ANNEX X

THE EFFECT OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CLIMATE ON VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PLANS AND CAPABILITIES
I. World Public Opinion

The evidence shows that the Vietnamese Communists believe popular opposition throughout the Western world to US policy in Vietnam can be an important factor in restraining the allied hand against the insurgents. Virtually every significant Vietnamese Communist statement on war strategy has stressed the necessity of mustering the maximum amount of world opposition against allied—principally US—action in the conflict.*

Also significant in the eyes of the Vietnamese Communists are the "liberation movements" and other outbreaks of civil unrest and rebellion which occur elsewhere in the world against Western authorities. Hanoi and the Viet Cong see these, in part, as developments which hopefully will draw a direct American military or economic reaction which will distract and weaken the US war effort in Vietnam.** Such "people's action" is also regarded as encouraging the morale

*In an important speech setting forth the DRV's terms for settling the war in April 1965, for example, Premier Pham Van Dong devoted nearly a quarter of his address to this theme. "Strong and unrelenting opposition" from the "world's people," Dong said, "has the effect of checking and repelling" the "aggressive and warmongering plots" of the enemy. In the face of this opposition, he claimed, "the rear" of the enemy is "disintegrating" and "contradictions" in his ranks are increasing.

**According to the DRV chief of staff, Van Tien Dung, the US cannot put "all its economic and military potential" into action in Vietnam if it has to "cope with the situation in many other countries and in many fields...to repress other peoples."
of the Communist rank and file in Vietnam by demonstrating that they are not alone in their opposition to Western "imperialism and colonialism." Largely for these reasons, Hanoi has frequently urged greater cooperation and unified action by the Soviet Union and China during the last two years in support of the world "liberation movements." The North Vietnamese apparently consider such action a matter of great significance to Vietnamese Communist interests, since North Vietnamese usually refrain from offering advice to the rest of the bloc.

If the situation in Vietnam develops to the point where the Vietnamese Communists are forced to make a decision on whether to continue to support large-scale insurgency in the South, it is probable that their estimate on the extent of world popular opposition to allied policy in Vietnam and of the strength of the various "liberation movements" would be a significant factor in influencing their decision. It would, however, almost certainly not be a critical factor.

II. Domestic Opposition in the United States

A more important issue in any Vietnamese decision on continuing the war would be the extent and effect of opposition to American policy from within the United States. It is clear that the Vietnamese realize general Western agitation against the allies will never be particularly effective unless accompanied by important opposition in the US."

The Vietnamese Communists do not view this opposition as simply a manifestation of moral reticence among American intellectuals and leftists over Washington's war policy, but also believe that important opposition may develop as a result of the economic pinch of the war on the American public and business, and that such opposition may be further fanned by the continuing American casualties in Vietnam. It is clear that the Vietnamese believe the US will

"This has repeatedly been a theme of Vietnamese propaganda in such assertions as "the struggle of the American people plays an important role in the common struggle of the peoples to check the acts of the US Government in Vietnam."
be forced to go on an extensive wartime footing eventually and that this will greatly increase domestic opposition.*

There have been other indications in private that the Vietnamese believe domestic opposition in the US, if developed strongly, would seriously inhibit US war options. Vietnamese Communist cadres have been told by their leaders that the "increase in anger in world opinion over US activities in Vietnam" could be "among the more important factors," in addition to "casualties and economic costs," which would cause the "American government to desist and decide to give up and get out."**

It is hard, however, to assess just how far the Vietnamese Communist inner councils really believe domestic opposition to US war policy has developed to date. In their view of the American situation, the Vietnamese are doubtless influenced to some extent by their overall lack of sophistication on American politics and by their earlier successful experience in bringing significant pressure from French public opinion to bear on French war policy in 1953-1954. In private conversations with visitors to Hanoi, the North Vietnamese have sometimes compared the present war with their own experiences against the French.

Their lack of sophistication and eagerness to seize on evidence of mounting US domestic opposition can perhaps

*We have the word of North Vietnamese party first secretary, Le Duan, on this. Late last year, he told a visiting Western Communist that he was sure the US would have to mobilize a reserve force of 1,200,000 men in order to support a force of 400,000 men in Vietnam. The US, he said, could not maintain that kind of war effort without being forced eventually by opinion in the US to re-examine and change its policy.

**Western statesmen have been told by Vietnamese Communist spokesmen that they believed the opposition to US policy shown by some congressional leaders and by well-known American journalists indicated a basic "lack of confidence" in the administration's policy. According to the Vietnamese, the "US is suffering from a lack of a clear objective which would unify American public opinion" behind the American policy on Vietnam.
best be seen in their reaction to the American student protests over Vietnam policy which reached at least an initial peak in the fall of 1965. There was an increasing air of optimism over the strength of the student agitation in Vietnamese Communist propaganda at that time, capped by an announcement from Hanoi on 24 October that a "united front of the Vietnamese and American people has de facto taken shape." The propaganda strongly suggested that the Vietnamese were overreading the extent and depth of the protests in the US.* It is possible that the optimistic tone of the propaganda was intended in part to give a boost to the Vietnamese rank and file by demonstrating the sympathy which allegedly exists for their position in the enemy's own camp.

There has been some evidence in Vietnamese Communist materials during 1966 of substantial realism regarding the potential for domestic opposition in the US. This could be seen, for example, in General Vo Nguyen Giap's assessment of the war situation in the DRV party journal in January 1966. Giap placed US domestic opposition last when reviewing American weaknesses in the war. He indicated that the opposition would exercise a restraining effect on American options in Vietnam, but implied that it would not be decisive in determining US staying power in the conflict. Giap placed more emphasis on US limitations in maintaining strong economic and military positions throughout the world while pursuing a large-scale commitment in Vietnam. He did not, however, assess even this latter problem as critical in determining the outcome of the conflict.**

*Communist misjudgment of American opinion was also evident in Hanoi's threats recently to take punitive action against US flyers, and in its public abuse of the pilots. When Hanoi realized the depth of feeling in the US over the issue, it hastily stopped its propaganda regarding trials. Its willingness to do so is indicative of the importance it assigns to influencing US opinion.

**In private, visiting Western officials in Hanoi have been given much the same line during the past few months. One official was told that the DRV was "not counting" on US opinion to win the war. The same theme has been reflected (continued on next page)
It would appear that the Vietnamese Communist leadership does not expect any important difficulties for Washington in the near future, at least, as a result of popular opposition to the war or because of economic/military stresses caused by the conflict in the United States. Thus, in any decision taken on the war by the Vietnamese Communists in the next few months, the status of domestic American opposition would probably not be regarded as critical. If, in the longer pull, however, the US was not forced into extensive wartime mobilization measures and strong domestic opposition was not triggered as Hanoi appears to expect, the situation could possibly become a very important factor in any basic Vietnamese Communist decision on prolonging the fighting.

III. Cambodian Attitudes

Phnom Penh's attitude toward the Vietnam war is of importance to Hanoi's own plans chiefly on two counts: (1) Cambodia's ties to the 1954 Geneva agreements and, (2) its contiguity with Viet Cong operational bases in South Vietnam. By appealing to the nationalistic proclivities of Cambodia's leader, Prince Sihanouk, the Asian Communists have been able to gain a substantial amount of political support for the Vietnamese insurgents during the past several years. This has included Cambodian condemnation of the US role in South Vietnam as well as accusations that the US presence there is, as Hanoi claims, in violation of the Geneva agreements. Both of these themes are regarded by the Vietnamese as important foundation stones in their own political policy on the war.

