

73

# **GREAT VICTORY FOR THE MILITARY LINE OF CHAIRMAN MAO TSETUNG**

**— A CRITICISM OF LIN PIAO'S BOURGEOIS  
MILITARY LINE IN THE LIAOHSI-SHENYANG  
AND PEIPING-TIENTSIN CAMPAIGNS**



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# CONTENTS

## *Part One*

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO MILITARY LINES IN THE LIAOHSI-SHENYANG CAMPAIGN	1
I. A Sketch of the Liaohsi-Shenyang Campaign and Its Strategic Significance	2
II. The War Situation Before the Liaohsi-Shenyang Campaign. Chairman Mao's Wise Policy on the Strategically Decisive Engagement	4
1. DESPISING THE ENEMY STRATEGICALLY WHILE TACTICALLY TAKING HIM SERIOUSLY	4
2. THE WAR SITUATION WAS FAVOURABLE TO US, THE TIME RIPE FOR THE STRATEGICALLY DECI- SIVE ENGAGEMENT	8
3. ENSURING VICTORY IN THE FIRST CAMPAIGN BY STARTING THE STRATEGICALLY DECISIVE EN- GAGEMENT IN THE NORTHEAST THEATRE	16
III. Major Issues in the Struggle Between Two Military Lines in the Liaohsi-Shenyang Cam- paign	20
1. LIN PIAO DARED NOT DRIVE SOUTH TO THE PEIPING-LIAONING RAILWAY AND ANNIHILATE THE ENEMY ON THE SPOT	21
2. LIN PIAO OPPOSED TAKING CHINCHOW TO GAIN THE INITIATIVE IN THE CAMPAIGN	33
3. LIN PIAO REFUSED TO BLOCK THE ENEMY'S RE- TREAT BY SEA AND FAILED TO SEND TROOPS TO CONTROL YINGKOW	49
IV. Victory in the Liaohsi-Shenyang Campaign Was a Victory for Chairman Mao's Military Line	56

*Part Two*

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO MILITARY LINES IN THE PEIPING-TIENTSIN CAMPAIGN	60
I. A Sketch of the Peiping-Tientsin Campaign and Its Strategic Significance	60
II. The War Situation Before the Peiping-Tientsin Campaign. The Necessity and Feasibility of Launching It Without Delay	63
III. Major Issues in the Struggle Between Two Military Lines in the Peiping-Tientsin Campaign	71
1. LIN PIAO OPPOSED CHAIRMAN MAO'S INSTRUCTION THAT OUR NORTHEAST FIELD ARMY MOVE SOUTH OF THE GREAT WALL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE	72
2. LIN PIAO RESISTED CHAIRMAN MAO'S ORDER FOR OUR REAR UNITS NOT TO TAKE THE SHANHAI-KUAN ROUTE IN THEIR SOUTHWARD ADVANCE	83
3. LIN PIAO WRONGLY INSISTED ON ATTACKING NANKOW FIRST	89
IV. Victory in the Peiping-Tientsin Campaign Was a Victory for Chairman Mao's Military Line	95

*Part Three*

LIN PIAO'S BOURGEOIS MILITARY LINE SERVED HIS RIGHT-OPPORTUNIST POLITICAL LINE	102
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PART ONE

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN  
TWO MILITARY LINES IN THE  
LIAOHSI-SHENYANG CAMPAIGN

Guided by the great leader Chairman Mao Tsetung and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, the movement in China to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius has been developing in an extensive, thoroughgoing and sustained way. Conscientious study of Chairman Mao's proletarian military thinking and military line and intensive criticism of Lin Piao's bourgeois military line constitute an important part of this movement.

Lin Piao's bourgeois military line has shown itself to be extremely harmful in all its aspects. This was especially so after Lin Piao took charge of the routine work of the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee in 1959, when his bourgeois military line developed more fully.

To suit their counter-revolutionary aim of usurping Party leadership and seizing state power, Lin Piao and his sworn followers shamelessly stood the facts of history on their head, claiming nonsensically that the strategically decisive engagement in the Chinese People's War of Liberation (1946-49) was initiated by Lin, and that the victory of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign was the result of his "wise and resolute command." They extolled Lin Piao as a "military genius," a "strategist," an "ever-

victorious general," etc., etc. Obviously, each and every such mask must be stripped from Lin's face.

Below are some relevant facts of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, showing how Chairman Mao's proletarian military line overcame Lin Piao's bourgeois military line and resulted in great victory in this first campaign of the strategically decisive engagement in the War of Liberation.

#### I. A SKETCH OF THE LIAOHSI-SHENYANG CAMPAIGN AND ITS STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign began on September 12, 1948 — when the vanguard units of our Northeast Field Army reached the Peiping-Liaoning Railway and clashed with the enemy — and ended on November 2, lasting altogether 52 days and divisible into three stages.

In the first stage, from September 12 to October 19, our army took Chinchow, wiping out over 120,000 enemy troops, capturing Fan Han-chieh, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters, and cutting off the enemy's retreat by land. This induced a part of the more than 100,000 enemy troops at Changchun to revolt against the Kuomintang, and the rest to surrender, among the latter being Cheng Tung-kuo, another Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters.

In the second stage, from October 20 to 28, our army annihilated in the Heishan-Tahushan sector of western Liaoning Province 1 army, with 5 corps or 12 divisions, of enemy reinforcements, totalling more than 100,000 men who were sent from Shenyang to relieve Chinchow.

In the third stage, October 29-November 2, our army liberated Shenyang and Yingkow, wiping out nearly 150,000 enemy troops. In the whole campaign, 1 Kuomintang "bandit suppression" headquarters, with 4 army headquarters (the 1st, 6th, 8th and 9th) including 11 corps headquarters that in turn commanded 36 regular divisions, plus several irregular divisions and some miscellaneous armed forces — altogether 470,000 men or more — were wiped out, while Shenyang, Changchun, Chinchow and 11 other cities were captured. The entire northeastern China was now liberated.

Our army also won a series of victories in the other theatres of war from July 1 to November 2, 1948. We defeated the enemy in the campaign along the middle section of the Tientsin-Pukow Railway and in the Tsinan campaign, all fought in Shantung Province; in the Sui-Ki campaign (also known as the eastern Honan campaign, fought in the sector comprising Kaifeng, Suihsien and Kihhsien), and in the Hsiangyang-Fancheng campaign of the Central Plains theatre; in the central Shansi campaign of the northern China theatre; and in the Chengcheng-Hoyang campaign of the northwestern China theatre. During this four-month period, in these campaigns and in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, we knocked out a million enemy troops, basically changing the balance of forces between the enemy and ourselves. The Kuomintang forces were reduced to about 2.9 million men, while ours grew to more than 3 million. In his article "The Momentous Change in China's Military Situation" of November 14, 1948, Chairman Mao pointed out: **"The military situation in China has reached a new turning point and the balance of forces between the two sides in the war has**

undergone a fundamental change. The People's Liberation Army, long superior in quality, has now become superior in numbers as well. This is a sign that the victory of the Chinese revolution and the realization of peace in China are at hand." Chairman Mao also said: "Accordingly, the war will be much shorter than we originally estimated. The original estimate was that the reactionary Kuomintang government could be completely overthrown in about five years, beginning from July 1946. As we now see it, only another year or so may be needed to overthrow it completely." Actually, the People's Republic of China was founded on October 1, 1949, less than a year after Chairman Mao wrote these words, the course of the war fully demonstrating the correctness of his thesis.

The Liaohsi-Shenyang, Huai-Hai and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns constituted the strategically decisive engagement in the War of Liberation. After these three major campaigns, in which the main forces of the Kuomintang troops were virtually wiped out, our army supported by the people of the whole country switched to nationwide strategic pursuit and quickly liberated China's entire mainland.

## II. THE WAR SITUATION BEFORE THE LIAOHSI-SHENYANG CAMPAIGN, CHAIRMAN MAO'S WISE POLICY ON THE STRATEGICALLY DECISIVE ENGAGEMENT

### 1. DESPISING THE ENEMY STRATEGICALLY WHILE TACTICALLY TAKING HIM SERIOUSLY

Chairman Mao says: ". . . Strategically we should despise all our enemies, but tactically we should take them

all seriously." Strategically, all reactionaries are paper tigers; they are terrifying in appearance but not all that powerful in reality. From a long-term point of view, it is not the reactionaries but the people who are really powerful. It is on this basis that we must build our strategic thinking. If strategically, with regard to the whole, we dare not despise the enemy, dare not overthrow him and dare not fight and win victory, we shall be committing a Right-opportunist error. Tactically, however, all reactionaries are real tigers; in each specific struggle we must take the enemy seriously, be good at struggle and carefully study and perfect our art of struggle. It is on this basis that we must build our tactical thinking. If tactically, with regard to each part, we do not take the enemy seriously and are not prudent, we shall be committing a "Left"-opportunist error.

Despising the enemy strategically while tactically taking full account of him is Chairman Mao's great strategic thinking and a powerful ideological weapon with which we can overcome the enemy. It was by following Chairman Mao's strategic thinking that in the past decades we defeated powerful enemies, domestic and foreign, and won great victories in revolution and construction.

On June 26, 1946, the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang launched its nationwide counter-revolutionary war. Chairman Mao, in his article "Smash Chiang Kai-shek's Offensive by a War of Self-Defence" of July 20 of the same year, analysed the political, economic and military situation as regards the enemy and ourselves. He pointed out specifically: "Although Chiang Kai-shek has U.S. aid, the feelings of the people are against him, the morale of his troops is low, and his economy is in difficulty. As for us, although we have no foreign aid, the feelings of the

people are for us, the morale of our troops is high, and we can handle our economy. Therefore, we can defeat Chiang Kai-shek." In his report "The Present Situation and Our Tasks" delivered on December 25, 1947 at a meeting of the Party Central Committee, Chairman Mao profoundly analysed the international and domestic situation at that time, further pointing out: **"We said then [that is, at the time when the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang launched the adventurist war in 1946] that Chiang Kai-shek's superiority in military forces was only transient, a factor which could play only a temporary role, that U.S. imperialist aid was likewise a factor which could play only a temporary role, while the anti-popular character of Chiang Kai-shek's war and the feelings of the people were factors that would play a constant role, and that in this respect the People's Liberation Army was in a superior position."** Chairman Mao also advised the whole Party: **"We should rid our ranks of all impotent thinking. All views that overestimate the strength of the enemy and underestimate the strength of the people are wrong."** Events have proved entirely correct Chairman Mao's brilliant thesis of daring to fight and daring to win victory, and the ten major principles of operation<sup>1</sup> he formulated on the basis of our army's long experience in fighting.

<sup>1</sup> Referring to those included in Chairman Mao's report "The Present Situation and Our Tasks":

1) Attack dispersed, isolated enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces later. 2) Take small and medium cities and extensive rural areas first; take big cities later. 3) Make wiping out the enemy's effective strength our main objective; do not make holding or seizing a city or place our main objective. Holding or seizing a city or place is the outcome of wiping out the enemy's effective strength, and often a city

Guided by Chairman Mao's strategic thinking and under his personal command, and with the active support of the people in the Liberated Areas, the People's Liberation Army beat back the offensives by Chiang Kai-shek's forces on several fronts in the first year of the War of Liberation, i.e., from July 1946 to June 1947, forcing the enemy to switch from the strategic offensive to the strategic defensive, while our army went over from the strategic defensive to the strategic offensive. In the second year of the war (July 1947-June 1948), the Kuomintang forces, constantly pounded by our army, changed from overall defensive to regional defensive, and again in August 1948 from regional defensive to defence of key points. In these two years of hard fighting, our army wiped out a total of 2.64 million enemy troops, opening up excellent prospects for the war as a whole.

Taking a Right-opportunist stand and with his reactionary, idealist and metaphysical world outlook, the renegade and traitor Lin Piao invariably overestimated the enemy's strength and underestimated that of the people; he dared not fight and win victory, but strenuously opposed Chairman Mao's strategic thinking. When Chairman Mao with his boldness of vision decided to launch the strategically decisive engagement against the

or place can be held or seized for good only after it has changed hands a number of times. 4) In every battle, concentrate an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), encircle the enemy forces completely, strive to wipe them out thoroughly and do not let any escape from the net. In special circumstances, use the method of dealing crushing blows to the enemy, that is, concentrate all our strength to make a frontal attack and also to attack one or both of his flanks, with the aim of wiping out

Kuomintang forces with the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign in the Northeast, Lin Piao tried in a hundred and one ways to counter and undermine this great strategic decision. In good time, Chairman Mao sharply criticized Lin's Right-opportunist line and armed the whole Party, army and people with the concept of despising the enemy strategically while taking full account of him tactically. This resulted in the speedy victory of the war for the liberation of the Northeast and subsequently of the entire country.

2. THE WAR SITUATION WAS FAVOURABLE TO US,  
THE TIME RIPE FOR THE STRATEGICALLY  
DECISIVE ENGAGEMENT

By July 1948, that is, when the War of Liberation had entered its third year, the Liberated Areas had grown to 2.35 million square kilometres, or 24.5 per cent of China's total area, while their population had increased to 168 million, or 35.3 per cent of the total at the time. They included 586 cities of and above county-town level, or 29 per cent of China's cities in that category, and had within their territory 12,847 kilometres of railway lines

one part and routing another so that our army can swiftly move its troops to smash other enemy forces. Strive to avoid battles of attrition in which we lose more than we gain or only break even. In this way, although we are inferior as a whole (in terms of numbers), we are absolutely superior in every part and every specific campaign, and this ensures victory in the campaign. As time goes on, we shall become superior as a whole and eventually wipe out all the enemy. 5) Fight no battle unprepared, fight no battle you are not sure of winning; make every effort to be well prepared for each battle, make every effort to ensure victory in the given set of conditions as between the enemy and ourselves. 6) Give full play to our style of fighting — courage in battle, no fear of sacrifice, no fear of fatigue, and continuous fighting (that is, fighting successive battles in a short time without rest). 7) Strive to wipe out the enemy through mobile warfare. At

and a fair amount of mining and other industries. Although at that time the enemy temporarily accounted for a greater part of China's population, territory and cities, he no longer enjoyed such vast superiority in any of these respects as at the beginning of the war. Politically, economically and militarily, our situation steadily improved while that of the enemy daily deteriorated.

Politically, after overcoming the interference of Liu Shao-chi's opportunist line, which was "Left" in form but Right in essence, the land reform movement developed tremendously in the Liberated Areas, consummating this great transformation in the relations of production in areas with a combined population of about 100 million. This considerably raised the people's class consciousness and spurred their enthusiasm to support the liberation war. Mobilized and organized under the slogan "Defend our homes and land," the people in their millions were active in sending grain to the front, working in civilian teams and joining the army to fight the enemy. A surging tide of support for the front quickly formed, with the masses readily supplying manpower and materials needed for the war effort. Meanwhile, in conjunction with the

the same time, pay attention to the tactics of positional attack and capture enemy fortified points and cities. 8) With regard to attacking cities, resolutely seize all enemy fortified points and cities which are weakly defended. Seize at opportune moments all enemy fortified points and cities defended with moderate strength, provided circumstances permit. As for strongly defended enemy fortified points and cities, wait till conditions are ripe and then take them. 9) Replenish our strength with all the arms and most of the personnel captured from the enemy. Our army's main sources of manpower and material are at the front. 10) Make good use of the intervals between campaigns to rest, train and consolidate our troops. Periods of rest, training and consolidation should in general not be very long, and the enemy should so far as possible be permitted no breathing space.

land reform, a movement for Party consolidation was initiated throughout the Party organization, by which the Party was greatly developed and strengthened and its links with the broad masses were tightened. By the autumn of 1948, Party membership had grown from the 1.21 million of May 1945 to 3 million; the Party had basically overcome certain undesirable features in class composition, ideology and style of work that had existed to some degree, and deepened its understanding of Marxism-Leninism and of Party policy. In his "Speech at a Conference of Cadres in the Shansi-Suiyuan Liberated Area" delivered on April 1, 1948, Chairman Mao pointed out in connection with the great achievements in the work of land reform and Party consolidation in that area: **"It was on this basis that during the past year the Shansi-Suiyuan Party organization was able to perform war services on an immense scale in support of the great People's War of Liberation."** This appraisal applied not only to the land reform and Party consolidation in that particular Liberated Area. It applied also to such work in all other Liberated Areas.

Quite opposite to the situation in the Liberated Areas, the Kuomintang reactionaries had sunk into grave political crisis. Their policy of waging civil war, plus the close collaboration between U.S. imperialist monopoly capital and Chiang Kai-shek's bureaucrat-comprador capital in cruelly exploiting and oppressing the Chinese people and plundering their wealth, led to daily deterioration in the livelihood of the labouring masses in the areas under Kuomintang control. The people had no way out but to unite and wage mighty, extensive struggles against hunger, persecution, civil war, autocracy, and national betrayal. Some even took up arms against

the Chiang regime. For example, Party-led armed guerrillas active in the countryside south of the Yangtze River numbered upwards of 30,000 men. The anti-U.S., anti-Chiang national democratic united front led by our Party had developed apace after two years of war; many democratic parties and personages and mass organizations had come to see more clearly the real nature of the Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries, accepted our Party's political views and joined the anti-Chiang struggle it led. In short, the Kuomintang reactionaries were subjected to onslaughts from two sides: on the regular battle front and from within the areas under their control. Caught in this cross fire, Chiang Kai-shek found it increasingly difficult to sustain his reactionary rule.

Economically, too, the Liberated Areas and the Kuomintang-held territory presented two entirely different pictures. In the summer of 1948, Chairman Mao publicized his famous verse: **"Let the army advance, production increase and the sense of discipline grow stronger, and the revolution will be ever-victorious."** This was in fact a guiding principle for work throughout the Liberated Areas. It meant that the army should continue its strategic offensive and advance into the Kuomintang-occupied territory, that the Liberated Areas should keep up their energetic efforts to develop production and support the front; and that, with all this, plus a yet stronger sense of discipline throughout the Party and army, we would be assured of countrywide victory in the revolution. Guided by this principle of Chairman Mao's, and with the carrying out of land reform and the favourable condition of the main battlefield having shifted to the Kuomintang areas, an excellent economic situation prevailed in the Liberated Areas where industrial and agri-

cultural production was developing rapidly and the people's livelihood improving accordingly.

In the Kuomintang-controlled areas, however, the Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries' policy of civil war and national betrayal caused runaway inflation, serious devaluation of the paper currency, skyrocketing of prices, closing down of large numbers of national industrial and commercial enterprises, mass impoverishment, smouldering popular discontent and widespread mass uprisings. These combined to force the Chiang Kai-shek regime to the brink of total economic collapse.

Militarily, the situation was also favourable to us. The Kuomintang forces had shrunk from 4.3 million men at the beginning of the war to 3.65 million; of these only 1.98 million were combatants of and below divisional (brigade) level, with a little over 1.7 million capable of front-line fighting. On the other hand, the People's Liberation Army had in the same period grown from 1.2 million men (including 600,000 belonging to the field armies) to more than 2.8 million, of whom 1.49 million belonged to the field forces. In the first days of the war, the numerical strength ratio between the enemy and ourselves was 3.5 : 1, whereas at the beginning of its third year the ratio had changed to 1.3 : 1. The enemy still outnumbered us, but as a matter of fact, in striking force that could be used at the forefront he no longer enjoyed numerical superiority. Besides, the Kuomintang forces had been cut off by us in the northeastern, northern, eastern and northwestern China and Central Plains theatres, and were for the most part in the passive position of having to receive blows, hardly able to support and co-ordinate with one another in any campaign. The enemy also had to set aside troops to cope with the armed

guerrillas led by our Party, deal with mass resistance and defend Shanghai, Nanking and other major cities.

