao* [*Pacific Journal*], No. 1, 2002, pp. 62-66.

50. John Pomfret, "China, U.S. Cooperate In Large Heroin Sting; Distrust Had Hampered Previous Efforts," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2003, p. A10.

51. The entire expression as described in the July 1, 2003, speech to the Communist Party by Hu Jintao is: "ershiyishiji touershinian, dui wo guo lai shuo, shi yi ge bixu jinjin zhuazhu bingqie keyi da you suo zuo wei de zhuyao zhanlue jiyuqi."

52. Medeiros and Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy."

# CHAPTER 10

# DEMYSTIFYING *SHASHOUJIAN*: CHINA'S "ASSASSIN'S MACE" CONCEPT

**Jason E. Bruzdzinski**

## KEY QUESTIONS

In the absence of a comprehensive base of knowledge or intellectual debate on *shashoujian*, this chapter seeks to develop a baseline for understanding *shashoujian* in the context of current People's Republic of China (PRC) military affairs and aspirations for transformation of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the early 21st century. To this end, this chapter will seek initial responses to three fundamental questions:

1. What are the historical origins of *shashoujian* and what does the term mean in a military context?
2. How has *shashoujian* emerged as a topic of significance within the Chinese national defense establishment?
3. How might shashoujian satisfy Chinese national defense requirements?

## BACKGROUND

For those interested in the potential of the Chinese military to challenge or threaten U.S. interests, *shashoujian* is an important concept that must be properly understood and appreciated. While omitted from many discussions about Chinese military modernization in recent Western books and essays on the PLA, the *shashoujian* concept is a component of China's strategic culture that influences grand strategy, in addition to Chinese national security policy and PRC military affairs. As will be discussed in this chapter, *shashoujian* is an important part of China's effort to transform the PLA into a modern, effective, and professional force and should be important consideration for those studying PLA trends and developments.

## CHALLENGES

### Chinese Secrecy.

Military affairs are a very sensitive topic for discussions and publications in the PRC. The PRC regime considers nearly all of China's information on military subjects to be restricted (*neibu*) or internally published (*junnei faxing*). In fact, very little useful official information is publicly available or accessible to foreigners. Moreover, the national defense information that is made available by the PRC must be scrutinized carefully by researchers as it is commonly propagandist in nature and may be deliberately inaccurate for the purposes of perception management. Secrecy and a general lack of transparency on the part of the PRC often prove to be the greatest challenges to American understanding of the PRC government and the PLA. Much of the primary source material cited in this chapter was obtained from the Chinese (.cn) and Taiwan (.tw) domains of the Internet and the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS); some was drawn from earlier research by experts in government and academia. Internet searching in the Chinese and Taiwan domains was enabled by the search engines provided by Google© and Yahoo©, but there can be little doubt that the PRC authorities have sanitized data of any sensitive or classified information in sources that are searchable by using these tools.

### Open Source Publications Acquisition/Translation Issues.

The U.S. National Defense University (NDU) in Washington, DC, has a formalized publications-sharing program with the PLA National Defense University. This program was established in 1985 by a U.S.-PRC memorandum of understanding that was re-affirmed in 1995. The documents exchange program is a component of the U.S.-PRC military-to-military relationship, but from an American perspective the program has not been very successful. PLA NDU representatives have not demonstrated reciprocity by sharing unclassified PLA NDU military journals and other publications. Conversely, the U.S. NDU has given its PLA interlocutor virtually every document published by the U.S. NDU Press. Regrettably,

the military-to-military program has reportedly failed to produce a comprehensive collection of documents from the PLA NDU and at present *none* of the limited Chinese documents shared by the Chinese are catalogued, translated, or otherwise available to researchers using the U.S. NDU Library.[1]

FBIS carries out relatively limited collection and translation of PRC publications that focus on military and military-related topics. In light of this fact, many researchers within the PLA-watching academic community make regular visits to China to conduct interviews and visit bookstores and newsstands to obtain the latest information available on developments within the PRC defense establishment. Regrettably, this chapter did not directly benefit from project-specific travel to the PRC or from interactions with PRC government or Chinese military officials.

At FBIS, the translation and dissemination of Chinese publications transitioned from hardcopy/in-print to online/softcopy availability in 1996. Documents dating from 1993 to present are available from FBIS on CD-ROM. For U.S. Government personnel and contractors with access to classified government networks, FBIS provides additional archived publications (all unclassified) from 1988 to 1993; materials that predate 1988 are only available "in transfer" from the original hardcopy to microform.[2] Unfortunately, FBIS materials that exist on microform, while available with full tables of contents, are not searchable using automated research tools.

Varying precision of FBIS translations poses another challenge for researchers. FBIS translations of Chinese documents into English, in some instances, have been found to be inconsistent. For example, since 1996, FBIS appears to have translated the three-character term *shashoujian* using at least 15 different interpretations.[3] Multiple interpretations of a term can severely complicate a researcher's ability to identify a topic of significance and perform trend analysis against terms and topics or to identify frequency spikes or changes in usage in primary sources. For the U.S. Government, such shortcomings hold the potential to undermine the monitoring of key indicators for warning against strategic surprises.

Problems in identification, translation, and media/trend analysis may be one of several reasons for the relatively long time that elapsed between the emergence of *shashoujian* in the PLA and

evidence of American interest in the term. They may also be why so little is known in the United States about *shashoujian* as it pertains to the current and future interests of the Chinese military.

When a single translation/interpretation for *shashoujian* is applied to all documents containing the term, it appears that *shashoujian* is more than a mere idiom or metaphor in the vernacular of the PLA cadre and individuals within the PRC defense establishment. This first becomes noticeable in materials published in 1995 and becomes increasingly obvious by 1999. In 2000, there are indications that *shashoujian* could be part of a formalized, clandestine weapons research, development and acquisition (RD&A) effort. To demonstrate this point, the term *shashoujian* is not translated, but presented in Chinese *pinyin* transliteration throughout this document.

## EXISTING RESEARCH

Only limited research examines the topic of *shashoujian*. In the United States, a small number of researchers have attempted to define and contextualize the term, but none of the research discovered in the course of this project examined the subject of *shashoujian* comprehensively. The work of Dr. Michael Pillsbury comes closest. While American and Taiwan academics share some common views, there are also clear differences in their respective interpretations and assumptions about the context of *shashoujian*.

## WHAT ARE THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF *SHASHOUJIAN* AND WHAT DOES THE TERM MEAN?

To correctly examine the concept of *shashoujian*, it is important to understand its historical origins and the context of the term. The three Chinese characters that make up the term *shashoujian* are literally translated as kill (*sha*), hand (*shou*), sword, club, or mace (*jian*). The most common English language interpretation of *shashoujian* is "assassin's mace."

Dissection of the term *shashoujian* by non-Chinese (who lack deep cultural and linguistic skill) can be misleading, and the true meaning and context of *shashoujian* can be easily lost. For example,

the meaning of the Chinese compound "*shashou*" is interpreted as "hitman" or "assassin," and *jian* as "sword," "club," or "mace." This approach most often results in the translation/interpretation: "assassin's mace." Alternatively, *shashoujian* might be dissected as *sha* (meaning kill or killing) followed by the compound "*shoujian*" ("hand sword," "hand club," or "hand mace"). The result in this case is most often the interpretation of *shashoujian* as "killer mace" or "killing mace."

Interestingly, the Chinese characters *jiaan* and *jian* are different, but have very similar meanings and are used by most Chinese interchangeably. The *jiaan* is a short wood, iron, or steel rod with three or four angled edges. Some *jiaan* are tipped with a mace-type head. The *jiaan* does not have a sharp blade as a sword (*jian*) does. According to the Chinese Global Language and Cultural Center in Taiwan, the Chinese characters for these weapons are probably derived from *zhujiaan*: a bamboo strip that was used as a medium by the Chinese for writing before the invention of paper.[4]

As American scholars have argued, *shashoujian* has its origins in Chinese antiquity. *Shashoujian* has been frequently referenced in Chinese legends, folklore, and history, and the term is particularly common in Chinese contemporary martial arts novels.[5] However, determining its origin, defining the term, and understanding its important context can be somewhat challenging.

In ancient China, when wars were common and often long, the martial arts emerged to serve the needs of individuals and armies. As a result, the "way of the fist" (*quanfa*), the sword art (*jianshu*), and the war art (*wushu*) became a way of life for many Chinese people and set the martial arts as a cornerstone in Chinese culture. The practice of *jianshu*, which remains very popular in China today, emphasizes not only the disposition of an adversary and the desired effect of one's strikes, but also one's own attacking position and the forms (techniques) of strikes that one should use. Great attention is paid to the precision of one's position and use of forms in the practice of *jianshu*, as is the case in the practice of *taichi quan* (shadow boxing).

Historical references to martial arts weapons in Chinese legend and folklore pre-date the Southern and Northern dynasties period that began in 386 A.D. and can be traced to the Warring States (475-221 B.C.) and the Spring and Autumn (770-476 B.C.) periods.[6]

However, early records of Chinese fighting movements known as "hit and thrust" exercises were practiced as early as the Shang dynasty (1700-1027 B.C.).[7] The establishment of the *Shaolin* Temple by Emperor Xiao Wen during the Northern Wei dynasty (356-534 A.D.) was a key catalyst for the development of the martial arts in China. During this period, the original *Shaolin* style of *gong fu* (martial arts) was practiced with only 18 basic weapons—among them, the hand mace *(shoujian*).

The *shoujian* was a surprisingly small and light weapon, measuring only about 15-20 inches in length and weighing just a few pounds. Modern day analogues might resemble a lead pipe, crowbar, or hammer. Both the *jian* and *jiaan* were considered highly lethal close combat weapons and could be concealed within a wide sleeve. However, effective use of these weapons required considerable skill based on deception, good training, and long practice. Using the proper forms (techniques), the *shoujian* was a weapon that could be immediately employed with little or no warning against an adversary. A forged *shoujian* was capable of breaking swords and crushing a human skull or bones—even if an enemy was protected by the type of helmets or armor available during early periods of Chinese history.

The historical origin of the term *shashoujian* is elusive. According to one Taiwan source, it is found in a legend about General Xin Xiong of the Tang Empire (618-907 A.D.). General Xin is said to have had a great reputation for very rare skill with a (nonbladed) *jiaan* that was passed down to him by several generations of ancestors.[8] He used the weapon in fast striking forms, including the "moving serpent" and "dropping snowflake" movements. General Xin's most powerful form, however, was called "*shashoujiaan*." The legend relates that when General Xin taught his cousin, Lou Cheng, the most effective forms to employ with the *jiaan,* he kept secret the "*shashoujiaan*" form because he realized that he might no longer be the best user of the *jiaan* if he taught the form to his cousin. Hence, the form "*shashoujiaan,*" with the implication of "the most powerful and secret skill," is allegedly derived from this historic Chinese tale. From this story it seems clear that while the *jian* and *jiaan* are weapons, *shashoujian* is also a form—a well-practiced technique or movement.

## HOW HAS *SHASHOUJIAN* EMERGED AS A TOPIC OF SIGNIFICANCE WITHIN THE CHINESE NATIONAL DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT?

Interestingly, very few modern definitions of *shashoujian* can be documented. The most comprehensive Chinese military statement about *shashoujian*—that resembles a formal definition—comes from a PLA Air Force (PLAAF) officer, Senior Colonel Yang Zhibo, who, in 2002, served as a deputy researcher at the PLAAF Command College in the Office for Planning and Management Research. According to Yang, *shashoujian* can be "weapon systems and equipment" and/or a certain type of "combat method." In a *Kongjun Bao* article, he wrote:

> Basically, it is whatever the PLA needs to win future local wars under modern high-tech conditions. It includes two aspects: (1) weapon systems and equipment (e.g., hardware); and (2) every type of combat method (e.g., software). Weapons and equipment are the systems needed to deal with the enemy's electronic warfare and information warfare, and to counter every type of weapon and equipment the enemy can use for firepower attack. [*Shashoujian*] [c]ombat methods include attacking different types of weapons, such as early warning aircraft, stealth aircraft, and cruise missiles, as well as the combat principles to deal with different situations.
>
> To build a *shashoujian*, China must first complete a development program. It is a difficult, systematic process and not just one or two advanced weapons. It is something that all the services will use. It is an all-army, all-location, composite land, sea, and air system. It must also be a Chinese program that can use advanced foreign technology, but should not be purchased as a full system from abroad. One reason for not purchasing it from abroad is that these types of technology and tactics are common knowledge to everyone else, including the enemy. Second, other countries may not want to give China those types of technology and tactics, which are secret. Third, during wartime, political and foreign affairs (diplomacy) could possibly cut the flow of technology off from China In developing new combat methods research, combat methods constitute the full development of weapons and equipment technical and tactical capabilities, and the effective methods of raising combat effectiveness. The development of weapons, equipment, combat methods, and training must go hand-in-hand for them to be effective.[9]

Postings on two popular Chinese military enthusiast websites offered additional definitions of *shashoujian*. One writer

described *shashoujian* in the context of "weapons" and "system countermeasures" and also hinted that plans to develop a *shashoujian* program originated in the early 1990s.

