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ALONE IN CHINA: PATRICK J. HURLEY'S ATTEMPT
TO UNIFY CHINA, 1944-1945

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ALONE IN CHINA: PATRICK J. HURLEY'S ATTEMPT
TO UNIFY CHINA, 1944-1945

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ALONE IN CHINA: PATRICK J. HURLEY'S ATTEMPT
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CHAPTER I

MINER TO STATESMAN

The career of Patrick J. Hurley was a curious one. He traveled a path to national prominence full of shortcuts. He started out poor and, not forgetting this, fought his way to the top. Hurley, unfortunately, never realized the difference between success in fact and success in name. He became a general; but he never commanded troops. He received his law degree from a one year night law school. He was a diplomat by appointment rather than training, and a politician who never served in elective office. These titles; general, lawyer, diplomat, politician, represented success to Hurley. He fought for social position like a man possessed. He knew poverty, disliked it intensely, and sought by every means to raise himself from the lowly station to which he was born. Hurley typified in many ways the men who made fortunes in the oil fields of Oklahoma and Texas.

Hurley was a man of many facets. He was scrupulously honest. He was big, laughing, friendly. He believed that by accumulating great wealth he could buy the social position he

craved so badly. An anti-intellectual, he mistrusted thinkers wherever he found them, whether it be in the army, the government, the diplomatic service, or as leaders of foreign countries. Hurley had nothing in common with them. Yet, he found much in common with the self-made men like himself who frequently held high positions around the world. He was at home with Chiang Kai-shek, Joseph Stalin, and even Franklin Roosevelt, for these men emphasized action more than thought. Hurley respected and found communion with these proud, straightforward men who valued position as much as he did.

Hurley's roots went back to the last frontier of the American West, and it was from the red dirt hills of frontier Oklahoma that Patrick Hurley began his journey to national prominence. He stopped at many stations along the way and each one helped shape the man whom Roosevelt entrusted with America's future in the Far East.

Hurley was an Irishman through and through. His father, Pierce O'Neil Hurley, was an Irish rebel who found his way to Texas in the late 1860's, after a brush with British troops in Ireland. Pierce Hurley was a large, brawling man with a quick temper and ready fists. He traveled about Texas and Oklahoma, and in the late 1870's married Mary Kelly in San Marcos, Texas. Mary Kelly Hurley was as Irish as Pierce; but where Pierce was a fiery Irish rebel, Mary Kelly epitomized another aspect of Irish culture. She had a high respect for education, and passed this on to her young son Patrick before

her untimely death.¹ In 1882,³ the Hurley family moved into Indian Territory and established a farm in Coal County, Oklahoma, on land owned by Ben Smallwood, an influential Choctaw who later became chief of the Choctaw Nation. Life in Oklahoma was hard on the Hurleys, and Pierce went to work as a day laborer in the coal mines at Lehigh, Oklahoma.²

Born January 8, 1883, in Indian Territory, Patrick J. Hurley spent his early childhood in Phillips, Lehigh, and on the farm rented from Ben Smallwood. The influential Indian took a liking to the white boy living on his land. Young Pat spent a great deal of time at the Smallwood mansion, where he saw how the influential people of Indian Territory occupied themselves. He heard them talk of important matters and became acquainted with many of the most powerful people in the Choctaw Nation.³ When Hurley was not at the Smallwood home, he could be found running wild in the empty lands of Indian Territory.

Like his father, this young Irishman possessed a violent temper. Even in his youth, young Hurley's temper tended to get him into trouble. Once Hurley beat a man with a mace fashioned from a stick and a steel nut, and nearly killed him.⁴ In the rough coal mining territory, this violent temper was an asset.

In 1894, at the age of eleven, young Hurley began work-

¹Don Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1956), 17-18.

²Ibid., 19.

³Ibid., 22-25.

⁴Ibid., 26.

ing in the mines. His first job was as a trapper in the Number Six Mine of the Atoka Coal Mining Company in Phillips, Oklahoma. Pay was poor and the hours long, but he had no alternative but to work. His mother had died in February, 1896, and Pierce Hurley injured himself in a fall from a horse at about the same time. When Patrick's elder brother left the family, he found himself the sole provider for the Hurley brood. Work in the mines held no attraction for young Hurley, and he stole every moment he could to visit his friends, the Choctaws.⁵ Opportunity soon knocked for Hurley when Tom Golightly, an itinerant teacher, wandered into Phillips, Oklahoma.

Golightly made a career on the frontier establishing night schools to teach uneducated frontiersmen the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic. When Golightly opened his school in Phillips, Hurley was among the first to attend. When Hurley moved to the head of the class, it was apparent that the young Irishman possessed a keen mind. Golightly took a liking to the young man and encouraged him in his pursuits. At Golightly's school, Hurley first realized the potential of his mind.⁶ But, thoughts of school and mining left him with the outbreak of the Spanish-American War.

The Spanish-American War gave Hurley the chance he sought to leave the dreary mines of Phillips, Oklahoma. Theodore Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of Navy, was re-

⁵Ibid., 27-28.

⁶Ibid., 30.

cruiting cowboys to form a volunteer cavalry regiment. Although he was only fifteen years old, Hurley volunteered and got as far as Tampa, Florida, before the authorities realized that he was under age. Hurley never made it to Cuba, but he returned to Oklahoma determined never again to work in the mines.⁷ Hurley drifted around working as a cowboy, but knew that a university education held the key to the success he so desperately wanted.

He became determined to gain admittance to the Indian University, later Bacone College, located just outside Muskogee, Oklahoma. Hurley lacked the prerequisites to attend the University, but his persistence won him acceptance to the prep school division of the Indian University. He completed his work there in one year and then he enrolled in regular college courses. He soon became one of the most active students at the University. He played a French horn in the orchestra, was a first baseman on the baseball team, sang in the University choir, captained the football team, led a debate squad, and edited the school newspaper. In fact, young Hurley acted as assistant professor on the faculty of history while a sophomore. In 1905, Hurley received his degree from the Indian University and became a docket clerk in the intruder division of the Indian Service Office in Muskogee.⁸

While working for the Indian Service, Hurley turned his attention to law. He read for the State Bar Examination

⁷Ibid., 30.

⁸Ibid., 32-37.

in the office of Soaper, Huckleberry, and Owen, one of the leading law firms in Muskogee. He wanted to take the examination without getting a law degree, but friends convinced him that to succeed in law he needed a degree. They arranged for Hurley to be admitted to Yale. He resigned from the Indian Service in 1907 and headed East.⁹ On his way to Yale, he stopped to visit Washington, D. C.

From the moment of his arrival, Hurley was hypnotized by the national capital. He knew that he must seek his fortune in Washington, D. C. The drama and the excitement of government gripped the young frontiersman like a spell. All thoughts of Yale left him, and he sought admission to a university near the capital city. Unfortunately, he found himself unqualified to enter any of the usual law schools because of his insufficient academic background. He finally wrangled admittance into the National University Law School where he attended night classes. A year later, 1908, he received his Bachelor of Laws degree at the age of twenty-five.¹⁰ Hurley was ready to move on to higher things.

He returned to Tulsa and, in 1908, became a partner in the law firm of Gregg, Gormley, and Hurley. In 1909 the firm dissolved and Hurley took over the business. He soon had a flourishing law practice, pertaining mostly to oil, mining rights and land titles. Frequently, Hurley would accept parcels of land in payment for his services, and in only a very

⁹Ibid., 38.

¹⁰Ibid., 38-39.

few years the booming economy in and around Tulsa skyrocketed the value of Hurley's real estate. In this way, Hurley started what was to become a rather considerable fortune. He became one of the leading citizens in Tulsa and was elected as the first president of the Tulsa County Bar Association in 1910. That same year, Hurley was drafted as the Republican candidate for the State Senate from the district made up of Tulsa and Washington Counties. He ran an enthusiastic campaign and lost by only nine votes.¹¹ The next year, Hurley's path to success shortened measurably.

In 1911, Victor Locke, Jr., a boyhood friend of Hurley's, became principal chief of the Choctaw Nation. Locke soon got rid of the old tribal lawyer, Ormsby McHarg, the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Commerce and Labor in the Roosevelt administration, and turned to his old friend, Pat Hurley. Hurley was appointed attorney for the Choctaws on November 27, 1911.¹² With the appointment in his pocket, Hurley returned to Washington and resumed his study of law at George Washington University and, in 1912, he was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court. As the Choctaw lawyer, Hurley fought two notable cases, one to prevent the reopening of Choctaw rolls to admit Mississippi Choctaws, and the other to forestall an attempt by J. Frank McMurray,

¹¹Ibid., 40-41. Tulsa Daily World, November 16, 1910.

¹²U. S., Department of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner to the Five Civilized Tribes to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending, June 30, 1912 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1912), 34-35.

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an Oklahoma politician, to raid the Indian coffers.¹³ Both Locke and Hurley, however, left their positions with the Choctaws when war broke out in 1917.

Hurley had visions of heroically leading troops into battle. Prior to 1914, however, his only military experience had been his brief sojourn to Tampa, Florida, his membership in the Indian Territory volunteer militia, and as a Captain in the National Guard dating from March 17, 1914.¹⁴ On the basis of this experience, Hurley felt he was fully qualified to serve as a commissioned officer in the regular army of the United States. When the Oklahoma National Guard was activated following the United States entry into war in Europe, the Democratic-dominated Guard had no command position open for Republican Pat Hurley. Hurley was fearful that the war would pass him by, not giving him a chance to serve his country. He applied for a regular army commission and on August 18, 1917, he was appointed to the rank of Major in the Judge Advocate General's Department.¹⁶ He was assigned to duty in Washington administering the National Draft Act, but he was

¹³Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 46-69.

¹⁴"Statement of National Guard Record," Charles F. Barrett, Adj. Gen. of the State of Oklahoma to Hurley, July 17, 1928; in University of Oklahoma, Bizzell Library, Division of Manuscripts, Patrick J. Hurley Collection. Cited hereafter as Hurley Papers.

¹⁵Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 70.

¹⁶"Statement of World War Service of Lt. Col. Patrick J. Hurley, Judge Advocate General's Department," Charles H. Bridges to Hurley, December 18, 1928; Hurley Papers.

restless and never ceased his efforts to get transferred overseas.¹⁷ He finally succeeded in getting new orders and, in April, 1918, Hurley crossed the Atlantic with the first detachment of American artillery to go to France. Assigned to the staff of General Ernest Hines, Hurley found himself again a lawyer in uniform. Time and again, he applied for a transfer to the line, but since he lacked qualifications, his requests were denied. The war drew to a close, and Hurley had still not tasted action. On the last day of the war, Hurley, in desperation, made a final bid for glory.¹⁸

Although assigned to a staff position, far behind the lines, Hurley was determined to be decorated for valor. He arranged to carry a message from one artillery command post to another, and, as a result, the Army awarded Hurley the Silver Star.¹⁹ In the occupation which followed, Hurley won the Distinguished Service medal for negotiation for the occupation of the Duchy of Luxembourg.²⁰ He returned to the United States on May 30, 1919, a decorated war hero.

Before Hurley left the United States in 1917, he met Washington debutante Ruth Wilson, the daughter of Admiral Henry Wilson, the commander of the Atlantic Fleet. On first

¹⁷Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 70-71.

¹⁸Ibid., 71.

¹⁹The most critical account of how Hurley qualified for this award is in Drew Pearson and Robert Sharon Allen, More Merry-Go-Round (New York: Liveright, Inc., Publishers, 1932), 162-163.

²⁰Ibid., 163-164.

sight, Hurley knew that he wanted Ruth Wilson to be his wife. She was the most beautiful and certainly one of the most influential debutantes in Washington. On their second date, Hurley asked the Admiral's daughter to marry him. On December 5, 1919, after a courtship carried on partially by correspondence from France, the pair wed.²¹ Hurley returned to Tulsa with his bride and settled down to increase his fortune.

He soon became a leading figure in Oklahoma politics. In 1921, he played a key role in settling the race riots in Tulsa, heading a citizens' committee to maintain order. He refused to run for office but, in 1924, was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Cleveland. In 1926, he led the Oklahoma State Convention of the Republican party, where he turned down the gubernatorial nomination. Hurley's political reticence was short-lived, for early in 1928 he came out in support of Herbert Hoover.²²

Hurley accepted the responsibility of managing the state pre-convention campaign for Hoover. The old guard Republicans in Oklahoma favored Senator Charles Curtis of Kansas, with secondary support for Frank O. Lowden. Hurley met with defeat at the state convention when the old guard united to close the door on Hoover. But at Kansas City the nomination of Herbert Hoover put Hurley in virtual control of the Repub-

²¹Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 75.

²²Ibid., 76-79.

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lican party in Oklahoma.²³

Hurley avidly campaigned for Hoover in the presidential election. He stumped Oklahoma in his private airplane, flying to small towns where he made over sixty speeches. Due partly to these efforts, Hoover carried Oklahoma. As a reward, Hoover offered the Oklahoman several jobs in Washington, and Hurley accepted the post of Assistant Secretary of War.²⁴ On March 15, 1929, he assumed his new duties.²⁵ Several months later, the Secretary of War, James W. Good, died and the Oklahoma lawyer became the fifty-fifth Secretary of War on December 9, 1929, at the age of forty-six.²⁶

Hurley sailed the War Department through stormy seas. In one of his first official acts, he blocked the transfer of the Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to Camp Bragg, North Carolina. In the summer of 1931, Hurley visited the Philippine Islands and came out against independence, stating that most of the population there were not ready to be freed. When he appeared before a Senate committee holding hearings on the Hawes-Cutting Bill, a measure which would give independence to the Islands, Hurley exploded when the committee disagreed with him. He called the committee a star-chamber hearings and stalked out. This was the first of Hurley's many

²³Ibid., 80-81.

²⁴Pearson and Allen, More Merry-Go-Round, 164.

²⁵New York Times, March 13, 1929, 1.

²⁶Ibid., April 13, 1929, 3.

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dramatic appearances before Senate committees.²⁷ During Hurley's tenure as Secretary of War, he established the War Policies Commission and appointed General Douglas MacArthur as Chief of Staff, in opposition to the wishes of John J. Pershing.²⁸ But the greatest test for Hurley as Secretary of War came in 1932.

Hurley's suppression of the Bonus Riots in 1932 brought him a landslide of national publicity. An army of unemployed veterans had assembled in and around Washington, D. C., demanding that Congress appropriate funds to pay the bonus voted in 1924. Tension rose and, on July 26, 1932, riots broke out which the Washington police subdued with gunfire. On July 28, 1932, Hurley issued an order for federal troops to clear the area.²⁹ The bonus marchers dispersed, but this act became a political issue which contributed no small part to the defeat of the Republicans and Hurley's return to private life.³⁰

Although Hurley left the government, he remained on the national scene. He was a vocal critic of the new administration but publicly endorsed some Roosevelt measures, such as the National Recovery Act.³¹ Private citizen Hurley devoted

²⁷Ibid., February 12, 1932, 6.

²⁸Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 98-101.

²⁹Hurley to Douglas MacArthur, July 28, 1932; Hurley Papers.

³⁰See collection of clippings in Hurley Clipping Book, 1932; Hurley Papers.

³¹Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 138-139.

himself to his large law practice and to various business enterprises. In 1935, Hurley helped organize the Interstate Oil Commission, a functionary, regulatory organization.³²

Hurley reorganized the Richfield Oil Company, bringing it back from bankruptcy, and soon had regained much of the fortune he lost in the crash of 1929.³³ On March 18, 1938, the expropriation of oil properties in Mexico brought Hurley into an international dispute for the first time since he had arranged for American troops to enter Luxembourg at the end of World War I.³⁴

Hurley, acting as legal counsel for the Sinclair Oil interests in Mexico, took a direct interest in the settlement of the expropriation controversy. The United States government was hesitant to take a strong stand on the matter, knowing that intervention of any sort by the United States government could precipitate a revolution in Mexico.³⁵ With government support, however, the major American oil companies with holdings in Mexico selected a negotiator to deal with the Mexican government. Donald Richberg, a New Deal favorite, was selected to deal with the Mexican government. Hurley, fearful that the interests of Harry F. Sinclair had been neglected by Richberg, went to Mexico and arranged a separate settlement on behalf of

³²Ibid., 146.

³³Ibid.

³⁴New York Times, March 19, 1938, 1.

³⁵The best general treatment of the oil expropriation controversy is in Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), xii, xiii.

Sinclair with the Mexican government. Josephus Daniels, the American Ambassador to Mexico, during the negotiations ascribed Hurley's success to his ability to communicate with the Mexican President, Lazaro Cardenas, on the basis of a warm personal friendship.³⁶ In the years Hurley was occupied with the Mexican expropriations case, the American nation moved closer to war, both in Europe and the Pacific.

Hurley was not oblivious to these developments. As war approached, his statements on the international situation underscored the fact that, while he did not support Franklin Roosevelt on most of his domestic policies, he did approve of the President's growing involvement in Europe and the Far East. On November 7, 1939, after war broke out in Europe, in a speech to the overseas Masonic Lodge at Providence, Rhode Island, Hurley strongly attacked America's neutrality as embodied in the Neutrality Acts.³⁷ On May 19, 1940, he expressed his approval of the defense program outlined by President Roosevelt and added that there was a need for increasing non-partisan support of Roosevelt's emergency national defense program.³⁸ Three weeks later, on June 7, Hurley called on President Roosevelt and again reiter-

³⁶ Josephus Daniels, Shirt-Sleeves Diplomat (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 265.

³⁷ Typescript copy of Armistice Day Address delivered by Hurley to the Overseas Masonic Lodge, Providence, Rhode Island, November 11, 1939; Hurley Papers.

³⁸ Chicago Herald American, May 19, 1940, Hurley Clipping Book, 1940; Hurley Papers.

ated his support of Roosevelt's national defense program.³⁹

This meeting also sparked rumors that Hurley was being considered as a possible Secretary of War under Roosevelt in the event the President reorganized his cabinet.⁴⁰ Hurley continued to press for bipartisanship on the question of national defense and on September 9, 1940, came out strongly for the repeal of the Neutrality Act in support for President Roosevelt.⁴¹ Hurley continued to favor the President's defense program in public statements and by participation in reserve training during the year 1941.

Although Hurley had held a reserve officer's commission and the rank of Colonel for many years, he had taken part in less than four weeks of training between the time of his discharge in 1919 and October 31, 1941.⁴² Early in 1940, however, Hurley was informed that he was eligible for promotion to the rank of Brigadier General in the event of national emergency; he was retained on the eligibility list for the calendar year 1941.⁴³ In November, 1941, Hurley participated in twenty-eight days of training in North Carolina.⁴⁴ On Decem-

³⁹Tulsa Daily World, June 8, 1940, Hurley Clipping Book, 1940; Hurley Papers.

⁴⁰New York Herald Tribune, June 8, 1940, Hurley Clipping Book, 1940; Hurley Papers.

⁴¹Tulsa Daily World, June 15, 1940, and New York Times, June 16, 1940, Hurley Clipping Book, 1940; Hurley Papers.

⁴²"Statement of Service for Longevity Pay," November 1, 1941; Hurley Papers.

⁴³Adjutant General to Hurley, January 15, 1940, and Adjutant General to Hurley, April 2, 1941; Hurley Papers.

⁴⁴U. S. Army Special Order No. 251, October 25, 1941,

ber 4, 1941, Hurley in an interview with General George C. Marshall informed the Chief of Staff that he did not want a staff position in Washington and did not want to serve unless war actually broke out and unless he had an opportunity to go overseas.⁴⁵ Three days later the United States was in war.

Hurley was on a business trip to Venezuela when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. When he returned to the United States, he wrote a letter to President Roosevelt which changed the position he had taken in his talk with General Marshall a few weeks earlier. Hurley informed the President on December 24, that he would serve in any capacity and at any place, but added that he preferred to serve on the line.⁴⁶ Roosevelt soon found a place for the rambunctious Hurley.

The Japanese invasion of the Philippine Islands caught American forces in a weak position. In less than a month, American and Philippine troops under the command of General Douglas MacArthur had been forced into the mountainous Bataan peninsula where they continued to fight a bloody, holding action. It became clear in Washington that General MacArthur would have to be re-supplied with ammunition in order to continue his resistance against the Japanese invaders. Supply of MacArthur was made difficult because the Japanese had established a blockade around the Philippine Islands. It was

Hq. 3rd Army Area; Hurley Papers.

⁴⁵Hurley Office Diary, 1941, December 4, 1941; Hurley Papers.

⁴⁶Hurley to Roosevelt, December 24, 1941; Hurley Papers.

obvious that unusual means would have to be adopted to save the beleaguered Americans on the Bataan peninsula.⁴⁷

The War Department soon evolved a plan to aid MacArthur. A high-ranking officer with the proven ability to operate outside existing military channels would be sent to Australia with a large sum of American currency. When in Australia, this officer would commission ships to run the blockade to Bataan. Quite naturally, this would be no easy task. It required the services of an officer who had prestige, energy, and nerve.⁴⁸

Patrick J. Hurley was a natural choice for this mission. His stature as a former Secretary of War and as a leading figure in the Republican party gave him far more authority than an ordinary Colonel in the United States Army would carry. Hurley's vigorous pursuit of the negotiations concerning the Mexican oil expropriation controversy clearly demonstrated his ability to accomplish a difficult task against sizable opposition. Moreover, Hurley, considered too old to command troops, could be spared for this mission while younger regular army officers were needed in troop command positions.⁴⁹

Two other factors made Hurley eminently suitable for the mission. Hurley and MacArthur had been friends since MacArthur rose to the position of Chief of Staff under Hurley

⁴⁷Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1952), 25.

⁴⁸Ibid., 25.

⁴⁹Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 158.

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as Secretary of War. Secondly, Hurley had been a staunch advocate of a bipartisan national defense program in the years preceding the war. By giving Hurley this important task Roosevelt would underscore his intention of making the war effort truly bipartisan.

Hurley had a scant two days to prepare for his blockade running mission. On Friday, January 16, 1942, he conferred with General George C. Marshall, the Chief of Staff, who informed him that he had been selected to carry out the re-supply of General MacArthur.⁵⁰ The next day, Hurley returned to the War Department where he met with Marshall again and was briefed in detail on the assignment by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, then the chief of the Operations Division of the General Staff. Marshall designated Hurley as a personal representative of the Chief of Staff to cooperate with the commanding general, United States forces in Australia, for organizing and dispatching supplies to General Douglas MacArthur's command in the Philippines.⁵¹ When Hurley asked when he was to leave, Eisenhower informed him to return to the War Department by midnight, and to be ready for extended duty.⁵² Hurley's day was not yet over.

That same day, Hurley met with President Roosevelt who

⁵⁰Hurley Office Diary, 1942, January 16, 1942; Hurley Papers. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, 25.

⁵¹Hurley Office Diary, 1942, January 17, 1942; George C. Marshall to Hurley, January 17, 1942; Hurley Papers.

⁵²Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, 25. Marshall to Dwight D. Eisenhower, January 17, 1942; Hurley Papers.

spoke with him briefly and informed him that his name had been forwarded to the Congress with the recommendation that he be promoted to the temporary rank of Brigadier General. By one o'clock in the morning, January 18, 1942, Hurley had left Washington by air on his secret mission.⁵³

Hurley did not reach Australia on the first try. Because of bad weather, his plane was grounded at Hamilton Field in California for more than two weeks. During that time Hurley received news that his promotion to Brigadier General had been approved and also, to his surprise, that he had been appointed the first American minister to New Zealand. He was to assume the duties of minister upon completion of his military assignment.⁵⁴

In early February Hurley arrived in Australia. He immediately began to round up ships for his mission and by February 8, he had collected six ships with crews. He cabled General Marshall that he was prepared to begin the re-supply of MacArthur on Bataan. Two days later Hurley received a message from Major General George Brett, the American representative on the American-British-Dutch-Australian command at Surabaya. This message said that naval authorities refused to grant permission for Hurley's ships to sail for Bataan. Hurley immediately flew to Surabaya. In discussions

⁵³ Hurley Office Diary, 1942, January 17, 1942; Hurley Papers.

⁵⁴ Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 160. Adjutant General to Hurley, January 17, 1942; Hurley Papers.

with General Archibald P. Wavell, Hurley secured permission to dispatch the ships to Bataan.

Hurley arrived back in Australia on February 19, 1942. He had checked into a hotel in Port Darwin where the ships he had assembled were waiting in the harbor. That same day the Japanese launched an air attack on the city and crowded port facilities. Hurley was slightly wounded in the head by a flying bomb fragment and as a result received the Purple Heart. Six of the ships which he had assembled were sunk during the attack and of the remaining six, only three reached the Philippines. MacArthur was ordered to Australia and the defenders of the Bataan peninsula were overpowered by the Japanese. With the Philippines lost, Hurley's military mission ended and it was time for him to assume his duties as American Minister to New Zealand. Hurley, however, was reluctant to leave the scene of action, but after repeated urgings by General Marshall, he went to New Zealand.⁵⁵

Hurley disliked his new assignment. Although he performed his duties there well, he chafed at being so remote from the military action. He began to feel that he had been placed in a backwash area of the war. Hurley wanted to see

⁵⁵The best general account of the efforts to re-supply MacArthur in the Philippines is in Louis Morton, The Fall of The Philippines, Vol. II, Part 1, of The War in the Pacific, in United States Army in World War II, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (53 vols.; Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947-1960), 390-404. The best general account of the evacuation of MacArthur is Ibid., 353-360. Hurley's role in the re-supply effort and the evacuation of MacArthur is in Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 155-168.

action or at least be where the action was taking place. He looked for every opportunity to leave New Zealand and when the New Zealand Prime Minister, Peter Frazer, flew to Washington in July, 1942, to discuss military matters, Hurley accompanied him.⁵⁶

While in Washington, Hurley was given a new mission by Franklin Roosevelt. The President sent Hurley back to New Zealand by way of the Soviet Union, where he was to discuss the problems of the Pacific war with Marshal Joseph Stalin. Before Hurley left, he managed to enlarge the trip to include a junket through the Middle East. Much to Hurley's pleasure he was allowed to make the trip not as a diplomat but as a General in the army.⁵⁷ Hurley arrived in Moscow on November 4, 1942, and remained there two weeks before he met with the Soviet Premier.⁵⁸ His discussions with Stalin had little substance. They spoke in general terms of democracy, of the necessity of defeating the Axis, and of the heroic efforts by troops of both sides in that struggle.⁵⁹ The sphynx-like Soviet leader found the colorful, rambunctious Hurley amusing and so, when Hurley asked permission to visit the front at Stalingrad, Stalin readily granted the

⁵⁶Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 170-171. Hurley to Marshall, October 21, 1942; Hurley Papers.

⁵⁷Marshall to Hurley, October 5, 1942; Roosevelt to Joseph Stalin, October 5, 1942; Hurley Papers.

⁵⁸Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 174.

⁵⁹Hurley to Roosevelt, November 15, 1942; Hurley Papers.

request.⁶⁰ Hurley barnstormed through Russia for the better part of two months, arriving at Teheran, Iran, on New Year's Day, 1943. Thus, he ended the first of many whirlwind visits to the Soviet Union.

Hurley wrote voluminous reports about his visit to the Russian capital and his observations on the various military fronts. He reported in glowing terms the unity of purpose which existed between the United States and the Soviet Union. Regarding these reports, George F. Kennan, a noted diplomat, stated:

I don't think . . . he [Hurley] knew what he was talking about when he reported on the views of the Soviet leaders. On the other hand, there was ample advice available to him which he showed no desire to tap on these subjects. I mean, it was not surprising to me that Hurley didn't know that he was being given the usual run-around and the usual patter by Stalin and Molotov, but I think that if he had been a wiser and more thoughtful man, he would have asked some people who would be familiar with those conditions for some years to comment on those.⁶¹

In any event, Hurley, now in Teheran, turned his attention from Russia to the Middle East.

The President's representative spent two weeks in Iraq and Iran. Although Hurley's orders specified that he was to continue on to New Zealand, he was reluctant to return to the South Pacific island because he believed it to

⁶⁰Stalin to Roosevelt, November 15, 1942; Hurley Papers.

⁶¹Description of Stalingrad front in Hurley to Roosevelt, December 11, 1942; Description of trip to Caucasus in Hurley to Roosevelt, December 29, 1942; Hurley Papers. U. S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, State Department Loyalty Investigation, Senate Report 2108, 81st Cong., 2nd Sess., 1950, Part 2, 2124. Cited hereafter as Loyalty Investigation.

be a position which would keep him isolated from the mainstream of the war. At least partially to avoid returning to New Zealand, he wired Roosevelt that the situation he had uncovered in the Middle East was so critical that it warranted his verbal report.⁶² The President yielded to Hurley's demands and Hurley flew back to Washington.

After a meeting with Roosevelt, Hurley emerged as a special presidential representative in the Middle East. Hurley was to report personally and directly to Roosevelt on the general conditions in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, and the Arab states in the Near East, including the kingdom of Saudi Arabia.⁶³ Hurley arrived in North Africa on March 13, 1943, and did not return to the United States until early June. Responsible only to Roosevelt, Hurley created great excitement as he swept majestically through North Africa and the Middle East. He later described how he developed a formula for becoming acquainted with the problems of every nation he visited. Hurley talked with political and military leaders, read a few books, listened to official guides, and visited the tourist sights. In other words, he took a V.I.P. tour of each country through which he passed. He met virtually every leader in the Middle East from King Saud to David Ben-Gurion. The trained foreign service officers at the various posts Hurley visited resented this bumptious amateur

⁶²Hurley to Roosevelt, December 29, 1942; Hurley Papers.

⁶³Roosevelt to Hurley, March 3, 1943; Hurley Papers.

diplomat. Hurley on his part tended to resent the condescending attitude which he sensed was present among the more experienced foreign service officers.⁶⁴ By the time Hurley returned to Washington, much of the State Department and a good portion of the War Department were up in arms about his activities.⁶⁵

Hurley's reports from the Middle East had charged that elements in the State Department were either pro-British or pro-Communist in their sentiments. He said that some members of the State Department were intent upon using the war against Germany and Japan as a means for strengthening the British Empire's hold over weaker nations of Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Others, he continued, were determined to assist the Communist conspiracy for world domination by the Soviet Union. There was no means of defense against Hurley's charges. As a prominent Republican, Hurley was immune from attack by Roosevelt's natural opposition. Working for probably the most powerful Democratic president in the history of the United States, Hurley had the support of most Democrats as well. Denied these natural channels of protest, dissatisfied individuals in the State Department gave their version of Hurley's activities to Drew Pearson, the noted Washington columnist. On August 17, 1943, Pearson wrote that Hurley had agreed with Ibu Saud's vow to drive the Jews from

⁶⁴Log of Middle East trip, March 13, 1943, to June 15, 1943; Hurley Papers.

⁶⁵Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 198-199.

Palestine.⁶⁶ A few rebels in Congress turned their attention on Hurley, charging him with anti-Semitism among other things, but their attacks, too, proved ineffectual.⁶⁷ Roosevelt, rather than dismissing Hurley, selected him for another special mission.

On October 14, 1943, Hurley left Washington for Chungking, on a new and important mission for the President. On his way to Chungking, Hurley had several specific tasks. He was to check on the situation in the Middle East and also confer with American and Allied military leaders in India. In order to accomplish these secondary assignments Hurley was required to make several side trips in the Middle East and confer for more than a week in New Delhi. In his meetings at New Delhi, Hurley learned of the tensions and conflicts which were disrupting the activities in the China-Burma-India theater. It was not until November 7, that Hurley arrived in China to pursue the main purpose of his trip.⁶⁸

Roosevelt sent Hurley to China to sound out Chiang Kai-shek on the arrangements and various problems which would be discussed at the forthcoming Cairo and Teheran conferences. Roosevelt had envisioned two conferences. The first, involv-

⁶⁶Hurley Clipping Book, 1943, August 17; Hurley Papers.

⁶⁷Emanuel Celler to Roosevelt, August 18, 1943; Hurley Papers.

⁶⁸Hurley to Roosevelt, November 7, 1943; Roosevelt to Hurley, October 12, 1943; Hurley to Roosevelt, November 18, 1943; Draft of Hurley Memoirs, vii, 2; Hurley Papers.

ing the United States, China, and Great Britain, in which the problems of the Pacific alone would be discussed. At a second conference the Soviet Union, represented by Marshal Stalin, would be present and, in addition to questions broadly affecting the world-wide war effort, the question of Soviet entry into the Far Eastern war would be raised. Chiang told Hurley he would not meet with Stalin at the second conference since Russia was not then involved in the war with the Japanese, but he would cooperate with the Soviets if they entered that war on the Allied side.⁶⁹ In addition to the specific arrangements for the conferences tentatively scheduled for late November, Hurley was instructed to sound out the Generalissimo on American strategy in the Pacific.⁷⁰

Hurley gave the Chinese leader a briefing on the American island-hopping strategy. Chiang Kai-shek expressed his approval but still envisioned a landing on the mainland of China by American forces as a prelude to an all-out attack on Japan.⁷¹ Hurley cut short his conferences with the Generalissimo after three days when he learned that Roosevelt desired his presence in Cairo.⁷²

The President's special representative arrived in Cairo on November 16, and, after meeting with President Roosevelt, flew on to Teheran on November 22.⁷³ Hurley per-

⁶⁹Hurley to Roosevelt, November 20, 1943; Hurley Papers.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Marshall to Hurley, November 10, 1943; Hurley Papers.

⁷³Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 207-209.

formed only one function at the Teheran conference. He drafted the Iran Declaration, essentially a reaffirmation of the Atlantic Charter, and at the end of the meetings, Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill signed the declaration, which guaranteed the post-war independence of Iran.⁷⁴ When the heads of state left the Iranian capital, Hurley remained. The President had asked Hurley to stay in Iran to coordinate the activities of American agencies there. Hurley remained in the Middle East until March, 1944, when the President called him to Washington for consultations.⁷⁵

Hurley's further activities in the Middle East had succeeded in alienating career officers in the State Department even more. At the same time, Hurley had become angered by what he believed to be deliberate attempts to sabotage his mission to the Middle East.⁷⁶ He became more hostile when, on a visit to the State Department, he saw a memorandum written by Eugene Rostov, describing one of Hurley's reports from Iran as "hysterical, messianic globalony." The memorandum bore Dean Acheson's approving initials.⁷⁷ Apparently the opposition to Hurley's proposals in the State Department did not shake Roosevelt's confidence in him. Indeed, Roosevelt

⁷⁴Declaration of the Three Powers Regarding Iran, December 1, 1943; Hurley Papers.

⁷⁵Edward R. Stettinius to Hurley, November 5, 1943; Hurley to Roosevelt, February 8, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁷⁶Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 228-230.

⁷⁷Ibid.

himself thought that the plan was an excellent one, and said so when he forwarded it to the State Department.⁷⁸

Hurley remained in Washington for the remainder of the spring and summer of 1944. He was unwilling to accept any position which would force him to serve within the State Department's chain of command. In July, Hurley began to hear rumors about the developing crisis in China.⁷⁹ In August, Roosevelt would give Hurley the task of solving the Chinese puzzle. On the eve of the China mission, Hurley's past history revealed little which would qualify him for such a task. Although he delighted in wearing his General's uniform, he was relatively inexperienced as a soldier. He had no training which qualified him to understand the peculiar problems he would face in China. Nevertheless, Hurley held the confidence of President Roosevelt and that qualification overrode any of Hurley's deficiencies.

⁷⁸Roosevelt to Cordell Hull, January 12, 1944; Roosevelt to Hurley, March 25, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁷⁹Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 232.

CHAPTER II

THE CHINESE PUZZLE

The situation which developed in China in the summer of 1944 had deep roots in the past. Since the Open Door notes of John Hay, America had been committed to maintaining the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China. The United States reaffirmed its devotion to these principles and had secured their acceptance by eight other powers in the Nine Power Treaty signed in Washington in 1922. Among the nations party to this agreement was Japan. When Japan undertook the military occupation of Manchuria and established the Japanese-sponsored puppet regime of Manchukuo in 1932, the United States felt that the Open Door principles had been violated. Furthermore, the United States, under the provisions of the Kellogg Pact of 1928, had committed itself to the settlement of disputes by peaceful and orderly processes. Japan's policy in Manchuria had also ignored the spirit of this agreement.

The United States response to the aggressive activities of Japan was fourfold. It made an effort to persuade Japan to abandon her course of conquest, but, at the same time, carefully avoided war with Japan. Nevertheless, American

efforts to assist China in maintaining her independence and integrity in the face of Japanese aggression drew the United States further into the Asian conflict. America adopted a policy of non-recognition toward territories which the State Department felt were unlawfully seized from China by the Japanese. Furthermore, credits were extended to China to aid her in solving difficult currency problems. In 1937, when Japan invaded northeast China, the United States government refrained from applying neutrality legislation which, if enforced, would have worked to the disadvantage of China.