In quality, the enemy could in no way compare with us, for our forces were politically conscious. When the war entered its third year, the military and political quality of our army showed still further improvement, as can be seen from the following:

First, in line with the overall plan of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee, the People's Liberation Army in the winter-spring of 1947-48 launched a new type of ideological education movement, with "pouring out grievances" and the "three check-ups" as its main content; measures were also taken to promote political, economic and military democracy in the army. Just as Chairman Mao pointed out: **"The correct unfolding of the movement for pouring out grievances (the wrongs done to the labouring people by the old society and by the reactionaries) and the three check-ups (on class origin, performance of duty and will to fight) greatly heightened the political consciousness of commanders and fighters throughout the army in the fight for the emancipation of the exploited working masses, for nationwide land reform and for the destruction of the common enemy of the people, the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang. It also greatly strengthened the firm unity of all commanders and fighters under the leadership of the Communist Party. On this basis, the army achieved greater purity in its ranks, strengthened discipline, unfolded a mass movement for training and further developed its political, economic and military democracy in a completely well-led and orderly way. Thus the army has become united as one man, with everybody contributing his ideas and his strength, fearless of sacrifice and capable of overcoming**

**material difficulties, an army which displays mass heroism and daring in destroying the enemy. Such an army will be invincible."**

Secondly, our army's ability to capture strongly fortified points had increased considerably. 1) We had developed a sizable artillery. In northeastern and eastern China we already had artillery and special arms columns, and in northern China we had two artillery brigades. Every infantry column (corps equivalent) and every division and regiment had its own artillery unit. 2) Many of our infantrymen had learned demolition techniques and could blow up enemy fortifications and city walls. 3) We had gained some experience in attacking and capturing medium and small cities. In the Central Plains theatre we took Loyang and Kaifeng; in the eastern China theatre, Weihsien and Yenchow; in the northern China theatre, Shihchiachuang, Yuncheng and Linfen; in the northeastern China theatre, Szepingkai. Attacking and capturing these cities had augmented our experience and ability in taking heavily fortified points. We were now able in an all-round manner to apply the ten major principles of operation; we were able not only to wage mobile warfare but to assault and capture strongly fortified medium cities and even big cities and wipe out massive enemy forces.

In a word, though still numerically inferior to the enemy, our army was superior in quality, particularly in its notably enhanced political consciousness and prowess in taking well-fortified points, as compared with the early period of the war. The conditions existed for launching the strategically decisive engagement. On the enemy side an opposite situation obtained. The Kuomintang army's morale was flagging and its fighting

capacity declined as whole corps and divisions were destroyed one after another and many ranking officers taken captive.

Politically devoid of popular support because of its unjust cause, and economically beset with grave crisis and manifold difficulties, the Kuomintang reactionaries suffered repeated military defeats, which in turn aggravated the economic crisis and speeded their political collapse. Clearly, the balance had been tipped in our favour. But as Chairman Mao pointed out: **"However, the presence of these conditions and of a situation favourable to ourselves and unfavourable to the enemy does not mean that we have already defeated him. Such conditions and such a situation provide the possibility for our victory and his defeat, but do not constitute the reality of victory or defeat; they have not yet brought actual victory or defeat to either army. To bring about victory or defeat a decisive battle between the two armies is necessary."**

In directing China's revolutionary war, Chairman Mao made it a point to strive to create good combat opportunities, then seize and exploit them to win victory in campaigns and battles. **". . . We should resolutely fight a decisive engagement in every campaign or battle in which we are sure of victory; we should avoid a decisive engagement in every campaign or battle in which we are not sure of victory; and we should absolutely avoid a strategically decisive engagement on which the fate of the whole nation is staked."** This is Chairman Mao's fundamental principle on decisive engagements. He also emphasized: **"We are for decisive engagements whenever circumstances are favourable, whether in battles or in major or minor campaigns, and in this respect we should never tolerate passivity."**

By the autumn of 1948, with the situation and conditions definitely in our favour, the time was ripe for the strategically decisive engagement in the War of Liberation. Chairman Mao, with the far-sightedness and courage of a great proletarian revolutionary, seized this favourable opportunity and made the firm decision to launch such an engagement against the enemy. According to the various conditions in the northeastern, eastern and northern China theatres, he personally organized and directed the crucial Liaohsi-Shenyang, Huai-Hai and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns, bringing the strategically decisive engagement step by step to complete victory.

### 3. ENSURING VICTORY IN THE FIRST CAMPAIGN BY STARTING THE STRATEGICALLY DECISIVE ENGAGEMENT IN THE NORTHEAST THEATRE

We selected the Northeast theatre for the first campaign of the strategically decisive engagement because the situation there was more favourable to us at the time than in the other theatres. Chairman Mao showed his great concern for the Northeast Liberated Area by sending large numbers of cadres and troops to the Northeast as early as around the time of the victory of the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-45), and giving the directive to build stable base areas in the Northeast and a series of other important instructions which clearly formulated the principles and policies for such work. The Party and government organizations, army units and the people in the Northeast resolutely carried out Chairman Mao's instructions. With powerful support from the other Liberated Areas and exploiting the uniquely favourable local conditions, they created an excellent situation in their area after nearly three years of arduous

struggle. (See Sketch Map 1.) This is seen from the following three aspects:

First, our army had obviously gained numerical superiority over the enemy. At the time, the enemy had on the Northeast front a total of 550,000 men: 480,000 regulars and 70,000 irregulars. Our Northeast People's Liberation Army had 12 infantry columns, 1 artillery column, 17 independent divisions and 1 railway engineering column, totalling 610,000 men. We had also various offices of the Northeast Military Area Command with its troops, altogether 90,000 men. In other words, we had in the Northeast 700,000 regulars, and our total troop strength there would number 1 million if the 300,000 men of the regional armed forces belonging to the provincial military area commands were included. Of the five major war theatres, the Northeast was the only one where our regular troops outnumbered the enemy. In the Northwest theatre we had less than 200,000 men against the enemy's 300,000 (450,000 if the enemy troops in Chinghai, Ningsia, Kansu and Sinkiang were counted in); in the northern China theatre we had some 400,000 men against the enemy's 600,000 (over 700,000 including the Kuomintang troops in Taiyuan and Tatung); in the eastern China theatre we had about 700,000 men (less than 400,000 were regular troops however) against the enemy's 600,000 regulars; in the Central Plains theatre we had 340,000 men against the enemy's 750,000 (including the Kuomintang's defence force along the Yangtze River). These figures show clearly the singularly favourable position of our army in the Northeast.

Second, the enemy in the Northeast theatre was hesitant and wavering in action. His troops numbering 550,000 were cut apart and isolated in three areas:

Changchun, garrisoned by Cheng Tung-kuo, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters, with 1 army (the 1st) of 2 corps, or 6 divisions, plus some regional forces and "home-going legions,"<sup>1</sup> totalling over 100,000 men; Shenyang, seat of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters, garrisoned by its Commander-in-Chief Wei Li-huang with 2 armies (the 8th and 9th) of 8 corps, or 24 divisions, totalling 300,000 men; the section of the Peiping-Liaoning Railway centring around Chinchow, with the sector from Shanhaikuan to Yih sien garrisoned by 1 army (the 6th) of 4 corps, or 14 divisions, totalling 150,000 men under Fan Han-chieh, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters. We had cut all land connection between these three areas. In August 1948, Chiang Kai-shek called a military meeting in Nanking at which he set forth the principle: "Pull out of the Northeast, consolidate northern China, take firm hold of central China and build southern China into a permanent base." Actually, this principle was suggested by the Americans whose main interests were concentrated in certain parts of northern, central and southern China. (What the Kuomintang referred to as central China was what we designated as eastern China and the Central Plains.) But Chiang Kai-shek dared not put this principle into practice because of the multiplying contradictions within his camp; implementation of the said principle would hasten the political collapse of the Kuo-

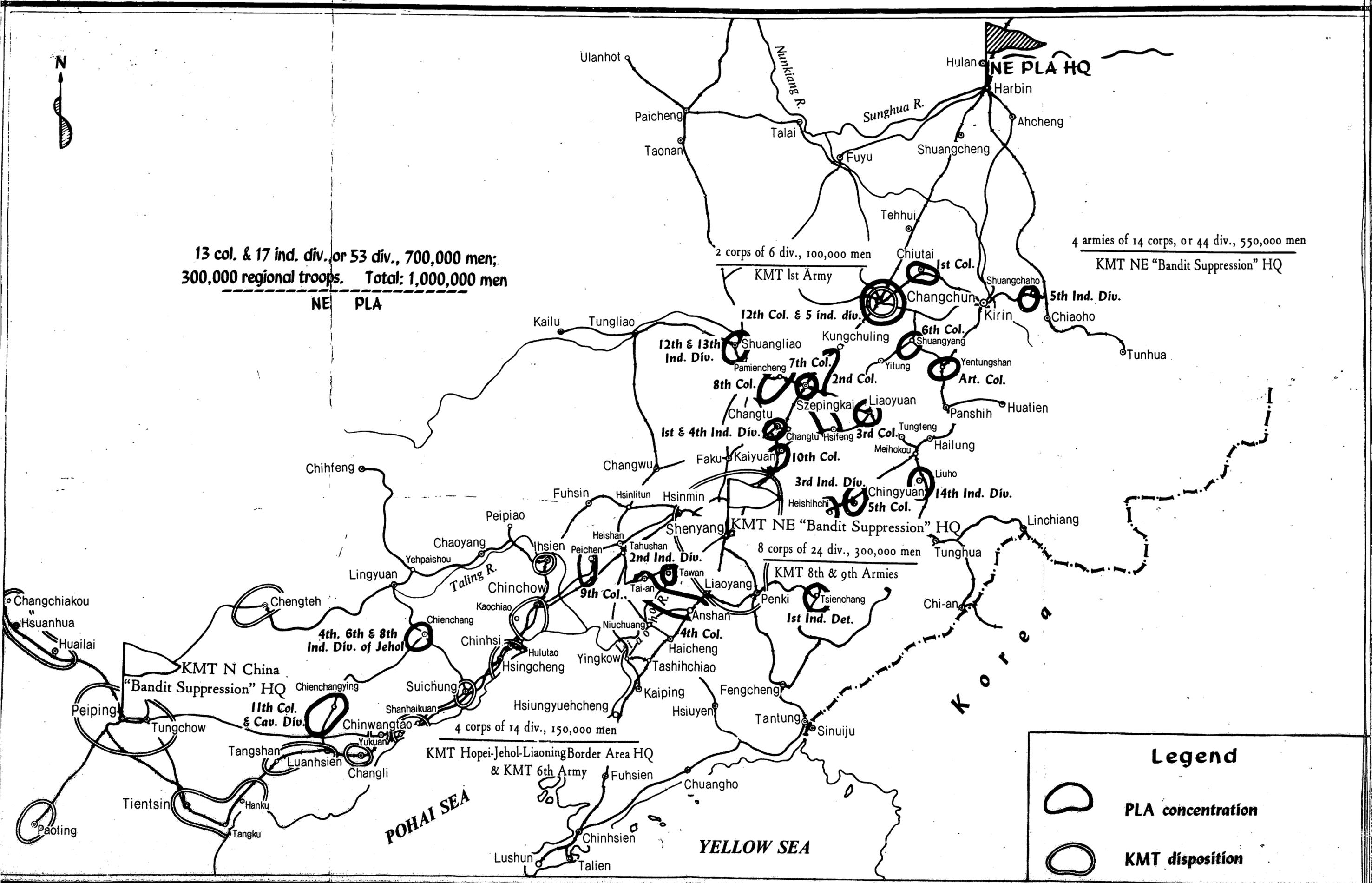
<sup>1</sup> Reactionary armed bands organized by the Kuomintang and made up of landlords and local tyrants who had fled from the Liberated Areas to the Kuomintang areas during the War of Liberation.

mintang regime and add to its economic difficulties. Hence the hesitation of the enemy, not knowing whether to withdraw from the Northeast or hold out there. This state of affairs was very much in our favour.

Third, the Northeast Liberated Area (including Jehol Province) had expanded to constitute 99 per cent of northeastern China's total area, the enemy controlling only 1 per cent (Changchun, Shenyang and several county towns in its environs, several medium and small cities along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway and Chengteh of Jehol). Of northeastern China's population, the Northeast Liberated Area had 86 per cent, while of its more than 9,900 kilometres of railways only 500 or more remained in enemy hands. So in the Northeast our army had a stable rear that could afford rich manpower and material supplies.

A powerful people's army, a wavering enemy and a consolidated liberated area — these constituted our favourable situation in the Northeast. It was a situation stemming from the brilliant leadership of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee and from Chairman Mao's revolutionary line being strictly carried out by the Party organizations, the people's government, the army and the local people. Chairman Mao has consistently taught our army that there must be **"caution in the initial battle,"** and that **"the first battle must be won. The plan for the whole campaign must be taken into account. And the strategic stage that comes next must be taken into account."** These are the three principles regarding the first battle which we must never forget. By deciding to wage the first campaign of the strategically decisive engagement in the Northeast theatre where the conditions

# Map I Dispositions of PLA and KMT Forces Before Liaohsi-Shenyang Campaign



were the most favourable to us, Chairman Mao laid a sure foundation for securing victory in this campaign.

At this crucial moment, however, the so-called "strategist" Lin Piao, clinging to his Right-opportunist stand, ignored the changed situation in China's revolutionary war and turned a blind eye to the especially favourable subjective and objective conditions in the Northeast theatre. He overestimated the enemy's strength and underestimated that of the people. Timid as a mouse, he feared the enemy as he would a tiger and dared not launch the strategically decisive engagement against the enemy in order to speed the victory of the revolutionary war and overthrow the Chiang Kai-shek dynasty for good. Such is the essence of Lin Piao's Right-opportunist line in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign.

### III. MAJOR ISSUES IN THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO MILITARY LINES IN THE LIAOHSI-SHENYANG CAMPAIGN

The Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign was personally organized and commanded by our great leader Chairman Mao, who, from its preparatory stage to victorious conclusion, sent more than 70 telegraphed instructions to Lin Piao. In these, Chairman Mao penetratingly expounded his strategic concept of a timely launching of the strategically decisive engagement in the War of Liberation. He explained in detail the reasons for starting the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign quickly, as well as the relevant concept of operations, direction of attack, dispositions and guiding principles. But Lin Piao dared not fight. He made one excuse after another for resisting

Chairman Mao's wise decision and committed a series of grave Right-opportunist errors during the campaign. From its very inception right through to the end, there existed acute struggle between two different kinds of military thinking and two different military lines.

The nub of the struggle between the two military lines in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign was whether or not we dared launch the strategically decisive engagement against the enemy, whether or not we dared fight battles of annihilation on an unprecedented scale, whether or not, strategically, we dared to separate the two large groups of enemy forces — one in northeastern China, the other in northern China — and completely encircle and wipe out the former. Three main specific questions demanded answering: Should our forces drive south to the Peiping-Liaoning Railway to blockade the Kuomintang forces in the Northeast and wipe them out one by one? Should we resolutely and speedily capture Chinchow in order to seize the initiative in the campaign? Should we swiftly block Yingkow and cut off the enemy's escape route by sea?

#### 1. LIN PIAO DARED NOT DRIVE SOUTH TO THE PEIPING-LIAONING RAILWAY AND ANNIHILATE THE ENEMY ON THE SPOT

The struggle between the two kinds of military thinking and two military lines concerned, first and foremost, whether our main force in the Northeast should drive south, cut the Peiping-Liaoning railway line, close the Kuomintang troops' escape route from the Northeast and annihilate on the spot Wei Li-huang's group unit by unit, or our main force should remain in the vicinity of Changchun, undecided as to the next move, enabling the

enemy in the Northeast to withdraw without hindrance south of the Great Wall.

The main point, and indeed the most important issue, in Chairman Mao's many instructions on the concept of operations for the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign was to persuade Lin Piao to send the main force of our Northeast Field Army south to the Peiping-Liaoning Railway, seal off the Kuomintang units in the Northeast and wipe them out one by one before they could withdraw to northern and central China.

About 16 months before the start of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, i.e., on May 20, 1947, Chairman Mao instructed Lin Piao to begin, forthwith and actively, creating conditions for our main force in the Northeast to drive south so that we could launch the strategically decisive engagement against the enemy, take control of the Changchun-Shenyang and Peiping-Liaoning railways and capture the four cities of Changchun, Shenyang, Peiping and Tientsin. Soon after this, Chairman Mao sought to correct Lin Piao's Right-opportunist error of always overestimating the strength of the enemy and underestimating that of the people, and especially his error of tarrying in Harbin with his eyes only on Changchun on the northern front without seeing the favourable conditions to the south. Chairman Mao stressed two points: 1) that, with the exception of Li Tsung-jen, then Director of the Kuomintang Generalissimo's Headquarters in Peiping, who might send a small number of his troops in northern China to the Northeast, the enemy in all the other war theatres south of the Great Wall would find it very difficult to send reinforcements there, and 2) that along the Peiping-Liaoning and Peiping-Suiyuan railway lines, the Shenyang-Chinchow, Chinchow-

Shanhaikuan, Shanhaikuan-Tientsin, Tientsin-Peiping and Peiping-Changchiakou sections were all advantageous battlefields for us. Chairman Mao's instructions were meant to convince Lin Piao that he should not overestimate the enemy's strength and give too much weight to the difficulty of driving south, but that he should take full account of the enemy's difficulties and the conditions favourable to us, that he should be confident and determined in sending his troops to fight south.

In February 1948, before the conclusion of our winter offensive in the Northeast which lasted from December 15, 1947 to March 15, 1948, Chairman Mao once again by way of instruction criticized Lin Piao's mistake of seeing no battle to be fought on the Chinchow front. In this instruction Chairman Mao specifically put forward the principle of bottling up the Kuomintang forces in the Northeast and annihilating them one by one, or, as it was put, "shut the door and beat the dog." Having concretely analysed the possibility of the enemy in the Northeast withdrawing to northern and central China, Chairman Mao pointed out that in that case the enemy would aggravate his own supply problem, which would further weaken his morale, while the concentration of his forces would be unfavourable for us. Chairman Mao therefore emphasized that from the strategic point of view it would be to our advantage to blockade the Kuomintang units in the Northeast and wipe them out one by one.

Chairman Mao made a subsequent detailed analysis of the significance and favourable conditions for driving southward, reiterating that the deeper we penetrated the enemy's rear, the greater would be the pressure on him to reduce his troops defending isolated strong-points on

our flanks and behind our lines. Or, he might withdraw from these strong-points altogether. With the enemy units along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway isolated from each other, we could wipe them all out and, by mobile warfare, annihilate the enemy reinforcements from Shenyang. It would be no big problem for our troops to get supplies when they fought along the Peiping-Liaoning railway line and, when using this tactic of breaking through at the centre, we could cut apart the two strategic groups of the enemy forces in the Northeast and northern China respectively and so facilitate our subsequent operations on the two flanks. Especially, in his telegram of September 7, 1948 regarding the concept of operations for the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, Chairman Mao instructed Lin Piao that efforts must be made so that **“in the two months of September and October, or a little longer, you can wipe out the enemy along the line from Chinchow to Tangshan and take Chinchow, Shanhaikuan and Tangshan,”** that for this purpose **“you must now prepare to employ your main force on this line, leaving the enemy forces at Changchun and Shenyang alone. When you are attacking Chinchow, be prepared also to wipe out the enemy forces that may come to its rescue from Changchun and Shenyang.”** If during the Chinchow-Shanhaikuan-Tangshan campaign the enemy at Changchun and Shenyang sallied forth in full strength to rescue Chinchow, **“then, without leaving the Chinchow-Shanhaikuan-Tangshan line, you can follow up immediately with large-scale annihilating attacks on the enemy reinforcements and strive to wipe out all Wei Li-huang’s troops on the spot. This would be the ideal situation.”** To win complete victory in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, Chairman Mao urged Lin Piao: **“Be firmly deter-**

**mined to fight a battle of annihilation on a scale larger than you have ever fought before”** and **“reconsider your plan of operations”** accordingly.

Chairman Mao’s point of departure in the many instructions given during this period was for our main force to first thrust in, sever the Peiping-Liaoning railway line and make a breakthrough at the centre, thus strategically cutting apart the two large enemy formations deployed in the Northeast and northern China respectively. It should then completely encircle the enemy troops in the Northeast, preventing them from withdrawing to northern and central China so that they could be wiped out piecemeal.

But for as long as half a year, from the end of our winter offensive on March 15, 1948 to the start of our move south about September 10, Lin Piao stubbornly resisted Chairman Mao’s instructions. Afraid of being caught in a pincer attack by the two enemy formations if he thrust to the flanks and rear of the Kuomintang troops in the Northeast, he aimed only at routing the enemy and opposed battles of annihilation; he intended to use his forces in a frontal push, hoping to ease the enemy slowly south of the Great Wall.