> A *shashoujian* is a weapon that has an enormous terrifying effect on the enemy and that can produce an enormous destructive assault. System countermeasures involve comprehensive development of land, sea, air, and strategic weapons that increase the overall countermeasures capability of equipment systems. It should be said that these are two different trains of thought in the development of weaponry, but the two are not opposites. *Shashoujian* are not isolated weapons, but rather should become important constituent parts of equipment systems. Development of *shashoujian* is aimed at further perfection of equipment systems, and can promote faster development of equipment systems; it is a step in the improvement of systems countermeasures capabilities. . . . The concept of system countermeasures is a new train of thought proposed in the early 1990s for the development of weaponry. . . . Under conditions where military funding was constrained and scientific/technical forces were limited, China could focus on the development of a few *shashoujian* weapons . . .[10]

Another writer cited the popular emergence of the term *shashoujian* in China in the 1990s, offered a historical definition of the term, and spoke of a *shashoujian* "designation" for specific weapons systems. This enthusiast wrote:

> *Shashoujian* is a term often heard in China beginning in the mid-to-late 1990s. It is a synonym for a secret weapon as originally used in traditional Chinese storytelling to describe an ancient weapon of surprising power. . . . several domestically made weapons have their names on the list of successful candidates for the designation *shashoujian*.[11]

As Dr. Michael Pillsbury and Dr. Alistair I. Johnston have noted, the Chinese also use the terms *wangpai* (trump card) and *shashoujian* to characterize certain U.S. and Russian weapons.[12] Johnston observed that "this implies that PLA writers believe Americans and Russians can conceptualize [and develop] *shashoujian* just as Chinese can."[13] One PLA writer validated Pillsbury's and Johnston's ideas when he commented that,

> U.S. troops had at least five *shashoujian* on the battlefield [during Operation DESERT STORM], i.e., the F-117A stealth fighter bombers,

> the B-1B stealth bombers, the B-52H bombers (specialized in launching cruise missiles outside the air defense zone), the ship-based Tomahawk cruise missiles, and the B-2A stealth bombers which can take off or touch down from domestic airbases to carry out shock tasks. Moreover, the U.S. troops would also use various kinds of ammunition which are more powerful and more accurately guided.[14]

Understanding the origins and context of *shashoujian* is very important for discovering the meaning of the term, realizing its true significance, and assessing the implications of *shashoujian* for the PLA. For example, learning the historical origins and context of *shashoujian* allows researchers to appreciate the term's resilience despite the significant changes that have occurred in China over the last 2,000 years. Such strong endurance of the concept of *shashoujian* through transgenerational storytelling or "vignettism"[15] highlights the significance of the term in Chinese society, strategic culture, and as a possible driver for the development of Chinese military strategy, tactics, and weapons in the 21st century. Correctly translating and interpreting *shashoujian* are also important to facilitate meaningful research, to establish a baseline of knowledge, and to make new discoveries. Indeed, while there are Western analogues to and applications of *shashoujian,* "mirror-imaging" for analysis to understand the term is a pitfall to be avoided. The Chinese definitions and context must be the genesis of scholarly work on this unique subject.

**The PLA Debates Alternative Paths for Military Strategy and Force Modernization.**

Since the mid-1980s, Chinese military scholars have been studying trends in the development of U.S. defense policy and strategy, operational doctrine, and the enhancement of overall combat capability of the U.S. armed forces. During this period, many of these scholars also have been engaged in debate about the requirements for future warfare and the most appropriate direction for the modernization of the PLA. These military studies and debates have served as significant agents for change within China's national defense establishment.

In 1986, at a military campaign theory seminar where 60 new warplans were submitted and discussed by leading Chinese military strategists, a majority of those strategists espoused a move from China's traditional "war of annihilation" goal to a focus on "fighting a full-fledged war and attacking key-points."[16] In June 1991, at the direction of the Central Military Commission (CMC), the Chinese Academy of Military Science (AMS) held a forum on Operation DESERT STORM to explore new approaches to "development of defense-related scientific research and army building," among other major topics.[17] Influenced by the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) trend and the overwhelming combat effectiveness of U.S. military operations from 1991 to present,[18] China's military scientists broke into three distinct schools of thought on military modernization; "the People's War school," "the Limited, High-Technology War school," and "the RMA school."[19]

According to Michael Pillsbury, from the early to mid-1990s, individuals and groups within the three schools of thought publicly debated alternative paths for PLA modernization in an apparent campaign for recognition by the PRC leadership.[20] Leaders of the PLA's RMA school of thought sought to persuade the PRC leadership that China must quickly develop the capability to deter, counter, or defeat U.S. military capabilities. The group held that nonlinear modernization by leaps was the best path.[21] Gradually, PLA strategists shifted their thinking from a "People's War Under Modern Conditions" mindset toward "Local, Limited War Under High-Technology Conditions," as articulated in 1993 by then PRC President Jiang Zemin.

By 1996, public statements from PLA general officers and PRC leaders indicated a strong move away from that school of thought and toward the nonlinear RMA or counter-RMA[22] approach to military modernization.[23] American PLA scholars observing China's military debates often opined that PLA writers were merely mimicking or "mirror-imaging" the U.S. RMA for their own purposes, but a closer examination reveals that the ideas espoused by many Chinese military scholars were indeed different from those driving the American military modernization. The following statement from Major General Xu Yanbin is characteristic of professional discussions about modernization of PLA in the 1990s.

> We should not mechanically follow U.S. theory. As a military revolution is an inevitable outcome of scientific and technological progress and thus a general tendency, we should not try to meet a new challenge by running after others . . . We should try to create our own superiority. . . . We should combine Western technology with Eastern wisdom. This is our trump card for winning a 21st century war.[24]

## A "Transformation" for the PLA?

The American RMA and China's study of trends in U.S. military operations during the 1990s sparked a period of critical thinking and intense publishing on alternative views in military affairs in the PRC. These developments resulted in unprecedented discussions and debate among the PLA cadre that prompted China's senior leaders to evaluate PRC national military strategy, as well as PLA force structure and warfighting capabilities. By 1998, significant policy, strategy, organizational, training, and operational reforms were underway within China's defense establishment. However, despite the American focus on "transformation," China's senior leadership remained committed to carry forward the military doctrines of Mao and Deng. It would be another 5 years before the phrase military "transformation" would be publicly uttered by the Chinese president and CMC chairman, Jiang Zemin. In 2002, at the 16th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) National Congress, Jiang said, "Our national defense and army building should keep in line with the world's military transformation." According to the *Nanfang Zhoumo* news magazine, this was the first time the term "military transformation" was used publicly by a leading member of the CCP.[25]

In the spring of 2003, China's senior political leaders and military officers participated in a series of significant meetings to encourage China's own military transformation among the rank and file of the PLA and institutions that support it. These events served to promulgate a significant evolution in strategic thinking by China's senior leadership and establish slogans to properly motivate members of these communities.

At the National People's Congress (NPC) and National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in March, CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin said it was "necessary to push forward military transformation within Chinese characteristics."[26]

In May, PRC President Hu Jintao attended the fifth meeting of the CCP Political Bureau to study "trends in the development of the world's new military transformation." Members of the CCP Political Bureau heard lectures on military transformation from several Academy of Science speakers. Discussions at this event explored the history of the world's six military transformations and the significance of information technology for the sixth (current) military transformation.[27] AMS scholar Pi Mingyong identified and described the six major "military revolutions," noting that all have been linked to "the rise and decline, the glory and humiliation of the Chinese nation."[28] Importantly, Pi argued that developing countries in a relatively "backward position" can catch-up with military revolutions. He cited the Japanese *Meiji* Reform, Turkey's military revolution led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and China's "nuclear revolution" as examples. PLA General Liang Bi of the AMS also highlighted the significance of information as the catalyst of the sixth transformation. He argued that:

> The extensive use of information technology can multiply the people's capacity to find out about the battlefield situation and enable the commanders to deploy an appropriate type of combat force, on an appropriate scale, at an appropriate time, in an appropriate location, and to carry out highly integrated combined operations in an appropriate manner.[29]

Several months before the CCP Political Bureau meeting at the Human Studies Forum of Chinese Scientists, Deputy Chief of the PLA General Staff Xiong Guangkai articulated details of the PLA's new modernization path in a speech titled, "On the New Military Transformation." Xiong stated that "the essence of the new military transformation is a reflection of the information revolution in the military field."[30]

Jiang Zemin's 2002 utterance of the phrase "military transformation" and the subsequent campaign of speeches on this topic by other senior leaders—to educate and indoctrinate PLA officers and enlisted personnel—were significant events. The consistent use of the phrase "military transformation" served to acknowledge the success of efforts by the PLA's RMA scholars in their campaign to break from China's long adherence to "People's

War" doctrines and the PLA's practice of linear, reactive approaches to force modernization.

Some American observers of the Chinese military have argued that China's ethnocentrism and bureaucracies are the principal reasons for the PLA's lagging combat capabilities and resistance to adopting foreign ideas. Moreover, some contend that Chinese pride or inefficiency may be the reasons for the 5-year delay in Jiang's use the term "transformation." However, a more rigorous examination of these events, with an understanding of the cultural and political dynamics in China, produces alternative conclusions.

China's reluctance to abandon the "People's War" doctrines of the recent past probably has as much to do with the Marxist philosophy of "dialectical materialism" and the application of the scientific method to military affairs as it does with Chinese pride, "face," or inertia.[31] Decades of training, indoctrination, and belief meant that China's military scholars and senior leaders probably could not be convinced to move away from "People's War" until the laws of warfare that they had accepted as valid could be demonstrated to be "incorrect." The capabilities employed by the U.S. armed forces in the 1991 Persian Gulf War and other U.S. military actions up to 2002 validated the hypotheses of many Chinese RMA scholars and severely damaged the validity of "People's War" for the 21st century. As the practical application of "People's War" doctrines for modern warfare eroded in the mid-1990s, an opening was created for new military thinking in China. The historical and cultural grounding of *shashoujian* in Chinese society and strategic culture afforded the PRC leadership an opportunity to blend Chinese tradition with the requirements of the future, or, in the words of an ancient Chinese stratagem, to "borrow a corpse to raise the spirit."[32] With his term as president nearing an end, Jiang Zemin did not fail to seize this uncommon opportunity to secure his legacy as a visionary leader for the PLA.

**Emergence of *Shashoujian* Within the PLA.**

As noted by Johnston, the term *shashoujian* does not appear in the major published military writings of Mao Zedong.[33] However, usage of the term within the PLA probably began in about 1955 under Mao's regime, when China embarked on its "two bombs and

one satellite" program.[34] Some Chinese articles published since 1997 include historical references and comparisons of *shashoujian* with that program. Perhaps surprisingly, research for this chapter uncovered no comparisons of *shashoujian* with China's "863 Program."[35]

By the mid-1990s, Chinese military scholars and other senior officers were advocating the development of *shashoujian* for deterrence, and as a means to defeat a superior adversary in modern, high-tech warfare.[36] In his research, Pillsbury identified and translated more than 20 articles mentioning *shashoujian* and has commented on the rise of positions and ranks of the PLA cadre discussing *shashoujian* from the mid-1990s to 2000. According to Pillsbury, the earliest, recent references to *shashoujian* weapons by Chinese military writers appear in scholarly books[37] as well as the AMS journal, *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, in 1995.[38] The *Guang Jiao Jingkan* journal also reported on a military program to develop *shashoujian* weapons in 1995.[39] The emergence of the term *shashoujian* at that time suggests a link to China's internal debates about military strategy and modernization.

From 1995 to 1997, leading PLA scholars from the RMA school of thought appeared to be campaigning to convince senior PLA leaders and the core leaders of the CCP to initiate programs to cope with the impact of the American RMA. According to Pillsbury, this campaign was probably led by General Wang Pufeng, the first senior PLA officer known to advocate the PLA's use of *shashoujian* weapons to defeat of the U.S. military.[40] Pillsbury also commented that he came to realize that the term was sensitive when he asked a senior PLA strategist about *shashoujian* and was told that the term could not be discussed.[41] By early 1997, senior PLA officers (warfighters) were advocating the positions espoused by General Wang 2 years earlier.[42]

While some advocates for *shashoujian* may have come from the RMA school of thought, the historical and cultural significance of the term to the Chinese means that in a modern context *shashoujian* blends tradition (the old) with modernity (the new). Given its lineage, *shashoujian* is a term that probably holds appeal for PLA scholars within the People's War and Local, Limited War schools of thought as well. For example, a statement by General Huang Bin of

the PLA NDU demonstrated continuing emphasis on the People's War maxim of protracted warfare in combination with *shashoujian*:

> We can fight a war with them [the United States], they will not be able to continue the war after a while. Moreover, we also have our *shashoujian*.[43]

Additional research will be necessary to demonstrate conclusively the relationships among the three schools of thought and the term *shashoujian*.