When Japan joined Germany and Italy to form a tripartite military alliance, however, the methods and emphasis of American foreign policy in the Far East changed. The United States endeavored to broaden its role in China. To counter the Japanese attempt to establish a puppet Chinese government under Wang Ch'ing-wei early in 1940, the United States government declared its continued recognition of the Chungking government as "the government of China." This meant that all aid to China would go to the Chungking government of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

Chiang, in desperate straits, needed anything the United States could supply. Loans were granted and other measures adopted to stabilize Chinese currency. Lend-lease aid was approved, including technical assistance which greatly increased tonnage carried over the Burma Road, the main land route to China until it was closed by Japanese military operations in May of 1942. The United States began a program to equip and

train Chinese forces and helped to organize and outfit the "Flying Tigers," a volunteer group of American civilian fighter pilots under the command of Claire L. Chennault, later Commanding General of the Fourteenth Air Force. American aid to China, however, failed to halt Japanese aggression.

From September, 1939, to early December, 1941, the United States continued a barrage of notes to the Japanese leaders in an attempt to point out the folly of the path they had apparently chosen. In 1940 and 1941 President Roosevelt initiated more rigid measures to dissuade the Japanese from their hostile course. Economic sanctions, including embargos on oil and steel and the freezing of Japanese credits in the United States, were designed to show the Japanese the error of their ways. American policy in China was significantly altered by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

The national objectives of the United States crystallized when it became involved in a two-front war with the Axis powers. The immediate objective was defeat of the Axis. Secondly, less immediate but equally vital, was the creation of a peace with assurances of permanent stability. To further these goals, American policy in China by 1944 was directed toward the effective joint prosecution of the war and full collaboration with China as a major power. It was expected that China would share primary responsibility in the organization of world peace and help to bring stability and prosperity in the Pacific area.¹

¹State Department Policy Paper, "Policy toward China March 1933-August 1939, Revised as of December 1, 1944;"

Unfortunately, this policy was based on several false assumptions.

Determined to resist the Japanese program of establishing puppet governments in China, the United States chose the Kuomintang-controlled Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek as the "government of China." By recognizing only this government, the United States sanctioned a government representing not the people of China, but rather several powerful political factions. The landlord class, the Western-oriented big businessmen of the coastal cities, and a loose coalition of warlords controlled the Kuomintang. These three groups were held together by the personal leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, who maintained his position by catering to the special interests of each, and by balancing the power of one against the other.

In reality, the Kuomintang shared political power in China with several other groups, the most powerful of which was the Communist party. At the beginning of hostilities with Japan, the Communist party was small and tightly organized. It did, however, possess a base of operations in North China. After 1937, the Communists had extended their control over large portions of rural North China through guerrilla warfare. The Japanese were content to hold the large cities and com-

Hurley Papers. The Standard Official summary of American Relations with China is U. S. Department of State, United States Relations with China with Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949, Based on the Files of the Department of State, Department of State Publication 3573. Cited hereafter as China White Paper.

munication lines. By the late summer of 1944, the Communist party was a strong, dynamic force challenging the Kuomintang for leadership in the country.²

The United States entry into the war in the Far East assured Japan's defeat. With the Japanese threat removed, the Kuomintang turned more and more of its attention to the Communists. The Nationalists hoped that by not wasting their strength against the Japanese they would, because of American aid, be able to turn their armies on the Communists at the end of the war. The Japanese did not capitalize on the situation, for they were more than busy resisting the American island-hopping in the South Pacific.

On the other hand, Mao Tse-tung took advantage of the Kuomintang's inactivity by attacking the Japanese, thus expanding the influence of the Communist party among the peasants in Japanese-occupied China. Mao won additional support from the peasants by initiating social and economic reforms in the areas where Communist influence was supreme. Through such programs he also influenced liberal elements in Kuomintang-controlled China. To counter the growing strength of the Communists, Chiang Kai-shek adopted only stopgap measures, for he planned to eliminate the Communists by force of arms following the

²Report of John Stewart Service, "The Need of an American Policy Toward the Problems Created by the Rise of the Chinese Communist Party," September 3, 1944; Report by John Stewart Service, "The Need for Greater Realism in Our Relations with Chiang Kai-shek," October 10, 1944; Report by John P. Davies, Jr., "How Red are the Chinese Communists?" November 7, 1944; Hurley Papers. A good summary of Communist expansion in the war years is in China White Paper, 52-58.

war with Japan.³

The United States found itself supporting a government which did not represent all of China and which by 1944 had little hope of ever doing so. Moreover, this government, rather than fighting Japan, devoted most of its attention to preparing for a civil war which would certainly follow the defeat of Japan by the United States. United States aid, which went exclusively to the Chungking government and which was intended to hasten the defeat of Japan, was stockpiled for the expected civil war. In spite of this aid, it became clear that because of its organic weakness, the government of Chiang Kai-shek would be on the losing side in that civil war.⁴

Unfortunately, conditions in the United States made it almost impossible to reappraise America's China policy. Americans found it difficult to analyze the situation in China accurately because, with the exception of information originating from official American sources, news from China was extremely unreliable.⁵ Communications were further muddled

³Hurley to Secretary of State, June 7, 1945; Hurley Papers. China White Paper, 570-572.

⁴A good summary of U. S. problems in China was prepared for Hurley by the Intelligence Section of General Joseph W. Stilwell's Staff and is titled, "Notes on Problems Connected with our Mission in China," Hurley Papers. See also China White Paper and Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, Stilwell's Command Problems, Vol. IX, Part 2, of China-Burma-India Theater, in United States Army in World War II, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (53 vols.; Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947-1960). Cited hereafter as Romanus and Sunderland, Command Problems.

⁵U. S., Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations and Committee on Armed Services, Military Situation in the Far East,

because the Chungking government carried on its relations with the United States in a most irregular manner. Rather than going through the Department of State, representatives of the Chungking government, official, unofficial, and familial, would go directly to the various departments of the United States government, and even the President, circumventing the State Department and the American Ambassador in China. Frequently the State Department found itself totally uninformed on matters pertaining to China. Furthermore, President Roosevelt made no effort to rectify the irregular procedures of the Chungking representatives.⁶

The United States found itself alone in the position it had adopted toward China. The British did not view China as a great power and expected it to be divided after the war into spheres of influence. Moreover, the British made it clear that they did not intend to relinquish without a struggle any of their former possessions or spheres of influence in the Pacific, including Hong Kong.⁷ American policy in China was further challenged by the Russian specter to the north. There was little doubt that the Soviet Union would come into the Far Eastern war, but it appeared likely that it would wait

Hearing to Conduct an Inquiry into the Military Situation in the Far East and the Facts Surrounding the Relief of General Douglas MacArthur from his Assignments in that Area, 82nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1951, Part 4, 2882. Cited hereafter as MacArthur Hearings.

⁶Cordell Hull, Memoirs of Cordell Hull (2 vols.; New York: MacMillan Company, 1948), II, 1586-1587.

⁷Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins; an Intimate History (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), 716.

until the fighting was over and then act to reestablish the sphere of influence which Russia once enjoyed in Manchuria.⁸

President Roosevelt viewed the problems in China in terms of personalities. He lacked confidence in General Joseph W. Stilwell in particular and the State Department representatives in general. For his information on China he tended to rely on personal representatives such as Wendell Wilkie, Patrick Hurley, and Henry Wallace, who were usually, as Henry L. Stimson said, "easy dupes of the wonderfully charming circle around Chiang Kai-shek in Chungking."⁹ The Chinese leaders with whom these representatives met blamed all the problems in China on the American Ambassador, Clarence E. Gauss, and General Stilwell.¹⁰ Roosevelt's attempt to solve the China problem at the Cairo conference by meeting with the Generalissimo ended in failure. His disillusionment with Chiang Kai-shek, growing out of that meeting, caused him to listen closer to the counsel of Stilwell, even though he had little confidence in the General.¹¹

General Joseph W. Stilwell's mission to China began on July 2, 1942, when he received a message from General George

⁸MacArthur Hearings, Part 3, 1845.

⁹Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), 535-536.

¹⁰Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, 634.

¹¹Romanus and Sunderland, Command Problems, 82. The best account of Stilwell's first meeting with President Roosevelt which was influential in forming the unfavorable opinion Roosevelt held of Stilwell is in Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 535.

C. Marshal ordering him to China. He was directed to increase the combat efficiency of the Chinese army and further the war effort against Japan.¹² The obstacles General Stilwell encountered in his attempt to accomplish his mission caused him to take a very pessimistic attitude toward the Kuomintang by 1944. In comparing the Kuomintang with the Communist party, Stilwell saw the Kuomintang exemplified by corruption, neglect, chaos, taxes, trading with the enemy, and other equally unpraiseworthy attributes. He saw in the Communist program reduced taxes and rents, greater production, a higher standard of living, and active participation in government. He saw them practicing what they preached. This contrast caused Stilwell to view the Communists more favorably than the Kuomintang.¹³ The shortcomings he ascribed to the Kuomintang were reflected in the administration of its army which was unable to launch any meaningful attack against the Japanese.¹⁴

From this viewpoint, General Stilwell and a majority of the American military personnel in China began to see only one solution to the China muddle. They knew that, without pressure, Chiang Kai-shek would not launch an offensive against the Japanese. As many Americans serving in China caustically put it, "Pearl Harbor was China's armistice day."¹⁵ The

¹²Joseph W. Stilwell, The Stilwell Papers, ed. Theodore H. White (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1948), 306.

¹³Ibid., 316.

¹⁴Ibid., 316-317.

¹⁵Samuel Lubell, "Vinegar Joe and the Reluctant Dragon," Saturday Evening Post, CCXVII (February 24, 1945), 11.

American soldiers in China thought that if the United States gave arms to the Communist forces, it would hasten the defeat of the Japanese both by increasing the combat effectiveness of the Communists and by forcing Chiang Kai-shek into action which would win back American support.¹⁶ This solution had the approval of the foreign service officers and the American Ambassador in China.

The State Department representatives in China were a highly skilled group of men. Most of them had long experience in China and spoke fluent Chinese.¹⁷ They worked in close harmony with the American military establishment in China and, indeed, four foreign service officers, John P. Davies, Jr., Raymond P. Ludden, John Stewart Service, and John K. Emmerson, were assigned directly to Stilwell's staff as political advisers.¹⁸ Years later, John Stewart Service described these men as strongly conservative in American terms. He said, however, that because of the situation in China where the Kuomintang governed badly and the Communists governed well, many of them adopted a more favorable view of the Reds. Rather than being pro-Communist in their political beliefs, however, they simply tended to be anti-Kuomintang.¹⁹ As part of the American observer group established in Yen-an in the summer of 1944,

¹⁶Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2163.

¹⁷Ibid., Part 2, 2068.

¹⁸Ibid., Part 2, 1994-1995, 2093.

¹⁹Ibid., Part 2, 2053.

Service and Ludden sent back reports underscoring the growing importance of the Communist party in China.²⁰

A military crisis developed in China in the summer of 1944 which had extensive political implications.²¹ As a result of the Cairo conference, Stilwell initiated a North Burma offensive designed to open a land route to China. This offensive was approved by Roosevelt in spite of General Claire Chennault's urgings that the limited supplies entering China be channeled directly to the Fourteenth Air Force to be used against Japanese troops in East China who were expected to take the offensive against Chennault's air bases. Because of considerations arising out of the European theater of operations, landing craft allotted to a British operation which would support Stilwell's offensive were withdrawn. Chiang used this along with the United States refusal to grant a \$1 billion loan as justification for switching his support to General Chennault.²²

The Generalissimo found several reasons why support of Chennault's Fourteenth Air Force was more acceptable than cooperation with Stilwell's North Burma operation. While Stilwell's plan would require a heavy commitment of Chinese men and material, the brunt of continued air operations in

²⁰ Ibid., Part 2, 2068.

²¹ The most complete treatment of the crisis in China in 1944 is in Romanus and Sunderland, Command Problems, 399-442.

²² Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xi, 1; Hurley Papers. Romanus and Sunderland, Command Problems, 297-398.

East China would be borne by the American Air Force. If the Japanese did attack in that area, none of Chiang's elite American-trained troops would be in danger of being mauled.²³

Because of these considerations, Chiang gave General Chennault and the Fourteenth Air Force the go-ahead to attack the Japanese. As long as the Fourteenth Air Force was inactive, the Japanese had no interest in advancing along the East China front. When Chennault's air attacks became bothersome to the Japanese, however, they launched an offensive aimed at destroying the bases from which Chennault's planes flew. This was what Stilwell had predicted.²⁴ The Chinese forces in East China were unable to protect the bases. Chiang therefore withdrew forces allocated for the Burma campaign and demanded a greater share of the arms, munitions, and other military supplies earmarked for that operation. It became clear to Stilwell that perhaps the only way to save the Burma offensive was to remove Chiang Kai-shek from power.²⁵ Political considerations pointed to the same solution.

The growing strength of the Communist party made it a definite threat to the Kuomintang weakened by military defeats. Sensing his new-found power, Mao Tse-tung began a concentrated effort to win United States support. The presence of the

²³Romanus and Sunderland, Command Problems, 297-398.

²⁴Stilwell, The Stilwell Papers, 306-307. Romanus and Sunderland, Command Problems, 316-319.

²⁵MacArthur Hearings, Part 3, 2494. Stilwell, The Stilwell Papers, 321-322.

American observer group, code named "Dixie", in Yen-an gave Mao access to the Americans. By granting frequent interviews to the American observers, he hoped to influence them favorably. Mao was successful in his ploy. The result of these interviews and observations was a series of reports which, in effect, pointed out that Chiang was on the way out and Mao would someday rule all of China.²⁶

The reports recommended that the United States should extend at least partial aid to the Chinese Communists. The observers in Yen-an believed that this would benefit the United States in several ways. First, this aid would indicate to Chiang that he did not have complete support of the United States as he had believed and, therefore, he might more readily initiate social and economic reforms aimed at winning back full American confidence. By aiding the Communists, the United States would be given a degree of flexibility in its China policy not present when it gave all-out support to the Kuomintang. Moreover, by aiding the Communists the United States would be in a better position if Chiang Kai-shek did fall, and be allied with a group which was actively carrying the war to the Japanese. These reports, combined with the ineffective efforts of Chiang's military operations, seemed to call for a revision of American policy in China. The demand for change in American policy came primarily from American military and

²⁶The many reports of John Stewart Service written in Yen-an in the summer of 1944 were perhaps best summarized by George F. Kennan in Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2115.

diplomatic representatives on the China scene.

John S. Service stated this position most clearly. He urged the President to advise Chiang Kai-shek that unless United States demands for military cooperation and social and economic reforms were met, he could no longer expect unqualified American support. Service declared that if reforms were not forthcoming, the United States should begin giving limited military support to the Communists. At the same time, the United States should prepare for the collapse of the Chiang government and, if possible, form a third group which would be more liberal than the Kuomintang, but yet not Communist. Finally, Service thought that the United States should prepare for the complete control of China by the Communists and be in a position to influence the newly emerging leaders.²⁷

This was not the kind of advice which Roosevelt wanted. Although his faith in Chiang as a strong leader had been weakened by the events at the Cairo conference and subsequently, the President still believed that there was no other alternative to the Generalissimo in China. But by late summer of 1944, it had become evident that some new approach to the muddle in China was called for. Since Roosevelt rejected the advice of the experienced diplomats in China, he had to seek a more satisfactory solution to the problem.²⁸

²⁷The most succinct statement of this policy is in Report of John Stewart Service, "The Need of an American Policy Toward the Problems Created by the Rise of the Chinese Communist Party," September 3, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²⁸William D. Leahy, I Was There (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 255.

CHAPTER III

THE SOLUTION

As the crisis in China worsened in August, 1944, Roosevelt, unable to find an alternate course, continued reluctantly to follow the advice of the State Department and General George C. Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff. Supporting Stilwell, the President sent strong-worded requests and sharp near-ultimatums to the imperturable strong-man in Chungking. Still, Chiang refused to take any action to lessen the dangers growing out of the deteriorating military and political situations. Roosevelt's notes and thinly veiled threats were bringing no results and only two alternatives remained for the American President. First was the solution advanced by the military personnel and foreign service officers in China. They recommended issuing an ultimatum to Chiang Kai-shek, stating that if he failed to initiate reforms and turn over control of military operations in China to General Stilwell, the United States would begin extending aid to other forces in China. Roosevelt's other choice was to send a special presidential envoy to China in hopes that a new mind, unhampered by the hostility and pessimism which had developed on all sides in China, could end the crisis.

The course of action advocated by Stilwell, his staff, and the American diplomatic representatives in China did not please the President. He felt it left the United States without a workable alternative should Chiang Kai-shek refuse to accept the American conditions. The President feared that if Chiang rejected an ultimatum, the United States would be unable to find another leader capable of keeping China in the war.¹ The Far Eastern war would then become more costly to the United States in men and materials; for American grand strategy in the Pacific hinged on the supposition that the main striking force of the Japanese army would remain tied down on the Asian continent, arrayed against the Chinese regular forces of Chiang Kai-shek.² If Chiang withdrew his troops from the war, great numbers of Japanese soldiers would be free to resist American operations in the Pacific. Therefore, Roosevelt wished to avoid a showdown with Chiang.

The other alternative, sending a special presidential envoy to China, was far more attractive to the President. For many years Roosevelt had found the use of special representatives an efficient means of accomplishing special diplomatic tasks. He disliked working through the State Department and relied on strong personalities, such as Harry

¹Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xi, 8; Hurley Papers.

²Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940-1943, Vol IV, Part 4, of The War Department in United States Army in World War II, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (53 vols.; Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947-1960), 525. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, 772.

Hopkins and Patrick J. Hurley, to communicate his wishes to foreign representatives.³ Another factor made this alternative even more acceptable.

The State and War Departments had been pressing Chiang Kai-shek to have an American, at the time General Stilwell, placed in command of allied forces in China with hopes of untying the pressing military snarl there.⁴ Earlier in the year, Vice President Henry Wallace received the Generalissimo's blessing for an American attempt to bring together the Chinese Communists and the Chinese Nationalist forces in a united effort against the Japanese, thus laying the groundwork for future discussions.⁵ Then, on July 8, 1944, Chiang Kai-shek had requested that the President send a special representative to China qualified to speak for Roosevelt on political and military matters.⁶ The President and his advisers began the search for a suitable man to send to China.⁷

Since the President had sent Hurley to China once before and the results had pleased him, it was not surprising

³Elliot Roosevelt, As He Saw It (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 193. Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 536.

⁴Romanus and Sunderland, Command Problems, 415.

⁵John Carter Vincent to Hurley, August 24, 1944; Hurley Papers. Summary Notes on Conversations Between Vice President Henry A. Wallace and President Chiang Kai-shek, June 1944 in China White Paper, 559.

⁶Leahy, I Was There, 255. Roosevelt to Chiang, July 13, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁷Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 536. Leahy, I Was There, 256.

that he thought of Hurley for another mission. Hurley was a dynamic, positive man who had a reputation for speaking frankly; this, coupled with his reputation as a military diplomat, made him appear ideally made for the job. Roosevelt decided to send Hurley to China as his special representative to deal with the command problem which appeared to be the core of the difficulties between the United States and the Chungking government. Hurley's name was forwarded to Chiang Kai-shek on August 9, and the Generalissimo expressed his approval of the President's choice.⁸ The President determined that the moment was propitious to send along with Hurley someone qualified to discuss the economic future of China. Donald M. Nelson was chosen for this task. As head of the War Production Board, he was one of Roosevelt's most influential economic aides and advisers.⁹

On August 9, Hurley met with Joseph Grew, the special adviser on Far Eastern affairs of the State Department, who told him that he was being considered for a special mission to China.¹⁰ The next day, Roosevelt made his final decision to send Hurley to China, but it was not publicly announced until August 20.¹¹ As yet, Hurley had no detailed information on the task before him, but he must have surmised that

⁸Roosevelt to Chiang, August 9, 1944; Hurley Papers.
Roosevelt to Chiang, August 21, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Hurley Office Diary, 1944, August 9, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹¹New York Times, August 20, 1944, 1.

the growing conflict between Stilwell and Chiang was at the heart of the matter.

Hurley began preparing for a mission to China. On Sunday, August 13, he conferred with the Chinese Ambassador and the next afternoon talked with Harry Kung, the Chinese Minister of Finance and the brother-in-law of Chiang Kai-shek. Dental appointments and a speech at the Army Industrial College on Wednesday consumed the next two days. By Thursday Hurley was again concentrating on the China mission. At four thirty in the afternoon, he met with Major General Thomas T. Handy, the Chief of Operations, and the same evening dined at the Chinese Embassy.¹² All of these activities set the stage for a late morning meeting on Friday, August 18, with President Roosevelt.

Shortly before noon, Hurley and Donald Nelson entered the President's oval office with Secretary of State Cordell Hull. They spoke with Roosevelt only briefly, for Hurley arrived back at his Shoreham Building office by twelve fifty. In that short conference, Hurley received the directive which sent him winging to China a week later, to try to solve the growing political and military problems there. Hurley spent the afternoon mulling over the Roosevelt directive. After another meeting with General Handy that evening, Hurley went home, again to ponder the meaning of the Presidential order.¹³

¹²Office Diary, 1944, August 13-August 17, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹³Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xii, 5; Hurley Papers.

Hurley's instructions were brief. The Presidential letter contained only two short paragraphs, but Hurley interpreted these paragraphs in later years to justify all his actions in China. The letter designated Hurley as Roosevelt's personal representative to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek who would report directly to the President. Hurley's principal mission was to promote efficient and harmonious relations between the Generalissimo and General Stilwell, and to facilitate Stilwell's exercise of command over the Chinese armies to be placed under his direction. In the second paragraph Roosevelt advised Hurley to coordinate his activities with the United States Ambassador in China.¹⁴ Hurley was to leave for China within a week.

The detailed preparation for the mission had to take place in the seven days before Hurley boarded the plane for China. Meetings with Lieutenant General Henry H. Arnold and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau broadened Hurley's understanding of the problems faced by the Army Air Force and the Treasury Department in China. He continued his discussions with General Handy through the week and talked with anyone who he thought possessed information which would aid him in the successful completion of his task. He met with Joseph Grew again, General Marshall, Harry Hopkins, various Chinese generals, and even the British Ambassador.¹⁵ The

¹⁴Roosevelt to Hurley, August 18, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁵Hurley Office Diary, 1944, August 18, August 24, 1944; Hurley Papers.

day before his departure, Thursday, August 24, 1944, Hurley had a final conference with the President.

Meeting for less than an hour in the late afternoon, the two men discussed corruption in the Chinese government and the political alternatives to Chiang Kai-shek. The President characterized Mao Tse-tung as "probably a competent man, but untried in the larger responsibility of governing China." Roosevelt felt that the lack of Chinese leaders forced the United States to depend on Chiang; therefore, the policy of the American government was to support the Generalissimo. Existing American policy, he thought, made it impossible for the United States to recognize any other political factions in China. Secretary Hull, the President pointed out, had explained this in a message to the Japanese Ambassador before the outbreak of war in the Far East.¹⁶

At the same meeting, Hurley discussed his understanding of the personality conflict raging in China. He had discussed the problem of Stilwell with various people in the Far East during his abortive trip to China in 1943, and felt he fully understood the difficulties of dealing with the caustic General. Hurley and Roosevelt also considered the matter of arming the Communists, but both agreed that the idea should be rejected because of Chiang's well-known apathy toward the idea.¹⁷

¹⁶Document Handed by Secretary of State Cordell Hull to the Japanese Ambassador, November 26, 1941, in China White Paper, 464-466.

¹⁷Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xi, 8; Hurley Papers.

After this final briefing, Hurley went home to bed. The next morning he rose and journeyed to the National Airport where he boarded a plane for China.

Flying west from the Capital, Hurley and Nelson flew over Alaska and crossed Siberia to Moscow. Hurley wanted to consult with Russian officials because he believed that a clarification of the Soviet Union's policy regarding China would simplify his mission.¹⁸ Chiang feared that the Soviet Union would aid the Chinese Communists in their efforts to destroy the Kuomintang government. Therefore, Chiang would be unwilling to entertain any thoughts of cooperation with the Chinese Communists unless he could be assured that the Soviet Union had no intention of supporting Mao Tse-tung. Hurley and Nelson arrived in Moscow on Wednesday, August 30, at 6:05 p.m. and were greeted by a large party of Russian, American, and Chinese officials.¹⁹ The next day, at four o'clock in the afternoon, Nelson, Hurley, and Averell Harriman, the American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, proceeded to the office of Russian Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov.

Donald Nelson took the lead in the discussion by summarizing the various objectives of both his and General Hurley's mission to China. He expressed to the Soviet Foreign Minister the President's desire to aid China during and after the war with Japan. After a brief review of the economic con-

¹⁸Hurley to Roosevelt, October 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁹Hurley China Log, 1944, August 25-August 30, 1944; Hurley Papers.

ditions in China, the meeting turned to the problem of Communist-Kuomintang unification.

Molotov and the American representatives agreed that the Chinese Communists were the major opponents to Chiang Kai-shek. Nelson told Molotov that political unity was a requisite to efficient military operations as well as economic growth in China. He then asked the Soviet diplomat for advice in solving the matter of unification in China.

Molotov avoided proposing any definite solution to the problem. He acknowledged the desirability of a unified China, but stated he could offer no advice on how to achieve it. He did contend, however, that the problem could probably best be viewed not from Washington nor from Moscow but rather from Chungking. After studies were made there, he thought it might be possible for the Soviet Union and the United States to adopt some mutual course of action which would bring about the unification of the Chinese nation. Molotov then attempted to change the subject, but Nelson was not so easily diverted.

Nelson continued his efforts to get a more definite answer from the crafty Communist. He knew the Russians had a substantial interest in China, their close neighbor, and told Molotov this. Nelson asked Molotov if he believed the plans outlined by Hurley and himself could be worked out with the present Chiang government. Molotov replied that he had not had sufficient opportunity to follow the developments in China. Nevertheless, off the record, he offered some ideas which he believed might aid Nelson and Hurley in their mission.

Molotov's discourse covered three main problems in the relations between the Soviet Union and the government of Chiang Kai-shek. The first grew out of the role of the Soviet Union in the unsuccessful uprising led by Chiang Hsueh-liang, the Manchurian warlord, in 1936, which resulted in Chiang's captivity in Sian. The second was caused by the presence of large numbers of Soviet citizens living in the Chinese province of Sinkiang. The third was the Soviet Union's relationship to what Molotov referred to as the "so-called" Communists in North China. This was the problem which was of primary concern to Hurley.

Molotov denied any Soviet responsibility for the internal affairs and developments in China for which at times the Soviet Union had been unjustly blamed. He charged that the people in North China who claimed they were Communists were, in reality, not Communists at all but merely hungry people who called themselves Communists. As soon as they received some food, he commented, they would cease to be Communists. A wider distribution of United States aid would greatly reduce the number of Communists in China. The more Chiang oppressed the Chinese, the more people in China would call themselves Communists. The Soviet Union, he argued, could not be held responsible for this. If Chiang Kai-shek straightened out his government, he would be troubled far less by dissident elements within the nation, regardless of what they called themselves.

Was Molotov speaking the truth or following a well

planned ruse to convince the Americans that the Communists in China were not really Communists? Many factors indicate that Molotov spoke the truth. It is not difficult to see why Mao's group would not be popular in the Soviet Union. First of all, the Politbureau of the Chinese Communist party had branded Mao a deviationist in 1924 when he suggested that the true proletarian of China was the peasant rather than the industrial worker of the city. Since that time, Mao had received virtually no support from the Soviet Union in his efforts to bring about a communist revolution in China. Indeed, Stalin did not begin to support Mao until it became obvious that Mao had nearly won political supremacy in China. This time did not come until the end of World War II.²⁰

Nelson, believing the talks had come to an end, left the room, but Hurley and Ambassador Harriman remained. Hurley explained that his task was primarily to bring military unity in China. He disclosed that Roosevelt authorized him to offer to Marshal Stalin all necessary information on the course of the war in the Pacific. General Hurley then brought up the desirability of Soviet permission to use routes through Persia, Alma Alta, and Sinkiang, to bring material into China. Molotov made no comment on this proposal. After this exchange, Hurley and Harriman left the Soviet Foreign Minister and returned to the American Embassy.²¹ Hurley and Nelson remained

²⁰Two general studies on Sino-Soviet Relations are: Henry Wei, China and Soviet Russia (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1956), and Aitcher K. Wu, China and the Soviet Union; a Study of Sino-Soviet Relations (London: Methuen, 1950).

²¹Transcript of Conversation between Donald M. Nelson,

in Moscow a few more days, meeting with various diplomatic representatives in the Russian capital and participating in a reception at the American Embassy and a luncheon given in their honor by Foreign Minister Molotov. Early Sunday morning, Hurley and Nelson departed for New Delhi where they would meet General Stilwell.²²

As Hurley flew over the Middle East, the events of the last three weeks must have weighed heavily on his mind. Less than fifteen days ago, China meant little to him. From the time when Joseph Grew informed him that the President was considering him for a mission to China, the problems in that far away nation seldom left his mind. China, and the events which transpired there during the next year haunted him for the rest of his life. The two weeks of briefings which he attended in preparation for the mission only scratched the surface of the vast problem represented by China. Hurley and the President had great faith, however, in the ability of two men, no matter how wide the gulf between them, to get together and thrash out their difficulties man to man. Hurley's meeting in Russia with Molotov reinforced his confidence that the mission would end in eventual success. Hurley looked forward to his meeting with General Stilwell so that he might begin to solve the problems of unifying the main political factions in China and increasing Chinese military effectiveness against the Japanese.

Patrick J. Hurley, Averell Harriman, and V. M. Molotov, August 31, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²²Hurley China Log, 1944, August 31-September 3, 1944; Hurley Papers.

CHAPTER IV

HURLEY LAYS THE GROUNDWORK

At exactly ten thirty in the morning, September 4, the C-54 carrying General Patrick J. Hurley and Donald M. Nelson to the Far East landed in New Delhi. They were met by a delegation led by General Joseph W. Stilwell, the Commanding General of the China-Burma-India theater.¹ Hurley and Stilwell went directly to American headquarters to discuss the situation which the United States faced in China. Nelson and the rest of the party went to the Imperial Hotel, but within the hour Nelson joined Stilwell and Hurley.

There can be little doubt that these initial conferences dealt primarily with the difficulties which existed between Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and General Stilwell. The talks continued during lunch at the Imperial Hotel and on through the afternoon and evening. The next morning Hurley, Nelson and Stilwell departed for Chabua, India, with Stilwell's Deputy, Lieutenant General Daniel I. Sultan. They stayed at Chabua overnight as guests of General Sultan and, on Wednesday, they resumed their trip to Chungking, arriving there at

¹Hurley China Log, 1944, September 4, 1944; Hurley Papers.

two twenty in the afternoon. The usual covey of officials greeted Hurley and Nelson. They then hurried to their appointed quarters to rest before beginning the harrowing round of meetings which would begin the next day.²

Hurley's initial meeting with the Generalissimo was at 11:00 a.m., September 7, 1944. Chiang won Hurley immediately, and Hurley left the meeting with a favorable impression of the Generalissimo. Every suggestion that Hurley made, the crafty Chinese leader appeared willing to adopt. He even expressed a desire to see Stilwell in command of all Chinese forces. Chiang, however, doubted the possibility of a settlement with the Chinese Communists. He implied that the Communist troops would have to submit to the control of himself and the National Military Council as a primary requirement for a unified command. In spite of this, Hurley believed that a definite prospect for military unification in China existed and that the Generalissimo had shown a willingness to comply with the desires of the President.³

The General journeyed on to Ambassador Gauss' residence, where his high hopes of success were shattered. The pessimistic Ambassador proclaimed that nothing in the world could prevent the collapse of the Nationalist government. This was, in somewhat plain terms, what Ambassador Gauss and his staff

²Hurley China Log, 1944, September 4-September 6, 1944; Hurley Papers.

³Hurley to Roosevelt and Marshall, September 8, 1944; Hurley Papers.

at the Chungking Embassy had been telling the State Department for some time.⁴ Hurley could not understand why Gauss presented no practical alternatives to such an outcome. Hurley argued that if Chiang collapsed it would mean disintegration of the Chinese army and at least thirty or more Japanese divisions would be released to fight the Americans then poised for an invasion of the Philippines.⁵ He vehemently declared that if Gauss' arguments were correct, he would return to the United States at once, knowing that the failure of his mission was a foregone conclusion. Gauss, undaunted, reinforced his argument by charging that the National government was corrupt, inefficient, and incapable of rendering any real service to the United States, either in the war or afterward. Hurley was taken back, but not for a moment did he alter his conviction that his mission would succeed.⁶ Gauss' pessimism, however, was not the only foreboding of failure which Hurley met in the first few days in Chungking.

Hurley had barely settled down in the Chinese capital when a flood of reports engulfed him. A staff study prepared by General Stilwell's Intelligence Section indicated that China was more than a military problem. The report dwelt on the

⁴China White Paper, 64.

⁵Mary H. Williams, Chronology; 1941-1945, Vol. VIII, Part 5, of Special Studies in United States Army in World War II, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (53 vols.; Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947-1960), 302.

⁶Statement of Hurley for Life, January 11, 1946; Hurley Papers.

relation of politics to military action in China, pointing out that the Communist forces in China were in no way subordinate to Chiang Kai-shek. In fact, the Communists had forced Chiang to keep large portions of his army tied down guarding the border between Chinese Communist areas and those controlled by the Kuomintang.⁷

Three reports from John Stewart Service, then serving with the United States Army Observer Group at the Communist capital in Yen-an, reemphasized the political and military dangers of the situation in China. The first report, "The Need For An American Policy Toward the Problems Created by the Rise of the Chinese Communist Party," pleaded for a definite policy to deal with the Chinese Communists. The second indicated the growing strength of the Communist forces, and a third sketched the background of the Chinese Communist leaders, depicting them as highly dedicated, vigorous, and intelligent.⁸

The Communists in Yen-an noticed Hurley's arrival and made a concerted effort to attract his attention by following a dual strategy. They launched a vigorous propaganda attack on Chiang Kai-shek and simultaneously initiated an effort de-

⁷"Notes on Problems Connected with Our Mission in China," prepared by General Stilwell's Intelligence Section; Hurley Papers.

⁸Report by John Stewart Service, "The Need For An American Policy Toward the Problems Created by the Rise of the Chinese Communist Party," September 3, 1944; Report by John Stewart Service, "The Growth of the New Fourth Army: An Example of the Popular Democratic Appeal of the Chinese Communists," September 4, 1944; Report by John Stewart Service, "General Impression of the Chinese Communist Leaders," September 4, 1944; Hurley Papers.

signed to favorably impress Roosevelt's special representative with the more progressive features of the Communist effort in North China. By following this two-fold path, the Communists hoped eventually, through Hurley, to reach the ear of Franklin Roosevelt.

The strong criticism of Chiang Kai-shek began on September 7, only one day after Hurley arrived in Chungking. The Chieh Fang Jih Pao, the house organ of the Chinese Communist party, and the Hsin Hua News Agency, another arm of the Chinese Communist party, vigorously attacked the Generalissimo's opening address to the third session of the People's Political Council at Chungking. This marked the first direct criticism by the Communist party of the Generalissimo since the summer of 1943. Significantly, the Communist radio broadcasted in English, and therefore reached most Americans in China.⁹ While sharply criticizing the Kuomintang government, the Communists painted a complimentary picture of themselves.

The Chinese Communists lacked direct access to General Hurley. But the American Observer Group, sent to Yen-an earlier in the year, provided the Communists with a means of reaching the special representative. With this in mind, the Communists granted the Americans in Yen-an a series of interviews and briefings in which the Chinese Communist party was presented in glowing terms. They felt certain that reports of these

⁹Report by John Stewart Service, "Communist Criticism of Chiang Kai-shek's Opening Address to the People's Political Council," September 8, 1944; Hurley Papers.

briefings and interviews would be sent to Chungking and eventually reach Hurley.

One series of lectures focused on Communist administration in guerrilla areas. High ranking Communist leaders described their guerrillas as the vanguard of a democratic upheaval in peasant China which would initiate local elections and inaugurate land reform. Peasants and liberals alike looked to the Communists, it was reported, because their program had the approval of the people and because no important political opposition had formed against them. In summarizing their activities, the Communists said the guerrillas used their influence in a democratic way to further democratic ends.¹⁰ While indirectly attempting to impress Hurley with the concrete accomplishments of the Chinese Communists in rural China, the Communists also hoped to give him a broader view of the philosophical background of the peculiar brand of Communism developed by Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

The Communists chose a roundabout method to achieve this end. Mr. Okano Susumu, a high ranking leader in the Japanese Communist party, resided in Yen-an. On September 8, 1944, two days after Hurley arrived in China, Okano outlined in some detail the program of the Japanese Communist party. Unusually moderate, Okano's program envisioned the progress of Japan toward socialism by a gradual development through political

¹⁰Report by John Stewart Service, "Development of Communist Political Control in the Guerrilla Bases," September 10, 1944; Hurley Papers.

democracy and democratically controlled capitalism. In the transition period, the Communists would ally themselves with any genuinely democratic group. What Okano sketched was in reality Mao Tse-tung's avowed brand of Communism for China. The emphasis on gradual transformation and cooperation with private sectors of the national economy hopefully would alleviate the fear Hurley harbored against a radical communist program which envisioned rapid social and economic revolution.¹¹ Despite the clamor over the Communist issue and its obvious relationship to the Stilwell-Chiang feud, Hurley concerned himself with settling the narrower aspects of the battle between the American General and the Chinese Generalissimo.