In this half-year period Lin’s resistance to Chairman Mao’s instructions may roughly be divided into two stages:

In the first stage (March to July 20, 1948), Lin Piao made out that he was to attack Changchun while actually not daring to do so, but holding our main force in the area between Shenyang and Changchun, indecisive and fighting no battle at all.

In mid-April 1948, a month after our winter offensive, Lin proposed attacking Changchun with our main force

in the Northeast while blocking enemy reinforcements with part of our troops there. He blustered that this was his basic idea and that, as for any others, including the idea of Chairman Mao to drive southward, none had any merit whatsoever.

Did Lin Piao really intend to attack Changchun? By no means. In early May 1948, that is, less than 20 days after he proposed "attacking Changchun," he changed his tune and suggested three alternate plans of operations in the Northeast. The first was to attack Changchun immediately. But, he hurried to claim, it would be a risky battle with the chances of losing greater than those of winning; in short, the plan was unfeasible. The second was for our main force to push south to fight along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway and in Jehol and eastern Hopei. But, Lin went on, this way we might not encounter any enemy force at all, or else one as concentrated as that at Changchun and thus unassailable; moreover, grain supply would be very difficult, Lin said, and the enemy at Changchun might take advantage of this and escape. So he dismissed this plan also. Lin's third alternative was to lay siege to Changchun for an extended period, engage the enemy reinforcements moving north from Shenyang and then attack Changchun. He favoured this last plan, not only negating the idea of attacking Changchun immediately but also refusing to carry out Chairman Mao's instruction to drive south.

But Lin was not serious even in proposing this last plan, for only 20 days afterwards he again changed his mind and retracted further. On May 24 Lin Piao dispatched two columns to attack the outskirts of Changchun, with its airfield as the main objective. They wiped out 5,000-6,000 enemy soldiers but at the heavy sacrifice

of over 2,000 of our men. Trembling in his boots, Lin Piao exaggerated both the enemy's combat effectiveness and the difficulty in attacking the city. On this premise he proposed to "besiege Changchun for a prolonged period" with part of our forces and pursue and annihilate the enemy when he attempted to withdraw. The gist of this plan was to keep our main force inactive between Changchun and Shenyang for an extended period. Obviously, with hundreds of thousands of our troops deployed between these two cities, it was unthinkable that the enemy should venture to withdraw from Changchun. Furthermore, Chiang Kai-shek and Wei Li-huang both based their plans on our Northeast army attacking Changchun first. They accordingly decided to lure our main force to this isolated city in order to win time to strengthen their defences at Shenyang and Chinchow. So Lin Piao's proposal played right into the hands of the enemy. It was a most absurd and impractical proposal of a definitely Right-opportunist nature.

Chairman Mao's instructions were most explicit: 1) It was possible to capture Changchun; 2) but our strategic interests demanded that we should not attack that city first, but should deploy our main force against the Peiping-Liaoning Railway instead. Lin Piao's proposals, whether to "attack the city (Changchun)," "besiege the city and attack enemy reinforcements" or "besiege the city for a prolonged period," were all pretexts for resisting Chairman Mao's instructions and concealing his not daring to move south to the Peiping-Liaoning railway line and attack Changchun. Shilly-shallying and at a loss what to do even in the prevailing excellent situation, he took no action whatsoever. Such was the essence of Lin Piao's Right-opportunist thinking.

After repeated criticism by Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission, Lin Piao finally, on July 20, expressed in a report willingness to drive south for battle. Two features of his report are noteworthy: First, Lin Piao, who had long stubbornly refused to drive south, agreed to the southward push only after the Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee's Northeast Bureau had discussed the question of our army's movement. This shows that there had been struggle on this score between comrades of the Standing Committee and Lin Piao. Second, Lin Piao never mentioned the principle of blockading Chiang Kai-shek's units in the Northeast and wiping them out one by one, indicating that his agreement to the southward drive was half-hearted rather than being based on a realization of its strategic importance.

In the second stage (July 21 to September 10, 1948), although Lin Piao agreed, if reluctantly, to advance south, he invented two absurd excuses for continuing his resistance to Chairman Mao's concept of operations. One was that the situation was grave on the southern front, so he could not drive south at once; the other was that grain was in short supply there, which made any immediate southward drive precarious.

Having received Lin Piao's report expressing willingness to drive south, Chairman Mao immediately issued him instructions in which he pointed out the favourable conditions for such a move by our army and also the difficulties that might be met. He asked Lin Piao to look seriously for ways to overcome these difficulties, and also to step up preparations so that operations could start on the southern front in August. But, on the very day that Chairman Mao issued these instructions, Lin

Piao submitted another proposal that the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission send troops to encircle and attack Tatung in Shansi Province so as to divert a part of Fu Tso-yi's troops in northern China there. Time and again Lin stressed the grave situation in the south and wanted our 3rd Army in northern China to move first in order to draw Fu's troops to reinforce Tatung; only then would he move south. He went so far as to declare that the timing of the movement of our main force in the Northeast depended on the shift of the 3rd Army. He also cited hardship in transporting provisions due to damage to railway bridges by flood in the Northeast, and claimed that our main force could not move south before late August or early September, adding that the timetable might be advanced if the 3rd Army moved earlier. All this goes to show how Lin Piao procrastinated and invented all kinds of excuses to resist the southward drive.

Why was Lin Piao so reluctant to drive south? Mainly because he overrated the enemy and the enemy's initiative in sending large reinforcements. He was afraid that if the enemy forces in northern China moved north as reinforcements he might be subjected to pincer attacks by the two large enemy strategic formations. In this connection, he resorted to lies about the enemy's movements to deceive the Party Central Committee. In early August he reported to the Revolutionary Military Commission that a certain number of the enemy's corps in northern China were already deployed in certain places of eastern Hopei Province while a certain enemy corps from eastern China had also been sent there. Exaggerating the seriousness of enemy movements, he calculated that the enemy forces in northern China might co-

ordinate with those at Chinchow in sending reinforcements eastward and link up with those at Shenyang, and that they might even reinforce those at Changchun or support their retreat. This assumption was ludicrous. For there were sharp contradictions at the time between Fu Tso-yi, Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northern China "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters, and Wei Li-huang, Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters. His troops not being Chiang Kai-shek's own, Fu aimed always at preserving them and would never risk his units being destroyed by reinforcing Wei Li-huang's, which were Chiang Kai-shek's own forces. Judging from the general situation then prevailing, it may be said that the enemy would not send reinforcements until he considered that our army had been to a certain extent depleted. Obviously Lin Piao overestimated Fu Tso-yi's initiative in this respect. In the light of this Right-opportunist appraisal, Chairman Mao, in his instructions to Lin, further analysed the enemy's activities. He warned Lin not to be taken in by the enemy but grasp the favourable opportunity and take swift action. Chairman Mao also criticized Lin's wrong idea that the movement of our main force in the Northeast depended on that of our 3rd Army in northern China.

Lin Piao had to give up his unreasonable demand and admit that the movement of our Northeast main force need not hinge on that of the 3rd Army. However, he again brought up as an obstacle the distance over which provisions had to be transported, reiterating that roads had been washed out, that time would be needed to repair them and that since the troops would be without provisions en route the date of their southward move

would be uncertain. In his resistance to driving south, Lin Piao after being criticized by Chairman Mao gave up his pretext of "grave enemy activities" but he still clung to his "difficult provisioning" excuse. His despicable, obdurate attitude of resisting Chairman Mao's instructions was infuriating, to say the least. As a matter of fact, Chairman Mao had instructed Lin Piao two months before to prepare provisions for our troops' southward drive, but Lin completely ignored the instruction. Now, when Chairman Mao gave the order for the southward advance, he said this was impossible because of lack of provisions. Lin had been stressing the enemy's threat on the southern front and demanding that our 3rd Army first move westward to divert the enemy in the Peiping-Tientsin area. Only then, claimed Lin, could our main force in the Northeast fix the time of their southward movement. After Chairman Mao criticized this totally fallacious idea and set a date for the advance west of the 3rd Army, Lin used the provisions question to again defer decision on the date for going south. He calculated meticulously when it came to his own troops' provisioning and their protection against possible enemy movements, but he never gave a thought to the more difficult position of the 3rd Army. This contemptible attitude of Lin Piao's and his Right-opportunist appraisal of enemy activities were of course severely criticized by Chairman Mao.

Lin Piao dared make no further excuses for not driving southward, but he dragged his feet in making arrangements. The Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission again gave Lin many detailed instructions on how to solve the provisions problem, even telling him about the areas along the Peiping-Liaoning

Railway that produced abundant grain which the Party Central Committee's Northeast Bureau could obtain in exchange for cloth. Lin could not now but deploy his forces about September 10, already 10-30 days behind schedule according to Chairman Mao's plan, which envisaged the start of operations along the Peiping-Liaoning railway line in the latter half of August.

Facts proved that none of Lin Piao's pretexts was valid.

As to the enemy activity on the southern front, it was not as serious as Lin Piao made out. His Right-opportunist assessment led him to exaggerate the situation so that he went so far as to demand that the movement of our million-strong Northeast troops be predicated on that of the hard-pressed 50,000-strong 3rd Army in northern China. It was most preposterous to make this the precondition for carrying out the Party Central Committee's directive for the southward drive.

The question of provisions was not as Lin Piao presented it either. Not one column or division had reported insufficient provisions during the whole Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, nor had any asked for emergency transport of supplies. A leading comrade working in the Northeast at the time said that throughout the campaign each fighter received an average of 250 kilogrammes of grain delivered to the front, and that towards its conclusion this amount was practically doubled. Allowing 25 kilogrammes per person per month, each had a 20 months' supply, and after the campaign large quantities of surplus army grain were sent to Shenyang and Changchun for civilian consumption, the remainder being sent to northern China for use by our forces going for battle south of the Great Wall. Lin Piao's allegation of a "grave provisions problem" was blown sky high. Even assum-

ing some problems in provisioning, Lin, as strategic commander of a major war theatre, should have been able to solve them.

Lin's consistent opposition to the southward drive for half a year had two grave results: our Northeast army lost the chance to launch yet another drive in that period; the southward movement of its main force was delayed and so was the start of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign.

To sum up, Lin Piao stubbornly refused to carry out Chairman Mao's instructions on the southward drive of our main force because he overestimated the strength of the enemy and underestimated that of the people, and because he magnified out of all proportion the difficulties involved. He took a totally Right-opportunist stand in appraising the situation of the time.

## 2. LIN PIAO OPPOSED TAKING CHINCHOW TO GAIN THE INITIATIVE IN THE CAMPAIGN

The capture of Chinchow and the complete annihilation of Fan Han-chieh's troops were requisite to achieving the initiative in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign. Chairman Mao time and again instructed Lin Piao on this point: First of all he should consider launching offensives at Chinchow and Tangshan, and whenever possible seize the line from Chinchow to Tangshan and wipe out all or most of Fan Han-chieh's troops; lay the stress of fighting on taking Ihsien, Chinchow and Chihsi, especially Chinchow, which was the key to the whole campaign. To guarantee victory at Chinchow, Chairman Mao instructed Lin Piao promptly to move his command post to the front and make the necessary deployments for the coming attack. Chairman Mao also

pointed out that the sooner Chinchow was taken, the better, that further delay could land our army in a passive position. In his telegrams on the concept of operations for the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, Chairman Mao gave further instructions concerning the capture of Chinchow and attacking enemy reinforcements: **“Because the enemy forces in and near Chinchow, Shanhaikuan and Tangshan are isolated from each other, success in attacking and wiping them out is pretty certain, and there is also a fair hope of success in capturing Chinchow and in attacking enemy reinforcements.”** Therefore **“you must centre your attention on the operations in Chinchow and strive to capture this city as quickly as possible. Even if none of the other objectives is attained and Chinchow alone is captured, you will have won the initiative, which in itself will be a great victory.”**

Why was the attack on Chinchow so important? There were three main reasons:

1) Chinchow was located at an important strategic point on the Peiping-Liaoning railway line. Our quickly taking the city was the key to realizing our objective of sealing off the Kuomintang army in the Northeast and destroying it piecemeal. Stationed in and around Chinchow were over 100,000 enemy troops under Wei Li-huang which had linked up with Fu Tso-yi's group in northern China to the south. The capture of Chinchow would bring the Peiping-Liaoning Railway under our control and strategically separate Wei Li-huang's troops from Fu Tso-yi's group so that we could besiege all the enemy forces in the Northeast. Failure to take Chinchow, even though some smaller cities were captured, would leave the strategically placed Chinchow as a base for the enemy to regain control of the Peiping-Liaoning

Railway, along which he could then escape south of the Great Wall.

2) Our speedy capture of Chinchow would enable us to manoeuvre the enemy and so facilitate our subsequent moves. Because the city was vital to the enemy, Chiang Kai-shek was bound to send Wei Li-huang's troops to its rescue when we intensified our attack, and we could make a rather hard nut easier to crack. For, by the time the enemy was manoeuvred out of his strongholds and had arrived north of the Taling River, not far from Chinchow, we would already have captured the city. We would then be able to shift our forces nearby, wipe out the enemy reinforcements on the move and so realize Chairman Mao's plan of capturing Chinchow and attacking enemy reinforcements. Delay in capturing the city would land us in a passive position where we would invariably find it difficult to attack the enemy reinforcements, which would be approaching from Shenyang.

3) The capture of Chinchow would mean the annihilation of 100,000 Kuomintang troops, depleting by one-fifth the enemy strength in the Northeast and substantially weakening the enemy's confidence to hold cities.

Thus, with the smooth development of the whole campaign hinging on the speedy capture of Chinchow, Chairman Mao repeatedly stressed the importance of resolute thrust in taking the city.

Was the capture of Chinchow possible? Yes, and for two reasons militarily:

First, we were strong and the enemy was weak. While he seemed powerful, with supposedly 100,000 enemy troops garrisoning Chinchow and fairly strong defence works, he had three fatal weaknesses which nullified his apparent combat effectiveness. One was that

he had only seven regular divisions, the rest being special arms, miscellaneous and logistics units. A second was that there were no backbone forces among his seven regular divisions, some of which had only just been recruited from among regional forces, were poorly equipped and ineffective in combat. (In fact, the enemy's regular provisional divisions in the Northeast all consisted of former regional forces.) The enemy's third weakness was that many of his units had previously been put out of action by our army. For example, his 79th Division units air-lifted from Shenyang had already been decimated a couple of times and were hardly fit for combat. Our Northeast army, on the other hand, had grown out of battle-tested forces transferred from the various Liberated Areas south of the Great Wall after victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan. Moreover, some units were reinforced by Red Army veterans and so our army was remarkably combat-worthy. Besides, as it had undergone a new type of ideological education movement and long period of rest and consolidation and had powerful support from the rear, our army's morale was of the highest. Such a strong army was certain to defeat the weak enemy.

Second, there was ample time to seize Chinchow. Gaining time to capture this strongly fortified city depended on slowing down and reducing the enemy reinforcements, which were likely to advance from two directions: from Peiping and Tientsin northward, or from Shenyang westward. As Chairman Mao had noted, the Peiping and Tientsin enemy forces paid special attention to preserving their own strength and would not easily send in reinforcements when we attacked Chinchow. If they did, and sent them by sea via Hulutao, it would take time,

and their number would necessarily be limited. Regarding the enemy forces in Shenyang, as Chairman Mao had also pointed out, they had Changchun to worry about and would not be able to reinforce Chinchow in full strength. Further, because these enemy troops had no way of knowing for certain whether we would attack Chinchow and fend off their reinforcements or besiege the city and attack them, they would be in a quandary whether to send reinforcements at all. By the time they ascertained our real intentions and decided to reinforce, it would be too late — our troops attacking Chinchow would have moved away after capturing the city, in time to annihilate the enemy reinforcements. The most important factor was, of course, that the enemy's strength to launch assaults was generally weak. Subjected to our strong interception, his reinforcements could only advance at snail's pace.

In short, it was possible for us to take Chinchow, a city at once strategically vital to the Kuomintang army in the Northeast and now becoming its vulnerable spot. Chairman Mao had pointed out in his instructions to Lin Piao that there was fair hope of success in first capturing Chinchow, and that its capture would benefit the overall situation. This was a scientific analysis of the necessity and feasibility of taking Chinchow. As a matter of fact, our all-out attack on the city lasted only 31 hours and resulted in the total annihilation of the enemy garrison troops. Its capture completely upset the enemy's dispositions in the Northeast and the overall military situation developed rapidly in our favour. This again dramatically affirmed the analysis by Chairman Mao.

Lin Piao had always been afraid to capture Chinchow. He feared not only the possibility of a tough battle

against large numbers of enemy troops strongly dug in, but the further possibility of being caught in a converging attack by enemy reinforcements rushing in from several directions. For a long time, therefore, Lin Piao refused to attack Chinchow. Actually, he was afraid of four things. One was that the enemy might come by sea to Hulutao and Chihsi to reinforce Chinchow; the second was that Fu Tso-yi's army might come to reinforce from beyond the Great Wall; the third was that the enemy troops at Shenyang might come to Chinchow's rescue or seize Changwu to cut communication between our front and rear; the fourth was that the enemy at Changchun might break through, flee towards Shenyang and then join forces with the Kuomintang troops there to reinforce Chinchow.

Precisely because he took a Right-opportunist stand and wrongly assessed the enemy's situation, Lin Piao made a series of grave mistakes with regard to the direction of attack, and dispositions, plan and command of the campaign.

First, as to the direction of attack, Lin repeatedly shied away from attacking the enemy's vulnerable spot—Chinchow.

For some time Lin Piao had wavered between favouring an attack on Chengteh in Jehol Province and seizing Shanhaikuan, but not taking Chinchow. In early August 1948, he reported to the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission that "six to seven enemy divisions are often stationed in Chinchow" and that "the enemy has completed his military installations in Chinchow, so we are not prepared to attack there." He proposed instead that after taking Ihsien, Kaochiao, Chihsi, Hsingcheng and Suichung, our main force should move

on to attack Chengteh. This meant that after capturing these five cities, our main force should withdraw from the Peiping-Liaoning railway line and offer the enemy a chance to recoup his defensive position, or give facility for the enemy's Northeast troops to retreat to northern China.

Chairman Mao refuted Lin Piao's proposal and clarified three points: 1) If we attacked Chengteh instead of Chinchow, Wei Li-huang would go to all lengths to concentrate his forces on the Chinchow-Tangshan line and in all probability join forces with Fan Han-chieh and advance westward to Fu Tso-yi's rescue, which would likely make things difficult for us. 2) As the areas to the west were short of grain while those to the east were grain producers, there would be no provisions problem if we fought along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway. 3) The main targets of the autumn campaign of our army in the Northeast should be the Kuomintang groups under Wei Li-huang and Fan Han-chieh; we should not think of attacking the 13th Corps in Chengteh under the Kuomintang Northern China "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters after attacking several divisions under Fan.

Even after Lin Piao's erroneous views were negated, he remained undecided about capturing Chinchow, and soon suggested instead an attack on Shanhaikuan after taking the afore-mentioned five cities along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway. This was again refuted by Chairman Mao, who said that attacking Shanhaikuan before Chinchow would waste time and energy and give the enemy at Shenyang time to reinforce. If, however, we attacked Chinchow first, the enemy troops at Shenyang would not likely be able to give prompt aid, for they were in

a confused state themselves and would remain so for some time.

Although Chairman Mao explained clearly the pros and cons, stressing that neither Chengteh nor Shanhaikuan, but only Chinchow, should be our first target, Lin Piao clung to his passive, wait-and-see attitude even after our troops had marched south. Our campaign had been launched for more than 20 days, yet Lin made no move to attack Chinchow and even failed to take Ihsien in its environs. For this he was again severely criticized by Chairman Mao.

Lin Piao's fear of attacking Chinchow stemmed chiefly from his Right-opportunist thinking. The Chinese People's War of Liberation had entered the stage of strategically decisive engagement. Its goal could be accomplished only by daring to launch large-scale campaigns of annihilation and wresting heavily defended big and medium cities from the enemy. This was entirely possible, for our People's Liberation Army was now much more able to storm heavily fortified points and fight large-scale battles of annihilation. Totally blind to this development of the objective situation, Lin Piao was by no means a "military genius," but a short-sighted Right-opportunist with no head for strategy at all.

Second, as to dispositions for the campaign, Lin Piao only very tardily concentrated his main force on Chinchow.