On the physical side, Cambodia has served as a source and a transit channel for limited amounts of both food and other supplies for the Viet Cong. The Cambodians have also taken a primarily neutral stance in permitting limited use of their territory as a refuge and a secure base for the Vietnamese Communist forces.

in the remarks of DRV diplomats abroad. In May, a French newsmen was told by the DRV representative in Paris that Hanoi was greatly interested in encouraging the efforts of students and intellectuals in the US in their opposition to US policy, but realized that they represented only a minority.
The Communists, nevertheless, do not have an ally or even a constant sideline supporter in the Cambodians. Cambodia's ambivalent foreign policy has frequently been at odds with Hanoi's stand on such issues as Indo-Chinese neutrality and the exact terms for settlement of the Vietnam war. The Communists have thus had to adopt a basically cautious policy in exploiting Cambodia for their war effort. They are probably reluctant to make any really large scale or far reaching plans for the use of Cambodian territory by the Viet Cong, and they cannot automatically count on receiving consistent and favorable political support from Phnom Penh.

On balance, the situation probably tends to exert a restraining influence on Vietnamese Communist policy options in the sense that it forces the Vietnamese to focus primarily on better strategic use of South Vietnamese and Lao-tian territory in their efforts to cope with the growing allied military pressure on their operational bases.

IV. The Effect of Links With Western Leaders

The Vietnamese Communists also regard the establishment and preservation of adequate links to leaders and key officials of Western countries as an important element in their war strategy. There are a number of reasons for this apart from a natural inclination to enhance Vietnamese Communist prestige at the international level. Such contacts, for one thing, offer the Vietnamese an opening to promote opposition to allied policy on Vietnam among influential individuals in the free world.

This can be seen in Hanoi's treatment of the Indian Government. Although Indian proposals for settling the war have consistently been rejected by the Vietnamese as unacceptably generous to the allies, Hanoi has been very careful to avoid direct attacks on the Indian Leaders in its propaganda. It has assiduously cultivated its diplomatic relations with New Delhi and treated Indian representatives visiting North Vietnam with considerable courtesy and friendship. The Vietnamese doubtless believe the Indian outlook has an important influence on over-all Afro-Asian opinion about the war. Hanoi apparently also regards some Indian leaders as potential channels for floating Vietnamese views about the war to the allies.
During 1966, the Vietnamese seem to have given special attention to the use of Western statesmen as third party channels to the allied leadership. This development has been most evident in Hanoi's treatment of the Canadian representatives who have visited or have been stationed with the ICC in Hanoi. The North Vietnamese have frankly told them that they wish to preserve the channel which the Canadians provide to the US, and have suggested that Canadian visitors be empowered to discuss more than just ICC business while in Hanoi.

From what has been learned of third party contacts with the North Vietnamese, it does not appear that the greater Hanoi interest in talking to prominent Westerners during 1966 represents any softening as yet in Vietnamese resolve to continue the war. It probably does mean, however, that the Communist leaders realize it might become necessary at some point to change their tactics and actively consider a political settlement of the conflict. At such a time, third party contacts could prove especially valuable, in part because they would provide a channel to the allies that did not first filter through the bloc. At such a critical point, the Vietnamese might not see eye to eye on strategy with bloc leaders.

V. The Public Posture of the National Liberation Front (NFLSV)

Since the creation of the NFLSV in 1960, the Vietnamese have made a continuous effort to demonstrate that the Front enjoys broad political support and control throughout South Vietnam and that its "growing strength" is supplemented by mounting recognition of Front claims and position in international circles. The results of this have been disappointing at best for the Communists. Front influence in South Vietnam is limited chiefly to the rural areas under Communist control; even in those areas, the Front is widely regarded as a facade to cover the operations of the hard core Viet Cong (see ANNEX III for a discussion of the numerical strength and influence of the Front in South Vietnam).

On the international side, although there is a substantial body of opinion in the free world which holds that the insurgency in the South is an indigenous, patriotic and legitimate revolutionary movement, the Front's own activities have contributed relatively little to the spread of this belief.
The Front is widely regarded in the West as more or less a voice for the Communist view on Vietnam. Efforts to achieve quasi-diplomatic status for the Front have not been very successful. Even some of the bloc countries where the Front has opened "permanent representations," have made it clear that the NFLSV is accredited only to local national front organizations and not to the bloc government itself.

The best evidence, perhaps, of the weak position of the Front lies in its failure to establish a provisional national government in South Vietnam. While both North Vietnamese and Front officials have hinted on several occasions in the past year that such a move was in process, it will probably not take place in the predictable future. Such an action would pose formidable problems for the Communists and actually further expose the lack of public support for the Front. It would almost certainly alienate politically active groups in the South, such as the Buddhists, who do not entirely support the Saigon government and have political ambitions themselves. The Front would also find it difficult to establish a satisfactory seat of government in South Vietnam.*

Despite the weaknesses of the Front, however, there are compelling reasons for the Vietnamese Communists to continue to operate under its banner. It provides, for example, a formal medium under which all facets of the insurgent political and military activity in South Vietnam can be organized. Although it does not yet pretend to formal government on a national scale, it does establish for the Communists a needed organizational alternative to the Saigon regime. It is also useful as a platform for advertising the broad program of political and economic objectives which the Communists have set forth as their alleged goals in South Vietnam.

*The leadership of any provisional NFLSV government would have little attraction among politically conscious elements of the population in South Vietnam not allied with the Communists. Movement toward the opening of negotiations on the war, should the Vietnamese Communists decide to do so, might also be complicated by the establishment of a Front government.
ANNEX XI

THE PROBABLE NEAR TERM MILITARY AND POLITICAL STRATEGY OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS
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THE PROBABLE NEAR TERM MILITARY AND POLITICAL STRATEGY OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS

I. General Concepts

The near-term military strategy of the Communists will probably revolve around two major efforts: (1) to keep intact, as far as possible, their main force units in the South, and (2) to build up this main force strength, both in quantity and quality, so as to be able to counter the allied power when US forces in Vietnam have built up to the level of 400,000 expected by the Communists at the end of 1966. The North Vietnamese leaders probably hope that if they can go into 1967 with an ability to field a main force strength of what we estimate to be about 125,000 as compared to a US strength of 400,000, they will be able to continue the war. Hanoi probably estimates that a four-to-one manpower advantage in favor of the US will not be enough for the US to decisively defeat the Communists. Of particular importance to the Communists is the fielding of sufficient combat units to counter the expected US strength in combat maneuver battalions. (See ANNEX IV for a discussion of ratios in US and Communist combat strength)

One of the best recent Communist assessments of the military situation was contained in a lengthy article carried in the June issue of the North Vietnamese army journal. This article, as well as a discussion of tactics in a document captured in Binh Dinh Province in June 1966, indicate that the Communist plan for the rest of this year is largely a continuation of their 1964-1965 concept. According to the article, by mid-1965, Communists attacks in the highlands were coordinated with those in the "delta"--a clear reference to what in fact was an almost simultaneous launching of operations in the Kontum-Pleiku-Phu Bon provincial area of the highlands together with large operations nearer the central coast in Quang Ngai Province and in the provinces around Saigon. The result was, as the article declared, a spreading of ARVN's forces, particularly its reserves, so thin that the South Vietnamese army's ability to keep going was in question.
The article indicated that the Communists will concentrate again this year on opening simultaneous campaigns in the highlands and in the area northeast and northwest of Saigon. The frequency of other actions in the northern coastal provinces may accelerate toward the end of the year as the northeast monsoons begin there. The primary aim will again be to stretch the enemy's forces "thin," and to inflict as many casualties as possible. This time, however, the primary opponent will be US rather than South Vietnamese units. Although the latter continue to be struck as attractive targets of opportunity, captured documents and recent Communist propaganda identify US troops as the principal threat and dismiss the South Vietnamese "puppet army" as "no longer a force which can deal on equal terms with us."

