

## ***In commemoration of the China's 15-year resistance war against Japan***

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# **COMMUNISTS & THE JAPANESE INVASION OF MANCHURIA**

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## **Historical Context on Manchuria**

Manchuria, i.e., China's northeastern provinces, had been a spot of contention between Russia and Japan since the First Sino-Japanese War (1 August 1894 – 17 April 1895). Japan was forced to relinquish the Liaodong Peninsula, where the future Russian Port Arthur was to be built, in exchange for an increased war indemnity from Manchu China, after Russia, Germany and France joined hands in applying pressure on the Japanese, namely, the Triple Intervention of 23 April 1895. To counter the Japanese threat, Li Hongzhang, Manchu China's foreign minister, struck a deal with the Russians to build the Chinese Eastern Railway, resulting in the subsequent Russian encroachment on China's sovereignty, namely, the extraction of a 25-year lease on the Liaodong Peninsula, which in turn led to a chain effect of various powers grabbing Kiaochow Bay, Kwang-Chou-Wan Bay, and Weihaiwei from China. As George Kennan stated, "at the end of 1897 and the beginning of 1898 there was a real and justifiable fear that China would be partitioned." Only the Japanese declaration of support for the open door policy averted the U.S. secretary of state's decision to join the gang in demanding a port in Fujian Province from China. The ensuing Boxer Rebellion gave the Russians an excuse to invade Manchuria for the suppression of the Boxers, and a cause to stay on in the area and refuse to leave. The powers worked to thwart the growing Russian threat. In 1902 Britain formed a military alliance with Japan. In Japan, the Japanese ultranationalists, such as Miyazaki Toten, et al., actively supported Sun Yat-sen, the Chinese revolutionaries and Manchu China's overseas cadet students who were studying at the Japanese infantry and army colleges and preparatory schools, in a concerted effort to organize resistance to the Russians. With the backing from London bankers and the Wall Street, Jacob Schiff, et al., Japan fought the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–05, drove the Russians out of southern Manchuria, and under mediation of the purportedly neutral Americans, reached a Portsmouth Treaty.

In accordance with the Portsmouth Treaty, both Japan and Russia agreed to evacuate Manchuria and return its sovereignty to China; however, Japan would be allowed to inherit the Liaodong Peninsula lease and the Russian rail system in southern Manchuria, not to mention southern Sakhalin from Russia. In the follow-up negotiation with China, Japanese foreign minister Komura Jutarō inserted a clause in the provisions of the Portsmouth Treaty to the effect that "only Japanese or Chinese could become shareholders in the projected South Manchurian Company", which was an attempt at excluding the rest of powers from the Japanese monopoly on southern Manchuria. The Portsmouth Treaty purportedly gave Japan a lease term of another 28 years, till March 27th, 1933, which sowed the seed for the Second Sino-Japanese War, when Nationalist China, after setting the capital in Nanking in 1927 and militarily uniting China in 1928, endeavored to abolish unequal treaties and extraterritoriality and recover the sovereignty

and the customs, and repeatedly declined the Japanese's request for extension of the lease. While the Treaty of Shimonoseki of 1895 forced Manchu China to recognize the independence of Korea and gave the Japanese the de facto military control of the Korean Peninsula, the Portsmouth Treaty ended the Russian ambition over Korea and paved the way for Japan to annex Korea. In July 1905, Japanese prime minister Katsura Taro, following the precedent set in the 1902 treaty with Britain in regards to the spheres of influence, reached the "Katsura-Taft Agreement" with the United States, which was an exchange of memorandum with the U.S. defense minister William Howard Taft on the matter of recognition of the Japanese interest in of Korea as a Japanese reciprocal acknowledgment of the U.S. interests in the Philippines. Shortly afterward, in November 1905, Japan forced the Korean king into signing a Japan–Korea protectorate treaty, i.e., the Korea Japan Eulsa Agreement of 1905. Korean King Kojong, whose emissary was declined a meeting with Theodore Roosevelt in 1905, had to abdicate the throne to Sunjong under the Japanese pressure over the matter of sending emissary Lee Jun to Hague in an attempt to nullify the Ulsa agreement. On 22 August 1910, Japan effectively annexed Korea via the Japan–Korea Annexation Treaty. During WWI, the Japanese government, under prime minister Kuma Shigenobu, separately imposed the Twenty-One Demands onto the Republic of China and coerced the Republic of China into signing treaties pertaining to Japan's inheritance of Germany's interests in Shandong Peninsula etc. Separately, the United States secretary of state Robert Lansing and Japanese special envoy Ishii Kikujir, in a stab in China's back no less that the Yalta Agreement during WWII, struck the Lansing-Ishii Agreement on 2 November 1917, which was to acknowledge that Japan had "special interests" in China due to its geographic proximity, especially in those areas of China adjacent to Japanese territory.

President Woodrow Wilson's call for the right of nations to self-determination, as iterated in the fourteen points, gave impetus to both the Chinese and the Koreans in the struggle against the Japanese. While there erupted the March First Movement in 1919 in Korea, which incurred a bloody crackdown in the hands of the Japanese, there was the May Fourth Student Movement in China against the Paris Peace Conference in regards to Japan's inheriting the German lease of Qingdao and the railway on the Shandong Peninsula. Disappointed over the failure of Wilson's moral leadership, a large number of the Chinese and the Koreans threw themselves into the communist movement, and blind followed the path of the Bolshevik call for the national self-determination. Inside of the Soviet Union, Chinese like Ren Fuchen, and Koreans like Yi Dong Whi and Hong Bom Do, fought on the side of the Soviet Red Army as military leaders of respective ethnic legions. In 1920, Yang Jingzai, one such Chinese expatriate, accompanied Gregory Voitinsky on a visit to China in search of high caliber Chinese communism activists and subsequently helped to launch the Communist Party of China (CCP). Before that, from 1918 onward, batches of Soviet agents were sent to Chinese cities for liaison with anarchists in propagating the Anarchist-Bolshevik theories. The Soviet diplomats in Peking, like Leo Karakhan, repeatedly suggested to the Republic of China to unilaterally revoke the unequal treaties for sake of provoking a direct confrontation between China and the powers. To stabilize the situation in the Pacific, the United States convened a Washington Conference in 1922-3, during which some resolutions were made as to "ensuring China's integrity; strengthening her finances by agreeing to hold a conference to arrange for limited increase of tariff rates; a special commission was to study extraterritoriality." The Soviets, however, were cunning enough to convene the congress of the Far East nationalities (i.e., the First Congress of the Toilers of the Far East) as a counter-blast to the initiatives of the Western powers", to which 52 Koreans from

various factions attended The notorious Lansing-Ishii Agreement, though theoretically abrogated in April 1923 and replaced by the Nine-Power Treaty, was to be tacitly taken for granted by the powers, and transformed into varieties such as the Amau Doctrine etc down the road.

### **The Soviet Scheme to Communize China**

Whereas Japan was forced to withdraw from Siberia and give up Qingdao, the Soviets, adamant on the world revolution, set their eyes on the Chinese continent after setbacks in instigating the military uprisings in Germany and Hungary, giving guns to all the warring factions in China without regard for the ten-year arms embargo that was imposed by the powers since the end of WWI to stop the surplus WWI weapons from flooding and destabilizing the Chinese market. More, the powers, in October 1922 cancelled the international co-management over the Chinese Eastern Railway which effectively paved the way for the control of the railway to the Soviet Union from the Russian White Army. The Soviets, who in 1919 and 1920 hoodwinked the Chinese with two declarations of intent to transfer the Russian ownership of the railway to China free of compensation, took advantage of the schism between North China and South to strike an agreement with the northern government in Peking and the regional overlord in Manchuria in 1924, which allowed the Soviets to retain the co-management and co-ownership of the railway for 80 years and a shortened duration of 60 years, respectively.