Chiang did not neglect his two special guests. In meeting after meeting, the Generalissimo lavished attention on Hurley and Nelson. On September 9, Chiang Kai-shek held a large dinner honoring Roosevelt's representatives. Hurley, Nelson, Stilwell, Gauss, and most other high ranking Chinese and American officials were in attendance. After an excellent meal, Chiang proposed a toast to the health of the President and his two distinguished guests. Hurley returned the compliment by toasting the health of President Chiang.¹² But dinners and toasts could not reconcile the basic differences between Chiang and Stilwell. The challenge before Hurley

— ¹¹Report by John Stewart Service, "The Program of the Japanese Communist Party," September 8, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹²Hurley China Log, 1944, September 9, 1944; Hurley Papers.

seemed to be ever increasing.

A crisis in the fight occurred on September 15. After crippling the military effort in Burma by refusing to provide replacements for the Chinese units fighting there, Chiang informed Stilwell that if the offensive in Burma was not resumed within a week, he would withdraw troops from that front and commit them in the east where they would be used to defend Chennault's air fields. Stilwell noted the meeting in his characteristic fashion, stating that the "crazy little bastard" gave the "usual cockeyed reasons and idiotic tactical and strategic conceptions. He is impossible."¹³ The next day the Generalissimo again called for Stilwell and Hurley and this time insisted that he be given full control of Lend-Lease. Hurley objected to this request, and Stilwell commented that if the Generalissimo were allowed to get control over distribution of Lend-Lease, he, as the American commander in China, would be "sunk."¹⁴

On September 18, Stilwell, still angered over the demands of Chiang Kai-shek, received what he believed to be good news. Upon recommendations from the State and War Departments, President Roosevelt finally took a firm stand against the dallying of the Generalissimo. In a virtual ultimatum, Roosevelt warned that China was on the verge of military collapse, and he threatened to withdraw United States support from Chiang's

¹³Stilwell, The Stilwell Papers, 330.

¹⁴Ibid., 331.

government unless Stilwell was made commander of Chinese forces and the attack pursued on the Burma front.¹⁵ Stilwell, overjoyed, rushed to the Generalissimo's residence.

He arrived while Hurley was in conference with the Chinese leader. The General called Hurley out and read the message to him. Hurley urged that it not be delivered lest it destroy what progress had been made in the negotiations. Stilwell did not share Hurley's faith in the meetings, believing that only such an ultimatum as he now possessed could force Chiang to make meaningful concessions. He told Hurley he must follow the orders of the President. Stilwell handed the message to Chiang Kai-shek who read it and commented only "I understand." With this, the meeting terminated.¹⁶ As Stilwell returned to his office, he composed a sardonic narrative poem recounting the incident.¹⁷

During this period of increased tensions late in September, 1944, the Communists made two direct approaches to Hurley. General Chu Teh, the leader of the Communist armies, sent a letter to Hurley which arrived on September 11. He invited Hurley to visit the Chinese Communist capital at Yen-an and asserted that the Communist forces, if supplied with the necessary equipment, could play an important role in the ex-

¹⁵Roosevelt to Chiang Kai-shek, September 16, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁶MacArthur Hearings, Part 4, 2866-2867. Hurley China Log, 1944, September 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁷Stilwell, The Stilwell Papers, 334.

pected counter-offensive against the Japanese. The Communist General spoke with pride of the prowess of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army, contrasting their many victories to the innumerable defeats suffered by the Nationalist forces. He boasted of the two million man People's Militia and the five hundred thousand man regular force of the Chinese Communist party. In his letter, Chu Teh reminded Hurley of the urgent situation in China.¹⁸

Ten days later a Communist representative called at the American Embassy and renewed the invitation for Hurley and Nelson to visit Yen-an.¹⁹ The Communist spokesman also requested a meeting with the two presidential representatives. Gauss informed the Communist agent that, while Hurley and Nelson were then absent from Chungking, it would be possible to arrange a conference. The Ambassador, on the other hand, cautioned Hurley about the wisdom of initiating conversations with the Communists while still engaged in talks with the Generalissimo.²⁰

Although the Communists wanted to talk with Hurley, they regarded him with suspicion. John Stewart Service commented many years later that many rumors circulated in the Communist capital about the Hurley mission. Public statements

¹⁸Chu Teh to Hurley and Nelson, September 10, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁹The Communist party kept a non-official representative in the Chungking capital.

²⁰Clarence L. Gauss to Hurley, September 21, 1944; Hurley Papers.

originating in Chungking implied that Hurley would attempt to bring about an agreement between the two parties and unify the two armies. Nevertheless, reports in Yen-an in early October asserted that the only immediate subject of the negotiations was Chiang's demand for Stilwell's recall. Service recalled that leaders in Yen-an believed that Hurley was gradually swinging to the support of Chiang in the hope, promoted by T. V. Soong, that Chiang's cooperation on other issues could be secured if Stilwell were removed.²¹ The Communists probably interpreted this news with mixed feelings, for they knew Stilwell favored arming the Communist forces. On the other hand, if an alliance could be thrashed out, it might prove beneficial to the Chinese Communist party, for it would certainly receive a share of the American arms and equipment then flowing into China. If the outcome of the Hurley mission was vague and uncertain to the Chinese Communists, it was equally so to Hurley and the administration in Washington.

The highest leaders in the government viewed the personality conflict in China with alarm. Presidential advisers discussed the problem in detail, laying it before the President on October 4, 1944. The President believed that early in August, 1944, the Generalissimo had agreed in principle to designate Stilwell as commander of the Chinese forces, as a step toward meeting the desperate military situation developing in China. In the two months which followed, however,

²¹Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 1921.

Chiang Kai-shek apparently reversed his position.²² No one knew what to believe. An entry in the diary of Secretary of Navy James Forrestal, on October 5, 1944, indicated the confusion in Washington. Forrestal recounted how the President first decided to send a stiff message to Chiang Kai-shek, then reversed himself and sent a milder one. Forrestal felt that the lines of communication to China had broken down.²³ Meanwhile, in China, events took new turns.

As of early October, Hurley had not responded to the feelers sent out by the Yen-an Communists. But they knew Hurley desired to unify the Kuomintang and Communist armed forces in China. In casting about for a way to inform Hurley of their position on unification, they adopted a quite simple device. On October 4, Chairman Mao Tse-tung presented a detailed program for unification acceptable to the Chinese Communist party. Of course, newsmen and diplomats noted Mao's presentation and in this way Hurley learned of Mao's position. A dispatch by Brooks Atkinson of the New York Times reported Mao's program.

Mao's proposal was quite simple. He thought a national emergency council should be called with representatives from all factions in China fighting the Japanese. This council should discuss ways of working out unification and propose a manifesto laying the foundation upon which a newly formed government would operate until the end of the war. Mao

²²Leahy, I Was There, 270.

²³James Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, ed. Walter Millis (New York: Viking Press, 1951), 12.

maintained that this manifesto should specify the rights of the people and abolish all laws and ordinances destructive to democratic national unity. It should contain, he continued, a new program for political, military, economic, and social development. Once this manifesto was drafted and accepted by the parties involved, a new government would be formed. Mao then turned to more specific problems involved in forming a government.

He proposed that the newly formed council should elect government leaders, because the war made it impossible to hold national elections. He maintained that certain elements in the Kuomintang should not be allowed to run, particularly the Fascist ultra-conservative "C. C. clique,"²⁴ which, he asserted, controlled the government through the Kuomintang party machinery. In addition to forming this new civilian coalition government, Mao declared that the military high command also needed a complete reorganization because it no longer commanded the respect of the people and the soldiers. He argued that when the war ended, it would be possible to elect a coalition government. He pledged the Communist party's support of such a government as long as it was based upon democratic principles.²⁵

²⁴The "C. C. clique" was a faction within the Kuomintang, also known as the "Organization clique," headed by the brothers Ch'en Kuo-fu and Ch'en Li-fu. This faction controlled the Central Political Institute for training civil servants and the Kuomintang central secretariat and Organization Ministry, with all their personnel files, financial resources, and secret party policy. It was one of the main sources of Chiang's support within the party.

²⁵Press Wireless Message, Brooks Atkinson to New York Times, October 4, 1944; Hurley Papers.

With this Communist program in hand, Hurley took a new look at the situation in China.

On every side he encountered opposition to Chiang Kai-shek's rule. It came from both American and Chinese sources. Americans in China found little to praise in Chiang, and on the Chinese side it became more and more apparent that large portions of the population did not support the Generalissimo. Although the Kuomintang tried to keep Hurley away from the more liberal elements in China, he eventually came in contact with some of the Chinese liberals who were arrayed against the Chiang regime. Late in September, Dr. Sun Fo, the liberal son of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, began seriously to court the presidential representative. When Sun Fo finally met with Hurley he sharply criticized Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary policies, and told Hurley he favored a liberalization of the government under Chiang.²⁶ Moreover, Chinese resistance to the Kuomintang on rare occasions found its way into the newspapers.

Liberal elements in the Chinese press called on Chiang to make reforms. They demanded an improvement in the soldiers' living conditions and insisted that troops be sent against the Japanese rather than the Communists to the north. One newspaper called for rapid action to bring about a unification of the Communist and Kuomintang armies and called for the ouster of ultra rightist elements within the Kuomintang.²⁷

²⁶Hurley China Log, 1944, September 15, 28, 29, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²⁷F. McCracken Fisher to Hurley with Enclosure, October 9, 1944; Hurley Papers.

The growing dissatisfaction with the Kuomintang among all elements in China was aptly expressed by John Stewart Service.

On October 10, 1944, Service wrote his report Number 40, "The Need for Greater Realism in our Relations with Chiang Kai-shek," which figured prominently in charges later brought against him that he was pro-Communist. Service viewed the Chinese Communists as a strong, vibrant force in China; at the same time he saw the reactionary Kuomintang destroying any support it had among the population. Service charged that the Kuomintang was no longer essential to the American position in China. He believed that if Chiang refused to respond to demands for democratic reform, the United States should shift its support to other forces in China, meaning the Communists. He argued that the United States was providing essential support to the Chiang regime, and that the United States should start to utilize its important position and influence to force Chiang to bring about reforms.²⁸

The clamor against Chiang drew more of Hurley's attention as the Stilwell controversy drew to a conclusion. In reality, Hurley played only a small part in the final dismissal of Stilwell from China. Early in October, Chiang formally requested Stilwell's removal. He did not, however, make his demand public. Henry H. Kung, Chiang Kai-shek's brother-in-law, heard Harry Hopkins comment at a Washington cocktail party that the President had decided to remove Stilwell.

²⁸Report by John Stewart Service, "The Need for Greater Realism in our Relations with Chiang Kai-shek," October 10, 1944; Hurley Papers.

Actually, at this time, the decision had not been finalized and Hopkins' disclosure was accidental. Kung, however, immediately relayed this information to the Generalissimo, after which Chiang made his ultimatum public. Following this announcement, the Generalissimo would lose face if the United States persisted in keeping Stilwell in China. Chiang's public statement sealed Stilwell's fate. On Saturday, October 21, General Joseph W. Stilwell took his leave of China.²⁹ Even before Stilwell left, however, Hurley had turned his entire attention toward the unification problem.

Hurley had agreed to meet with Communist representatives on October 17, and as his first confrontation with the Chinese Communist representatives approached, he maintained his usual confidence. On Wednesday, October 11, Hurley began to prepare for his meeting with the Communists by holding talks with the Kuomintang negotiators who would speak for their party if Hurley was successful in bringing the two factions together.³⁰ As Hurley neared the date of the meeting he noted in a message to the President: "I have the so-called Communist question under discussion at the present time, and I am satisfied that

²⁹The most complete set of documents relating to Stilwell's relief from command in China is: Oklahoma File; Hurley Papers. This file contains all documents pertinent to Stilwell's removal and was assembled by Stilwell. Of particular note regarding the Kung-Hopkins incident are Documents 20 and 23 in the Oklahoma File.

³⁰Hurley China Log, 1944, October 11, 1944; Hurley Papers.

we will arrive at a solution to that problem."³¹ All members of the Embassy did their best to prepare Hurley for his discussions.

The American Embassy staff wrote a briefing sheet to aid Hurley in his talks with the Communist representatives. It bore no signature but carried the date October 17, the day of the first meeting with the Reds. The experienced diplomats wanted Hurley to emphasize to the Communists, Tung Pi-wu and Lin Hu-tang, that the talks were completely private and confidential, and that nothing of the conversations should be revealed without Hurley's approval. The reasons for such precautions were obvious. Even the slightest hint of United States support for the Chinese Communists could result in irreparable changes in the balance of power in China. Many groups, precariously allied with Chiang, might well shift to Mao if they learned that the American representative was engaging in discussions with the Communist faction. After making the importance of this point perfectly clear, Hurley was advised to begin discussions on certain specific points.

In the first place, Hurley was to stress that both the American and Russian governments were anxious to see military unification in China. The General was then to offer his good offices to aid in reaching an agreement between the Yen-an group and the Kuomintang. After this specific offer had been made, Hurley hoped to present two more suggestions.

³¹Hurley to Roosevelt, October 13, 1944; Hurley Papers.

Members of the Embassy staff in Chungking felt that the anti-government propaganda effort being carried on by the Yen-an group benefitted no one except the Japanese and the puppet government at Nanking. Such a campaign seriously handicapped any hope for settlement. They advised Hurley to try to get the Communists to halt the propaganda assault against Chiang. If the opportunity presented itself, Hurley was advised to suggest a meeting between Mao Tse-tung and Chiang Kai-shek. The Embassy staff pointed out that the likelihood of such a meeting, however, was rather remote at the time.

If the Communists reacted favorably, it was suggested that Hurley would prepare a draft agreement for the settlement of the political question and hand it to Kuomintang and Communist representatives. Uneasy at the approaching conference, the Embassy staff requested that before Hurley drafted any proposal that they be given an opportunity to bring the General up to date on relations between the two factions. They thought it would be particularly valuable if Hurley knew the points that the Chiang government had already conceded and the points that it might be willing to concede. They cautioned General Hurley not to present a proposal which the Chiang government would refuse to accept.³² With these thoughts in mind, Hurley entered discussions with the Communist representatives.

The first meetings with the Reds took place on October

³²Unsigned suggestions, October 17, 1944; Hurley Papers.

17 and 18. In these meetings the Communist negotiators presented their position on unification. They favored unification of China under a government in which what they called democratic principles could evolve, a government by the people. But for war purposes they were willing to submit to the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. On hearing this, Hurley was confident that the Communists would cooperate with United States or United Nations forces in China for a quick defeat of Japan after landing in China. Hurley asked the Communists to put their proposals in writing and on Thursday, October 19, Hurley met with Wang Shih-chieh and Chang Chih-chung, the Kuomintang negotiators, and made a similar request.³³ After meeting with the Kuomintang negotiators, Hurley sent an optimistic report to the President.

He informed Roosevelt that he had entered into conversations with the Communists, a feat, he said, that many people had believed impossible. Hurley said he had advanced a formula for unification which would put Chiang in unquestionable command of all armed forces in China and which acknowledged the political aim of a united China under a government based on democratic principles. Hurley classified his report as only informative, but said that for the first time it looked as if unification of all military forces in China was possible.³⁴

On October 21, the negotiations took another step

³³Hurley China Log, 1944, October 19, 1944; Hurley to Roosevelt, October 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

³⁴Hurley to Roosevelt, October 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

forward. On that date, Hurley's suggestion that both sides put their proposals in writing began to bear fruit. Kuomintang negotiators handed Hurley the government proposals for the settlement of differences between themselves and the Communists. The next Monday, the Communist negotiators, Lin Tze-han and Tung Pi-wu, presented their revised suggestions for settlement to Hurley. Hurley went to work trying to bridge the gap between what proved to be two widely separated positions.

The government proposal contained nine specific points which were divided into two categories. The first five dealt with military matters, while the last four concerned political problems. The Kuomintang program for military unification demanded that the Communist forces be formed into twelve divisions and be placed in the front lines. They would be under complete control of the Generalissimo and would be given the same treatment as other units in the Nationalist army. This would have meant that they would have been thrown into the heaviest fighting without proper equipment and as a result would be destroyed by the Japanese. If the Communists had agreed to this position they certainly would have been completely unrealistic. The political proposals were vague and offered nothing concrete to the Communists. Their main suggestion was that the Communist party would be given some unspecified role in the government dominated by the Kuomintang.³⁵

³⁵"Proposals for the Settlement of the Differences Between the Chinese Government and the Communists," October 21, 1944; Hurley Papers.

Likewise, the Communists offered little or nothing which could serve as a basis for compromise. The Reds prefaced their plan for unification with a review of some of the earlier negotiations with the Kuomintang which had resulted in failure. Perhaps the reason for this was to show that the Communist party had been wronged on several occasions by the Nationalists. The actual Communist unification program, however, was little more than a restatement of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's position which he enunciated in Yen-an on October 4. This included basic policy and personnel changes, the end of one party rule, the convening of a National Emergency Conference with representatives of all political factions in China to form a coalition government, and the reformation of the Military High Command into a Joint High Command.³⁶ Even though Hurley could see that there was no easy road to compromise between these two positions, he remained confident.

Although the Communists and Chiang used similar words such as freedom, unity, democracy, and self-government, neither side accepted their true meanings. To the Communists the ideas embodied in these words could be achieved only under a Communist form of government. To Chiang, they would become a reality through his benevolent dictatorship. Therefore, if either side accepted military or political unification on the opposition's terms, it would mean it had sacrificed its own ideals. Both the Communists and Chiang wanted to defeat Japan

³⁶Lin Tze-han and Tung Pi-wu to Hurley, October 23, 1944; Hurley Papers.

and build a strong, independent China. Of course, the basic difference prevailed as to who would lead China to these goals.

As Hurley read over the position papers of the two parties he noted the similarity in their goals. He also saw that both sides used the same words to describe the ideas which were part of these objectives. Hurley interpreted words like freedom, unity, democracy, and self-government through his experiences as an individualistic, self-made American, who has won recognition from both sides of the political fence in his own country. To Hurley, the ideas embodied in the words used by both the Communists and the Kuomintang had reached their fullest expression in the United States where two political parties had for many years shared the political power. Therefore, he could not understand why the Communists and the Kuomintang could not reach an agreement on unification and at the same time achieve their avowed objectives. For this reason he tended to minimize the difficulties in bringing the two factions together.³⁷

Up to this point Hurley felt, somewhat naively, that negotiations had progressed well. He had not accomplished much in September because of the necessary preoccupation with the Stilwell affair, but during October he had seemed to make startling progress. By October 23, Hurley felt that he fully understood the positions of both parties. While they seemed far apart on the specific terms under which they would work

³⁷Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 1971.

together, both the Communists and the Kuomintang had categorically stated that they favored unification. Not only did they both favor cooperation, they both professed identical goals for the future of China. Because both sides desired a united China and because of their similar goals, Hurley felt confident that he would be able to work out a compromise.

He was sure that the Hurley personality would succeed in bringing Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung together even though the subtle logic and cold reasoning of the professional diplomats had failed to do this many times before. Hurley also knew he had carried the negotiations as far as he could with representatives below the top men. The time had come when he must meet with the leaders of the two factions. He had access to the Generalissimo but the Communist leader, Mao Tse-tung, remained in Yen-an. It was clear to Hurley that if Mao would not come to Chungking he would have to go to Yen-an.

CHAPTER V

THE COWBOY MEETS THE COMMISSARS

Both the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists had clearly stated their positions on unification, and now Hurley must try to work out an agreement. In order to help accomplish this, Hurley felt he must go to Yen-an. He would be well accepted, for he had already received two invitations to visit the Communist capital, one from the top ranking military leader in the Red camp, Chu Teh. Furthermore, the conflicting descriptions of the Chinese Communists which he heard in Chungking made Hurley want to meet the Communist leaders and make his own evaluation of them. The Kuomintang hierarchy spoke only evil about the Communists and their leader, Mao Tse-tung. But, the American community in China because of their anti-Kuomintang posture appeared to be pro-Communist.¹ The only point the Kuomintang, the informed American community, and even the Chinese Communists could agree upon was that the Chinese in Yen-an were Communists. Yet during Hurley's talks with Molotov in Moscow, the Soviet Foreign Minister denied that the anti-Kuomintang group led by Mao Tse-tung were

¹Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2053.

Communists. Every day Hurley delayed his trip to Yen-an, more contradictory material about the Chinese Communist regime crossed his desk.²

On November 2, 1944, even while Hurley mulled over his pending journey to North China, Theodore H. White, the noted journalist, then working for the Luce publications, questioned Mao Tse-tung on the unification problem. Mao acknowledged that unity in China was desirable, particularly for pursuing the war against the Japanese, but he held little hope that it would ever come about. When asked about the possibility of untying the Gordian knot which tangled the relations between the Kuomintang and the Communist party, Mao replied that only a sword could accomplish the task. White perceived that this boded ill for the imminent negotiations and questioned Mao about them.

Chairman Mao then sagely analyzed the Kuomintang's professed desire for unification. With the Japanese still in China, he told White, public opinion in China and abroad demanded unity. This was against the interest of the Kuomintang, but the Nationalists would support unification talks to satisfy the American demands for a united war effort. These negotiations were only a delaying tactic to be used while the United States defeated Japan. With the Japanese removed, the Kuomintang forces, under Chiang Kai-shek, would turn their attention to destroying the Communist party in China.

²Fisher to Hurley with Enclosure, October 28, 1944; Hurley Papers.

Mao felt only two factors could prohibit the outbreak of civil war when the Japanese left the Asian continent. First, the Chinese people disliked civil war. Secondly, foreign public opinion opposed it also. Because of this Mao hoped that a foreign government would not support a fratricidal conflict in China. The Chairman said that to whip up sentiment for a civil war, Chiang Kai-shek continued falsely to accuse the Communists as running dogs of Red imperialism. Even if future unity among the United States, Great Britain, and the U.S.S.R. continued, these charges would be whispered into the ears of foreign representatives.

White then asked Mao how the Communists would react to the hostile actions of the Chungking government. As long as the Japanese remained in China, Mao said, he would not move his forces against the Kuomintang. But, actions after the war would be dependent upon the Nationalists and Chiang Kai-shek.³ If Mao sounded confident, he probably had just cause, for the reports which John Davies was sending back from Yen-an in early November predicted "the Communists are in China to stay, and China's destiny is not Chiang's but theirs."⁴ The day after White's interview with Mao, Hurley took positive steps toward solution of the unification problem.

³Interview with Mao Tse-tung by Theodore H. White, November 2, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁴Report by John P. Davies, "How Red Are the Chinese Communists?" November 7, 1944; Report by John P. Davies, "Will the Communists Take Over China?" November 7, 1944; Report by John P. Davies, "The Chinese Communists and the Great Powers," November 7, 1944; Hurley Papers.

On November 3, Hurley met with Dr. Wang Shih-chieh and General Chang Chih-chung, the Kuomintang negotiation team.⁵ At this meeting, Hurley probably informed the Kuomintang leaders of his intention to visit Yen-an, and gave Dr. Wang and General Chang a copy of the five point basis for agreement between the two parties which he had derived from the position papers given him. The proposal called for unification of all military forces in China under the leadership of the Generalissimo. Both the Communists and the Kuomintang would agree to support the principles of Sun Yat-sen and pursue unspecified policies designed to promote general progress and the development of democratic processes in government. The government of China would recognize the Chinese Communist party and all other political parties opposing the Japanese. At the same time, the Communists would merge their de facto government in Yen-an with the National government in Chungking. Finally, all officers and soldiers in the army, whether Communist or Nationalist, would receive equal treatment and allowances.⁶ This was the plan Hurley hoped to put before Mao Tse-tung. To do this, however, he must go to Yen-an.

Shortly before his departure for Yen-an from Chungking on November 7, General Hurley sent a dramatic message to the President; "Today I am going into territory held by Communist troops." He said he hoped to find a basis for agreement

⁵Hurley China Log, 1944, November 3, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁶"Basis for Agreement," October 28, 1944; Hurley Papers.

between the National government and the Communist party for the unification of all military forces in China. Hurley added that his actions had the full consent and approval of the Generalissimo and General Albert C. Wedemeyer, Stilwell's replacement.⁷ With this parting word, the General boarded a plane for Yen-an.

Hurley's hastily assembled delegation consisted of himself, Lieutenant Horace Ing, a Chinese-American interpreter, and a few others. It was organized and away so quickly that only a few people knew what was happening. The whole adventure appealed to Hurley's dramatic instincts. It was an admittedly dangerous flight, and Hurley's plane had a fighter escort a good portion of the way. Only when it came through the clouds over the Communist capital was anyone really sure he was arriving. Colonel David D. Barrett, commander of the Yen-an Observer Group, had received garbled reports of Hurley's impending visit but not until he saw the plane did he fully realize that Hurley was about to land.

As Hurley's plane approached the tiny, rough airstrip that served the Communists, Barrett called the Communist leaders. Then, he rushed to the strip to greet the incoming Hurley. Barrett reached the field dressed in his woolen uniform and a heavy blue-denim cotton quilted coat, the standard garb in the frigid Communist stronghold. The plane taxied to a halt and out stepped the resplendent Hurley, complete with

⁷Hurley to Roosevelt, November 7, 1944; Hurley Papers.

row upon row of ribbons, Order of the Mexican Aztec Eagle, the White Eagle of Yugoslavia, and several other equally flamboyant decorations. The tall, handsome General must have been taken back when the pudgy, denim-clad Barrett cracked, "General, you have a ribbon there for everything but Shay's Rebellion." Meanwhile, the news of Hurley's arrival caught the Communist hierarchy equally unprepared.

The big three of the Chinese Communist party, Mao Tse-tung, Chou En-lai, and Chu Teh, scrambled on top of one another as they piled into Mao Tse-tung's private automobile, a converted ambulance. Through the rough, bumpy streets of Yen-an the car raced to greet the American General. The Communists rushed from the ambulance and raced across the field. Hurley hailed them like long lost friends and shouted his characteristic Indian war whoop. As the Indian battle cry echoed across the hills of North China, a rag tag collection of Communist soldiers tried to form themselves into some semblance of an honor guard. In one final flurry of confusion, the honor guard fell into place and Chinese bugles answered the Indian war whoop.

The usual pleasantries were exchanged in the cow pasture which served as an airport. Mao and Chu Teh impressed Hurley immediately, but the General reacted adversely to the suave Chou En-lai much as he did to the American diplomats he had encountered around the world. Hurley later said he got along well with Mao from the beginning. They posed for pictures and once again Hurley gave his famous war whoop.

Although no mention is made of it, it might well be possible that Hurley included his war dance, which he frequently performed with little or no prompting. After these formalities or lack of formalities, the party all got into Mao's ambulance and began the journey to Hurley's billet.

The comradeship of the tightly packed ambulance gave Hurley a chance to unlimber his famous personality. He told some of his best anecdotes which Colonel Barrett translated with idiomatic gusto. Crossing a dry river bed, Hurley remarked to Mao that it reminded him of his native state of Oklahoma, where one could tell when a school of fish swam up-river by the cloud of dust they raised. The Communist leaders got the full Hurley treatment.⁸

Hurley watched carefully from the window of the ambulance as it rolled through the Communist capital. The hastily alerted people had turned out to greet Hurley with friendly waves. He noted that they lived in dugouts scratched in the sides of mountains, for bombing had destroyed the unprotected buildings. Hurley was no stranger to Communist governments, having visited the Soviet Union several times in the past. What he saw in Yen-an, however, failed to ring a bell. He found stores open, cattle being traded, and on every exchange the profit motive was the single determining factor. These things certainly did not look like Communism in action to him.⁹

⁸Statement of Hurley for Life, January 11, 1946; Hurley Papers. "China; Yahoo!" Time, XLV (January 1, 1945), 28-29.

⁹MacArthur Hearings, Part 4, 2903.

After resting overnight, Hurley began his discussions with Chairman Mao at 10:00 a.m., November 8, 1944. The first meeting, lasting less than an hour, was not critical. Hurley and Mao exchanged greetings and Hurley told Mao of President Roosevelt's concern for the future of China. He then presented the five points which he had prepared in Chungking and which he hoped would serve as a basis for an agreement on unification. Mao, at first, reacted skeptically and questioned Hurley about its origin. Hurley confirmed that the points were acceptable to Chiang Kai-shek. Mao then adjourned the meeting in order to study the details of the proposed agreement more closely.

At three in the afternoon the next day, the second meeting convened, this time lasting three and a half hours. Mao began by speaking of his desires for unity and the essential prerequisites to agreement. China's life hung in the balance, he said, and all effort should be directed to fighting the Japanese. Mao's desire to defeat the Japanese surmounted even his distaste for the Kuomintang, and he offered to submit to Kuomintang authority in order to achieve the final objective of a free and democratic China. Finally, he reviewed the hindrances placed in the way of real cooperation by the Kuomintang, and cited the many ways in which the Kuomintang hindered his forces. The Kuomintang surrounded the Communist-held territory with troops which could be used to fight the Japanese. Chiang, he said, suppressed Communist activities in Kuomintang territory and drove Communist party

members there underground. Only in Chungking, he said, were the Communists even able to print a newspaper. Because of these factors, he questioned the sincerity of Chiang's efforts to defeat the Japanese.

Mao complained that these oppressive policies contrasted sharply to those of the Communist party, asserting that as Chiang resisted unification, the chasm between them only widened and would lead eventually to civil war. He said that the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army, Communist military units, held down vast numbers of Japanese forces. It was the presence of these very forces, Mao continued, that prevented the Japanese from attacking and finally crushing the Kuomintang. Much of the success of the Communist forces, he said, was due to the reforms which they had initiated among the peasants, and the readiness with which the peasants were willing to support the Communist cause amply demonstrated this fact.

Mao said the military defeats of the Kuomintang occurred because the people no longer supported Chiang and Chiang's army lacked the will to fight. Corruption ravaged the Kuomintang ranks, he charged, and Chiang's only real interest in promoting unification was to delay long enough for the United States to defeat Japan.

Hurley said that only the enemies of China desired to see China divided. Mao corrected Hurley, saying that, while he did not desire to see China divided, he felt that it would be impossible to bring about unity as long as Chiang Kai-shek

continued his reactionary political and economic policies.

The conversations continued throughout the day with hardy give and take. Finally though, Mao made a most important statement. He said he would accept one of the points on Hurley's proposals in full and was willing to negotiate the others. Hurley was delighted. They immediately hammered out a rough outline of the revised five points. Mao, Chou En-lai, Hurley and Barrett sat around the table making additions, corrections, changes here and there, and by seven o'clock in the evening they had what seemed like a solid basis for agreement.¹⁰

The Yen'an draft varied considerably from the five points Hurley brought from Chungking. The Communists had added what amounted to a bill of rights, including such items as justice, freedom of conscience, freedom of press, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and habeus corpus. Detail changes were less important, however, than those wrought in the viewpoint from which the document was written. In the proposal originally submitted by Hurley, the Kuomintang leaders had offered to make a place in their government for some Communists, but Chiang had never indicated a willingness to accept a true coalition government. In the new draft, the emphasis was changed so that the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist party were conceived as equal political forces which would join to form a coalition government, under which all military forces

¹⁰ Transcript of Meetings with Mao Tse-tung, November 8, 1944; Statement of Hurley for Life, January 11, 1946; Hurley Papers.

would be united. Hurley missed this fine point of difference, for he was confident that he had worked out an acceptable formula for unification.¹¹

On November 9 Hurley conferred with members of the Dixie Group, and that evening attended a banquet celebrating the anniversary of the Russian revolution. The guests concerned themselves with having a good time and practically ignored the occasion being commemorated. Hurley was the life of the party. Yahoos and war dances were liberally mixed with Oklahoma humor, reminiscent of Will Rogers. Hurley believed that he had closed the political gap in China that so many said could not be bridged.¹²

Before leaving, Hurley drafted a congratulatory letter to Chairman Mao. He cited the leader for his splendid cooperation and leadership as shown by his party's willingness to reach an agreement with Chiang Kai-shek. He deeply appreciated the quality of mind and heart that Mao had brought to bear on the solution of this most difficult problem. Mao's work, Hurley said, contributed to the welfare of a united China and a victory of the United Nations. He hoped that the cooperation would continue, not only through victory in war, but through a period of lasting peace, and in the reconstruction of a democratic China.¹³

¹¹"Agreement between the National Government of China, the Kuomintang of China and the Communist Party of China," November 10, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹²"China; Yahoo!" Time, XLV (January 1, 1945), 28-29.

¹³Hurley to Mao, November 10, 1944; Hurley Papers.

On this note of hope, Hurley returned to Chungking on the morning of November 10, with a signed agreement which clearly implied equality between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist party. To this extent the document was fundamentally different from the one which had been agreed to by Chiang. Chou En-lai accompanied Hurley to Chungking to iron out any further differences in the impending unification.¹⁴ Hurley now hoped to add the name of Chiang Kai-shek to that document when he arrived in Chungking. As his plane left Yen-an, General Hurley sat back satisfied with his mission.

Only a few hours after Hurley arrived in Chungking, however, the prospects for an agreement on unification took a turn for the worse. Arriving at 5:15 p.m., Hurley drove immediately to his villa, and a few hours later Dr. T. V. Soong, the Kuomintang Foreign Minister, called on him. After looking at the Hurley-Mao agreement, Soong rejected it as a "bill of goods." Soong's position was a great disappointment to Hurley. The rejection depressed him because he felt bad anyway after having contracted a cold in Yen-an. Consequently, he went to bed where he remained for a week.¹⁵ Hurley made some attempt to carry on business but saw no visitors until November 16. When he finally returned to work, he had the Kuomintang counter-

¹⁴Hurley China Log, 1944, November 10, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁵Albert C. Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports! (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1958), 311.

proposal to the Yen-an agreement.^{90 16}

The new proposal had four points couched in the same phrases as the agreement of November 10. Just as the Communists had changed Hurley's original proposal, the Kuomintang subtly revised their November 10 agreement. In fact, the four point revision called for a total submission of the Communist party to the rule of the Kuomintang.¹⁷ The positions of the Nationalists and Communists were worlds apart. A less resolute person than Hurley would have lost hope in unification and begun to look for some other course. Hurley, however, continued to believe wholeheartedly in the possibility of uniting the Communist and the Kuomintang parties.

The November 10 proposals agreed upon by Hurley and the Chinese Communists proved unworkable for several reasons. Most important was the fact that neither of the two parties was willing to form a coalition which gave the opposition a chance to survive as a permanent political force in China. Mao was willing to agree to a coalition government only because he knew the tide of power ran in his favor. Clearly, Chiang could not agree to any proposal which would give the Communists a meaningful foothold in government. Therefore, it should have been obvious to Hurley that uniting the two warring factions was all but impossible. Hurley, however, much as Franklin Delano

¹⁶Hurley China Log, 1944, November 11-16, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁷Note Given to General Hurley by Dr. Wang Shih-chieh and General Chang Chih-chung, November 15, 1944; Hurley Papers.

Roosevelt, relied on special talents of personal persuasion to conquer impossible situations.

Hurley had an abiding faith in his own ability to bring the two parties together. Naively, he believed his efforts would be strong enough to counteract all the problems between the Communists and the Nationalists. He believed that through simple discussion, he could unite the two parties which had been feuding for nearly twenty years. Hurley failed to realize that he was not dealing with the Republican and Democratic parties in the United States, but rather two monolithic political systems whose very existence depended upon complete control of the governmental framework.

Hurley knew he had lost the first round in the battle for unity in China. Yet he had made some positive progress. He had clarified the positions of the two parties, worked out a possible basis for agreement, and journeyed to Yen-an where he secured the signature of Mao Tse-tung on a proposed settlement. Although that agreement was rejected by the Kuomintang, he believed that it would someday form the basis upon which a united China would be built.

CHAPTER VI

SWEET AND SOUR

The rejection of the November 10 agreement by the Kuomintang only momentarily dampened Hurley's hopes for unification. By November 16 he was once again optimistic about the chances for settlement. Chou En-lai was in Chungking and Hurley knew that his presence greatly increased the chances for accord. Chou, one of the very highest officials in the Communist party, could speak with authority for Mao. Hurley believed Chiang Kai-shek eagerly desired an agreement and this, too, was a favorable factor. Hurley felt that the opposition to unification was coming from the Kuomintang party and Chiang Kai-shek's personal advisers, and thought that they had rejected the November 10 proposal because it would have been too great a defeat for them to sustain. In an optimistic report dated November 16, Hurley told the President that he would continue to search for a formula for unification acceptable to both sides, and which would result in an early settlement.¹

The military situation in China worsened when the Japanese Eleventh Army took Kweilin and Liuchow on November 10

¹Hurley to Roosevelt, November 16, 1944; Hurley Papers.

without a fight.² In the weeks which followed, John Davies advised Hurley to maintain a more flexible position in negotiating with the two Chinese political factions. Davies agreed that for the moment the United States could not afford to abandon Chiang Kai-shek because such a move would lose more than could be gained. But he cautioned Hurley that an objective attitude toward all factions had to be maintained, and cited the British error of supporting a politically bankrupt regime in Yugoslavia.³ The impending Russian intervention in the Far East, Davies advised, would make it necessary for the Chinese Communists to shift entirely to Russia for military and political support. This in turn would greatly weaken ultimate American influence with the Communist regime in Yenan.