The article also covered specific military concepts which appear to constitute advice from the High Command on how to battle the US in South Vietnam during the rest of 1966. It suggested that the Communists believe they can be relatively effective in limiting the mobility of US forces. It referred, for example, to the creation of what it termed an "extermination belt" around Da Nang. This belt was not explained in detail, but the positioning and activity of Communist forces in the Da Nang area suggest that the Communists believe they can create a type of flexible cordon around Da Nang and other US base regions which can restrict many US forces largely to their general base and confine them primarily to static defense tasks.

One major tactical adjustment the Communists will have to undertake is better concealment of the locations of their

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*The document captured in Binh Dinh stressed that the enemy must be attacked on successive days both in the highlands and in the lowlands. It declared, however, that our capabilities for this area are still low and far from being able to completely annihilate an enemy unit." Thus, "it will be difficult to attack the enemy continuously," and "if the enemy reacts with great strength, with high mobility, we can hardly avoid being pushed into a negative situation and suffering losses." To cope with this problem, it stresses the need for superior morale and discipline to offset the superior US firepower, for a continued build-up of forces, and for the devising of new plans to "keep up with the situation and mission."
main force units. US forces are now gathering more and better intelligence on the tactical disposition of Communist forces than was ever available to the ARVN alone. The ability of the US to conduct "spoil operations" on the basis of this intelligence appears to be keeping the Communists off balance and inflicting heavy losses which require two to three months for a unit's recovery. These "spoil operations," moreover, are playing havoc with the practical application of one of North Vietnam's cardinal military tenets—that main force units must avoid pitched battles during the period in which they are still building up.

As a result, it seems likely that during the rest of 1966, the Communists will stick primarily to ambushes, hit-and-run strikes at isolated posts, terrorist bombings, and guerrilla harassment, although they will almost certainly attempt to conduct operations in regimental strength and greater should favorable conditions arise. Their recent military conduct suggests that they may frequently try to devolve large-scale battles into a series of skirmishes in which Communist units hit piecemeal at smaller US or allied units.

II. Probable Areas of Communist Operations

Although it is difficult to predict precisely what the Communist forces will attempt to do during the next six months to one year, there is considerable intelligence, gathered from captured documents, prisoner interrogations, and agent reports, and derived from known deployments of Communist main force units and from their operations this year, to indicate certain priority areas and targets. The totality of this information reinforces the belief that the Communists hope to repeat their operational patterns of 1965.

A. The Highlands

The continued reinforcement this year of the central highlands area bordering Laos and Cambodia with regular PAVN regiments suggests that this area is envisaged as a major base and staging area, first for operations to lure and attack US units under favorable conditions, and secondly for gradual encroachment on the "delta" or lowland areas. There have been numerous indications—in prisoner statements, in agent reports, in Communist propaganda, and in the pattern of increased guerrilla harassment—that the
Communists hoped this year to renew their 1965 monsoon effort in the highlands.*

These Communist plans apparently have been disrupted by the series of US "spoiling" operations conducted, some in conjunction with ARVN troops, in the highlands areas since early 1966. The Communists may nevertheless continue their efforts to apply "mobile warfare" principles in the highlands, although these may be preceded or accompanied by smaller action designed to disperse friendly forces and to permit the Viet Cong to regain the initiative. One document captured in the spring of 1966 contained battle plans for an attack against the US 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) base at An Khe.** Attacks on such US strong points, however, will probably be limited to mortar attacks or attempted sabotage and be designed largely to tie down US troops and achieve a psychological impact.

B. Coastal Areas of II Corps

Elsewhere in the II Corps area, the principal Communist interest continues to focus on Dinh Dinh Province on the coast. There is some recent evidence, however, that at least one PAVN Regiment--the 150th--has moved eastward from the Cambodian border area of the highlands, possibly to fill out a divisional structure under the Communist Southern Front

*Reportedly singled out for attack were Special Forces camps such as those at Duc Co, Plei Me, Plei Mrong, and Plei Djereng in Pleiku Province, and other targets extending as far as Toumorong district in Kontum Province to the north and into Darlac Province to the south. Coupled with road interdiction efforts, these attacks presumably would have the dual purpose of providing traps for the ambush of reinforcing units, and of eliminating some allied outposts in strategic territory.

**The Communists could find this a tempting target for many reasons--the frequent fog there which limits air response, the vulnerability of Route 19 to interdiction or ambush, and the previous Viet Minh success in trapping the French in this area. The Communists' recognition of their own vulnerability in positional warfare, however, makes it unlikely that they will attempt a major assault on An Khe.
headquarters in the Phu Yen-Khanh Hoa Province area on the coast. Long-term allied military operations to protect rice harvesting activities in this area appear to be successfully denying the Communists access to their primary targets in this part of II Corps—food and manpower.

The heavy Communist troop concentrations in the Phu Yen-Khanh Hoa area and in the Binh Dinh-Quang Ngai area, where another division operates on both sides of the provincial border across ARVN corps boundaries, may foreshadow renewed attacks toward the coast. The latter months of 1966 and the early months of 1967 would appear to be the most favorable period for larger scale Communist operations in this area, although hit-and-run raids coordinated with actions in the highlands could occur here at any time.

C. I Corps

One of the provinces consistently suffering the greatest number of Communist-initiated actions has been Quang Ngai, in the southern part of I Corps. Extensive operational plans for extending the already considerable Communist control over this province have been captured this year, but the Communist main force units have not yet proved sufficiently strong to carry out such plans in full or to threaten the province capital itself. At present the Communists in this area also appear to be seeking to avoid sustained, large-scale engagements in favor of rapid hit-and-run attacks and continued erosive tactics. They may, however, resume efforts to grab off isolated district towns as weather conditions become more favorable.

There is little hard evidence available on Communist intentions in the northern Quang Ngai-Quang Tin-Quang Nam part of I Corps. The presence of sizeable forces in this area appears primarily designed to protect their Military Region 5 headquarters area from US operations and to tie down substantial US forces in the vicinity of the US bases at Chu Lai and Da Nang. More immediately significant may be the presence of two Communist divisional structures in northernmost I Corps—the Northern Front headquarters area in Thua Thien Province and the recently infiltrated PAVN 324B division near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in Quang Tri Province. One mission
of these forces probably is to draw US units into the area
and spread them "thin."**

COMUSMACV has for some time anticipated an increased
Communist thrust in the Quang Tri-Thua Thien area. This
would not only divert attention from Communist efforts to
develop a base in the highlands and permit some respite there,
but would facilitate support from or sanctuary in the Commu-
nist "rear base" in North Vietnam. The presence of the
324th, which infiltrated across the DMZ, may portend increased
use of this shorter, more direct route in addition to routes
via the Laotian corridor. The Communists may also hope to
exploit the inactivity and possible lowered effectiveness of
South Vietnam's 1st Division in this area. The immediate of-
fensive plans of the 324th Division now appear to have been
disrupted or delayed by early US detection and counteropera-
tions, but increased Communist activity in this northernmost
part of South Vietnam remains probable.**

D. III Corps

There is strong evidence from the deployment of Viet
Cong forces, that the Communists intended

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*One recently captured PAVN prisoner claims that there
are two other PAVN divisions--one just above the DMZ in
North Vietnam and one near Route 9 opposite western Quang
Tri in Laos--prepared to cooperate in just this effort.
The presence of additional PAVN divisions around Quang Tri
could also reflect further infiltration in process, or pos-
sibly plans to seize territory in Quang Tri. Such plans
have been reported by some 324th Division prisoners.