With Soviet guns, the Nationalist Party (KMT) launched a northern expedition war in 1926-8 to reunite China. The communists, who controlled the political departments of the northern expedition armies, almost succeeded in sovietizing China, and only failed in the plots when they impatiently pushed for the bloody land revolution and attempted to hijack the government and the armies. In the aftermath of the Soviet debacle in sovietizing the Chinese continent in 1927, the Soviets changed the objective for their operations in Manchuria to having the Chinese communist proxies incite the Chinese opposition to the Japanese plans to build additional railways in southern Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia. The Japanese, who had failed to force Zhang Zuolin to endorse the Group 2 clauses of the Twenty-one Demands concerning the extension of the lease term for the Southern Manchuria Railway and the rights of settlement and extraterritoriality etc., assassinated the overlord of Manchuria by blowing up the train carriages in June 1928. Zhang Xueliang, who initially had to pay special attention to the Japanese threat after succeeding his father's post, loosened his guard after figuring out that the Japanese militarists' response was subdued over his declaration in late 1928 that the northeastern Chinese provinces revert to the central government's rule. Overwhelmed by an ambition to assert the national sovereignty over the railway in the frenzy of national unification and fed by poor intelligence about Stalin's Soviet Russia that was rumored to have been weakened by the political purge movements, Zhang Xueliang, on the pretext that the Soviets and Chinese Communists were scheming to foment wars to disrupt China's unification (e.g., Feng Yuxiang's liaison with the Soviets in seeking the military aid for a rebellion), arrested Soviet railway manager Boris Emshanov, dismantled the Soviet organizations of unions, youth leagues, and scouts etc, and provoked the Soviets into launching the War of Chinese Eastern Railway in 1929. Unable to obtain assistance from the central government which just finished quelling the Guangxi Clique rebellion in spring 1929 and then faced with Feng Yuxiang's rebellion, Zhang Xueliang fought against the Soviets on his own accord and lost the war. As Arthur Young

commented, “in this Russian-Chinese clash may be found the seeds of World War II. The ink was then hardly dry on the Kellogg-Briand pact, signed by Russia, by which all parties agreed to settle disputes without using force. Russia’s getting away with force was carefully noted by the Japanese military, based in southern Manchuria.”

In the midst of the War of the Chinese Eastern War, the Japanese Kwantung Army was rumored to be scheming for a military action to take advantage of the situation. Chinese Youth Party leader Zeng Qi promptly sent Li Huang to Manchuria and persuaded Zhang Xueliang into concluding the war with the Soviets. The Japanese, however, were given more reasons to invade Manchuria, other than the renewal of the 28-year lease of the railway and the Kwantung leasehold as stipulated by the Portsmouth Treaty. The various factions of the Korean Communists, under the Soviet order to dismantle their organizations and enroll in the Communist Party of China, issued an order to the thousands of members to prove their worthiness to join the CPC by taking the rampage of violent actions against the Japanese. From 1930 to 1931, the Korean Communists conducted unremitting rebellions, attacked the Japanese consulates and police posts and sabotaged the Japanese railway and storage facilities in southern Manchuria

### **Chinese Communists’ Roots in Manchuria**

Communist seeds in Manchuria started in YMCA Mukden where Yan Baohang, i.e., Joseph Platt’ confidante, was in charge of the operations after return from Peking YMCA internship in early 1921. Yan Baohang launched a Marxism study group at YMCA, and was to play a major role in the activities of both YMCA and IPR. From 1922-1924 onward, the communists, having changed course on the anti-YMCA movement [as advocated by Sergi Dalin et al.] and using the cover of YMCA, penetrated Feng Yuxiang's army, making him a so-called “Christian” general with a communist wife, played the key role in the organization of the "student army" among Hu Jingyi and Feng Yuxiang's northern warlord armies as well as recruited the trainees for indoctrination in the Soviet Union, i.e., future OGPU/GRU agents, including Shi Zhe and Zhang Kexia et al. In 1924, communist Haan Leran, who was an ethnic Korean exile converted to communism while studying arts in Shanghai, came to Mukden to organize and direct the party operations at YMCA Mukden, in the name of a representative from Shanghai YMCA. Haan Leran first converted Su Ziyuan [i.e., the future most prominent G.R.U. agent] and Guo Gang, et al., all YMCA activists, into communists in 1924. In early 1925, Li Dazhao separately sent in communist Ren Guozhen to Mukden for beefing up the party work. Ren Guozhen, who was given lecturer posts together with communists Wu Xiaotian and Chen Rixin at the YMCA summer college, further organized the activists at YMCA Mukden into the CPC Mukden party branch. While Haan Leran obtained understanding with Ren Guozhen to consider enrolling Yan Baohang into the communist party in 1925 and Yan Baohang in 1927 officially submitted the application request after a talk with Su Ziyuan who had returned to Mukden from the U.S.S.R, no explanation was given as to why Yan Baohang, someone whose party application for the CPC membership was personally rejected by Stalin in 1937, was left out.

The first significant activities that the communists undertook in Manchuria were the instigation of Guo Songlin’s rebellion against Zhang Zuolin in southern Manchuria in autumn 1923, and the subsequent organization of mass rallies and sabotage activities conducted in northern Manchuria

on behalf of Guo Songlin. Owing to Zhang Xueliang's intervention, the Mukden YMCA gang was spared any punishment over the implication with Guo Songlin who was executed together with his YMCA wife. However, Ren Guozhen, who was sent to Harbin in September 1925, was arrested later in the year for his activities in disturbing peace in the Manchuria hind during the battles and sentenced to prison for eleven months. It would be in September 1927 that the CPC Hebei provincial commissariat dispatched Chen Weiren to Manchuria for organizing the interim Manchuria provincial committee, with limited number of party members and party organizations restricted to Mukden, Dalian, Harbin and other major cities. Chen Weiren, secretary of the interim provincial committee, passed on the Soviet directive to take up the anti-Japanese struggle in Manchuria as the main tasks and proposed to make the Anti-Japanese work in Manchuria account for the majority of the party's revolutionary work. In September 1928, communists convened a third Manchuria representatives' meeting and upgraded the interim commissariat to the CPC Manchuria Provincial Commissariat.

On November 5th, 1928, the Provincial Commissariat published its so-called No. 33 Notice, and called for struggles against the Japanese for recovering the South Manchuria Railway, revoking the rights granted to the Japanese for building additional railways, taking back Port Arthur and Dairen, as well as the rights to the land around the railway, the mines and plants, and nullifying the unequal treaties with Japan. One month later, the Provincial Commissariat was hit by the Manchurian authority. Running under the CPC leadership and influence would be front organizations such as the "ten-person non-cooperation league" and the "anti-Japanese society", and other anti-Japanese mass organizations, with the ingredients being workers, and the radical young students and intellectuals. In 1929, Ren Guozhen, as a representative for the Manchuria Provincial Commissariat, proposed to the CPC Central in having the "ten-person non-cooperation league" upgraded to the Anti-Imperialist League. After Zhang Xueliang, maddened by CCP's slogans of "Down with China ! Support the Soviet Union !", authorized Harbin police chief Mi Chunlin in breaking into Soviet consulate where the Comintern was holding a meeting on May 27th, 1929, and arrested consul-general Kuznezov.

Parallel to the communist efforts against the Japanese and very likely a diversion tactic against the ongoing brawl between Zhang Xueliang and the Soviets, YMCA Mukden operatives, i.e., a conspiracy faction working under Zhang Xueliang since the early 1920s, organized the 14-member Liaoning Citizen Diplomacy Association (later renamed to the Northeast Citizen Diplomacy Association, and in the sense of a people's council on foreign relations), with Wang Huayi taking lead and acting as a standing committee member together with Yan Baohang, et al. Yan Baohang, after returning to China from studies in Scotland, took over Joseph Platt's director job at YMCA Mukden in early 1929. Other members included Lu Guangji, president of the chamber of commerce, and Du Chongyuan, president of the provincial workers' union. The trigger came from the dismantling on June 21, 1929, of a segment of the split rail track of the Peiping-Liaoning Railway by Japanese named Sakakibara Masao who ran a farm nearby. Furthermore, the Mukden YMCA gang organized two more societies against the Japanese, i.e., the Citizen Common Knowledge Promotion Society and the Resist-Drug Federation. The War of the Chinese-Eastern Railway ultimately erupted over the Soviet and Chinese Communist agitation in sabotaging Japan's attempt at building five additional railways in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. When Zhang Xueliang decided to send reinforcement to the northern front, Yan Baohang, Du Chongyuan and Wang Huayi and et al., changed the anti-Japanese tune to express

support for the recovery of the Chinese-Eastern Railway and further on July 10th organized a troop farewell party to see the reinforcement forces being sent to the northern Sino-Soviet border. Communist documents later disclosed that they had failed to coordinate with the activities of patriotic organizations conducted by the YMCA gang, whom they termed patriotic industrialists, educators and other celebrities, as a result of the arrogance resulting from the leftist close-doorism and leftist adventurism of Li Lisan and Wang Ming's CPC Central Committee leadership. One example of confrontation between the communists and the YMCA gang would be communist Zhao Shangzhi's disruption of the assembly held by the Liaoning Citizen Diplomacy Association on April 12th, 1930, which ended in the arrest of over twenty communist and youth league members, including some provincial party leaders such as Li Zhaolin the future communist guerrilla general.

