

The OSS in Support of the Chinese Communists

by Captain William C. Spracher, USA

PREFACE

No nation in the world has caught the fancy of historians and speculative journalists alike more than China, that intriguing, enigmatic land bearing a quarter of the earth's population. Relations between the U.S. and China have ranged from close to nearly non-existent, but never have they been clearly predictable. Studies of the foreign policies of these two contrasting nations reflect this diversity of culture and world view. With the passing of the Mao era and the dramatic turn of events stemming from our recognition of the People's Republic, even more attention will be focused on this fascinating country in the future. Another subject which has received a great deal of scrutiny on the American domestic scene is the role of our intelligence and military organizations in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. There have been clamors of foul play from many quarters of our society. Charges of overstepping bounds regarding policy-making have been leveled against the CIA vis-a-vis Angola and Chile, the FBI and Army intelligence in operations against domestic dissidents, and certain high-ranking military officers pertaining to proposed Korea pullout plans, among others. Less known are the many events in our more distant history in which intelligence organs dabbled in foreign policy-making, either with or without the encouragement of political leaders. The following essay investigates one such case in China, the tremendous implications of which can only be appreciated in hindsight considering the momentous events of recent months.

A most bitter disappointment for United States foreign affairs during World War II was the awkward situation in China between the Nationalists and the Communists, both of which separately declared their willingness to cooperate in defeating the Japanese. U.S. officials spent many months fruitlessly trying to smooth over quarrels between the two in an effort to form a united front. The basic problem was convincing the only Chinese leader formally recognized by the U.S. government, Chiang Kai-shek, that the Japanese and not the Communists were his true enemies. Futile attempts were made in the fall of 1944 to set up negotiations between the Nationalists at Chungking and the Communists at Yen-an in northern Shensi Province. Major General Patrick Hurley, President Roosevelt's personal envoy, traveled to Yen-an to meet with Mao Tse-tung and on 10 November personally drafted and witnessed Mao's so-called "Five-Point Proposal," the major point of which was the establishment of a coalition government in which the Communists would be allowed to participate.¹ This plan was presented to the Nationalists

and answered on 22 November with a counter-proposal, the so-called "Three-Point Plan," which omitted any mention of coalition government. Upon its receipt, Chou En-lai's reaction was that, although the Communists could not give up the principle of coalition government, the Nationalist proposals were acceptable for the present. Although he gave it reluctantly, Chou was soon to reverse his position on 8 December,² not only refusing the Three-Point Plan but adding even more conditions than were originally in the Five-Point Proposal.

Something undoubtedly occurred during that 16-day period to cause the reversal. At least one account suggests the catalyst was a plan of direct U.S. support put forth to the Communists by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) without the knowledge of either Hurley, who had been appointed Ambassador to Chungking in the interim, or Lieutenant General Albert Wedemeyer, who had replaced General Joseph Stilwell as Theater Commander in China. Stilwell had been Commander of the entire China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater and Chief of Staff to Chiang. Due to friction between the two, one of Hurley's tasks had been to act as intermediary. He also was to attempt to secure for Stilwell command of all Chinese troops and to convince Chiang of the need for a military alliance with the Communists. It has been suggested that the OSS plan provided the Communists with the incentive to frustrate any attempt at coalition by offering both official recognition and weapons and with the belief that the U.S. was inclined to deal with them directly.³ Upon reading such accounts, I immediately become skeptical, partly because my intelligence experience has convinced me that U.S. intelligence elements, contrary to popular belief, rarely get involved with behind-the-back foreign policy formulation, and also because I know that the OSS in World War II had an admirable record for working in close concert with its Army bosses.

Before surveying the facts in an effort to determine the extent of OSS complicity in this early "Two-China policy," it is first necessary to understand the Yen-an environment and the major actors involved. The establishment of the Military Observers Mission, nicknamed "Dixie," and the opening of a consulate in Yen-an were first suggested by John P. Davies, Jr., in a June 1943 report to Stilwell which argued the military importance of the area and its relation to future Soviet entry in the war.⁴ Davies was a Foreign Service Officer and at the time political advisor to Stilwell. Another key FSO was John S. Service, later to become senior State Department representative at Yen-an. Service's duties prior to that assignment included performing liaison between Stilwell's headquarters and the American Embassy, advising the OSS and

other agencies in the theater, helping G-2 to appraise Chinese intelligence, furnishing Stilwell background information on Chinese political conditions and personalities, serving as the general's public relations man, and maintaining contact with the Communist delegation at Chungking.⁵