**An entrenched Communist position in northernmost I
Corps could provide them an alternate, although less effec-
tive, base area for ultimately moving against the lowlands.
The Communists appear to have been trying for some time to
forge a secure area stretching from their zone C stronghold
in Tay Ninh Province northwest of Saigon across the highlands
to North Vietnam at the 17th parallel. This appears to have
been one aim of the coordinated drives in mid-1965 in the
central highlands and in the Phuoc Long-Binh Duong area near
Saigon.
to resume an effort to link up the southern portions of their base complex in III Corps during the 1966 summer monsoon period. The primary targets appear to have been a district town and a Special Forces camp in Dinh Long Province which separates Zone C and Zone D, northwest and northeast of Saigon, respectively. Possibly related efforts to improve their position in III Corps include the presence of an understrength division or Front headquarters southeast of Saigon in coastal Phuoc Tuy Province, and efforts to build up main force units in previously neglected areas east of Saigon, presaged in part by intensified guerrilla harassment throughout early 1966.

US operations targeted against both the Viet Cong Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), headquartered in Zone C, and against Communist regiments in the Binh Long-Binh Duong area appear to have thwarted or delayed Communist plans in the III Corps area.* Nevertheless, the heavy concentration of both main force units and guerrillas in much of the III Corps area gives the Communists the capability to place a variety of military, economic, and psychological pressures on the area around Saigon. This pressure is reinforced through road interdiction, shipping harassment, and terrorism within the capital itself.

E. IV Corps

In the delta areas south and west of Saigon the number of large-scale Viet Cong operations have been dropping for some time. This probably reflects some reduction in capability because of both heavy casualties and heavy troop levies for other areas especially III Corps. Sporadic attacks against ARVN and paramilitary outposts and Special Forces camps have occurred in recent months, however, and probably will continue. The delta area is of vital importance to the Communists as a source of rice and manpower, and in substantial portions they remain solidly entrenched. Except when

*US operations in this northern part of the III Corps area are being sustained on a long-term basis to drive a secure wedge between Zones C and D, apply increasing pressure on the Communist military and political headquarters in the area--COSVN, Military Region 7 (now known as MR1), and Saigon/Gia Dinh--and gradually weaken the Viet Cong hold on their traditional base areas.
engaged in strength by ARVN operations, the Communists in IV Corps will probably continue to give primary emphasis to maintaining their lines of communication between the delta and Zone C--as stressed in captured documents--and to retaining base areas and secure zones for training and for the smuggling of supplies. They will probably also attempt to harass road and water communications between Saigon and the delta in order to put an economic squeeze on Saigon and on the provinces served by the capital.*

III. Prospects and Problems

Although there is as yet no hard evidence available on Communist planning beyond 1966, we anticipate no significant change in present Communist military strategy through at least the spring of 1967. The primary objective of the Communists, if they can succeed in maintaining their main force basically intact through this year, will probably be to inflict enough heavy casualties on the US forces--particularly in the highlands--to cause the US to pull in its horns and stop its "spoiling" operations.

The Communists, however, will be under severe pressure to come up with some new ideas or modifications of their present tactics. Although they will almost certainly maintain their reliance on the ambush, recent failures in this tactic, resulting from US anticipatory moves and rapid counteraction, have caused them setbacks. They will probably also work to improve their "close-in" battle tactic which is designed to inhibit US use of artillery and air support. The increasing emphasis noted in captured Communist documents on the need for a superior human element--improved cadres and improved troop discipline and morale--points up the Communists' awareness that, under continued pressure from US troops and air bombardment, the coming year will be a highly significant one for them.

IV. The Near Term Political Strategy of the Vietnamese Communists

Within South Vietnam, Communist political goals for the remainder of 1966 and early 1967 will have to take account

*Harassment of district towns, outposts, and US and ARVN airfields, primarily by mortar fire, will probably continue, along with small-scale actions to disrupt and undermine the government's Revolutionary Development (pacification) program.
of recent Communist setbacks. Captured documents indicate that the Communists will give priority to strengthening and improving their political apparatus, notably by trying to improve the quality of political cadres down to the village level, and by continued emphasis on the recruitment of party members and sympathizers in both rural and urban areas.

With regard to particular target groups for penetration, concentration will probably continue to be on the South Vietnamese army and civil service. Laboring class elements may attract increasing attention, not only in the hope of fostering new wage-price spirals and further economic discontent, but because of the access of construction workers to US base facilities and of porters and other supporting workers to US logistical supply lines. The Communists will probably continue their efforts to exploit communal tensions—between the Buddhists and Catholics, between the Chinese and ethnic Vietnamese, between the Vietnamese and the ethnic tribes, and among other rival political factions. The failure of the Buddhists in confronting the military in Saigon may well give the Communists second thoughts about expending too many assets on trying to gain a handle on the Buddhist organization. There is little question that the Communists will continue to focus their proselytizing efforts on the ARVN in an attempt to encourage desertions and defections. They will also try to sow distrust and dissension among the Vietnamese over the US presence, role, and intentions.

The Communist policy with regard to South Vietnam's coming constitutional assembly election in September is still unclear. It seems doubtful at this time that the Communists have any significant number of followers among the candidates who have filed, though many of the candidates are relative unknowns even to local government officials. There are scattered reports that the Communists will make serious efforts to disrupt the election. Similar such reports preceded past elections, but Communist interference turned out to be relatively ineffective. Communist propaganda statements have, however, vigorously denounced the coming election as a farce and a trick. They may thus feel impelled to try to take a more active position through covert campaigning against candidates, or through terrorism and other direct sabotage efforts.
In areas under their control, the Communists are likely to continue their efforts to consolidate their hold. There has been evidence over the past year of some quasi-governmental reorganization at the local level through the establishment of village "Liberation Committees." Documents indicate that these committees are Party-controlled administrative bodies rather than a part of the Liberation Front structure. This local government endeavor may receive increased emphasis, possibly in concert with local plebiscites with which the Communists might hope to challenge and undercut the impact of elected institutions created by Saigon.
ANNEX XII

AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF ASIAN COMMUNIST EMPLOYMENT OF THE POLITICAL TACTIC OF NEGOTIATIONS
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AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF ASIAN COMMUNIST EMPLOYMENT OF THE POLITICAL TACTIC OF NEGOTIATIONS

Summary

This Annex discusses the Asian (particularly Chinese) Communist practice of negotiating, focusing on the motives which, in the past, have impelled Asian Communists to negotiate and the signs they have given when they were prepared to talk. It includes an analysis of the fight-talk tactic used in the Chinese civil war in the 1930s and 1940s as well as a detailed examination of the Korean experience of 1950-53 and the Vietnamese experience of 1953-54. Finally, there is a short discussion of implications for Vietnam today.

a. General Findings

On the two occasions when the Chinese Communists have initiated negotiations during military conflicts, their forces were either

(a) weak and in danger of annihilation, as in the Chinese civil war, or

(b) badly hurt in the field, as in the Korean war.

As they negotiated, they continued to fight. This fight-and-talk tactic was formulated by Mao Tse-tung in 1940 as a means to preserve his weak forces from being destroyed by Chiang Kai-shek's militarily superior armies. Subsequently, it was used in Korea by the Chinese and North Koreans, at first as a expedient to shield their badly hurt armies in 1951, and then, from 1951 to 1953, as a holding tactic until they could extract terms enabling them to disengage from a costly limited war.