In June, CPC politburo sent Liu Shaoqi to Manchuria to be secretary for the reorganized Provincial Commissariat. Two months later, on August 22nd, Liu Shaoqi and Meng Yongqian, while agitating for strike at the Mukden Cotton Mill, was detained by the factory security staff, and subsequently taken by police to the detention center under the High Court Prosecutor's Office in Mukden. Zhou Enlai, from the CPC Central in Shanghai, personally instructed Rao Shushi, acting provincial secretary, to work on facilitating the release. In September, Liu Shaoqi and et al. were set free by the court after Chang Baoyu, i.e., communist branch secretary at the factory, denied knowing the agitators. At about the same time, in late August of 1929, Zhang Guanyi, whose original name was Ma Shangde but carrying numerous aliases such as Yang Jingyu, was arrested at the Japanese-run Fushun Coal Mine. Yang Jingyu, en route to the Soviet Union for military studies, was retained by Liu Shaoqi to do underground work as the Fushun special commissariat secretary when unexpectedly, the Sino-Soviet border was closed and the railway traffic ceased as a result of the pending War of the Chinese Eastern Railway. In October, Yang Jingyu extradited to the Fushun district court as a communist suspect, and in December, further transferred to the Mukden High Court Prosecutor's Office, where he was given a prison sentence of one year and a half.

In March 1930, Liu Shaoqi yielded the provincial party secretary job to Rao Shushi and left Manchuria for the CPC Central in Shanghai, where Li Lisan, hijacking the illiterate communist general secretary Xiang Zhongfa, was calling on the Red Armies to attack major cities and provincial cities to achieve the success of a Bolshevik revolution in one province or multiple provinces. In April, at Mukden, communist Zhang Shangzhi's disruption of the assembly held by the Liaoning Citizen Diplomacy Association led to a manhunt and an arrest of dozens of communists. At the same time, Li Zhaolin, who lost contact with his Japan-educated communist tutor Li Nongru in 1929 and had come to Manchuria to re-establish contact with the communists, was arrested by the police while distributing leaflets. In May 1930, Li Zifen, the new provincial secretary who was working on commuting Yang Jingyu's imprisonment term or release, was also arrested. At the prison, Li Zhaolin make friendship with Korean communist Kim Chaek (who converted to the CPC in July 1930), and after release from a prison, Li Zhaolin went to Peiping to join the communist organization at Mengdougou Mine before being sent back to Manchuria for taking advantage of the Japanese invasion to launch the Soviet revolution. After serving the full sentence, Yang Jiyu was arrested again in April 1931 for implication in the communist mutual aid society activities. It would be after the 18 September 1931 Japanese invasion and takeover of Manchuria that provincial organization department director Heh Chengxiang, in late

December of 1931, managed to have the Japanese and the puppets (i.e., some former Manchuria Army connection) release all the trapped communists at the prison cells. Under the escort of provincial secretarial division chief Shang Yue, Yang Jingyu first went to Harbin to be acting secretary for the provincial military committee and then was sent to southern Manchuria for launching the Soviet land revolution.

Chinese Communists, from October 1927 to June 1930, never exceeded the peak number of more than 250 party members in Manchuria. However, the Comintern's order to have Korean Communists convert to the CPC membership changed the landscape. Back on June 29th, 1930, the CPC Central Committee issued a directive, "CPC Instruction Letter to Manchuria Provincial Commissariat Regarding the Struggle of Korean Farmers in Manchuria and the Organization Issue of Korean Communists Joining the CPC". From June to November 1930, in a timeframe less than six months, Chinese Communists absorbed a large number of Koreans, expanding the membership to 2,000 people, and developed local party organizations from 12 to 55 from 12. The yardstick the Korean communists imposed on themselves would be to prove their worthiness to the Chinese comrades by actions. Later well-known Korean communists, such as Lee Hong Gwang and Lee Tong Gwang, et al., all joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1930. On August 6th, 1930, the Provincial Commissariat, in observance with the CPC Central's for victory in one province or multiple provinces, renamed itself the Manchuria "Total Action Committee". In late August, senior communist leader Chen Tanqiu came over to reorganize the "Total Action Committee" into an expanded committee of 15 persons. Answering the Moscow and CPC calls for the Soviet land revolution, the Koreans turned Manchuria into a fireball. It would be in February 1931 that Pavel Mif and Wang Ming's CPC Central dispatched Zhang Yinglong to Manchuria as the new provincial secretary. However, Tang Hongjing was sent to Manchuria by the CPC's Second Central Committee. Zhang Yinglong was busy stamping out the influences and elements of the CPC Second Central than changing the prior-year's course of uprisings and revolution against the Manchurian authorities and the Japanese consulates. Hence, the Korean communists' violent actions, more against the Japanese and the Korean nationalists than against the Manchurian authorities, continued on throughout 1931, which was taken by the Korean nationalists to be the direct fuse that induced the Japanese Army into invading and occupying Manchuria on September 18th, 1931.

### **The Entanglement of Korean Nationalists & Communists**

Unlike the Chinese Communists who had trouble making grounds in Manchuria, the Korean Communists had multiplied exponentially owing to the Diaspora of the Koreans in the surrounding counties, i.e., Japan, Russia, Manchuria and the Korean homeland. However, it was due to the nature of this multiplicity that factions sprang up, and in-fighting persisted throughout the years, which resulted in the Soviet's massacre of the Korean independence fighters at the 'Free City' in June 1921, the Comintern's directive to have the Korean communist fractions merge together in 1922 and the order to organize anew a party inside Korea, and the ultimate decision at the Sixth Congress on 7 September 1928 held in Moscow that the Korean Communist Party (KCP) be revoked the party branch representation at the Comintern; that Koreans in the homeland were to be treated to be under the Japanese Communist Party jurisdiction on basis of the "One Country, One Party" principle; and that the Korean Communists must meet

qualification for re-enrolment in the Chinese and Japanese Communist Parties. The Korean Communists subsequently answered the call by launching waves of attacks against the Japanese in Manchuria, taking the blame from both the Chinese and the Korean nationalists that the Korean Communists were the running dogs for the Japanese and responsible for inducing the Japanese Army into an invasion of Manchuria.

When Japan first imposed the protectorate treaty onto Korea in 1907, independence fighters such as Jung-keun Ahn and Hong Bom Do et al., began to resort to armed rebellion, and set their bases in Jiandao (Gan-do), the triangular area surrounded by China, Korea and Russia, inside Jirin of Manchuria, and at Kraskino (present Yanqiu; i.e., the ancient trade hub between Palhae and Japan) and Nikolayevsk in the Russian Maritime Province, and on the Sakhalin Island. Jae Hyeong Choi, a prominent Korean businessman in the Russian Far East, funded the military actions. The Korean volunteer army, from about April 1908 onward, mounted large-scale raids, by the number of thousands of soldiers, across the Tumen River against the Japanese. Unable to fight the Japanese militarily, Jung Keun Ahn resorted to assassination against Japanese privy council president Ito Hirobumi at the Harbin train station in October 1909. In the aftermath of the eruption of the First World War, the Soviet takeover of Russia, and the convention of the Paris Peace Conference, Koreans renewed their non-violent efforts and Son byon hi, leader of the Donghak (i.e., Eastern Learning) religious group, organized the March First Movement seeking for Korean independence from Japan in 1919. The ferocious Japanese crackdown caused a massive exile of Koreans to the overseas, with large crowds gathering in Vladivostok's Sinhanchon (i.e., "New Korean Village"). Three separate groups in China, Korea, and Russia launched the interim governments, upholding Syngman Rhee, Yi Dong Whi and Son Byon Hi as leaders, respectively. In Shanghai, China, Korean exiles organized the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea in April 1919, with major leaders elected in absentia: Syngman Rhee elected president, Yi Dong Whi minister for the military affairs, Kim Kyu-Sik foreign minister, and Jae Hyeong Choi finance minister. Back in spring 1917, Yi Dong Whi had crossed the border to Blagoveshchensk to join the Russian social democratic revolution and subsequently the Soviet revolution, got arrested as a German spy suspect in July 1917, was released to Khabarovsk in early 1918 at the intervention of the Russian social democrat party, and subsequently participated in organizing the Korean Socialist Party and the Korean Red Guards.