On the intelligence side, Major General William Donovan, soon to be OSS Director, proposed in November 1941 that an American un-



Mao and Ambassador Hurley in August 1945 while in Chungking for talks with Chiang.

dercover mission be sent to North China to work with the Communist partisans. Roosevelt felt the plan had some merit and asked his Cabinet for comment. The War Department noted critically that Communist guerrillas were "too short of arms, ammunition, and equipment to carry on as they once did."⁶ For the time being the plan was shelved. Stilwell's FSO's were persistent, however, and by the spring of 1944 Roosevelt broached the subject to Chiang, who not surprisingly rejected it outright. In June Vice President Wallace made a trip to China and Chiang acquiesced to the idea, probably because he wanted to insure continued U.S. support and because he felt he could strengthen his political hand against Stilwell, with whom he was continually at loggerheads, by demonstrating a strong spirit of cooperation with the Americans.⁷ Therefore, the Dixie Mission was formally established at Yen-an on 24 July 1944 and headed by Colonel David Barrett, formerly military attache to Chungking.⁸ Service accompanied Barrett as political officer of the Mission.

One account describes Dixie as initially consisting of 9 members representing the Air Corps, Medical Corps, Signal Corps, and Infantry. This was followed within a month by a second contingent, enlarging the group to 18.⁹ The Mission's tasks were to assess "the most effective means of assisting the Communists to increase the value of their war effort" and to evaluate the Communist potential for military collaboration against the Japanese. This meant American aid and an American relationship, which was exactly why Chiang had balked so vigorously before allowing

the Americans to make direct contact with the Communists.¹⁰ Two separate sources formerly with OSS confirm Dixie's make-up as composed of 15 military personnel in addition to Barrett, Service, and one other FSO. Five of the military were from OSS China, known as Detachment 202.¹¹ These personnel were responsible for the additional task of reporting on the military capabilities of the Japanese in North China.¹² This little coterie of military, diplomatic, and intelligence officers working together was unique, as was the higher headquarters in Chungking, in that FSO's were assigned directly to the U.S. military commander. Although there was an Ambassador to China, at that time Clarence Gauss, unlike most military commanders Stilwell had both a military and political role, not to mention both an American and Chinese hat. It was therefore deemed necessary to have his own liaison and advisory staff of FSO's reporting directly to him rather than to the Ambassador.¹³ This point should be kept in mind as I later discuss the commander's degree of awareness of what was going on. Moreover, OSS was an integral part of the U.S. Army, unlike today's CIA which enjoys supra-departmental status.

The Yen-an environment thus reflects a tripartite grouping with somewhat different missions but all reporting through the same chain-of-command. The implication is obvious. As overall commander, General Wedemeyer should have been appraised of what his subordinate elements were doing, and Ambassador Hurley, as head of the U.S. country team, should have been aware of those military activities with political ramifications. The central issues then are did they know of the OSS plan and, if not, why not? To provide adequate answers requires looking at the timing and details of the plan itself, which unfortunately paralleled high-level personnel shifts in the China Theater. Hurley became Ambassador replacing Gauss on 30 November 1944. The second half of the year was devoted to development of more streamlined operations and reorganization in the elements of Southeast Asia Command, CBI's higher headquarters in Ceylon. Among the features, the intelligence services were coordinated, and reorganization was facilitated by Stilwell's recall.¹⁴ Chiang convinced Roosevelt to remove him on 18 October, and Wedemeyer assumed command of U.S. forces on 31 October. By then the CBI Theater had been split, leaving Wedemeyer responsibility only for China. Of course, neither of the "newcomers" was actually "new" to ongoing activities in the region, Hurley having been special envoy and Wedemeyer Chief of Staff to Admiral Mountbatten at Southeast Asia Command Headquarters. Before assuming his new job, Wedemeyer was "already known to take a friendly and close interest in OSS activities,"¹⁵ having participated in the founding of OSS while a member of the Army Staff. As a result, notwithstanding the fact he was new to the job, any involvements of that organization in Chinese affairs should not have taken him by surprise.