**"Concentrate a superior force to destroy the enemy forces one by one"**—This is an integral concept in Chairman Mao's military thinking and a fundamental principle guiding our army's operations, a principle especially to be carried out in strategically decisive engage-

ments, and without which it will be impossible to wipe out large numbers of enemy forces and win victory.

In view of our army's concept of operations and the deployment of the enemy forces in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, four aspects demanded consideration in the disposition of our Northeast forces: 1) attacking Chinchow; 2) intercepting the enemy troops coming from Chihsi and Hulutao to reinforce Chinchow; 3) preventing the enemy troops at Shenyang from reinforcing Chinchow; 4) preventing the enemy at Changchun from breaking through and fleeing south. Final victory in the whole campaign hinged on the correct handling of the order of importance of these four aspects, of the relationship between the part and the whole, of the various stages of the campaign, and of our troop deployment.

Chairman Mao had long before said: **"I am not objecting to operations in two or more directions, but at any given time there ought to be only one main direction."** During the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign he again pointed out that in the first stage it was advisable **"to leave the enemy at Changchun and Shenyang alone and focus your attention on the enemy at Chinchow, Shanhaikuan and Tangshan,"** and that **"you must now prepare to employ your main force on this line."** Chairman Mao had also repeatedly warned Lin Piao that ordinarily the main force should be concentrated on attacking one point, not distributed evenly. This was a basic guarantee for quickly capturing Chinchow and gaining the initiative in the campaign.

Acting counter to Chairman Mao's instructions, Lin Piao for a long time failed to concentrate our main force on the Chinchow front. On September 3, 1948 Lin proposed the deployment of three columns and 11 in-

dependent divisions around Changchun and between Changchun and Shenyang to deal with the enemy troops in the former city, of four columns near Hsinmin to cope with the enemy troops at Shenyang, and of only five columns and three independent divisions along the Peiping-Liaoning railway line. This was an arrangement completely reversing the proper order of importance. After Chairman Mao's criticism, Lin Piao on September 10 decided to transfer one column from the Hsinmin area to the Peiping-Liaoning line, but the deployment as a whole remained an erroneous one in that it distributed forces evenly between north and south and had no main direction of attack. Not until 9 a.m. on October 3, i.e., a good 20 days after the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign was launched, did Lin Piao, upon Chairman Mao's repeated instructions, revise his plan and send another two columns from the Changchun-Shenyang sector to the Peiping-Liaoning railway line, bringing the total strength there to eight columns and three independent divisions. The main thrust of attack was thus finally centred on the Chinchow front and a long-standing error in disposition corrected.

Chairman Mao says: **"The concentration of troops seems easy but is quite hard in practice. Everybody knows that the best way is to use a large force to defeat a small one, and yet many people fail to do so and on the contrary often divide forces up. The reason is that such military leaders have no head for strategy and are confused by complicated circumstances; hence, they are at the mercy of these circumstances, lose their initiative and have recourse to passive response."** The reason for Lin Piao's repeated mistakes in deploying his forces lay

precisely here. He was a typical example of those commanders who have no head for strategy at all.

Third, in drawing up the plan for the campaign Lin Piao did not proceed from the overall view of capturing Chinchow and attacking enemy reinforcements.

Chairman Mao has always emphasized that **"before fighting the first battle one must have a general idea of how the second, third, fourth, and even the final battle will be fought."** Only in this way can a campaign, once started, develop battle by battle and can there be smooth continuity in fighting, with the enemy forces being annihilated one after another and without ourselves committing the error of vacillation and being tied down. During the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, Chairman Mao pointed out time and again that when our main force had captured Chinchow and the enemy reinforcements from Shenyang advanced to the area north of the Taling River, we should shift our troops and, **"without leaving the Chinchow-Shanhaikuan-Tangshan line," "follow up immediately with large-scale annihilating attacks on the enemy reinforcements and strive to wipe out all Wei Li-huang's troops on the spot."** Taking Chinchow in order to manipulate the enemy and pave the way for annihilating his reinforcements on the move and thus wiping out Wei Li-huang's forces in the Northeast one by one, then and there, was vital to the realization of Chairman Mao's overall plan for the entire campaign.

However, Lin Piao, afraid that the enemy troops at Shenyang might send reinforcements when we attacked Chinchow, deployed strong counter-forces in the Hsinmin area near Shenyang, hoping to prevent the enemy troops there from coming out. That was against Chairman Mao's overall plan for the campaign. Chairman Mao at this

point said that if Lin's plan were to be followed, the enemy at Shenyang, threatened by our strong forces distributed at Hsinmin and its vicinity to intercept his reinforcements, might not dare to venture out and our second battle would not proceed smoothly. To embolden the enemy reinforcements to advance deep into the area north of the Taling River, therefore, we should deploy our counter-forces far from Shenyang. Our main force could then, after taking Chinchow, quickly shift position and surround the reinforcing enemy and annihilate him without difficulty.

Upon Chairman Mao's instruction, Lin Piao readjusted his plan and shifted the troops to west and southwest of Hsinmin. As it turned out, the entire Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign developed precisely as Chairman Mao had predicted. In the initial stage of our assault on Chinchow, the enemy reinforcements from Shenyang dared not move towards Chinchow directly but detoured in the direction of Changwu from where, after we had captured Chinchow, they advanced south to the Heishan-Tahushan sector, exposing themselves like sitting ducks to our attack and annihilation. The successful development of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, like a close chain of events, was due entirely to Chairman Mao's brilliant command.

Fourth, in directing the campaign, Lin Piao kept wavering in making the decision to take Chinchow.

In a sense, war is a contest between the subjective ability of the two armies' commanders to gain, on a given material basis, the superiority and initiative; without correct command in the specific campaign, actual superiority and initiative can never be achieved nor the way paved for victory. So, after the concept of operations

and dispositions for the campaign have been determined, a resolute yet flexible command assumes key importance in guaranteeing its complete success.

Lin Piao's Right-opportunist errors in directing the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign again demonstrated his political nature. Even after the campaign was under way, Lin failed to overcome his fear of fighting a decisive engagement. This was clear, if only in terms of the actual directing of the campaign. Afraid of the enemy and ridden with apprehension, he would become nervous, wavering and hesitant whenever the slightest change occurred in the enemy situation. Several times, therefore, he was indecisive about attacking and capturing Chinchow. To illustrate:

1) A most striking example occurred on October 2, 1948, when our Northeast army had destroyed the enemy in Ihsien, Hsingcheng and Suichung and tactically surrounded Chinchow. At this crucial juncture, because of a slight change in the enemy situation, Lin Piao flinched from attacking Chinchow, and suggested instead shifting the main force back to Changchun. This was a blatant if vain attempt to sabotage Chairman Mao's correct concept of operations for the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign.

Our army's operations along the Peiping-Liaoning railway line were dealing the enemy telling blows. On September 30, Chiang Kai-shek made a hurried flight to Peiping. He ordered the Kuomintang Northern China "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters to send five divisions and the Hsuchow headquarters two divisions to Hulutao to reinforce Chinchow along with the four divisions stationed in Hulutao and Chihhsi. On October 2 the panic-stricken Chiang flew to Shenyang where he decided to organize a "west-bound army" with Liao Yao-hsiang's

9th Army as base, also to reinforce Chinchow. News of this again caused Lin Piao to waver in his plan to take Chinchow. He submitted to the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission a "proposal" that the main force turn back to capture Changchun instead.

The situation was not in fact so serious. Enemy reinforcements were nothing unexpected, it would take time for them to concentrate, and their numbers could not be large. Our army was entirely capable of intercepting these enemy troops and thus gaining sufficient time for our assault on Chinchow, vital to the enemy in the Northeast and our capture of which was prerequisite to our army's seizing the initiative both strategically and for the whole campaign. Lin Piao's proposal to turn back and attack Changchun, if allowed to go through, would not only foil this plan, it would aggravate the difficulties in our next step. Our army would have been set marching back and forth to no purpose between Chinchow and Changchun while the enemy maintained his hold on the Changchun-Shenyang-Chinchow region, or else retreated south with ease. Chairman Mao's overall plan for the strategically decisive engagement would have been completely disrupted. Again, Lin Piao's "proposal" had to be severely criticized by Chairman Mao as a gross mistake and therefore unacceptable to the Party Central Committee. Chairman Mao ordered him to capture Chinchow unfailingly within about 10 days and resolutely carry out the concept of operations for the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign.

In short, it was Chairman Mao's firm, correct command overcoming Lin Piao's Right-opportunist errors in good time that assured victory in the Chinchow battle.

2) Lin Piao's resolve to attack Chinchow was again shaken when Liao Yao-hsiang's army sallying forth from Shenyang rushed towards Changwu to relieve Chinchow, and when the enemy forces bottled up at Changchun rumoured that they would break through.

On October 6, Liao's troops massed at Hsinmin and started out three days later. But instead of going directly southwest to reinforce Chinchow they turned north towards Changwu, their objective being to cut the Tahu-shan-Tungliao Railway linking our front and rear, and so force us to lift our siege of Chinchow. Meanwhile, to divert our attention north, the enemy at Changchun "leaked" his plan to break through south. Such enemy moves posed no direct threat to our plan for the capture of Chinchow but rather indicated their impotence before our powerful offensive. And yet Lin Piao panicked and wavered again. He telegraphed the Party Central Committee repeatedly, pleading the emergency of the enemy "desperately pouring in reinforcements" and "attempting to occupy Changwu so as to cut off our communications," that the enemy troops at Changchun would "certainly take advantage of all this to make a breakthrough." This vacillation on the part of Lin Piao stemming from his Right-opportunist stand was likely again to delay our capture of Chinchow and put us in a passive position.

Chairman Mao pointed out to Lin over and over again that it was not necessary to worry about difficulties in intercepting the enemy sent to relieve Chinchow, because on his way from Shenyang he would be advancing cautiously, slowly, with his ear to the ground. It was not entirely bad for us if the enemy occupied Changwu, which would serve him no purpose so long as we were not afraid of our line of supply being cut. Also, the

enemy troops at Changchun were not really contemplating an immediate breakthrough. Our victory at Chinchow once again demonstrated the correctness of Chairman Mao's command and of his analysis of the enemy situation.

3) Lin Piao dared not move his command post south to the vicinity of the Peiping-Liaoning railway line, though the war situation demanded it. It is our army's glorious tradition to keep the command post moving in the main direction of attack so as to be posted on the enemy's movements and correctly deploy our own forces. But in this respect too Lin Piao dragged his feet, for he dared not fight large-scale battles of annihilation along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway and capture Chinchow. The main force of our Northeast army began moving towards that railway line on September 9, but not until the 21st and only after repeated criticism and urging by Chairman Mao did Lin move his command post a few score kilometres south from Harbin to Shuangcheng, and finally on October 4 he moved it further south to Fuhsin. Lin's protracted dilatoriness in moving his command post forward in the main direction of attack limited his vision in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign and threw his analysis of the enemy situation and hence his battle command far off the mark. Chairman Mao once again severely criticized him, hoping he would learn better.

Conditions constantly change in a war or in the course of any campaign. A good commander should be able to see through the appearance of a thing to its essence, and never waver in his decision when a slight change occurs in the enemy situation. There are numerous instances in history of vacillation and indecision in command resulting in the loss of a good combat opportunity, superiority and the initiative, and so leading to defeat. From its very in-

ception, the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign generally developed as Chairman Mao had predicted. The key question was our army's firmness in its decision to capture Chinchow quickly. But, on this key question, Lin Piao, who was lauded by his sworn followers as an "ever-victorious general," vacillated time and again whenever some little change took place in the enemy situation. His Right-opportunist thinking and incompetence in command was again revealed. The course of victory in the Chinchow battle was one of Chairman Mao's proletarian military line continually overcoming the bourgeois military line of Lin Piao. This is the most striking historical conclusion to be drawn from the capture of Chinchow.

### 3. LIN PIAO REFUSED TO BLOCK THE ENEMY'S RETREAT BY SEA AND FAILED TO SEND TROOPS TO CONTROL YINGKOW

In the second stage of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign Lin Piao, acting in opposition to Chairman Mao's instructions, committed the error of refusing to send troops quickly to control Yingkow so as to block the retreat route by sea of Chiang Kai-shek's troops in the Northeast. After Chairman Mao corrected Lin's mistake of attempting to "turn back to attack Changchun" and distributing strength equally between north and south, our Northeast army on October 4, 1948 readjusted its dispositions for assaulting Chinchow. Besides the four columns and 11 independent divisions to cope with the Shenyang and Changchun enemy troops, five columns and the main force of the Artillery Column were to attack Chinchow, one column was to be stationed at Kao-chiao as general tactical reserve and two columns and three independent divisions were to intercept the enemy

at Chihhsi and Hulutao. The columns to attack Chinchow prepared at once for the battle. Fighting in its environs began on October 9 and ended in victory on the morning of October 12. After further immediate preparations for the capture of the city proper, our army launched its general offensive. The five columns that were to attack Chinchow were organized into three groups. The north assault group consisting of the 2nd and 3rd columns, a division of the 6th Column and the main force of the Artillery Column was to attack from north to south; the south assault group consisting of the 7th and 9th columns was to attack from south to north, while the east assault group consisting of the 8th Column was to attack from east to west. At 10:00 hours of the 14th all the assault groups burst forth in an artillery bombardment, our infantry following up by demolishing enemy defence works and by charging. Around 11:00, our north and south groups had broken through the city walls and engaged the enemy in street fighting. The 8th Column also broke through and penetrated deep into the city. Towards evening, our army had penetrated at 10 points from each of which it deepened its advance. By dawn of the 15th the enemy had been wiped out except for the 10,000-some in the old quarter of Chinchow. At noon our army resumed its attack, assaulting the old quarter, and by dusk all the remaining enemy forces had been annihilated. And so it was that Chinchow was completely liberated in 31 hours of fierce fighting. The enemy casualties totalled 100,000 men, breaking down into seven regular divisions, various regional troops, and logistics and special arms units. Fan Han-chieh, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters, and the army com-

mander Lu Chun-chuan were taken prisoner. Our army now completely controlled the section east of Chihhsi along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway.

During our attack on Chinchow, nine enemy divisions at Hulutao and Chihhsi started out on October 10 to reinforce the city, but up until Chinchow's liberation around the evening of the 15th the enemy reinforcements never broke through the blocking positions of our 4th and 11th columns though they pounded at them for six days and nights. Our army wiped out more than 6,000 of this enemy force and took over 600 prisoner. In this battle to hold off enemy reinforcements, the 34th and 28th regiments of our 4th Column fought magnificently and were conferred the titles "Heroic Regiment of Tashan" and "Heroic Defending Regiment" respectively.

Seeing Chinchow as good as lost, Chiang Kai-shek on October 15 flew for a second time to Shenyang with Tu Yu-ming, Deputy Commander of the Kuomintang "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters at Hsuehchow, to discuss how to cope with the situation. He ordered Cheng Tung-kuo, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters, to lead his troops to break through from Changchun and advance to Shenyang whence, together with the garrison troops there, he was to retreat south of the Great Wall. Chiang had a letter to this effect in his own hand air-dropped to Cheng. But the precipitous fall of Chinchow had scared the enemy out of trying a breakthrough out of Changchun. On the 17th, General Tseng Tse-sheng's 60th Corps, which had been brought to Changchun from Yunnan and which had connection with us, mutinied and came over to our side. Another enemy corps at Changchun, the New 7th, was thus further isolated. Driven

into a tight corner, Cheng Tung-kuo sent emissaries to our army on the 18th to negotiate terms of surrender and on the same day a document was signed. Cheng's troops began laying down arms. By the morning of the 19th Changchun was completely liberated, marking the victory of the first stage of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign.

The liberation of Chinchow and Changchun spelled out the total destruction of the enemy forces in the Northeast. Chiang Kai-shek, however, dreamed of recapturing Chinchow to cover the retreat of his remnants south of the Great Wall. He flew to Peiping on the 18th and called Fu Tso-yi, Wei Li-huang and Tu Yu-ming into conference, deciding that the Kuomintang troops should close in on Chinchow from Hulutao and Changwu in order to open up the Peiping-Liaoning Railway. Liao Yao-hsiang's army in Changwu consisted of 5 corps (including the New 1st and the New 6th, Liao's "crack units") with 11 infantry divisions, plus 3 cavalry brigades. Chiang Kai-shek decided to send the three cavalry brigades back to Shenyang and incorporate the 207th Division's 3rd Brigade from Shenyang into Liao's army. He ordered Liao's army to set out for Chinchow on the 20th. At the same time, Chiang sent Tu Yu-ming to Hulutao to lead in a march on Chinchow the nine divisions stationed in the Hulutao-Chinhsi sector and the two divisions of the 39th Corps which had been newly transferred there from Yentai in Shantung Province. But Chiang Kai-shek was not at all sure of success in this plan and so instructed Wei Li-huang to send troops immediately to capture Yingkow, at the same time ordering the requisitioning of ships in Tientsin for the retreat of his Northeast troops by sea when necessary.

In view of the changed deployment on the enemy side, Chairman Mao advised Lin Piao of the extreme favourableness to our next move the enemy's attempt to regain control of the Peiping-Liaoning Railway would bring. Our Northeast army should in that case be deployed so as to pin down the enemy forces in the Hulutao-Chinhsi sector while shifting our main force to the Heishan-Tahushan sector to annihilate Liao Yao-hsiang's army on the move. Chairman Mao gave Lin Piao many instructions, further pointing out that with the Peiping-Liaoning railway line cut the enemy troops in the Northeast had only Yingkow left as an escape point from which those at Shenyang would most likely attempt fleeing south by sea. Even though Liao Yao-hsiang's troops were heading towards Chinchow, they could turn towards Yingkow even if they had gone as deep as Kou-pangtze south of Heishan. Chairman Mao ordered Lin Piao to send strong forces at once to control Yingkow, build military works there and, if the enemy troops turned in that direction, resist them and then, when our main force arrived, jointly annihilate them. Chairman Mao also pointed out that our troops that had besieged Changchun could be sent to carry out this task, but that as an urgent step the 10th Column in the Tahushan area should first go and put up defence works there. Controlling Yingkow meant leaving no escape route for the enemy and a strategic victory for us.

Lin Piao, however, judging wrongly that "the enemy has begun his general retreat towards Chinchow," dismissed any thought of his trying to escape through Yingkow. So, while he had ordered the six columns in the Chinchow area and the two columns near Changwu to march towards Heishan and Tahushan to close in on

Liao Yao-hsiang's army, he did not send the 10th Column to control Yingkow but only dispatched there the 2nd Independent Division from southern Liaoning. Then, on October 22, he re-ordered this division to rush back west of Hsinmin to block the enemy there. Yingkow thus became a vacuum, and the Kuomintang 52nd Corps in Liaoyang jumped at the chance to seize the port, taking it on the 24th and so controlling the corridor for the enemy's retreat south by sea.

Liao Yao-hsiang's army began on Chiang Kai-shek's order to move south from Changwu on October 20. The next day his forces clashed with our front-line troops in the Heishan-Tahushan sector where for five days running his five corps fiercely attacked our positions without breaking through. By the 25th our eight columns which had advanced north from Chinchow and south from the vicinity of Changwu to pursue the enemy had already approached both flanks and the rear of Liao's units. Liao, finding himself in danger of being encircled by our converging forces, on the evening of October 25 ordered his whole army to flee towards Yingkow, now in Kuomintang hands. We were faced with the grave situation of not being able to wipe out wholly and completely the Kuomintang troops in the Northeast. At this crucial juncture, the commanders and fighters of our Northeast People's Liberation Army, following Chairman Mao's teachings on giving full play to their style of fighting — no fear of fatigue, no fear of difficulty, courage in battle and continuous fighting — overcame all obstacles and pursued this enemy force at incredible speed, overtaking and surrounding it on October 26 in a narrow strip of 20 square kilometres bounded on the east by the Jaoyang River, on the west by Tahushan, on

the north by Wuliangtien and on the south by Weichia-wopeng. Further, while the enemy was in chaos, we completed the separation of his troops on the battlefields. That very evening our army began large-scale encirclement and annihilation of Liao's troops, first wiping out his army headquarters, which threw him into still greater disorder, and proceeding to wipe out the encircled enemy units one by one. The morning of October 28 saw the complete annihilation of the enemy there and the victorious conclusion of the second stage of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign.