In Indochina, however, the decision to begin negotiations was imposed by the Soviet and Chinese leaders on Ho Chi Minh when they feared American involvement and escalation of the war more than he did in 1953. They urged Ho to close out the war, which he was by no means losing in the field, and persuaded him to make concessions to the French after talks started and to try to seize Vietnam by a process
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Summary

This Annex discusses the Asian (particularly Chinese) Communist practice of negotiating, focusing on the motives which, in the past, have impelled Asian Communists to negotiate and the signs they have given when they were prepared to talk. It includes an analysis of the fight-talk tactic used in the Chinese civil war in the 1930s and 1940s as well as a detailed examination of the Korean experience of 1950-53 and the Vietnamese experience of 1953-54. Finally, there is a short discussion of implications for Vietnam today.

a. General Findings

On the two occasions when the Chinese Communists have initiated negotiations during military conflicts, their forces were either
(a) weak and in danger of annihilation, as in the Chinese civil war, or
(b) badly hurt in the field, as in the Korean war. As they negotiated, they continued to fight. This fight-and-talk tactic was formulated by Mao Tse-tung in 1940 as a means to preserve his weak forces from being destroyed by Chiang Kai-shek's militarily superior armies. Subsequently, it was used in Korea by the Chinese and North Koreans, at first as an expedient to shield their badly hurt armies in 1951, and then, from 1951 to 1953, as a holding tactic until they could extract terms enabling them to disengage from a costly limited war.

In Indochina, however, the decision to begin negotiations was imposed by the Soviet and Chinese leaders on Ho Chi Minh when they feared American involvement and escalation of the war more than he did in 1953. They urged Ho to close out the war, which he was by no means losing in the field, and persuaded him to make concessions to the French after talks started and to try to seize Vietnam by a process of...
of low-risk political subversion. Even after Ho had been induced to begin negotiations, his desire to use Mao’s original fight-and-talk tactic for a protracted period was subordinated to the larger interests of Soviet policy (to split the Western alliance in Europe) and Chinese policy (to prevent the US from establishing alliances in Asia). The Soviets and Chinese viewed these interests as being best served by a “peace” offensive and hindered by continuation of the Indochina war. Ho made concessions, particularly on the matter of partition, which were later viewed by him and his lieutenants as a mistake not to be repeated.

b. The CCP-KMT Civil War (1937 to 1949)

Constantly maneuvering to preserve the badly depleted ranks of his Red Army from complete destruction by Chiang Kai-shek’s militarily superior forces, Mao in September 1939 finally induced Chiang to establish, on paper, a CCP-KMT united front against Japan. But within the context of this paper alliance, Mao expanded his military and political forces in the northwest and even directed quick-decision thrusts to be made against isolated KMT units. As a pattern of limited armed conflict and political struggle emerged in 1940, Mao avoided major military operations which would provoke a major counterattack and developed a tactic of limited-fight, limited talk: “After we have repulsed the attack of the KMT forces and before they launch a new one, we should stop at the proper moment and bring that particular fight to a close. In the period that follows, we should make a truce with them.” (Mao’s statement of 11 March 1940). In this way, Mao gained a series of small victories without running the risk of a general civil war, while expanding his territorial holdings behind the Japanese lines.

While fighting continued on the local level, CCP-KMT negotiations went forward on the national level intermittently from 1940 to 1946. Represented in Chungking by his brilliant negotiator, Chou En-lai, Mao used various lulls in the civil war to increase his regular forces, and in 1944, he permitted the American Army Observer Mission to operate in Yenan because its very presence had a political restraining effect on Chiang. Recognizing the strengthened military and political position of Chiang after the surrender of Japan in August 1945, Mao tried to settle for a half-way station—legalization of the CCP—on the road to an eventual seizure of national power. Chiang refused to facilitate this eventual takeover. On 19 August 1946, shortly after KMT planes bombed Yenan, Mao dropped the talking half of his dual tactic
and began to fight the all-out civil war, which his forces decisively won in mid-1949.

c. The Korean War (1950 to 1953)

Initial Chinese Communist military successes from November through December 1950 increased Mao's confidence that the UN forces could be driven from Korea if military pressure was sustained, and Chou En-lai rejected a cease-fire as "a breathing spell" for the UN. But a series of manpower-killing advances by UN and ROK units in March and early April 1951 followed by the blunting of the Communists' big April and May offensives, which cost them an estimated 221,000 men, left the ranks of Mao's best armies decimated by 1 June 1951. Of the 21 Chinese Communist divisions which had initiated the April and May offensives, 16 had suffered about 50 percent casualties.

These disastrous defeats impelled Mao to begin negotiations, but there were no prior indications that he was prepared to drop his previous political conditions for a cease-fire. When, on 23 June 1951, Soviet UN delegate Malik for the first time called for talks for a cease-fire, he merely avoided raising the preconditions that the US must withdraw from Taiwan and that Peking should be admitted to the UN. Mao seized upon the military breathing-s spell to improve the badly impaired combat capabilities of his forces in the field.

Mao's strategy at the armistice negotiations (July 1951 to July 1953) was to wage a "protracted struggle," combining tactics of political attrition with limited military pressure. But this strategy did not break the determination of the US negotiators to defend the principle of voluntary repatriation of war prisoners. The death of Stalin (5 March 1953) permitted the development of a new Soviet attitude toward East-West tensions in general and concluding an armistice in particular. Their pressure on Mao and his own recognition that further resistance was purposeless, and even harmful to his economic program, impelled him to retreat and accept voluntary repatriation—a move which opened the way for the armistice agreement of 27 July 1953.

d. Vietnam (1953 to 1954)

The same considerations that led the Soviets and the Chinese to negotiate an end to the Korean war in mid-1953 made them look with favor upon a negotiated settlement of
the Indochina war. At the time, however, the fortunes of
the Vietnamese Communists in their eight-year fight with the
French were steadily improving and Ho Chi Minh gave no in-
dication that he would be willing to accept less in a nego-
tiated settlement than his forces could seize on the battle-
field.

The first indication that the Communists might consider
negotiations came from the Soviets, who began in August 1953
to quote with approval demands in the French press for a
"Panmunjom" in Indochina. By September, the Chinese had
also indicated a willingness to discuss Indochina at the
conference table. But Vietnamese Communist propaganda made
it clear that these Soviet and Chinese initiatives were being
made at a time when Ho was still resisting the concept of ne-
gotiations. The attitude of the Viet Minh leaders at this
time is illustrative of the generalization that Asian Commu-
nists have been unwilling to begin negotiations when they
have been in an advantageous position militarily, or have not
been badly hurt in the field.

As the French Government was being subjected to increa-
sing pressure from many members of the National Assembly and
from the French public for an end to the costly war, Moscow
and Peking acted to convince Ho that he could make major gains
through negotiations. On 29 November 1953, he finally took
the initiative in proposing negotiations, but it was a hedged
proposal that, in effect, demanded a complete French surrender.

Premier Laniel was able to resist the strong domestic
pressure for immediate bilateral negotiations with the Viet
Minh by agreeing to discuss Indochina at the Geneva confer-
ence in May 1954. Although Ho clearly preferred bilaterals,
(in which he would have been in a much stronger position vis-
a-vis the French than he was at Geneva), he was again pres-
sured by the Soviets to agree to international negotiations.

At Geneva, Molotov and Chou En-lai moved adroitly to
avoid any impasse that could be used by the US as an excuse
for intervention in the fighting. Ho, whose delegate, Pham
Van Dong, started with maximum demands after the fall of
Dien Bien Phu (7 May 1954), apparently calculated that nego-
tiations could continue for some time without leading to
American involvement. His tactics of protracted negotiations,
which would afford him more time to solidify his military
position, were similar to those of Mao in Korea. But again
and again, the Soviets and Chinese acted to undercut his delegate's maximum demands at Geneva for French political concessions in exchange for a ceasefire.

The Viet Minh certainly had not expected to have to make as many political concessions as they finally agreed to at Geneva. Ho was in a position to negotiate from strength and to do so for a long time, but he found himself caught in a Sino-Soviet political web and was persuaded not to use his growing military capability to force major concessions. It was clear at the time that the North Vietnamese were far from completely satisfied with the Geneva compromises. As time has gone on, they have probably become even more convinced that the political concessions they made there were a mistake. The clear awareness that they were impelled, primarily by Moscow and Peking, to stop at a half-way station on the road to total military victory has made them all the more determined to fight on in the present situation.

e. Implications for Vietnam Today

North Vietnamese and Chinese Communist officials have indicated privately that the compromises made in 1954, providing the Viet Minh with something less than a total takeover of Vietnam, were a mistake. Ho's determination not to stop half-way again, even in the face of increased US airstrikes, is bolstered by Mao's special need to keep him fighting. Mao's special need, which stems largely from an image of himself as "leader" of the international Communist movement, is to prove Soviet and other doubters wrong regarding the ability of revolutionaries to defeat the US in a protracted small war.