The OSS plan consisted of preparing to train and outfit up to 25,000 Communist guerrillas and furnishing the People's Militia with an additional 100,000 pistols in order to carry out operations behind Japanese lines.¹⁶ It also provided for use of U.S. personnel to assist the Communist forces, or as Lieutenant Colonel Willis Bird of OSS China, who presented the plan to the Communists, described it in his report to OSS Headquarters in Washington: "To place our Special Operations men with their units for purposes of destroying Jap communications, air fields, and blockhouses, and to generally raise hell and run."¹⁷ Wedemeyer's later reports suggest he did not know of this OSS project until 24 January 1945, when he was provided a portion of Bird's report to Washington, and Hurley's papers do not refer to it at all.¹⁸ The text of the report made available to Wedemeyer, including specific details of the OSS plan, is found at the Appendix.¹⁹ This official write-off does not in itself convince me, although I can find no fool-proof evidence to the contrary. Consequently, I shall analyze the reasons why I believe the plan was known to Wedemeyer based on an examination of related approved plans with which it seems to fit, statements by key personnel showing that the plan was not really an innovative or shocking idea, and finally a look at the chronological sequence of events to determine if the plan was in fact at the root of the negotiations failure.

History has taught me that omission does not necessarily equate to lack of knowledge. The Watergate denials are a good example. Perhaps Hurley felt the situation of being plagued by too many low-level policy-makers was getting out of hand and that the FSO's who so strongly voiced admiration for the Communists were trying to preempt his authority. Naturally, even if he knew of the plans to covertly aid the Communists, he would not have wanted to advertise this because it would have made him look weak and undermined his relationship with Chiang. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that at this time Hurley was totally unaware of these specific dealings, since "the Communists sought not only to bypass the Nationalists, but also Ambassador Hurley himself and deal directly with the President. They were encouraged in this naive belief by the FSO's stationed in Yen-an, who insisted that Hurley did not genuinely represent American policy."²⁰ There is much evidence that Hurley displayed intransigence on the question of dealing directly with the Communists. By late 1944 the debate had arisen among U.S. officials whether the Communists were already predictably the victors if the inevitable civil war and, if so, whether the U.S. government, while continuing recognition of Chiang, should begin to deal directly with the Communists as the de facto authority in the areas controlled by them and as the probable future rulers of China.

Although Hurley opposed any such direct relations with the Communists, most of the "old China hands" favored a more flexible policy. But Hurley overrode all dissent and forbade reporting to Washington anything critical of the Nationalists.²¹ It is not illogical to surmise that by pretend-

ing the problem did not exist, by refusing to listen to arguments and by ignoring mention of them in his writings, it might go away. Moreover, the FSO's were in close contact with OSS representatives on the Dixie Mission. Although the plan was formally presented by Bird, an OSS official from Chungking (Deputy Chief, OSS China) and not from Yen-an, it likely stemmed from observations of OSS personnel on the Dixie team, since they were in closest contact with the potential recipients of the aid and in a position to evaluate how needy Mao's troops really were. Considering the nature of the small U.S. contingent making up Dixie, it is hard to believe the FSO's were not cognizant of the plan. Indeed, they probably helped formulate it, since Service in particular had been clamoring for direct aid to the Communists for several months. It is also difficult to accept that at some point the OSS personnel would not inform the theater commander of their plan, or that the FSO's if they in fact were aware, would not mention it to Hurley. From July 1944 when he went out on the mission until he took leave in October to go to Washington at Stilwell's request after the latter's removal,²² Service was operating a veritable paper factory from Yen-an, reporting to Hurley everything he was sympathetic to the Communists. Of course, if the OSS plan was not finalized until after Service's departure, it is possible his assistant did not pick up on it and hence did not report it. Among Service's duties was conducting liaison with OSS, but perhaps this function was neglected during his absence.

Turning to Wedemeyer, he too soon became vexed by all the friendly suggestions for aiding the Communists. Although the FSO's were reporting to Hurley through their State Department channel, they also advised the theater commander on those politico-military matters with which they became involved since, as was mentioned earlier, that was the prescribed chain-of-command. Wedemeyer found the information they provided "helpful and constructive" in some regards, but unbalanced in others. "After getting caught in one mix-up with Hurley over arms support, he seems to have become leery of listening to any political comment."²³ If the mix-up referred to is the OSS plan, this infers strongly he was getting suggestions all along, either from the FSO's or OSS or both, and feasibly could have had foreknowledge of the OSS plan. According to Ray Cline, who was with OSS at the time and later became head of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, OSS managed to keep the confidence of Wedemeyer, who was determined to maintain an objective intelligence view of the situation on the ground, regardless of overall policy constraints that might be imposed from Washington.²⁴ Cline had been receiving reports from China in his position as Chief of Current Intelligence, Research and Analysis Branch, OSS. Whatever the case, one thing does seem clear. Wedemeyer was more level-headed and open-minded than Hurley, and if either of them was aware of or approved the OSS plan, it was Wedemeyer.