Immediately after destroying Liao Yao-hsiang's army our Northeast People's Liberation Army responded to Chairman Mao's instruction and started marching towards Shenyang and Yingkow. On November 1 it occupied urban Shenyang and the next day wiped out the last enemy forces on the southern outskirts. The whole city was liberated, with more than 140,000 enemy troops put out of action. Even before our attack on Shenyang Wei Li-huang, Commander-in-Chief of the Kuomintang Northeast "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters, had fled by plane, leaving his remnant forces to the commander of the Kuomintang 8th Army, Chou Fu-cheng, whom our army soon took prisoner. Simultaneously with our liberation of Shenyang we recaptured Yingkow on November 2, wiping out over 10,000 enemy troops. The headquarters staff of the Kuomintang 52nd Corps and of a division together with three regiments had already fled south by ship, only to be wiped out later in the Shanghai campaign. The entire Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign now ended.

Following the annihilation of the enemy troops at Shenyang, those headed towards Chinchow from Chinghsi

and Hulutao hastily withdrew to Hulutao, which is bounded by the sea on three sides. There, making use of the favourable terrain, they switched over to the defensive until on November 8 some retreated to Tangku and the rest to Shanghai by sea.

#### IV. VICTORY IN THE LIAOHSI-SHENYANG CAMPAIGN WAS A VICTORY FOR CHAIRMAN MAO'S MILITARY LINE

Chairman Mao points out: **“The stage of action for a military man is built upon objective material conditions, but on that stage he can direct the performance of many a drama, full of sound and colour, power and grandeur.”** The Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign was such a drama in the War of Liberation. Its director was the Chinese people's great leader Chairman Mao Tsetung. It was Chairman Mao who, grasping the favourable opportunities, made the decision to launch the strategically decisive engagement in the Chinese People's War of Liberation. It was Chairman Mao who proposed that our army move south to the Peiping-Liaoning Railway, blockade the Chiang Kai-shek forces in the Northeast and wipe them out one by one. It was Chairman Mao who decided to concentrate our forces in attacking Chinchow first while making preparations to destroy the enemy reinforcements from Shenyang. It was again Chairman Mao who decided that, after capturing Chinchow, our forces should quickly turn to surround and completely wipe out Liao Yao-hsiang's army and then march immediately on Shenyang and Yingkow. Chairman Mao's strategic decision and concept of operations, combined with the

Northeast army's and people's hard struggle, made possible the great victory of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign. Such is the historical truth. Lin Piao, who opposed Chairman Mao's instructions, committed a series of Right-opportunist errors throughout the campaign. He consistently played his Right-opportunist role, being terrified of the enemy, hesitant to press forward, wavering and therefore making no positive contribution.

Lin Piao's bourgeois military line in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign found expression mainly in his Right-opportunist overestimation of the enemy's strength and underestimation of that of the people, which made him waver and fear the strategically decisive engagement. He did not dare to march south to the Peiping-Liaoning railway line, thrust in between the Fu Tso-yi and Wei Li-huang strategic groups for battle or to capture Chinchow. Chairman Mao was referring mainly to Lin Piao when he stated in “The Concept of Operations for the Peiping-Tientsin Campaign”: **“Some of our comrades have suffered through overrating the enemy's combat effectiveness.”** Lin's errors in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign were corrected one after another by Chairman Mao through struggle. **“Without combating and thoroughly overcoming these harmful tendencies which damage the revolution and the revolutionary war, it would be impossible to establish a correct line and win victory in this war.”** Without the victory of Chairman Mao's proletarian military line in its struggle against Lin Piao's bourgeois military line, victory in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign would have been impossible.

The Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign showed how Lin Piao's bourgeois military line catered wholly to the needs of Chiang Kai-shek, chief representative of the big land-

lords and big bourgeoisie. Herein lies its ultra-Right essence. When the War of Liberation entered its third year, Chiang Kai-shek was very hard pressed, especially for time. Given time, he could pressgang more people and organize his reactionary troops so that, with additional aid from U.S. imperialism, he could recoup militarily and start his civil war all over again. Lin Piao's bourgeois military line was exactly tailored to fit this need of Chiang Kai-shek for time. With our main force in the Northeast under him, Lin hesitated and wavered between Changchun and Shenyang for half a year, presenting Chiang with half a year to prepare his defences at Shenyang and along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway. By opposing Chairman Mao's instructions time and again, Lin in effect was enabling the enemy to retreat en masse to northern and central China. Had this happened, the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign would have failed, nor could the Huai-Hai and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns have proceeded smoothly. The entire War of Liberation would have been set back.

The Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign as conceived and commanded by Chairman Mao provides a wealth of experience, especially in putting out of action, on the spot and one by one, powerful enemy groups by strategically decisive battles. For example: 1) the experience of fighting, resolutely and in good time, strategically decisive battles when conditions are ripe, according to Chairman Mao's operative principle of **"fighting profitable decisive engagements and avoiding unprofitable ones"**; 2) the experience of following the three principles regarding the first battle (see p. 19), and of continuous fighting; 3) the experience of all-round implementation of Chairman Mao's ten major principles of operation in strategically

decisive battles, especially the principle of concentrating our forces to annihilate the enemy forces one by one, and of combining large-scale mobile warfare with large-scale positional warfare; 4) the experience of bringing the power of political work into full play so as to guarantee victory in the campaigns of a strategically decisive engagement; 5) the experience of mobilizing and organizing the masses to support our army's operations. But the fundamental and most important experience as pointed out by Chairman Mao in his article "On the Great Victory in the Northwest and on the New Type of Ideological Education Movement in the Liberation Army" is: **"A review of the whole situation proves one truth. Provided we firmly oppose conservatism, fear of the enemy and fear of difficulties, and provided we follow the general strategy of the Central Committee of the Party and its directive on the ten major principles of operation, we can unfold our offensives, wipe out vast numbers of enemy troops and strike such blows at the forces of the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang that they can only parry them for a time without being able to hit back, or that they cannot even parry our blows and will be completely wiped out, one after another."**

## PART TWO

### THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO MILITARY LINES IN THE PEIPING-TIENTSIN CAMPAIGN

The Peiping-Tientsin campaign, guided and commanded personally by our great leader Chairman Mao, was one of the three major campaigns in the strategically decisive engagement during the Chinese People's War of Liberation. **"History tells us that correct political and military lines do not emerge and develop spontaneously and tranquilly, but only in the course of struggle."** There was fierce struggle between Chairman Mao's proletarian military line and the bourgeois military line of Lin Piao in the Peiping-Tientsin campaign, and the victory resulting from the former prevailing over the latter was another brilliant triumph for Chairman Mao's military thinking and line.

#### I. A SKETCH OF THE PEIPING-TIENTSIN CAMPAIGN AND ITS STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

This campaign, mounted after the conclusion of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign and during the victorious course of the Huai-Hai campaign, was a large-scale offensive and gigantic war of annihilation. Taking part in this campaign were 1 million People's Liberation

Army men: 200,000 from 2 armies of the Northern China Field Army together with some regional forces, and 800,000 from the 12 infantry columns, 1 special arms column and 1 railway engineering column of the Northeast Field Army. On the enemy side were 600,000 men: the 4 armies, with 13 corps, of Fu Tso-yi's group (which at that time included some of Chiang Kai-shek's own troops), together with some regional "peace preservation corps." Of this enemy force, one corps of 40,000 men was deployed in Kueisui while the other 12 corps of 44 divisions were scattered along the 500 kilometres from Changchiakou in the west to Tangshan in the east.

The Peiping-Tientsin campaign lasted more than two months and was carried out in three stages. The first stage was from November 29, 1948, when the 3rd Army of our Northern China Field Army arrived in the Changchiakou area, to December 20, when our Northeast Field Army cut the links between Peiping, Tientsin and Tangku. In this stage our troops chiefly followed the principle of **"encircling without attacking"** and **"cutting off without encircling,"** the aim being to tie down Fu Tso-yi's troops as well as Chiang Kai-shek's to prevent their escape. This would win time for the main force of our Northeast Field Army to move south of the Great Wall before our strategic encirclement and tactical cutting off of the enemy forces. In this stage our troops succeeded in cutting off and encircling the enemy at five isolated points — Changchiakou, Hsinpao-an, Peiping, Tientsin and Tangku — creating favourable conditions for wiping out the encircled enemy piecemeal.

In the second stage, from December 21, 1948 to January 15, 1949, our army "pounded both ends and then took the middle," wiping out the enemy forces in

Hsinpao-an, Changchiakou and Tientsin and thus further isolating Peiping.

In the third stage, January 16-31, 1949 we combined political with military offensive and forced the enemy in Peiping to accept peaceful reorganization.

During the Peiping-Tientsin campaign we wiped out and reorganized over 520,000 troops of Fu Tso-yi's group in northern China and liberated the major cities of Peiping, Tientsin, Tangshan and Changchiakou. All of northern China was now liberated except for the cities of Taiyuan, Tatung, Hsinhsiang and Anyang, and a few isolated points (Kueisui, for example) which we purposefully passed over for the time being.

Like the other two campaigns (the Liaohsi-Shenyang and the Huai-Hai), the Peiping-Tientsin campaign was of great importance in the annals of the Chinese People's War of Liberation. With more than 1.5 million of its troops wiped out in these three campaigns, the reactionary Kuomintang regime was tottering and falling apart. As Chairman Mao pointed out in his article "Why Do the Badly Split Reactionaries Still Idly Clamour for 'Total Peace'?" of February 15, 1949, **"the reactionary Kuomintang rule is collapsing more rapidly than was expected. It is only a little over four months since the People's Liberation Army captured Tsinan and only a little over three months since it captured Shenyang, but all the remnant forces of the Kuomintang in the military, political, economic, cultural and propaganda fields are already hopelessly split and disintegrated. The general collapse of Kuomintang rule began with the Liaohsi-Shenyang and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns on the northern front and the Huai-Hai campaign on the southern front. In less than four months, from early October last year to the**

**end of January this year, these three campaigns cost the Kuomintang a total of more than 1.54 million men, including 144 entire divisions of its regular army. The general collapse of Kuomintang rule is the inevitable outcome of the great victories of the Chinese People's War of Liberation and of the revolutionary movement of the Chinese people. . . ."** In the wake of these three major campaigns the People's Liberation Army, enthusiastically responding to Chairman Mao's great call, **"Carry the revolution through to the end,"** and acting resolutely on his **"order to the army for the countrywide advance,"** switched over to strategic countrywide pursuit of the enemy and, with the support of the people throughout the country, quickly overthrew the Chiang Kai-shek regime. These brilliant achievements bear out the wisdom of Chairman Mao's timely decision on launching the strategically decisive engagement in the Chinese People's War of Liberation.

## II. THE WAR SITUATION BEFORE THE PEIPING-TIENTSIN CAMPAIGN. THE NECESSITY AND FEASIBILITY OF LAUNCHING IT WITHOUT DELAY

Victory in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign and in the other theatres effected a fundamental change in the nationwide military balance of forces between the enemy and ourselves. The Kuomintang forces had been depleted from the 3.65 million men of June 1948 to 2.9 million, while the People's Liberation Army had grown from 2.8 million men to more than 3 million. The military situation in the country had reached **"a new turning point."**

**“The People’s Liberation Army, long superior in quality, has now become superior in numbers as well. This is a sign that the victory of the Chinese revolution and the realization of peace in China are at hand.”** In view of this tremendous change in the military situation, Chairman Mao now called on the whole Party, army and people to step up the struggle so as to **“finally and completely wipe out the reactionary forces and build a united, democratic people’s republic in the whole country.”**

In early November 1948, Chairman Mao personally organized and commanded the Eastern China and Central Plains Field Armies to launch the Huai-Hai campaign with the force of an avalanche. The Kuomintang army under Huang Po-tao was soon completely wiped out and shortly afterwards the army under Huang Wei as well as Tu Yu-ming’s group were encircled. The units under Liu Chih, Commander of the Kuomintang “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters at Hsuehchow, had been or were in the process of being wiped out.

The enemy forces in the northern China theatre, now in an isolated and precarious position, were extremely nervous. When, in the latter half of 1947 our troops there switched over to the strategic counter-offensive and offensive, Fu Tso-yi’s troops were strategically placed in a position of passive defence and had to dig in at a number of points or along several lines. After the switch-over, our army between October 20 and 22 won a signal victory in the battle of Chingfengtien, wiping out more than 20,000 of the enemy’s 3rd Corps troops. On November 6, it launched the battle of Shihchiachuang, liberating this important city in northern China on November 12 and wiping out another 20,000 enemy troops. In the first half of 1948 and a little later, our troops in

northern China fought the Chahar-Suiyuan campaign and mounted attacks in Jehol, Chahar, eastern Hopei and northern Paoting on the northern front, wiping out more than 40,000 enemy troops and liberating vast areas. On the southern front, they conducted the battles of Linfen and of central Shansi, wiping out over 120,000 enemy troops and bottling up the Kuomintang Shansi troops under Yen Hsi-shan in the isolated cities of Taiyuan and Tatung. The whole of Shansi Province was thus virtually liberated and the two large liberated areas of Shansi-Chahar-Hopei and Shansi-Hopei-Shantung-Honan were linked up as one contiguous whole.

In autumn 1948, under Chairman Mao’s unified disposition, our troops in northern China sent part of their main forces west to Suiyuan Province to co-ordinate with our Northeast army in waging the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign. They liberated vast areas in Suiyuan and severed Fu Tso-yi’s group from its rear in that province. This forced Fu to dig in and defend a number of points and lines along the three railways branching out from Peiping: in the east, Shanhaikuan, Chinwangtao, Luanhsien, Tangshan, Tangku, Tientsin and Peiping along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway; in the south, points north of Paoting on the northern section of the Peiping-Hankow Railway; in the west, mainly Peiping, Hsuanhua and Changchiakou along the Peiping-Suiyuan Railway. North of Peiping, Fu defended mainly the line from Chengteh to Tungchow.

Although before the Peiping-Tientsin campaign Fu Tso-yi’s troops were numerically superior to our northern China units (Fu had 600,000 men against our 400,000, only half of whom comprising two armies and some regional forces could engage Fu), they were at a dis-

advantage strategically. Especially since Wei Li-huang's troops in the Northeast had been wiped out and those of Liu Chih in eastern China were being wiped out unit after unit, Fu was panicked all the more because he knew that our Northeast Field Army would certainly move south of the Great Wall bringing him under the strong pressure of our Northern China and Northeast Field Armies. Analysing the enemy situation in northern China, Chairman Mao pointed out that **"they are like birds startled by the mere twang of a bow-string."** This description accurately reflected the enemy's inherent weakness and the possibility of his attempting a retreat at any moment.

However, as there were clashes of interest and numerous contradictions within his camp, the enemy was indecisive as to whether his troops in the Peiping-Tientsin area should entrench there, or flee south of the Yangtze River or possibly westward to Suiyuan. This predicament showed the deepening contradictions between U.S. imperialism, Chiang Kai-shek and Fu Tso-yi.

U.S. imperialism, unwilling lightly to give up the interests it had gained from its aggression against China, feared that abandonment of northern China might pose a serious threat to the Yangtze valley. It stood, therefore, for holding on in Peiping and Tientsin in an attempt to check our Northeast and Northern China Field Armies with Fu Tso-yi's troops so that it could support Chiang Kai-shek in regrouping his forces in the south for a comeback. Consequently it promised Fu direct aid and military equipment, sending him 70,000 rifles and 200 million rounds of ammunition in an attempt to augment his arms and stiffen his determination to defend the Peiping-Tientsin area.

When Wei Li-huang's troops had been wiped out in the Northeast and Liu Chih's were being wiped out in eastern China, Chiang Kai-shek at first intended to transfer Fu Tso-yi's troops south to strengthen the Yangtze front and protect the Nanking-Shanghai area, centre of his reactionary rule. He offered Fu the post of "governor-general of the Southeast" on condition that he take his troops south. But Chiang later changed his mind, mainly for the following reasons: 1) He saw that U.S. imperialism was set on holding Peiping and Tientsin. If he defied his master's wish, it might become difficult for him to obtain further U.S. military aid. 2) Fu Tso-yi was not willing to withdraw to the south because he did not belong to Chiang's own faction. 3) There were not enough ships for 44 divisions to withdraw by sea, while withdrawal by land would be hindered by our troops' interception all along the way. So Chiang decided to sacrifice Fu to our army if necessary, in order to gain time to reorganize his own forces and strengthen the Yangtze front.

Fu Tso-yi also had his own calculations. He was afraid that, not belonging to Chiang's own faction, his troops might be taken over by the latter if he withdrew south. His main idea was to flee west to Suiyuan and align with Hu Tsung-nan in the Northwest for a last-ditch struggle. But on this he was still undecided for the following reasons: 1) U.S. imperialism counted on Fu firmly defending Peiping and Tientsin. 2) There were 24 divisions of Chiang's troops and only 20 divisions of Fu's own in the Peiping-Tientsin area; Chiang would never agree to Fu's flight. 3) Fu misjudged the situation. As Chairman Mao has pointed out: **"The enemy always underrates the energy of our army and overrates his own strength,**

though at the same time he is like a bird startled by the mere twang of a bow-string." Fu estimated that after the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign our Northeast Field Army would require at least 3-6 months' rest and consolidation before it could fight south of the Great Wall. During this interval, he reckoned, he could receive U.S. aid to build up his forces. He worked out a two-stage plan covering six months. In the first three months he would recruit 200,000 men, in the second another 300,000, so that building on his original troop strength he would have a total of around one million men—about the same, according to his estimate, as the combined strength of our Northern China and Northeast Field Armies after the latter had moved south of the Great Wall. Fu Tso-yi decided, therefore, to hold out in Peiping and Tientsin, and not flee west to Suiyuan unless conditions dictated.

Early in November 1948, Chiang Kai-shek, Fu Tso-yi and other Kuomintang generals met in a military conference at Nanking to discuss the defence of the Peiping-Tientsin area. After some open and behind-the-scenes struggles they adopted the policy of "temporarily defending Peiping and Tientsin, holding on to the seaport, increasing strength and watching developments." They wanted to hold on to the Tangku seaport to facilitate their withdrawal south when necessary, and also as a port of entry for U.S. aid. "Watching developments" meant following the changing situation in other parts of the world (the Kuomintang reactionaries were then working hard to get the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union to intervene in the Chinese revolution), keeping a close watch on the trend of events in China itself, and watching for our Northeast Field Army's advance south of the Great Wall. So it is clear that the

enemy's policy remained one of preparing to flee while keeping an eye on the situation.

In line with this policy, Chiang Kai-shek wanted Fu Tso-yi to readjust his troop disposition and shorten his lines of defence in order to concentrate his forces in the Peiping-Tientsin-Tangshan triangle, i.e., to concentrate them in the east to the neglect of the west. At the same time Fu was allowed to recruit three more corps. Chiang's intention was clear: If, after our Northeast Field Army had moved south of the Great Wall, Fu's troops could not hold out, he could make use of Tangku and organize temporary defence to check our advance and gain time for the Kuomintang troops' gradual withdrawal by sea.

But Fu did not act entirely according to Chiang's wishes. He withdrew only the 13th and 86th corps from Chengteh, Chinwangtao and Shanhaikuan to the Peiping-Tientsin area, and had all of Chiang's 24 divisions in northern China deployed in the Peiping-Tientsin-Tangshan triangle while stationing his own 20 divisions between Peiping and Changchiakou. This meant that Chiang's troops would have to take the brunt of our Northeast army's advance along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway to northern China while Fu's divisions could move west to Suiyuan unscathed.

Having contracted his front, Fu revised his disposition plan, dividing the Peiping-Tientsin-Changchiakou area into three defence sectors. The first was the Changchiakou sector with the city itself as centre and including the Changpei-Wanchuan-Hsuanhua-Huai-an line, defended by Fu's 11th Army headquarters, 1 corps headquarters and 7 divisions (brigades). The second was the Peiping sector with 1 general headquarters, 2 army

headquarters, 6 corps headquarters and 20 divisions. The third was the Tientsin-Tangku sector, defended mainly by the Kuomintang Tientsin garrison headquarters and the 17th Army, altogether 5 corps headquarters and 17 divisions. These formed a long, narrow strip of defence extending 500 kilometres from Tangshan in the east to Changchiakou in the west. This disposition for defending a number of points and lines was very favourable to us in carrying out the strategic encirclement and tactical cutting apart of the enemy. (See Sketch Map 2.)