The Shanghai interim government had a split immediately afterwards, when Yi Dong Whi, who came to Shanghai in August of the year to assume the premier post, stealthily continued his communism activities by renaming his socialist party to the Koryo Communist Party, and in the next year, sent messengers to seeing Lenin and the Soviets for financial aid, in competition against the Russian-Korean Irkutsk faction. At Irkutsk, Gim Cheol Hun launched the All-Russia Korean Communist Party which subsequently was renamed to All Russia Koryo Communist Party in 1920 and the Koryo Communist Party in May 1921.

In Vladivostok's Sinhanchon, Jae-Hyeong Choi organized an independent army regiment in November 1919. Some of the Korean bands in Siberia and Sakhalin joined the Mensheviks or the Bolsheviks, forming partisan groups, such as the Sakhalin Force, to fight the Japanese and the Kalmykov and Semyonov white armies. At the Sino-Korean border, there existed major bands like Kim Ja Jin's northern military administration office's army, Hong Bom Do's Greater Korea independence army, and Yi Sang Ryong's western route army. Yi Sang Ryong, Hong Bom Do,



began to attack the Japanese outpost from August-October 1919 onward. Yi Cheong Cheon, a graduate of Japan's elementary military school, left the nationalist military academy post to join the over half a dozen armed bands to form the independence army corps under the banner of the interim government of the Republic of Korea. Taking advantage of the international intervention in the Russian civil war, the Korean independence army procured weapons from the Czechoslovak Army in Vladivostok. Having learnt that the Koreans had acquired weapons, the Japanese infantry *Shidans* in Siberia sent troops southward to pincer-attack the Koreans. Hong Bom Do's army, in June 1920, ambushed the Japanese army in Wangqing County and Kim Ja Jin's army, in October, ambushed the Japanese army in Helong County of Jirin Province, China. Subsequently, the Japanese Army, from October 1920 to May 1921, conducted sweep campaigns. Hong Bom Do and Im Byeong Guk fled to seek asylum in the Russian maritime province. In April 1920, the Japanese Army raided the New Korea Village near Vladivostok, rounded the prominent Korean leaders-in-exile and killed Jae-Hyeong Choi et al. In October 1920, Korean partisans took Nikolayevsk after a battle, and murdered several hundred Japanese soldiers and civilians.

In November 1920, the Soviet Red Army, taking advantage of the powers' withdrawal of support for the Russian White Army, swept across the Siberian Plains to reach the Chinese border along the Amur River. Lenin, who was trying to get the Japanese withdraw from Siberia on the one hand and disliked the factional fight between the he Korean Revolutionary Military Congress Army under the Soviet-Koreans' Irkutsk group and the Greater Korea Independence Corps under Yi Dong Whi's 'Shanghai' group, attempted to solve the problem of at least 36 independent Korean military units by reorganizing them under the Soviet Red Army. In early 1921, the Soviets declared Alekseyevsk, a town near Irkutsk, an open city for all Korean armies. Some 7,000 Koreans came over for receiving free arms supply and training. On June 22nd, 1921, owing to the machination by the Irkutsk communist faction, the Soviet Red Army ordered the Greater Korean righteous and brave army, about 4000, to be reorganized into the people's revolutionary army. On the 27th, the Soviets started to surround the Koreans to implement the reorganization. On the 28th, the Soviets, with tanks, attacked the Sakhalin righteous and brave army, killed dozens and disarmed over 800. When the Greater Korean righteous and brave army attempted to send relief to the Sakhalin force, hundreds more were killed, and close to 1000 were disarmed. More died fighting their way to escape to China. Hong Bom Do's column, having lost hundreds of officers and soldiers, were incapacitated, and was no longer able to launch any military action thereafter. This came to be called the Free City or Amur River Incident. Over 1500 Koreans were forced into the Soviet army while the rest were killed, imprisoned or sent to the gulags. Yi Cheong Cheon, who participated in running the Koryo revolutionary army cadet school in Manchuria, was put into prison at Irkutsk. (Yi Cheong Cheon, after release from the Soviet prison, joined the Righteous Command as commander for the military affairs department, and after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, tacked on the post as commander of the Korea Restoration Army in China's wartime interim capital Chungking in 1940.) Survivors who escaped to Ning'an of China broadcast the news of the Soviet and Korean communist trickery. Yi Dong Whi, who resigned from the Shanghai interim government in March 1921, arrived at Siberia in July 1921, after the occurrence of the Free City Incident. Yi Dong Whi went to Moscow to inquire with about the Soviet duplicity in the Free City Incident, resulting in the Comintern's order to have the Korean factions merge with each other and prisoners at the Free City be released. In January 1922 came the peak of communism activities when the Soviet Union

convened the Far East people's congress. Back in Shanghai, Kim Gu, the interim government's security chief, authorized the killing of [[ Gim Rip]] who misappropriated Lenin's funds (part of the 600,000 rubles that was the first tranche out of 2 million agreement struck with Lenin), the monopoly of which was one reason that Yi Dong Whi was evicted from the nationalist interim government. In June, Yi Dong Whi, et al., merged different communist/socialist factions, as well as the nationalists, to launch a united Koryo Central Administration in Blagoveshchensk. The next year, in June 1923, Yi Dong Whi, joined by Yeo Un Hyeong who also split off from the Shanghai interim government but disagreed with the secrecy on the socialist party members' control of the Lenin funds, further schemed to launch a Korea Republic and a Red Flag Regiment.

### **The Reorganization of the Korean Communist Party & Japan's Invasion of Manchuria**

Back in spring 1917, around the time when Tsar Nicholas' government fell on March 13th, Yi Dong Whi had crossed the border to Blagoveshchensk to join the Russian social democratic revolution and consecutively the Soviet revolution, got arrested as a German spy suspect in July 1917, and was released to Khabarovsk in early 1918 at the intervention of the Russian social democrat party. In Irkutsk, the Soviets established a Korean department in January 1918. Russian-Koreans, such as Gim Cheol Hun, and nam man chun, et al., assembled the Korean expatriates to fight on the side of the Red Army. In April, Yi Dong Whi and Kim Rip et al, with Kim Alexandra Petrovna's sponsorship, organized a Korean proletarian society, and in June participated in organizing the Korean Socialist Party and the Korean Red Guards which the Soviets at Irkutsk got in contact with subsequently. From 1917 to 1920, Vladivostok and its surrounding towns changed hands more than half a dozen times among the Soviets, the Japanese, Aleksander Kolchak's army and Grigori Semenov's army, with pro-Japanese and pro-Soviet Koreans sandwiched in between. In August 1919, Comintern sent Kim Rip to Shanghai. In late 1919, Lenin recognized Yi Dong Whi's socialist party to be a member of the Comintern, to be qualified for the Soviet funding. Gim Cheol Hun, to compete against Yi Dong Whi launched the All-Russia Korean Communist Party in July 1920 which subsequently was renamed to All Russia Koryo Communist Party on May 5th, 1921. In May 1920, Grigori Naumovich Voitinsky, who was on a mission of organizing the Chinese communism panels, assisted Yi Dong Whi and Kim Rip et al, in launching the Koryo Communist Party in Shanghai. Bak jin sun, back in Siberia, carried on the socialist party operations with the recognition from the Soviet Far Eastern nationals' department which set up the Chinese and Korean divisions in July, till October when Gim Cheol Hun's All-Russia Korean Communist Party overwhelmed the Socialist Party at the All-Russia Korean Congress held at Omsk in Siberia.

In January 1921, the Far East secretariat at Irkutsk was set up under Boris Zakharovich Shumiatsky. The Irkutsk Faction, with easy access to the Soviets, overpowered the Shanghai Faction with the control over the Soviet conduits on the matter of the political recognition and financial and military support, which coincided with Yi Dong-hwi's resignation from the premier post at the Shanghai interim government and loss of influence over the Korean nationalists. In May, gim cheol hun launched the First All-Russia Korean Communists' Congress on 6 May 1921 and renamed his party to the All Russia Koryo Communist Party. In Shanghai, Yi Dong Whi convened a congress at the French Concession in late May, making himself speaker and

Kim Rip chief secretary. In November 1921, the Shanghai Faction, which had historical relationship with the Korean nationalists, dispatched Kim Ha Gu to Dunhua of Manchuria for launching the Manchuria general office of the Koryo Communist Party, and subsequently expanded to Jiandao, the triangular area at the Soviet-Korean border, and Jehol to the west. In the report to the Soviets, the Shanghai Faction claimed that all members of the Korean National Association, which Kim Il Sung's father founded, are members of the Koryo Communist Party. The Irkutsk Faction, which claimed to have 4433 members by November 1922, sent agents to Yanbian etc to establish the communist organization at Jiando, which was to evolve to an alliance with the future Tuesday Faction.