Discussion

A. The CCP-KMT Civil War (1937 to 1949)

The badly depleted ranks of Mao's Red Army, which straggled into the sanctuary of northwest China in November 1935 after the punishing attacks of Chiang Kai-shek's forces during the Long March, were incapable of resisting an all-out KMT offensive. Aware of this basic fact, Mao repeatedly appealed to Chiang to end the civil war and establish a CCP-KMT united front to expel Japanese forces from north China. Chiang was unwilling to comply primarily because Mao insisted on preserving his military units for use in the revolution: "It
goes without saying that we shall never allow Chiang to lay a finger on the Red Army." (Mao's statement of 14 March 1936). But Japan's large-scale attack on China in July 1937 provided Mao with a new opportunity to move Chiang into a united front against Japan. Mao took the first formal step: on 22 September 1937 the CCP declared that its armed forces would be under the "direct control" of Chiang. Actually, three days after this paper statement, Mao made it clear that "direct control" was only an anti-Japanese political facade and that units and their weapons would remain under Communist control:

It is necessary to maintain the CCP's absolutely independent leadership in what originally was the Red Army as well as in all guerrilla units. Communists are not permitted to vacillate on this principle. (CCP resolution of 25 September 1937)

Mao used the mythical anti-Japanese united front to deter the KMT forces from attacking his new sanctuary in the northwest and to expand his military, territorial, and political holdings. Most of the CCP effort was directed toward extending its assets, some was directed toward guarding against a KMT attack, and only a little was directed toward engaging Japanese armed forces. Negotiations for the reorganization of the former "Red Army" units moved very slowly in 1937 and 1938, and clashes continued on the local level between some Nationalist and Communist forces. As friction increased, Mao began to formulate his political-military tactic. On 6 November 1938, he directed that the CCP's main field work should be in the relatively secure rear areas of the Japanese forces, calculating that the political-military vacuum behind the Japanese lines would shield the CCP from superior KMT forces until the foothold in the northwest could be expanded. Mao enlarged his armed forces as quickly and efficiently as possible, but he always stopped just short of provoking an open break with Chiang and the retribution of a major KMT offensive.

Calculated restraint, intended to provide Chiang with no pretext for an offensive, was designed by Mao to be a temporary tactic to gain vitally needed breathing spells prior to
the opening of a revolutionary advance in the future. Mao indicated the "positive" role of reduced military aggressiveness as a tactic in advancing the revolution:

Our concession, withdrawal, turning to the defensive or suspending action, whether in dealing with allies or enemies, should always be regarded as part of the entire revolutionary policy, as an indispensable link in the general revolutionary line, as a segment in the curvilinear movement. In short they are positive.

(Mao's statement of 5 November 1938)

That is, defensive or suspended action was part of Mao's policy to expand his armies and the CCP membership behind Japanese lines with the aim of seizing more territory at the expense of the KMT. But quick-decision thrusts were never abandoned. For example, in the spring of 1939, Communist forces moved quickly into Shantung Province, and in the winter of 1939-1940, they decimated KMT forces in Hopei Province. These clashes were fully concordant with Mao's policy of expanding holdings by armed struggle within the context of the CCP-KMT paper united front.

A pattern of limited armed conflict and political struggle emerged in CCP-KMT relations in the spring of 1940. Mao began to refine his fighting-and-talking tactic. Militarily, he limited the offensive operations of the Communist armies, which were still considerably inferior to KMT armies; politically, he worked vigorously to indoctrinate workers, peasants, and intellectuals. In this fashion, he groped his way, seeking out and exploiting the soft spots in Chiang's military and political armor.

Mao systemicized his tactic. On 11 March 1940, he set forth the unique position that there was no incongruity between waging a political-military struggle against Chiang while maintaining a united front with him. The struggle half of this dialectical policy was intended to demonstrate to Chiang that Mao's forces could not be destroyed—that they would fight back against any KMT offensives. The unity half was intended to deter KMT attacks and to "avert the outbreak of large-scale civil war." Mao depicted the partial struggle against Chiang as "the most important means for strengthening KMT-CCP cooperation," his calculation having been, as he pointed out on 4 May 1940 in a directive to Communist field commanders operating in east China, that clashes with the KMT forces were necessary...
so as to make the KMT afraid to oppress us... and compel them to recognize our legal status, and make them hesitate to engineer a split.

That is, Mao, on occasion, used military action in certain areas rather than direct political concessions to sustain the united front on paper.

He correctly estimated that small CCP military thrusts would not provoke Chiang to move beyond limited counter-attacks because Chiang did not have the military capability in 1940 to open a nation-wide offensive against CCP forces so long as the war against Japan was being waged. Mao’s estimate of 4 May 1940 was that

The present military conflicts are local and not nation-wide. They are merely acts of strategic reconnaissance on the part of our opponents and are as yet not large-scale actions intended to annihilate the Communists.

In this way, he defended the general plan for limited civil war which he had enunciated on 11 March 1940 as a limited-fight, limited-talk tactic. Mao had set forth the important tactic in considerable detail:

First, we will never [sic] attack unless attacked; if attacked, we will certainly counterattack...
Second, we do not fight unless we are sure of victory; we must on no account fight without preparation and without certainty of the outcome....Third, the principle of truce. After we have repulsed the attack of the die-hards [i.e., the KMT forces] and before they launch a new one, we should stop at the proper moment and bring that particular fight to a close. In the period that follows, we should make a truce with them. We must on no account fight on daily and hourly without stopping, nor become dizzy with success. Herein lies the temporary nature of every particular struggle. Only when the die-hards launch a new offensive should we retaliate with a new struggle.

This became the basic tactical principle of Mao. His practice indicated that his forces were directed to fight, close off the particular battle with a defeat of KMT forces, and then seek a truce and be prepared to negotiate in the hope that Chiang would not take a local and limited defeat as the
reason for a large-scale offensive against all Communist armies. This is the tactical principle designed to advance Mao's protracted war waged with initially weak forces, limiting their actions to safe proportions.

In this way, Mao gained a series of local victories without running a great risk of general civil war. At the same time, he seized territory by expanding the base areas behind the Japanese lines and by controlling the actions of his field commanders, whose forces sporadically chopped away at small KMT units. For example, the First Contingent of the Communist New Fourth Army commanded by General Chen Yi decimated KMT forces in northern Kiangsu in July 1940 and, in the second half of 1940, several Communist victories were won in the lower Yangtze valley. Mao had directed that the New Fourth must be expanded to 100,000 men; by the end of 1940, his generals were successful in expanding this army to approximately that number of combat regulars.

While fighting continued on the local level, CCP-KMT negotiations took place on the national level in the second half of 1940 as Mao implemented his fighting-and-talking tactic. Even when vastly superior KMT forces unexpectedly surrounded and destroyed 9,000 men attached to the New Fourth's headquarters as they were withdrawing to the north of the Yangtze River, Mao refused to consider this setback as invalidating his principle of waging a limited war. In June 1943, the intermittent negotiations between the KMT and CCP reached another major impasse in Chungking, just as they had in late 1939 and in January 1941. Chiang asked Mao to give a conclusive reply to his demands to relinquish the independent CCP government and to incorporate CCP forces into Nationalist armies. Chou En-lai, the brilliant Communist representative in Chungking, deflected these demands and charged the KMT with increasing their forces along the northwest border base areas. Chou attained some success in his political effort to depict Chiang as the obdurate element in the united front.