Davies strongly favored a coalition government which he believed would be most satisfactory for United States interests in China. Davies knew that Hurley held this opinion also and therefore was as diplomatic as possible when he said that the likelihood of such an agreement was at best remote. For, as he wrote, neither party would surrender its sovereign position

²Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, Time Runs Out in CBI, Vol. IX, Part 3, of The China-Burma-India Theater, in United States Army in World War II, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (53 vols.; Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947-1960), 56. Cited hereafter as Romanus and Sunderland, Time Runs Out.

³In Yugoslavia the British had persisted in supporting royalist General Mihalovich, Commander in Chief of the Yugoslav army under the direction of the exiled Yugoslav government in London, even though Communist partisans led by Marshal Tito more vigorously attacked the Germans and would probably control the country when the Germans were driven out.

merely to join with the other. If unification failed, as he predicted it would, Davies found the course of action clear. The United States would have to give its wholehearted support to one faction.

Davies believed that at the moment the alternatives were limited because of overdependence upon the Chungking regime. In order to expand the possible courses of action, Davies advocated that the United States should greatly increase its operations in North China. Thus, if it became necessary for the United States to rely on the Chinese Communists to provide a base of operations, the groundwork for working with that group would already be laid. Davies thought the United States should move at once to work out an accommodation with the Communists. Otherwise, the Americans might find that they had lost out completely in China, with Chiang depending on the British and Mao on the Russians.

Davies argued that if a choice had to be made between the Kuomintang and the Communists the United States should choose to support the Communists. The political power in China was in the process of shifting from Chiang to the Communist forces, and according to Davies it would only be a short time before the Communists became the strongest and most constructive unifying force in China. Moreover, because of control of vast areas behind Japanese lines exercised by the Communist forces, they would be of far greater strategic value to the United States in the event of an American landing on the China mainland.

Davies told Hurley that the United States could not rely on the British or the Russians to aid the Americans materially in China. Their objectives varied substantially from those of the United States. The British, he said, desired a divided China. To support his contentions about the British and the Russians, Davies submitted to Hurley accounts of conversations he had held with officials in the British and Soviet Embassies.⁴

If the United States openly declared itself in favor of the Communist regime, Davies continued, there would be less disturbance than expected. The Chiang government would remain vocal, but the United States would have allied itself with the most coherent, progressive, powerful force in China, he reasoned. Acting quickly through the distribution of supplies and postwar aid, Davies said, the United States could exert considerable influence in the direction of Chinese nationalism and independence from Soviet and British control. If the United States chose to remain with the Kuomintang, its ally would be a regime which had proven itself incapable of unifying China and of slight use in the final attack of the United States on Japan.⁵ Hurley did not at the time comment on Davies' advice. However, the optimistic Hurley certainly must

⁴Report by John P. Davies, "Conversation with Soviet Assistant Military Attaché," November 17, 1944; Report by John P. Davies, "British Views on the China Situation," November 17, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁵Report by John P. Davies, "American Chinese Relations During the Next Six Months," November 17, 1944; Hurley Papers.

have believed Davies to be a defeatist because of the foreign service officer's prediction of failure for the unification talks. Hurley could not understand such an attitude and the unfavorable impression he probably formed of Davies grew in the months which followed.

Hurley was too involved with the negotiations concerning unification even to consider a course of action if they failed. On November 17, the Kuomintang presented a new three point proposal for settlement with the Communist forces. Dr. T. V. Soong gave it to Hurley and asked the General to present it to the Communists as his own basis for settlement. Hurley glanced at the document and quickly rejected it. Rather than being conciliatory, it ordered the Communists to submit to the unconditional rule of the Kuomintang.⁶ Hurley told Soong that he would not support such an unconciliatory proposal.

Soong had attempted a clever ruse which failed. If Hurley gave the inflammatory document to the Communists as his own, negotiations would certainly have ended. The Communists knew that only Hurley's efforts and the lever of American aid could force Chiang into a coalition government. If it appeared that Hurley supported the Kuomintang so completely that he would back such a one-sided offering, the Communists would have been fully convinced that he had not the slightest sincerity in his efforts to unify China. This perhaps was exactly what the

⁶Proposed basis for settlement given to Hurley by T. V. Soong, November 17, 1944; Hurley Papers.

Kuomintang wanted. The Nationalists had for the moment, however, misread the degree to which they could manipulate Hurley.

While military battles raged and unification talks saw-sawed back and forth, Roosevelt waited expectantly in Washington. Hurley's glowing reports on the prospect of solving China's political problems contrasted sharply with war news from China. With the situation unclear, Roosevelt thought that his direct intervention in the unification discussions would be helpful.⁷ To avoid a repetition of the Stilwell incident, Roosevelt decided to use a subtler approach to Chiang Kai-shek. He sent a letter to Hurley, advising him to inform the Generalissimo and the Communists that, both from his and the Russian viewpoint, an agreement would greatly expedite the objective of defeating the Japanese in China. Cryptically, Roosevelt urged Hurley to emphasize the word "Russians" to the Generalissimo.⁸

The letter indicated the President's impatience with the China question and the problems of dealing with Chiang. He had replaced Stilwell and expected a greatly increased cooperation. Stilwell had left China three weeks before and Roosevelt had yet to see any favorable action on the part of Chiang because of that act. Ambassador Gauss resigned his post and had departed a week after Stilwell, and still the Nationalists had shown no evidence that they planned to get on

⁷Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, 16.

⁸Roosevelt to Hurley, November 18, 1944; Hurley Papers.

with the war against Japan. United States concessions to Chiang had seemingly produced no positive response and the President was even left without an Ambassador in China. In light of this situation, Roosevelt decided to offer the post to Hurley.⁹ Certainly, Hurley could do as well as had already been done.

Armed with the President's letter urging unification and an offer of the ambassadorship, Hurley went to spend the weekend at the Generalissimo's villa. The two men discussed the Communist-Kuomintang split and how it might be mended. Charm flowed profusely at the two dynamic men turned their talents to winning each other. When Hurley informed the Generalissimo that he was being considered for the ambassadorship, the Generalissimo rose and rushed to Hurley, shook hands with him, slapped him on the back, and added that he had worked and prayed for such to happen for two months. Hurley told the Generalissimo he would not accept the post without the Generalissimo's approval, although he had already done so on November 17.¹⁰ Chiang cautioned Hurley about the dangers of dealing with the Communists and alluded to a reformation of his own government which would bring in more liberal democratic elements. Invigorated by his weekend with the Chinese leader, Hurley returned to Chungking on Monday morning, November 19, and resumed consideration of negotiations which he

⁹Roosevelt to Hurley, November 17, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁰Hurley to Roosevelt, November 17, 1944; Hurley Papers.

hoped to conclude successfully in the near future.¹¹

On November 21 Hurley met again with the Kuomintang leaders. They had revised their three point proposal which they had attempted to foist upon him a week earlier. Although milder in form, it still did not make the guarantees which the Communists deemed essential for a lasting settlement.¹² Fifty-five minutes after the Kuomintang delegation left, Chou En-lai and his aide arrived at Hurley's office. Probably at this meeting, Hurley submitted the new Kuomintang proposal to the Communists. Chou departed with the document in order that he might examine it carefully before his next meeting with Hurley, scheduled for the next day.¹³

At six in the evening the same day, Soong met with Hurley to discuss some alternatives to unification.¹⁴ Soong must have realized that the presentation of the three point proposal would end Communist participation in the unification talks. In the evening meeting, the Foreign Minister presented three suggestions, all of which involved renewed emphasis on equipping and training Kuomintang forces. Soong implied that any of these courses would enable the Nationalist forces to take the offensive within six months. This appeared to be a

¹¹Hurley China Log, 1944, November 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹²Proposed basis for settlement given to Hurley by Dr. Wang Shih-chieh, November 21, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹³Hurley China Log, 1944, November 21, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁴Ibid.

very optimistic estimate.¹⁵ ¹⁰⁰ In spite of Soong's offer, Hurley continued to press for unification at the meeting with Chou En-lai the next day. It was the last meeting Hurley had with the Communist representative before he returned to Yen-an.

The Kuomintang realized that their three point proposal which Hurley had given Chou En-lai would likely result in an end to negotiations on political and military unification. They probably also felt confident that Chou would not terminate the talks without first consulting Mao Tse-tung in Yen-an. Meanwhile, the Kuomintang and Chiang set out to impress the Americans favorably, Hurley in particular. To win American support, Chiang reshuffled his cabinet. He removed some of the more objectionable reactionaries, such as General Chen Cheng, his War Minister, and substantially reduced the power of his brother-in-law, H. H. Kung. On the surface it appeared that Chiang Kai-shek had indeed liberalized his government. In reality, he replaced well-known reactionaries with lesser-known reactionaries. This fact escaped no one familiar with the personalities involved in Chinese politics.¹⁶ Unfortunately, Hurley was not among these individuals.

Hurley spent Sunday, November 26, at the Generalissimo's country estate where the Generalissimo sought to convince Hurley that the Kuomintang was undertaking genuine reforms. After

¹⁵ Alternatives to settlement of Communist question given to Hurley by T. V. Soong, November 21, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁶ American Information Service extract of Domei English Service of November 25 and 26, 1944, November 27, 1944; Hurley Papers.

dinner Chiang came to sit on the veranda of Hurley's cottage. For two hours they sat gazing at the moon and, with the aid of an interpreter, discussed world affairs. The Generalissimo, in extremely good humor, expressed his satisfaction with the relations between the United States and China. Hurley returned to Chungking on Monday, relaxed and refreshed by the mountain air. He met with the Communists and the Nationalists, as well as with Congressman Mike Mansfield of Montana who was in the China theater to observe conditions there.¹⁷

On November 28, Chou En-lai began his efforts to return to Yen-an but he was delayed for several days because of weather. Hurley misread Chou's intended departure as a sign that agreement was imminent. He believed both parties were anxious for a settlement and that only the weather prevented consummation of an agreement at an early date. He thought that Chou En-lai was returning to Yen-an only to get the approval of Mao Tse-tung and the Central Committee of the Communist party.¹⁸ In reality Hurley had no sound basis for his confidence; but his optimistic outlook was in part the product of occurrences in Washington during the same week.

On November 22, the President formally nominated Hurley for the post of Ambassador to China. Six days later his name was sent to the Senate by special messenger, and by November 29, the Senate had approved his nomination.¹⁹ Reaction in the

¹⁷Hurley China Log, 1944, November 26-27, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁸Hurley to Roosevelt, November 29, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁹Stettinius to Hurley, November 28, 1944; Hurley Papers.

United States varied. The New York World Telegram said, "The Orientals may not understand him, but they can't help but like him." Some editorialized that Hurley was exactly what China needed, a businessman and a soldier rather than a trained diplomat. Others questioned the fact that he had little training in both diplomatic matters and Far Eastern affairs but generally agreed that his close contacts both with the White House and Chiang Kai-shek made up for his lack of formal training. One observer reported that the nomination of Hurley and Edward R. Stettinius, for the post of Secretary of State, marked a sharp change to the right for President Roosevelt.²⁰

Hurley immediately assumed his duties as Ambassador, although he was not formally presented to the Nationalist government until December 12, and indeed his credentials did not arrive until some time in January. Shortly after Hurley began functioning as Ambassador, a report came across his desk of an interview held by a British Colonel with a Kuomintang General. The Chinese General had told the British officer that it was an error to attempt to unite the Communists and the Kuomintang. The General called the Communists sly and untrustworthy, charging that their only objective in China was to engage in malicious propaganda against the central government.²¹ Hurley called in the quoted Chinese General to

²⁰Hurley Clipping Book, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²¹Memorandum of Conversation between General Li Tsung-jen and Colonel L. T. Ride, December 4, 1944; Hurley Papers.

question him about the interview.

When the Chinese General denied the statements attributed to him in the British report, Hurley assumed that the British were engaged in a conspiracy to frustrate his attempts to unify China. Immediately, Hurley called on the British Ambassador, Sir Horace Seymour, where he branded the report false and said it had been intended to influence United States career foreign service officers against unification. The British Ambassador found himself at a loss to explain the strange attack, but he agreed to withdraw the letter.²² This incident exemplified the attitude Hurley adopted toward anyone reporting information which suggested that unification was less than possible or desirable. This rigid viewpoint led eventually to his split with virtually every informed individual in China, except the Kuomintang leadership.

Hurley had waited for word from the Yenan capital for more than a week when, on December 8, he received a letter from Chou En-lai. Much to Hurley's dismay, it seemed to end any chance of unification in the foreseeable future. Chou reported that after discussions with Chairman Mao Tse-tung, they had agreed that it was impossible to find any fundamental common ground in the two positions taken by them and the Kuomintang. The Nationalist three point counter proposition clearly disagreed with Communist suggestions for a coalition government and a united military council. This, coupled with

²²Statement of Hurley for Life, January 11, 1946; Hurley Papers.

the refusal of the Communists' five point proposal, precluded any possibility of Chou's return to Chungking for continued talks.

The Communists, Chou informed Hurley, planned now to publish the five point agreement. By doing this they hoped to draw the attention of the public to the unreasonable attitude toward unity held by the Kuomintang. In his letter Chou did not rule out the possibility of military cooperation with the Americans and expressed a desire to continue talks with Hurley and General Wedemeyer concerning that matter. The Communists wanted to see the United States Army Observer Group in Yen-an under the command of Colonel David Barrett continued and in fact even expanded.²³ It appeared that the move to bring about political and military unification in China had failed.

In the short month since Hurley's trip to Yen-an, the talks on unification had turned a full circle. Complete stalemate, to impending agreement, and back to complete stalemate, all had come to naught. In the same month, Hurley's mission was expanded. He was no longer a special representative, a visiting fireman to put out a fire; he was now a full fledged Ambassador. As Ambassador, he assumed full responsibility for the events taking place in China. If China could be saved, the glory would be Hurley's. If China fell, the blame would also be his.

²³Chou En-lai to Hurley, December 8, 1944; Hurley Papers.

CHAPTER VII

HURLEY MARCHES ON

During December Hurley continued to press for unification in the face of the discouraging letter from Chou En-lai. He had not lost hope, for a report submitted by Colonel Barrett with the Chou letter shed light on the unexpected rupturing of the discussions, and hinted that the Communists would still talk. On December 8, Mao called Barrett to his office and explained to him in picturesque terms why he had rejected the three point proposal which Chiang offered in lieu of the November 10 agreement. He denounced Chiang's plan as a scheme to destroy the Communist party, offering only meaningless concessions in return for complete surrender by the Communists.

Mao expressed his disappointment in Hurley's actions. He could not understand why Hurley had abandoned the five point proposal that Hurley himself had drawn up and proclaimed as being fair to both sides. Mao thought Hurley's favoritism toward the Kuomintang led him to ignore the Generalissimo's responsibility for China's crisis, and believed it was unfair that the Communists, with no part in the crisis, should be asked by Hurley to give up so much when the Generalissimo sacrificed nothing. The Chairman said that the United States

would learn the error of its ways when all China was lost because of the blundering of the Generalissimo.

The Communists, Mao said, differed from Chiang Kai-shek in that they could stand on their own feet like free men. He declared that the Communist forces could be of great aid to the United States and hasten the defeat of Japan. But if the United States chose to abandon them, Mao warned that they could turn elsewhere for aid. In any event, the Chairman continued, the Communist party had fought the Japanese for many years without outside aid and they would continue to do so in the future no matter what happened. Mao said that the November 10 agreement which he had signed and which Hurley had taken to Chungking for the Generalissimo's signature represented his final offer.

Chiang Kai-shek's refusal of a coalition government, Mao said, made it necessary for him to take certain actions. He would send out a call for the formation of a united committee with representatives of all the People's Political Councils in the various regions under his control. When this organization took shape, he would then ask that it be recognized by Chiang Kai-shek. If Chiang refused, he would form a separate government. Mao added quickly, however, that the Communist party was still willing to negotiate on the basis of the five point agreement.

Chairman Mao's attitude throughout the interview was extremely recalcitrant. Several times he went into a violent rage, shouting over and over again, "We will not yield any

further," and alluded to Chiang as a "turtle's egg." All the while, Colonel Barrett apparently remained calm trying to appraise fully the situation. Every emotional point made by Chairman Mao was, according to Chou En-lai, supported with cold, calculating reason. Barrett left the interview feeling that he had talked in vain to two clever, ruthless, and determined leaders who felt absolutely sure of their strength.¹

The evening of the 10th, Hurley drew up the first draft of his reply to Chou En-lai's letter of December 8. That evening he dined with T. V. Soong and showed him the draft answer. Soong found flaws in it and advised Hurley to send a radiogram asking Chou to delay publishing the five point proposal until Barrett returned to Yen-an with a letter from Hurley.² Soong probably pointed out that this would give time to write a more carefully worded reply. The next day Hurley met with Soong twice. The first meeting included Dr. Wang Shih-chieh and General Chang Chih-chung, the chief Kuomintang negotiators on the unification question. Soong returned at five o'clock, and at six both went to discuss the matter with the Generalissimo.³

The resulting letter was designed to prevent the Communists from publishing their five point proposal and to provide a means by which Hurley might reopen negotiations. Hurley

¹Report by David D. Barrett, "Interview with Chairman Mao Tse-tung," December 10, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²Hurley to Mao, December 11, 1944; Hurley Papers.

³Hurley China Log, 1944, December 10-11, 1944; Hurley Papers.

wrote Chou that he considered both the five point agreement and the three point proposal as steps in negotiation and, therefore, as far as he was concerned, negotiations remained open. The National government wanted to continue talks and he felt that the exchange of ideas should proceed unless the Communists definitely chose to end them. Publicity given to any phase of the discussions, he cautioned, could increase the controversy and preclude a unification of China. Finally, Hurley refused to give his consent to the publication of the terms of the November 10th five point proposal at that time.⁴

It does not appear that Hurley thought the five point plan was merely a step in negotiations when he drew it up in Yen-an. He considered the proposals a basis for a fair agreement and this was indicated by blanks at the bottom of the paper for the signatures of Mao, Chiang, and two witnesses. Two of the spaces were signed, that of Mao and the one allotted to Hurley as a witness. A simple proposition on which to base a settlement would not likely have included these signatures. Whether Hurley truly revised his attitude toward the five point agreement or whether he was merely groping for a way to reopen negotiations, it is impossible to say. In any event, difficult flying conditions prevented the letter from reaching Yen-an for three days.⁵

⁴Draft of Letter from Hurley to Chou En-lai, n.d., with corrections by T. V. Soong dated December 11, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁵Hurley to Mao, December 14, 1944; Hurley Papers.

On December 12, Hurley described for President Roosevelt the objections which the Communists found in dealing with the Generalissimo and his government. He then chastised the Nationalist government for refusing to give the Communist November 10th offer proper consideration. Hurley said that the Generalissimo desired a fair settlement but was unable to deal with the problem directly because of the worsening military situation in China.⁶ Chiang had asked Hurley to attempt to reopen negotiations, but Hurley insisted that the government itself take steps to renew talks with the Communist party and assume responsibility for their success or failure. Hurley was reluctant to be placed in the same position he had been by the refusal of the November 10th agreement.⁷

Hurley had been acting in the capacity of Ambassador since the resignation of Clarence Gauss on November 1, although his official appointment was not approved by the Senate until November 30. He had planned to wait until his credentials arrived from Washington before officially occupying the office, but when it appeared that it would take several weeks for the credentials to reach China, he decided it would be best to end his role as special presidential representative. On December 12, 1944, Hurley was formally presented to the Chinese government as the American Ambassador to China.⁸

⁶The Generalissimo seldom entered into negotiations directly, but rather, T. V. Soong, Wang Shih-chieh and other Kuomintang officials were charged with the day to day meetings.

⁷Hurley to Roosevelt, December 12, 1944; Hurley Papers.

⁸Ibid.

The next day, December 13, Hurley, now with full Ambassador status, and other high ranking American officials met with Chiang Kai-shek to discuss the worsening military situation. After the meeting, the Generalissimo asked Hurley about the progress of negotiations between the Nationalist government and the Communist party. Chiang probably was fully aware of the very latest developments, but he knew of Hurley's interest in the matter and wanted to know the American's viewpoint. He complimented Hurley on his efforts to bring about an agreement, and said Foreign Minister Soong would continue to cooperate fully in finding an acceptable basis for unification between the Nationalists and the Communists.⁹

Meanwhile, Barrett had been unable to leave Chungking by air because of weather conditions. Already three crucial days had passed without Hurley's answer reaching the Communists. He sent a radiogram to Yen-an explaining Barrett's delay and assured Mao that the Colonel would arrive as soon as possible.¹⁰ Hurley took the opportunity given him by bad weather to draft another letter to Chairman Mao, thanking him for his hospitality and a set of photographs which the Chairman had sent to Chungking with Barrett.¹¹ On December 15, Barrett, along with John P. Davies, reached Yen-an.

The negotiations with the Communists came up in several

⁹Hurley China Log, 1944, December 13, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁰Hurley to Mao, December 14, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹¹Ibid.

questions at a press conference held by Hurley after Barrett and Davies had left Chungking. When questioned about the talks, Hurley replied that, since they were still in progress, he preferred not to make any statement. Examined closer about his own personal feelings, Hurley replied that he hoped every element would be able to unite to defeat the Japanese. He gave no indication, however, that the meetings were deadlocked.¹² Not knowing what the outcome of Davies' and Barrett's visit to Yen-an would be, Hurley spent an inactive but tense weekend. On Monday, December 18, Davies and Barrett returned from the Communist capital.

Davies gave a full report on his conferences with the Communist big three, Chou En-lai, Mao Tse-tung, and Chu Teh. Davies deemed the long interviews granted him by the Communist leaders an exceptional manifestation of good will. He was impressed by the supremacy of Mao over the other Communist leaders and there was no question in Davies' mind that Mao ran the Chinese Communist party. Davies noted the courtesy with which he was treated and thought that perhaps the Communists believed they had been unduly brisk with Colonel Barrett when they rejected the Generalissimo's counter proposals.

Davies' talk with Chou covered a broad field. The two men delved most deeply, however, into the difficult political situation in which Chiang Kai-shek found himself as a result of his numerous and continuing defeats at the hands of

¹²Transcript of Hurley Press Conference, December 15, 1944; Hurley Papers.

the Japanese. Chou noted that the Generalissimo took the offensive only after extensive prodding by the Americans and then only half-heartedly. Davies was struck by Chou's assumption, the same one incidently held by Davies, that the reason for the Generalissimo's reluctance to attack the Japanese was a de facto non-aggression agreement with them. They also discussed the Communist scheme of establishing an administrative federation over the areas which were under Communist control. Chou favored such a step but Mao remained cautious. Apparently Mao, since his interview with Barrett a week earlier, had decided to delay such action, at least for the moment.

In a cordial meeting with Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the main topic was Sino-Japanese cooperation. Mao said that the Japanese appealed to Chiang on two points: first, his strong pan-Asiatic feelings; and secondly, Chiang's anti-Communist sentiments. But he expressed hearty amusement at the Japanese efforts to deal with Chiang. He said it was impossible for anyone to do business with Chiang Kai-shek. With the Communists, Mao laughed, the Generalissimo would always negotiate but never come to an understanding. With the Americans, Chiang would always proclaim his determination to prosecute the war against Japan as vigorously as possible, but he would never seriously assume the offensive. Finally, Mao said, Chiang would always collaborate with the Japanese, but he would never surrender to them.

Davies rounded out his interviews with the Communist triumvirate when he met on the morning of the 17th with

Chu Teh and other Communist military leaders. General Chu made the usual claims of expanding Communist strength accompanied by charges of Kuomintang aggression against Communist forces in various parts of China. When questioned about the effectiveness of guerrillas under the control of the Kuomintang, General Chu said they either collaborated with the Japanese or at best were ineffective. The Communist military men then expressed an interest in the European theater and American operations in the Pacific, complimenting Davies on the valor of American troops. Davies received the distinct impression that the Communists liked Americans and hoped to cooperate with them.¹³

Chairman Mao and Chou En-lai had sent letters to Hurley and their contents had to be interpreted in light of Davies' report. Mao's letter was unusually brief. In it the Chairman cited an answer to a congratulatory message which he sent to President Roosevelt on Roosevelt's reelection. In the reply Roosevelt said that the United States would cooperate with all anti-Japanese forces in China to defeat the Japanese. Mao asked Hurley to tell the President that, as leader of the Chinese Communist party, he subscribed fully to this policy, and thanked him. Seemingly, Mao was calling to Hurley's attention what he believed to be the true American policy in China.¹⁴ Mao was clearly losing patience with Hurley's demand

¹³Report by John Davies, "Visit to Yen-an, December 15-17," December 27, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹⁴Mao to Hurley, December 16, 1944; Hurley Papers.

for unification on one hand, and failure to adopt a realistic attitude which would make that possible on the other. Chou's letter focused more specifically on the negotiations.

Chou agreed not to publish the five point proposal of November 11, but he attacked the Kuomintang for a complete lack of sincerity in coming to a meaningful agreement. The fundamental difficulty, he declared, was the unwillingness of the Kuomintang to forsake one-party rule and accept a democratic coalition government. Chou, however, left the door open for further negotiations when he said that the Communist party would be willing to negotiate whenever the Kuomintang showed sufficient sincerity.¹⁵ The door, then, was not as tightly shut to further negotiations as Hurley had feared. The new Ambassador immediately began another round of conferences with the Generalissimo and other Kuomintang leaders in order to arrive at a modus vivendi for unification acceptable to both parties.

Hurley met with Chiang on December 18, 19, and 20, and sent letters to Mao and Chou on the 21st. He applauded the Communists for leaving the way open for further talks on unification. It was his belief that the Chinese Nationalist government also desired to continue negotiations and he hoped that either Mao or General Chou would return to Chungking for that purpose. Hurley wrote that the chances of success along the general lines of the Communist proposals were brighter than

¹⁵Chou to Hurley, December 16, 1944; Hurley Papers.

ever before.¹⁶ While waiting for an answer, Hurley prepared a detailed summary of his activities in China for the new Secretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.

Hurley's extensive report was intended to inform the Secretary on conditions in China. Hurley outlined the mission which had been given to him by President Roosevelt and told the Secretary that since his arrival, and the assignment of General Wedemeyer to China, relations between the Nationalist government and American officials in China had notably improved. China, he said, was moving slowly toward democracy but remained for the moment a benevolent dictatorship under Chiang Kai-shek. Hurley said his long discussions with the Generalissimo on the Sino-Soviet question resulted in a more conciliatory attitude on the Generalissimo's part regarding the matter of unification. Chiang, once assured that the Soviet Union had no interest in China, was much more willing to make concessions to achieve military unification with the Communist party in Yenan in order to further the war against Japan.

Nonetheless, Hurley expressed his disappointment over the deadlocked negotiations. The Kuomintang, he said, had an opportunity to make a settlement with the Communists but had refused to do so. Hurley had persuaded Chiang Kai-shek and others in the National government of the necessity for unification but was at the moment battling to convince the Kuomintang

¹⁶Hurley to Mao, December 21, 1944; Hurley Papers.

to make liberal political concessions to the Communists. He said the Kuomintang tried to avoid the use of the word "coalition" and he viewed this as the main stumbling block. Hurley saw little difference between the avowed principles of the National government, the Kuomintang, and the Chinese Communist party and looked elsewhere for the failure of the talks.

Hurley blamed his failure to achieve unification on the imperialist bloc of nations led by Great Britain, and on American military officials and foreign service officers who believed that the Chinese Nationalist government and Chiang Kai-shek would ultimately fall. The British, he charged, exerted a strong influence to keep China divided so that they might regain the special position they enjoyed in China before the war. Just how this influence was brought to bear, Hurley did not explain. Hurley said the Americans in China who thought Chiang would fall encouraged the Communists not to permit their troops to be united with the Chinese army because the collapse of Chiang would force the United States to deal with the Chinese Communists. At this time Hurley believed the senior officers of the Embassy to be in agreement with him on the matter of unification. He summarized all the protestations against unification in China as being stock arguments of imperialists and all others who opposed the principles of the Atlantic Charter.¹⁷

A critique of Hurley's report was prepared in the State

¹⁷Hurley to Stettinius, December 23, 1944; Hurley Papers.

Department. While accepting Hurley's interpretation of his mission and acknowledging that American relations in China had improved since Stilwell's removal, State Department representatives took exception to Hurley's optimistic appraisal of Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang's activities in the past, they said, did not merit confidence in his ability to move toward true democracy. Neither did the State Department critique share Hurley's optimism on the matter of Chinese unity.

The critique reminded the Secretary of State that the differences in viewpoint between Chiang and the Communists were simple but fundamental. Chiang was prepared to grant the Communists representation in the government, providing such representation had no controlling or directing influence. The Communists, on the other hand, would not accept such a proposal. They wanted a true coalition government, a government in which they would have a direct say in the policies and administration of the nation. It seemed unlikely, the critique continued, that Chiang would be willing to grant that much to the Communists.

The analysis of State Department officers dismissed Hurley's charges against the imperialists and American officials in China as being based on misunderstandings. The cynical outlook of European diplomats in China contrasted sharply with the optimism expressed by Hurley and quite likely Hurley misinterpreted such an outlook as opposition to Chinese unity. His disagreement with the Americans in China was written off as caused by differences of opinion.

The critique cautioned that, while Ambassador Hurley did not share the opinion that Chiang would fall, it was a viewpoint which should be taken into consideration. The further disintegration of Chungking's authority was a contingency for which the United States should be prepared. Whoever prepared the critique of the Hurley message said that if Chiang's efforts to reach a settlement with the Communists did not succeed, serious thought should be given to the establishment of a supreme American command under Chiang of all troops in China.¹⁸

The differences between the views of the State Department officials as expressed in the critique and those of Hurley were important. Hurley had faith in Chiang's ability to move China toward unity and democracy; the State Department officials did not. Hurley thought that the stumbling blocks in the path of unification were semantic and the opposition from imperialist nations and American officials in China. The State Department officials said unification was unlikely because of fundamental differences between the two factions.

The day after Hurley sent his report to Washington, he received a message from Chairman Mao Tse-tung. It appeared to contain a feeler to reopen talks. After acknowledging the receipt of Hurley's letter, Mao said that preparations for an important conference would keep Chou En-lai in Yen-an. He still doubted the sincerity of the Kuomintang in the negotia-

¹⁸Unsigned critique of Hurley's December 23, 1944, message to Stettinius, December 26, 1944; Hurley Papers.

tions, but suggested that a conference be held at Yen-an in the near future.¹⁹ Hurley sent Barrett back to Yen-an on December 26 with a verbal answer to Chairman Mao's proposal.²⁰ Little did the Ambassador know that negotiations would soon take on a startling new aspect.

On December 29, Barrett returned from Yen-an with a letter from Chou En-lai for Hurley. It indicated that the Communists would not continue abstract discussions on the question of unification. Instead, Chou put forth four points which the Reds offered as prerequisites to any new talks. The points included release of political prisoners, withdrawal of the Kuomintang army surrounding the Communist forces, abolition of all repressive regulations restricting freedom of the people, and the cessation of all special Secret Service activities. If the Kuomintang implemented these suggestions, the Communists would take part in new exchanges on the problem of unification. An error in paraphrasing, Chou said, had resulted in Hurley's belief that the Communists had offered to continue talks in Yen-an.²¹

Barrett reported on his conversations with the Communist leaders on December 28 and clarified the reasons for the new Communist position. According to Barrett, Mao and Chou did not believe the President and the people of the United

¹⁹Mao to Hurley, December 22, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²⁰Chou to Hurley, December 28, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²¹Ibid.

States realized how little the Generalissimo represented the Chinese people, or to what extent he had lost their support. They said many parties, factions, and individuals in China, in addition to the Chinese Communists, earnestly desired reformation and reorganization of the government. In order to enlighten Hurley and hence the President, the Communists sent a long list of over fifty non-Communists opposed to the excesses practiced by the Kuomintang.²²

Perhaps because of a worsening sinus condition which required daily treatment, General Hurley did not answer the letter for almost a week.²³ On January 3, Hurley went to the Generalissimo's villa on Yellow Mountain to spend the night. That evening and into the next morning, they had long discussions, through interpreters, concerning the Communist problem. Hurley continued to push for a coalition government. The Generalissimo replied that he thought a coalition cabinet would be a good idea, but that he wished to avoid the use of the word "coalition". Chiang said that he wanted to make the reforms which the Communists demanded but did not want to give the Communists credit for forcing him to make them. The next morning the Generalissimo came to Hurley's cottage for breakfast after which the two men walked and talked for several hours. Hurley returned to Chungking and that evening the

²²Barrett to Hurley with Enclosure, December 30, 1944; Hurley Papers.

²³The damp air in Chungking constantly irritated Hurley's sinuses during his year in China.

two men met again.

Hurley conferred with Chiang on Friday, January 5, and finally, on the 6th, he drafted an answer to the letter from Chou En-lai dated December 28.²⁴ The Ambassador expressed his displeasure at the departure from the original procedure which was to arrive at an agreement on the general principles facing them before discussing any specific details. He thought that the talks should continue in keeping with the original procedures. As a counter-proposal to the four points, Hurley agreed to journey once again to Yen-an with Dr. T. V. Soong and other Kuomintang negotiators. If an agreement in principle was reached in Yen-an, Chairman Mao and General Chou could return to Chungking to conclude the agreement. Hurley asked Chou to give the suggestion his careful consideration and reply by letter through Colonel Barrett.²⁵

Meanwhile, the differences which Hurley had been experiencing with some of the other Americans stationed in China came more into the open. It was generally accepted that Hurley caused Stilwell's removal. And there was some belief that Clarence Gauss had resigned from the post of Ambassador because he was irritated by the constant meddling of special representatives sent out from Washington.²⁶ Both

²⁴Hurley China Log, 1944-1945, December 28, 1944-January 6, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁵Hurley to Mao and Chou, January 7, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁶Washington Post, November 19, 1944, Hurley Clipping Book, 1944; Hurley Papers.

these men were highly respected by members of their staff. When Hurley assumed the position of Ambassador, he inherited this same staff. Quite naturally, these men resented working under Hurley who they thought was a factor in the removal of their previous superiors whom they respected. The Embassy staff and the American military staff in China were both highly professional organizations. Part of the tremendous respect enjoyed by both General Stilwell and Ambassador Gauss came because they, too, were professionals. Hurley was neither a professional soldier nor a professional diplomat. He was rather a highly affectatious politician. Incident after incident created friction between Hurley and his staff.

Hurley's problems with foreign service officers in the Embassy were varied. From the moment of his arrival in China, Hurley found that the professional diplomats refused to accept the possibility of unification. From Ambassador Gauss to John Stewart Service, Hurley met with general pessimism and a readiness to scrap Chiang Kai-shek in favor of some other leader.²⁷ The seriousness of these differences of opinion were magnified to some extent by the activities of the Kuomintang which, through the Chinese Secret Service, endeavored to convince Hurley that members of his staff were involved in a conspiracy to overthrow the Nationalist government.²⁸ Although

²⁷Statement of Hurley for Life, January 11, 1946; Report by John Stewart Service, "The Need for Greater Realism in Our Relations with Chiang Kai-shek," October 10, 1944; Hurley to Orlando Ward, January 11, 1952, 20-21; Hurley Papers.

²⁸Hurley to Ward, January 11, 1952, 27; Hurley Papers.

it is unlikely that Hurley initially accepted these charges made by the Chinese Secret Service at face value, he came to believe them in his later years.²⁹ At the time, however, Hurley's differences with his staff were of a more personal nature.

After Hurley had been confirmed as Ambassador, he went to the Ambassador's residence. He found it full of career foreign service officers who had moved out of the Embassy. George Atcheson, the senior officer in the Embassy, told Hurley that there was no bed for him in the Ambassador's residence and tried to convince Hurley that he should stay in the quarters provided by the Army. Atcheson said that Gauss's bed had been his personal property and that on his departure Ambassador Gauss had given it to Atcheson. Hurley believed he was being deliberately affronted. When Hurley demanded that the men leave his house, Atcheson replied that the foreign service officers had a right to live in it. They were forced to leave anyway but the entire incident left both staff and Ambassador Hurley quite angry with one another.³⁰ But, Hurley's problems with Americans in China extended far beyond such minor personal annoyances.

The American press corps in China labored under hampering restrictions. Their dispatches were subject to a rigid censorship by the Nationalist government which would not allow

²⁹Hurley to Ward, January 11, 1952; Hurley Papers, Hurley makes the most complete statement of the "Stilwell Conspiracy."