**A Traceable Chronology of Documents.**

Statements made by the Chinese military's most senior officers after 1996 clearly encouraged the development of *shashoujian* as a new direction for the PLA. Pillsbury cited a March 1997 issue of *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue* which featured an article by General Liu Jingsong, then president of the AMS. In the article, General Liu associated the classic Chinese stratagem of the "inferior defeating the superior" with the use of *shashoujian* weapons.[44] Pillsbury's examination of the journal also revealed that several articles containing discussions about *shashoujian* were presented by the commander of the Guangzhou Military Region, commander of the Chengdu Military Region, and commander of the PLA Navy. Pillsbury also obtained a copy of the *Journal of the PLA National Defense University* (*junnei faxing*) where General Liu discussed methods to successfully attack a U.S. aircraft carrier using *shashoujian* weapons.[45]

In April 1997, PLA Air Force (PLAAF) Commander Liu Shunyao hinted at a change in PLA direction when he discussed the PLA's need to "form, as soon as possible, a certain scale of *shashoujian*" and also said, "The prospect has emerged for the study of a tactical methodology aimed at defeating enemies possessing high-technology armament."[46] In the same month, the restricted AMS journal *Junshi Xueshi* contained an article by Admiral Yang Yushu of the PLA Navy's (PLAN) East Sea Fleet in which the author advocated the development of an information warfare system as a *shashoujian* weapon to defeat an enemy.[47] A September 1997 article in a Hong Kong newspaper further indicated that changes were taking place within the PLA when it reported, "the State's third generation

leading collective calls on the armed forces to adapt themselves to the requirements of modern local warfare and to have their own *shashoujian*."[48]

By 1998, advocacy of *shashoujian* programs for the PLA had reached the highest levels of the PLA and China's civilian leadership. PRC National Defense Minister Chi Haotian disclosed in August that President Jiang Zemin had advanced "a general train of thought on China's national defense and army modernization drive and outlined tasks for specific stages in the run up to the mid-21st century . . ." Among those tasks disclosed by General Chi, the development of *shashoujian* is specifically called out. In discussing China's military modernization plans, he said:

> We should learn and master advanced science and technology; keep abreast with the latest high-technology developments in the world; develop key technologies in the main; develop weaponry and equipment with a substantially higher scientific and technological standard; create some *shashoujian*; and explore a weaponry and equipment development path with Chinese characteristics.[49]

In February 1999, Vice Chairman of the CMC General Fu Quanyou also spoke of the need for *shashoujian*:

> To defeat a better equipped enemy with inferior equipment in the context of high-technology, we should rely upon high-quality personnel, superior operational methods; and high-quality *shashoujian* weapons.[50]

In May 1999, in the wake of the accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Jiang Zemin stressed to the PLA leadership that "It is necessary to master, as quickly as possible, a new *shashoujian* needed to safeguard state sovereignty and security."[51]

At roughly the same time, following the publication of a long article on the history of China's "two bombs and one satellite" program written by Zhang Jingfu,[52] Chinese Academy of Science (CAS) officials discussed the article and noted "that so long as it is needed for state security, they will work like those who did in earlier periods to develop the necessary items for the state as quickly as possible." CAS scholar Yang Dongsheng, who took part in the historical research, stated that:

> China cannot be bullied by others at will. China must become strong through our own effort. Therefore, we must develop our own high-technologies and produce some impressive and important things.[53]

In August 1999, Jiang Zemin repeated his call to the Chinese military for *shashoujian* weapons. This time he said:

> We should set great store by stepping-up high-technology innovation for national defense purposes and by developing technology useable for both military and civil purposes as well, and we should also master several new *shashoujian* for safeguarding our national sovereignty and security as quickly as possible.[54]

In early March 2000, General Fu Quanyou echoed his own earlier statements on *shashoujian*, and also reinforced Jiang Zemin's calls for *shashoujian* development at the National People's Congress before a panel of PLA deputies. He said:

> We must lose no time developing and building *shashoujian*, strengthening military theoretical research and overall planning for preparations for military struggles, making increased efforts to acquire scientific and technical knowledge, increasing the scientific and technological drilling of troops, and improving construction for war preparedness and the study and practice of task-specific methods of operation in order to comprehensively improve our army's ability to fight combined operations under high-technology conditions.[55]

In August 2000, following a statement by the U.S. Government that the United States regards China as a "strategic competitor," Jiang issued a memo to the senior PLA cadre. In the secret memo, Jiang Zemin rejected PLA requests for large budgetary increases. Instead, he specially ordered the development of *shashoujian*.[56] He is reported to have said:

> . . . As a big nation, China should have procured some *shashoujian* weapons in the struggle against global hegemony . . . As our internal resources are limited, we should concentrate them first and foremost in areas of strategically vital importance to safeguard our national security, territorial integrity and to oppose hegemony in today and tomorrow's world.[57]

A November 2000 leak to a Hong Kong newspaper validated this report, which claimed that Jiang gave direction on PRC preparations to deal with the Taiwan situation. In the context of the possibility of a U.S. intervention, he discussed the importance of *shashoujian* for China's ability to maintain options for its strategy against Taiwan, stating:

> The long delay of [resolution of] the Taiwan issue is detrimental to its peaceful solution. It is imperative to step-up preparations for a military struggle so as to promote the early solution of the Taiwan issue. To this end, it is necessary to vigorously develop some *shashoujian* weapons and equipment. In this way, we will always have the initiative in solving the issue in either a peaceful or nonpeaceful way.[58]

## *Shashoujian*: A Secret Program?

In 2000, reports surfaced that China's senior military officers and national leaders had indeed outlined a secret project to develop *shashoujian* (warfighting concepts and weapons).[59] Details of the project (assigned the code number 998) were leaked in June 2000. Dr. Pillsbury discovered a February 2001 *Jiefangjun Bao* article (written by a *bona fide* CCP Central Committee official) that verified the plan to develop *shashoujian* weapons.[60] In February 2001, Wang Congbiao of the Policy Research Unit of the CCP Central Committee quoted Jiang Zemin as having said:

> We should have a high regard for enhancing the innovation in advanced national defense technology, stressing the development of military/civilian dual-use technology and mastering as quickly as possible the new *shashoujian* needed to safeguard our national sovereignty and security.[61]

The Chinese leadership probably established the 998 Project in response to their growing concerns about the implications of an interventionist U.S. military strategy, missile defense program decisions, and the on-going American RMA. It was formalized by a strategic resolution adopted at Beidaihe in early August 1999 during an enlarged session of the Political Bureau of the CCP Central Committee.[62] However, references to *shashoujian* in Chinese military

writings and statements appear to indicate that preliminary work on this program could have begun as early as 1995. If so, China could be as many as 7 years into a *shashoujian* weapons acquisition program.

China's 998 State Security Project has several components that respond to U.S. foreign policy decisions (including decisions to use force) and the development of new military capabilities.[63] The 998 Project calls for the PLA to ". . . accelerate the research, development and installation of new weapons . . . to resist U.S. hegemonism."[64] It is managed under the direction of the Political Bureau of the CCP Central Committee and the Central Military Commission. The 998 Project Leading Group is reported to include the members shown in Figure 1. The work conferences supporting the 998 Project are directed by the four PLA General Staff Departments.[65]

(From left to right)
Jiang Zemin - Former PRC President, CMC Chairman
Hu Jintao - PRC President, CCP General Secretary, CMC Vice Chairman
WU Bangguo - Chairman, Standing Committee of the National People's Congress
Cao Gangchuan - CMC Vice Chairman, Minister of National Defense
Guo Boxiong - Member, Political Bureau - CCP Central Committee. CMC Vice Chairman
Liu Jibin - Director, Commission on Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND).

**Figure 1. The 998 State Security Project Leading Group.**

## The 122 (December 2) Project and 126 (January 26) Program: Components of a *Shashoujian* Research and Development Effort?

In December 2000, Jiang Zemin announced that the CMC, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, and the State Council had adopted a new "decision on the development of strategic weapons to meet the needs of the situation in the new period."[66] The decision is referred to as the "Resolution on the December 2 Project." The objectives of the December 2 (122) Project are said to be to improve the combat effectiveness, counterattack capability, and "winning edge" of the PLA. These goals are to be achieved by developing a new generation of "strategic high-tech weapons" and "strategic nuclear weapons" and by "improving the readiness of PLA strategic weaponry." At the meeting, Jiang Zemin is said to have announced the members of the 122 Project Leading Group, which reportedly includes Hu Jintao (as leader); Wen Jiabao and Chi Haotian (as deputy leaders); and members Guo Boxiong, Cao Gangchuan, Wang Zuxun (Commandant of the AMS), Yang Guoliang, Huang Cisheng (Deputy Commander of the Second Artillery and Chief of Staff for Nuclear Weapons), Shen Binyi (Deputy Commander of the PLAN), Li Yongde (Deputy Commander of the PLAAF), and others.

China's 126 Program was approved by CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin following a national conference on science, technology, and industry for national defense held in January 2000. The program focuses on the acceleration of China's development and production of high-technology weaponry. According to a Chinese news source, the 126 Program is the second national-level program established for China's development of military equipment. (China's first such program was the 863 Program established by Deng Xiaoping in March 1986). Under the 126 Program, China will develop six major projects within a period of 12-15 years. These projects are reported to include the development of an aerospace technological system, an electronic information technological system, a strategic defense technological system, a deep-level counterattack technological system, an optical laser technological system, and a nonconventional and conventional materials technological system.[67] Under these six projects, 36 "theme projects" have been developed by expert groups,

technology groups, and logistics groups established to support the 126 Program.[68]

The 126 Program is said by a Chinese source to be regarded by the PLA as "a development program for the new century." The program is overseen by PRC President Hu Jintao, with Vice Premier Wu Bangguo serving as the program leader. Wang Zhongyu, Cao Gangchuan, and Liu Jibin serve as deputy leaders of the program's leading group.[69] Interestingly, the members of this leading group are very similar to those in charge of China's 998 Project.

Although the term *shashoujian* is not used in reference to the 122 Project or the 126 Program, additional research is necessary to determine whether these initiatives are associated with or related to the 998 Project or *shashoujian* in any way.

### *Shashoujian* and PLA Research, Development and Acquisition (RD&A).

China's military-industrial sector is a large and complex network of PRC academic, civil, and military organizations. Some of these organizations are independent; others remain state-owned enterprises. Within this large network there are three principal organizations where Chinese military RD&A decisions are made. This smaller set of critical organizations includes the PRC State Council, the CMC, the PLA General Staff Department, and the Commission on Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND).

At the direction of Jiang Zemin, a sweeping series of military reforms was initiated across China's national defense establishment in 1998. In that year, the PLA's General Armament Department (GAD) was established as a PLA General Staff department to manage and fund military RD&A plans. At the same time, the function and authority of COSTIND were examined, and the commission was reorganized and streamlined. If *shashoujian* weapons and tactics development are indeed components of a larger PRC state security project, as evidence suggests, it is highly likely that leaders and senior officials within the PRC State Council, CMC, PLA General Staff Department, and at COSTIND have addressed considerations and decisionmaking for these issues. All of these organizations are

represented in the 998 State Security Project Leading Group.

In addition to the numerous calls for *shashoujian* made by China's senior leaders, a number of various publications include statements about *shashoujian* in the context of PLA modernization efforts. These references occur mostly (beginning in 1998) in articles in Chinese military newspapers, such as *Jiefangjun Bao*, which are intended for a PLA audience. In many instances, these articles refer to the development of *shashoujian* weapons in an aspirational context.

*June 1998:* "The PLA should stress both real war preparations and deterrence preparations by first developing a number of deterrent *shashoujian* of a standard identical to that of an enemy's as it did in the past when developing "two bombs and one satellite" and a nuclear submarine."[70]

*August 1998:* "We must give priority to the development of defense-related research and high-tech weapons and equipment, concentrate resources on the tackling of key technologies, exert ourselves to tackle "bottlenecks" which prevent the improvement of our combat effectiveness, and strive to achieve major progress in key projects which will play an important part in the winning of future wars, so that our army will have a number of powerful *shashoujian* as quickly as possible."[71]

*April 1999:* PLA scholar An Weiping observed that China's *shashoujian* program should be responsive to China's "one low and five insufficiencies." The "one low" refers to China's low integration of information technology with armaments and equipment, while the "five insufficiencies" are identified as (1) high-power armaments, (2) weapons for launching attacks, (3) precision guided munitions, (4) reconnaissance, early warning, command and control, and (5) electronic armaments. The scholar recommended a focus on "key projects and development of our own *shashoujian* weapons . . . We should concentrate our resources on developing a number of *shashoujian* weapons with great deterrent power, thus making up for the insufficiencies of our armaments."[72]

*February 2000:* Michael Pillsbury translated a *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue* article in which General Wang Ke, a member of the CMC and director of the PLA's General Logistics Department, discussed three priority areas for military investment. The three areas General Wang

identified were defense infrastructure, education and training, and *shashoujian* weapons.[73]

*June 2000:* Party committees of various services and arms made meticulous efforts to organize the research and development and further improve measures related to weaponry development, particularly the development of *shashoujian*.[74]

*June 2002:* An article from *Huajianbing Bao* indicated that the CMC and the PLA's four General Departments had approved the establishment of "several projects for *shashoujian* weapons."[75] The article also reported that "some *shashoujian* weapons have already been fielded in units and have formed up combat capability . . . [while] others already have final designs and are about to be issued to [Second Artillery Corps] units."[76] Further reporting in the article, if correct, seems to indicate a program featuring a significant level of investment, effort, and dedication.

> So as to put *shashoujian* weapons in the hands of units as soon as possible, numerous scientific and technological cadre of the Fourth Institute . . . spend nearly 200 days each year [performing operational research] . . . producing more than 10,000 technical reports and documents of various kinds to submit to leaders at all levels to use in their decisionmaking. Nearly 4,000 of their recommendations have been adopted by staff and research and development organizations, and as many as 10,000 difficult problems have been discovered and resolved. Science and Technology personnel have also completed more than 600 scientific research projects, of which eight received first, second, and third class commendations as National Science and Technology Advancements, and 187 received awards as Military Science and Technology Advancements. Some of the research filled either military or national gaps.[77]

*June 2003:* In the course of innovation in military technology, vigorously developing critical technological equipment with independent intellectual property rights and strategic impact is an endeavor to forge *shashoujian* of our army for informationized warfare and to build our army's modern operational system centering on informationization.[78]

These discussions about *shashoujian* weapons by no means indicate or prove that China has a secret *shashoujian* weapons RD&A program. However, it also cannot be proven that such a program does not exist. The examples of PLA references to *shashoujian* weapons in

the context of military RD&A are provided to offer food for thought and perhaps a starting point for further research to examine these possibilities.

## HOW MIGHT *SHASHOUJIAN* SATISFY CHINESE NATIONAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS?

As the previous discussion has shown, *shashoujian* is an element of Chinese strategic culture that influences military thinking and preparations within the PLA. If it has been formalized as a PRC state security program, *shashoujian* has significant implications for the Chinese national defense establishment and also U.S. national security interests. The final section of this chapter examines the implications of the PRC's *shashoujian* concept as it relates to 1) Chinese views about modern warfare, 2) the PLA's calculus for military assessments, and 3) the PLA's developmental efforts to cope with inferiority.