Colonel Barrett was another critical link. Although an Army man, as head of Dixie he had operational control over both FSO's and OSS personnel at Yen-an. Logically, they would have kept him apprised of what was happening there. Having formerly been attache at Chungking and a close personal friend of Stilwell, he should have been in continual contact with his superiors at that location also, at least keeping them abreast of key issues. Barrett got involved in some other related schemes worthy of note. In fact, there was not just one plan to provide military aid to Mao's forces, but at least two more. One of these, suggested by Barrett and approved by Wedemeyer, was rejected by Chiang on 2 December 1944. It involved organizing three Communist infantry regiments of about 5,000 men in Yen-an, armed and equipped by the U.S. Services of Supply, which would move into Nationalist territory and there be commanded by a U.S. officer with ten liaison officers.²⁵

Another was the so-called "McClure Plan." Major General Robert McClure had been Wedemeyer's Chief of Staff only since 28 November.²⁶ He had supervised formulation of a plan which involved dispatching U.S. airborne units of 4,000-5,000 well-trained technicians to operate in Communist-held territories on missions of demolition and sabotage of Japanese installations. This plan was to be offered to the Communists for reaction only and not as a formal presentation of the U.S. government.²⁷ Prior to its delivery, its concepts were approved by Wedemeyer in concert with Donovan, who was on a trip to China.²⁸ In other words, the head of OSS knew of the McClure Plan in advance. Is it not reasonable that he would have mentioned the OSS plan at that time so that the two could be properly coordinated? In fact, was Donovan actually aware of the separate OSS plan? Based on his decision to visit at the crucial time that plans for aiding the Communists were being orchestrated and also based on his well-known incessant interest in the most minute details of all unconventional and covert activities, I submit that he was.

To add weight to the argument that Wedemeyer also knew of the OSS plan, both the Army and OSS decided to introduce their plans directly to the Communists, rather than follow past practice and first discuss them with the Kuomintang government. Davies at one point sounded a note of caution and warned Wedemeyer, "They'll crucify you the way they crucified Stilwell." The general allegedly replied, "I don't care."²⁹ Barrett was tabbed to present the McClure Plan, along with a message from Hurley, on 15 December. Not only was this plan revealed to the Communists by Barrett on the same day as the OSS plan by Bird, the two officers flew to Yen-an together with their respective proposals in hand!³⁰ The Communist leaders were suspicious of both but gave their tentative approval. I find it incredible that two Army Colonels traveling side-by-side would not discuss their activities with one another and report any conflict between the plans to their superiors, ultimately the same individual — Wedemeyer — even though on that day the general was on an inspection tour and personally unavailable during Barrett's trip to Yen-an.

Earlier when it was announced that Donovan would visit China, McClure and Wedemeyer began

to shape more comprehensive plans for presentation to Donovan.³¹ This again indicates probable coordination of any Army and OSS plans and foreknowledge of them by Wedemeyer. Nevertheless, he maintained he did not know of Bird's proposal to the Communists until 24 January 1945. When he did receive a portion of Bird's report, it started out by saying, "All agreements on Dixie Mission tentative and based on our government's approval of project." However, it goes on to say that "Theater Command already agreed on principle of support to fullest extent of Communists and feel it is an OSS type project."³² This strongly suggests prior coordination of all support plans, including that of OSS, at a level at least as high as Wedemeyer's staff, probably McClure. Whether McClure mentioned only the broad concepts to Wedemeyer or informed him of all the details is difficult to determine. It may be that the Bird report describes only "the last stage in a long and complicated series of negotiations, brought to fruition on or about 15 December, and never reported to Wedemeyer."³³

The point is that Wedemeyer should have been completely apprised of a project as sensitive as providing arms to the Communists, which after consultation with them and presentation to Chiang was bound to cause controversy at higher official levels. Possibly responsibility for the plans was split between Army and OSS so that, even though the two would complement each other, failure would allow dispersal of the blame among different elements or even plausible denial altogether. Of course, this is a tactic that has been developed into an art by U.S. officials. From an operational point of view, coordination makes sense, since the Army plan basically offered regular troops and the OSS plan arms and special operations personnel. The two would have had to be closely interwoven to insure their success against the Japanese and to guarantee that a unified argument could be proposed to the Generalissimo for his approval prior to execution of the measures. In the end, none of the plans in their pure form came to fruition. Based on his adamant position that "any aid to the Communist Party from the U.S. must go to that Party through the National Government of China," as voiced in a 31 January 1945 report to the Secretary of State, Hurley took steps that month to defeat the McClure Plan.³⁴