From the above we can draw some conclusions:

1) The objective situation in the whole country and the northern China theatre confronted us with the strategic task of launching the Peiping-Tientsin campaign swiftly and wiping out northern China's enemy troops on the spot. For, "like birds startled by the mere twang of a bow-string," the enemy was liable to flee, and his flight, no matter where, was not in the interests of the rapid liberation of the whole country.

2) We had favourable conditions to carry out this task. First, with the enemy rapidly collapsing, we had countrywide advantage. Second, with the whole of the Northeast liberated, our entire Northeast Field Army could march south of the Great Wall to fight in the Peiping-Tientsin campaign. The combined strength of our Northern China and Northeast Field Armies was absolutely superior to that of the enemy in Peiping and Tientsin. Third, the five major Liberated Areas had in the main been linked up, providing sufficient manpower, material and financial backing for the Peiping-Tientsin campaign. Fourth, the enemy in northern China was hesitant and wavering, and his disposition over a long, narrow strip could facilitate his being encircled and cut

apart by the main units of our Northern China and Northeast Field Armies.

In a word, it was both necessary and possible, upon the conclusion of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign and while the Huai-Hai campaign was developing successfully, to start the Peiping-Tientsin campaign without delay and wipe out the enemy in northern China on the spot. It was on the basis of the favourable conditions throughout the country and in the northern China theatre in particular that our great leader Chairman Mao made the timely and wise strategic decision that our Northeast main force should move south of the Great Wall at an early date so as to wipe out the enemy in northern China and not allow him to get away.

As commander of the Northeast Field Army, the renegade and traitor Lin Piao, however, took a Right-opportunist stand and brazenly opposed Chairman Mao's wise decision. At critical junctures and on key questions concerning the Peiping-Tientsin campaign, Lin repeatedly defied the instructions of Chairman Mao, the Party Central Committee and its Revolutionary Military Commission. Had it not been for Chairman Mao's prompt and resolute measures to overcome Lin's mistakes, the Peiping-Tientsin campaign would have failed, delaying the countrywide victory. Lin Piao's mistakes and criminal acts in this campaign were irrefutable.

### III. MAJOR ISSUES IN THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO MILITARY LINES IN THE PEIPING-TIENTSIN CAMPAIGN

The struggle between Chairman Mao's proletarian military line and the bourgeois military line of Lin Piao



in the Peiping-Tientsin campaign focused on whether or not we should launch the campaign quickly and by surprise, wipe out the enemy forces in northern China on the spot and so win complete victory in the strategically decisive engagement as a whole. Specifically, it concerned three questions: Should our Northeast Field Army move south of the Great Wall as soon as possible? Should it move under cover? Should the principle of **“encircling without attacking”** and **“cutting off without encircling”** be followed during the first stage of the campaign so as quickly to accomplish the strategic encirclement and tactical cutting apart of the enemy forces in the Peiping-Tientsin area?

1. LIN PIAO OPPOSED CHAIRMAN MAO'S INSTRUCTION  
THAT OUR NORTHEAST FIELD ARMY  
MOVE SOUTH OF THE GREAT WALL  
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

To overthrow Chiang Kai-shek and liberate the whole country at the earliest possible date, Chairman Mao, with great foresight and the entire situation in mind, boldly decided swiftly to follow up the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign and the successful development of the Huai-Hai campaign with the launching of the Peiping-Tientsin campaign. Chairman Mao issued a series of instructions scientifically analysing the whole country's military and political situation and putting forward the concept of operations that called for pinning down the enemy forces in the Peiping-Tientsin area and completely annihilating them on the spot. He made a well-considered disposition plan for the campaign and adopted brilliant measures that ensured the overall victory of the strategic decisive engagement.

On the eve of the Peiping-Tientsin campaign, the reactionary Kuomintang government was already on the brink of all-round military, political and economic collapse, and this prompted Chiang Kai-shek to think about strengthening his defences along the Yangtze River front. To do this, there was only the Kuomintang strategic army group in northern China available for transfer, more specifically the 24 divisions of Chiang's own faction, while none of the other three Kuomintang strategic groups could be transferred, certainly not immediately. For Liu Chih's group in eastern China was being surrounded and wiped out, Hu Tsung-nan's group in northwestern China had all it could do trying to defend Szechuan and southwestern China, and Pai Chung-hsi's central China group was mainly deployed around Wuhan to defend the middle Yangtze valley. On the other hand, any southward withdrawal of Fu Tso-yi's group en bloc was bound to meet with Fu's opposition, besides being difficult from the aspect of transporting so many troops by sea in a short period. Chiang Kai-shek's 24 personal divisions were therefore the only units that could be trans-shipped from northern China to the Yangtze River front.

As for the enemy forces in northern China, they faced three alternatives: 1) entrench in the Peiping-Tientsin area; 2) Chiang Kai-shek's 24 divisions withdraw to the Nanking area and Fu Tso-yi's 20 divisions flee west to Suiyuan; 3) Chiang's and Fu's divisions both withdraw to the Nanking area.

Their first alternative would be the most advantageous to us. Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission emphasized that the overall situation demanded our tying down the whole

of Fu Tso-yi's group in northern China and wiping it out there. This would facilitate the move of the main force of our Northeast Field Army to northern China and hasten the collapse of the Chiang Kai-shek bandit regime by preventing its organizing defences south of the Yangtze. And, while the enemy's escape south or west might enable us to take the Peiping-Tientsin area without a fight, it could only harm the further development of the War of Liberation.

But neither were our own forces in northern China adequate to tie down and wipe out on the spot both Chiang's and Fu's forces there. The 1st Army of our Northern China Field Army, which consisted of three armies at that time, was encircling and destroying Yen Hsi-shan's forces in the Taiyuan area. Available for action in the Peiping-Tientsin campaign were only the 2nd Army (in the Chuyang area) and the 3rd Army (which was encircling Kueisui), plus the advance army (two columns, already in the Chihhsien-Yutien area) of our Northeast Field Army, freshly arrived in the northern China theatre. These two northern China armies of ours were insufficient to prevent the flight of Fu's 20 divisions west to Suiyuan, should he so decide, to say nothing of intercepting and wiping out their main forces. Moreover, our 2nd Army in northern China and advance army from the Northeast could not stop Chiang's 24 divisions either, should they concentrate around Tientsin and Tangku and then slip out south by sea. And, if Fu's forces fled west, Chiang's would certainly flee south at the same time. The circumstances demanded that we lose no time in increasing our forces in the northern China theatre to wipe out the enemy there.

Our Northeast Field Army must move quickly south of the Great Wall.

As Marx and Engels pointed out in their article "Russell's Resignation — On the Krim Incident": "**. . . Time is victory in war. To let the favourable moment slip when a superior force can be thrown against the enemy is the biggest mistake that can be made in waging warfare.**" Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission made the timely decision that after the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign the main force of our Northeast army should postpone rest and consolidation and move at once south of the Great Wall for the strategic encirclement and tactical cutting off of the enemy in northern China, resting and consolidating only after this task was accomplished. The enemy should be destroyed piecemeal when our disposition was finalized. This entirely correct decision was the first prerequisite to annihilating the enemy forces in northern China wholly and on the spot.

Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission issued a series of instructions for the Northeast Field Army to move without delay south of the Great Wall so that we could form a powerful, superior force in preparation of the timely launching of the Peiping-Tientsin campaign. In latter October 1948, i.e., before the conclusion of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, Chairman Mao had already instructed Lin Piao that, while sending the Northeast Field Army's 4th and 11th columns, then in the Chinchow area, south of the Great Wall as advance party, he should prepare ideologically, organizationally and materially for our main force to follow south. Chairman Mao pointed out that the task set at the meeting of the Party Cen-

tral Committee Political Bureau in September 1948, namely, to build an army of 5 million, annihilate 500 brigades of the enemy's regular forces and completely overthrow the Kuomintang regime in about five years (from July 1946), might possibly be accomplished one year earlier, since the war was developing at great speed. Chairman Mao specially ordered Lin Piao to hasten preparations and spread this idea among cadres. He also ordered the repair within one month of the Shenyang-Chinchow and Changwu-Ihsien-Chengteh railways, as well as the main highways in Jehol Province and eastern Hopei, to facilitate military transport and the delivery of grain and ammunition to the front in anticipation of the forthcoming campaign. Then again, on November 16, Chairman Mao instructed Lin Piao to send the Northeast main force south of the Great Wall as soon as possible and encircle Tientsin, Tangku and Tangshan, resting and consolidating only after this was done so as to prevent the enemy's escape by sea. The Revolutionary Military Commission subsequently set the date for the southward advance at about November 25. Chairman Mao's instructions were made in the light of the overall war situation and the actual conditions of our Northeast army, correctly handling the relationship between the whole and the part. The Northeast Field Army, having just fought the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, in fact needed rest, consolidation and replacement. If it took time out for these before moving south of the Great Wall, however, the enemy in northern China would likely have fled, our forces there being insufficient to stop him from doing so. Only by following Chairman Mao's instructions could we seize the initiative and, with thorough

preparation, launch the attack according to our own schedule.

But Lin Piao, taking a Right-opportunist stand, turned a deaf ear to Chairman Mao's instructions and countered them with passive resistance. He made no preparations whatsoever. Overestimation of the strength of the enemy and underestimation of that of the people blinded him to the imminent doom of Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary rule, to the earlier-than-expected victory of the War of Liberation, and to the benefit to the overall situation the wiping out of the northern China enemy troops on the spot would bring. He dared not seize early nationwide victory by fighting continuously and launching the Peiping-Tientsin campaign at the earliest possible date.

Chairman Mao says: **"We are for decisive engagements whenever circumstances are favourable, whether in battles or in major or minor campaigns, and in this respect we should never tolerate passivity."** But Lin Piao invented various excuses and held the army back and away from battle in opposition to Chairman Mao's instructions for the Northeast army's main force to advance south of the Great Wall as soon as possible.

Chairman Mao then sternly instructed Lin Piao to order all columns to complete preparations within one or two days so that on November 21 or 22 the whole Northeast army, or at least eight columns, could advance at the double and by the shortest route and surround Tangshan, Tangku and Tientsin before the enemy knew it, so as to prevent his escape.

Repeatedly and sternly ordered and urged by Chairman Mao and the Revolutionary Military Commission, Lin Piao agreed, if reluctantly, on November 19 to send the Northeast main force south. On the 20th he asked

for a day's grace, scheduling the operation for the 23rd. Fully 20 days (from the end of October, when Chairman Mao ordered him to prepare ideologically, organizationally and materially, to November 19, when he grudgingly agreed) had elapsed, during which time Lin had made no preparations at all for our army's march to northern China. His resistance and procrastination seriously affected our troops' actions. Some units set out hastily after the simplest mobilization, some held a cadres' meeting and started out with no mobilization, and some mobilized only on the march.

Lin Piao made all sorts of excuses in justification. "Fighters who live in the Northeast are afraid of going so far from home, while some cadres are beginning to think of a life of ease and comfort," drivelled he, slandering to the hilt the commanders and fighters of our Northeast Field Army. Lin regarded them as short-sighted "inferior men" only caring for "oil, salt, sauce, vinegar and firewood" and "wife, sons and daughters," thinking only of self and not of making revolution, and having no revolutionary aspirations at all. He sang in complete unison with Confucius' nonsense that "the highest are the wise and the lowest are the stupid," that "the superior man thinks in terms of righteousness, the inferior man in terms of gain," that "the superior man is concerned with virtue, the inferior man with farming; the superior man is concerned with law, the inferior man with benefits," etc., etc. In fact, the commanders and fighters of the Northeast Field Army had very high class consciousness. Many were emancipated peasants who had joined the people's army to defend the fruits of victory, and their political awareness had been further raised as a result of a new type of ideological education

movement in the army. Encouraged by the excellent situation in the strategically decisive engagement and by the victory of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, the commanders and fighters enthusiastically responded to Chairman Mao's great call, "**Overthrow Chiang Kai-shek and liberate all China!**" They were most eager to move south of the Great Wall and join the battle to liberate northern China and the whole country.

In spite of Lin Piao's obstruction which led to inadequate mobilization and hasty preparation, the Northeast Field Army started marching immediately to northern China upon receipt of the order from Chairman Mao and the Revolutionary Military Commission. The various columns set out between November 23 and 26, marching continuously. In the highest of spirits, they covered 500-750 kilometres at top speed and arrived at the Peiping-Tientsin front in 15-20 days or more, sooner than estimated by the Revolutionary Military Commission. This fully demonstrated the high class consciousness of our commanders and fighters, and their determination to carry out Chairman Mao's instructions. And the same applied to the people of the Northeast Liberated Area, who gave full support to the army in its southward advance, the 150,000 civilian workers arriving at the Peiping-Tientsin front on schedule. Reporting to the Revolutionary Military Commission on January 1, 1949, the Northeast Field Army headquarters stated: "Our vanguard units set out on November 23 and all units of the army had arrived in eastern Hopei within a month. They were able to begin operations without rest and consolidation as they were well supplied all along the route of march and maintained excellent morale in the victorious situation."

But Lin Piao complained: "The filling in of our ranks by new recruits and captured Kuomintang soldiers is not yet completed, and it will take a fairly long time to educate the liberated soldiers. Desertions and depletion will be even more serious in these circumstances." What a dark picture Lin drew of our Northeast army! The gist of this was that unless work was done over a fairly long period "desertions and depletion will be even more serious" when our troops started their southward march, that it would be impossible to lead the troops to the northern China theatre and therefore out of the question for them to join the Peiping-Tientsin campaign.

What were the facts? In the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign our army won great victories with few casualties. Replacement was very quickly completed, drawing in new recruits and liberated Kuomintang soldiers. The Northeast Field Army added 170,000 men to its ranks, of whom 110,000 were liberated from the defeated Kuomintang units and 60,000 were emancipated peasants who had newly joined our army. Together, these constituted 21 per cent of the 800,000 Northeast troops entering northern China. Even with the large influx of new elements, and despite Lin Piao's obstruction and sabotage and resultant lack of mobilization, the morale of our troops soared, thanks to the correct leadership of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee, and to the encouragement engendered by the victorious situation. They arrived at the Peiping-Tientsin front after their long march, with negligible non-combat depletion and none of the dire consequences Lin had predicted.

Deliberately exaggerating difficulties, Lin Piao also said: "The army has not been issued cotton-padded overcoats, caps and shoes for winter." It is true that due to

continuous fighting in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign some troops had not yet been issued winter clothing, but this was not an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the army's moving south of the Great Wall. Transport means and capacity of the Northeast Field Army and the Northeast Liberated Area at that time were sufficient to ensure supply for the military operations, and the needed winter clothing could be quickly sent to the troops on the march.

Two railways were available for the Northeast army's move south: the Peiping-Liaoning line and the Changwu-Ihsien-Chengteh line. The former had been damaged in the fighting, but with the Northeast Field Army's Railway Engineering Column and available local railway workers, the line could be repaired without delay. And in fact this was done. As a leading comrade then working in the Northeast reported to the Revolutionary Military Commission on November 23, 1948: "The Chinchow-Shanhaikuan section of the Peiping-Liaoning Railway is under repair up to Hsingcheng, and the work can be completed up to Shanhaikuan within this month. After the troops move south of the Great Wall, the repair work there can be undertaken by two detachments. The Harbin-Tungliao-Changwu-Hsinlitun-Chinchow line is already open, and the section from Shenyang to Hsinlitun will be open by the end of this month. Four to six trains (each of 25-30 waggons of 30-ton capacity) can travel the Chinchow-Shanhaikuan section every day, barring enemy planes' damaging the line. We are now planning to organize sea transport from Yingkow, Hulutao and Talien as an auxiliary measure."

From this it can be seen that rail transport was available straight through from Harbin to Shanhaikuan

already by the end of November 1948. There were highways in addition. Besides the railways with a daily capacity of 3,000-5,400 tons of freight for the front, trucks, mule and horse carts and civilian labour provided tremendous transport facility. We had 3,000 trucks at our disposal (1,000 from three transport regiments of the Northeast Field Army's logistics department and 2,000 mobilized locally), 8,000 animal-drawn carts, 140,000 draught animals (including the 100,000 belonging to the army) and 150,000 civilian workers. In addition, the Eastern Hopei Liberated Area in northern China organized 5,000 carts to accompany the troops. Available transport, therefore, was entirely adequate to ensure supplies to the Northeast army on the march. Actually, in the movement south to the Peiping-Tientsin front, 500 waggonloads of provisions and 420 waggonloads of ammunition and military equipment were transported to the Chinchow-Shanhaikuan area by rail, while 30,000 barrels of oil, and cotton-padded caps, shoes and overcoats, besides miscellaneous supplies, were also speedily delivered.

In a word, while Chairman Mao repeatedly stressed our Northeast Field Army main force's taking the shortest route and proceeding at top speed south of the Great Wall to meet the need of grasping the favourable moment and concentrating a superior force to speedily encircle the enemy in the Peiping-Tientsin area and completely wipe him out, Lin Piao, who had no faith in people's war or a people's army, invented all kinds of pretexts to withhold troops from action and time and again put off the southward advance. This meant letting slip the favourable moment, giving the enemy a chance to escape and thus sabotaging Chairman Mao's strategic

decision for the on-the-spot annihilation of the enemy in northern China.

2. LIN PIAO RESISTED CHAIRMAN MAO'S ORDER  
FOR OUR REAR UNITS NOT TO TAKE  
THE SHANHAIKUAN ROUTE IN THEIR  
SOUTHWARD ADVANCE

Chairman Mao had repeatedly indicated the necessity of grasping the war situation as a whole and making the subjective direction of war correspond to the objective conditions. He said that **"victory or defeat in a war is first and foremost a question of whether the situation as a whole and its various stages are properly taken into account."** **"What is most important for the person in overall command is to concentrate on attending to the war situation as a whole."** The enemy forces in northern China, in a state of nerves by now, remained temporarily in the Peiping-Tientsin area to watch developments, especially the movements of our Northeast Field Army, but ready to flee at any moment. On our side, it would take 20-30 days for our Northeast forces to move from Chinchow, Shenyang and Yingkow to the Peiping-Tientsin front and complete the encirclement of the enemy troops there. Our pinning down these enemy troops in the meantime was the second prerequisite to complete victory in the Peiping-Tientsin campaign.

In order to tie down the enemy so that we could launch the Peiping-Tientsin campaign by surprise and wipe him out, Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission took the following strategic measures: In the northern China theatre the 1st Army was ordered to postpone its attack on Taiyuan, the 3rd Army to break up its encirclement of Kueisui

and concentrate around Chining, and the 7th Column to keep a close watch on the enemy forces at Paoting but not wipe them out. Instructions were subsequently issued to our northern China units to use the enemy's stalling tactics and agree to negotiate with him. In the eastern China theatre, the following order was given to the Eastern China and Central Plains Field Armies: **“. . . After they have wiped out Huang Wei's army, to spare the remainder of Tu Yu-ming's armies under Chiu Ching-chuan, Li Mi and Sun Yuan-liang (about half of which have already been destroyed) and for two weeks to make no dispositions for their final annihilation.”** Meanwhile, to prevent the enemy in the Peiping-Tientsin area from fleeing towards Tsingtao, the order was also given for **“our troops in Shantung to mass certain forces to control a section of the Yellow River near Tsinan and to make preparations along the Tsingtao-Tsinan Railway.”** Of the many measures ordered by Chairman Mao for pinning down the enemy, the most important was that the Northeast Field Army should move south of the Great Wall under cover, preventing premature discovery by the enemy.

To conceal this strategic objective and quickly and unexpectedly move our Northeast army to the Peiping-Tientsin front, Chairman Mao issued instructions to Lin Piao at the start of our Northeast main force's southward advance stressing that every unit, to maintain strict concealment, should proceed to eastern Hopei through the passes of Lengkou and Hsifengkou in Jehol and not take the Shanhaikuan route. Chairman Mao subsequently instructed the rear units and the headquarters of the Northeast Field Army also not to go by way of Shan-

haikuan. The enemy had miscalculated that after fighting the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign our Northeast army would take 3-6 months to rest and consolidate before moving into northern China; also that it must pass through Shanhaikuan. One enemy corps therefore remained at Shanhaikuan to tie down our main force and gain time for the Kuomintang's main forces to flee or else hold their positions. Our not taking the Shanhaikuan route was for the specific purpose of misleading the enemy and launching a surprise attack.