### A View of Warfare in the Early 21st Century—Characteristics of Information Age Wars.

Chinese military scholars have dedicated great effort to study the change in the requirements of warfare from the mechanization-firepower age to the information-firepower era.[79] As an example, Major General Wang Baocun, a leading PLA scholar on military strategy and an expert on information warfare, concluded in 1997 that ten defining features will characterize warfare in the information-firepower era of the 21st century: 1) limited goals in conflicts; 2) wars of short duration; 3) less damage; 4) larger battlefields and less density of troops; 5) transparency on the battlefield; 6) intense struggle for information superiority; 7) unprecedented force integration; 8) increased demands for command and control; 9) strategic objectives achieved through precision, not mass; and, 10) attacks on weaknesses, not strengths, of the enemy's "combat system."[80]

Interestingly, these characteristics represent strategic and operational objectives, centers of gravity (key points of strength or weakness), and opportunities for the PLA to seize the initiative in

conflict. Wang advocated the consideration of these features for the development of Chinese military strategy, warfighting methods, and the PLA's transformation process.

To be sure, it is difficult to know for certain whether General Wang's ideas have been accepted by China's senior leaders. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that such expert judgments about future warfare can influence PRC military strategy, warfighting methods, and the PLA modernization. General Wang's judgments may also help China's national defense community establish requirements that support strategy, policy, and the development of *shashoujian* (weapons and tactics). In this sense, the characteristics of future wars described by Wang (as well as those identified by other PLA scholars) can reveal hints or cues about the focus and direction of China's *shashoujian* programs for PLA watchers.

### *Shashoujian* and Military Strategy—Using the Inferior to Defeat the Superior.

> **Mao Zedong**: Historically, . . . absolute superiority is present at the end, but is rare at the beginning of a war or campaign.[81]
>
> **Deng Xiaoping:** Even if we could modernize our military equipment in the next 10 or 20 years, compared to our enemies, our weapons would still be inferior. We are moving forward, but our enemies are not asleep either. Therefore, by that time, if we have to fight, we will still be the weak trying to defeat the strong.[82]
>
> **Jiang Zemin:** At present, our army's modernization standard is still incompatible with the need of fighting a modern war, this being a major contradiction faced by our army building. . . . our army still lags behind armed forces in developed countries in the West in terms of weapons and equipment, intelligence and reconnaissance, telecommunications and liaison, command and control, joint operations, logistics support and in other basic fields as well.[83]
>
> **Hu Jintao:** High-tech developments have greatly facilitated new military changes in the world. . . . China must improve its research into the change so as to constantly improve national defense and military modernization.[84]
>
> **Hu Jintao:** [China must]…achieve a leap-forward style of development in defense and army modernization.[85]

PRC leaders have recognized that the PLA has trailed behind foreign militaries in its ability to integrate science and technology with weapons and equipment—and, in this context, that the PLA is relatively inferior to advanced foreign militaries. For much of China's pre-revolutionary history, the same can be said to have been true of China's armies. Historically, Chinese forces emphasized and depended upon superior (and asymmetric) strategies and tactics to cope with the inferiority of weapons and equipment.[86] This trend continues today inside the PRC.[87] The emphasis on superior strategy and tactics is an important characteristic of Chinese strategic culture and has a significant impact upon Chinese military thinking, despite the relatively recent (and certainly more visible) priority placed on introducing advanced military hardware into the PLA.

Although China's leading military strategists and scholars recognize the relative inferiority of PLA weapons and hardware, it is important to note that this acknowledgment is not consistent with their judgments about China's ability to prevail against a superior military adversary in an information age war. In fact, American academic reviews of Chinese military literature reveal that China's best-known military scholars calculate that the PLA can prevail in an asymmetric conflict against a superior military under the right conditions, despite the shortcomings of Chinese military hardware.[88] For many American military strategists, this inconsistency is illogical and confusing, but the assertion is, in fact, quite logical and reconcilable from the Chinese perspective. Chinese strategic culture, modes of thinking, and the concept of *shashoujian* consistently support the Chinese belief that the inferior can defeat the superior. The research of both Dr. Pillsbury and Lieutenant Colonel Mark Stokes first identified the linkage between *shashoujian* and the Chinese inferior-superior stratagem.[89]

China's robust community of military scholars has been working hard for more than a decade to study the new characteristics of modern warfare amidst the period of the so-called "sixth transformation" in military affairs. PLA scholars apply a holistic approach to the assessment of military capabilities, potential, and opportunities to seize initiative on the battlefield. This holistic view often is complemented by disciplined application of dialectical and relativistic reasoning. Using dialectical and relativistic approaches,

they judge the military strength, weakness, and capability of the U.S. armed forces in comparison to those of the PLA. While rare among U.S. military analysts, dialectical and relativistic thinking is a defining characteristic of Chinese military science and strategic thinking. This important intellectual difference is precisely what enables PRC military scholars to rationalize (and believe in) the ability of the inferior to defeat the superior. Ancient and modern Chinese military literature is replete with examples of dialectical and relativistic reasoning that seeks to demonstrate this ability. This approach to military assessment is taught to officers at the PLA's NDU and reflected in the scholarship of AMS researchers. It is probably practiced by PLA forces in the field during training exercises.

In 1995, Major Yu Guangning, an assistant researcher at the AMS, published an essay in a military journal that highlighted the historical significance of dialectical thinking through his examination of differences between Chinese and Western approaches to geostrategic thinking. He also identified four major differences between Chinese and Western geostrategic thinking:

> China's best known classical statesmen, strategists, diplomats, and even philosophers all favored treating war-making might dialectically. They had a whole set of dialectical war-making logic such as the weak defeating the strong, the inferior winning out over the superior, a standoff between weak and strong, and the conversion of weakness into strength. . . . We always seek to keep our opponents from bringing their might into full play, while strengthening ourselves through weakening our opponents. . . . In Western military history, the strongest military forces often do not win the final victory. That is the case in the oft stated "winning the battle, but losing the war," which is related to the West's military thinking of controlling means and emphasizing might to the neglect of winning the war.[90]

Yu concluded that Western geostrategic thinking is an expansive "rivalry for superiority" with an emphasis on "technological might," while China's thinking values "balance" and stresses the importance of "strategy." The impact of China's traditional use of dialectical and relativistic thinking on matters of state is unmistakable in the writing of this PLA scholar.

The impact of China's historical traditions and practices are also visible in PLA scholarly writings. Two PLA senior colonels highlighted these characteristics in their discussion about seizing combat initiative and using relative strengths against a superior enemy's points of weakness.

> It is natural that the core idea of our army's operational doctrine for high-tech conditions is deeply rooted in our army's rich operational traditions. An overview of our army's war history shows that, in most cases, our army was inferior to its enemies in terms of the overall strength and the quality of weapons and equipment. Apart from political factors, the main reason our army managed to defeat time and time again its strong enemies, Chinese or foreign, was because our army had reached higher standards in the art of war and operational guidance.[91]

Using a holistic approach and dialectical thinking, many PLA scholars assess military strengths and weaknesses with a focus on the "relative." In an example that is characteristic in Chinese military literature, Colonel Yu Guohua, a lecturer at the PLA NDU, demonstrated the PLA's consideration of the "relative" in its military assessment methodology, arguing that:

> . . . the relative nature of our enemy's strength and our own weakness is manifest in the fact that although the other side may be strong, they are not strong in all things; they have some weaknesses, and our side may be weak, but we are not weak in all things; we have some strength.[92]

Yu's essay also showed the significant influence of Chinese history and tradition on assessments of strength and weakness. In his paper, he recommended that the PLA turn weakness into strength through the use of classic stratagems: undermine the righteousness of the enemy's cause, sow discord, create confusion in the enemy's communications, cause the enemy to deplete war materials without achieving objectives, and target weaknesses (not the strengths) of the enemy's war apparatus (systems, equipment, and weapons). In his essay, Yu anticipated what might be a common foreign criticism of his arguments and approach to reasoning—such as "Can examples of the inferior defeating the superior be identified in the case of a modern, local high-tech war?" Yu's answer seems astonishingly simplistic:

> . . . so far, among the local high-tech wars that have occurred, there has never been an actual case of the weak defeating the strong or the inferior defeating the superior. There are two main reasons: One, the history of high-tech local war is relatively short; we have not seen all of its forms and shapes yet. Second, the high-tech local wars so far have been unique.[93]

Another example of the PLA's use of a holistic approach to military assessments, which included a reference to *shashoujian*, appeared in a May 2000 newspaper article. According to the article, in 1999 the PLA NDU established a Center for the Study of Military Operations against Taiwan.[94] Since then, this Center has conducted in-depth studies of tactics, campaigns, and other subjects and drawn lessons from the limited wars of the late 1990s, including the conflicts in Kosovo and Chechnya. The findings from the Center's work were forwarded to the CMC and PLA General Staff Department for consideration. Later, in April 2002, the PLA General Staff sponsored an all-army conference to hear an exchange of views among PLA scholars on campaigns and tactics for operations against Taiwan.[95] An authoritative source from the PLA conference argued that some foreign methodologies for military assessments are incorrect because they are not holistic and fail to appreciate the virtue of dialectical and relativistic reasoning:

> The foreign assessment that currently China does not have the ability to invade Taiwan is not correct . . . In comparing military strengths, not only the extent of modernization of one's weaponry, but also the use of tactics, one's mastery of weaponry, and the morale of the troops must be included. When all the factors, including a certain degree of U.S. involvement, are considered, the PLA can win the war without any doubt. Besides, the PLA has a *shashoujian* unknown to outsiders.[96]

While China's military scholars approach military assessments holistically, employ dialectical and relativistic thinking, and often arrive at judgments favorable to the PLA, most Chinese military scholars also emphasize the PLA's need to make up for having less (in terms of technology, weapons, and equipment, etc.). It is here that the Maoist philosophy (the value of man over material) comes into play. Increasingly, PLA scholars seem to straddle the issue and highlight the virtues of both sides. Their judgments often lead to

three common recommendations. First, the PLA must continue to study and apply China's rich tradition of superior strategy and art of warfare. Second, the PLA must progress rapidly in developing science and technology and in integrating advanced technology with the PLA's weapons and equipment. Third is a defense or validation of the "inferior can defeat the superior" stratagem. Quotations from the writings of three Chinese military scholars demonstrate a range of views within the PLA.

*Reverse the Balance of Combat Strength with Superior Strategy*.

> Western countries have made rapid progress in science and technology in modern and contemporary times. They enjoy an obvious scientific and technological superiority in wars. In order to win a victory in their wars for national liberation or war against aggression, some developing countries naturally have to count on their traditional superiority in the use of strategy for making-up for their technological weakness. This indicates that the use of strategy can reverse the balance of combat strength despite the varying technological standards of weapons and equipment.[97]

*Employ Deadly Weapons*.

> We need to change our traditional way of thinking that we can win against superior forces by stressing tactics, but even more so by having *shashoujian* weapons.[98]

*Develop New Equipment While Carrying Forward Tradition*.

> . . . we should speed-up the development of equipment for reconnaissance and early warning, the automation of air defense command and electronic warfare, and of *shashoujian* weapons for hard destruction of the enemy, to narrow the technology gap between ourselves and powerful enemies. While developing new technology, we should also pay close attention to drawing sustenance from our national culture, and inheriting and carrying forward our army's tradition in being skilled at applying strategy, that is, as experts say: "Let thought and technology soar together."[99]

The concept of *shashoujian* is attractive to the PLA's warfighters and intellectuals regardless of whether they represent the PLA's "old

guard" or its "young turks." *Shashoujian* is also appealing to China's senior leaders who seek to motivate, professionalize, and modernize the PLA. Because it blends the traditional with the modern, the *shashoujian* concept does not threaten China's legacy philosophy and doctrine, but it does allow an exciting way forward for the Chinese military in an uncertain period of transformation. For the PLA, in terms of military strategy, the *shashoujian* concept effectively bridges the divide between the past and the future.

### *Shashoujian* and PLA Operational Art.

There has been a great deal of discussion in PLA literature about how and when weapons and tactics (including *shashoujian*) should be optimally employed against superior adversaries to achieve military objectives. Pillsbury discussed several of these "employment concepts" in his November 2001 report for the U.S. China Economic and Security Commission.[100] Five specific methods are common in Chinese military writings: 1) identify and exploit weaknesses, 2) seize initiative through surprise, 3) employ extraordinary means, 4) attack vulnerabilities (key points/at certain moments), and 5) ensure survivability and counter-strike capability.

*Identify and Exploit Weakness.* According to Pillsbury, the Chinese believe that the successful employment of *shashoujian* against a superior adversary requires good intelligence and assessments of the adversary's strategy, tactics, weapons, platforms, and systems.[101] This is necessary to identify the centers of gravity (weaknesses) within the enemy's military structure. Once strengths and weaknesses have been identified and assessed, the strengths can be avoided, and the weaknesses (particularly key nodes) can be targeted for attack using *shashoujian* (weapons and methods). In 1996, a passage from a *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue* essay highlighted the need to correctly identify and fatally attack structural weaknesses (key nodes supporting military operations) while avoiding enemy strengths. Notably, the recommendation to focus on striking weaknesses is complemented by recommendations to employ other *shashoujian* methods, including surprise and precision targeting.