Mao & Chiang Ch'ing outside their cave home in Yen-an Province (March 1947)

Hurley had learned of the plan from the Sino-American Cooperative Organization (SACO) while visiting Chiang's residence on 12 January. SACO was an intelligence arrangement in support of the KMT government formed from elements under Commodore Milton Miles, Chief of Naval Intelligence in China, plus the Chinese secret police under Tai Li, Chiang's ruthless henchman.³⁵ It competed at cross-purposes with OSS China, even though for political reasons there was token OSS representation in SACO. Tai Li's agents had

somehow gotten wind of the discussions, and this gave them a grand opportunity to undermine OSS. Miles had for some time carefully cultivated the friendship of Hurley,³⁶ and it was not difficult to convince Hurley that both the OSS and Wedemeyer's staff were operating against his policies and behind his back. When Wedemeyer returned from his trip, he was called to task by Hurley and forced to apologize to Washington. General Marshall ordered Wedemeyer to investigate and report at once. On 27 January Wedemeyer informed the Chief of Staff that he had warned all officers of his command not to negotiate without Chiang's approval. He said he did not know Bird accompanied Barrett to Yen-an and implied he had not known of Bird's discussions. After apologizing to Marshall and Hurley, Wedemeyer issued an order for no officers to get involved in Chinese politics.³⁷ Naturally, an apology disclaiming knowledge was easier to swallow than an admission of deliberate plotting behind Hurley's back, which would have been tantamount to insubordination to U.S. policy.

As mentioned earlier, the proposal to provide military support to the Communists was not a novelty suddenly brought to light by the specific plans discussed above. The idea had been brewing for at least a year, and was supported by much documentation. For example, Davies wrote:

The likelihood of civil war following the defeat of Japan, the dynamic Communist expansion, the uncertainty of a Nationalist victory in a civil war, the incalculable costs of American intervention, and the probability that a civil war would reverse the Communist trend toward nationalism to one of dependence on the Soviet Union . . . were presented by American officials in China to the State Department and the White House beginning in 1943. In August 1944, Mao indicated to an American official a desire to establish a Communist working relationship with the U.S. during and after the war. Washington did not react.³⁸

In one of his many letters dispatched from Yen-an, Service commented on 29 August:

The U.S. Army has made a start in cooperation with the military forces of the Chinese Communists The obvious success which this halfway cooperation has had should lead logically to the consideration of more active measures. Such active cooperation would begin with our furnishing basic military supplies now desperately lacked by the Communists. . . . If the Kuomintang is actually what it claims to be — democratic and sincerely anxious to defeat the Japanese as quickly as possible — it should not oppose our insistence on giving at least proportional aid to the Communists. It is not too much to say that the strength of Kuo-

mintang opposition will be a measure of the desirability of support to the Communists.³⁹

In mid-September Ambassador Gauss stated to Hurley that, with the war approaching the China coast, "it appears that we are to be faced inevitably with the problem of determining whether the Chinese Communists are to be supplied with American arms and equipment in the struggle against Japan." Since this would have to be done against the will of Chiang, he pointed out, the decision could bring about the fall of his regime.⁴⁰ That same month Stilwell sent a message to Marshall noting, "If CKS and Co are allowed to control supplies you will know who will get them. You also know who will not get them. Somehow we must get arms to the Communists who will fight."⁴¹ Nevertheless, the Communists clearly had no expectation of immediate U.S. support and were extremely cautious about discussing it. Any move toward "active collaboration," Chou said, would be strongly and obstinately resisted by the KMT. Chou thought for the present there might be a slow and careful course toward "modified collaboration."⁴² Reports by Service suggested this could take the form of furnishing basic military supplies which the Communists lacked and training in the use of the equipment, later leading to "actual tactical cooperation."⁴³

In another letter dated 10 October 1944, Service cautioned:

In the present circumstances, the KMT is dependent on American support for survival By continued and exclusive support of the KMT, we tend to prevent the reforms and democratic reorganization of the government which are essential for the revitalization of China's war effort Ignored by us, and excluded from the Government and joint prosecution of the war, the Communists and other groups will be forced to guard their own interests by more direct opposition.⁴⁴

Services's sentiments were echoed by Davies who likewise informed the State Department of the increasingly difficult situation:

We must fully understand that by reason of our recognition of the CKS Government as now constituted we are committed to a steadily regime and severely restricted in working out military and political cooperation with the Chinese Communists If Chiang and the Communists are irreconcilable, then we shall have to decide which faction we are going to support . . . we must keep in mind these basic considerations: Power in China is on the verge of shifting from Chiang to the Communists. If the Russians enter North China and Manchuria, we obviously cannot hope to win the

Communists entirely over to us, but we can through control of supplies and postwar aid expect considerable influence in the direction of Chinese nationalism and independence from Soviet control.⁴⁵

It should be obvious from the above excerpts that the idea of supporting the Communists was not revolutionary. It had been debated by virtually all of the major U.S. actors, both those actively urging it and those reluctant to go against declared U.S. policy of taking action only with the approval and knowledge of the Nationalists. The OSS cannot be blamed for upsetting the apple cart with a hare-brained scheme. At any given time from August 1944 on, Stilwell, Wedemeyer, or any of the FSO's could have urged OSS covertly to formulate a specific plan so as to bypass the discomfort of violating U.S. policy.



Mao leads the march from Yanan in 1947; at left, is Chiang Ching

The last issue I want to examine is whether Chou's policy reversal was precipitated by the sudden disruption of the OSS offer of aid. Hurley maintained that the plan encouraged the Communists to take an intransigent position and caused the breakdown in KMT-Communist negotiations.⁴⁶ The facts, however, do not support such a claim. State Department accounts refer to Chou refusing the plan to Hurley on 16 December 1944. But Chou made no mention of OSS interference, indicating the problem was the KMT's unexpected and flat rejection of the Communist Five-Point Proposal, along with the unwillingness to forsake one-party rule and accept the proposal for a "democratic coalition government."⁴⁷ Recalling that Bird broached the OSS plan on 15 December, a sudden reversal on the following day indeed would have been reasonable if that in fact was what caused it. As Barbara Tuchman imagines the reaction of Hurley when he learned what had happened from Nationalist agents, "A terrible bell rang in his mind: here was the reason why the Communists had walked out on coalition. They had received a direct offer and were already secretly proposing to go to Washington over his head."⁴⁸ As previously cited, one source insists Chou reneged on 8 December, a full week before Barrett and Bird traveled to Yanan with their respective plans in hand! If so, that deflates the deprecating impact of the OSS proposal, since the Communists had already decided to cease negotiations. Even if Chou did not formally announce this to Hurley until 16 December, the assumption he changed his mind prior to the date of Bird's visit absolves OSS of blame for the breakdown. In the end, the obvious explanation is that the Communists rejected Chiang's counter-proposal because it was blatantly un-

acceptable and disadvantageous to their political position.

I feel that Hurley's explanation was merely a convenient alibi for the frustrated and inept Ambassador. I previously intimated through Chou's statements that the Communists did not expect overnight success in securing direct U.S. aid. This point lends credibility to the notion that negotiations did not fall through merely as a result of the aid proposals, especially consider in the Communists were informed they were not being presented with an official U.S. government position but were simply being consulted in advance to determine their willingness to cooperate. Even Wedemeyer himself, during his round of apologies in January 1945, confessed he did not believe the OSS incident was the main cause of the breakdown in negotiations.⁴⁹

In conclusion, I am confident this treatise shows, if nothing else, how complex the political situation in China was in 1944. Obviously the roles of the key U.S. players in the Nationalist-Communist milieu were murky and not as simplistic as often portrayed. Nor will future U.S.-Chinese relations be as clear cut as the recent euphoria over recognition might forecast. As O. Edmund Clubb, U.S. Consul General in Peking from 1947 to 1950, so aptly observed in light of President Carter's explanation for diplomatic recognition of China as an acknowledgment of "simple reality":

The past history of Chinese-American relations has been far from simple. To many Americans, there has always been a special relationship between the two countries. But there have been frequent failures to understand each other and much ambivalence in policy. Indeed, Chinese-American relations have, since the 1940's, seesawed between the two poles of love and hate.⁵⁰

Notwithstanding this difficult policy environment, based on examining the evidence available I submit the following conclusions regarding the situation in 1944. First, Ambassador Hurley was completely unaware of the OSS plan for supporting the Communists. Secondly, General Wedemeyer was aware that his staff and the OSS were working out plans for aiding the Communists, and he backed up their efforts wholeheartedly. However, due to his untimely absence from the scene, he probably had not been briefed on the specifics of the OSS plan in question and was not knowledgeable that it was going to be proposed simultaneously with the plan of his own Army staff, which he undoubtedly did approve. Finally, there is sufficient evidence to disprove the contention that the OSS plan was the major contributor to the negotiations breakdown, if in fact it was related at all. Indeed, as historian Herbert Feis so appropriately titled his book about this period, the situation was truly "The China Tangle."