Back in Korea, in 1920, labor organization such as the shipbuilding labor mutual aid society and the Incheon labor union organization, began to appear. Cha geum bong, who first started the Korean research society to prepare for the organization of labor in 1919, launched the Korean Laborer's Mutual Aid (Red Aid) Society in Seoul in April 1920. In January 1921, the proletariat camaraderie society was formed, and two months later the society was renamed to the proletariat league, which was to become the backbone for the future Tuesday Faction of the Korean Communist Party. In October 1922, Gang Dal Young built the Korean Labor Federation after splitting from the Korean Laborer's Mutual Aid (Red Aid) Society. In November, the Korean Labor Federation further evolved to the Korean Labor League.

In 1920, the Korea Federation of Youth was formed to coordinate over activities of various youth organizations. On January 27th, 1921, Gim Sa Guk, Yi Yeong et al., severed from the Korea nationalist Youth Group, i.e., the Korean Youth Federation, to launch the Seoul Youth Society, which was to become the Seoul Faction of the Korean Communists in the future. In Shanghai, Choe Chang Sik, Che Chan Shiku, yeo un hyeong (who joined China's KMT & CPC parties and in 1919 organized the New Korean Youth Party) and Bak Heon Young organized the Koryo Youth Society in May. In Japan, Gim Chan, Gim Yak Su, Jo bong am, jeong, jae dal et al., founded the Korean anarchists' Black Wave Society in late 1921. In Korea, in the same year, Sin Chae Ho took charge of organizing the Korean anarchist organization, the Black-color Youth League. In early 1922, Gim Jae Bong, Bak Heon Young, jo dong ho, i.e., the Irkutsk Koryo Communist faction, went to Russia to attend the Far East Toilers' Congress as representatives of the Young Koryo Communist Association. In November 1922, in Tokyo, Gim Yak Su and Jeon gun hae etc al., split from the anarchist Black Wave organization to form the socialist North Star Society; and in late 1924, Gim Yak Su et al., returned to Korea to found the socialist North Wind Society.

In Russia, the Soviet Union was declared in November 1922. One month before, Yi Dong Whi, at the New Korea Village, organized the greater Korea national assembly. In December 1922, the Soviets ordered the Koreans to dismantle the Koryo Communist Party over factionalism, and ordered to establish a singular Korean Communist Party in the Korea homeland. At the Comintern's Far Eastern Bureau, there were previously three Koreans on board the Korean liaison division, including Jeong Jae Dal, han myeong seo, and yi dong hwi, plus Japanese gatayama sen. In 1923, Moscow, after dismissing the two Koryo communist parties, set up a Koryo department under the Comintern direct. Yi Dong Whi continued the armed struggle in organizing the jeokgidan (Red Flag Regiment) and the Korean Republic. (However, the Soviets, in February 1924, after Lenin's death, intervened to dismantle the government of the Korean

Republic. Later in 1926, Yi Dong Whi organized the Korean Revolutionary Party and the Koryo Army; from 1927 to 1929, worked on the International Organization for Aid to Revolutionaries (MOPR) in Blagoveshchensk.) To assist the organization of the Korean party, the Comintern dispatched Gim Jae Bong and Chul Shin to Korea in April 1923, to be followed by Gim Chan in June and Jeong Jae Dal who was sent to Korea in July. Jeong Jae Dal launched the New Thought Research Society together with Gang Dal Young who built the Korean Labor Federation that evolved to the Korean Labor League. Gim Jae Bong and Bak Heon Young, et al, representing the original Irkutsk Koryo Communist faction, as well as Gim Chan and Jo Bon Gam, i.e., a Japan returnee, joined the New Thought Research Society which would be renamed to the Tuesday (Kayo) Society in 1924. In December 1923, the Third Comintern dismissed the Koryo Bureau at the Moscow headquarters and in April 1924, launched the Korean Bureau under the Far Eastern Bureau, and issued an order to Gim Jae Bong and Chul Shin as to launching a singular Korean communist party.

The Seoul Youth Society leaders, Gim Sa Guk Yi Yeong et al., convened an All-Korea Youth Congress in March 1923 in Seoul, to which 94 youth organizations attended. A socialist society that split from the nationalist and YMCA youth societies, i.e., the Korean Youth Society was founded. In April 1924, Gim Sa Guk et al. further consolidated 223 organizations to form the amalgamated Korean youth league, while radicals, such as Irkutsk faction element and Bak Heon Young, and Japan returnee Jo Bon Gam organized a so-called “newly arising youth league”. In 1924, the Seoul Youth Society, with some elements from the North Wind Society, formed the Korean worker and peasant league and later in August 1924 formed the Korean proletariat arts league. In April 1924, the amalgamated Korean worker and peasant league was formed. In August, a Korean labor party was launched. In October 1924, Gim Sa Guk, Yi In Su, and et al., i.e., so-called neo-Seoul [Youth Society] Faction, in cooperation with “newly arising youth league”, launched the Koryo Communist League (i.e., known as the Seoul Communist Party), also known as the Young Koryo Communist Association, to counter the competitive communist party activities from Gim Jae Bong’s Tuesday Society, and Gim Yak Su’s North Wind Society. Back in Manchuria, China, Russian-Korean Han Bin was in charge of the organization department for the Manchuria General Bureau of the Young Koryo Communist Association, which was a Comintern sanctioned branch. Yi In Su, and et al., were to become the Marxism-Leninism (ML) Faction of the Korean Communist Party when the Tuesday Faction committee members incurred crackdown in the hands of the Japanese, while Jo Bon Gam et al, who escaped to Shanghai from Korea, were to become the neo-ML Faction in Manchuria down the road and set up operations in Panshi, southern Manchuria.

In November 1924, Jeong Jae Dal and Gang Dal Young’s New Thought Research Society merged with elements of the North Wind Society to form the Tuesday Society. In March 1925, Gim Yak Su’s North Wind Society finally abandoned the idea to launch a separate communist party on its own, choosing an alliance with the Tuesday Society in lieu of an alliance with the Seoul Youth Society. On April 17th, 1925, the Korean Communist Party (KCP) was officially launched in Seoul with a confluence of numerous communism organizations, mainly the Tuesday Society and the North Wind Society, with 16-17 participants, and elected Gim Jae Bong as secretary-in-charge, Gim Yak Su personnel director, Gim Chan (of the Irkutsk faction) propaganda director, Jo Dong Ho organization director, Jeon Gun Hae labor (worker and peasant) director Ju Jong Geon investigation director, and Song Byeong Woo political director,

all the seven department directors being concurrent central executive committee members. The next day, April 18th, Bak Heon Young (also of the Irkutsk faction) and Jo Bon Gam, i.e., leaders of the radical “newly arising youth league”, who launched the Koryo Communist League (i.e., known as the Seoul Communist Party) in late 1924, convened a meeting of the amalgamated Koryo communist youth society, attended by 18 people, and organized a central executive committee, with Bak Heon Young as secretary-in-charge and Jo Bon Gam international department director, and other active members such as Kim Yong-bom and Waseda university graduate Ri cheol bu, han wi geon.

Later in March 1926, the Soviets officially acknowledged the April 17th, 1925 party to be a member of the Comintern. However, back in November 1925, at Sinuiju, the communist courier who was sent to Moscow via Shanghai was caught with a report on the Young Koryo Communist Association movement, which led to the Japanese sabotage of the first Korean communist central committee, both April 17th.gang and April 18th gang. Bak Heon Young, who was put into prison, later came out of the prison to work for Korean newspapers, and stayed on in Korea till after the Japanese surrender. Gim Chan, another Irkutsk faction member, fled to China in early 1926. In February 1926, Gang Dal Young ( ) rebuilt the KCP central committee, with Gwo No Seol acting as secretary in charge.