> . . . in operations under high-tech conditions, we must not only focus on annihilating the enemy's combat effectiveness, but we must, first of

> all, pay attention to and place stress on striking nodes of the enemy's operational structure. With regard to operational guidance, we must try our best to find out in good time the structural weaknesses of the enemy's operational system, including the essential weak links of the enemy's whole national infrastructure which supports the enemy's operations; then we can use precision guided weapons, deep striking forces, and special operational forces to swiftly bypass the enemy's strong nodes, skillfully direct our firepower to enemy's weak links, and give it a fatal strike. . . . It is necessary to realize the combination of mobility with firepower and shock attack at a higher level, and concentrate operational effectiveness in a decisive time and at a decisive place to attack decisive spots and to strike at the enemy's critical part.[102]

In 1999, the Lanzhou Military Region Headquarters conducted studies of "local wars of the 1990s." A *Jiefangjun Bao* editorial about the study effort made some revealing comments concerning the PLA's needs and requirements for *shashoujian*, calling for

> . . . prioritizing and slanting our manpower and financial resources in an effort to develop a few world-class and directed *shashoujian* for an extreme deterrent against a strong enemy. . . . We need to intensify our asymmetrical combat preparations aimed at enemy weak points. We need to counter enemy asymmetrical weapons with our own asymmetrical countermeasures. A strong enemy with absolute superiority is certainly not without weakness that can be exploited by a weaker side that finds the weakness of the stronger one and [at the same time] striking larger weaknesses with smaller strengths . . . [we need to be] able to take a certain initiative by making a small move that would affect the overall situation. So our military combat preparations need to be more directly aimed at finding tactics to exploit the weaknesses of a strong enemy.[103]

*Seize Initiative Through Surprise.* For the Chinese, operational surprise is an essential condition for an inferior force to seize initiative and achieve victory in combat against a superior adversary. It is first necessary to keep secret some *shashoujian* weapons and tactics (others are made known for the purpose of deterrence) and to prevent an adversary from knowing the ways and means of *shashoujian* strikes. To maximize the effect of such strikes the PLA will also engage an adversary in conditions when attacks are not expected. In these circumstances, the PLA's combat effectiveness can also benefit from the shock effect of *shashoujian* strikes. Inversely, inflicted damage

and the shock effect of *shashoujian* strikes severely impact the ability of the adversary to observe, orient, decide, and act. In this sense, surprise also delays and degrades the combat effectiveness of the superior adversary.

> . . . we should not fight with the enemy in a way anticipated by the enemy, in a time and in a place that the enemy are expecting. Only in this way will we be able to change inferiority into superiority, and passivity to activity, and thus win the initiative in conducting operations.[104]

*Employ Extraordinary Means.* Chinese military operations researchers believe that the use of secret, deceptive, or otherwise unorthodox methods (stratagems, doctrines, tactics, techniques, and procedures) that are unknown to an adversary can significantly aid the employment of *shashoujian* weapons. The use of such extraordinary means for attacks with conventional, nuclear, and *shashoujian* weapons can transform weakness into strength by generating shock and inducing chaos and paralysis in the forces of a superior adversary. In this context, tactical surprise (the use of unorthodox and/or unanticipated methods) is distinctly different from strategic surprise (in the context of time, location and conditions). Both forms of surprise are typically viewed by PLA operations researchers as force multipliers.

> The key principle of the stratagem of prevailing over the enemy with extraordinary means is that it is necessary, on the basis of having technical *shashoujian* [methods] to make surprising uses of such weapons when the opponent is not psychologically or materially prepared at all.[105]

> Everyone knows that *shashoujian* weapons can be used surprisingly effectively at a certain time, place and under certain conditions, but these *shashoujian* weapons in turn require rational combinations with other weapons.[106]

*Attack Vulnerabilities.* In 2001, a PLA researcher examined two U.S. military operational incidents in an effort to identify lessons of value for military tactics development. The researcher highlighted the "gray critical states" (what other Chinese military scholars have called "definite blind spots" or "dead zones"[107]) of two U.S. military platforms: the U.S. Marine Corps' MV-22 tilt-rotor aircraft and

the USS *Kittyhawk* aircraft carrier.[108] In December 2000, an MV-22 crashed during a night training mission. The cause of the crash was investigated and found to be the result of a rapid vertical descent that created unstable airflow. This occurred in the aircraft's transition from horizontal to vertical flight. In another instance, in October 2000, USS *Kittyhawk* was participating in a joint military exercise with elements of the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Forces and conducting underway replenishment operations when two Russian *Sukhoi*-27 fighter aircraft overflew the deck of the carrier at very low altitude. The PLA operations researcher concluded that:

> The crash of the tilt-rotor craft MV-22 *Osprey* and the penetration into the USS *Kittyhawk* aircraft carrier's defense zone have shown that dangerous critical gray states exist in both high-tech weaponry systems and modern joint combat operation processes. We ought to earnestly study it [critical gray states] to get to the heart of the problem and discover measures to deal with this problem. Only by doing so can we transform this contradiction into something beneficial to us and enable us to defeat the enemy.[109]

Coping with U.S. aircraft carriers is a common topic of examination by Chinese military analysts. Dr. Pillsbury was among the first to identify the specific interest of PLA operations researchers in determining the vulnerability of U.S. aircraft carriers.[110] A number of articles explore strategies and tactics that Chinese military researchers believe might permit the PLA to effectively deter, deny, or destroy an aircraft carrier.[111] A 2001 *Junshi Wenzhai* article highlighted the use of combined attacks that employ asymmetric measures such as: "sea mine emplacement, timely jamming, and electronic confusion, submarine ambush, focused surprise attack with guided missiles, and [other] raids which take the enemy by surprise."[112] In 2002, another article highlighted five *shashoujian* weapons that could be successfully employed in operations against U.S. aircraft carriers:

> . . . the aircraft carrier has an immense body like an island, leaving it basically no hiding ground on the vast seas, and no way to evade enemy reconnaissance and tracking. Aircraft, submarines, anti-ship missiles, torpedoes, and mines are the five major killers the aircraft carrier must face.[113]

The article highlighted the utility of advanced mines, citing their unanticipated effectiveness against the U.S. Navy during Operation DESERT STORM when USS *Tripoli* and USS *Princeton* suffered significant damage from mine explosions.

These examples are characteristic of many contained in Chinese military writings. They serve as clear indicators that PLA analysts are carefully studying the operational vulnerabilities of U.S. weapons, platforms, and military systems. The identification and discussions about the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the U.S. armed forces reveal a key part of PLA's systematic effort to develop operational methods to counter technologically superior adversaries in a future war.[114]

*Ensure Survivability and Counter-Strike Capability.* The Chinese believe that *shashoujian* (in the context of weapons, platforms, systems, and methods) must remain denied to intelligence collection, both before and after use in combat, to ensure the effectiveness of strikes as well as the survivability of *shashoujian* units and equipment. Deception, concealment, and mobility all help to avert the opportunity to mitigate against *shashoujian* strikes. These practices also minimize the likelihood of surprise (effective preemptive attacks) against *shashoujian* units and equipment. For the Chinese, *shashoujian* forces must serve as a credible deterrent and an effective tool in preemption, but must also be able to survive initial attacks by a superior adversary to ensure the PLA's ability to achieve victory through devastating counterstrikes.

> . . . we must guarantee that our strategic units still have nuclear counterattack and retaliation strengths even after receiving several attacks. China has already formed a network of strategic nuclear weapons using land-based firing (from deep wells and underground tunnels), mobile firing (from strategic highways and exclusive railway lines), and sea firing (from nuclear submarines).[115]

The strategic missile nuclear submarine is the *shashoujian* of the Chinese navy. It is characterized by a large cruising radius, broad operations area, good stealthiness, strong mobility, and high speed. In coming wars against aggression, a nuclear submarine will be a mobile and stealthy missile base, striking after the enemy has struck, to make a surgical fatal blow against an enemy.[116]

**Effects of *Shashoujian* Strikes.**

In addition to PLA discussions about methods, Chinese military scholars also frequently discuss the effects of *shashoujian* strikes. These effects include: deterrence, decapitation, blinding, paralysis, and disintegration.

*Deterrence*. According to China's ancient strategists, the best military leader wins his objectives without resorting to warfare. This virtue is still respected and practiced in the PRC today and directs emphasis on psychology (through strategy, deterrence, and negotiation) over armed conflict.[117] Most Chinese military writing on *shashoujian* weapons includes discussion of psychological warfare and the requirement for credible deterrence. Frequently, PLA scholars characterize China's strategic missile forces -including the PLA's Second Artillery Corps and, increasingly, the PLA Navy's strategic submarine fleet—as *shashoujian* forces.[118] It is, therefore, apparent that China regards its nuclear forces as *shashoujian* because of their psychological deterring effect and overwhelming destructive power. The missions and methods of both the Second Artillery Corps and the PLAN strategic submarine fleet include requirements for survivability and counter-strike capability.[119] Moreover, PRC leaders judge these elements of the PLA to possess the ability to decapitate, paralyze, disintegrate, and blind (e.g., through electromagnetic pulse) the most powerful adversary that China might face in conflict. This belief is the basis for China's declared deterrence strategy and nuclear weapons program.

> Appropriately developing the military deterrent threat force required by an active defense policy, such as a limited and effective nuclear force, and constantly developing air force, space forces, elite armed forces, and the overall people's war waging capability, we will possess a *shashoujian* that will leave the enemy trembling; this is the basis of China's intimidation psychological war.[120]

Despite the focus of this quotation on nuclear weapons, it is important to reiterate the earlier point that PLA scholars value the significant deterring power of conventional *shashoujian* weaponry.[121] As previously discussed, Chinese military researchers conclude that mobile ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, sea mines, and torpedoes all

serve as means to deter U.S. air and naval forces from entering into a military engagement with the PLA.

*Decapitation*. In the traditional sense, the defeat of an adversary by a single fatal strike or "death blow" is the intended outcome of a *shashoujian* strike. Ideally, such a strike is executed with foreknowledge. It comes deceptively and swiftly, and without any perceptible indication or warning to alert the enemy. If employed perfectly, a *shashoujian* strike kills the adversary instantly, without the victim ever seeing it coming. The grim result is final and irreversible. In a discussion about the PRC nuclear weapons policy one PRC analyst said,

> Enlightened by the Iraq war, in waging war against Taiwan in the future, the PLA is considering applying "decapitation action" against the leading elements of Taiwan independence, together with precision lightning strikes on Taiwan's major military, economic, and political targets.[122]

*Blinding, Paralysis, and Disintegration*. As in martial arts (specifically *quanfa*) and the medicinal practice of acupuncture, pressure point warfare against key nodes is intended to have debilitating systemic effects within a military structure or organization. PLA strategists often discuss the importance of conducting *shashoujian* strikes on critical infrastructure that supports military operations. Some targets frequently identified by Chinese military scholars include command and control centers and networks, early warning and intelligence systems, remote sensing platforms (specifically unmanned aerial vehicles and reconnaissance satellites), and military logistics systems. PLA scholars view these systems as operational dependencies—the relative weaknesses of a superior enemy—and as more vulnerable to attack than the relative strengths (weapons and platforms) of a superior adversary. Effective *shashoujian* strikes on the key nodes of a superior adversary can cause paralysis and initiate the disintegration of a superior force. In the minds of Chinese operational research experts, these effects can enable the inferior to overcome the superior by transforming the PLA's weakness into strength and the adversary's strength into weakness. In an authoritative PLA NDU document, two editors highlighted the importance of "vital points" attacks on military systems to achieve "blinding, paralyzing, and lethal" effects.

> Attacks on vital points in the enemy's systems should take as their main targets three basic links in the enemy's information systems; namely, sources from which the enemy probes for information, information channels, and information processing centers. The sources from which the enemy probes for information are the "eyes and ears" of the enemy's combat operations system. The information channels are the system's "nerve centers," and the information processing centers are its "brains and heart." It is not difficult to see that these three basic links are key links, which assure that an information system, and even an entire system of combat operations, can operate normally. Attacks on these three basic links in an enemy's information systems should be part of a single, coordinated whole. Through "blinding, paralyzing, and lethal" actions against the enemy's combat operations system, these attacks create conditions favorable for decisive combat. . . . By striking directly at the "brains, heart, and nerve centers" of the enemy's systems, this method paralyzes powerful troop formations and makes them collapse without being attacked.[123]

In another essay, two PLA senior colonels explained the importance of dominance across the electromagnetic spectrum to create chaos for an adversary in modern warfare. They characterized electronic warfare as an "intangible power on the modern battlefield."

> Electronic warfare has obscured the demarcation line that marks the beginning of an engagement and [EW] has become an intangible power on the modern battlefield. Whichever side loses in an electronic war will be reduced to blind and deaf, so its weapons will be disabled, and it will lose its initiative in battle or a campaign or even a whole strategic situation.[124]

PLA Major General Dai Qingmin has discussed the critical role of information warfare as an element of electronic warfare to deny critical information to an adversary.

> Integrated network-electronic warfare uses electronic warfare to disrupt the opponent's acquisition and forwarding of information. It uses computer network warfare to disrupt the opponent's processing and use of information. And it makes integrated use of electronic warfare and computer network warfare to form up overall, combined power to paralyze an opponent's information systems.[125]

In an interview about U.S. dominance of the electromagnetic spectrum in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Dai observed:

> . . . the United States used the space-based strategic-class reconnaissance advanced warning and positioning system with very high resolution, Airborne Warning and Control System planes, unmanned aircraft, other campaign-class information systems, all types of sensors and other tactical-class information systems to conduct round-the-clock continuous reconnaissance on Iraq, and provide real-time information about the targets to U.S. and British special forces and ground forces, thereby considerably raising the hit rate. To the U.S. troops, the battleground was "crystal clear," and the battle situation was "in full view." But because the other side did not have complete reconnaissance positioning system of all classes, it could not see clearly and even was completely blind about what the other side was doing; to them, the battleground was "shrouded" with heavy "battle fog."[126]

From a defensive perspective, several strategies to minimize the impact of an adversary's high-technology advantage in warfare were proposed by Sun Zian in 1995. This scholar identified the following as key areas for PLA strategy development: employing long-range interception weapons, maintaining communications during warfare, maintaining secrecy, exploiting intelligence derived from commercial channels, conducting saturation ballistic missile strikes against key nodes, ensuring camouflage and dispersal of equipment, deceiving the enemy with false targets, jamming enemy targeting systems, and enhancing the mobility of existing weapons. He also noted that other factors can minimize an enemy's high-tech advantage, including seasonal and weather factors and terrain.[127]

In summary, *shashoujian* is an important concept for the Chinese military because it impacts thinking on military strategy, weapons acquisition programs, and also the PLA's warfighting methods. The stratagem that the "inferior" can overcome or defeat "the superior" is a separate concept that is also an important element of Chinese strategic culture. However, the two concepts are linked because *shashoujian* (weapons and tactics) make valuable contributions to support the stratagem (as *shashoujian* can serve as both the ways and the means by which an inferior military can defeat a more powerful military). However, it is important to emphasize that, for China, the question is not *whether* the weak can overcome the strong, but *how*.