APPENDIX DETAILS OF OSS PLAN

All agreements on DIXIE Mission tentative and based on our government's approval of project. Theater Command already agreed on principle of

support to fullest extent of Communists and feel it is an OSS type project. If the government approves the following is tentative agreement:

- a. To place our S.O. (Special Operations) men with their units for purposes of destroying Jap communications, air fields, and blockhouses, and to generally raise hell and run.
- b. To fully equip units assisting and protecting our men in sabotage work.
- c. Points of attack to be selected in general by Wedemeyer. Details to be worked out in cooperation with the Communists in that territory.
- d. To provide complete equipment for up to twenty-five thousand guerrillas except food and clothing.
- e. Set up school to instruct in use of American arms, demolitions, communications, etc.
- f. Set up intelligence radio network in cooperation with 18th Route Army.
- g. To supply at least 100,000 Woolworth one shot pistols for Peoples Militia.
- h. To receive complete cooperation of their army of six hundred fifty thousand and People's Militia of two and one half million when strategic use required by Wedemeyer.



Captain William C. Spracher, U.S. Army, received a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy and an M.A. in international relations from Yale University. He is currently assigned as a political science instructor in the Department of Social Sciences, USMA. His military experience includes an armor assignment in Germany where he was platoon leader, battalion S1, assistant S3, and S2, followed by an intelligence assignment at the U.S. Army Intelligence Agency, serving as detachment commander and operations officer in the operations center. A graduate of the Armor Officer Basic Course and the Defense Intelligence School, he has had articles published in such journals as *Presidential Studies Quarterly* and *Military Intelligence Magazine*.

FOOTNOTES

1. Richard C. Thornton, *China: The Struggle for Power 1917-1972*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1973, p 156.
2. *Ibid.*, p 157.
3. *Ibid.*, pp 157-8.
4. Barbara W. Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China 1911-45*, The Macmillan Co., NY, 1971, pp 462-3.
5. *The Amerasia Papers: A Clue to the Catastrophe of China*, US Congress, Senate Subcommittee on the Judiciary, 1970, Volume I, p 37.
6. R. Harris Smith, *OSS*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1972, p 260.
7. *Ibid.*, p 262.

8. Herbert Feis, *The China Tangle*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1953, p 162.
9. Barbara W. Tuchman, "If Mao Had Come to Washington: An Essay in Alternatives," *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 51, October 1972, p 46.
10. Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China*, p 462.
11. Ray S. Cline, *Secrets, Spies and Scholars*, Acropolis Books, Washington, 1976, p 74.
12. Smith, *op. cit.*, p 263.
13. Feis, *op. cit.*, p 256.
14. B.H. Liddell Hart, *History of the Second World War*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, NY, 1970, p 633.
15. Smith, *op. cit.*, p 266.
16. *Ibid.*, pp 272-3.
17. Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Time Runs Out in CBI*, in *United States Army in World War II*, Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Washington, 1959, p 251.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, pp 251-2.
20. John S. Service, *The Amerasia Papers: Some Problems in the History of U.S.-China Relations*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971, p 76ff.
21. John P. Davies, "America and East Asia," *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 55, January 1977, p 388.
22. *The Amerasia Papers: A Clue to the Catastrophe of China*, p 37.
23. *Hearings, Institute of Pacific Relations*, US Congress, Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 82d Congress, pp 2534-6, quoted in Feis, *op. cit.*, p 259.
24. Cline, *op. cit.* p 75.
25. Romanus and Sunderland, *op. cit.*, p 74.
26. *Ibid.*, p 72.
27. *Ibid.*, p 251.
28. *Ibid.*, p 75.
29. Smith, *op. cit.*, p 273.
30. *Ibid.* See also Tuchman, "If Mao Had Come to Washington," p 49, in which she claims Barrett brought two proposals authorized by McClure. McClure had cleared the one regarding the U.S. technical troops with General Chen Cheng, Chiang's Chief of Staff, and secured the kind of ambiguous reply which a Chinese uses to disguise "No" and an American takes to mean "Maybe". The second more startling proposal carried McClure's verbal assurance to Barrett that it had been cleared with Hurley. It projected a beachhead on Shantung and landing an entire U.S. airborne division with Communist supply aid.
31. Romanus and Sunderland, *loc. cit.*
32. *Ibid.*, p 251.
33. *Ibid.*, p 252.
34. *Hearings on Military Situation in the Far East*, US Congress, Senate Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations, 81st Congress, Second Session, 1957, p 3672.
35. Romanus and Sunderland, *op. cit.*, p 74.
36. Smith, *loc. cit.*
37. Romanus and Sunderland, *op. cit.*, p 253.
38. Davies, *loc. cit.*
39. Joseph W. Esherick, ed., *Lost Chance in China: The World War II Despatches of John S. Service*, Random House, NY, 1974, p 322.