The failure of Chiang to launch large-scale attacks against Communist forces in 1943 was attributed by Mao at the time to the political success in arousing domestic and international opinion against Chiang's policies. (Liberation Daily, 5 October 1943). Two additional factors were Japan's east China offensive against KMT forces and US efforts to stop Chiang's attempts to suppress the Communists. That is, Mao
adroitly used political pressures to compensate for military weakness: "The Communists are not capable of much, if any, offensive action." (Report of Colonel Depass, 16 November 1943)

Expeditiously, from 1943 to 1945, Mao used the lull in the CCP-KMT protracted war to further expand his armed forces, which increased to 475,000 regulars by October 1944. The Wallace mission to China in June 1944 resulted in the dispatch of the American Army Observer Mission to Yenan, which Mao favored because of "its political effect upon the KMT":

Any contact you Americans may have with us Communists is gold. Of course, we are glad to have the Observer Mission here because it will help to beat Japan. But there is no use in pretending that--up to now at least--the chief importance of your coming is not its political effect on the KMT. (Mao's remarks to John S. Service, interview of 27 August 1944)

That is, Mao exploited the US desire to end the civil war and get on with the war against Japan, adroitly using it as a political shield against the potential offensive-power of Chiang's superior military forces. He was capable then of considerably more tactical flexibility than he has been in recent years.

By insisting on policies which made the KMT appear unreasonable, Mao deflected Chiang's demand that, to become a legal party, the CCP should disband its armed forces. In a carefully worded proposal, which Mao maneuvered Ambassador Hurley to sign with him in Yenan on 10 November 1944, Mao agreed only "to work for" the unification of all military forces while insisting on the formation of a "coalition national government and a united national military council." His intention was to exploit the generally held view that the CCP was justified in refusing to disband its armies before the formation of a coalition government. However, in order to keep the negotiations alive, he directed Chou En-lai in Chungking to join Ambassador Hurley in pressing Chiang to accept the proposal. Chiang insisted on disbanding the Communist armies, and Mao was then able to "expose" Chiang as recalcitrant in rejecting a "reasonable" negotiations compromise--i.e., a coalition. The widespread domestic and international appeal of the Maoist program for a settlement, the rapidly expanding military-political power of the CCP, and US anxiety to bring about...
unity put Chiang at a considerable disadvantage in the talk. Mao's success with dilatory tactics—that is, his substituting of talks about "working for" unified armed forces in the place of action taken to disband CCP armies—further isolated Chiang in China and internationally.

All along, Mao had continued to expand his forces, and by 24 April 1945, he claimed that they totalled 910,000 regulars and more than 2,200,000 militia. Mao made a major move shortly before Japan's surrender, ordering CCP troops to link up with Soviet troops driving southward in Manchuria (10 August 1945). As CCP and KMT armies raced for control of various Japanese-vacated areas and as Chiang prepared to strike at Mao's forces, the Communist leader accepted Chiang's invitation to accompany Ambassador Hurley to Chungking, arriving on 28 August 1945. Mao was still anxious to gain a series of breathing spells. Two days before flying to Chungking, Mao drafted an inner-party policy line on negotiations, in which he indicated that the CCP should be prepared to make some concessions—namely, some reduction in the size of those base areas which were indefensible and in the strength of CCP armed forces:

Without such concessions, we cannot explode the KMT's civil war plot, cannot gain the political initiative, cannot win the sympathy of world public opinion and the middle-of-the-roaders in China and cannot gain in exchange legal status for our party and a state of peace.

But there are limits to such concessions: the principle is that they must not damage the fundamental interests of the people (i.e., CCP control of the base areas and the armed forces).
(Mao's statement of 26 August 1945)

Mao in Chungking recognized the strengthened military and diplomatic position of Chiang after the surrender of Japan and the signing in Moscow of the Sino-Soviet treaty. In private talks, he dropped his demand (to which he later returned) for a coalition government and high command, but insisted on retaining not less than 20 divisions as well as exclusive control of the base areas in north China. He wanted to obtain a settlement, a half-way station of legalization on the road to an eventual seizure of national power, inasmuch as his armies were still smaller and more badly-equipped than Chiang's. "The Communist armies do not possess
sufficient strength to directly oppose the KMT armies in positional warfare; but over a long period of time as an occupying force, the KMT cannot hold out even with US help.” (August 1945 report of Colonel Yeaton from Yenan) Chiang accurately summarized Mao’s position as equivalent to allowing the CCP to carry on its political revolution without opposition or hindrance while professing to end the KMT-CCP military clashes by negotiating. Actually, while Mao was talking, CCP forces were consolidating their control over newly taken territory in the north, and when Mao returned on 11 October 1945, after refusing to disband his forces, he justified in the context of protracted revolution, his willingness to negotiate.

Mao made it clear to cadres in Yenan on 17 October that reducing CCP forces to 20 divisions would not mean handing over weapons. “The arms of the people, every gun and every bullet, must all be kept, must not be handed over.” He then reminded cadres that his strategy was to wage a long revolutionary war:

Was our party right or wrong in deciding at its 7th Congress [in April 1945] that we were willing to negotiate with the KMT provided that they changed their policy? It was absolutely right. The Chinese revolution is a long one and victory can only be won step by step.

As both sides raced to seize Japanese arms and fill the territorial vacuum, Mao directed the Northeast Bureau of the CCP to expand its holdings and use the newly-arrived 100,000 Communist troops to hold the rural areas remote from the existing centers of KMT control. Between the truce of January and June 1946, both sides took territory in Manchuria. During the whole period of the Marshall mission in late 1945 and 1946, Mao tried to disgrace Chiang politically by advocating a moderate program of “peace, democracy, and unity” while his armed forces expanded. He relied heavily on their ability to avoid decisive engagements, to prolong the stop-start fighting, and to counter-attack against small KMT units.

In the final series of negotiations of Mao’s long revolutionary war, he gave priority to the goal of attaining a ceasefire and an extension of the Manchurian truce. He was also concerned in June 1946 about US aid to Chiang’s forces. On the one hand, he relied on General Marshall’s...
mediation to gain an immediate cease-fire, to ameliorate Chiang's demands, and to state his own settlement terms. Chou En-lai, urbane and persuasive, ably discharged his task by appearing conciliatory, moderate, and reasonable. On the other hand, Mao's press and radio in Yenan criticized US policy with increasing vehemency in an effort to deter Washington from giving further aid to the KMT. By 26 June 1946, Mao demanded that the US stop all military assistance to Chiang and withdraw all US troops from the mainland; his concern with the modern equipment sent to KMT forces had been deepened. "Let them know that whatever happens, if we are faced with mechanized war, we shall fight on if necessary with our hands and feet." (Mao's statement to Robert Payne in June 1946)

Although his armies were still numerically inferior to Chiang's, Mao issued an inner-party directive on 10 July warning his forces to prepare to smash Chiang's offensive by an all-out "war of self-defense," which required the temporary abandonment of indefensible cities and the opening of mobile warfare. Mao had no alternative but to fight against superior forces and on 19 August 1946, shortly after KMT planes bombed Yenan, Mao was impelled to drop the talking half of his dual tactic and prepare for all-out civil war, which his forces won in the straightforward contest of military strength waged between late 1946 and mid-1949.

In drawing an analogy between the Chinese civil war and the Vietnam war today, CCP propagandists emphasize the protracted nature of both conflicts and the evolution of weak into strong Communist forces. But they deliberately de-emphasize, or avoid any reference to, the talking-half of Mao's tactic and the temporary half-way station he tried to obtain. Unlike the Soviet propagandists, they insist that talking should take place only after the US withdraws its forces from South Vietnam.