³⁰Statement of Hurley for Life, January 11, 1946; Hurley Papers.

any unfavorable material to be dispatched from China. Moreover, if a reporter left China and wrote uncomplimentary stories about the Chiang regime or the Nationalist war effort, he would not be allowed to reenter China. Therefore, the press became very dependent upon a cooperative attitude on the part of the American diplomats and military personnel stationed in China. These American officials would frequently make available to correspondents classified material which was objectionable to the Chinese government in order that the press would fully understand American problems in Asia. General Stilwell cooperated to the fullest extent in this way, as did Ambassador Gauss.³¹

With Stilwell's departure, the press found it more difficult to get its stories through the Chinese Nationalist censors. Moreover, since much of the information available to the press representatives came from the Embassy staff and the American military staff, their stories took on a decidedly anti-Hurley slant. Hurley became involved in a disagreement with Theodore H. White, the correspondent from Time and Life magazines, on November 8, 1944, when Hurley arrived in Yen-an. Hurley believed White's activities in Yen-an were definitely against the interests of unification and from that moment, White and Hurley became enemies.³² White, as president of the Foreign Correspondents Club in China in the years 1944-1945,

³¹Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2101-2102, 2144-2145, 2095-2097.

³²"Note for File," November 8, 1944; Hurley Papers.

held considerable influence among the other press representatives in China.³³ From this time on Hurley's relations with the American press corps in China worsened but, because of censorship by the Chinese government, little real derogatory criticism of Hurley reached the United States.

Hurley's smoldering feud with Americans in China and particularly the Embassy staff erupted in an open battle between Hurley and John Paton Davies. Davies, a senior foreign service officer, had been a long-time friend of General Stilwell. The two men met in China years before the outbreak of the war, and Davies became a close adviser of General Stilwell during the war.³⁴ Something of a cynic, Davies tended to look at the gloomy side of the situation.³⁵ Moreover, Davies was a staunch advocate of professionalism in diplomacy.³⁶ It was only a matter of time until Davies and Hurley came into conflict.

In a series of reports written in December, Davies began indirectly to criticize Hurley. Davies openly stated that the attempts at unification had failed. This, of course, was directly opposed to Hurley's belief.³⁷ In a report by Davies titled, "The Generalissimo's Dilemmas", he took a completely

³³Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2092.

³⁴Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2095-2097.

³⁵For example see Report by John P. Davies, "The Generalissimo's Dilemmas," December 9, 1944; Hurley Papers.

³⁶Professionalism is a central theme throughout John Paton Davies, Jr., Foreign and Other Affairs (New York: W. W. Norton, 1964).

³⁷John P. Davies, "Proposed Statement of American Policy," December 12, 1944; Hurley Papers.

opposite view of the China situation from that of Hurley.³⁸

It is quite likely that Davies made no secret of his opposition to Hurley and his policies, particularly after he had arranged a transfer to the Embassy at Moscow. Davies finally left China for the Soviet capital but not before Hurley made a vicious verbal attack on him, witnessed by General Wedemeyer.³⁹

The significance of this feud and other disagreements with staff members, and the press, grew during Hurley's tenure in China. From this point on, Hurley tended to reject all of those who in any way criticized his activities, believing that they emanated from "persons, organizations or foreign governments who have predicted or who desire the collapse of the Chinese National government."⁴⁰ Hurley seemed to think that active efforts were being made to sabotage his policy.

The growing feud between Hurley and lower level American diplomats in China was to have a substantial effect on American policy there. These men were trained diplomats and facile in the use of subtle logic. Moreover, when arguing with Hurley on the various matters which affected the situation in China, they were able to use their expertise to gain the upper hand. Hurley, unwilling to surrender his position and yet not possessing the expert knowledge necessary to

³⁸Above, fn. 35.

³⁹Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports!, 318-319.

⁴⁰Hurley to Stettinius, December 29, 1944; Hurley Papers.

defend it, would refuse to argue and rather state his position in absolute terms, shutting his mind to all pro or con arguments. Not only did this succeed in further angering the foreign service officers, but it cast American policy in China in an inflexible mold which resulted in de facto unqualified support for Chiang's government.

CHAPTER VIII

GAMBITS, WITCH-HUNTS AND AN EARLY THAW

The negotiations with the Communists took a strange twist when, on January 9, 1945, a message arrived from Yen-an for General Wedemeyer. Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai requested permission to visit Washington and explain the position of the Chinese Communist party to President Roosevelt. Mao's desire to meet directly with the American President indicated that the Chinese Communists no longer had faith in Hurley's ability to force Chiang Kai-shek into a coalition government. Indeed, Hurley by now was a staunch supporter of the Kuomintang government, and this made it appear unlikely that he would consider aiding the Communists if unification attempts failed. The Communist leaders specified that the knowledge of their request be kept from the Nationalist government so that they would not lose face if the President chose not to invite them to Washington.¹

Mao's attempt to talk with Roosevelt must have stemmed from the important conferences which were held in Chungking in late December and early January. In these meetings, the Com-

¹Richard L. Evans to Wedemeyer for Joseph K. Dickey, January 9, 1945; Hurley Papers.

munists agreed that the possibility of compromise with Chiang Kai-shek no longer existed. Although the Communist leaders refused to discuss the question of civil war, American observers in Yen-an believed that the Chinese Communists were actively preparing for large scale civil war. Few of these Americans doubted that all of south and southeast China behind Japanese lines would be in Red hands within the year, for it was no secret that party organizers and military leaders were leaving Yen-an in large numbers for these regions. At the same time, it was predicted that by the end of 1945 the Chinese Communists would control more than a million troops.²

These warlike preparations pointed to a new hard line by the Chinese Communists. The Yen-an leaders seemed to have decided that it was time for the United States to make a decision between Chiang and civil war, or the Communists and coalition government. Influential Communists commented that if America bolstered Chiang with arms and equipment and not the Communists, it would bear the responsibility for the results in China.³

Although the request to meet with President Roosevelt was denied, the Reds did not give up hope of turning the Americans against Chiang. Rumors had been rampant throughout Chungking of an impending Kuomintang-Japanese understanding with the ultimate purpose of destroying the Communists.⁴ These rumors were strengthened when a report of a conference

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

with General Chou En-lai reached Chungking January 11, 1945.

At ten thirty on the morning of January 10, Chou En-lai called an urgent meeting with ranking American representatives in Yen-an. Chou said that he had some startling information. He specified, however, that before revealing the news that it must be restricted to Wedemeyer, and that General Wedemeyer alone should decide on its disposition in the United States. Chou specifically stated that, "General Hurley must not get this information as I don't trust his discretion." The cable referred only to negotiations which involved the most exalted personages, military and civilian, in Asia. Chou En-lai had refused to allow the transmission of this material via radio and had requested that Wedemeyer come to Yen-an at once or dispatch an implicitly trusted officer such as David Barrett to receive the full story. According to the report which reached Chungking, Chou documented part of his story with copies of correspondence of high authority.⁵

Based on the sketchy information from Yen-an, a hypothesis was advanced that Chou had proof of a Kuomintang-Japanese agreement. John K. Emmerson, one of the foreign service officers attached to Wedemeyer's staff, cautioned against making any solid evaluation until the evidence arrived, but he did make some tentative observations. Emmerson said that many motives might prompt the Communists to inform the United States that the Japanese and Chungking governments had reached an

⁵Evans to Wedemeyer for Dickey, January 10, 1945; Hurley Papers.

agreement and in his opinion good reasons existed to accept the credibility of the Communist evidence.

Emmerson believed that the Japanese and the Kuomintang could gain definite advantages from such an agreement. It would allow both the Japanese and the Kuomintang to devote their full attention to their most dangerous enemy, the Chinese Communists. Moreover, such an accord would forestall any possibility of a Communist-Kuomintang alliance and would enable Chiang to act as an intermediary and to relay peace feelers between Japan and the Allies. The Chungking government, however, would risk the loss of United States investments, Lend-Lease, and friendship by joining Japan. Therefore, Emmerson reasoned, if such an agreement existed, it would be secret and limited to specific points and would never involve surrendering to Japan. Emmerson suggested that Wedemeyer send a representative to Yen-an to make a thorough investigation of the charges and prepare a report for presentation to the highest authorities in Washington.⁶

Mao's answer to Hurley's letter of January 7 also arrived in Chungking on the 11th. Mao rejected Hurley's request for a continuation of talks on the unification question because he still doubted the sincerity of the Kuomintang. Mao declared that the negotiations of the last eight years had proven clearly that the Nationalist government did not want a settlement. Nevertheless, he offered to send Chou En-lai back to Chungking

⁶Report by John K. Emmerson, "Communist Report of Kuomintang-Japanese Agreement," January 13, 1945; Hurley Papers.

if the Kuomintang agreed to a new set of proposals.

Chairman Mao then outlined a plan for a National Affairs conference to be called in Chungking. Members of the Kuomintang, the Communist party, and the Democratic Federation, a weakly defined third force coalition, would be represented at the meetings. The Kuomintang would have to guarantee that the proceedings of the conference would be public and that the delegates would have equal standing and freedom of travel. If the Kuomintang found these proposals acceptable, Mao would then send Chou En-lai to Chungking to participate in preparatory talks which would lead to the conference.⁷

Hurley was becoming exasperated with the inability of the Kuomintang and the Communists to get together. He thought that he had made good progress by bringing Chiang Kai-shek to the negotiating table and influencing him to initiate reforms, but certain groups in China had systematically resisted his attempts to unify the nation. Hurley believed that standpat elements in the Kuomintang party, a faction within the Communist party, the Imperialist governments, Dr. Soong, and American diplomatic and military officials were the most important sources of resistance to his unification program. Yet he felt that he had overcome all of these at about the time when the Communists submitted the four conditions to continued discussions of December 28 and broke off the talks.⁸

⁷Mao to Hurley, January 11, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁸Hurley to Roosevelt, January 14, 1945; Hurley Papers.

Hurley searched frantically during the first two weeks of January to discover the cause of the ruptured negotiations. Some time early in the new year Hurley learned, probably through Kuomintang sources, that a military plan which he had discussed with Major General Robert B. McClure, Wedemeyer's Chief of Staff, had leaked to the Communists. Hurley discussed the matter with McClure on January 5, but at that time General McClure stated that to his knowledge no such plan had been presented to the Communists by United States personnel.⁹ Hurley was not satisfied and continued to investigate.

By January 14, Hurley believed he had pieced together the true story of what had happened. General McClure had drafted a plan which would be followed if the United States should decide to give limited aid to the Chinese Communists.¹⁰ This plan envisioned the placement of highly trained units in Communist territory to destroy Japanese communication lines. The Communists would be used for building air fields, as guides, to give protection to the various demolition groups, and to transport supplies, demolition equipment and foodstuffs to the outlying groups from the base airfields. In addition, the Communists would effect night attacks and carry out reconnaissance missions against the Japanese under United States direction. Title to all equipment used in these operations would remain with the United States.¹¹

⁹Wedemeyer to Marshall, January 27, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Transcript of Conversation between General Robert B.

McClure discussed the plan with Hurley. The Ambassador said that from the military viewpoint the plan sounded fine, but he thought it could be troublesome if it became known to the Communists. As a safeguard, Hurley advised the addition of a clause making the entire scheme subject to the approval of the Generalissimo. McClure agreed and added the clause in pencil at the bottom of the proposal. Against Hurley's advice McClure discussed the scheme with T. V. Soong and later with General Chen Cheng, the Chinese War Minister. Both expressed their interest in the idea but made no commitments.¹²

McClure was excited by the prospect of the plan and indeed hoped to command the units committed to it if it were adopted.¹³ Because of his interest, McClure wanted to investigate the proposal's feasibility from every angle. Late in December, Colonel Barrett was dispatched to Yen-an with a message from General Hurley to Mao Tse-tung. McClure seized the opportunity to send Lieutenant Colonel Willis H. Bird of the Office of Strategic Services with Barrett, and directed Bird to explore with the Communist military authorities the practicality of using a special unit for operations in the areas under the control of the Communist forces. McClure did not intend that Bird would convey the impression that such a plan

McClure and General Chen Cheng on December 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹²Wedemeyer to Marshall, January 27, 1945; Transcript of Conversation between General McClure and General Chen Cheng on December 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

¹³Transcript of Conversation between General McClure and General Chen Cheng on December 19, 1944; Hurley Papers.

had been prepared or was being discussed in Chungking.

When the two Colonels reached Yen-an, Barrett impressed upon the Communists that any statements made were not commitments and should be held in the utmost secrecy. Barrett and Bird told Chu Teh that it might be possible for American troops to operate in Communist-controlled territory whether or not a political settlement was made by the Communists and the Chungking government, but that the acceptance of such a plan would have to be based upon Nationalist approval. When Chu Teh asked if the plan could be carried out without Nationalist concurrence, Bird said that it was possible but unlikely unless United States policy changed. Throughout the discussion, both officers emphasized the tentative nature of the talks.¹⁴

On January 14, Hurley reported to Washington that the McClure plan, which he said was drafted without Wedemeyer's approval, had been made known to the Communists and as a result talks on unification were broken off by the Yen-an leaders. Hurley said that McClure's scheme envisioned bypassing the Nationalist government to reach an agreement with the Communist party. Under the terms of this accord, the Communist army would receive supplies and Lend-Lease without the approval of the Nationalist government. Hurley implied that if such an agreement became a reality, it would be futile to try to save the Nationalist government. From Hurley's explanation, it seemed that high ranking officers on Wedemeyer's

¹⁴Wedemeyer to Marshall, January 27, 1945; Hurley Papers.

staff had opened separate negotiations with the Communists which would have destroyed the Kuomintang government without the approval of Wedemeyer, Hurley, or Chiang Kai-shek.

Hurley linked the request for a meeting in Washington by Mao and Chou to the supposed disclosure of a Kuomintang-Japanese agreement. He saw these two incidents closely tied to the Communist discovery of the McClure plan. Hurley said that the Communist attempt to keep secret the request for a conference with the President, and the qualification that he not be told of the information regarding Kuomintang-Japanese relations, were designed to prevent him from learning of their attempt to secure Presidential approval for the McClure proposal.

In spite of the impasse caused by the revelation of the McClure scheme to the Communists, Hurley saw a chance to salvage the situation. He advised President Roosevelt to secure Churchill's and Stalin's support at the Yalta meeting for the immediate unification of all military forces in China and a postwar unified democratic China. The President was advised to offer to meet with Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung on the condition that they reach an agreement between themselves. If Roosevelt did this, Hurley promised he would be able to place in the hands of the President the complete plans for the unification of the military forces in China, the recognition of the Chinese Communist party as a legal political party, the representation of all parties in the Chinese government, the liberalization of the Chinese government, the promotion of

democratic processes, the establishment of fundamental freedom and individual rights, and the construction of a reunited, democratic China.¹⁵

The President apparently accepted Hurley's report at face value.¹⁶ For on advice of the President, George C. Marshall sent an inquiry to General Wedemeyer on January 16, requesting immediate information regarding disclosure of the McClure plan to the Communists, together with Wedemeyer's recommendation for appropriate further action.¹⁷ Wedemeyer, on a visit to the front in Salween, rushed to Kunming in order to read the urgent message from Marshall. When he read it, he was thoroughly confused for he was totally uninformed on the matter. He then went directly to Chungking and met with Hurley. General Wedemeyer expressed his displeasure that Hurley had made such serious charges against members of his staff without first consulting him. Wedemeyer believed that Hurley's actions had reflected on his ability as Commander of American troops in China to make decisions regarding his staff, and had violated accepted procedures which were virtually traditional in the United States Army. He agreed, however, that if the information regarding the McClure plan and its disclosure to the Communists was correct, drastic measures would be taken. He initiated an immediate investigation.¹⁸

¹⁵Hurley to Roosevelt, January 14, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁶Leahy, I Was There, 289.

¹⁷Marshall to Wedemeyer, January 15, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁸Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports!, 305-306.

By January 19, Wedemeyer thought he had enough facts to answer the Chief of Staff. He said the controversy had resulted when McClure's plan somehow leaked to the Chinese Communists. He told how McClure had discussed it with T. V. Soong, Hurley, War Minister Chen Cheng, and Colonel Barrett. Based on McClure's statement to Hurley January 5, that he had discussed the plan with no one else, Wedemeyer suggested that the proposal had probably reached the Chinese Communists through either Dr. Soong or General Chen rather than one of his officers. Wedemeyer recommended that no further action be taken unless and until further circumstances or developments irrefutably indicated that the plan did leak to the Communists through United States Army sources. The General added that Hurley concurred in the recommendation but did not agree to Wedemeyer's statement of facts.¹⁹

On January 23, another message arrived in Chungking from General Marshall. Marshall asked specifically if the United States personnel contemplated bypassing the Generalissimo regarding the employment of Communist troops. He wanted to know the status of such a plan and who formulated it. Finally, Marshall expected more information regarding the matters on which Wedemeyer and Hurley did not agree. The situation was considered so grave that Roosevelt thought that perhaps he should personally contact the Generalissimo on the matter.²⁰

¹⁹Wedemeyer to Marshall, January 19, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁰Marshall to Wedemeyer, January 23, 1945; Hurley Papers.

It took Wedemeyer four days to get a more accurate picture of what had happened. Wedemeyer was greatly surprised to learn that Lieutenant Colonel Bird, the Deputy Chief of the Office of Strategic Services in China, had gone to Yen-an. On questioning, he found that McClure had dispatched Bird to forestall a proposal by Major General William J. Donovan, the Chief of the Office of Strategic Services, momentarily expected in China, to visit Yen-an. In his answer to Marshall, Wedemeyer regretted that his people had become involved in such a delicate situation, but refused to believe that the incident was a main cause for the breakdown of negotiations. Although Wedemeyer did not agree with Hurley's interpretation of the incident, they had reached complete accord on the facts and the conclusions of the case. The earlier differences with Hurley were cleared up when Wedemeyer became aware of discussions which had taken place in Yen-an between Bird and the Communist leaders. He added that there would be no need for discussing the matter with the Generalissimo for he had shown no concern over the matter.²¹

In the middle of the controversy over the McClure plan, John Stewart Service returned to China as a replacement for John Davies. Hurley, already angry over the McClure controversy, called Service to his office about January 20. When the foreign service officer reported to the Ambassador, he was told that if he interfered with Hurley in any way, which

²¹Wedemeyer to Marshall, January 27, 1945; Hurley Papers.

Service took to mean making any policy recommendations at all, Hurley would break him.²² This conversation again demonstrated the poor state of relations between Hurley and the foreign service officers in China.

The same day Hurley met with Service, he wrote a note to Chairman Mao. He told Mao that the Kuomintang had offered to make new concessions including the establishment of a war cabinet which would include Chinese Communist representatives. Hurley thought it would be a great pity if such far-reaching government proposals were rejected out of hand and advised Mao to send General Chou to Chungking to discuss them.²³ Two days later Hurley was informed that the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Communist party had discussed the new Kuomintang offer, and later the same day he received the encouraging news that Chou En-lai would arrive in Chungking on January 24.²⁴ With this simple message Hurley believed that the thaw in negotiations had at last arrived. Moreover, on the plane with Chou would come proof of the alleged negotiations between the Kuomintang and the Japanese.

²²Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2075.

²³Hurley to Mao, January 20, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁴Morris B. DePass to Hurley, January 22, 1945; Hurley Papers.

CHAPTER IX

A FALSE SPRING

On the plane bringing Chou from Yen-an came a letter for Wedemeyer from Chu Teh. It contained the so-called proof of Kuomintang-Japanese negotiations and a plan to subvert the Japanese puppet forces with financial aid of the United States.¹ Against the wishes of the Communists, Wedemeyer showed the letter and its enclosures to Hurley. The Ambassador was unimpressed. The document which purported to prove the existence of Kuomintang-Japanese talks was written in Chinese on unheaded paper without a signature of origin or date, and Hurley branded it a weak and clumsy fake.²

Moreover, Hurley saw a close relation between the unsubstantiated story of Kuomintang-Japanese negotiations and the plea for American financial aid.³ The Communists hoped, Hurley deduced, that if Americans accepted the first document, then the aid request would be approved. The Ambassador believed that the Communist attempt to keep him from viewing the

¹Chu Teh to Wedemeyer, January 23, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²"Secret Information Regarding the Interconnections Between the Japanese Puppets and Chungking;" Hurley Papers.

³"1945 Project and Budget for Undermining and Bringing Over Puppet Forces;" Hurley Papers.

letter and its enclosures was motivated by a fear that he would quickly see through their scheme. It was Hurley's opinion that if any aid to the Communists was approved before an accord had been reached between the Reds and the Kuomintang, it would mean the collapse of the Chungking government.⁴

The questionable proof and the accompanying request for American aid tended to reinforce the position Hurley had taken when the news that such proof existed reached Chungking in early January. He had said then that it was part of a plot to bypass Chiang's government and win American favor. His minor victory on this point, coupled with Chou's return to Chungking to reopen the negotiations which everyone had said would fail, encouraged Hurley to take an even more distorted view of his role in China, his mission, and the people around him.

Hurley had taken to self-glorification and felt that he alone was capable of making either decisions or reports on the subject of Kuomintang-Communist negotiations. He believed wholeheartedly that his role in American history was unique. His mission, he said, was far more worthy of consideration than it had received in America. Furthermore, Hurley thought that the main reason he had failed to accomplish the task assigned him by the President was the barrier created by the ineffectual bureaucrats who surrounded him in the American Embassy. More and more Hurley seemed to operate alone.⁵ He

⁴Report by Hurley to Stettinius, "KMT-Communist Negotiations," Part III, February 17, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁵Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby, Thunder Out of China (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1946), 249.

imagined himself singlehandedly coordinating the activities of all American agencies in China, conducting continual military conferences with Wedemeyer and the Generalissimo, attending to the regular duties of the Embassy, and at the same time carrying on full-time negotiations.⁶

When Hurley sent a report reflecting his views to Washington, George Atcheson, the First Secretary of the Embassy, felt it his duty to inform the Ambassador that the Embassy staff did not agree with his position. In coordination with the other political officers on the staff, Atcheson prepared a critique in an effort to correct what he considered Hurley's warped view of the situation in China. Atcheson said that to his knowledge, no one on the Embassy staff had opposed Hurley's attempts to unify China and moreover the staff was willing and able to offer Hurley as much aid as possible in pursuing his mission. Atcheson commented that if he were in Washington, he would assume from Hurley's report that the Embassy staff was of little use in China and should be replaced. He hoped that Hurley did not hold such an opinion, but did not wish to argue about it. Atcheson's actions demonstrated that the opposition to Hurley among the professional diplomats in China was growing.⁷

Hurley did not limit his criticism of professional dip-

⁶Report by Hurley to Stettinius, "KMT-Communist Negotiations," Preamble, January 31, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁷Undated critique by George Atcheson of Report by Hurley to Stettinius, "KMT-Communist Negotiations," Preamble, Part I, Part II, January 31, 1945; Hurley Papers.

lomats to those on the Embassy staff. He believed another reason for the failure of unification was the resistance to the policy approved by the President and the Secretary of State by the diplomatic officials in the State Department's Division of Chinese Affairs in Washington. Hurley thought that the State Department was so inefficient and such an ineffective instrument to implement foreign policy that it forced the President to carry on the country's foreign relations through personal representatives.⁸

The widening gulf between Hurley and the State Department, both in Chungking and Washington, made it clear that Hurley would have to journey to Washington to get the situation cleared up. He was unable to leave, however, while the negotiations between Chou En-lai and the Kuomintang continued. Hurley attended most of the discussions at the invitation of both parties, and he was confident that his presence would aid in bringing the talks to a successful conclusion.

The negotiations had begun immediately after Chou's arrival in Chungking on January 24. At the end of the second meeting that same day, Dr. Wang Shih-chieh, the Kuomintang chief negotiator, presented three new points for Chou En-lai's consideration. The Kuomintang offered to establish a War Cabinet with a membership of seven to nine men. The Chinese Communist party would have representation in the War Cabinet along with other political parties in China. Secondly, the

⁸Hurley to Stettinius, February 12, 1945 (unsent); Hurley Papers.

Generalissimo offered to appoint three officers, one American, one Kuomintang, and one Chinese Communist, who would make recommendations regarding the reorganization of Chinese Communist supplies and troops for approval by the Generalissimo. Finally, the Chinese Communist forces would be placed under the command of an American Army officer for the duration of the war against Japan.⁹ Hurley cautioned both sides that he had no authority to agree that an American would participate in any such plan.¹⁰ There was little doubt on either side, however, that this was possible. The meeting adjourned and Chou En-lai received a chance to fully digest these three new points.

The next day Chou gave Hurley his views on the Kuomintang proposals. Dr. Wang Shih-chieh, he said, had either purposely evaded the issue, or the Communists had failed to impress him with their chief objectives. The whole document was predicated on the idea that concessions would be made by the Kuomintang while it remained in full control of the government.

Chou then repeated the position taken by Mao Tse-tung and himself when Hurley had conferred with them at Yen-an. The Communist party would not submit the command of its troops to the Kuomintang. It would, however, agree to place the con-

⁹Additional Three Points Given to General Hurley by Dr. Wang Shih-chieh, January 24, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁰Report by Hurley to Stettinius, "KMT-Communist Negotiations," Part IV, February 18, 1945; Hurley Papers.

trol of its troops under a new National government which would represent a genuine coalition administration. This coalition government would have to be composed of representatives of the various political parties. Chou also took exception to the Kuomintang's interest in reorganizing the Communist armed forces. Agreeing that the consultative commission should be appointed for the reorganization and unification of the Chinese armies, he would not, however, permit such a commission to reorganize Communist troops alone. He maintained that the entire Chinese military establishment would be reorganized rather than just the Red army. Chou was willing to have an American serve on the commission directing such a reorganization.¹¹

On Tuesday, January 31, Hurley called on the Generalissimo. Present at the conference were Hurley, the Generalissimo, and Wang Shih-chieh. Chiang announced that on May 4 he would call a meeting in keeping with the will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen for the purpose of taking steps to draft a constitution. This constitution would pass control of the National government to the people and abolish the one-party rule of the Kuomintang. In the Generalissimo's opinion, all the political parties in China, including his own, constituted less than 2 per cent of the Chinese people. Therefore, it would not be in the best interests of China to turn control of the government over to any political group or coalition of political

¹¹Ibid.

groups. Chiang believed that it was his duty to have a democratic constitution for China adopted by a convention in which all the people of China, not only the organized political minorities, would participate.

The Generalissimo then turned his attention directly to the Chinese Communists. He said they were non-democratic and professed to be democrats only for the purpose of trying to achieve control of the administration of the National government. He minimized the danger of the Communists and denounced them in scathing terms. But Hurley had heard all of this before and suggested to Chiang that such discussions only lost valuable time. Hurley reminded the Chinese leader that he could afford to make concessions to obtain control of the Communist armed forces and that the most important objective at the moment was the unification of the military effort against the Japanese. If unity became a fact, Hurley implied, civil war would be prevented and a united, free China under a democratic constitution would emerge.¹²

In spite of the Generalissimo's hostile attitude toward the Communists, the negotiations continued daily. During the course of the talks, Chou devoted most of his time to pushing a friendly consultative meeting in Chungking with representatives of the Kuomintang, the Communist party, and other groups. Chou wanted nationally respected individuals without specific party affiliation also to participate in the meetings. Hurley

¹²Ibid.

liked this suggestion for he had long suggested that such a group be instituted to devise a way to unify China and serve as a steering committee to guide the conduct of all parties during the transition period.¹³

On the whole, however, Hurley remained unsatisfied with the talks. At each meeting both sides viewed with alarm their opponent's record and pointed with pride at their own. T. V. Soong emerged as the spokesman for the Kuomintang while Chou En-lai represented the Communists. Soong argued that the Kuomintang was the historic party of revolution in China, the party of Sun Yat-sen, and, therefore, had a responsibility to China. Chou agreed with Soong, but replied that the time had come when, in accordance with the will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the desires of the Chinese people, the government should be returned to control of the people.

Chou said that there was only one successful way to conduct the government during the transition period. That was to form a true coalition government by the major parties based on trust of each other. Soong opposed surrendering central authority to a coalition during the war because it might result in weakening the government. Chou countered by saying that with proper concessions, the central government would have unlimited support from the Communist party. If China remained divided, Chou said, the imperialist powers would again prevent China from developing economically and taking its just

¹³Ibid.

place in the world. Throughout the meetings, Hurley kept in constant touch with the Kuomintang negotiators and met frequently with Chou En-lai.¹⁴

During the last week of January, Dr. Wang began to feel that Hurley was favoring the position being advanced by Chou En-lai. Although Hurley, as mediator, was supposed to be neutral in the discussions, the Kuomintang had come to expect his support. The Kuomintang knew that if the Communists could win Hurley to their side, the Chungking government would be in a very dangerous position. Finally, Dr. Wang told Hurley that he seemed to be siding with the Communists in the talks. Hurley denied that he had agreed with Chou but said that too much time had already been wasted debating the fundamental issues involved. He declared that conferees had made too many speeches, and had failed to take enough action.¹⁵

This statement by Hurley startled the Kuomintang official and prompted him to form a committee with Chou En-lai for the purpose of drawing up proposals from which firm agreements might be developed. Only a few days later, on February 3, Dr. Wang presented a draft of the proposed agreement. It provided that a meeting of the Nationalist and Communist representatives would be called to form a political consultation committee. The committee would study the steps to be taken to end the period of one-party tutelage, and establish a constitutional government. It would devise a common politi-

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

cal program to be followed in the future and would determine the way in which members of the parties outside the Kuomintang would be taken into the new National government. Once the committee had unanimously accepted a plan, it would be submitted to the National government for approval and execution. During the time the committee met, both sides would refrain from mutual recriminations.¹⁶

An elated Hurley met with Chou En-lai a short time later. Chou said he had sent the draft agreement to Yen-an and that for the first time he believed the talks were approaching the point where both sides could cooperate.¹⁷ Hurley's hopes were also high, but they were tempered by some serious doubts. For one thing, unification of the armed forces remained predicated on political action to be taken by the Kuomintang in the future. Hurley knew full well by this time that the Kuomintang would be unlikely to take such action without a great deal of pressure. Moreover, all recommendations of the political consultative committee required the unanimous approval of all participants, and this limited the likelihood of action for it gave either side an absolute veto over any proposal.

The day after the meeting with Chou En-lai, Hurley discussed the matter with the Generalissimo. It did not take

¹⁶Draft of Agreement Concerning the Inter-Party Conference given to Hurley by Wang Shih-chieh, February 3, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁷Report by Hurley to Stettinius, "KMT-Communist Negotiations," Part IV, February 18, 1945; Hurley Papers.

long to learn that Chiang disapproved of the plan. The Generalissimo thought that the Communists had obtained what they had been endeavoring to get all alone, namely, a full coalition government. Hurley took exception to the Generalissimo's charge. He said that only one other document in the long series of talks offered as good a chance of reaching a working agreement with the Communists. The proposal Hurley referred to was the five point agreement of November. The Communists, Hurley believed, would still accept a reasonable revision of it, and Hurley reminded the Generalissimo that in it the Communists had agreed to submit control of their armed forces to the National government.¹⁸ Hurley's arguments however did not change the Generalissimo's opinion of the new proposals.

When the Communists approved the document, the Generalissimo balked. Rather than implementing it, he said that he would incorporate the suggestions into five new points he was about to offer. When the Generalissimo submitted the new Kuomintang offer, he had essentially deleted all references to a coalition government. Hurley knew that this would be unacceptable to the Communists. When Hurley objected, the Generalissimo began his usual long diatribe against the Communists, and said that the Kuomintang was the only truly democratic party in China.¹⁹

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

It was clear that the negotiations were fast breaking down. Chou was scheduled to leave Yen-an to consult with Mao on February 16. Two days before Chou's departure Wang Shih-chieh held a press conference in which he said that the Communists had rejected all proposals presented by the Kuomintang.²⁰ The next day Chou En-lai answered Dr. Wang's statement by charging him with insincerity and unfairness. Chou said that when Wang listed the concessions by the Kuomintang he had failed to explain the prerequisites attached to them which made them either impractical or meaningless. Chou said that the Kuomintang opposed establishing a democratic coalition government and absolutely refused to do away with the one-party dictatorship. Chou again submitted the four points of December which he said the Nationalist government should meet to show their sincerity in the negotiations. With these parting words, he returned to Yen-an to confer with the Central Committee of the Communist party on February 16.²¹

Outwardly, Hurley remained optimistic, but in private he was understandably disappointed. Chiang's inability to unite the country would considerably weaken China's position in the forthcoming San Francisco United Nations conference.²² This point was underlined when, on February 18, Chou En-lai

²⁰Copy of Press Statement by Wang Shih-chieh, February 14, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²¹Copy of Press Statement by Chou En-lai, February 15, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²²Report by Hurley to Stettinius, "KMT-Communist Negotiations," Part IV, February 18, 1945; Hurley Papers.

sent a letter asking for Chinese Communist representation on the Chinese delegation to the United Nations meeting scheduled for April 25. Chou argued that the Kuomintang could not represent the broad masses of the people and suggested that the Nationalists make up one-third of the delegation while the remaining two-thirds be composed of Communists and independents. Chou asked Hurley to transmit his request for representation on the delegation to President Roosevelt.²³

Hurley quickly answered Chou's letter. He told the Communist that he had no authority to make a decision on the subject of representation to the San Francisco conference, but commented that the talks there were to be between nations and not between political parties within nations. He dropped the matter there temporarily.²⁴

Hurley was due to return to the United States for consultation, and on February 16, 1945, the Generalissimo discussed with Hurley matters which he wished the Ambassador to submit to officials in Washington. Chiang thought Hurley's departure presented a good opportunity to drop the bombshell which he had been preparing for some time. Chiang charged that Stilwell had been involved in a conspiracy with the Communists to overthrow the government, and had the Communists succeeded, they would have made a humiliating and costly treaty with Japan. The Generalissimo said that no one realized the implications

²³Chou to Hurley, February 18, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁴Hurley to Chou, February 19, 1945; Hurley Papers.

of the Stilwell matter, certainly not the "dupes of the newspaper correspondents, the creatures of Stilwell, Barrett, Davies, and Service, and certainly not the American public." If this conspiracy had succeeded, Chiang said, United States policy in the Far East would have received its death blow.

Hurley doubted Chiang's statements, but the Generalissimo continued. He asked Hurley to impress upon the American people that China was united and that only small groups held out against unification. He minimized the importance of the Communists and called on Hurley, particularly in view of the forthcoming San Francisco conference, to deny the charge that China was not united. He said the military forces of the Communists were of nuisance value only and boasted that when the war with Japan ended, the well-equipped divisions he possessed would easily destroy them. Chiang said that even Russia realized the Communists could never control China, but he feared that the American public had been misguided by representatives of the United States Army and State Department.

Chiang gave Hurley a final word on unification. He said his attitude toward the subject changed from day to day. Even the Communists did not know what they would do, he said. Chiang hoped deeply and sincerely that the Communists might be led to support the government, but he cautioned that they demanded a coalition government so they might become a majority and then through intrigue establish a Communist dictatorship.²⁵

²⁵Memorandum of Conversation between Hurley and Chiang, February 16, 1945; Hurley Papers.

With these parting words from the Generalissimo, Hurley departed from Chungking on February 19.

Hurley left behind several problems which would catch up with him in Washington. His staff was nearly in revolt. The professionals found it impossible to agree with what they believed was Hurley's distorted viewpoint. They feared the complete loss of China unless something were done quickly. If the Embassy staff chafed under Hurley's restrictions, the same could be said of Hurley's relations with the State Department. The Ambassador knew that he was returning to Washington for a direct confrontation with State Department officials. He did not know what the outcome of that confrontation would be, but he counted on his friend, Franklin Roosevelt, to support his position.

CHAPTER X

HURLEY REAFFIRMED

During February, 1945, the foreign service officers of the American Embassy in Chungking had waited for a chance to bring to the State Department's attention the difficulties they were having in working under Hurley. The fight with Davies, the warning to Service, the attack on the staff made in the preamble to Hurley's report of January 14, all increased the ire of the professional diplomats in China. George Atcheson, as *Chargé d'affaires*, assumed the position of ranking officer in the Embassy when Hurley left for Washington. Atcheson, no less than the others, found Hurley impossible to work with and wanted to bring this to the attention of the State Department.

The Embassy staff, however, was not motivated purely by personal animosity toward Ambassador Hurley. These Far Eastern experts also objected to what they considered Hurley's naive and unrealistic assessment of what he could do to improve the situation in China. In the two and a half months since Hurley had assumed the post of Ambassador to China, his evaluations had consisted almost entirely of optimistic predictions substantiated with very little fact. Atcheson and, indeed, the rest of the staff feared that the over-optimistic view toward

unification advanced by Hurley would lead the United States policy planners in Washington to make the wrong decisions regarding America's future course of action in China. The staff and Acheson felt that if American policy remained unchanged, the end of American influence in China was a distinct possibility.¹

Hurley's departure from China gave Acheson the chance he needed. He felt that it was his duty to inform the State Department fully on the situation in China as he and his fellow foreign service officers saw it. Needless to say, this view contrasted sharply with that of Ambassador Hurley. Acheson and the Embassy staff believed that the situation in China was worsening rather than improving as Hurley had hinted in his reports. Such an opinion was not allowed to reach Washington while Hurley was in China. Therefore, when Hurley departed Acheson called upon the political officers of the Embassy to prepare a comprehensive study of the Chinese situation and make a policy recommendation to be forwarded to Washington.²

Oddly enough, John S. Service, the man who actually drafted the message, was not a member of the Embassy staff in Chungking. At the time, he was working on General Wedemeyer's staff as a political adviser. But he shared the views of Acheson and the other officers in the Embassy and, having just returned from the United States, he was most familiar with views on China held in Washington. Partially because

¹Loyalty Investigation, Part II, 2015.