The second KCP central committee took initiatives in establishing the Japan general bureau and the Manchuria general bureau. In Manchuria, in spring 1926, Jo Bon Gam of the ML Faction, Gim Cheol Hun of the Irkutsk Faction and Gim-Ha-Gu of the Shanghai faction, worked on the launch of the Manchuria general bureau (MGB) at Zhuhe (pearl river) County, resulting in the launch of the MGB at Ningguta (surreal antiquity tower), Ning’an of Jirin, in charge of three regional bureaux. The Manchuria general bureau “divided Manchuria into three regions, north, south, and east, and assigned different factions to each”. In May 1926, the KCP MGB instructed the Tuesday Faction to organize a Young Koryo Communist Association MGB, which ran into conflict with the existing Young Koryo Communist Association that was controlled by the ML Faction. In October, the KCP’s East Manchuria Bureau was set up in Longjing, Jiandao.

Han Bin, who was sent by the Soviets to Manchuria to work on the Young Koryo Communist Association and further in 1925 dispatched to Seoul, separately worked with the Seoul Faction on organizing the Marxism-Leninism (ML) league before returning to the Soviet Union five months later. In June, Gang Dal Young and Gwo No Seol’s central committee, which took lead in organizing the protest movement on the occasion of mourning the late Korean king Sunjong, was sabotaged by the Japanese. Filling in the vacuum would be the new central committee organized in December 1926 by An Gwang Cheon of the North Star Society and Yi In Su of the Seoul Youth Society, who combined forces with Gim Cheol Su, a Yi Dong Whi follower working at the KCP Manchuria General Bureau. The 3rd cabinet of the KCP central committee, which had combined forces from the North Star Society (renamed to the January Society in Tokyo), the Seoul Youth Society and the Shanghai faction (Han Wi Geon and Yang Ming et al.) came to be called the ML Faction. On December 6th, 1926, at a cavern meeting in Seoul, the ML Faction, which was to be sabotaged by the Japanese shortly afterward, called for a national united front with the bourgeoisie and nationalists. Additionally, Yi Yeong, who was kicked out of the ML faction, attempted at organizing a party in December 1927, and Cha Geum Bong

organized a 4th central committee, with him as secretary in charge, before he was to be arrested in July, about five months later.

In October 1927, the Japanese consular police at Longjing (dragon well) sabotaged the Tuesday Faction's Manchuria general bureau. Hence, the ML Faction launched its own Manchuria general bureau. Owing to the factional fighting and perpetual feuds among rival factions that had plagued the party before, during and after its founding, Comintern, in December 1928, made a decision to disband the KCP in Korea and Manchuria. In Shanghai, the KCP Shanghai Branch members, who mainly belonged to the ML Faction, converted to the CPC membership since September 1927, were put under a special branch under a district commissariat of the CPC Jiangsu provincial commissariat. Chen Gongmu, a Korean Whampoa cadet who joined the December 1927 Canton Commune mutiny, joined the ML Faction in Shanghai in March 1928 after fleeing Canton, and later in June 1929 tacked on the organization department director post at the ML's Manchurian General Bureau. In November 1929, Han Bin, together with Chinese Li Chunshan, were sent to China for relaying the Soviet guideline as to how to convert the Koreans in China and Manchuria to the CPC membership, culminating in a Harbin meeting resolution reached in early 1930 to have the Korean general bureaus shut down and members re-enroll in the CPC. In May 1930, the Propaganda Department of the Comintern, at a meeting held in Khabarovsk, ratified the resolution to have the Korean Communist Party in Manchuria merged with the Communist Party of China.

### **Continuous Entanglement between Korean Nationalists and Communists**

The Korean nationalists, after incurring the Soviet betrayal in the Maritime Province, i.e., the June 1921 Free City Incident, had scaled down military actions against the Japanese and settled into the military-farming life mode in Manchuria. After the Free City Bloody Incident, about 300 Korean independence fighters who returned to China were stranded at the Sino-Soviet border. The Shanghai interim government, in March 1922, sent over funds to assist with the hunger situation. The Korean People's Association members in Manchuria, at one time in late 1921, were declared to have automatically become members of Yi Dong Whi's Koryo Communist Party [before the party was to be disbanded by the Soviets at the end of 1922], out of the Shanghai Faction's desperate attempt at competing against the Irkutsk group. The Korean People's Association, one of many Korean independence movement organizations, was initiated in 1917 by Kim Hyong Jik, i.e., Kim Il Sung's father, who made friends with numerous young men [who were to become independence fighters] while studying at evangelical Sungsil Middle School. In October 1923, Kim Hyong Jik mediated over different factions and helped to launch a united politico-military organization that was termed the United Righteous Command, which was subsequently renamed to the Jungyi (righteous) Command. Kim Kyu-Sik, after returning to the Yanji base, launched the Koryo Revolutionary Army in Mingyuegou (bright moon valley) in May 1923, and initiated the format of combing the military with the farming. At the turn of 1924-5, Kim Kyu-Sik, Kim Ja Jin and Kim Hyoku ( Kim Hyuk), on basis of the northern route army of the 1920 allied independence army, organized the Sinmin (New Citizen) Command. Since 1925, Kim Hyong Jik, who was to die one year later over an illness resulting from crawling across the frozen Yalu River, played the key role of mediating among the major Korean armed bands operating along the Yalu River at the Sino-Korean border, namely, the Jungyi

(righteous) Command, the Sinmin (new citizen) Command and the Chamyi (consultancy) Command, the latter of which was the only one having allegiance to the interim Korean government in Shanghai.

In 1925, the Japanese, in light of the lessened military actions from the Korean nationalists and cut-off support from the Soviets, struck a deal with the Manchuria authorities on policing the border area, in lieu of conducting military sweep campaigns that came from three directions of Port Arthur to the west, Jiandao (Hunchun) to the east and Korea across the Yalu River. (The Soviets, meanwhile, had a rapprochement with Zhang Zuolin, the Manchurian overlord, till later in the year when Feng Yuxiang and the Soviets instigated the Guo Songlin rebellion.) On June 11th, Mitsuya Miyamatsu, a police superintendent of the Korean governor-general's office, reached a Mitsuya Agreement with Yu Zhen in regards to the Manchurian authority's cooperation on the arrest and extradition of the Korean rebels, which was construed to be a "a withdrawal from the policy advocated since 1915"

From the Soviet maritime province, Yi Dong Whi, after his Korean Republic was dismantled by the Soviets in February 1924, ensuing Lenin's death, schemed to organize the Koryo Army; and in March 1926, launched the Koryo Revolutionary Party. In April, leftists among the Jungyi (righteous) Command, under hyeon ik cheol (also known as muk-kkwan(choek) - later killed in Changsha in May 1938 in an assassination plot against the nationalist leadership), became the backbone of the Koryo Revolutionary Party in Manchuria. Kim Kyu-Sik, representing the Sinmin (New Citizen) Command, also participated in the launch of the Koryo Revolutionary Party. In May, Kim Ja Jin attacked and intercepted the Japanese governor-general's cash-in-transit column, and obtained 60 million yen which was to become the funds for running the Sinmin (New Citizen) Command. Korean Communists in Manchuria, in early 1926, infiltrated into the nationalist-run "amalgamated East Manchuria Young Men Association", to offset the influence of the Sinmin (New Citizen) Command. In December, the KCP Manchuria General Bureau, where Gim Cheol Su, a Yi Dong Whi disciple was at work in an alliance with the ML Faction in Seoul, which called for a national united front with the bourgeoisie and nationalists, attempted at a merge with the Koryo Revolutionary Party.

In synchronization with the collapse of the 1924-1927 KMT-CPC collaboration in China, Yi Dong Whi veered off from the Koryo Revolutionary Party operations to work on the International Red Aid from 1927 onward. In October 1927, the Japanese consular police destroyed the KCP's Tuesday Faction MGB, which led to different KCP factions vying for establishing separate general bureaus, with the ML Faction starting its operation in March 1928. Kim Ja Jin, in cooperation with gim-dong-sam from the Jungyi (righteous) Command, organized a society for promoting a singular national party. In January 1928, the "amalgamated East Manchuria Young Men Association" transformed to the "amalgamated East Manchuria Young Men Alliance", which, unknown to Kim Il Sung who organized his own version gray-color youth organization, was already a KCP front or the front of the Young Koryo Communist Association MGB. In February 1928, the Japanese Army swept against the New Citizen Command, and arrested Kim Hyoku ( Kim Hyuk), et al, about 30 cadres in total. Kim Ja Jin, after Kim Hyuk's arrest by the Japanese consular police, split off from the pro-Japan faction and bore the main responsibility for running the New Citizen Command. The three military commands fought against each other for control of domains as well as against the Japanese sweep campaign. While

Kim Ja Jin attempted in vain to help unite the three commands of Jungyi, Sinmin and Chamyi to organize a united command in Jirin, the three commands and the KCP MGB, with the Jungyi (righteous) Command and the KCP as the core, convened a meeting in May 1928 to discuss the singular party proposal. What ensued was a split into two groups of the continue-to-negotiate faction versus the strive-to-promote faction. Among the communists, the Seoul and Shanghai factions launched its bureau in August 1928 by organizing the Korean Communist Alliance of the Koreans in Manchuria.