The route charted by Chairman Mao for the southward advance of the Northeast Field Army was mainly through the Hopei-Jehol-Liaoning Liberated Area where the masses had the political consciousness to give effective support to our troops and also keep the movement secret. We could ensure concealment in this mountainous base area with hidden paths so long as our troops strictly observed the instruction to march at night and rest by day. The enemy would not discover our southward movement until it was a fait accompli. This route was moreover the shortest, and as soon as our troops passed Lengkou and Hsifengkou they could swiftly thrust between Peiping and Tientsin, cutting these two enemy-held cities apart. This would facilitate our tactical deployment and the encirclement and separation of the enemy units. It was the ideal route for our troops' concealed march south to wipe out all the enemy forces where they were.

But disregarding the overall situation and flouting organizational discipline, Lin Piao disobeyed instructions, reporting what he had done only afterwards. He displayed the rankest arrogance by ordering the three rear columns to move along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway

and enter northern China through Shanhaikuan, reporting his action to the Revolutionary Military Commission on December 7, two days later. Lin Piao's route took the troops mainly through areas newly liberated in the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign and along the railway and highways on the plain. As this route passed through areas carefully scouted by the enemy, with many released captives and straggling Kuomintang soldiers fleeing south of the Great Wall, military secrecy was scarcely possible. Especially, our three columns pressing to the east of Tangshan would likely put the already nervous enemy to flight. This was a serious matter sabotaging Chairman Mao's decision on the strategically decisive engagement.

In arbitrarily changing the route, Lin Piao gave two lame excuses for his recalcitrance and resistance to the Party's centralized leadership. One was that the route through Jehol to eastern Hopei was too sparsely populated to support so many troops passing through, indicating his worry about finding enough food and quarters there. The other was that the enemy planes reconnoitring and raiding day and night would make it impossible to keep secret the movement of our masses of troops over a long distance.

But what were the facts? As to provisions, a leading comrade working in the Northeast at that time reported to the Party Central Committee that eastern Hopei alone had adequate grain and fodder for two months' consumption by a million people and 100,000 head of livestock respectively, that this area as well as Jehol had been requested by telegram to prepare still more grain and fodder, and that part of the supplies on hand in northeastern China had already been sent to Changwu, Ihsien

and Hsinlitun, the rest to be transported following the troops. Furthermore, the report said, the Northeast Liberated Area had allocated 500,000 silver dollars to meet emergency expenses of the troops on the march. All this proves beyond doubt that provisioning and billeting posed no serious difficulty for the troops passing through Jehol to eastern Hopei. As a matter of fact, the nine columns that did take this route encountered no big supply problem. Later, in a report to the Party Central Committee, the Northeast Field Army headquarters also said: "As provisions were well prepared all along the way, we had no difficulty in this respect." Lin Piao's excuse was only a flimsy cover for his blunders.

Concerning secrecy, there have been numerous instances in history of success in this respect in major military actions. During the period of the Agrarian Revolutionary War (1927-37), at the critical moment when our great leader Chairman Mao was directing the operations to foil the enemy's second and third "encirclement and suppression" campaigns against the Central Soviet Area, our army, with the support of the people in the base areas — a most favourable condition — moved between enemy lines in gaps of 10-20 kilometres without being discovered. Especially during the third counter-campaign against "encirclement and suppression," after the three battles at Lientang, Liangtsun and Huangpi, our troops returning from the east to the west passed through a 10-kilometre gap between enemy lines and reached Hsingkuo where they rested and consolidated for half a month before the enemy discovered them. Likewise, in our present case, the Hopei-Jehol-Liaoning route would take our Northeast army through an old liberated area where popular support was no less good. So why couldn't

the secret be kept? In fact, with our commanders and fighters acting on Chairman Mao's instruction of marching at night and resting in the daytime, the Kuomintang planes gained nothing from their reconnoitring and bombing of the Hopei-Jehol-Liaoning Liberated Area, and for a fairly long time the enemy failed to locate our troops. On December 5, even upon discovering our 3rd and 5th columns along the Great Wall, the enemy did not expect that our Northeast main force would quickly pass through it. Only on December 12 did Fu Tso-yi discover our main force, already south of the Great Wall. By then our forces had separated and encircled the enemy's basic units along the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line, and it was too late for them to escape. Here again, Lin Piao's allegation concerning the possibility of secrecy being kept in the movement of a large force was proved mere sophistry.

The possibility of pinning down and annihilating the enemy where he was hinged on our Northeast main force not taking the Shanhaikuan route, for only thus could it move to the Peiping-Tientsin front under cover and cut apart, encircle and wipe out the enemy forces there by surprise. Sending the three rear columns through Shanhaikuan regardless of the danger of exposing our army's movement, as Lin Piao had arbitrarily decided, could have alerted the enemy and sabotaged Chairman Mao's strategic plan. Only because our troops conscientiously carried out the measures outlined by Chairman Mao for tying down the enemy; because the Northeast Field Army's commanders and fighters strictly observed Chairman Mao's instructions to move under cover and so kept the secret for more than 20 days; particularly because, after the Northeast main force started moving, Chairman

Mao ordered the 2nd and 3rd armies of northern China and the Northeast advance army to begin operations along the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line, making the enemy in the Peiping-Tientsin area reinforce the west and cutting and encircling Fu Tso-yi's core units so that he would scarcely be able to take care of the east and still less to abandon his own troops and flee south; because the enemy wrongly assessed the situation — it was only because of all this that no serious consequences followed.

### 3. LIN PIAO WRONGLY INSISTED ON ATTACKING NANKOW FIRST

Our army takes war of annihilation as its basic policy. Chairman Mao says: **“A battle in which the enemy is routed is not basically decisive in a contest with a foe of great strength. A battle of annihilation, on the other hand, produces a great and immediate impact on any enemy.”** Fight a battle merely to rout the enemy, or a battle to annihilate him? This was another important question in the struggle between the two military lines in the Peiping-Tientsin campaign.

The thrust of the concept of operations formulated by Chairman Mao for the Peiping-Tientsin campaign and of the series of his other instructions was to wipe out the enemy forces in the Peiping-Tientsin area, on the spot, and lock, stock and barrel. To achieve this, Chairman Mao took into account the possibility of the enemy fleeing southward or westward and ordered two armies of the Northern China Field Army and the Northeast Field Army's advance army (two columns) to encircle and separate the enemy forces along the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line west of Peiping. He also emphasized strongly

that after advancing south of the Great Wall the main force of the Northeast Field Army should first cut the link between the enemy forces in the Peiping-Tientsin area and block their escape route by sea. This was the third prerequisite to wiping out the enemy on the spot.

From mid-November to early December 1948, Chairman Mao issued the Northern China and Northeast Field Armies a number of instructions. First, the Northern China 3rd Army should set out quickly from eastern Suiyuan and proceed eastward to cut apart and encircle the enemy at Changchiakou, Hsuanhua and Huai-an. The principle was to tie down and encircle part of his forces and not let them flee eastward, not attacking until the opportune moment, i.e., after our Northeast main force advanced south of the Great Wall. Chairman Mao stressed the importance here of encirclement over annihilation so as to induce the enemy in the east to send reinforcements westward. Chairman Mao more than once instructed Lin Piao even before the arrival of the Northeast main force south of the Great Wall that it should bottle up the enemy in Tientsin, Tangku and Tangshan by surprise and cut off his escape route by sea. On November 26 Chairman Mao more specifically pointed out that the first battle the Northeast main force should fight south of the Great Wall should be around Langfang along the Peiping-Tientsin railway line in order to cut the contact between these two cities. Some units should meanwhile be deployed to surround Tangshan, preventing the flight of the enemy there. The second task was to attack and wipe out the Kuomintang troops in Lutai and Tangku to forestall the enemy's escape by sea.

Taking a Right-opportunist stand, Lin Piao resisted these instructions and on December 7, when the 3rd and

5th columns, vanguard units of the Northeast Field Army's main force, arrived at the Chihhsien-Yutien area, he proposed sending them to attack the enemy's 16th Corps at Nankow.

Chairman Mao promptly refuted Lin Piao's wrong idea, pointing out how it did not serve the overall plan. Fu Tso-yi had 15 divisions including one cavalry division concentrated in and around Peiping, Chohsien, Tungchow, Shunyi and Nankow. If, in addition to our two advance Northeast columns already deployed along the Kangchuang-Pataling line, we were to send another two columns to attack and wipe out the enemy's 16th Corps at Nankow before cutting the link between Peiping and Tientsin, the enemy in the Peiping area would likely feel forced to flee at once to Tientsin and Tangku. Chairman Mao stressed once again that the main concern was that the enemy might escape by sea, and that the primary task of the Northeast Field Army was to prevent the enemy in the Peiping area from fleeing to Tientsin. For this purpose, four columns needed to be sent to take the Langfang-Hsiangho line, severing Peiping from Tientsin. Therefore, Chairman Mao told Lin Piao that he should wait for the arrival of the follow-up units and then implement the plan of cutting all contact between Peiping and Tientsin, encircling Tangshan and attacking and wiping out the enemy in Lutai and Tangku.

But Lin Piao stuck to his own wrong idea and refused to carry out Chairman Mao's instructions. Again despicably acting first and reporting afterwards, he ordered the 3rd and 5th columns to rush to Nankow to wipe out the enemy forces there and in the vicinity. Chairman Mao immediately telegraphed Lin Piao to stop his operation. Apart from explaining in detail why Nankow

should not be attacked, Chairman Mao comprehensively expounded, in a long telegram of December 11, the concept of operations for the Peiping-Tientsin campaign and the series of strategic dispositions for carrying it out. In this document entitled "The Concept of Operations for the Peiping-Tientsin Campaign," Chairman Mao pointed out explicitly: **"The main or the only concern is that the enemy might flee by sea. Therefore, in the coming two weeks the general method should be to encircle without attacking or to cut off without encircling."** He also said: **"In the two weeks beginning from today (December 11-25), the basic principle is to encircle without attacking (in the case of Changchiakou and Hsinpao-an) and, in some cases, to cut off without encircling (in the case of Peiping, Tientsin and Tungchow, to make only a strategic encirclement and cut the links between the enemy forces, but not to make a tactical encirclement) in order to wait for the completion of our dispositions and then wipe out the enemy forces one by one. In particular, you must not wipe out all the enemy forces at Changchiakou, Hsinpao-an and Nankow because that would compel the enemy east of Nankow to make a quick decision to bolt. Please make sure you understand this point."**

Concerning Lin Piao's Right-opportunist thinking, Chairman Mao said that the enemy forces — except certain divisions which **"still have a fairly high combat effectiveness for the defence of fortified positions — have little offensive spirit; they are like birds startled by the mere twang of a bow-string. This is especially the case since you advanced south of the Great Wall. You should on no account overrate the enemy's combat effectiveness. Some of our comrades have suffered through overrating**

**the enemy's combat effectiveness, . . ."** This hit the nail on the head as far as Lin Piao was concerned. Precisely because he overrated the enemy troops' combat effectiveness and feared that should he try to cut off communication between Peiping and Tientsin he might come under the pincer attack by the Kuomintang forces in these two cities, he insisted instead on sending two columns, the 3rd and 5th, to attack the enemy's 16th Corps at Nankow and drive the enemy out of the Peiping area. In fact the enemy dared not launch, nor could he muster enough strength to launch, any pincer attack against us. The headquarters of Fu Tso-yi's 11th Army and the Kuomintang 105th Corps were already sealed up in Changchiakou by our northern China 3rd Army; Fu's "crack" 35th Corps was being encircled in Hsinpao-an by our northern China 2nd Army; the enemy 104th and 16th corps at Huailai and Kangchuang were being pursued and wiped out by our two Northeast advance columns. In order to rescue his encircled troops and strengthen the defence of Peiping, Fu Tso-yi dispatched three corps, the 92nd, 94th and 62nd, from around Tientsin and Tangku to west of Peiping, leaving the 86th and 87th corps to defend the Tientsin-Tangku-Tangshan area. He, in fact, had no forces left to attack us with. As for our troops, in addition to the 3rd and 5th columns which had already arrived in the Chih sien-Yutien area, the 6th Column was already at Hsifengkou and the vanguard division of our 10th Column had reached the vicinity of Yutien by December 7. The latter two columns and our northern China 7th Column south of Chohsien were all in a position and fully able to cut the links between Peiping and Tientsin. In actual fact, the enemy in Peiping and Tientsin did not engage us in a pincer attack when

the 3rd, 6th and 10th columns of our Northeast Field Army came out to cut the Langfang-Hsiangho line. Lin Piao proved a rank Right opportunist who, overrating the enemy's combat effectiveness, looked upon him as terrifying as a tiger and dared not attempt the operation of cutting the links between Peiping and Tientsin.

It was most important for a commander of ours in any campaign strictly to carry out the entirely correct concept of operations and campaign plans as formulated by Chairman Mao and the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Party Central Committee, and, for this purpose, to concentrate on attending to the situation of the campaign as a whole. During the first stage of the Peiping-Tientsin campaign, Lin Piao could think only of attacking Nankow. He had no overall view and gave no thought to how his move would affect the whole situation. Lin Piao — in the situation of the Peiping-Tientsin campaign having already begun but the links between Peiping and Tientsin not yet cut and our dispositions to block the enemy's escape route by sea not yet completed, when the enemy had started changing his dispositions so that his troops in the Peiping area stepped up reinforcements to Changchiakou and part of those in the Tientsin-Tangku area had already been transferred west of Peiping, when the enemy was being pinned down and manipulated by us — blunderingly ordered an attack on Nankow without waiting for the entire Northeast main force to arrive and the whole operation to unfold. By compelling the enemy forces east of Nankow to make a quick decision to bolt eastward and those west of it to flee westward, the carrying out of Lin's order would have seriously disrupted Chairman Mao's strategic objective and operations plan for wiping out Fu Tso-yi's

group in northern China on the spot. Lin Piao's idea was merely to rout the enemy in battle but not annihilate him.

#### IV. VICTORY IN THE PEIPING-TIENTSIN CAMPAIGN WAS A VICTORY FOR CHAIRMAN MAO'S MILITARY LINE

Seizing the favourable opportunity for the timely launching of a strategically decisive engagement is of vital importance in military operations. After the victorious conclusion of the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, the first in the strategically decisive engagement in the War of Liberation, Chairman Mao made a brilliant and timely strategic decision to launch the Peiping-Tientsin campaign without delay and wipe out the enemy forces in northern China where they were. In making this decision while the Huai-Hai campaign was developing successfully, he took into account the excellent situation where the enemy was fast collapsing and the enemy forces in northern China were jittery, ready to bolt but had not yet made up their mind to do so.

Chairman Mao's idea was that after the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign the main force of our Northeast Field Army should advance south of the Great Wall as early as possible, postponing rest and consolidation, and by a surprise move strategically encircle and tactically cut apart the enemy forces which were scattered over a long, narrow strip of defence line and were ready to flee west or south at any moment. Then, and only then, should our troops rest and consolidate. This would throw the enemy into a dilemma that would allow him neither to

escape nor to shorten his defence lines. Chairman Mao formulated a series of measures to conceal our strategic objective and deceive and mislead the enemy in order to facilitate the start of the Peiping-Tientsin campaign with a surprise attack. Chairman Mao's strategic decision was finally carried out, thanks to the stern measures he took to overcome Lin Piao's sabotage and interference.

Victory in any major campaign has as its prime prerequisite a correct concept of operations. Applying the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and taking into account the respective situations of the enemy and ourselves, Chairman Mao formulated an entirely correct concept of operations for the Peiping-Tientsin campaign, a concept that ensured victory over the enemy. Before and during the campaign, he made well-considered dispositions in accordance with the development of the situation, dispositions which guided the whole campaign forward as a closely-knit whole and from victory to victory.

In the first stage of this campaign, in which the enemy's escape was to be frustrated pending the arrival of our Northeast main force south of the Great Wall and the subsequent strategic encirclement and tactical cutting apart of the enemy forces, Chairman Mao instructed our troops first to tie down part of the enemy forces along the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line, at the same time adopting the principle of **"encircling without attacking"** and **"cutting off without encircling"** and then destroying them one by one after the completion of our deployment. Our troops accordingly first encircled Changchiakou by surprise to induce the enemy forces in the Peiping-Tientsin area to dispatch reinforcements westward. We then surrounded the enemy's

35th Corps and other reinforcing units at Hsinpao-an and Kangchuang. Fu Tso-yi now found it hard to abandon the besieged troops at Changchiakou and Hsinpao-an and make up his mind to flee south by sea. His only alternative was to dispatch troops from Tientsin and Tangku to reinforce Peiping. While the enemy was thus tied down, time was gained for our Northeast main force to advance south of the Great Wall for the speedy encirclement and cutting apart of the enemy forces there.

In the second stage of the campaign, Chairman Mao, assuming the possibility of Fu's personal troops fleeing west to Suiyuan Province and of Chiang's escaping south by sea, adopted the tactics of "pounding both ends and then taking the middle." First of all, our troops captured Hsinpao-an and Changchiakou between December 22 and 24, 1948, wiping out Fu's main force, his 35th Corps and other units, and closing off to the enemy in Peiping the escape route to Suiyuan. Then, on January 14, 1949 our troops launched a general onslaught on Tientsin and took the city the following day. Tangku was liberated in its wake. The enemy's attempts to entrench in the cities or to escape by sea were foiled and, like a turtle in a jar, the Kuomintang forces in the Peiping area were isolated with no chance of reinforcement.

In the third stage of the campaign, with the enemy bottled up, doomed to defeat and therefore low in morale, Chairman Mao closely integrated military with political offensive and forced the enemy in Peiping to accept peaceful reorganization on our terms. Peiping was peacefully liberated on January 31, 1949.

Chairman Mao decided that, considering the situation of the enemy and ourselves in the northern China theatre, the Peiping-Tientsin campaign should commence

along the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line, a decision that again showed his grasp of the art of directing war. It should start there for the following reasons: 1) All of Fu Tso-yi's troops were deployed in a long, narrow strip of territory extending from the Tangshan area in the east to the Changchiakou area in the west. Moreover, Fu's personal troops were stationed west of Peiping, ready to flee in that direction, while Chiang's own were east of the city, ready to flee south. 2) The Changchiakou area was vital to the enemy as a place Fu's own troops must pass in their retreat west to Kueisui. If our troops started fighting along the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line, and separate and encircle Fu's troops there, he would have to dispatch his forces in the Peiping-Tientsin area as reinforcements. We could then tie down Fu's troops as well as Chiang's, forcing the enemy forces in the east to move westward. It would gain time for our Northeast main force to arrive south of the Great Wall and for the completion of our dispositions to cut apart and encircle the enemy forces. Besides, Changchiakou was defended by only seven enemy divisions and was the weakest of the enemy's three defence sectors; our northern China 3rd Army could very quickly encircle these enemy troops. 3) Our northern China 2nd Army stationed in the Fuping-Chuyang area and our Northeast advance army then in the Chih sien-Pingku area could easily move towards the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line. Chairman Mao decided, therefore, that the campaign should begin along the Peiping-Changchiakou railway line, attacking the enemy at his weakest point, to which he would be sure to send reinforcements. This would enable us to cut off the westward escape route of Fu Tso-yi's troops and tie down Chiang's units east of

Peiping, gaining time and providing favourable conditions for the separation, encirclement and piecemeal annihilation of the enemy troops by the main forces of our Northeast and Northern China Field Armies.

It was precisely because Chairman Mao not only formulated an entirely correct concept of operations and plans for the Peiping-Tientsin campaign but personally made wise deployment and directed our troops in their operations that we were able to win a brilliant victory in this campaign with a minimum of casualties.

The Peiping-Tientsin campaign, the last of the strategically decisive engagement in the War of Liberation, resulted in putting out of action and reorganizing over 520,000 Kuomintang troops and liberating practically all northern China. This great victory marked the total defeat of the Kuomintang army in our strategically decisive engagement against it. With the conclusion of the three major campaigns — the Liaohsi-Shenyang, the Huai-Hai and the Peiping-Tientsin — the Kuomintang's main force north of the Yangtze River was almost completely knocked out of action, laying Nanking, centre of the reactionary Kuomintang rule, open to the direct threat of our army. Politically, the enemy was split more than ever, and Chiang Kai-shek was forced to "retire." Militarily, the remaining million or more enemy forces, dispersed over extremely long fronts from Sinkiang to Taiwan, were sagging in morale as they neared total collapse. Thus, the course of the war was shortened and the liberation of the whole country speeded. All this was the result of Chairman Mao's brilliant decisions concerning the launching of the strategically decisive engagement and the Peiping-Tientsin campaign.