This seems the critical question being considered by contemporary Chinese military strategists and PLA analysts of foreign military capabilities. For the Chinese, *shashoujian* is *not* necessarily a "silver bullet" that automatically brings victory in warfare. The Chinese seem to believe that *shashoujian* will assure victory against a superior adversary only if used appropriately, in the context of the correct strategy, under the proper conditions, and at optimal moments. The Chinese also recognize that superior adversaries can also possess and employ *shashoujian* weapons and tactics that can force a weaker enemy to capitulate, as the U.S. armed forces have done on two separate occasions in wars against Iraq.

## CONCLUSIONS

China's history and traditions profoundly influence the thinking of China's leaders and senior military officers. Ancient Chinese history, as well as more recent experiences and observations, are guiding internal PLA debates about strategy, methods, and the development of new weapons and military equipment. In these debates, China's military scholars are also reexamining philosophical issues, such as Mao Zedong's emphasis upon the relative value of strategy and methods (man) versus new weapons, platforms, and systems (material). Practical matters, such as the applicability of traditional approaches versus the modern methods and others, are also being considered by scholars, particularly at the AMS and the PLA NDU.

For China, the initial years of the 21st century will serve as an interesting and appropriate period of reflection, examination, reexamination, and experimentation where old and new ideas compete—and sometimes mix—to drive the development of the PLA. Such is the case for *shashoujian* as it relates to PRC military strategy, methods (doctrine), and the PLA's transformation campaign. While China's leaders seek to rapidly improve both the PLA's warfighting methods and the quality of weapons and equipment through resource reallocations and the acquisition of *shashoujian* (weapons), PRC military strategy will likely remain asymmetric vis-à-vis the United States. China's long tradition of minimizing the relative superiority of adversaries while employing effective stratagems and

tactics will also endure. The PLA's transformation is underway, but it will take time. The influence of ancient Chinese military concepts and stratagems will likely remain strong within the PLA throughout this transformation. In the minds of China's military strategists and, increasingly, of the PRC leadership, the *shashoujian* concept is not only compatible, but also potentially catalytic for current and emerging military strategy and for the PRC's ambition to develop new capabilities to credibly deter, and if necessary defeat, military superpowers. At a minimum, *shashoujian* serves as a function to help Chinese military officials prioritize a select set of military programs for special funding and rapid development to guide China's military modernization program.

*Shashoujian* holds significance for Chinese military affairs, strategic culture, and military preparations. A spike in the usage of the term by PLA scholars in the mid-1990s indicates that *shashoujian* was an element or outgrowth of the PLA's post-DESERT STORM debates over military strategy. In 1995, references to *shashoujian* began appearing in China's most authoritative military journal, *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*. By 1997, numerous references to and indications of PLA discussions about *shashoujian* appeared in other significant PRC military journals and in PLA newspapers, particularly in *Jiefangjun Bao*. From 1996 to 1998, China's senior military officers, including PRC military region commanders and PLA service chiefs, wrote a series of PLA articles about *shashoujian*. In 1998, PRC Defense Minister Major General Chi Haotian said publicly that President Jiang Zemin had advanced a new line of thinking on military modernization and had specifically called out the need for *shashoujian*. During the same year, China's military RD&A system began to implement an unprecedented reform that included the restructuring of COSTIND and the establishment of the PLA's GAD. From 1999 to 2000, several of China's most prominent senior leaders and military officers undertook a campaign of speeches about military preparations that included slogans calling upon the PLA to develop *shashoujian* (weapons and tactics). By the summer and fall of 2000, several Chinese newspapers reported that Jiang Zemin had ordered the creation of the 998 State Security Project, a secret project to develop *shashoujian*. And, finally, in 2002 Jiang Zemin advocated a "transformation" with *shashoujian* weapons for the PLA.

During this remarkable period, the *shashoujian* concept appeared to be a response to changes in military strategy. It also influenced PRC leadership decisions about reform within the PLA, military transformation, plans for the development of new weapons, and tactics tailored for asymmetric warfare.

Despite the traceable chronology of events over a period of 5 years and the relevance of the *shashoujian* concept to the classic stratagem of "overcoming the superior with the inferior," there has been surprisingly limited study of *shashoujian* in the United States. With the exception of Pillsbury's groundbreaking discoveries, the PLA's unusual focus on *shashoujian* has gone largely unnoticed and uninvestigated by the American PLA-watching community. Perhaps a more comprehensive examination of open source materials from and on the Chinese military is necessary.

At present, due to resource limitations and prioritization, the U.S. Government directs FBIS translation of only selected articles from *Jiefangjun Bao*, with virtually no full-text translations of other PLA (military region or PLA service) newspapers, military journals, or books specific to Chinese military affairs.[128] Absent the specific direction and resources from various U.S. Government communities of interest—to shift the emphasis of FBIS translation work to perform these tasks—FBIS was quite understandably unable to recognize the significance of *shashoujian*—that *shashoujian* is more than a mere idiom or metaphor for those discussing it within China's national defense establishment.

For U.S. policymakers, analysts, and academics, routine and comprehensive coverage and translation of publicly available Chinese military literature is important for several reasons. First, an increasing amount of published information is becoming available from authoritative Chinese military sources, including the AMS, the PLA NDU, and other military research institutions. Importantly, these documents appear to be precisely where new ideas, theories, and concepts are initially raised within the PLA. Moreover, the reporting in Chinese military newspapers, such as the popular *Jiefangjun Bao*, tends to lag from 6 to 12 months behind the appearance of key issues in the PLA's more prominent military journals and full-length books.

Second, surprising as it may seem, few American PLA watchers can read Chinese well enough to perform primary source research or are trained with machine language translation and other tools. They remain largely dependent upon Chinese military literature in translation. Third, failure to keep up with developments in the Chinese national defense establishment by exploiting primary sources (especially PRC military journals and books) can prevent identification of key indicators of change—or warning of developments that are of interest to U.S. policymakers. In a worst case scenario, the failure to monitor Chinese military literature could be a contributing factor in a future miscalculation or intelligence failure.

While the United States and China both conduct military assessments of their own and each other's armed forces and military operations, they reach starkly contrasting conclusions.[129] In a cautionary 1996 report for the Department of Defense Office of Net Assessments, Pillsbury wrote of PRC judgments about U.S. military strengths, weaknesses, and capabilities, concluding that these judgments could lead to "dangerous misperceptions" with potentially catastrophic consequences.[130] An example of such a "dangerous misperception" is found in a PLA judgment made about the performance of the Yugoslav army during NATO's ALLIED FORCE operation in Bosnia, which stated that

> From the outstanding performance of the Yugoslav army in resisting NATO airstrikes, we can see that there are great prospects for overcoming a superior enemy with an inferior force in a high-tech war.[131]

While the deception and denial campaign of the Yugoslav army may have been effective against NATO air forces, it seems a leap for the PLA military scholar to conclude that the Yugoslav army was successful in overcoming NATO's superior forces.

The contrast between U.S. and PRC assessments and judgments is troubling because these views can lead either nation toward miscalculation and possibly military disaster. It is dangerous for China's leaders to believe that the PLA can prevent a conflict or prevail in a military campaign against a superpower such as the United States with "superior strategy," despite the generational

gaps between the United States and China in hardware and in the integration of science and technology with military equipment. The notion that China's leadership could decide to order a *shashoujian*-equipped PLA into what would almost certainly be a disastrous conflict with the United States is, indeed, very troubling.

These grim possibilities are the fundamental reasons why PLA watchers must consider dozens of new research questions concerning the implications of *shashoujian* for PLA organizational reform, warfighting capability and readiness, and PLA professionalization. In addition, researchers should carefully study the impact of the *shashoujian* concept on strategic issues, including Chinese negotiation strategy, PRC deterrence and military coercion theory, China's propensity to use force for conflict resolution, and escalation issues.

When considered in the context of current Chinese threat perceptions concerning the United States, PRC assessments of PRC and U.S. military capabilities and vulnerabilities, and the potential for miscalculation, the *shashoujian* concept and weapons development programs hold disturbing implications for American defense strategy and military operations in the Asia-Pacific region. *Shashoujian* is a concept that merits watching as it continues to be incorporated into the lexicon, weapons acquisition plans, and practices of the PLA.

Can China successfully develop and use *shashoujian* to enhance its position as an inferior military force? On the one hand, it can be argued that leaders within the PLA think so and will persevere to achieve these objectives. It is also evident that increasingly sophisticated research is being performed and published at the AMS. Similarly, the PLA officer corps is becoming more professional as a result of improvements in PRC and PLA education programs. Operational training of PLA officers and enlisted personnel is also more realistic and challenging than in the past. On the other hand, China's military is rising from a low base of professionalism and capability, and has few discernible areas of world-class excellence. China has also had a long history of military inferiority and has traditionally trailed the world's leading militaries in the development and integration of cutting-edge military hardware. The PRC defense industrial base, although reforming, remains a complex, corrupt, and inefficient network of organizations where personal relationships

continue to heavily influence important investment decisions and outcomes. Thus, the outlook for the PLA's successful development and employment of *shashoujian* is uncertain.

Dr. Larry Wortzel, a former U.S. Army attaché to China and long-time scholar of the Chinese military, examined a similar set of questions in a 1998 essay titled "Chinese Military Potential."[132] In his essay, he asked and answered the question, "Can the Chinese [PLA] get it all together? . . . The short answer is probably not." But Wortzel added an important caveat in the form of a case study: another possible scenario. He noted that in 1984 Zhang Ruimin took over China's leading producer of home appliances, the collectively owned and failing Haier Group, and by 1989 had turned the failing collective into one of China's most successful companies. Zhang incorporated world-class "best practices" in leadership, management, and production; established an effective quality control system; dealt out incentives and penalties to govern employee performance; and enhanced the company's systems engineering and integration capabilities. Wortzel concluded that if the PLA could similarly attract and properly assign individuals with these talents, then the PLA could achieve its military potential—as Wortzel claims the PLA has already done for its M-class missile programs, as well as its sea and air launched cruise missile programs.

Whether the PLA can develop and effectively use *shashoujian* is perhaps less important than whether China's senior leaders believe in the possibility, and whether the PLA would attempt to defeat the superior with the inferior, plus a few "assassin's maces."

Senior American policymakers should concern themselves with and watch out for the following elements or combinations of elements to counter *shashoujian* and the stratagem of the ability of an "inferior defeating the superior": 1) the possibility of China presenting a military operational concept that takes the United States by surprise, 2) weapons systems and infrastructure that can enable the PLA to implement the operational concept, and/or 3) a strategic or tactical context in which the successful use of this operational concept is decisive.

This chapter is an effort to address these important issues. However, these and many other questions about *shashoujian* and its impact on the PLA merit serious attention and dedicated study

by PLA watchers in academia and government. It is hoped that this research will complement a larger foundation of existing work—upon which to build a stronger, more robust base of knowledge.

## CHAPTER 10 - ENDNOTES

1. Dr. David Shambaugh has led other efforts to encourage greater collection and sharing of Chinese military literature by the academic community and the U.S. Government, in part by establishing the Chinese Documents Center, a library of Chinese military publications at The George Washington University's Gelman Library.

2. Conversation with Mr. Jeffrey Dyrek, FBIS Customer Service Office, August 21, 2003.

3. Some FBIS interpretations include: assassin's mace, decisive weapons, killer mace, killing mace, killing sword, killer weapons, leap ahead weapon, leap forward weapon, magic weapon, new type weapons, powerful weapons, silver bullets, sure-to-win striking power, trump card weapons, and vital acupuncture point weapons.

4. Chinese Global Language and Cultural Center Online: *http://edu.ocac.gov.tw/taiwan/kungfu/e/5123-3.htm*.

5. See Michael Pillsbury, *Dangerous Chinese Misperceptions: The Implications for DoD*, prepared for the Office of Net Assessment, Washington, DC, 1996; Michael Pillsbury, ed., *Chinese Views of Future Warfare*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1997; Mark Stokes, *China's Strategic Modernization: Implications for the United States*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1999; Alistair Iain Johnston, "Toward Contextualizing the Concept of a *Shashoujian* (Assassin's Mace)," unpublished manuscript, August 2002; Dennis Blasko, "PLA Ground Forces Lessons Learned: Experience and Theory," Laurie Burkitt, Andrew Scobell, and Larry M. Wortzel, eds., *The Lessons of History: The Chinese People's Liberation Army at 75*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2003, pp. 61-89.

6. Discussion with Michael Pillsbury in August 2003. Also see "Security Issues: Strategic Perceptions."

7. See "The History of Kung Fu" at *http://www.prodigymartialarts.com/wing_chun.htm*.

8. This paragraph draws from Chinese Global Language and Cultural Center Online.

9. Yang Zhibo, "An Attempt at Analysis of *Sashoujian*," *Kongjun Bao*, May 16, 2002 [*sashoujian* has a slightly different meaning than *shashoujian*: *sa* implies a "sudden thrust" of a hand mace].