²Ibid.

Service had fewer routine duties, Acheson chose him to prepare the report. After composing the first draft, Service and officers at the Embassy met to review it and make revisions. They developed a tightly knit, carefully worded case against the position presented in the numerous cables sent to Washington by Hurley.³

On February 28, ten days after Hurley left China, Acheson signed the report and forwarded it to the State Department. It began: "The situation in China appears to be developing in some ways that are not conducive to effective prosecution of the war nor China's future peace and unity." From this statement the Embassy staff went on to review the failure of America's attempt to unify the major factions in China through diplomatic means. Then the Embassy representatives predicted that, if the United States continued its exclusive support of Chiang Kai-shek, civil war would result in China. The staff warned that impending internal conflict would not long be delayed. Only resolute action by the United States of an "immediate nature" could effectively forestall civil war.

The policy to save China offered by the Embassy staff was based on ideas advanced by Joseph W. Stilwell before his removal from China. The United States would inform the Generalissimo that the immediate and paramount consideration of military necessity would be the basis for future American

³Ibid.

policy. Chiang would be told that the United States would arm any groups in China that proved themselves willing and were in a position to fight the Japanese. An offer would then be made to form a coordinated military command for effective prosecution of the war.

Only by such action, the staff argued, could the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists be forced to cooperate with each other. The staff said that such a policy would be greatly welcomed by the vast majority of the Chinese people and would raise American prestige. With such a policy, the report continued, America could secure the cooperation of all China's forces in the war, hold the Communists to the American side rather than throwing them into the arms of Russia, convince the Kuomintang of the undesirability of its apparent plans for civil war, and, finally, bring about a unification which, though not complete, would provide the basis for a peaceful future development toward full democracy.⁴

This report reached Washington shortly before Hurley arrived on March 3. The next day the State Department brought the Acheson telegram to his attention.⁵ As might be expected, Hurley reacted violently to the contents of the message, and, besides, he was angered by the manner in which the protest from Chungking was brought before him. Hurley said that John Carter Vincent, Chief of the State Department's Division

⁴Acheson to Stettinius, February 28, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁵Hurley China Log, 1945, March 3-4, 1945; Hurley Papers.

of Chinese Affairs, "called him on the carpet," and Vincent, along with another man, attempted to put him on the defensive about his activities in China. Hurley said neither man understood America's role there. He told Vincent the policy he had been implementing as Ambassador in China was the policy of the President, which had been in effect since the beginning of the war, and had the approval of the White House and the State Department.

Hurley seemed unable to understand the position advocated by his staff in Chungking. These officers argued that American policy there should be changed. They said that this would give the United States the flexibility needed to deal with the unstable situation there and would insure success in achieving the long range goals of the United States in China. Hurley drew his own conclusions regarding the unrest in the Chungking Embassy. He was sure that the professionals there were trying to reverse what he believed to be America's historic China policy. Hurley knew also that Vincent and others in the Division of Chinese Affairs shared the viewpoint of the State Department experts in China.⁶

Ambassador Hurley saw only one solution to the problem. He must have the men responsible for the Acheson telegram removed from China. There was no doubt in Hurley's mind that Acheson and Service were the ringleaders behind the telegram. Confident that he still enjoyed the support of President

⁶Statement of Hurley for Life, January 11, 1946; Hurley Papers.

Roosevelt, Hurley began the process which would bring the situation in the Chungking Embassy under control.

The State Department immediately reassigned Atcheson at Hurley's request, but Service's replacement proved more difficult.⁷ Technically, Service was a member of Wedemeyer's staff and as such was not subject to State Department orders. Hurley went directly to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and demanded that the foreign service officers serving with Wedemeyer be returned to his control. Since the original assignment of these political observers to the military staff in China had been Stimson's idea, he was reluctant to comply with Hurley's request.

The Secretary of War asked Wedemeyer if he was willing to have the men returned to the Chungking Embassy. Wedemeyer sensed that Stimson did not favor giving up the highly trained China experts; but, in spite of this, he said that he had no objection to having them reassigned to Hurley's staff. Wedemeyer pointed out that he and Hurley had a reciprocal arrangement concerning the exchange of information and, therefore, he had no need for special political advisers. No doubt Wedemeyer was also thinking of the hard feelings which would result if he refused to give up the foreign service officers. When Wedemeyer failed to express a need for the China hands, Stimson could do no more than comply with Hurley's desires.⁸

⁷Leahy, I Was There, 337.

⁸Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports I, 342-343.

Atcheson, in charge of the Chungking Embassy, was well informed on events taking place in Washington and was not surprised when he was told to return to the United States. Service, younger and perhaps more idealistic, did not expect Hurley's victory. Indeed, he held high hopes that someone of influence in Washington would challenge and defeat the powerful Ambassador. Service received his orders to return to the United States while in Yen-an, and on his way through Chungking spent an evening with Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby, the Life and Time representatives in China. They failed to sense the meaning of the sudden orders and instead speculated that Service's new assignment would be an advancement.

When Service arrived in Washington and learned the true meaning of his reassignment, he wrote his two friends in China. He was bitterly disappointed that the strong opposition to Hurley he had expected to form after the Atcheson telegram reached the State Department had failed to materialize.⁹ Service did not understand that as long as Hurley held the confidence of the President, it would be very difficult to challenge his authority. Hurley, meanwhile, seemed satisfied that the removal of Atcheson and Service from Chungking had reestablished his control over Embassy affairs, and he turned his attention to other matters.

With his victory over the State Department secure, Hurley once again became involved with the problem of unifika-

⁹Loyalty Investigation, Part 1, 1357.

tion. On March 12, while still in Washington, he received a telegram from General Chou En-lai, in which Chou told of a letter he had sent to the Chungking government. In that letter, Chou had accused the Generalissimo of cutting the ground from under the negotiations. The talks had been moving hopefully toward the formation of a political conference, he said, when Chiang made a public statement on March 1, before the Commission for the Inauguration of Constitutional Government, expressing his opposition to such a meeting. Moreover, in the same statement, Chiang had proposed to call a National Congress on November 12, which would exclude parties in China other than the Kuomintang.

In the same telegram the Communist Foreign Minister again made a plea for Communist representation on the Chinese delegation being formed for the San Francisco conference. General Chou pointed out to Hurley that both England and the United States included delegates from both major political parties. Chou requested that his letter be brought to the attention of President Roosevelt.¹⁰ Hurley had already discussed the matter of Communist representation on the Chinese United Nations delegation with the President, so the proposal came as no surprise to Roosevelt.

The President recognized the fairness of Chou's position. A major portion of a letter sent by Roosevelt to Chiang Kai-shek on March 15 dealt specifically with the

¹⁰Chou to Hurley, March 9, 1945; Hurley Papers.

Communist bid for representation on the Chinese United Nations delegation. Roosevelt advised the Generalissimo that he could anticipate no disadvantages that would arise from the inclusion of Communist representatives. In fact, Roosevelt reasoned, there might be distinct advantages. The President thought the addition of the Communists to the delegation would create a favorable impression at the conference and, moreover, such a gesture would be of real assistance in bringing about political unity in China. Roosevelt pointed out to Chiang that the United States delegation and those of other nations as well would have representatives from all major political parties.¹¹ This letter brought quick results, for by April 17, the Communists had dispatched Tung Pi-wu to San Francisco.¹²

Meanwhile, Hurley became involved in even broader questions involving American policy in the Far East. Before leaving Chungking he had heard rumors, probably from Kuomintang sources, that a secret agreement made at Yalta drastically affected the military and political situation in Asia. When Hurley returned to Washington, he questioned State Department officials about the arrangements made by the President at the Crimean Conference. They replied that to their knowledge Roosevelt and Stalin had not arrived at any formal understanding regarding China. Determined to get at the truth, Hurley approached his first meeting with the President since his

¹¹Roosevelt to Chiang, March 15, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹²Copy of article in Ta King Pao (Chungking), April 17, 1945; Hurley Papers.

return from China ready for a battle.

His attitude changed suddenly when he noted the President's physical condition. According to Hurley, the President looked sick and near death. Much of the fight left Hurley when he saw his old friend in such poor health. Hurley cautiously raised the subject of the Crimean talks with Roosevelt, and after some discussion, Roosevelt finally produced the agreement concerning Russian entry into the Far Eastern war. Hurley was shocked when he examined the document.

Hurley felt that the territorial integrity and the political independence of China had been surrendered. The protocol provided that the Soviet Union would enter the war in the Far East on the conditions that the status quo in Outer Mongolia would be preserved and the former rights of Russia, violated by Japan in 1904, would be restored. Specifically regarding China, this meant that the Port of Dairen would be internationalized, Russia's preeminent interests in that port would be safeguarded, and Port Arthur would be leased as a naval base to the Soviet Union. In addition, the South Manchurian Railway would be operated by a joint Soviet-Chinese company and Soviet interests in it would be protected. The President had agreed to use his influence to obtain the concurrence of Chiang Kai-shek to the provisions of the agreement. Roosevelt denied that these provisions in any way affected the territorial integrity or political independence of China and told Hurley that he was seeing ghosts.¹³

¹³China White Paper, 113-114.

According to Hurley, the President changed his attitude by the time of their next meeting some days later. Roosevelt told Hurley that he had examined the document more closely and admitted that some features of it justified Hurley's fear. He then asked Hurley to visit Churchill and Stalin and secure their support for a free, unified China under Chiang Kai-shek. Hurley later interpreted this to mean that he was to obtain changes in the Yalta agreement which would guarantee Chinese sovereignty.¹⁴ There is no way to confirm the exact details of these meetings. But, several different meanings can be attached to the discussions without substantially altering the facts as reported by Hurley.

There is no reason why Hurley's account of the events leading up to the initial confrontation with Roosevelt cannot be accepted at nearly face value. Moreover, Hurley's description of his assault on the agreement in the first meetings rings true and might well have caused Roosevelt to reconsider the matters covered at Yalta. Yet, it seems unlikely that the President ever concluded that the agreement was a mistake. Virtually every official who knew of its existence at the time believed it to be the best possible arrangement which could be achieved under the circumstances.¹⁵

¹⁴MacArthur Hearings, Part 4, 2884-2885. Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xiii, 20; Hurley Papers.

¹⁵Leahy, I Was There, 318. MacArthur Hearings, Part 3, 1846, and Part 5, 3332. Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, 31. John L. Snell, The Meaning of Yalta; Big Three Diplomacy and the New Balance of Power (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956), 197. China White Paper, 115.

Still, Roosevelt might have felt that it would do no harm to quiet the fears of his volatile Ambassador to China. Hurley was ordered to visit Churchill and Stalin and discuss the China problem with them in order to determine if England and Russia truly supported American policy in China. A second aspect of the mission was to coordinate with the Russians the disclosure of the Yalta secret agreement to Chiang Kai-shek. Charged with this mission, Hurley prepared to leave the United States for London, Moscow, and Chungking.

During Hurley's month-long stay in Washington, he continued to advance an optimistic view of the China situation. The day before he left the American capital, Hurley held a press conference in which he summed up his attitude toward China. The Ambassador commented on the desirability of unification and said that the United States expected favorable results.¹⁶ Hurley's optimism, however, was not shared by John Carter Vincent.

On April 2, just before Hurley's departure for England, Vincent sent the Ambassador a letter in which he gave Hurley some advice on the unification problem. Vincent thought that Russia could give considerable help in furthering unification in China, and urged Hurley to request openly such help when he reached Moscow. He cautioned Hurley that neither Chiang nor the Chinese Communists would yield without firm and constant pressure. Vincent reasoned that the Soviet Union was

¹⁶Department of State, Radio Bulletin No. 79, April 2, 1945; Hurley Papers.

in a position to place pressure on the Chinese Communists and at the same time the United States could do the same with the Kuomintang.¹⁷

Hurley left Washington April 3 on his not so secret mission. Newsweek magazine reported that Hurley had been charged with a secret task by Franklin Roosevelt, and the editors guessed right when they said Hurley would take to Chungking information from the President on what the Soviet Union could be expected to do in the Pacific conflict.¹⁸ The Washington, D. C., Times Herald, however, believed Hurley's mission concerned the San Francisco conference. Its editors conjectured wrongly that Hurley carried a personal plea from the Chief Executive for full understanding and complete harmony between the big three in San Francisco.¹⁹

With rumors rampant, Hurley began his roundabout return to China. He spent four days in England where he talked with many English officials, including Prime Minister Churchill, who, according to Hurley, reaffirmed his support of American policy in China. He left England shortly after midnight, April 8, 1945, and arrived that afternoon in Cairo. While in Cairo, Hurley met with T. V. Soong, who was on his way to the San Francisco conference. He arrived in Teheran on April 12, where his journey ended momentarily the next day, when he

¹⁷Vincent to Hurley, April 2, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁸"The Periscope," Newsweek, XXV (March 26, 1945), 25.

¹⁹Washington, D. C., Times Herald, April 4, 1945; Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

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learned President Roosevelt was dead.²⁰ Hurley immediately tendered the customary resignation to the new President. At the same time, he offered to continue in his post.²¹ President Harry S. Truman wired back quickly, advising Hurley to continue with the mission assigned to him by the late President Roosevelt.²² The problems facing Truman during the early months of his presidency so occupied him that Hurley had a free hand in China for several months.

Hurley arrived in Moscow and conferred with Marshal Stalin on April 15. In the talks with the Soviet leader, he told of his negotiations with the Chinese Communists, commenting that his discussions with Foreign Minister Molotov in August of 1944 had had an important effect on the struggle for unity in China. Stalin said he would assist in every way possible to bring about the unification of military forces in China, and added that he would use his influence with Prime Minister Churchill to secure the same objective, unaware that Hurley had already spoken with the British Prime Minister on this subject.²³

The conversation then shifted to Yalta. Hurley seemed primarily concerned with arriving at a date when he could re-

²⁰Hurley China Log, 1945, April 3-April 13, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²¹Hurley to Harry S. Truman, April 13, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²²Truman to Hurley, April 13, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²³Summary of Conversation between Hurley and Stalin, April 15, 1945; Hurley Papers.

veal the provisions of the agreements to Chiang Kai-shek. Stalin feared that if Russia's entry into the Asian war became known to Chiang before the Soviet Union was ready to attack the Japanese, it might leak and prompt the Japanese army to attack the Russians before they were prepared. Apparently, the subject of changing the terms of the agreement did not arise. After some discussion of the military situation in China, the meeting adjourned.²⁴

Hurley's report of this conversation again brought him into conflict with the professional diplomats in the State Department. While Hurley reported that Stalin had agreed unqualifiedly to America's policy in China as outlined during the conversation, George F. Kennan, then Charge d'affaires in Moscow, took sharp exception to Hurley's conclusions.²⁵ Kennan found Hurley's telegram so unrealistic that he followed it with another, warning the State Department not to be misled. Kennan said Stalin's "use of words which meant all things to all people and his cautious affability" should not lead the United States into an undue reliance on Soviet aid or even Soviet acquiescence to the achievement of American long-term objectives in China.²⁶

Truman agreed with Kennan's assessment of the situation regarding the Soviet Union, but the new President unfortunately

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Hurley to Stettinius, April 17, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁶Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2119-2120.

failed to note the secondary implication of the message.²⁷

In effect, Kennan said that Hurley was a rather gullible individual who was addicted to writing exaggerated reports of success. Perhaps if Truman had been more familiar with Hurley's background and the feud with the State Department, he would have realized Hurley's shortcomings and gracefully replaced him. But Hurley remained Ambassador to China and arrived in Chungking on April 22, to occupy an office which by then had been vacated by some of the most important of the old China hands. Meanwhile, in Chungking, many of those who survived the purge hoped for a way to get out of China quickly.²⁸

²⁷Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs, Vol. I: Year of Decisions* (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1955), 85.

²⁸Loyalty Investigation, Part 2, 2361.

CHAPTER XI

BIDING TIME

Ambassador Hurley's arrival in Chungking on April 22 marked the beginning of a new phase in the Kuomintang-Communist negotiations.¹ Hurley spent the first few weeks after his return testing the new power which resulted from his victory over State Department officials who had disagreed with him. He chided the professional diplomats for not having recognized the urgency of unification in China at a much earlier date, and told them of the diplomatic coup he believed he had achieved by securing Russian and British approval of this United States policy in China.² Hurley's desire to gain firm control over basic policy matters led him to search for a specific issue which would strengthen his cause.

General Wedemeyer possessed two directives which he believed authorized him to start arming the Chinese Communists. These documents had originated in the State Department Division of Chinese Affairs. They were not really directives but rather duplicates of briefing papers prepared for the President

¹Hurley China Log, 1945, April 22, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²Draft message, Hurley to Stettinius, n.d.; Hurley Papers.

prior to the Yalta conference. The State and War Departments had distributed them for informational purposes and copies had been in Hurley's possession for some time.³ Ambassador Hurley thought that these two documents should be challenged.

Hurley sent a message to Washington attacking the directives. He said the United States could not arm the Communists and still achieve unification. He cautioned the Secretary of State against playing both ends against the middle with a divided American policy, and advised that Wedemeyer would defer action until the Embassy in Chungking received instructions from the Department.⁴ When this message arrived in Washington, no one there doubted what answer Hurley expected, for by this time the State Department had a clear understanding of what Hurley thought should be done in China.

Hurley favored all-out political and military support for the Chiang Kai-shek regime. At the same time, despite the apparent contradictions, he wanted to continue to work for cooperation between the Communists and the Kuomintang. Eventually, Hurley hoped to bring the Communist military forces under the control of Chiang. Hurley believed that any deviation from these policies would result not in flexibility but in confusion and failure. As Hurley characterized it, "lowering of

³The two briefing papers referred to are: Memorandum for the President, "Outline of Short-range Objectives and Policies of the United States with respect to China," January 12, 1945; and Memorandum for the President, "Political and military situation in China in the event the U.S.S.R. enters the war in the Far East," January 9, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁴Draft message, Hurley to Stettinius, n.d.; Hurley Papers.

American sights," with respect to American objectives in China, seemed to be defeatism and could hardly fail to render the American task in China more difficult.⁵

Six days after the Ambassador's return to China, he restated confidence in his ability to bring about unity in China. At a press conference, he mentioned his talks with Marshal Stalin and Prime Minister Churchill and informed the reporters that both men had agreed with America's overall policy in China. Hurley thought that the news concerning the appointment by Chiang of a Communist party member to the Chinese delegation for the United Nations conference at San Francisco was an encouraging sign. Such developments, he told the reporters, gave him hope that the unification of all anti-Japanese military forces in China was within the foreseeable future.⁶

By May 8, Hurley had received an answer from the State Department which he expected would confirm the policy he had outlined in his message requesting guidance on the two directives possessed by Wedemeyer. The acting Secretary of State, Joseph C. Grew, agreed with Hurley that the United States should retain its fundamental objectives. But he cautioned that it was most important that complete flexibility be maintained with regards to the manner of achieving them. Grew wanted Hurley to make it entirely clear to the Generalissimo and his government that the United States support was not a

⁵Ibid.

⁶United States Office of War Information Bulletin, April 28, 1945, 17-21; Hurley Papers.

blank check. He said the Chinese government must understand that the United States expected thorough reforms, a broadening of the bases of government, and improvement in administrative efficiency. It was essential that internal unity be achieved as soon as possible so that the prosecution of the war could be facilitated and a sound foundation could be laid for firm and friendly relations with Russia.⁷

On May 15, at a meeting of the representatives of United States agencies operating in China, Hurley made a statement on American policy. He left no doubt that his policy and that of Washington were not the same. Hurley said that it was the policy of the United States not to support militarily, politically, or economically any regime in China other than the National government of China with its capital temporarily in Chungking. While Hurley denied it in principle, he had in fact extended all-out political and military support to the Chungking government. With a de facto blank check from the United States, it was very unlikely that Chiang would make the concessions which the Chinese Communists demanded as prerequisites for unification.⁸

Of more immediate concern in China and elsewhere was the impending implementation of the Yalta agreement. Everyone knew that little would be accomplished in China until the Soviet Union entered the war and made its objectives clear. By

⁷Joseph C. Grew to Hurley, May 8, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁸Hurley to Stettinius, May 15, 1945; Hurley Papers.

this time, a decision had been made that the United States would not attempt to engage the masses of the Japanese Army in China with American ground forces. The United States would bypass a landing on the mainland of China and instead invade the Japanese home islands.⁹ This decision greatly increased the Soviet position in China, for Russian intervention would not be counter-balanced by a corresponding American military involvement.

On May 22, 1945, Congressman Mike Mansfield of Montana made a speech on the Soviet Union in China. He traced the various problems which existed between Russia and China, pointing out specifically the problems of Mongolia, control of Manchuria, and the Chinese Communists. Congressman Mansfield said that the question of Chinese disunity was very important to the United States and pointed out the dangers inherent in Russian support for the Chinese Communists.¹⁰ Congressman Mansfield's accurate analysis of the probable results of Soviet intervention in the Far East was made without knowledge of the Yalta agreement. Furthermore, it indicated that to anyone familiar with the situation in the Far East, Russia's probable course of action was no mystery.

Congressman Mansfield was not the only one concerned about Sino-Soviet relations, for President Truman had sent Harry Hopkins to Moscow to again discuss Russia's entry into

⁹Truman, Memoirs, I, 236.

¹⁰U. S., Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 1945, XCI, Part 4, 4900-4903.

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the Far Eastern war. On May 28, Hopkins cabled Truman from the Russian capital with news that the Russian army would be deployed in Manchuria by August 8. Hopkins declared that Stalin seemed anxious to reach an agreement with the Kuomintang regarding the Yalta proposals. The Soviet Premier wanted to see T. V. Soong no later than July 1, and requested that the United States inform Chiang Kai-shek of the Yalta agreements at the same time. Once again Stalin said he desired unity in China under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. He expressed his agreement with the American Open Door policy and recognized that the United States was the only power with the resources to aid China after the war.¹¹

Meanwhile, by early June signs of impending civil war in China could be seen everywhere. Chiang was making a strong bid to have his United States-equipped Chinese troops in South China moved north of the Yangtze River, and to provide troops already there with American arms. This, of course, would put the best equipped troops in China in a position to attack the Chinese Communist strongholds in North China as soon as the war with Japan ended.¹²

The growing danger of internal conflict became so great that political officers in the Embassy could no longer ignore it. In the first week of June, Secretary George Ringwalt and Counselor Robert L. Smyth of the Embassy, through a variety of

¹¹Truman, Memoirs, I, 264-265.

¹²Lee Tsung-jen to Wedemeyer, June 4, 1945; Hurley Papers.

Chinese sources including Kuomintang, liberal, and Communist, learned of clashes between the Kuomintang and Communist forces in areas which were being evacuated by the Japanese in South China. In some cases these skirmishes involved more than six divisions on each side, and in one instance the Kuomintang was reported to have suffered a serious reversal in which the Communists captured over four hundred American rifles and machine guns.

Smyth and Ringwalt's informants charged that, although the Sixth Kuomintang Congress went on record as supporting the settlement of outstanding Communist problems through peaceful means, the attitude of the ruling clique in private sessions was just the reverse. On several occasions the Generalissimo was reported to have addressed the Congress in secret session on the Communist question and linked the Communists with the Japanese as enemies of the state who should be shown no mercy. On another occasion, the Generalissimo had said that the end of the war with Japan would present a golden opportunity for the Nationalist government to deal with the Communist "traitors." Smyth and Ringwalt were told that as long as the United States policy of unlimited support of the Kuomintang continued, no possibility of peaceful settlement between the Communists and the Kuomintang existed and both parties would move closer to civil war.¹³

¹³Robert L. Smyth and George Ringwalt's report was not sent to Washington separately, but was included in Hurley to Stettinius, June 7, 1945; Hurley Papers.

Confronted with this serious evidence, the two foreign service officers thought it should be brought to the attention of the Ambassador and the State Department in Washington. They wrote a summary of these problems and presented it to Ambassador Hurley. Hurley became angry when he read the report. He vehemently denied that the dangers of civil war reported by Smyth and Ringwalt existed. He told them that the United States policy was not to give unlimited support to the Kuomintang and that rumors to the contrary were untrue. To Hurley, they were persisting in the old "die-hard attempt" to bring about the collapse of the Nationalist government in China. Hurley agreed to forward the report on to Washington but attached to it a long rebuttal denying the accuracy of the information. Hurley ended his counter-attack on the foreign service officers with predictions of his own success and a denunciation of what he called "American ideological crusaders."¹⁴

Nevertheless, rumors of civil strife could not be stilled. The June 7 issue of the Communist newspaper published in Chungking charged the Kuomintang with attempting to precipitate civil war. The Communist paper reported that the Kuomintang was using 97,000 troops to blockade Communist areas. On the other hand, the article said that the Communists were decidedly against civil war and, above all, strongly against the use of American Lend-Lease weapons to fight it. As a

¹⁴Hurley to Stettinius, June 7, 1945; Hurley Papers.

result of these charges, public sale and distribution of this issue was forbidden.¹⁵ Once again, Hurley denied the authenticity of the Communist report, but by then even he admitted certain unfavorable signs in China.

Hurley was despondent over the results of the Sixth Kuomintang Congress held in May, 1945. A sharp conflict had taken place within the Kuomintang party, and there was considerable outspoken criticism of the government during the sessions. Moreover, the general trend of the Congress was unfavorable to liberal elements. The reactionary "Organization clique" increased its power by about 10 per cent, mostly at the expense of more liberal factions within the party.¹⁶ As a result, this group had direct control of about 40 per cent of the membership in the two most important committees in the party, and indirectly controlled a majority of both committees. An attempt to have the Generalissimo made party leader for life was blocked by Sun Fo, the liberal son of Sun Yat-sen. Hurley disappointedly informed the State Department of these developments.¹⁷

The Sixth Kuomintang Congress did not go unnoticed by the Communist leadership. In a broadcast originating in Yenan on June 16, the Chinese Communists repeated their intention to

¹⁵Hurley to Stettinius, June 12, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁶The "Organization clique" is another name for the "C. C. clique," a reactionary political faction within the Kuomintang.

¹⁷Hurley to Stettinius, June 16, 1945; Hurley Papers.

boycott the People's Political Council, which the Kuomintang had designated as a prelude to the People's Congress, scheduled to be convened on November 12. Mao Tse-tung had already asserted his refusal to participate in such a meeting in February. The broadcast charged that the Kuomintang refused to terminate its one-party government or even to carry out the basic preliminary arrangements for the restoration of unity as provided in the Communist four point proposal of December 28. Charging that the Kuomintang decision to call the People's Political Council was a unilateral act, the Communists insisted that the Kuomintang had even designated the Communist delegates. They attacked the Kuomintang's refusal to grant any other party in China a legal position, asserting that the proposed Congress would be completely dominated by the Kuomintang and would prepare the way for disunity and civil war.¹⁸

In spite of this icy blast from Yen-an, the Kuomintang continued to go through the motions of attempting to reopen negotiations with the Chinese Communists. The Kuomintang formed a committee composed of independent members of the Democratic League and liberals in the Kuomintang to negotiate with the Communists on the unification question.¹⁹ There was

¹⁸Transcript of Broadcast from Yen-an, "Chinese Communists Not to Attend Forthcoming People's Political Council," June 16, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁹Hurley to Secretary of State, June 23, 1945; Hurley Papers. The Democratic League was a group of minor political parties which had joined in 1939, with the principal object of preserving Kuomintang-Communist cooperation. It had played an important but unsuccessful role in the negotiations between the Communists and the Kuomintang prior to Hurley's efforts.

little sincerity in this effort, however, for the Kuomintang was still unwilling to make any meaningful compromise with the Communist party.

Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai replied to the Committee's request to visit Yen-an for the purpose of holding talks on June 18, 1945. They repeated their usual charges against the Kuomintang, but welcomed the Committee's request to fly to Yen-an and ardently hoped that the Kuomintang would be able to realize its errors. If this came to pass, they said, the Communist party would be very willing to enter into discussions.²⁰ Although the Communists also sounded anxious to reach an agreement, in all probability their actions were motivated by a desire to buy time while waiting for the Russian entry into the Far Eastern war. Hurley joyfully cabled the news of the impending resumption of negotiations to the State Department on June 23.²¹

Hurley and the new Communist representative in Chungking, General Wang Jo-fei, discussed Kuomintang-Communist relations on June 29 for more than three hours. After Hurley explained that he was the best friend the Communists had in Chungking, the meeting got down to the problem of finding a workable formula for unification. Wang stated that the five point proposal of November 10, with some alterations, would still be acceptable to the Communists as a basis for negotia-

²⁰Mao and Chou to Wang Jo-fei, June 18, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²¹Hurley to Stettinius, June 23, 1945; Hurley Papers.

tions, but indicated that Mao would like to see the four points of December 28 accepted before initiating serious talks. Hurley agreed that the five points were still the best basis on which to build an agreement, but he refused to meet the Communist demand to put pressure on the Generalissimo to accept the four points advanced by the Communists in December as a condition to further negotiations. This refusal helped seal the fate of the new talks.²²

It now became clear that an agreement would be impossible. Hurley earnestly hoped for a united China but at the same time he continued to give virtually full support to the Generalissimo and the Kuomintang. Under such conditions the Kuomintang would certainly refuse to grant any meaningful concessions to the Communists. The Communists would not accept unification on the Kuomintang terms, for it would mean most certainly the end of the Chinese Communist party. Neither side it seemed was willing to make any concessions until talks in Washington and Moscow concerning the implementation of the Yalta agreement were finalized and their results known in China.

Efforts to implement the terms agreed to at Yalta concerning Soviet entry into the Far Eastern war really began when President Truman informed T. V. Soong on June 9 of the assurances Stalin had made to Hopkins about Russia's Far Eastern policy. At the same meeting, Truman divulged the contents of the Yalta secret protocol. Soong acted surprised, stating

²²Hurley to Secretary of State, June 29, 1945; Hurley Papers.

that the two treaties made in 1924 by the Soviet government renounced special concessions, leases, and privileges in China. Truman explained to Soong that he was anxious to see Russia enter the war in the Far East early enough to materially shorten the war. He assured Soong, however, that he would do nothing to harm the interests of China, America's friend in Asia.²³

The Chinese statesman made a curious remark to Admiral Leahy about the provisions of the Yalta agreement. In a private conversation, Soong told Leahy that China could not permit Russia to exercise the degree of control in Manchuria that was possible under the Yalta agreement. Soong said that China would prefer to settle the controversy by military action when forces became available. Having in mind the deplorable state of China's armies, the surprised Leahy asked Soong when China would be in a position to do that. Soong replied that it could be any time within the next five hundred years.²⁴ On this note, Soong left Washington on June 15, the same date that Chiang was informed of the contents of the Yalta protocol.

On June 9, the Secretary of State sent a message to Hurley, authorizing him to discuss the Yalta agreements with Chiang on June 15. The same telegram included the assurances made by Marshal Stalin to Harry Hopkins in Moscow.²⁵ The Generalissimo seemed surprised on hearing of the agreement.

²³Truman, Memoirs, Vol. I, 267-270.

²⁴Leahy, I Was There, 381.

²⁵Stettinius to Hurley, June 9, 1945; Hurley Papers.

Acting deeply hurt, he remained silent for a few moments, and then asked Ambassador Hurley through an interpreter to repeat the statement as if he did not understand what he had heard. Finally, Chiang expressed his deep disappointment in the actions of his fond friend and ally.²⁶ It would seem that the Generalissimo was engaging in a bit of acting, for it was unlikely that he did not receive news of the protocol from Soong, who had specific knowledge of it on June 9.

Negotiations between Soong and Stalin, however, did not begin until June 30, the day the Chinese official arrived in Moscow.²⁷ Soong's main objective was to get the Soviet Union to support Chiang in his struggle with the Chinese Communists. Stalin had two objectives, both of which were outlined in the Yalta agreement. First, he wanted to invade Manchuria and strip the area of the industrial complex which had been developed there by the Japanese and ship it to the Soviet Union. Secondly, the Soviet dictator wanted a warm water outlet on the Pacific with land access to it. Stalin knew that he had the better bargaining position, for Chiang's government would probably fall if the Soviet Union supported the Chinese Communists. Soong tried to make as few concessions as possible to Stalin's demands for Soviet economic, political, and military control in Manchuria, and still get Stalin to pledge Soviet aid and support for Chiang in his struggle with the Chinese

²⁶MacArthur Hearings, Part 3, 2416-2417.

²⁷Truman, Memoirs, Vol. I, 315.

Communists.

In spite of Stalin's excessive demands, Soong anxiously pressed for an agreement with the Soviet Union which would guarantee Russian support of Chiang. He told American representatives in Moscow that the Yalta understanding was not a handicap to his negotiations. Averell Harriman, the American Ambassador in Moscow, repeatedly urged Soong not to give in to Stalin's demands and at the same time met frequently with Stalin and Molotov to insist that the Soviet position was not justified. On instructions from Washington, Harriman informed Soong that the United States would consider any concessions that went beyond the United States interpretation of the Yalta understanding as being made because Soong believed that it would be of value in obtaining Soviet support in other directions.

All China eagerly awaited the outcome of Soong's talks. Since late February all efforts to achieve unity in China had been blocked because neither side was willing to make any concessions until it became known what the Russians would do when they entered the Far Eastern war. The Communists were confident that the Soviet Union would aid them in their struggle to overthrow Chiang.²⁸ Chiang, on the other hand, expected that the concessions he was willing to make regarding Manchuria would win him Russian support. Hurley, for his part,

²⁸Report by John Stewart Service, "Chinese Communist Expectations in Regard to Soviet Participation in the Far Eastern War," n.d.; Hurley Papers.

expected that Russian entry into the conflict would make unification possible. The talks continued in Moscow, however, for a month and a half before an agreement would be signed. In that time, several events took place which changed the whole situation in China.

CHAPTER XII

THE WAR ENDS

While China waited for the Soviet entry into the Far Eastern war, an important event took place in the New Mexico desert which changed the balance of power in the Far East and the world. News arrived in Germany July 16, on the eve of the Potsdam conference, that the atomic bomb was a colossal reality, and, as a result, the diplomatic efforts to bring Russia into the Pacific war became pointless. The Russians might well have been disturbed to find that President Truman had lost interest in knowing the exact date on which they would come into the war.¹ For despite Stalin's public reluctance to go to war in Asia, he strongly desired to invade Manchuria.

Because of the atomic bomb, Stalin could no longer play a reluctant role. He would have to reach an agreement with the Chinese quickly in order to get into the war and secure his objectives in the Far East before the Japanese capitulated. Meanwhile, in China, the Communists, the Kuomintang, and Ambassador Hurley waited, hoping that Soviet entry into the war against Japan would solve their problems.

¹Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 637.

Continued reports of skirmishes between the Kuomintang and Communist forces underscored the tinderbox situation in China. In a report dated July 16, 1945, the American military attache told of a major defeat suffered by Kuomintang forces. He commented that the fighting between the Communists and the Kuomintang in Sinkiang province had assumed large scale proportions with Communist forces steadily increasing their operations against the Nationalists, especially since the cessation of European hostilities. It appeared probable, he said, that Communist-Kuomintang fighting would increase.²

Ambassador Hurley finally recognized the existence of these clashes in a cable sent to Washington on July 31. Hurley's telegram dealt specifically with a fight between the Communist and Kuomintang forces north of Sian. Regular Kuomintang troops were attempting to suppress a militia rebellion when the leaders deserted to the Communist side. Frequently local troop commanders would use the hostility between the Kuomintang and the Communists to maintain a relatively independent position within their own areas. If either side threatened their independence, they would immediately appeal to the other for support. This was apparently what had happened in this instance, for the report indicated that neither the Kuomintang nor the Communists had instigated the uprising of the militia troops. Hurley minimized the importance of the skirmish but promised to keep the department notified of

²Charles C. Dusenbury to American Embassy, July 16, 1945; Hurley Papers.

further developments.³

Probably for no greater reason than to keep channels of communication open, half-hearted attempts at unification continued in July. On July 8, Dr. Wang Shih-chieh informed Counselor Robert L. Smyth of the American Embassy that the Kuomintang committee recently dispatched to Yen-an had brought back a new Communist plan for unification. Actually, the new proposal was little more than the one advanced during the February negotiations with the additional provision that Chiang Kai-shek not hold the People's Congress scheduled for November. Dr. Wang pointed out that the Communists had omitted military unification in their message and charged that the Democratic League was in actuality "on the fringe of the Communists." The Kuomintang leader said that in reality the Communist proposal was a plot to put the Kuomintang in a minority position and seize control of the government.⁴

When Hurley learned of Wang's discussion with Smyth, he must have been somewhat amused. For Dr. Wang's charge that the Communist plan was a deep laid plot to gain control of the National government seemed ridiculously naive. In Hurley's opinion the Communists themselves did not take the plan seriously and saw it only as a ploy to gain time while awaiting the results of the Soong conference in Moscow. Hurley realized the

³Hurley to James F. Byrnes, July 31, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁴"New Communist Proposals," a report of conversation between Dr. Wang Shih-chieh and Robert L. Smyth, July 8, 1945; Hurley Papers.

importance of these talks as well as the Communists, for he had advised Roosevelt more than a year before that the Communist problem in China could not be settled until the Soviet attitude toward the Communists was clear and made known to Chiang Kai-shek. Hurley believed that if the Soviets entered the Far Eastern war, and signed a treaty of friendship with Chiang's government, the Chinese Communists would be forced to reach an accord with the Generalissimo.