precise measures. If we do no more than agree to use some such standard terminology we will have made progress because now an adjective such as, for example, "probable" can mean anything from "just better than equally likely" to "virtually certain."

CLOSING COMMENTS

When one has laid out an analysis in accordance with these guidelines what does one have? Some very long and pretty dull reading to be sure. But, one also has the basis for a reasonably competent writer (who needs to know little about the subject) to repackage the product *ad infinitum* to serve the needs of high-level and low-level policymakers, and general thrill seekers. If the analysis is properly done, packaging the product for dissemination is relatively easy. Agonies of repeated reviews and debates *ad nauseam* over turns of phraseology are symptomatic in part of papering over obvious cracks in analytic walls.

To repeat an assertion made in the context of models, one also has a vehicle that will facilitate future critiques of the analysis because everything is laid out naked, inviting any would-be kibitzer to take pot shots. Even folk who do not understand the area under study will be able to detect the standard errors that have plagued men's intellectual endeavors in many fields. For example, "good analysis," as seen here, makes such fallacies as "achieving maximum gain at minimum cost" stand out more starkly to would-be critics.

Similarly, critics are invited to proclaim that the analyst has used too few indicators. Why will this be the case? Because people *always* use too few indicators, whether they're betting on horses, planning personal estates, or trying to detect the outbreak of war. Unconsciously we all pick a few, no more than half a dozen, things we look at in determining trends. This is inherent in our mental machinery. The analytic process can extend our horizons to perhaps tens or hundreds of things, depending upon how we go about it.

This assertion about the role of good analysis in facilitating criticism is repeated because it is fundamental. We must produce work that can be criticized! This goes very much against the human grain. No one likes to be "torn apart" by critics; everyone subconsciously seeks to avoid it by a variety of devices, some of which have been discussed above. Accepting this view implies that we will shift our thinking about good analysis away from the finished products of the Intelligence Community toward the intermediate products and processes. But without a view of "good analysis" similar to that presented here we have no way, consistently year after year as people come and go, to build a better understanding.

We should, however, end on a humble note. The Earl of Halsbury, drawing on his experience in World War II, lectured a group of analysts 25 years ago and pointed out that we will never reach the end of the process. He said,

The content of a human social or historical situation is always richer than verbal analysis can display. Reality is like

a tangled skein of threads. With infinite patience the analyst dissects one thread out of the bundle and is delighted to observe a causal nexus between its parts. We thus reach truth, but never The Truth. The reality inevitably bristles with more detail than can be apprehended as a whole.

Captain Robert Bovey, USN is a former Special Assistant to the Director of Central Intelligence. He is currently assigned to the Pentagon and the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Continued from page 20

40. Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China*, p 485.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*, p 486.
44. *The China White Paper*, US Department of State, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA 1967, p 574 (originally issued as *United States Relations with China*, 1949).
45. *Ibid.*
46. Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China 1941-50*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963, p. 178.
47. *The China White Paper*, p 77.
48. Tuchman, "If Mao Had Come to Washington," p 55.
49. Romanus and Sunderland, *loc. cit.*
50. O. Edmund Clubb, "China and America: A Look at a Long and Ambivalent Relationship," *The New York Times Magazine*, 28 January 1979, p 20.

DEDICATION



This issue of the AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE JOURNAL is dedicated to Colonel Leland Holland, USA. Lee, a Member of NMIA, was one of the hostages taken in the United States Embassy by the Iranian students. According to reports, he spent over seven months in solitary confinement and was forced to sleep on a concrete floor much of the time. Colonel Holland has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his actions during the first take over of the Embassy. The award, however, had to be kept secret until his return after 444 days of captivity. He was the Army Attache to Iran.

The Members of NMIA extend their best wishes to Lee and his family.

SUPPORT YOUR
SCHOLARSHIP FUND