10. Anonymous explanation posted at *http://army.tom.com*, September 29, 2000.

11. Posting by Kadey, *www.redfox88.com/w090htm* (originally carried on *Zhonghua Wang Luntan* [China Network Forum]), August 2, 2002.

12. Michael Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.: A View from Open Sources*, November 2, 2001, *http://www.uscc.gov/beseanchieports/200_2003/pdfs/strat.pdf*, p. 16. Also see Johnston, "Toward Contextualizing the Concept of a *Shashoujian*.

13. Johnston, "Toward Contextualizing the Concept of a *Shashoujian*, p. 1.

14. Dong Wenxian, "Diplomatic Success Comes From the Sky—Analyzing U.S. Troops' Military Deterrent During the Iraqi Arms Inspection Crisis," *Jiefangjun Bao*, April 14, 1998, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereafter FBIS).

15. A term coined by Dr. Dore Levy of Brown University, author of "Vignettism in Chinese Poetics," in a paper presented at the Association of Asian Studies, Washington, DC, April 4-7, 2002. Abstract available at *http://www.aasianst.org/absts/2002abst/China/sessions.htm#138*. I am grateful to Dr. Michael Pillsbury for highlighting the importance of "vignettism" as it pertains to Chinese military history and strategy.

16. Gao Guozhen and Ye Zheng, "Operational Doctrine Must Change Over Time," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, November 20, 1996 in FBIS.

17. Li Xuanqing, Fan Juwei, and Su Kuoshan, "Defense Science and Technology Forges Sharp Sword for National Defense—Second Roundup on Achievements of Army Building Over the Past 50 Years," *Jiefangjun Bao*, September 7, 1999, in FBIS.

18. An incomplete list of events examined by the PLA cadre at the PLA National Defense University and AMS includes, but is not limited to, the sale of U.S. defense articles to Taiwan (1991-present), Operation DESERT STORM (1991), Desert Hammer Exercise (1994), the Taiwan Strait Crisis (1995-96), and Operation ALLIED FORCE (1999).

19. Michael Pillsbury, *Chinese Views of Future Warfare.*

20. *Ibid*.

21. *Ibid*. Also see discussions with Dr. Michael Pillsbury in summer 2003.

22. Thomas Christensen, "Posing Problems Without Catching Up," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4, p. 10. For additional comments on the "counter-RMA" approach, also see Zhang Dejiu's excerpt of Major General Xu Yanbin's "Academic Report at the National Defense University," published under the title "In Depth Information Warfare Is Psychological Warfare," *Jiefangjun Bao*, August 13, 1996, in FBIS.

23. This movement was likely vindicated (from a Chinese perspective) as a result of the strong U.S. military response to PLA operational exercises during the 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis.

24. Zhang Dejiu.

25. Wu Chenguang, "Push Forward Military Transformation," *Nanfang Zhoumo*, June 12, 2003, in FBIS.

26. *Ibid*.

27. *Ibid*.

28. *Ibid*. Also see Wang Baocun, "Subduing Enemy Force Without Battle and Informationized War," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, May 4, 1999, pp. 60-63, in FBIS; Peng Guangqian, "Meeting the Challenge of the New Military Transformation," *Liaowang*, No. 23, June 9, 2003, pp. 52-54, in FBIS.

29. *Ibid*.

30. *Ibid*.

31. I am grateful to Dr. John Battilega for sharing his expertise on the impact of Marxist dialectical materialism and use of the scientific method on military affairs.

32. "Borrow a Corpse to Raise the Spirit": to "take an institution, a technology, or a method that has been forgotten or discarded and appropriate it for your own purpose. To revive something from the past by giving it a new purpose, or to reinterpret and bring to life old ideas, customs, and traditions" (from *http://www.chinastratagies.com*).

33. Johnston, "Toward Contextualizing the Concept of a *Shashoujian*," p. 1.

34. Unattributed article, "Take the Road of Building Crack Troops with Chinese Characteristics," *Ta Kung Pao*, September 3, 1997, in FBIS; Yi Jan, "The People's Liberation Army Will Conduct Massive Anti-Hegemony Military Drill; Breakthroughs Will Be Achieved in Deadly Equipment," *Ching Pao*, No. 263, June 1, 1999, in FBIS; Li Xuanqing, Fan Juwei, and Su Kuoshan, "Defense Science and Technology Forges Sharp Sword for National Defense—Second Roundup on Achievements of Army Building Over the Past 50 Years," *Jiefangjun Bao*, September 7, 1999, in FBIS; Xu Hezhen, "Focus on Psychological War Under the Background of Larger Military Strategy," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, October 20, 2000, p. 67-76, in FBIS; Zhang Yining and Sun Kejia, "Understanding Development by Leaps in the Build-Up of the Armed Forces," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, June 1, 2001, pp. 123-131, in FBIS; Wang Congbiao, "Studying Jiang Zemin's 'On Science and Technology'," *Jiefangjun Bao*, February 13, 2001, in FBIS.

35. China's 863 Program was a national-level program initiated in March 1986 to advance Chinese science and technology through indigenous research and development, foreign acquisition, and other hybrid approaches as a component of, and to achieve the objectives of, Deng Xiaoping's "Four Modernizations." Some U.S. scholars believe it to have been responsive to President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program that was presented on March 23, 1983. See Su Enze, "Observer: '863' and Military Modernization," *Jiefangjun Bao* (Internet Version), February 28 2001, p. 9.

36. You Ji, "The Evolution of China's Maritime Combat Doctrines and Models: 1949-2001," Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 2002, p. 25. Also see Dr. You's references to Zhang Youcai, "Several Issues Regarding Electronic Warfare in a Landing Operation" and "Research on Operational Command Under High-Technology Conditions," Beijing: PLA National Defense University, 1997, pp. 327-333.

37. As identified by Michael Pillsbury: Wang Pufeng, *Information Warfare and the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Beijing: Military Sciences Press, 1995.

38. Wu Jianguo, "The Nuclear Shadow in High-Technology Warfare Cannot Be Ignored," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, November 20, 1995, in FBIS. Also, as identified by Michael Pillsbury: Shen Zhongchang, Zhou Xinsheng and Zhang Haiying, "A Rudimentary Exploration of 21st Century Naval Warfare," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, No. 1, February 20, 1995, pp. 28-32, in FBIS.

39. Xu Zhzhi, "Jiang Zemin Deploys Highly Intelligent Defense System," *Guang Jing Yuekan*, March 1995.

40. Michael Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.*, p. 12. Also see General Pan Junfeng's essay, "Several Views on New Military Affairs," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, Summer 1996, p. 111, translated in part by Dr. Michael Pillsbury in

*China Debates the Future Security Environment*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2000, p. 70.

41. Interview with Dr. Michael Pillsbury, September 3, 2003.

42. Interview by Xu Bodong, Director of the Institute of Taiwan Studies, with Major General Huang Bin, Professor of the PRC National Defense University, published in *Ta Kung Pao*, May 13, 2002, in FBIS.

43. *Ibid*.

44. Michael Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.*, p. 13.

45. *Ibid*., p. 12.

46. Sun Maoquing, "Make Efforts to Build Modernized People's Air Force—Interview with Air Force Commander Lieutenant General Liu Shunyao," *Liaowang*, April 14, 1997 in FBIS.

47. Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.*, p. 14.

48. "Take the Road of Building Crack Troops with Chinese Characteristics," *Ta Kung Pao*, September 3, 1997, in FBIS.

49. Tseng Hai-tao, "Jiang Zemin Defines Cross-Century Military Strategy," *Chiao Ching*, August 16, 1998, in FBIS.

50. Fu Quanyou, "Deepen the Study of Characteristics and Laws of High-Technology Local War and Raise the Standard of Guidance for Winning High-Technology Local Wars of the Future," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, February 20, 1999, pp. 6-14, in FBIS.

51. Yi Jan, "*Zhongnanhai* Plans New Military Strategy," *Ching Pao*, No. 284, March 1, 2001, pp. 38-39. Also see Pei Fang, "Major Operation to be Performed on Military Logistical System," *Chiao Ching*, March 16, 1999, pp. 50-52.

52. Zhang Jingfu is a former Secretary of the Party Committee of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

53. Yi Jan, "The People's Liberation Army Will Conduct Massive Anti-Hegemony Military Drill; Breakthroughs Will Be Achieved in Deadly Equipment," *Ching Pao*, No. 263, June 1, 1999, in FBIS.

54. As identified by Dr. Michael Pillsbury: Wang Congbiao, "Studying Jiang Zemin's 'On Science and Technology'," *Jiefangjun Bao*, February 13, 2001, in FBIS.

55. Zheng Shuyan, "Fu Quanyou Emphasizes at NPC Panel That It Is Necessary to Make Solid Preparations for Military Struggles With Great Sense of Political Responsibility and Urgency," *Jiefangjun Bao*, March 8, 2000, in FBIS.

56. Cary Huang, "Jiang Zemin Reportedly Urges the Development of Strategic Weapons," Hong Kong iMail (internet version) August 5, 2000.

57. *Ibid*.

58. "Jiang Zemin Orders Effectual Preparations for Use of Force," *Ching Chi Jih Pao*, November 29, 2000.

59. Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.*, p. 5.

60. Wen Jen, "Revealing Secrets of Beijing's 998 State Security Project," *Tai Yang Pao*, June 13, 2000; and Cary Huang, Hong Kong iMail (Internet Version), August 5, 2000, p. A3. Also from Pillsbury, see Wang Congbiao, "Studying Jiang Zemin's 'On Science and Technology'," *Jiefangjun Bao*, February 13, 2001 in FBIS.

61. Wang Congbiao.

62. *Ibid*.

63. *Ibid*. According to the source, the components are as follows: "Set-up the research and manufacture of new weapons to deal with new strategic tactics, develop naval ship-launched missiles and cruise missiles, equip the troops ahead of schedule with electron laser and light beam weapons, stop discussing the issue of proliferation with the United States, revise some original policies on not being the first to use nuclear weapons, revise the improper policy on not forming alliances or blocs."

64. *Ibid*.

65. *Ibid*.

66. Wen Jen, "Beijing Starts December 2 Strategic Weaponry Project," *Tai Yang Pao*, December 11, 2000, in FBIS. The information in the paragraph is all taken from this source.

67. Wen Jen, "Jiang Orders Hi-Tech Aerospace Weapons Development," *Tai Yang Pao*, March 21, 2000, in FBIS.

68. *Ibid*.

69. *Ibid*.

70. Cheng Jian, "Take Information Warfare as a Starting Point of Military Preparations," *Jiefangjun Bao*, June 2, 1998.

71. Qiu Jichen, Cai Jicheng, and Gao Huai, "Vigorously Strengthen the Army's Quality Building in the New Period," *Jiefangjun Bao*, August 27, 1998, p. 6.

72. An Weiping, "Thoughts on Developing Armaments by Leaps and Bounds, *Jiefangjun Bao*, April 6, 1999, in FBIS.

73. Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.*, p. 14.

74. Tang Wu and Zhu Ruiqing, "Leading Cadre Should Set an Example in Practicing the Three Represents—Roundup of the Study and Implementation of Chairman Jiang's Important Thinking on the Three Represents by Party Committees at and Above the Army Level of the Armed Forces and the Armed Police," *Jiefangjun Bao*, June 3, 2000, in FBIS.

75. Fang Bin and Chen Zhenzhong, "Fourth Research Institute Provides Powerful Support for Fighting and Winning," *Huojianbao,* July 2, 2002, in FBIS.

76. *Ibid*.

77. *Ibid*.

78. Peng Guangqian, "Meeting the Challenge of the New Military Transformation," *Liaowang*, No. 23, June 9, 2003, in FBIS.

79. Yao Youzhi and Zhao Dexi, "The Generalization, Conservation, and Development of 'Strategy'," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, September 30, 2001, pp. 120-127, in FBIS.

80. Wang Baocun, "A Preliminary Analysis of Information Warfare," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, November 20, 1997, pp. 102-111. Also see Peng Guangqian, "Meeting the Challenge of the New Military Transformation," and Li Zhangrui and Liu Chunjun, "Firepower Cannot be Excluded from Information Warfare," *Jiefangjun Bao*, September 19, 2000, in FBIS.

81. *Collected Works of Mao Zedong*, Beijing, *Renmin Chubanbshe*, 1964, p. 456.

82. *Collected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Beijing, *Jiefang Chubanshe*, 2nd edition, Vol. 2, October 1994, p. 78.

83. Wang Congbiao, "Studying Jiang Zemin's 'On Science and Technology'," *Guangzhou Yangcheng Wanbao*, February 13, 2001, in FBIS.

84. Untitled article, *Renmin Ribao*, May 25, 2003. Also see *Agence France Presse*, Beijing, May 25, 2003.

85. Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "PLA Seeks a New Leap Forward," *China Brief*, Jamestown Foundation, June 2, 2003, p. 1.

86. Zian Ruyi, *Command Decision-making and Strategems*, Beijing: *Kunlun* Publishing House, 1999, in FBIS. Of course this focus on asymmetric efforts by a weaker, poorly armed military to wage war against a larger and better armed foe is not unique to China.

87. PLA scholarly literature since 1993 is replete with discussions and examples.

88. The following PLA experts have made extensive efforts to study Chinese military literature: Michael Pillsbury, Thomas Christensen, Mark Stokes, and Timothy Thomas (Foreign Military Studies Office, Ft. Leavenworth, KS).

89. See Mark A. Stokes, *China's Strategic Modernization: Implications for the United States*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, p. 27. Also see Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.*, p. 8.

90. Yu Guangning, "A Comparison of Chinese and Western Geostrategic Thinking," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, November 20, 1995, in FBIS.

91. Senior Colonel Huang Xing and Senior Colonel Zuo Quandian, "Holding the Initiative in Our Hands in Conducting Operations, Giving Full Play to Our Own Advantages to Defeat Our Enemy—A Study in the Core Idea of the Operational Doctrine of the People's Liberation Army," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, No. 4., November 20, 1996, pp. 49–56, in FBIS.