Hurley had been working for some time to improve the possibility of unification. He had advised the Nationalist government that it could afford to make generous political concessions after Soong reached an agreement with Russia. With the support of the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communists could bring civil war in China, but without that support, Hurley reasoned, they would eventually have to participate as a political party in the National government. The Ambassador took the view that the Chinese Communists had greatly exaggerated their power. In his discussions with visitors and his reports to Washington, Hurley repeatedly told how State Department officials, Army officers, and journalists had in a large measure accepted the Communist leaders' exaggerated statements in regard to their military and political strength.

When unification came, Hurley was sure that the five point agreement of November 10, 1944, would form the basis for it. In Hurley's opinion and also in Mao's, this scheme offered a reasonable basis for settlement of the outstanding differences between the Communists and the Kuomintang. Essen-

tially, it called for the formation of a coalition government in which all the political factions in China would be represented. As part of the five points, the Communists had agreed to submit the control of their armies to this coalition government. Hurley knew that the five points were not altogether satisfactory to the Nationalist government but he was confident that the differences could be negotiated, for he still believed the problem was one of semantics. Hurley favored the publication of those five points and had given his permission to Mao Tse-tung to do so.⁵ By July 16, the Kuomintang had also come to the conclusion that publication of the five points would be acceptable.⁶

By mid-July, Hurley was looking forward to a rapid conclusion to his duties in China and a hero's welcome in the States. He believed himself fully justified in the attitudes he had taken regarding the State Department officials, military officers, and journalists whom he believed had worked to sabotage his unification policy. In a few weeks they would be proven wrong publicly and Hurley would at long last be vindicated. He had found the climate difficult in Chungking and was looking forward to a long rest.⁷ Meanwhile, repeated rumors circulated in Washington concerning Hurley's impending

⁵Hurley to Byrnes, July 10, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁶Report by Robert L. Smyth, "Memorandum concerning Conversation between Dr. Wang Shih-chieh and Patrick J. Hurley, on July 16, 1945," July 18, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁷Hurley to Lucille M. Carter, August 8, 1945; Hurley Papers.

resignation as the war in the Far East drew quickly to a close.⁸

The first two weeks of August, 1945, were filled with momentous events. The atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima August 6, and three days later the Soviet Union entered the Far Eastern war. Japanese surrender could only be a few days away.⁹ On August 11, Hurley received a message from the new Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, asking him to have Chiang Kai-shek designate an officer to act as his representative in the surrender ceremonies.¹⁰ Hurley relayed this message to the Generalissimo on August 12, and Chiang expressed his complete accord.¹¹ On August 14, word arrived in Washington that the Japanese had accepted the surrender terms and the war was over.¹²

Surrender, however, was no simple matter in China. In many parts of China there was no clear-cut line dividing the Communist territory and that controlled by the Kuomintang. Most of rural North China was under control of the Communists. In Southeast China, there was no clear control exercised by either side in the rural areas. Some of the guerrillas operating there were Communist controlled, others were Kuomintang

⁸"Washington Forecast," Newark, New Jersey, Call, July 29, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁹Edwin O. Reischauer, Japan: Past and Present (2d. ed. rev.; Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1953); 287.

¹⁰Byrnes to Hurley, August 11, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹¹Hurley to Byrnes, August 12, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹²Truman, Memoirs, Vol. I, 435.

controlled, and many were virtually independent and were little more than bandits. Both in the North and the Southeast, the Japanese controlled the cities and communication lines.

Both the Kuomintang and the Communist party made every effort to capture Japanese forces, for, in addition to the cities and communication lines, they wanted to secure the arms and ammunition belonging to the Japanese and the Nanking puppet forces. Under the date of August 10, 1945, General Chu Teh, the Commanding General of the Communist forces, issued a proclamation calling for Japanese surrender to his troops. The order openly defied the National government of China and conflicted with the Potsdam declaration which designated that surrender was to be made to the Nationalists. The Japanese surrender had come before the announcement of the Sino-Soviet treaty which Hurley hoped would convince the Communists that civil war was impossible. Now, Chu Teh's proclamation made it necessary for Hurley to give up his waiting game and enter directly into the struggle going on in China.

On August 12, 1945, Hurley informed Secretary of State Byrnes of Chu Teh's proclamation. The Ambassador advised Byrnes that he was aware that the United States policy in China opposed any assistance to the National government in a fratricidal war, but, he continued, the question had resolved itself as to whether the United States government and the United Nations would take any action toward preventing civil war in China. Hurley argued that if the Communists were allowed to accept the surrender of the Japanese and acquired

Japanese arms, civil war in China could not be avoided. He recommended to Byrnes that the Japanese should be penalized for any attempt to arm forces opposed to the Chinese government.¹³

Meanwhile, Wedemeyer and Hurley, without specific authorization, adopted a course of action which involved the United States deeply in the civil strife in China.¹⁴ Wedemeyer endeavored to stymie the Chinese Communists, whom he believed to be servants of the Kremlin, by aiding the National government in its efforts to establish sovereignty over North China.¹⁵ He did this by interpreting what he termed vague and contradictory instructions from Washington in the broadest fashion.¹⁶ The tactics which Wedemeyer adopted and of which Hurley approved contributed to the downfall of the Chiang government in all of China.

Wedemeyer gave Chiang Kai-shek all the aid at his disposal to prevent the Japanese-held cities and transportation lines in North China from falling into Communist hands. Three Chinese divisions were airlifted into Manchuria and over 50,000 American Marines were landed in North China to hold Tientsin, Peiping, and coal mines and railroads in the adjoining areas until Chiang's troops could arrive. At the same time, Chiang recognized many of the Nanking puppet leaders and

¹³Hurley to Byrnes, August 12, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁴Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports!, 348.

¹⁵Ibid., 345, 347.

¹⁶Ibid., 348.

authorized them to occupy areas and accept the Japanese surrender in his name.¹⁷ All these actions were carried out ostensibly to aid in the surrender of the Japanese, but there was little doubt that their real purpose was to foil the Chinese Communists.

Hurley's and Wedemeyer's activities in China went unnoticed in Washington, where all thoughts had turned from the war to demobilization. Public opinion in America demanded that troops be demobilized as quickly as possible, and Washington followed this policy during the remainder of 1945.¹⁸ But the two American senior representatives in China, Wedemeyer and Hurley, continued on a path which could well involve the United States in an internal conflict on the China mainland. Why Wedemeyer followed this course was no puzzle. He was motivated by a fear of an international Communist conspiracy which would result in the seizure of China. On the other hand, this reasoning could not have been shared by Hurley. The Ambassador had long argued that the objectives of the Soviet Union and the United States in China were identical. He believed that when the Sino-Soviet friendship pact was signed it would demonstrate the correctness of his contention. Why then did Hurley support Wedemeyer's actions?

The answer lay in Hurley's mind. Ambassador Hurley was a man of action. Once given a mission, he would not swerve

¹⁷China White Paper, 312.

¹⁸Byrnes to George M. Stanton, August 20, 1945; Hurley Papers.

from it until he achieved success. Hurley had tremendous faith in his ability to succeed, and he felt any attempt to change his goals reflected on this ability. Thus, when the foreign service officers, military men, and even the journalists in China said that unity in China under Chiang Kai-shek was impossible, Hurley reacted violently. He had fixed his mind on a united China. He believed that anyone who branded unification impossible was in fact saying that Hurley would be unable to accomplish his mission.

Hurley adopted every means at his disposal to achieve his objective. One thing which seemed necessary was to prevent the Chinese Communists from strengthening their position by capturing Japanese arms so that they could wage civil war without Soviet aid. He knew that the Sino-Soviet friendship treaty would be announced in a few days. This is why Hurley went along with Wedemeyer when he wanted to throw the full weight of the United States Army behind Chiang Kai-shek. Hurley believed that the ends justified the means. By strengthening the Nationalists, he believed that the Chinese Communists would be delayed long enough to allow the completion of the negotiations going on in Moscow. Once the treaty was announced, the Chinese Communists, he believed, would lose hope and join with the National government. Thus, Hurley acted out of a confidence in his own ability to achieve the American goal of a united China under Chiang Kai-shek.

In Yenan, however, the Communist leaders were surprised by Japanese capitulation and unprepared for the large scale

American support given to the Kuomintang. They had thought that the Japanese would make a strong last stand in Manchuria and North China even if the Japanese home islands were invaded. In spite of the Russian invasion of Manchuria, they thought the war would continue for some months. The Communists had been in the process of greatly expanding their regular army, but this expansion would not reach its peak until late in the year. The Communists had not expected the final Japanese counter-offensive to come until the end of 1945, or even late in the spring of 1946.¹⁹

At first Mao doubted Japan's sincerity in the surrender. The military situation was unclear. The Communists had failed to take any of the big cities, but they were clearing the Japanese puppets out of smaller communities and had cut most of the main railway lines in North China. Apparently the Russians were staying north of the Great Wall, although they had linked up with the Communist Eighth Route Army in a number of places. Before the arrival of American troops, Tiensin was about to fall to the Communists, and the Shantung peninsula was solidly in the hands of the Red Eighth Route Army. The Communist forces were actively pursuing the advantage they held in North China, and this course gave every promise of

¹⁹Michael Landray to Sir Horace Seymour with Enclosure, August 24, 1945; Hurley Papers. Landray was a British observer stationed in Yen-an. His long report to Sir Horace Seymour, the British Ambassador, was sent out through American channels because they were the only ones which existed in and out of Yen-an. It is particularly valuable because it gives a version of events in Yen-an from a point of view which was distinctly different from that of the Americans stationed there.

civil war.²⁰

In Yen-an the danger of civil war seemed extremely serious. The Red leaders knew that Chiang Kai-shek was making every effort to improve his military position against the Communists by seizing the main cities and communication lines previously held by the Japanese in Communist dominated areas of Central and North China. The Communist leaders were quite determined to resist Kuomintang penetration into the main areas of China which they controlled, and extended this to include Americans acting on behalf of the Kuomintang. On the other hand, they appeared willing to allow Communist guerrilla enclaves in the Yangtze River valley and South China to fall to Kuomintang control.²¹

The Communists were confident that Chiang Kai-shek could not defeat them in civil war. Mao Tse-tung had the support of a well organized population over a large area, a fact which had been verified by many observers. It seemed certain that the rural population would continue to support the Communists against the Kuomintang. Although some of the landlord class might possibly switch their support from the Communists to the Kuomintang, the only result was expected to be a return by the Communists to a land distribution program. The Japanese had attempted since 1939 to clear the Communist forces from the rural areas in China and there was no reason to suppose that the Kuomintang would be any more successful.²²

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

Michael Landray, a British observer stationed in Yen-an, predicted that without hope in the rural areas, the Kuomintang would have to devote itself to controlling the cities. Even if Chiang's forces were able to capture all the major cities and railways, he reasoned, their position would at best be something like that of the earlier civil war, which took place from 1927 to 1937. Nevertheless, many of the advantages the Kuomintang enjoyed during that ten year period would be lost. The British diplomat said that the Communist regular army was nearly as large as that of the Kuomintang, and its base areas were much larger than in the earlier period. Even though the Kuomintang forces had far better equipment, their relative improvement was not so great as that of the Communist armies.²³

According to Landray, Communist long range success hinged on the peasants. As long as the Communists held the hostile countryside, the war could go on indefinitely and could easily spread over most of China. The obvious Communist strategy would be to organize and extend peasant revolts in Kuomintang areas. If the Kuomintang could offer the peasants as much as the Communists, Landray said, the situation would change drastically; but this appeared unlikely based on the past performances of the Kuomintang and Chiang Kai-shek.²⁴

It was clear to the Communists, the Britisher observed, that the Kuomintang was totally dependent on United States support. Most of the important cities in North China were

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

hundreds of miles from the nearest regular Kuomintang troops. Without the American Army Air Force, the Kuomintang forces could not reach these cities. With a large portion of the countryside arrayed against it, the Kuomintang would find it difficult to maintain itself without economic aid from abroad. Moreover, the Kuomintang leadership laid great stress on the importance of better equipment received from the United States.²⁵

To Landray, the Communists appeared confident of being able to defeat Chiang Kai-shek with or without American support, and this factor made the likelihood of avoiding civil war remote. The Communist leaders believed submission to the Kuomintang government would be suicidal for them and would involve the sacrifice of everything they fought for. Mao, Chou, and the other Chinese Communist leaders did not believe any of Chiang's promises about democracy or reforms, and considered them as merely propaganda for foreign consumption. They believed that Chiang would only come to terms with the Chinese Communists if it was made clear to him that he would not have foreign support in a civil war.²⁶

The activities of the United States military forces following the surrender of Japan made it clear to the Communist leaders that at least Hurley and Wedemeyer had decided on full military and political support of the Kuomintang in civil war. The Communists had sensed a fundamental change in

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

American policy after the recall of Stilwell. Hurley had committed the United States to unconditional political support for Chiang and Wedemeyer's military aid to Kuomintang troops put him also solidly in the Chiang camp. Moreover, Landray said that the Communist leaders viewed the arrest of John Service, in connection with the Amerasia case in the United States as an obvious attempt to stifle criticism of Hurley, and intensified the suspicion with which the Communist leaders regarded Hurley and Wedemeyer.²⁷

While doubt, indecision, and surprise were the order of the day in Yen-an, more startling developments were taking place in Chungking. On August 16, 1945, Hurley sent a message to the Secretary of State informing him that the Generalissimo had received a cable from Dr. Soong in Moscow stating that the Sino-Soviet treaty probably would be signed by the Soviet officials on August 14, but as yet Hurley was unsure of its provisions. The Generalissimo seemed quite satisfied with the agreement which had been worked out, and he thanked Hurley for his aid in laying the groundwork for the rapprochement with the Soviet Union. When Chiang told Hurley that the negotiations were completed and in a few days the treaty would be a reality, the Ambassador advised Chiang to send an invitation to Mao Tse-tung to visit with the Generalissimo in Chungking. As a result of the treaty, Chiang would be free to show the realistic and generous leadership of which he was

²⁷Ibid.

capable. Chiang sent the message and Hurley expected that if Mao accepted the invitation, the danger of armed conflict between the Communist party of China and the National government would be reduced to a political controversy.²⁸

²⁸Hurley to Byrnes, August 16, 1945; Hurley Papers.

CHAPTER XIII

THE END IN CHINA

In the Sino-Soviet treaty announced in the fourth week of August, China recognized the independence of Outer Mongolia, made Dairen an international port under Russian control, leased Port Arthur to the Soviet Union to be used as a naval base for a period of thirty years, and agreed to place the Chinese Eastern Railway and the South Manchurian Railway under a joint Sino-Soviet administration. In exchange for these concessions, the Soviet Union recognized the Chungking government as the central government of China, and promised that all Russian economic and military support would go to that government.¹

At the completion of the negotiations, Soong told Harri-
man that he was pleased with the results and expressed his
gratitude for the active support the United States had given
him in the negotiations.² Although Soong was pleased with the
terms, he was not sure that the treaty would be well received
in China. Indeed, Russia had made some distinctive gains at
the expense of China. To shift responsibility for the treaty

¹China White Paper, 585-596.

²MacArthur Hearings, Part 5, 3339-3340.

from himself, Soong got Chiang to appoint Wang Shih-chieh as Foreign Minister and he signed the actual treaty for China.³ The agreement was consummated in Moscow on August 14 and was ratified in Chungking by the Generalissimo on August 24.⁴

News of the treaty must have reached Mao Tse-tung shortly after it was agreed to in Moscow, for, on August 21, Hurley received the news he had been awaiting for almost eleven months. A wire from Yen-an notified General Wedemeyer that Mao Tse-tung desired a guarantee of safe conduct in the event he accepted the Generalissimo's invitation to confer in Chungking. The Chinese government had already guaranteed safe conduct and protection to Mao if he came to Chungking, but in spite of this, Mao desired a similar guarantee from the Americans. To reassure Mao, Hurley volunteered to fly to Yen-an and ride the same plane back to Chungking with the Chairman and his aide. Hurley viewed Mao's impending acceptance of Chiang's invitation with great expectations.

Ambassador Hurley felt that if Mao accepted the invitation offered by Chiang Kai-shek, a settlement could be achieved. The inexorable logic of events which Hurley said would bring Mao to the conference table seemed to be working. The conclusion of a favorable Sino-Soviet friendship pact, Hurley believed, would leave Mao without hope of success in any prospective civil war. The American Ambassador predicted

³Hurley to Byrnes (draft), n.d.; Hurley Papers.

⁴Hurley to Byrnes, August 24, 1945; Hurley Papers.

that, notwithstanding Mao's many fulminations, he would come to Chungking and the results would be a peaceful, strong, united, democratic government in China.⁵ Certainly, if Mao did accept Chiang's invitation, it would be a momentous milestone in the negotiations.

Two days later Hurley received more encouraging news from Yen-an. On August 23, 1945, he was advised that Chou En-lai would journey to Chungking to confer with the Generalissimo in the interests of unity.⁶ The next day the answer everyone expected lay before Hurley. Mao said that for the sake of a united China and peace in the Far East, he was willing to visit Chungking and discuss the state of the nation with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. He added that he would first send Chou En-lai for consultation. As if to remind Hurley of his commitment, Mao wrote the Ambassador that he looked forward to meeting him again in Yen-an before they undertook the trip to Chungking together.⁷

Mao's decision to go to Chungking was probably motivated by disclosure of the Sino-Soviet treaty. The pro-Chiang attitude assumed by the Soviet Union in that treaty unmistakably weakened the Communist position and, at the same time, strengthened the Kuomintang. While full scale civil war loomed ominously near, the Soviet Union's unpredicted actions may have

⁵Hurley to Byrnes, August 21, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁶Ivan Yeaton to Wedemeyer, August 23, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁷Mao to Wedemeyer, August 24, 1945; Hurley Papers.

convinced Mao that he should try to avoid a civil conflict. If the Soviet Union did indeed intend to support Chiang as it had vowed to do in the treaty, victory in civil war would be much more difficult. Mao, however, was not yet willing to surrender completely to the demands of the Kuomintang.

Hurley received a message from the American Observer Group in Yen-an which clearly underscored the Communists' determination to resist the Nationalists. The letter advised Hurley on how to arrive in the Communist capital and told him what the Communists were likely to accept in the way of a settlement. It advised him to show firmness and fairness and forget all past misunderstandings. The letter cautioned him not to expect the Chinese Communists to make major concessions or to abandon their former demands.

The Chinese Communists, it was reported, felt that the eyes of the world were on China. The Generalissimo had knocked at their door and it was their duty to try to save the peace. Their short range aims were a true coalition government which would allow the Communists free competition for ultimate power with the Kuomintang. But, at the same time, they seemed willing to accept some sort of plan to divide China into jurisdictional parts. Hurley was advised not to expect any great success in the forthcoming talks unless the Generalissimo conceded to some basic Yen-an demands. The Communists felt that if negotiations failed, international forces would in time be brought to bear on the Chinese question, and this pressure

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would work to their advantage.⁸

With this letter in hand, Hurley boarded the plane for Yen-an on August 27. He told reporters assembled at the airport that he was going to Yen-an with the full approval of the Generalissimo and at the invitation of Mao Tse-tung. Hurley said he would accompany Mao Tse-tung and his party to Chungking where the Communist leader would enter into direct negotiations with the Generalissimo and officials of the National government. He said that he was pleased to return to Yen-an for he had worked continually for more than a year to help avoid an open split between the National government and the Communists. In a controversy where there had been so many conflicting elements, Hurley said that it was a source of gratification to be able to maintain the respect and confidence of the leaders of both parties.⁹

Hurley arrived in Yen-an about four thirty in the afternoon. He was greeted at the airfield by Communist party leaders and members of the American Military Observer Group. Following a dinner and a night's rest, Hurley, with Mao and Chou En-lai, left for Chungking about noon the next day.¹⁰ When they arrived Chairman Mao made a statement in which he said China was about to enter into a stage of peaceful recon-

⁸Robert L. Johnson to Hurley with Enclosure, August 27, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁹Statement issued by Hurley prior to departure for Yen-an, August 27, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁰Hurley China Log, 1945, August 27, 28, 1945; Hurley Papers.

struction. At such a critical point in China's history, he added, the guarantee of peace, the realization of democracy, and the consolidation of internal unity were of utmost urgency. He said the political and military problems existing in the country should be rationally settled on a basis of peace, democracy, and unity in order to build an independent, free, strong, and prosperous new China. He expressed his hope that all anti-Japanese political parties and patriots of China would unite in the struggle to create a new China.¹¹

The cordial atmosphere of Mao's arrival ended two days later when a conference was held at Hurley's residence between Mao Tse-tung, Chou En-lai, Hurley and General Wedemeyer. The meeting was called to discuss the shooting of an American officer by some troops who were alleged to be Communists. The American Captain, John Birch, parachuted into Communist territory to secure information about the Japanese.¹² An argument between Birch and the commander of the local Communist troops resulted in Birch's death. The Communist leaders denied knowledge of the incident and asked Wedemeyer why he had sent Birch into Communist territory. Wedemeyer replied that he would send Americans anywhere in China to accomplish his mission.

Unfortunately, Wedemeyer chose to talk to the Chairman of the Chinese Communist party as he would talk to a delinquent Private in the ranks. Justified or not, this was not the dip-

¹¹Statement issued by Mao Tse-tung on arrival in Chungking from Yenan, August 28, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹²Captain John Birch was the individual after whom the John Birch Society was named.

lomatic way to address a man who might eventually become the ruler of China. Mao did not show any displeasure with Wedemeyer's attitude, but the discussion must certainly have impressed him unfavorably.¹³

Moreover, Wedemeyer was at the same time making plans with the Generalissimo for the continuation of America's commitment in China. Both envisioned the retention of an American military mission in China for a period of five years. Its purpose would be to assist and advise the Chinese government in the creation of modern air, ground, and naval forces. Both Hurley and the Generalissimo desired and expected Wedemeyer to be appointed head of the mission.¹⁴ Through actions of this kind Hurley and Wedemeyer were moving the United States toward a positive military commitment which would underwrite the faltering and reactionary regime of Chiang Kai-shek.

Mao was not surprised that Hurley and Wedemeyer were backing Chiang and he continued to negotiate. The discussions between Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung began September 2, 1945. In the first meeting, Chiang presented five points which comprised his plan for unification. He offered to form the existing Communist military forces into twelve divisions within a proposed new national army. These divisions would be commanded by Communists but would be under the control of the

¹³Minutes of Meeting Held at Ambassador Hurley's Home, No. 2 Chaling Village, 7:45 p.m., August 30, 1945, September 1, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁴Hurley to Byrnes for Truman, September 2, 1945; Hurley Papers.

National government. Where the Communist troops would be stationed after the reorganization was to be decided after the Communist party had submitted its recommendations. Regarding the areas of China under Communist control, Chiang took a hard line. He said that the Communist party demands regarding continued control of these areas were impossible to carry out, but added that there might be a possibility of some Communist magistrates remaining in their posts after an examination of their administrative records by the central government.

On political questions, the Generalissimo yielded very little. He found no need to reorganize the government before calling the People's Congress in November. Although he offered to consider the desires of the Communist party to participate in the government before the People's Congress, he regarded the 1937 elections for members of that body, held under Kuomintang domination, valid. He did, however, agree to consider some reasonable increase in the number of delegates which were to represent the Communist party.¹⁵ In the second meeting, on September 3, Chou En-lai and Wang Jo-fei presented the Communist offer for settlement. They considered that the most essential immediate problem was to stave off the pending civil war. To accomplish this end the Communists offered to make several concessions but demanded that the Kuomintang approach more realistically the military and politi-

¹⁵Important Points of the Conversation between President Chiang Kai-shek and Mr. Mao Tse-tung, on September 2, 1945; Hurley Papers.

cal situation in China. They wanted the Kuomintang to recognize the Communist governments and armies in North China in what they called the "liberated areas." They demanded that the Communists be assigned a zone in which they were authorized to participate in the surrender of the Japanese.

Finally, they asked for a cessation of all armed clashes and an agreement that the armed forces of both sides remain in the positions which they then occupied.

The Communists also repeated their demands for an inter-party consultation conference, composed of representatives of various parties and certain non-partisan leaders. This was essentially the same plan which had been advanced in February and which had been rejected by Chiang Kai-shek at that time. The purpose of the conference would be to discuss a variety of pressing political matters. Now, however, the Reds included the outline of what they considered to be the minimum terms the Communist party would accept. They asked for complete control of five specified northern provinces and partial control of six others. Moreover, the vice mayors of Peiping, Tientsin, Ching Tao, and Shanghai were to be nominated by the Communist party.

On the matter of military unification, the Communists again offered specific terms. They demanded that the existing Communist military forces be formed into forty-eight divisions within the National army and significantly requested the establishment of a Peiping provisional headquarters and a Peiping political council to be controlled by the Communists.

Through these two organizations the Communist leaders would exercise command over the Communist divisions. In addition to the regular army, the Reds wanted to reorganize the partisans in liberated areas into a self defense corps to be dominated by the Communists. Finally, they called for all Communist troops to be stationed north of the Yangtze river. The Communists advanced three proposals which were to promote inter-party cooperation. These three points were essentially a condensation of the four points which the Communists had demanded the Kuomintang initiate as a show of sincerity in December of 1944. They included the release of political prisoners, the safeguarding of all freedoms, and the abolition of unreasonable restrictive laws.¹⁶

The Kuomintang reacted to the Communist proposals as might have been expected. It rejected the Communist demands for recognition of their control in the "liberated areas." It offered to give the Communists an unspecified role in the surrender, but only after the Reds had submitted to Kuomintang authority. Chiang's party agreed that armed clashes should cease but refused to halt the expansion of Kuomintang troops into Communist controlled areas. Although Chiang agreed that a political conference might possibly be organized, he preferred to keep its function as vague as possible and refused to postpone the convening of the People's Congress in November. The Kuomintang turned down all meaningful sections of

¹⁶Important Points Presented by Mr. Chou En-lai and Mr. Wang Jo-fei on September 2 at 5:00 p.m., n.d.; Hurley Papers.

the Communist military unification program.¹⁷

Once again an old familiar pattern emerged. Both sides made inconsequential concessions and refused to surrender any of their power or sovereignty. Until they yielded something much more substantive, the prospect of unification remained hopeless. The Communists' apparent willingness to accept a territorial division of China along the Yangtze river at least as a temporary measure emerged as the only new development in Yen-an's thinking since the last series of conferences in February. On the other hand, Chiang's reaction to these proposals made it clear that he would not settle for less than all of China without extreme pressure being placed on him by the United States. The Generalissimo felt that with American and Soviet support, he could defeat the Communists in the North. The Communists, for their part, were willing to accept half of China because they were momentarily unsure of their position. Furthermore, they may have believed that some time in the future they would be able to undermine a Chiang regime in the South anyway. Although Hurley took an active interest in the talks, he chose to remain aloof from the day to day discussions.

Hurley's disappointment regarding the new negotiations caused him to think again of resignation. He was in poor health and life in China was hard. The weather, the food, and the climate all contributed to his poor physical condition. In a

¹⁷Government reply to the Important Points Presented by Mr. Chou En-lai and Mr. Wang Jo-fei on September 3, 1945, n.d.; Hurley Papers.

letter to Mrs. D. F. Lawrence, Hurley vowed to leave China soon and quit public office because he had "grown tired of the whole business."¹⁸ In the United States, rumors continued to circulate about Hurley's impending resignation. President Truman denied that Hurley would resign but the New York Times reported that if the rift between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists continued, Hurley felt there was no more to be done and he would leave his post in Chungking.¹⁹

The Ambassador, however, could not leave China without some token of diplomatic victory. He began searching once again for a scapegoat to take the blame for his failure in China. On September 11, 1945, Hurley sent a message to the Secretary of State which laid the groundwork for his impending resignation. He argued that since the war had ended, American objectives in the Far East had changed. Hurley believed that the United States was no longer upholding the principles of the Atlantic Charter. More specifically, he was concerned that America was ignoring the anti-imperialistic provisions of that document including self-determination. Certain indications had led Hurley to believe that the United States was supporting the imperialist powers, Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands, in their attempt to regain their pre-war empires. As proof of this, he cited the vote of the

¹⁸Hurley to Mrs. D. F. Lawrence, September 14, 1945; Hurley Papers. MacArthur Hearings, Part 3, 2309.

¹⁹Washington Star, September 16, 1945; New York Herald Tribune, September 16, 1945; New York Times, September 16, 1945; Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

American delegation at the San Francisco conference on the question of colonial independence in which the Americans sided with Great Britain and France against China and Russia.

The Ambassador pointed out how the objectives of the imperialists differed from those of what he believed should be American policy in Asia. The imperialist nations favored the sustaining of Japan as the dominant regulatory force in Asia and at the same time supported a policy intended to keep China divided. This was directly opposed to what President Roosevelt had outlined to him as long-range American policy in the Far East. Under these circumstances, Hurley requested an opportunity to return to the United States with General Wedemeyer on September 19 so that he could discuss American Asiatic policy with the Secretary of State and the President.²⁰

Five days later, on September 16, 1945, Hurley found another reason why he should resign. He had learned that George Atcheson and John Service had been assigned as political advisers to General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Allied Commander in the Pacific. In protest, he drafted a vitriolic three and a half page cable intended for the President and the Secretary of State. The telegram was never sent but it indicated the Ambassador's passionate state of mind on this question.

He charged both Atcheson and Service with opposing American policy in China and deliberately supporting the im-

²⁰Hurley to Byrnes, September 11, 1945; Hurley Papers.

perialistic nations in their objectives of a divided China.

Both men, he continued, supported the Chinese Communist party whose purpose it was to overthrow the National government of the Republic of China, to remove Chiang Kai-shek as war leader of China, and bring about civil war. Hurley said his mission in China had been accomplished over the virulent and able opposition of Acheson and Service. They had always supported a policy which would divide and weaken China.

Hurley's attack then turned to the State Department's Division of Chinese Affairs. He argued that this group had long been attempting to subvert his goals in China. Members of the advisory staff which Acheson led, he said, favored imperialism and opposed democracy. Even after he had secured the support of Churchill and Stalin for American policy in China, the Division of Chinese Affairs of the State Department and the men who once occupied the United States Embassy in China continued to report every false and feeble rumor, to magnify every personal and political clash in China into terms of civil war.

According to Hurley, Acheson and Service's appointments would certainly disrupt the unification conferences between the National government and the Communists. He said they would again attempt to break up the talks just as they had done in the fall of 1944 during similar negotiations. Finally, Hurley requested that neither Acheson nor Service be given any jurisdiction over American policy in China until he had been given an opportunity to present the matters in person

to the President and the Secretary of State.²¹ Hurley had found his scapegoats.

Meanwhile, back in the United States the growing muddle in China attracted the attention of the press. Alexander H. Uhl, in the New York Times on September 5, 1945, commented on Acheson's appointment by saying, "Acheson is on the conservative side, but once had a row with Ambassador Pat Hurley, as did most of the China State Department people, so he can't be too bad."²² Gunther Stein in the Christian Science Monitor on September 22, branded American policy as ill-defined since the passing of Roosevelt and felt that its aims were still not quite clear.²³ Mark Gayne, whom Hurley later labeled a Communist, noted the shift in the State Department which saw the liberal China crowd, led by John Carter Vincent, moving into positions of authority previously occupied by the more conservative old Japan hands. The now more powerful liberals in the State Department were strongly opposed to Hurley and Hurley was equally opposed to them, Gayne reported.²⁴ In addition, rumors continued to circulate concerning Hurley's impending resignation and his dissatisfaction with personnel

²¹Hurley to Truman and Byrnes (unsent), September 16, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²²New York Times, September 5, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²³Christian Science Monitor, September 27, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁴Chicago Sun, September 23, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

in the Embassy and the State Department's Division of Chinese Affairs.²⁵

Although Hurley had all the reasons he needed to resign he was determined to make one final try at bringing together the Communists and the Kuomintang. On September 18, he met with General Chou En-lai. Chou presented Hurley with a draft communiqué to be issued as a declaration by the two parties. The statement contained six major points, each with several subdivisions.²⁶ Hurley set about to simplify this document and by the next morning, the day of his departure from Chungking, he had a simple nine point declaration which he hoped could be agreed upon.

Hurley's declaration called for Communist-Kuomintang collaboration to prevent civil strife, establish democracy, and promote reconstruction and prosperity under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. Both parties should agree to participate in a political council with proportional representation for all political factions. Both parties should agree to uphold the principles of Sun Yat-sen and promote the establishment of a bill of rights. Hurley's document also called for prosecution and punishment of all traitors and war criminals, and the release of political prisoners. The eighth point of the declaration recommended the amalgamation of the Communist army

²⁵Washington Post, September 19, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁶Draft Declaration given to Ambassador Hurley by Chou En-lai on September 18, 1945, September 18, 1945; Hurley Papers.

with that of the Nationalists on an unspecified ratio. Finally, the Communist party, it was hoped, would agree that the Kuomintang would remain in control of the government until the transition from the period of one-party tutelage to a democratic government had been completed.²⁷

Although the declaration predicted a spirit of cooperation would blossom in China, Mao Tse-tung seemed less sure. Chairman Mao knew that Hurley planned to leave Chungking on September 19, and questioned the wisdom of remaining in the Kuomintang capital without Hurley's protection. Hurley wrote a letter to calm Mao's fears and said that if the Chairman desired transportation back to Yen-an he would arrange it; however, he told Mao that he had discussed the matter with Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang had personally guaranteed Mao's safety. At the time of the discussion the Generalissimo had expressed his hope that Mao would remain in Chungking until the talks ended. Hurley also believed that it would be helpful if Mao were to remain in Chungking long enough to work out a satisfactory understanding.²⁸

Hurley was ready to leave Chungking but not before his tenure in China was marred by one final incident. The very day he departed, the United States Information Agency issued a bulletin in Chungking which reported that Hurley would re-

²⁷Hurley's proposal for Declaration Issued by the Conference of the Representatives of the National Government and the Chinese Communist Party at Chungking, September 19, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁸Hurley to Mao, September 19, 1945; Hurley Papers.

sign when he returned to the United States. It also alluded to his various conflicts with the Division of Chinese Affairs of the State Department.²⁹ This news release was all Hurley needed to confirm his belief that his efforts were being purposely sabotaged in China.

Once again Hurley went to Washington for a showdown. From Hurley's point of view, America's lofty aims in China were being subverted, and in their place America was now supporting a pro-British imperialist policy in the Far East. As if this was not enough, Hurley's old adversaries, Acheson, Service, and members of the State Department's Chinese Affairs Division, were once again arrayed against him. Finally, rumors in the United States and now in China that Hurley would step down as Ambassador, made it seem that Truman would welcome his actual resignation. Hurley had felt he had done as much as he could with the proposed agreement which he drafted and gave to Chou before he boarded the plane taking him to the United States. He was tired of the job in China and was ready to return to private life.

²⁹Everett F. Drumright to Hurley with Enclosure, September 27, 1945; Hurley Papers.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FINAL BOW

On September 19, 1945, the date of Hurley's departure from Chungking, three major New York newspapers reported that the central government and the Communists were drafting an agreement to forestall the civil war and that Hurley would bring it to President Truman when he returned home to offer his resignation. They added that Hurley had helped draft the pact which was described as "an agreement to agree." The articles praised Hurley, stating that if an agreement were reached, it would be regarded by Hurley as a vindication of the way he had implemented America's long-standing policy of supporting Chiang Kai-shek's government.¹

The Ambassador arrived in the American capital on September 26, and almost immediately became involved in a long round of conferences.² He did not see the Secretary of State, however, until October 9. In the interim, several matters occupied his attention. One of Hurley's first important

¹New York Herald Tribune, September 19, 1945; New York Times, September 19, 1945; New York Daily News, September 19, 1945; Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²Hurley Office Diary, 1945, September 26, 1945; Hurley Papers.

meetings was with Secretary of Navy James Forrestal on September 28. According to Forrestal, Hurley repeated the idea that the Chinese Communists were not Communists at all. He said Russia desired to see a strong government in China and recognized that Chiang Kai-shek would be most nearly able to provide such a government. Hurley believed the Russians did not desire either revolution or anarchy in China because their own problems in Asia were far too complex and difficult to desire such a condition. During the meeting Hurley touched on the professional staff of the State Department and the American correspondents in China, both of whom he said had been a definite hindrance to him. Besides, they were communistically inclined.³

In the first weeks after Hurley's return from China, all the news coming from Chungking was good. On October 2, a cable arrived from the Chinese capital which indicated compromises were being made by both sides. The Communists had agreed to form their military forces into twenty divisions in the proposed new National army. These divisions were to be commanded by Communists. This was indeed significant, for they had originally demanded more than forty divisions while the Kuomintang refused to consider more than twelve. A military commission with Kuomintang and Communist representatives, it was said, would organize the Communist forces into these twenty divisions. Both sides had agreed to the formation of a political council of thirty-seven members composed of nine

³Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, 98-99.