On April 1st, 1929, the Jungyi Command of South Manchuria, the Sinmin Command of North Manchuria, and the Chamyi Command of East Manchuria transformed to a loose united Guomin (national) Command entity comprising of part of the elements from three military commands, with hyeon ik cheol presiding over the central committee. The pro-communism subgroups forming the national command were termed a “third force” by the Japanese. The national command called for a singular Korean revolutionary party and a singular Korean revolutionary army. In the summer, the ML Faction set up “baton teams” to assault the nationalists. In July, nationalist Kim Ja Jin created a separate general Korean alliance of societies. In September, during the 1st united command conference, the “reform council” faction, resenting the Soviet slogans of building a worker and peasant government, split off from the national command to join Kim Ja Jin’s alliance. The split among the national command became official. In autumn, the national command under hyeon ik cheol began to implement the other agenda which was to merge the “amalgamated East Manchuria Young Men Alliance” and the “amalgamated South Manchuria Young Men Alliance” in the spirit of a unified leadership, and convened a general assembly at Wangqingmen of Xingjing County, to which Kim Il Sung attended in the name of a representative from the White Mountain Young Men Alliance. Kim Il Sung failed to convince the national command leaders that he was different from the ML communist faction. Half a dozen communists [who hijacked the “amalgamated South Manchuria Young Men Alliance”] were arrested, and were later killed, to Kim Il Sung’s dismay since they did not appear to be culprits related to the ML Faction. (Kim Il Sung, at the time of attending the conference, stopped at Liuhe en route, and was amazed at the communist idea to set up the front organization of a Social Science Research Society as put forward by Cha Kwang Soo.) Shortly after exiting the conference, Kim Il Sung was arrested in Jirin for his agitation activities against the Chinese nationalist youth at Yuwen Middle School on the matter of defending the Soviet Union in the War of the Chinese-Eastern Railway, and would not be set free till early May of 1930, which was after the KCP Red May Uprising.

In December, the national command stipulated the formation of the Korean revolutionary party and army. In late 1929, from the Panshi County base, the ML Faction, which was already contending against the Tuesday and Seoul-Shanghai communist factions on the matter of controlling the independence army, colluded with the Manchurian police in ambushing and arresting anti-imperialism youth team. (Choe Chang Gul, a former follower of independence army general Yang Se Bong (Liang Shifeng), who returned to Liuhe to agitate among the ranks of the independence army after conversion to Kim Il Sung’s cause, and often provided military protection to Kim Il Sung against the “baton teams of the radical ML communist gang, had set up a Liuhe anti-imperialism youth alliance.) The national command and anti-national command conducted several high profile assassinations against the mid-level military leaders of the opposite parties. For the objection to the Soviet path, numerous high-level nationalist army



leaders were assassinated by the Korean communists. In northern Manchuria, Kim Ja Jin, on January 24th, 1930, while visiting one of the rice grinding mills that the command set up, was assassinated by a Korean communist bak-ssang-sil who was a subordinate of another officer gi-mil-seong who converted to communism and worked for the Japanese agent. On April 10th, 1931, during the height of the Korean communist uprisings in Manchuria, Kim Kyu-Sik, who enjoyed the with alias "Tiger Independence Army general", was killed in Zhuhe (pearl river) County when visiting a former subordinate who had converted to communism. In southern Manchuria, Choe Chang Gul, who had renamed his portion of the Korean revolutionary army to the Oriental Revolutionary Army in spring 1931 and actively recruited members in Liuhe, Xingjing, Hailong, Qingyuan and Panshi counties, was assassinated under mysterious circumstances.

### **Kim Il Sung's Maverick Communist Activities**

In Manchuria, Kim Il Sung took spontaneous actions in organizing various groups such as "Down with Imperialism Association" in 1926, the 'Korean Jirin Teens Association' and the 'Anti-Imperialism Youth Association' (with its core members calling themselves by the Young Korean Communist Association in 1927 while at age 15, and a separate Korean communist party in 1930 at age 18. Contrary to Kim Il Sung's claim that his late father had changed path to communism, Kim Il Sung was sponsored for studies at the nationalist-run Whasung Military Academy in Whajun as a result of the prestige Kim Hyong Jik enjoyed among the independence fighters. While studying at the academy, Kim Il Sung began to read communism-related books and began to solicit comrades to form the anti-imperialism league. After quitting the academy in mid-1926, Kim Il Sung sought referral of his father's friends to attend the Yuwen Middle School at Jirin. At Yuwen, Kim Il Sung encountered mentor Shang Yue, a communist who was released from Zhejiang province army prison and was referred by top Soviet agent Chu Tu'nan to come to Manchuria to teach at Yuwen under an alias, and got chance to read more communist publications, including Jiang Guangci's *On the Yalu River*. While attending Yuwen middle school for three years, Kim Il Sung organized the youth movement among middle school Korean students in and around Jirin and adopted the inside-out path by means of cooperation with the YMCA-run, Chondoist-run [i.e., Daoist heavenly way sect] teens associations and reformist Sin Gan Federation-run teens associations, and putting his Jirin Teens Association or Young Men Association (Alliance) of White Mountain under the nationalist-run South Manchuria Youth (i.e., the Young Men Association of South Manchuria) and East Manchuria Youth (i.e., Young Men Association of East Manchuria) Kim Il Sung, utilizing his father's cloak, recruited numerous independence army officers. Further, Kim Il Sung, deviating from the communist line, refrained from working with the Young Koryo Communist Association of Manchuria, and converted Irkutsk Faction leader Gim Chan's follower to his camp. His pals in southern Manchuria, while pushing through the anti-imperialism front organization and the Social Science Research enlightenment group, got embroiled in violent confrontations with ML Faction-controlled communist youth organizations.

In May 1930, Kim Il Sung was set free from the prison of the Manchuria authority thanks to the help of connections with the YMCA and his wealthy Chinese classmate Zhang Weihua at the Yuwen Middle School in Jirin. (Kim Il Sung was arrested in Jirin and put into prison for about

half a year over his activities in defending the Soviet Union during the War of the Chinese-Eastern Railway. During this timeframe, Kim Hyuk, a converted independence army leader under Kim Ja Jin, was sent to Harbin for launching a communist youth branch.) In June, Kim Il Sung and his followers, notwithstanding the crackdown related to the Korean communists' Red May uprisings, were in the process of launching a separate Korean communist party and a separate Korean revolutionary army in preparation for the armed struggle. In late June, Kim Il Sung convened a meeting in Kalun, a junction town in Manchuria, in the atmosphere of the on-going crackdown on the Korean communists' uprisings by both the Japanese and the Manchuria authorities. The communists' objective in the massive "Red May [1]" uprisings in Dunhua, Jirin and Jiandao etc, was to drive out the Japanese Kwantung Army lieutenant general Kawashima (commander of the 19th Shidan) who was touring the border area around that time, the Manchurian Army and the Manchurian civil administrators in east Manchuria.

Interested in launching a party while the predecessor Korean factions, i.e., the Tuesday (Kayo), ML and the Seoul-Shanghai factions had failed, Kim Il-sung, who already ran into conflicts with ML Faction communists and caught the attention of Comintern agents from above, sought to clarify the Comintern's party founding guidelines amid confusion over a principle which was passed at the May 1930 Comintern conference in Khabarovsk in regards to the directive that all Korean communists in Manchuria join the CPC. Kim Il Sung first contacted Kim Gwang Ryol (Kim Ryol), a Comintern rep in Jiajiatun in late June. On July 3rd, Kim Il Sung launched the party and named it the 'Camaraderie Society for the Construction'. Separately, Kim Il Sung, on July 6th, launched the Korean revolutionary army, claiming that the [leftist- and communist-dominated] National Command was embroiled in internecine fights and killings against the anti-National Command which actually controlled the independence armies [i.e., the renamed 'singular' Korean Revolutionary Army, numbering about nine "Chudai" or battalions]. Among Kim Il Sung's guerrilla army of about 18 followers, some belonged to his father's faithful followers from inside of the independence army and some were soldiers and officers recruited from the independence army, with the objective being to instigate defection but with a caveat against the rash ultra-leftist and leftist-adventurist actions. Using his father's cloak, Kim Il Sung's Korean Independence Army enjoyed the same popularity among the Korean exiles, something that the Korean communists, who were continuing the leftist land revolution throughout 1930-1932, never enjoyed. On August 1st, 1930, the so-called International Anti-War [in defense of the Soviet Union] Day, the ML-faction-dominated Korean Communists launched another massive uprisings along the Jirin-Dunhua Railway, which caused a loss of the Koreans' credibility among the Chinese in Manchuria in Kim Il Sung's opinion.