92. Yu Guohua, "On Turning a Strong Force Into Weak and Vice Versa in a Local High-Tech War," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, May 20, 1996, in FBIS.

93. *Ibid*.

94. Huang Lien-cheng, "The PLA Makes All-Out Preparations for War with Taiwan," *Ching Pao*, No. 274, May 1, 2000, in FBIS.

95. *Ibid*.

96. *Ibid*.

97. Huang and Zuo, "Holding the Initiative in Our Hands," pp. 49-56.

98. Jia Weidong, "Asymmetrical War and Smart War," *Jiefangjun Bao*, April 17, 1999, in FBIS.

99. Fan Chunglong, "Stand in the Forefront of the New Military Revolution in Deepening Troop Training Through Science and Technology," *Jiefangjun Bao*, April 4, 2000, in FBIS.

100. Pillsbury, *China's Military Strategy Toward the U.S.*, pp. 9-14.

101. *Ibid*., p. 9.

102. Huang and Zuo, "Holding the Initiative in Our Hands."

103. Unsigned editorial, *Jiefangjun Bao*, June 22, 1999, p. 6.

104. Huang and Zuo, "Holding the Initiative in Our Hands."

105. Niu Li, Li Jiangzhou, and Xu Duhui, "On Information Warfare Strategems," *Zhongguo Junshi Kexue*, August 20, 2000, pp. 115-122, in FBIS.

106. Dong Guishan, "Pursuing Development in Strides in Military Equipment Construction Calls for New Trains of Thought—Several Points of Consideration Regarding Our Army's Equipment Development and Support Guarantees," *Jiefangjun Bao*, May 30, 2000, in FBIS.

107. See Zhou Yi, "Aircraft Carriers Face Five Major Assassins," *Junshi Wenzhai*, March 1, 2002, pp. 4-6, in FBIS.

108. Liu Jiangping, "Let's Begin with the Crash of the MV-22 Osprey and the Penetration in the USS Kittyhawk Defense Zone," *Jiefangjun Bao*, February 14, 2001, in FBIS. Also see Zhou Jianguo and Xiao Wen, "A Breath-taking Scene from the Sea of Japan: Russian Fighter Jets Conduct 'Sneak Attack' on U.S. Aircraft Carrier," *Jiefangjun Bao* (Internet Version), November 20, 2000, in FBIS.

109. *Ibid*.

110. Pillsbury, ed., *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2000, pp. 83-85.

111. Among numerous other articles, see Major General Guo Xilin, "The Aircraft Carrier Formation Is Not an Unbreakable Barrier," *Guangming Ribao* (Internet Version), December 26, 2000; Zhou Yi, "Aircraft Carriers Face Five Major Assassins," *Junshi Wenzhai*, March 1, 2002, pp. 4-6; Feng Changsong, Xu Jiafeng, and Wang Guosheng, "Six Aircraft Carrier Busters," *Zhongguo Guofang Bao*, March 5, 2002, p. 4; Dong Hua, "Aircraft Carrier's Natural Enemy Anti-ship Missiles,"

*Junshi Wenzhai*, July 1, 2002, pp. 50-52; Xiao Yaojin and Chang Jiang, "China's Existing Tactical Missiles Can Fully Meet the Need of a Local War Under High-Tech Conditions," *Guangzhou Guangzhou Ribao* (Internet Version), October 21, 2002.

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# CHAPTER 11

# THE FUTURE OF PLA MODERNIZATION: BUMPS AND BOOSTERS

**Ellis Joffe**

After more than 2 decades of continuous but uneven efforts, the Chinese leaders have transformed their armed forces from the huge backward contingents of Maoist days into a modernizing army. They have reformed all major areas of China's conventional military establishment and upgraded their nuclear capability.

Their achievements have been impressive. Most outstanding has been the achievement of a capacity to deter or defeat a large-scale conventional or nuclear attack on China. However, this objective was achieved more than a decade ago, after the Chinese had substantially improved their existing weapons and acquired a second-strike nuclear capability. And its achievement was due as much to China's natural assets as to its military development.

Since then, the Chinese have doubtless greatly strengthened this capacity. However, they are still a long way from achieving their most fundamental objectives outside China: to confidently deter, or defeat, American intervention in a war with Taiwan; to effectively challenge U.S. military presence in the Pacific; and, over the long haul, to acquire a military posture that will underpin recognition of China as a great power.

The desire to attain these objectives--strengthened by the political clout of the military and by China's projected economic progress--ensures that People's Liberation Army (PLA) modernization will continue in the coming decades. However, while this combination sets the direction for the Chinese armed forces, it alone does not determine the pace, scope, and content of military modernization. These will be shaped by concrete circumstances that will influence the modernization process as bumps or boosters.

## External Realities.

While long-term aspirations may drive China's military modernization, its mode in a particular period has been determined

by a realistic assessment of China's external situation. During the Maoist period such an assessment was infused with a heavy dose of ideology, which for 2 decades had blocked the advance of China's conventional forces due to Maoist reliance on a "people's war" and a "people's army" for defending China, and on foreign revolutionaries to promote China's external objectives. Shortly after the end of the Maoist period, this approach was abandoned in favor of a focus on military modernization.

However, despite the appalling backwardness of Chinese conventional forces, their modernization in subsequent years has been uneven in intensity and scope. While leadership statements uniformly stressed the need for modernizing, on the ground there were more compelling considerations.

The first was the leadership's perception of external threats, which determined the degree of urgency with which it viewed the need to acquire military wherewithal. And throughout the period of post-Mao modernization, only in a few instances did a heightened sense of urgency accelerate the PLA's military modernization: the 1995-96 crisis with Taiwan; the 1999 NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia; and Taiwan President Lee Tenghui's 1999 provocative declaration that Taiwan should be treated as a separate state.

Even in these instances, the Chinese leadership did not perceive a direct military threat to China from the United States, as it had, for example, for a few years after the border clashes with the Soviet Union in 1969. The improvement of relations with the United States after 9/11/2001 has apparently reduced Chinese concerns that the Bush Administration would lend support to provocative acts on the part of the Taiwan government. Together with a growing feeling among Chinese leaders (despite deep suspicion of Chen Shuibian) that time is on their side on the Taiwan issue, the Chinese seem to be much more relaxed regarding the danger of a war in the Strait. How long this situation will last, and how it will affect military modernization, remains to be seen, but for the time being it appears to have removed a sense of military urgency from the Taiwan situation.

However, such urgency could return quickly and drastically. This could happen if, in the campaign leading up to the elections of 2004, Taiwan President Chen Shuibian continues to provoke the Chinese

with statements that Taiwan is moving toward independence. If he goes too far from China's standpoint, major military action by the Chinese to interdict this unacceptable trend should not be ruled out.

**Economic Uncertainties.**

In the absence of a direct military threat to China, the modernization of the PLA, for more than 10 years after Mao, proceeded slowly and selectively. Despite the sorry state of its weapons and equipment after 2 decades of neglect, and despite proclamations about the need to change this situation, the leadership focused primarily on improving the nontechnological areas of the military establishment. The bulk of the PLA's arsenal—especially tanks and planes--were upgraded, not replaced, while new weapons were purchased from abroad sparsely and in very small quantities.

There were several reasons for this policy, but the main one was economic. The Deng leadership decided that economic and technological progress would precede major military advances that required financial outlays. The result for the PLA was low military budgets that not only severely hampered the conversion of its armaments, but also created hardships in the daily life of its troops. The military leadership complained about the shortage of funds but accepted this policy--because it did not dispute Deng's decisions, because it was committed to Party control, but also because the generals accepted the rationale behind the policy. The expectation, however, was that once the economy advanced, the military would receive more money.

The change came in 1989, after which the military budget grew steadily. The catalyst was the Tiananmen crackdown and the desire of Deng's successor, Jiang Zemin, to curry favor with the generals. But the underlying factor that facilitated these increases throughout the 1990s and beyond has been China's rapid economic growth. And the anticipation of continued military modernization is based on the assumption that the Chinese economy will continue to grow.

If it does, economic growth will be a strong booster to military modernization. But what if it does not? After all China's economic progress, especially at the rapid pace needed to cope with social

problems, is not guaranteed, and economists do not rule out a slowdown in varying degrees of severity. In assessing the future course of PLA modernization, this possibility should also be taken into account.

For the military, an even more important factor than the state of the economy is their share of the national budget. From the start of post-Mao modernization, the mantra repeated by political and military leaders alike has been that economic development must come before military advances because the economy is the foundation on which national defense is built. However, this vague formulation still leaves open the question of how much the generals will get in a given year.

This will be determined by the condition of the economy and the external situation. But no less important are the state of civil-military relations and the position of the paramount leader.

**Civil-Military Friction.**

Until after the 16th Party Congress of 2002, it generally had been expected by analysts that Party-Army relations would be based on several premises. First, that the paramount Party leader would continue to be head of the military hierarchy, as had been the case since the founding of the People's Republic. Second, that Jiang's successor, Hu Jintao, would also continue to be an exceptionally PLA-friendly paramount leader, because, like Jiang, he completely lacked the personal authority that had enabled Mao and Deng to dominate the military. And, third, that, like Jiang, Hu would work out an arrangement with the military that would give them substantial allocations and broad autonomy in return for their support.

This expectation was undermined by Jiang. By clinging to the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission (CMC) even when he had to give up his post as supreme Party leader, Jiang caused the separation of political and military leaderships at the very top. The result has been an untenable situation. It deprived Hu, as paramount leader, of supreme formal command of the armed forces and subordinated him to Jiang in the CMC. It deprived the generals of unique access to the Standing Committee of the Politburo that they had when the chairman of the CMC was also chairman

of the Standing Committee. And it abolished the unified control of the Party and the military by the paramount leader that had been essential to the smooth cooperation between the political and military leaderships.

The implications for the PLA of this unprecedented setup have been significant. It has generated or exacerbated tensions between Hu and Jiang, and between the Party and the Army. It has made it harder for the generals to present their case to the Party's highest decisionmaking body. It has probably generated bad blood between Hu and the generals who supported Jiang enthusiastically, which will presumably leave a legacy even after Jiang retires and Hu becomes chairman of the CMC. It has most likely caused splits in the military between military leaders who have reservations about Jiang's chairmanship and those who have supported him fervently, each group for its own reasons. And it may have even weakened Jiang's position, as reflected in the fawning campaign to study and implement the "three represents" in the PLA, despite their irrelevance to military affairs.

It is not clear how these frictions might influence the future development of the PLA, but it is clear that they are harmful to a harmonious relationship between the political and military leaderships that is essential for a smooth and sustained modernization drive. Such frictions will become particularly harmful if personal rivalries become entangled with policy issues.

**Policy Issues.**

Policy differences over two issues surfaced again in 2003. The first, pertaining to economic versus military development, is not new, but it undoubtedly drew fresh force from the tensions between Hu and Jiang and between the Party and the Army. The second, pertaining to the relation between conventional and information-based warfare in PLA modernization, has presumably been reinvigorated by the Iraq War and is limited to the military establishment, but might also have ominous political overtones.

From its first days, the Hu administration has played up its sensitivity to social issues and to the need for more efforts to alleviate social grievances. The decision to reduce the increase

in military spending, taken by the new Party leadership despite the presumed dissatisfaction of Jiang and the military chiefs, was probably designed to demonstrate this sensitivity.

Furthermore, in his only publicly-reported statement on military policy, Hu placed military modernization in a subordinate position to the nation's central task of economic development and the building of a prosperous society. On the other hand, statements attributed to Jiang have placed military modernization on a par with social and economic tasks.

Regarding PLA modernization, since the Iraq War, Jiang and the military press have kept up a steady drumbeat of exhortations on the need of the PLA to make a transition to information-based warfare. Invoking the example of the stunning American victory in Iraq, articles have emphasized that this transition cannot wait for the completion of mechanization, but must be carried out simultaneously. Other articles, moreover, have given precedence to information-based warfare over mechanization, and have also condemned officers who refuse to change their mindsets in line with changing times. These are clearly the surface ripples of a major debate on the future of the PLA.

The awareness that information technology is crucial in modern warfare in not new in the PLA. In the late 1990s it had already been discussed by Chinese military commentators, and in 2000 Jiang himself supposedly emphasized its importance as a force multiplier. Following the Iraq war, information technology has shot to new prominence in PLA commentaries, which portray Jiang as its originator and staunchest advocate.

However, since Jiang is not a military thinker or innovator, it is obvious that he has formed an alliance with generals who favor a rapid transition to an information-driven PLA. The Iraq War has clearly given them fresh ammunition to demand new technologies. For Jiang, this alliance has probably provided an opportunity to shore up his personal position and to leave a much-coveted mark on the military.

This does not portend a new PLA surge to information-based warfare. Most of the articles that call for a transition explain in detail why information technology is decisive in war and how the United States exploited it in Iraq, but, beyond general pep talks on the need

to adopt it, they are vague on what the PLA should do. The few commentaries that are more concrete emphasize that the PLA must continue mechanizing, while the transition to information-driven warfare, given China's resources, has to be gradual and limited.

Furthermore, the new stress on information-based warfare has generated resistance that is apparently coming from the ground forces. This possibly derives from a combination of reasons. One, ground force generals may believe in continued reliance on firepower over information power. Second, they probably have a vested interest in opposing the transition, which involves troop cutbacks, control centralization, and abolition of command levels. Finally, it is exceptionally difficult to change any army, and the Chinese army is particularly resistant to change due to entrenched traditions, cultural patterns, and personal ties.

In sum, the Chinese army is changing, but, it is not moving into the information age by "leaps and bounds." Differences among its leaders as to how it should change are not going to speed up the process.

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