Kuomintang members, nine Communist members, nine members from other parties, and nine highly respected independents from non-political backgrounds, with Chiang Kai-shek as the chairman. The council would consider, among other things, the possibility of delaying the convening on November 12, of the People's Congress, a major bone of contention between the Kuomintang and the Communists. There was, however, at least one major source of disagreement. The Communists demanded an absolute veto over all proposals adopted by the council.⁴

Hurley continued to enjoy a relatively good press in the United States during early October. His name frequently appeared in society columns because of the important position occupied in Washington society by Mrs. Hurley. More laudatory, however, was an article which appeared in the New York World Telegram on October 12, the day before Hurley was to meet with President Truman. It was written by Parker LaMoore, who had written a political biography of Hurley in 1932, and who had gone to China in 1945 to act as one of Hurley's special press aides. LaMoore's article made it appear that Hurley had single-handedly united China in the face of a Communist-inspired State Department plot to subvert his activities.⁵ This was an incongruous charge in light of Hurley's belief that the Chinese Communists were not really Communists and that the Russians were supporting American policy in China.

⁴Walter Robertson to Byrnes, October 2, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁵New York World Telegram, October 12, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

On October 13, Hurley met with President Truman. In that meeting, Hurley offered to step down as Ambassador to China. He told the President that he was tired and that his health would not permit him to return to the Far East; but much to Hurley's surprise, the President refused to accept his resignation. Instead, Truman advised Hurley to have a check-up at Walter Reed Hospital, take a few weeks rest in New Mexico, after which they would discuss the matter again.⁶ Hurley was greatly surprised by the President's request. He had fully expected to walk out of the White House free of the responsibility which he had accepted more than a year before when Roosevelt picked him to go to China.

The next day, October 14, Secretary of State Byrnes announced that Hurley would return to China.⁷ When the Secretary of State announced Hurley's decision to return to China, Hurley's popularity could hardly have been higher. The Communists and the Kuomintang had announced agreement on Hurley's September 19 proposed declaration, and the American press hailed Hurley's role in making agreement possible. He also was receiving most of the credit for the Sino-Soviet treaty. Indeed, Hurley's part in reaching what were believed to be milestones on the road to peace in the Far East were charac-

⁶Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports!, 358-359. MacArthur Hearings, Part 4, 2936.

⁷New York Herald Tribune, October 14, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

terized as first rate pieces of successful diplomacy.⁸

Encouraging reports from Chungking continued to pour in. The Kuomintang government and the Communists expressed optimism concerning the outcome of negotiations publicly and privately. Both Chiang and the Communists acted enthusiastic about Hurley's return to China, and, amazingly enough, even the Embassy seemed to be looking forward to his arrival in the Chinese capital. In fact, almost everyone but Hurley's arch-enemies and Hurley himself appeared anxious for the Ambassador to return to China.⁹ Hurley was satisfied with what he had seemed to accomplish, but he heartily disliked going back to China. He met with Truman briefly on October 19, and left for New Mexico on October 22, to rest and think about Far Eastern problems.¹⁰

Hurley had only begun to settle down and soak up the New Mexico sun when he learned of events in China which greatly concerned him. The disturbing news was that clashes had occurred between the Communist and Nationalist troops. But Hurley wrote Everett F. Drumright, the new Chief of the Division of Chinese Affairs in Washington, that he was still convinced civil war could be avoided. Hurley cautioned,

⁸Meekesport, Pa., News, October 13, 1945; Henry R. Lieberman, "Chiang Talks of His Hopes for China," New York Times, October 14, 1945; Baltimore Sun, October 13, 1945; Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁹Robertson to Byrnes, October 15, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁰Hurley Office Diary, 1945, October 22, 1945; Hurley Papers.

however, that to avoid such a conflict, the government of the Republic of China would have to act in a decisive, realistic, and generous fashion.¹¹

The reports of civil war were soon officially confirmed. On November 1, 1945, Hurley received four documents from Drumright which described the rapidly deteriorating situation in China.¹² The first paper reported a press conference held by General Wedemeyer in Washington, October 22, in which he outlined the scope of American activities in China since the surrender. The United States commitment loomed unusually large in light of the American desire to remain neutral in the internal conflict which was soon to engulf China.¹³ The second document was a news release from the Chinese Minister of Information on October 27, which reported rather optimistically on the negotiations between the Kuomintang and the Communists then in progress.¹⁴

But this offered little encouragement in light of further information. A secret telegram dated October 31, from the American Embassy in Chungking reported that the statement of October 27 did not represent the true situation in China and had been made for consumption abroad. This document

¹¹Hurley to Drumright, October 28, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹²Drumright to Hurley, November 1, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹³Statement by Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer, Commanding General, China Theater of Operations, at News Conference, October 22, 1945, Washington, D. C., October 22, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁴Robertson to Byrnes, October 29, 1945; Hurley Papers.

claimed that a Communist liason man, Wang Ping-nan, had called at the American Embassy and charged that the central government was cooperating with the Japanese puppets. He intimated that elements of the Red Eighth Route Army had linked up with Russian forces in Manchuria. The Communists, this report said, believed that there might be a continuation of the conversations, but they had no hope that anything constructive might be accomplished from them.¹⁵

Another equally foreboding telegram came from Chungking on that same date, October 31, 1945. The second message dealt with the activities of the Russians in Manchuria and the breakdown of negotiations with the Communists which corresponded to the increased military conflict. The telegram was based on information provided by Dr. Wang Shih-chieh, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs for the National government. Dr. Wang charged that the Russians had refused to cooperate with the Nationalist government. Rather than holding towns and cities until the Nationalists could occupy them, they instead had withdrawn and the vacant areas were falling to the Communists. The Foreign Minister saw a direct relationship between the Communist truculence in Chungking and the attitude shown by the Russians. Since September 24, he said, the Communists had been cutting rail lines over which Kuomintang troops hoped to travel northward and repeatedly attacked troops of the

¹⁵Paraphrase of secret telegram dated October 31, 1945, from American Embassy in Chungking (re Kuomintang-Communist Negotiations); Hurley Papers.

Kuomintang government without provocation.¹⁶ The partial victory that Hurley thought he had won on the question of unification in China was becoming less significant every day.

The nation puzzled over Hurley's curious inactivity. With the situation in China becoming critical, why was Hurley still vacationing in Santa Fe? On November 3, the Associated Press queried Hurley about his return to China. The wire service was particularly interested in the exact date of Hurley's planned departure, calling to the Ambassador's attention the critical situation which existed in China.¹⁷ Hurley answered that he had not yet decided whether or not he would go back to Chungking. Furthermore, he would not make a final decision until after he had made a trip to Washington.¹⁸ The next day, November 4, a columnist in the New York Journal American reported that Hurley would definitely not return to China, but rather would run for the United States Senate in New Mexico.¹⁹

Some time after November 10, Hurley read a report which finally indicated that unification was impossible. On that date a secret message left Chungking which contained an account of the five point Kuomintang proposal and a four point

¹⁶Paraphrase of top secret telegram dated October 31, 1945, from Chungking (re Russia in Manchuria); Hurley Papers.

¹⁷Tank Chief of New York Bureau (Associated Press) to Hurley, November 3, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁸New York Times, November 3, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

¹⁹"Cholly Knickerbocker Observes," New York Journal American, November 4, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

counter-proposal made by the Communists. Both sides had accompanied their terms with the usual charges and counter-charges which had ruined previous talks.²⁰ Demands and accusations of the same type had emerged with the breakdown of negotiations in November, 1944, and February, 1945.

With unification seemingly out of the question, Hurley's return to China became even more unlikely. General Hurley had gone to Santa Fe reluctant to comply with President Truman's request that he continue as Ambassador to China. He felt, however, that he could not refuse the direct request of an American President. Besides, during his first ten days in Santa Fe-, things seemed to be improving in China. The agreement in Chungking between the Communists and the Kuomintang which offered hope of ultimate unification, what he believed to be the reduced dangers of civil war, and the V.I.P. treatment he was receiving from State Department officials made him feel that perhaps he should retain his Ambassadorial post.

But suddenly conditions changed. Near the end of October civil war in China broke into the open and criticism of Hurley in the United States became strong.²¹ An editorial in the New York Herald Tribune on November 2, 1945, said Hurley had committed the United States to all-out support of the

²⁰Paraphrase of Secret Telegram sent to State Department, November 10, 1945, by Embassy at Chungking; Hurley Papers.

²¹"Remarks of Honorable Albert J. Engle, November 5, 1945," U. S., Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 1945, Vol. XCI, Part 13, A4734.

Kuomintang regime, despite America's refusal in many areas of the world to interfere politically in internal disputes, let alone with military power. The editorial charged that by such actions, the United States made itself a virtual ally of the Kuomintang in the civil war with the Chinese Communists. The most outrageous aspect of the situation, the editor said, was that the State Department officials knew very little of what was going on in China, primarily because of Hurley's refusal to forward to Washington any reports by subordinates which contained criticism of the Kuomintang.²² Many newspapers joined in the chorus. One charged that Hurley had been mesmerized since his stay in China by the fact that the Chungking government was the only government in China to which the United States had extended legal recognition.²³ It was commonly accepted that Hurley's return to China would be construed as a victory for Chiang Kai-shek, and if Hurley were removed, the Communists' hopes would likely rise sharply.²⁴ This criticism convinced Hurley that his only course was to resign as Ambassador. He would not go quietly, however. He would use his resignation to build up his own image and lay the blame on others for the defeat of unification and peace in China.

Hurley returned to Washington November 15, and spent

²²New York Herald Tribune, October 30, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²³Buffalo, New York, Evening News, November 3, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁴Jay G. Hayden, Detroit News, November 7, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

much of the next week preparing his resignation. He began drafting it on Tuesday, November 20, spending most of the day editing and rewriting the document that he planned to submit to Secretary Byrnes. Part of Hurley's week was occupied with Thanksgiving festivities so he was forced to work over the weekend. Much of the time Hurley got help from Lacey Reynolds and Parker LaMoore, the two men who had acted as his press officers in Chungking and who had been political friends for many years. He completed the resignation and signed it on Sunday, November 25.

While Hurley was writing his resignation, China occupied the center stage in discussions at the White House.²⁵ On November 20, the heads of the State, War, and Naval Departments met to discuss the question of America's future policy in China and Manchuria, for Wedemeyer, who had recently returned to Chungking, had asked for instructions regarding the critical situation there. A meeting of these department heads resulted in a cable asking General Wedemeyer whether the Kuomintang troops had the capability of disarming the Japanese in Manchuria and returning them to Japan. The cable sent to Wedemeyer made it clear that the State Department wanted to help the Nationalists get the Japanese out of China, but did not wish to support the Chiang government directly against the Communists.²⁶

²⁵Hurley Office Diary, 1945, November 15-November 25, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²⁶Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, 108-109.

Wedemeyer's answer on November 23 clarified the issue, but left it unsolved. The General was reluctant to make any positive recommendations. He emphasized that it would be impossible to support Chiang and at the same time stay clear of the Generalissimo's war with the Chinese Communists. The General's recommendations were couched in either-or terms. America could withdraw all the troops at once from China or could announce its intention to continue supporting the Chiang regime with military and economic aid. Wedemeyer thought the question should be decided by the State Department.²⁷

On November 26, the War and Naval Departments, acting on Wedemeyer's telegram, turned the question back to the State Department. In a memorandum, Forrestal and Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson recognized the impossibility of upholding Chiang against the Japanese without supporting him also against the Chinese Communists. But they firmly elected to accept the risks involved in giving all-out support to Chiang.

Patterson believed that reports of Communist military strength were greatly exaggerated, and thought that Chiang offered the best chances of securing a unified China that would be friendly to the United States. This belief could well have been based on Forrestal's conversations with Hurley on September 28, 1945.²⁸ They recommended retaining more than 50,000 American Marines in North China and proposed to lend every

²⁷Ibid., 110-111. Wedemeyer to War Department, November 20, 1945, Appendix IV, Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports!

²⁸Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, 98-99.

aid to Chiang in getting the Japanese repatriated.²⁹

This was the state of the China tangle on Monday, November 26, when General Hurley kept a nine fifteen appointment at the State Department with Secretary Byrnes. At that meeting he told the Secretary of State the reasons behind his decision to resign. He felt he was not getting the support that he deserved from the Administration. He had seen articles in the Daily Worker which indicated to him that his secret reports to the State Department were being made available to the Communists. He said that he had heard through Dr. Wang Shih-chieh that Byrnes himself had said that, since the war was over, the Administration was going to give Hurley's post to a deserving Democrat. He reported a discussion he had with the Chinese representative to the United Nations, who warned him that if he returned to China the Administration would find some pretext for public discharge. Furthermore, Service and Acheson were still in the positions they had occupied when Hurley left for Santa Fe. Byrnes told Hurley that he had the full support of the State Department and the President, and that he would check into Hurley's charges while the Ambassador reconsidered his decision. Hurley left his resignation but agreed to discuss the matter again later in the day.³⁰

In the afternoon meeting, Byrnes made every effort to

²⁹Ibid., 111-112.

³⁰MacArthur Hearings, Part 4, 2936-2937. Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xiv, 23-24; Washington, D. C., Times Herald, November 28, 1945; Washington Star, November 28, 1945; Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

convince Hurley that he should continue on as Ambassador. Several reasons might have prompted Byrnes's desire to get Hurley back to China. Hurley had only recently promised that it would be quite easy to bring the Communists and the Nationalists together in peace and harmony, and pressure from the Congress for rapid demobilization made a heavy United States military commitment in China impossible. The easiest solution would be to send Hurley back to China to solve the problem through diplomacy. With persuasive arguments, Byrnes convinced Hurley that he would have the full support of the Administration, and finally Hurley agreed to fly to China after he addressed the National Press Club on November 28.³¹ Byrnes informed the President that Hurley would return and a plane was readied to take him back to China.³² The next day, however, the Secretary of State's plans met disaster.

On the morning of November 27, Hurley awoke, fully expecting that he would return to China the next day. He did not want to go back to China, and he had fully intended to resign when he left the Chinese capital. But he found it difficult to say no to the requests of President Truman and Secretary Byrnes. He talked to Secretary Forrestal on the telephone that morning and perhaps the two men discussed the worsening situation in China, for Forrestal had just completed

³¹Washington, D. C., Times Herald, November 28, 1945; Washington Star, November 28, 1945; Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

³²MacArthur Hearings, Part 4, 2937.

drafting a memorandum to the State Department which presented the Navy and War Departments' views on the subject. Hurley arrived in his office about ten forty-five and conferred with Byrnes again by telephone, discussing his imminent flight to the Far East. At that time, Hurley still apparently expected to be back in China before the week was out.

After speaking with the Secretary of State, Hurley turned his attention to the Congressional Record.³³ He must have been casually thumbing through the accumulated verbage which occurs in Congress every day when he ran across a speech made by Congressman Hugh Delacy of Washington on November 26. In the speech, Delacy charged that American military supplies in China were being used to suppress the aspirations of millions for a new democracy which they had begun to build for themselves. The Congressman blamed Hurley for the resignation of Clarence L. Gauss, the former Ambassador, and said Hurley's step by step reversal of the Roosevelt-Gauss policies in China made civil war unavoidable. Finally, he charged that Hurley and Wedemeyer had committed the United States to armed intervention in China.³⁴

Hurley saw in the speech what he believed to be additional confirmation that his reports to the State Department were being leaked to critics. Later, when Delacy was ques-

³³Hurley Office Diary, 1945, November 27, 1945; Hurley Papers. Washington Star, November 28, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

³⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 1945, XCI, Part 8, 10993-10995.

tioned about the source of his information, the Congressman said he had based his charges on cables sent from China by correspondents of the Associated Press, the United Press, and the New York Times, and that he had no access to any of Hurley's reports.³⁵ In fact, the information in Delacy's speech could easily have been derived from such sources. But Hurley did not want to go back to China and now he seemed to have a good excuse to resign. It appeared that the support Byrnes had promised him would not be forthcoming. Hurley called various press headquarters at about noon and said that he would release a statement at twelve thirty. In half an hour, reporters assembled at Hurley's office and he distributed a press release which had been prepared in advance for his expected resignation of November 26.³⁶

The resignation and the accompanying press release were dramatic statements of Hurley's dissatisfaction with the course of events in China and the United States. They represented a confused jumble of charges against State Department personnel, interspersed with patriotic fluff and padding. He charged that the United States supplies and prestige were being used to undermine democracy and bolster imperialism and communism. Hurley said that the American policy in China did not have the support of the career men in the State Department who consistently sided with the Chinese Communist party and the

³⁵Washington Star, November 28, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

³⁶Ibid.

imperialist bloc of nations in an effort to keep China divided.

Despite these handicaps, Hurley claimed that he had made progress toward unification and succeeded in preventing civil war between the rival factions. When he requested that the men subverting his policy be removed, they were returned to Washington and placed in positions where he considered they had supervisory authority over him. He said that the United States was in danger of being sucked into an imperialist power bloc which was forming against Communist imperialism.³⁷

Much of Washington was taken by surprise. Secretary Byrnes learned of Hurley's petulant resignation as he was about to leave the State Department for a cabinet luncheon with President Truman.³⁸ The dramatic event was the single topic of discussion at the cabinet luncheon that afternoon. Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson suggested that George C. Marshall be appointed to the vacant post. The selection of Marshall would serve two functions. First, the ex-Chief of Staff was certainly one of the most capable men in government service. If anyone could possibly bring order out of the chaos in China, it would be George C. Marshall. Secondly, the quick appointment of Marshall would steal much of the thunder from Hurley's sensational charges.³⁹

³⁷Hurley to Truman, November 26, 1945; Hurley Press Release, November 26, 1945; Hurley Papers.

³⁸Washington Star, November 28, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

³⁹Ibid. Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, 113.

But Hurley was not easily stilled, and the next day he leveled another blast at official Washington. If anything, Hurley's address to the National Press Club, November 28, 1945, further confused the issue. He said that the men of the diplomatic service in China either did not know American policy or they deliberately opposed it. Furthermore, he repeated that all of the diplomats whom he had removed from China were posted to Washington where they were placed in "supervisory" capacities over him. In spite of their opposition, Hurley claimed, he had succeeded in initiating discussions between the Communist party and the National government, he had brought Mao Tse-tung and Chiang Kai-shek together, and, finally, he had prevented a civil war among the political factions in China. Although he had secured approval of American policy from Churchill and Stalin, the imperialist civil servants of Britain in Asia had subverted Churchill's aims just as American career service officers had blocked Hurley's efforts.⁴⁰

As could be expected, the immediate reactions to Hurley's speech varied. At first both Republicans and Democrats in Congress shied away from commenting on Hurley's statement, ascribing their caution to a certain confusion they saw in the document. Arthur Krock observed in the New York Times that Hurley was known as an impulsive man and, however unjust the opinion was, he was not highly rated for sound judgment

⁴⁰"Excerpts From an Address by Patrick Hurley before the National Press Club at Washington, November 28, 1945," November 28, 1945; Hurley Papers.

or long deliberation before reaching conclusions.⁴¹ The New York Post said that Hurley had been a barrier to the formation of any genuine American policy, branded his resignation confused and inconsistent, and added that it illuminated the reasons for his failure. The Post continued that Hurley's statement made sense only if it was an open bid for the leadership of the varied anti-Russian and Nationalistic elements in the country. This anti-Hurley editorial went on to say that it was doubtful that Hurley ever understood or cared what policies were being set in Washington.⁴² On the other hand, some newspapers viewed Hurley's statement as a courageous protest against bungling in China which might stand out as the single most important patriotic service of the postwar era.⁴³

Almost every newspaper commentator, however, demanded the investigation of Hurley's charges. In no place was this cry louder than in the halls of Congress. Members of Congress were as confused as everyone else about American China policy. They wanted to know why the United States had soldiers in China when the war with Japan was over. They wanted to know whether the Russians were withdrawing according to their treaty arrangements. They wanted to know why the United States was continuing to support the Nationalist government. They wanted

⁴¹Arthur Krock, New York Times, November 28, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁴²New York Post, November 28, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁴³Newark, New Jersey, Star-Ledger, November 28, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

to know what stake the average American had in the Chinese civil war. They wanted to know why the United States was using force to meddle in the internal affairs of another nation. They wanted to know who the men were that Hurley had charged with subverting American policy. Finally, they wanted to give the State Department a chance to answer Hurley's charges.⁴⁴

Administration leaders, however, desired to avoid a full scale investigation of Hurley's charges. At worst, the Hurley resignation was a can of worms. Once the investigation began, anything might be uncovered. At best, Hurley's charges would be discredited. But the investigations could provide an issue for the coming 1946 elections. Trying to suppress the demands for investigation, Senator Tom Connally, Chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, ridiculed General Hurley's fulminations. Connally said he was trying to combat in the Senate what he called the mania for special investigation committees.⁴⁵ Hurley opposed the idea of any secret hearings but agreed to appear at any public hearing that was afforded him by the Congress.⁴⁶ Connally alone could not stifle demands for investigation and hearings were

⁴⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 1945, Vol. XCI, Part 14, House Resolution 443; Part 9, 11236; Part 8, 11122.

⁴⁵Paul W. Ward, The Baltimore Sun, November 29, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁴⁶Felix Belair, Jr., New York Times, December 1, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

scheduled by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to air Hurley's charges.

When the hearings opened on December 5, Hurley was the first witness. As he prepared to deliver his testimony, tension rose. Then, bright lights shone and cameras whirred as the impressive soldier-diplomat boomed out his indictment against the State Department. Hurley was the very model of a distinguished statesman with silver-grey hair and dressed impeccably in a tailored suit. He spoke out strongly with the voice of a trained orator, tinged with a dialect which found its roots in the red clay hills of Oklahoma. But as Hurley rambled on it became clear that behind this magnificent facade was a simple man who had met defeat, a simple man who was unable to bear the burden of that defeat himself or to conceive that conditions in China might have been outside American control. Instead, he lashed out in every direction, blaming the Communists for this, the English for that, the career diplomats for something else. Everyone had failed but Hurley and their failures, not his, ended with the defeat of the American aim of unification in China. The more Hurley spoke, the more implausible his charges became.

Finally, Hurley finished and the State Department presented its case. In contrast to Hurley's bombastic, confused testimony, the State Department officials presented a coldly logical statement of the China policy Byrnes had outlined in a letter to Congressman Jack Z. Anderson of California on

November 30.⁴⁷ In that letter the Secretary of State said that the United States favored the establishment of a strong, united, democratic China which would contribute to peace and stability in the Far East. Although the United States thought it essential that China solve its internal problems that task would have to be carried out largely through China's own efforts. Secretary Byrnes emphasized that the United States military commitment in China was for the sole purpose of aiding China accomplish the surrender of Japanese forces.

By December 8, it had become obvious that the only people in the State Department who knew what American policy was were the career men, among them George Acheson and John Service. It was apparent that they had been pressing steadily for just the type of policy which Byrnes identified in his testimony and in his letter to Congressman Anderson as that of the United States.⁴⁸ By December 9, it was clear that Hurley did not have the facts to back up his charges.⁴⁹

On December 11, the Saint Louis Post-Dispatch commented that "the Hurley show is about to close after a brief run which has been distinguished for its very bad script, consisting chiefly of lofty speeches interspersed with wild cries of wolf." The Post-Dispatch added that the Hurley drama might

⁴⁷U. S., Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 1945, XCI, Part 13, A5269-A5270.

⁴⁸New York Post, December 8, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁴⁹Jack Tait, New York Herald Tribune, December 10, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

have been mildly amusing were it not for the deeper implications. It was incongruous, the newspaper continued, that an American Ambassador charged with important and delicate missions had shown himself given to arbitrary decisions, indictment without proof of trial of associates, and a despotic manner dangerously out of key with America's devotion to a democratic way of life.⁵⁰

On December 12, the Washington, D. C., News announced the Senate Foreign Relations Committee planned a quiet, slow death for Hurley's charges.⁵¹ Nevertheless, the controversy which Hurley's resignation had caused would live on for several more years. Indeed, Hurley's name and the charges he had made in his resignation were to be revived whenever Communists in government or the Communist victory in China were discussed, and Hurley himself was frequently called upon to testify before Congressional committees on these matters.

Although Hurley's active role in China ended with his resignation, the problems which the United States faced there remained to be solved. Before the end of December, George C. Marshall, the new American Ambassador to China, was on his way to the Far East. The tremendous stature and ability of Marshall were brought to bear on the problems there but, unlike Hurley, he quickly realized that there was little which

⁵⁰ Saint Louis Post-Dispatch, December 11, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

⁵¹ Washington, D. C., News, December 12, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

could be done to save the situation. He saw that no reasonable amount of American military aid could save the Chiang government because Chiang and his army had lost the support of the people of China.⁵²

⁵²MacArthur Hearings, Part 1, 662.

CHAPTER XV

THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

The Hurley story did not end with the Connally hearings in December, 1945. Hurley thought that his sensational resignation would bring him the support and gratitude of the American people. Instead his departure from office and the hearings which followed did just the opposite. The charges which he made against the professional staff of the State Department in his resignation were discredited in the Connally hearings.¹ The ex-Ambassador's testimony not only failed to substantiate the accusation that pro-Communists were subverting American foreign policy, but, moreover, his confused statements and backward logic exposed him to be a bumbling, amateur diplomat who should never have been assigned to such a critical post in the first place.²

After the close of the hearings, Hurley returned to New Mexico where he had established a home shortly before the war. He ran for the United States Senate in 1946, seeking a forum

¹Marquis W. Childs, "The State of the Nation," New York Post, December 6, 1945, Hurley Clipping Book, 1945; Hurley Papers.

²"Our Choice in China," New Republic, CXIII (December 10, 1945).

in which he could alert the nation to the dangers he thought were before it.³ Hurley ran against the Democratic incumbent, Senator Dennis Chavez, but devoted most of his time in the campaign to restating the charges he had made at the time of his resignation. These issues were of little interest to the voters of New Mexico, and Chavez was returned to the United States Senate in spite of the general Republican trend in the 1946 elections.⁴ Hurley ran for Senator again in 1948 against Clinton P. Anderson, the former Secretary of Agriculture, and this time was defeated by an even greater margin.⁵

Hurley's protests that American foreign policy had been subverted by the pro-Communists in the State Department and his hints that American interests had been neglected at Yalta won him the ear of several dissident groups in the United States. The China lobby adopted Hurley as a hero because of his support of Chiang Kai-shek. Super-patriots, who believed American power was so great that it could change history anywhere in the world with a mere statement of policy, were quick to find a champion in Hurley. The professional Communist-fighters delighted in his intemperate statements about Communist subversion in the State Department. In much the same fashion, the Roosevelt haters accepted Hurley's charges about the Yalta conference at face value.⁶ Hurley's stories

³Walter M. Harrison, Me and My Big Mouth (Oklahoma City: Britton Printing Company, 1954), 312-314.

⁴Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 453. ⁵Ibid., 454.

⁶For Example see Hurley's postwar correspondence with

of Communist infiltration, of plots, and of secret agreements appealed strongly to all these groups for the common denominator among them was a conspiratorial mind.

United by the theme of conspiracy which ran through Hurley's charges, the factions which had united around Hurley encouraged him to make statements even less considered than those in his resignation.⁷ Minor events during his tenure in China took on new meanings as they became parts of a great conspiracy which only Hurley and his followers were able to fathom. A fire in the American Embassy in Chungking became part of a Communist plot to destroy proof of Communist subversion in the Embassy files.⁸ When Hurley's Cadillac limosine broke down, it was again attributed to sabotage, rather than to an inept Chinese mechanic.⁹ As Hurley developed the conspiratorial theme, he painted his role in the struggle against the conspiracy he had invented in terms larger than life.¹⁰ Still, he waited for the opportunity to plead his case once again before the nation.

While Hurley was in New Mexico losing elections and

Fulton Lewis, Jr., Alfred L. Kohlberg, George Van Horn Mosely, Henry Regnery, George Sokolsky, Walter Judd and Herbert Hoover.

⁷For Example see Hurley to Henry R. Luce, August 23, 1949; Hurley to Orlando Ward, January 11, 1952; and Hurley Press Release, June 2, 1950; Hurley Papers.

⁸Hurley Press Release, June 2, 1950; Hurley Papers.

⁹Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xii, 8; Hurley Papers.

¹⁰This is a continuing theme throughout Draft of Hurley Memoirs; Hurley Papers.

making irresponsible statements regarding his Ambassadorship in China, the lasting peace for which World War II had been fought was breaking down. Even before the war was over, the Soviet Union began to display a new hostile attitude toward the United States.¹¹ By the summer of 1949, the United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a world power struggle. The conflict with the Soviet Union was called the Cold War, and America had developed new weapons to fight in it.¹² The great crusades of World War I and World War II had failed to win a lasting peace and therefore war was rejected as a means of solving the ideological conflict with the Soviet Union. Instead, the United States had adopted the policy of containment developed by George F. Kennan, the Chief of the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department.¹³ Containment seemed to work well, for although the American people were not winning the Cold War, they at least were not losing.¹⁴

Halfway through 1949 events suddenly began to take place which made it look as though the containment policy had failed and the Communists were winning the struggle for world supremacy. On August 5, 1949, the State Department issued the White Paper which officially announced that China had

¹¹Truman, Memoirs, I, 85.

¹²Eric F. Goldman, The Crucial Decade and After: America, 1945-1960 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), 62-90.

¹³The most concise statement of the containment policy is in George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," Foreign Affairs, XXV (July, 1947), 566-582.

¹⁴Goldman, The Crucial Decade and After, 96-97.

fallen to the Communist armies.¹⁵ On September 23, 1949, the White House released the news that the Soviet Union had exploded an atomic bomb.¹⁶ Finally, in December and January, it was charged that Alger Hiss, a State Department official, had been a member of the Communist party and had passed classified State Department documents to Whitaker Chambers, a confessed Communist.¹⁷ Some leaders of the Republican party such as Senator Robert Taft of Ohio expressed concern over these events and began to give some of the more radical elements within the party a chance to express their views.¹⁸

On February 9, 1950, an obscure Wisconsin Senator, Joseph R. McCarthy, delivered a speech before the Women's Republican Club in Wheeling, West Virginia, on the subject of Communism in the State Department. McCarthy made wild, unsubstantiated charges that 205 Communists held positions in the State Department, but a population frightened by the unexpected advances made by the Communists around the world were ready to believe McCarthy's revelations.¹⁹ When the Korean War broke out in June of 1950, many people assumed that here was proof of the Wisconsin Senator's tales of subversion in high places.²⁰ As McCarthy's power rose, so did the power of

¹⁵New York Times, August 6, 1949, 2.

¹⁶New York Times, September 24, 1949, 1.

¹⁷Goldman, The Crucial Decade and After, 101-111.

¹⁸Ibid., 126-127.

¹⁹New York Times, February 12, 1950, 5.

²⁰Goldman, The Crucial Decade and After, 212.

the dissident elements which had surrounded Hurley in the years after the war.

Hurley was brought to Washington to restate the accusations he had made in 1946.²¹ The dissidents did not hesitate to use Hurley, for not only did his charges offer something for each one of the discontented, he was a figure of great stature, if not in fact, in appearance. But in the early 1950's, Hurley's testimony made even less sense than it had in 1946.²² Nevertheless, encouraged by the attention he was receiving in Washington and around the nation, he decided again to run for the Senatorial seat in New Mexico in 1952 despite attempts by party leaders in that state to block his nomination.²³ Hurley lost the election and in the next few years the dissidents who had won him new hearings were discredited by the antics of Senator McCarthy. The leaders of the Republican party who had for a brief moment courted these groups, rushed to disassociate themselves and Hurley found himself once again discarded and surrounded only by a band of people who were if anything more alone than he.

An evaluation of Hurley's role in China is difficult because he functioned not as an independent man, but rather as a representative of President Roosevelt. In many ways, Hurley was the perfect instrument for extending presidential

²¹See testimony of Hurley in MacArthur Hearings, Part 4, 2827-2859.

²²Ibid.

²³Lohbeck, Patrick J. Hurley, 460-461.

power into the far corners of the world. Through experience the President had learned that Hurley, once given instructions, would not vary from them. Moreover, Hurley could be counted on not to allow his own ideas to take precedence over those of the President.

When the President sent Hurley to China and later made him Ambassador, he knew full well the kind of man he had selected. Hurley had worked closely with the President since 1941. Moreover, he had been a well-known Washington figure since 1929. Roosevelt realized that Hurley had no special diplomatic training. Furthermore, Hurley's past history had demonstrated him to be a poor team worker and a flamboyant Washington dandy. More important, however, Roosevelt was sure Hurley would follow Presidential policy without question. Because of these factors, Hurley enjoyed the full support of Franklin Roosevelt.

The instructions Hurley had received from Roosevelt in late August, 1944, governed Hurley's actions in China.²⁴ What errors Hurley made there were to a considerable degree reflections of misconceptions held by Roosevelt and the country as a whole. Specifically, Hurley fell too much under the influence of Chiang Kai-shek. The same could be said of Franklin Roosevelt, who was committed to a policy of firm support for Chiang Kai-shek. Moreover, Hurley was confused on the nature of the Chinese Communists and tended to minimize their impor-

²⁴Draft of Hurley Memoirs, xi, 8; Hurley Papers.

tance. The same was true of Franklin Roosevelt. Hurley was overconfident of his ability to succeed in personal diplomacy. Once again, the same was true of Franklin Roosevelt. Finally, because Hurley and Roosevelt tended to place military objectives before political ones, they frequently rejected the counsel of professional diplomats in the State Department.²⁵

Time has proven the State Department experts right in their appraisal of the China situation. They predicted that China would fall under the control of Mao Tse-tung. This did happen, and America was left backing Chiang Kai-shek, a powerless old man entrenched in an island redoubt. They predicted that the Chinese Communists would be driven into the hands of the Russians. This, too, happened and the Chinese Communists had to fight the Korean war in order to free themselves from the Soviet yoke. They predicted that American support for Chiang would leave the United States without influence in a Communist dominated China. This is the situation in which the United States found itself after 1949.

Roosevelt's failure to respect or utilize the information supplied him by the State Department must be considered the primary cause of Hurley's failure in China. Had Roosevelt been more disposed to accept the aid of his State Department advisers, the instructions he gave to Hurley might have been far different. Unfortunately, relations between the Chief

²⁵Donald F. Drummond, "Cordell Hull (1933-1944)," An Uncertain Tradition; American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century, ed. Norman A. Graebner (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961), 201-203.

Executive and the State Department during the war years were unsatisfactory.

Although Roosevelt held the venerable Cordell Hull in high esteem, he found him difficult to work with. Roosevelt gradually came to believe that the State Department machinery was outdated and unsuited to the requirements of wartime diplomacy.²⁶ Indeed, his appointment of Edward R. Stettinius to the post of Secretary of State upon Cordell Hull's resignation was for the express purpose of reorganizing the State Department so that it might become a more efficient instrument for Presidential use.²⁷ Roosevelt's dissatisfaction with the State Department was not unique to him. In fact, many modern American Presidents have been equally disturbed by what appeared to be inefficiency in the State Department.²⁸ Perhaps too frequently the State Department must give unwanted answers to Presidential queries. These unpopular answers have caused the Presidents to turn to special envoys like Hurley who usually provided more pleasing answers.

²⁶Walter Johnson, "Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. (1944-1945)," Graebner, Uncertain Tradition, 210. Julius Pratt, Cordell Hull, Vol. XIII of The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, ed. Robert H. Ferrell (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1964), 532-533, 543-544.

²⁷Walter Johnson, "Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. (1944-1945)," Graebner, Uncertain Tradition, 210. Joseph C. Grew, Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945, ed. Walter Johnson, (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), II, 1383-1385.

²⁸Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), 409-412.

It was perhaps too much to expect Roosevelt and the American people to withdraw their full support from Chiang Kai-shek as the State Department China experts advocated. America had underwritten the Chiang regime in order to maintain the Open Door in China in the face of Japanese aggression. Since then Chiang had become the symbol of China in the minds of most Americans. Roosevelt and the American people would have found it very difficult to withdraw support from Chiang and not believe they had deserted China.

It is not the purpose of this work to predict what would have happened in China had Hurley not been sent there or had Roosevelt had him replaced when the foreign service officers in the Embassy protested against his amateurish methods and inaccurate reporting. Certainly by the time Hurley arrived in China, little could have been done to prevent a Communist takeover there. Perhaps, however, if the course advocated by the State Department officials had been followed, the United States would be faced today with a less hostile Communist China, the Korean War might well have been avoided, and a less dogmatic Marxist government might have come into control in China.

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