Claiming that he was intending to revive the network that was inadvertently impacted by the crackdown by the Manchurian authorities and the Japanese consular police in the aftermath of two major uprisings that were unrelated to his group's actions, Kim Il Sung travelled to Jirin, where he almost was caught by police, and subsequently continued on to Harbin, where the Comintern agents claimed that Kil Il Sung's party launching activity did not conflict with the Comintern's "One Nation, One Party" principle. The latter came up with the idea of sending Kim Il Sung to Moscow for studies [or in another sense brain washing to rectify the deviating thoughts], which Kim Il Sung declined. At Harbin, Kim Il Sung received the Comintern sanction to be the 1st secretary for the "Korean Communist Youth League of Eastern Jirin", part of the Young Koryo Communist Association of Manchuria. Later, Comintern agents, who apparently

still took Kim Il Sung to be a serious deviator to be dealt with, sent over a courier with a brief case containing money, documents and suits for Kim to make such a trip to Moscow, even though Kim had earlier expressed wish to stay put in Manchuria for revolution. Kim Il Sung did not establish relations with and nor join the Chinese Communists, who had taken custody of the Korean communists in 1930, till well after the 18 September 1931 Japanese occupation of Manchuria. It would be in spring 1932 that Kim Il Sung took direct order from the CPC Eastern Manchurian Special Commissariat to go to Antu for organizing the guerrilla force.

### **Korean Communists' Riots & the Japanese Invasion of Manchuria**

In Yanji and Helong of eastern Manchuria, Korean communists, in May 1930, launched the Red May uprising under a trickery of escalating the conflict in several stages to pull in innocent Koreans. First, the communists mobilized the people to conduct large-scale anti-Japanese demonstrations, then escalated the protests to violent attacks at the Japanese consulates, and eventually developed the rioters into armed insurrection and Red Army brigands. In the rural countryside, the communist called for resisting land rents and tax initially, followed through with violent actions against the landlords in the form of robbing the grain barns, and ultimately formed the peasant associations in what was called the revolutionizing of villages.

In the August 1930 uprising, which was held in the name of defending the Soviet Union at the communist-designated international anti-war day, Korean communists, starting at 2 am on August 1st, upped the ante by attacking the Manchuria Army posts along the Jirin-Dunhua Railway, with simultaneous military actions in multiple spots of Dunhua (i.e., a ML Faction base) and E'mu counties etc. Han Bin, the Russian-Korean Comintern agent who was sent to Manchuria for relaying the order to have the Koreans re-enroll in the CPC, together with Park Yun Se, led the uprisings, claiming that "in order to be admitted to the Chinese Communist Party they (i.e., KCP members) should be recognized by the [CPC] party as having distinguished themselves in the practical struggle." Kim Il Sung, passing through Dunhua, noticed the heads of decapitated rioters in the cages hanging on the poles at the south gate and noted down the infamy of radical communists who were deemed by the people of Manchuria as the lackeys working on behalf of the Japanese to destabilize the area and create pretext for the Japanese to invade and occupy Manchuria. The Manchurian authority rounded up thousands of Korean suspects, and extradited numerous offenders to the Japanese governor-general's office in Korea, where they were incarcerated. The Korean communists, under the Comintern and CPC direction, continued their nonstop rampage and terrorist activities.

After the August 1st Uprising, the communists staged hundreds of riots and armed uprisings on the national humiliation day, on the Soviet revolution anniversary day, and on the Canton Commune commemoration day. In Ning'an County, Kim Cak, the future North Korea general, was appointed secretary for the Ning'an County Action Committee while working under the Tuesday Faction-dominated Young Men Alliance of East Manchuria. In October, Kim Cak launched the uprising, mobilized the masses for strikes and rioting, and established an interim Soviet government, for which he was arrested, detained at the army headquarters of the [Chinese-Eastern] Railway Protection Army in Harbin in late November, transported to the Jirin

provincial prison in September 1931 and subsequently sentenced to 7 years at Mukden before being set free in the chaos following the Japanese attack at Mukden.

In September, the CPC Central in Shanghai purportedly negated Li Lisan's line of insurrection to build the Red Army, followed by the Comintern rebuke in November. After hijacking the illiterate CPC general secretary Xiang Zhongfa, Li Lisan, who mechanically copied Lenin's theory of achieving the victory of socialist revolution in one country, proposed the thesis of achieving the first victory in one province or a few provinces.

However, the armed rebellion did not abate. Yang Lim (Yang Lin), original name being Gim Hun, was sent to Manchuria in the winter to be provincial military committee secretary after return to Shanghai from studies at the Moscow infantry school. In November, the Japanese sabotaged the CPC Special Commissariat cell in Mukden and arrested party secretary Zhang Yinglong, military committee chairman Liao Ruyuan et al., who surrendered to the Japanese immediately, while at about the same time releasing all the imprisoned communists from prison, among whom would be Yang Jingyu who went to Harbin to take on the post as president of the "Northeast anti-Japanese Society" before being sent on a mission to southern Manchuria for the Red Army work. In November 1931, Tong Changrong, who was Dairen's city commissariat secretary, relocated to Jiando to be secretary for the East Manchuria Special Commissariat. Yang Lim (Yang Lin), original Korean name being Gim Hun, was sent to Manchuria to be provincial military committee secretary after return to Shanghai from studies at the Moscow infantry school. (Known as Bi Shidi who was killed in Red Army's 1936 eastern expedition across the Yellow River, Yang Lim was an early Korean nationalist who obtained the exemption from Chinese revolutionaries in southern China to attend first the Yunnan military academy and later the Soviet-funded Whampoa Academy, joined the CPC while studying at Whampoa in 1925, was one of the two Koreans who survived the long march and got killed in the Red Army's campaign against Shanxi governor Yan Xishan instead of the fight for the Korea independence.) In December, the CPC Manchuria Special Commissariat moved to Harbin and reorganized itself under Luo Dengxian the new secretary, with Luo Dengxian himself concurrent organization director, Heh Chengxiang propaganda director, Yang Lim and subsequently Zhao Shangzhi military committee chairman, Jin Boyang 金伯阳 worker director and 徐宝铎 Xu Baoduo secretary for the provincial young communist league. Yang Zuoqing 杨佐青 (Yang Diankun??), the future prominent GRU agent in occupied China, infiltrated into the [Harbin] special district garrison force of the Northeastern Provinces in the attempt at conducting mutinies, and after a failure, fled to southern Manchuria to conduct the Red Army work before Yang Jingyu was to come over as a replacement in spring 1932.

At Yanbian (i.e., Jiandao, which included Yanji, Wangqing, Helong, and Hunchun counties) of East Manchuria, Yang Lim conducted land revolution against the Chinese and Korean landlords, organized a worker-peasant Red Guards' force, attacked the Japanese outposts, and launched Soviet governments. At Jiandao, the Japanese used to retain two battalions of troops which were part of the Siberian expedition force but had to realign troops across Manchuria for the occupation. The autumn harvest struggle lasted from September to the end of the year. With the suppression of uprisings at the border region, more in the hands of both the Chinese nationalists and the Korean nationalists than entanglement with the Japanese [who were busy fighting the Manchurian Army along the major railway lines and major cities], Yang Lim fled back to Harbin

to be military secretary at the Manchuria Provincial Commissariat before a reroute to the Jiangxi Soviet enclave. After the riots, the KCP members in Jiandao were almost completely wiped out and doomed to fail. Korean communists in eastern Manchuria, for their radical Soviet revolution which provoked the antagonism from the nationalists, were being hunted down and killed by both the Chinese nationalists and the Korean nationalists as traitors and lackeys working on behalf of the Japanese. It would be due to Kim Il Sung the communist maverick that the East Manchuria communists obtained the legality and cover to survive and expand its forces.

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For follow-up events, see the CPC Land Revolution in Manchuria, the Wanbaoshan Incident, the Nakamura Incident & the Japanese 9-18-1931 Invasion.