The victory of our army depended chiefly on its combat worthiness, but also on its powerful political offensive, which helped to demoralize and disintegrate the enemy forces. In the stage of strategically decisive engagement of the War of Liberation, as our troops went from victory to victory, sealing the enemy's doom, and contradictions within the ranks of the enemy intensified to the breaking point, the conditions became still more favourable for us to win over or break up his forces. In the Peiping-Tientsin campaign Chairman Mao further integrated the military with the political offensive, establishing three patterns for disposing of the remnant Kuomintang forces: the Tientsin pattern, the Peiping pattern and the Suiyuan pattern. As Chairman Mao pointed out in his report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held in March 1949: **"With the conclusion of the Liaohsi-Shenyang, Huai-Hai and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns, the main force of the Kuomintang army has been destroyed. Only a million odd of its combat troops are left, dispersed over vast areas from Sinkiang to Taiwan and over extremely long fronts. From now on there can be only three patterns for disposing of these Kuomintang troops — the Tientsin pattern, the Peiping pattern or the Suiyuan pattern. To dispose of the enemy forces by fighting, as we did in Tientsin, must still be the primary object of our attention and preparations."** He also said: **"The possibility has increased for solutions on the Peiping pattern, that is, to compel enemy troops to reorganize peacefully, quickly and thoroughly into the People's Liberation Army in conformity with the latter's system."** **"The Suiyuan pattern is deliberately to keep part of the Kuomintang troops wholly or near-**

**ly intact, that is, to make temporary concessions to these troops in order to help win them over to our side or neutralize them politically. Thereby we can concentrate our forces to finish off the main part of the remnant Kuomintang forces first and then, after a certain period (say, a few months, half a year or a year later), proceed to reorganize these troops into the People's Liberation Army in conformity with its system."** These three patterns pointed out the way for the remnant enemy forces: Should they stubbornly resist, they would be wiped out as those garrisoning Tientsin had been; should they put down arms and accept our conditions they could come over to the side of the people and be reorganized into the People's Liberation Army. These patterns played an important role in splitting and disintegrating the enemy forces and liberating the whole country earlier. When our army subsequently embarked on its countrywide advance, it disposed of all remnant enemy forces by one or another of these three patterns.

## PART THREE

### LIN PIAO'S BOURGEOIS MILITARY LINE SERVED HIS RIGHT-OPPORTUNIST POLITICAL LINE

Marxism-Leninism holds that in class society the army is an instrument of class struggle, an armed body for carrying out given political tasks. The type of army to be built and the kind of military line to be implemented are determined by the political line of a given class, serve this political line and constitute an important part of it. Before the proletariat's rise to power, **"the seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution."** After the proletariat seizes power, because class enemies still exist at home and abroad, the whole proletarian party must continue to attach great importance to military affairs. In leading the protracted struggle of the Chinese revolution, Chairman Mao formulated a Marxist political line and also a Marxist military line for the Chinese Communist Party. Contrarily, the chieftains of the opportunist lines in different periods either flatly denied the decisive significance of armed struggle for the Chinese revolution or, while pursuing a "Left"- or Right-opportunist political line in frantic opposition to Chairman Mao's Marxist political line, rigged up a military line subservient to their erroneous political line and

diametrically opposite to the Marxist military line formulated by Chairman Mao for our Party. The struggle between the two military lines is always part and parcel of the struggle between the two political lines, and the latter is inevitably accompanied by the former. Chairman Mao pointed out that **"correct political and military lines do not emerge and develop spontaneously and tranquilly, but only in the course of struggle. These lines must combat 'Left' opportunism on the one hand and Right opportunism on the other. Without combating and thoroughly overcoming these harmful tendencies which damage the revolution and the revolutionary war, it would be impossible to establish a correct line and win victory in this war."** The bourgeois military line pushed by Lin Piao in the Liaohsi-Shenyang and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns was precisely a manifestation, in military affairs, of his Right-opportunist political line. Victory in these two campaigns was due to Chairman Mao's correct political and military lines overcoming Lin Piao's erroneous ones.

Like his Right-opportunist political line, Lin Piao's bourgeois military line had its deep class, ideological and historical roots. Springing from a landlord-bourgeois family, Lin Piao stubbornly clung to his exploiting-class stand after joining the Party; his reactionary world outlook based on idealism and metaphysics was never remoulded. At crucial times in the revolution he invariably committed Right-opportunist errors, indulged in duplicity by putting on a false front to deceive the Party and the people, and stubbornly toed an erroneous line in opposition to the correct line of Chairman Mao.

During the period of the Agrarian Revolutionary War, while he was in the Ching kang Mountains, and later

when he joined the march towards southern Kiangsi and western Fukien, Lin Piao wavered to the Right on many occasions, doubted how long we could keep the red flag flying, and advocated the ways of roving rebel bands. Chairman Mao's article "A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire" was written as a long letter criticizing Lin. When Wang Ming's "Left"-opportunist line dominated the Party, Lin Piao followed him in pushing passive defence as opposed to Chairman Mao's strategic principle of active defence and of luring the enemy in deep. Lin shouted about "making short swift thrusts at the enemy" and favoured positional warfare and war of attrition. As a result of Wang Ming's "Left"-opportunist line and his wrong military line, the Central Red Army failed to defeat the enemy's fifth "encirclement and suppression" campaign and was forced to make the Long March, during which advocates of the Wang Ming line resorted to flightism, putting the Central Red Army in an extremely difficult position. In January 1935 there was held an enlarged meeting of the Party Central Committee Political Bureau. This was the historically highly significant Tsunyi Meeting, which ended the dominance of Wang Ming's "Left"-opportunist line and established Chairman Mao's leadership throughout the Party and army, switching the Party to the correct Marxist-Leninist line. After the Tsunyi Meeting, with Chairman Mao's direct leadership, the Central Red Army four times switched back and forth across the Chihshui River, crossed the Wuchiang River to the south, threatened Kweiyang, forced the Chinsha River and threw off the encirclement, pursuit, blockade and interception by several hundred thousand enemy forces, gaining the initiative in the strategic shift and turning setbacks into victory. In

June 1935 the Central Red Army and the Fourth Front Army made a successful link-up. Then, under Chairman Mao's leadership, our Party overcame Chang Kuo-tao's line of establishing a bogus central committee and splitting the Red Army, and victoriously led the Red Army to the base area in northern Shensi. But, even at such a critical time as immediately after the Tsunyi Meeting, Lin Piao colluded with Peng Teh-huai and others in attempting to seize the leadership out of the hands of Chairman Mao, their conspiracy ending in failure due to the opposition of the whole Party.

During the period of the War of Resistance Against Japan, jumping from ultra "Left" to ultra Right, the renegade Wang Ming dished up a Right-capitulationist line. Lin Piao again toed this opportunist line of Wang Ming's. Opposing Chairman Mao's strategic principle of carrying out "**independent mountain guerrilla warfare**," he refused to mobilize the masses and set up base areas, pushing instead full co-ordination with the Kuomintang troops in fighting large-scale battles, a policy that fit right in with Chiang Kai-shek's scheme of killing people through another's hand. In 1940, when Chiang Kai-shek stepped up his capitulation to the national enemy while repeatedly launching anti-Communist campaigns, Lin Piao wrote articles shamelessly praising Chiang to the skies, extolling his autocratic regime as a "democratic political system," asserting that it "has made excellent achievements in national construction," and calling for "placing the whole Chinese army under the command" of Chiang's "united headquarters."

Lin Piao's Right opportunism was further revealed during the War of Liberation. After the victory of the anti-Japanese war, China was confronted with a decisive

struggle between two destinies and two prospects. Chairman Mao brilliantly pointed out that **“the new situation and task is domestic struggle. Chiang Kai-shek talks about ‘building the country.’ From now on the struggle will be, build what sort of country? To build a new-democratic country of the broad masses of the people under the leadership of the proletariat? Or to build a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country under the dictatorship of the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie? This will be a most complicated struggle.”** At this critical moment in the revolution, there was intense struggle between the two lines within our Party. With the broad vision and courage of a proletarian revolutionary, Chairman Mao scientifically analysed the prevailing situation concerning the struggle between the enemy and ourselves and put forward the political line of **“go all out to mobilize the masses, expand the people’s forces and, under the leadership of our Party, defeat the aggressor and build a new China.”** As to the attacks of the U.S.-Chiang reactionaries, he advanced the policy of **“give tit for tat and fight for every inch of land,”** and made the brilliant judgement that **“our victory [is] certain and Chiang’s defeat inevitable.”** During this period, Chairman Mao also placed great stress on opening up and building the Northeast Liberated Area. In autumn 1945, he dispatched more than 100,000 veteran troops and over 20,000 cadres from various older Liberated Areas to the Northeast and issued the directive for building stable base areas there, among other important instructions. The excellent situation that later arose in the Northeast was entirely due to the firm implementation of Chairman Mao’s and the Party Central Committee’s directives by

the Party and government organizations, army units and the people there, and to their hard work.

But Lin Piao time and again refused to carry out Chairman Mao’s instructions. He interfered with Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line, closely following instead the capitulationist line of a “new stage of peace and democracy” preached by the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi. Unable to see through the veil of the enemy’s temporary and apparent strength to his essential weakness, Lin Piao feared war and cherished illusions of peace. Faced with attack by the U.S.-Chiang reactionaries, he dared not wage a blow-for-blow struggle by meeting counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war but openly proclaimed his “willingness to co-operate with the Kuomintang in the Northeast” in a futile attempt to forfeit the revolution and prolong the dictatorship of the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie. In early December 1945, for instance, Lin Piao reiterated that countryside peace was at hand, that we were fighting our final battle, and that we must enter the stage of peace in a manner indicative of our might that could overwhelm the enemy, etc., etc. In 1946, when negotiations were being held between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party for an armistice in the Northeast, Lin babbled that the “new stage of peace and democracy” had arrived. In April of the same year, Chairman Mao instructed Lin Piao to cut the railways to prevent the enemy’s transport of troops by rail, but Lin, harbouring illusions of peace, failed to do so with the result that the enemy was able to rush reinforcements and supplies by rail for his attack on Szepingkai, causing losses to our troops.

**“The correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything.”** Lin Piao’s political capitulationism determined his Right conservatism in military affairs and his implementing a bourgeois military line.

The chief manifestation of Lin Piao’s military line was his mortal fear of the enemy and his passive avoidance of war. He insisted that no large-scale battles could be fought in the Northeast for the following five “reasons”:

- 1) Most of the enemy’s main forces were centred in the Northeast.
- 2) The railways in the Northeast were controlled by the enemy, so transport was easy for him.
- 3) As the Northeast was a rather newly liberated area, information about our troops’ movements was bound to leak out.
- 4) Our army in the Northeast was made up of troops from various other areas, as was the leading group there.
- 5) We should not draw the enemy to the Northeast. If our army fought hard, Lin Piao asserted, “many Kuomintang troops will be drawn north of the Great Wall. The sooner we fight, the sooner we’ll have them on our backs and that will harm the situation in the Northeast.”

Lin Piao time and again brought up these five pretexts, boiling them down to his motto of “awaiting, patience and relentlessness,” which he said should be applied to the Northeast. The first two actually meant passive avoidance of war instead of actively creating favourable conditions and concentrating a large force in one battlefield according to objective conditions for the purpose of eliminating large numbers of enemy troops. Lin Piao’s so-called “relentlessness” in fact reflected his persistent advocacy in the Northeast of attrition and battles merely to rout the enemy.

We present the following examples to illustrate how Lin Piao passively avoided war in military command and the harm this brought to the war situation.

First, when Lin Piao’s units had just entered the Northeast between November and December 1945, Chiang Kai-shek was out to “pick the peaches,” that is, to usurp the fruits of victory in the anti-Japanese war. He landed two corps at Chinwangtao, which were then ordered to advance towards Shenyang along the Peiping-Liaoning Railway. At that time, Chairman Mao repeatedly instructed Lin Piao to launch an attack between Shanhaikuan and Chinchow to destroy part of the enemy troops. But Lin babbled that the local people did not support our troops, but rather the Kuomintang, Chiang Kai-shek and the puppet Manchukuo regime, etc. Refusing to carry out Chairman Mao’s instructions, he launched no attack, with the result that the enemy quickly took Shenyang. Lin Piao’s claims flew completely in the face of historical facts and monstrously slandered the people of the Northeast, who thoroughly hated the Japanese imperialists occupying China’s territory, maintaining a colonial rule and setting up the puppet Manchukuo state. The most telling proof was that during the Japanese occupation the people in the Northeast unflinchingly persisted in armed anti-Japanese struggles. They could never forget the criminal policy of non-resistance and capitulation adopted by Chiang Kai-shek’s reactionary Kuomintang government in face of the Japanese imperialist aggression, a policy that led to losing the entire northeastern China. Now, in only three years Chiang Kai-shek’s several hundred thousand “crack” troops in the Northeast were utterly defeated, a great victory for our army. This was inseparable from

the enthusiastic support of the broad masses for Chairman Mao and the Communist Party, from their opposition to the Kuomintang and Chiang Kai-shek.

Second, from the summer of 1947 to March 15, 1948, our troops in the Northeast launched summer, autumn and winter offensives. Although we wiped out a large number of enemy troops, the units eliminated were only those of and below divisional level or were regional forces, without a single regular full-strength corps among them. This was due to Lin Piao's serious Right-opportunist thinking and his blundering command which resulted in dispersion of our forces for a long time. We had in the Northeast many veteran troops with fine Red Army traditions, who were skilful in warfare and enthusiastic in fighting for the revolutionary cause. But since Lin Piao passively avoided war and dared not concentrate a large force in any single battlefield, no regular enemy corps of full strength were wiped out in any of our three offensives in the Northeast before the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign.

Third, after each battle Lin Piao required a long period of rest and consolidation for his troops. For instance, in the 10 months from May 1947 to March 1948, Lin Piao fought three battles in the Northeast theatre, but with two periods of rest and consolidation, each of nearly two months. In his ten major principles of operation, Chairman Mao pointed out: **"Make good use of the intervals between campaigns to rest, train and consolidate our troops. Periods of rest, training and consolidation should in general not be very long, and the enemy should so far as possible be permitted no breathing space."** It is of course necessary to make good use of the intervals between campaigns and battles for rest, training and

consolidation, but the length of such periods should depend on the need of the war situation as a whole and generally should not be very long. The summer-autumn period of 1947 was a time when our troops were busy going over to the strategic offensive. The various field armies were expected actively to organize campaigns and battles in the interests of the overall situation; they should particularly avoid giving the enemy a breathing spell by resting, training and consolidating our troops for extended periods. Lin Piao's thinking on this question exposed the Right-opportunist essence of his passively avoiding battles as well as his lack of an overall point of view.

In military thinking, the chief manifestation of Lin Piao's erroneous military line was his idealist and mechanical approach to problems of warfare, for instance, the so-called "six tactics" which he pushed so hard during the War of Liberation. His tactic of "one point and two sides"<sup>1</sup> prescribed only concentration of forces at one point without mentioning gaining superiority over the enemy in relative strength or encircling the enemy from all sides. Entirely running counter to Chairman Mao's idea of concentrating a superior force to destroy the enemy forces one by one, this was in fact advocacy of war of attrition and war merely to rout the enemy. Lin Piao's so-called tactic of "four groups and

<sup>1</sup> Here "one point" referred to the main point of attack where, according to Lin Piao, as much as seven- or eight-ninths of the attacking troops should be employed, leaving merely two- or one-ninth for attack on what he called the "two sides" of the enemy position. He even absurdly called for using all the attacking troops against that one point to the total neglect of all the other sides.

one team"<sup>1</sup> was actually designed to make our battle formations rigid and conform to a fixed pattern when they should be organized according to specific conditions. This was an expression of mechanical and stereotyped thinking in military affairs. During the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, Lin Piao dared not march south to the Peiping-Liaoning Railway to strike at the enemy's flanks and rear so as to wipe him out completely, but wanted to ease him into northern and central China — another expression of his idealist and mechanical concept of military affairs.

From Chairman Mao's article "On Practice" we learn: **"We are opposed to die-hards in the revolutionary ranks whose thinking fails to advance with changing objective circumstances and has manifested itself historically as Right opportunism. These people fail to see that the struggle of opposites has already pushed the objective process forward while their knowledge has stopped at the old stage. This is characteristic of the thinking of all die-hards. Their thinking is divorced from social practice and they cannot march ahead to guide the chariot of society; they simply trail behind, grumbling that it goes too fast and trying to drag it back or turn it in the opposite direction."** This exposes the ideological root of Right opportunism. To reverse the wheel of history — such is the common aim of all Right opportunists, Lin Piao among them. In this respect, he fully identified himself with and was of the same breed as Chen Tu-hsiu, Wang

<sup>1</sup>This called for, in battles against heavily fortified enemy strong-points, the mechanical division of an assault unit into four groups. Being separately in charge of fire power, assault, demolition and combat support, these groups were supposed to combine to form one whole team.

Ming, Liu Shao-chi and the other chieftains of opportunist lines in our Party, and also Confucius and the representative Confucian figures in Chinese history, who advocated conservatism and opposed progress.

A multitude of historical facts exposed this so-called "military genius," "strategist," "ever-victorious general" and "representative of the correct line," Lin Piao, as a rank Right opportunist.

Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee seriously and over a long period of time criticized Lin Piao for his mistakes, and patiently tried to educate him. But Lin was a counter-revolutionary double-dealer who never showed up without a copy of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung* in his hand and never opened his mouth without shouting 'Long Live Chairman Mao!' and who spoke honeyed words to your face but stabbed you in the back. True to character, therefore, he all along took a double-faced attitude towards such criticism and education, acting out a role in public but doing quite differently in private, saying yes while meaning no. To deceive the Party and the people, he was capable of making a show of criticizing himself and professing willingness to correct his mistakes; actually he resented all who tried to help him, clinging stubbornly to his erroneous stand and continuing to do all sorts of evil things behind people's backs. **"But they [the die-hards] always get the opposite of what they want. They invariably start by doing others harm but end by ruining themselves."** And Lin Piao was no exception. Indulging in duplicity in every form, he ended up in utter and eternal infamy.

Lin Piao's bourgeois military line served his political line. The struggle between two military lines in the Liaohsi-Shenyang and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns was in the

final analysis a struggle between two political lines. As Chairman Mao pointed out in his "Speech at a Conference of Cadres in the Shansi-Suiyuan Liberated Area" of 1948: **"The revolution against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism waged by the broad masses of the people under the leadership of the proletariat — this is China's new-democratic revolution, and this is the general line and general policy of the Communist Party of China at the present stage of history."** To realize this general line and general policy, Chairman Mao issued during the War of Liberation the great call to the whole Party, army and people: **"Overthrow Chiang Kai-shek and liberate all China!"** The strategically decisive engagement as decided and commanded personally by Chairman Mao was precisely aimed to accelerate the victory of the revolutionary war and the progress of history, accomplish earlier than expected China's new-democratic revolution, fully realize the general line and general policy and **"finally and completely wipe out the reactionary forces and build a united, democratic people's republic in the whole country."** Lin Piao's Right-opportunist military line in the Liaohsi-Shenyang and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns fit to a T his Right-capitulationist political line and the wishes of U.S. imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek, who wanted to stabilize the situation at the front so as to win a breathing space in which to make a desperate attempt to extricate themselves from defeat. The essence of Lin's line was to oppose the general line of our Party, oppose the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek and the liberation of all China. But the objective law of the development of things is that revolution wins over reaction, and new forces triumph over decadent ones. Led by Chairman Mao and the Party

Central Committee, and through fierce struggle between the two political and military lines, our Party finally won the great victory in the strategically decisive engagement, accelerated the course of the Chinese revolution, overthrew the reactionary Kuomintang rule of Chiang Kai-shek, seized power throughout the land and established the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949.

The splendid victories in the great Liaohsi-Shenyang and Peiping-Tientsin campaigns are a signal victory for Chairman Mao's Marxist political and military lines.

毛主席军事路线的伟大胜利

——批判林彪在辽沈、平津  
两大战役中的资产阶级军事路线  
詹时圆

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