

(Mar. 6, 1937)

When the commotion of the Plenary Session of the Central Executive Committee died away, the Kuomintang and its Government were seen to be carrying on much as usual. Domestic policy is to proceed on familiar lines of economic reconstruction; internal political unity is to be sought by patient efforts at cooperation rather than by force; foreign policy is to be based upon the up-building of national strength, which means that the declared aims of firm resistance to invasion and of recovering the lost territories are not to be pursued recklessly.

The difficult problem of the communist armies is being worked slowly toward a compromise which the Government might state as, "Stop your rebellion and we'll give you a reservation"; and the communists in these <sup>words</sup> "Convince us that you will really stand up against Japan and will do something for the poorer classes, and we'll be quiet." Strenuous official denunciations of internal disruption and of class war, with barbed references to the record of the communists, are completed by detailed prescription of the absolute submission the Reds must make as the price of escaping destruction. In Chinese rhetoric this means that a settlement is well along. There will be general approval if the effort succeeds, though it seems that each side is feeling out the other with suspicious caution if not with plans for renewed action when desired.

Two queries must be ventured. Why do the communists want to abandon their military revolution and indeed their whole program? What will happen to the faith of all the radicals who have long contrasted the absolute ~~dedication~~ consecration of the communist leaders with the comfortable politics of bourgeois government? Somebody, right or left, is in for disillusion. When a leopard changes his spots, there is either deception or a miracle. The smiling cynicism of a Chinese friend is worth repeating: "Yes, they are communists. But they are tired and hungry Chinese communists. When the Government begins to feed them, they will no longer be dangerous." One may conjecture that it will not be easy to make the compromise include all groups or last indefinitely.

Military arrangements following the Sian revolt are bringing Chang Hsueh-liang's troops southeastward into Honan and Anhwei; restoring Central Government units to the Sian area; and pushing back Yang Hu-cheng's armies and the communists to the northwest in Kansu and portions of Shensi. The movements are most deliberate, and are not free from uneasiness. Yet all in all it seems that great dangers have been passed by with small direct cost to the nation, if only the results of political finesse are fairly stable.

Dr. Wang Chung-hui, of World Court fame and former President of the Judicial Yuan, succeeds Chang Chun as Foreign Minister. This is a minor personal adjustment, and may be temporary. Chang's policies and services will be retained without publicity. Wang Ching-wei will exert his influence in the Party and in the Central Political Council, not in a substantive Government post.

Relations with Japan are stirred in anticipation by the sharp discussions in Tokyo of the Army and its policies, and by the apparent attempt to push through some big economic concessions under the name of Sino-Japanese cooperation. M. S. B.