B. The Korean War (1950 to 1953)

Military developments in Korea in the spring of 1951 provide a clear-cut example of the Asian Communists having been impelled to switch to the talking phase after they had been hurt in the field. That is, they viewed the large losses
of Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) combat regulars as the sufficient cause for drastically reducing the fighting phase. The military struggle was subordinated to a political "protracted struggle," the intention being to wear down Western negotiators.

When, in late November 1950, the CCF entered the war in force, North Korean Peoples Army (NKPA) combat casualties were already very high, estimated by the United Nations Command (UNC) at 200,000 in addition to 135,000 prisoners. The NKPA had been virtually destroyed and never fought again above corps strength in the Korean war. The initial CCP successes against UNC forces from November through December 1950 increased the confidence of the Chinese Communist leaders that they could drive UNC forces from Korea if CCF pressure was sustained. On 22 December 1950 and again on January 1951, Chou En-lai rejected a cease-fire, describing it as a means to gain "a breathing spell" for UNC forces, and demanded that prior to any halt in the fighting all foreign troops must be withdrawn from Korea, US armed forces must be withdrawn from Taiwan, and Peking's representatives must be admitted to the United Nations. As UNC forces retreated from the Yalu River, however, they took a heavy toll of CCF combat units. For example, between 27 November and 11 December, the 60,000 men of the eight divisions committed by the 9th Army Group, Third CCF Field Army, were estimated by the Marine Corps to have suffered 37,500 combat casualties, a little over half of them inflicted by ground forces and the rest by air attack. The 9th Army Group was so damaged by firepower that it disappeared from the Korean battlefield for three months. By mid-January 1951, UNC forces had stopped the CCF all along the front.

General Ridgway directed UNC forces to comply with his dictum of "inflicting maximum casualties on the enemy" rather than gaining ground. The dictum was put into practice in the months following the UNC offensive which started in late January 1951. By 9 February, OPERATION PUNCH had annihilated at least 4,200 CCF (body count) and when, on 14 February, CCF infantry for the first time in Korea attacked in mass waves, UNC forces killed thousands of Chinese at Chipyong-ni. CCF mass infantry assaults resulted in further heavy Chinese casualties on the 20th and again on the 21st with the start of OPERATION KILLER. By 1 March, the entire Chinese front south of the Han River had collapsed and UNC
units moved to within 30 miles of the 38th parallel. CCF manpower and equipment losses continued to be "heavy" after the start of OPERATION RIPPER on 7 March, and on 14 March, Seoul was retaken as CCF and small NKPA forces fell back. A series of manpower-killing advances launched by UNC and ROK units in late March and early April moved the allied forces across the 38th parallel. The ranks of the best armies--Lin Piao's 4th Field Army and Chen Yi's 3rd Field Army--which the Chinese leaders used in the first massive assault against the UNC forces had been seriously depleted. "Now the best troops are annihilated; this forced the CCF to send replacements from the 1st and 2nd field armies.... The CCF suffered high casualties and its faith in victory had been reduced."

(From interrogation report of Assistant Battalion Commander, 40th Army, 4th CCF Field Army)*

General Van Fleet met the first Communist spring offensive, launched on 22 April 1951, with the manpower-killing tactics of General Ridgway, and directed his corps commanders on 30 April:

Expend steel and fire, not men.... I want so many artillery holes that a man can step from one to the other.

Because they used massed infantry assaults against concentrated US artillery, automatic-weapons, and air firepower, units of six CCF armies suffered a total of 70,000 casualties between 21 and 29 April and were forced to end their first spring offensive. Their second spring offensive was even more destructive to CCP men and materiel.

On 16 May, 21 CCF divisions, flanked by a total of 9 NKPA divisions, opened the second spring offensive along a 105-mile front using human wave tactics against strongly fortified UNC positions. Although gains of 10 to 15 miles were made along most of the front, the Communist offensive was completely spent by 21 May, and UNC forces, which had recoiled only slightly, lashed back in a major counteroffensive, depriving the Communists of the opportunity to place screening forces between their main armies and the

*The prisoner reports that are referred to in this Annex are, in almost every case, the reports of prisoners captured and interrogated in March and April 1951—that is, after the collapse of the January 1951 CCF offensive and before the even more costly defeat of the spring of 1951.
UNC units. UNC counterattacks quickly carried into CCP and NKPA former assembly areas, where large quantities of supplies were captured as many dumps were overrun. By 1 June, the CCP and NKPA lost more than 102,000 men, and of the 21 CCP divisions which had initiated the offensive, 16 had suffered about 50 percent casualties. The following table, which is based on US Far East Command estimates, indicates the magnitude of the Communist losses:

The table indicates that as of 1 June 1951, the Communists had sustained a loss of 25 percent of their total 16 May strength in Korea. From 1 to 14 June, they suffered an additional 49,000 casualties (not included in the table above).
Most of the CCF prisoners were taken during the last week of May in frantic efforts to escape, indicating that the political-control fabric of many CCF units had been shattered, primarily because large numbers of political officers and non-coms had been killed. UNC ground pursuit ended on 2 June after all of South Korea except for a small part on the Western flank had been cleared of Communist forces, enabling fortification of the UNC line in depth to begin in the vicinity of the 38th parallel.

The combined heavy losses to the first wave field armies--i.e., the CCF 3rd and 4th--and the second wave armies--i.e., the CCF 1st and 2nd--had significantly reduced the quality of the forces which the Chinese leaders could put in the field in June 1951. Many of their best combat officers and political cadres had been killed or captured, partly because of the Maoist practice which required that they take front-line positions to lead their troops. Many political officers were killed in combat "because they spent much of their time with the men in the front line to lead the battle themselves" (from interrogation report of a private in the 125th Division, 4th CCF Field Army), and in some companies all officers including the company commander had been ordered to the front line to raise the men's "fighting spirit" (from interrogation report of the Company Political Officer in the 118th Division, 4th CCF Field Army). "The casualties among the commanders were high...because they took the lead at the front" (from interrogation report of Battalion Commander, 64th Army, 1st CCF Field Army). The massed infantry attacks--used for the first time by the CCF in Korea in mid-February 1951--facilitated the destruction: "We fought only with human wave tactics; great numbers of men have been sacrificed; it was indescribably miserable" (from interrogation report of Private, 42nd Army, 4th CCF Field Army). The Maoist doctrine of "defeating the enemy's firepower with a superiority in manpower...is a military idea which is no good.... These views of mine were shared by most lower-level leaders and the men in the CCF, though they could not dare to make them public" (from interrogation of Assistant Battalion Political Officer, 40th Army, 4th CCF Field Army). "Human wave tactics are supposed to overwhelm the enemy's firepower with predominance of manpower and thus win the victory. From my first experience in this war, I found that this tactic had no sense and no value.... In actual combat it was nothing but a mass loss of lives and defeat"
(from interrogation report of Squad Leader and CCP member, 40th Army, 4th CCF Field Army). The quality and number of CCF cadres who were lost to the four CCF field armies probably was the sufficient cause for the Chinese Communist leaders, whose forces comprised about 95 percent of the Communist combat units in Korea, to switch to the talking phase. Heavy losses of NKPA officers of the I, II, and III Corps were also indicated by intercepted messages in June 1951.

In the disastrous offensives of spring 1951, the CCF and NKPA sustained an estimated 221,000 casualties from 21 April to 16 June. By 16 June, the Chinese casualties since the CCF entered the Korean war were approximately 577,000, including roughly 73,000 non-battle casualties—mostly due to various epidemics—and 16,500 prisoners. (NKPA casualties as early as November 1950 had already been very high, estimated at 200,000 in addition to 135,000 prisoners. No data is reported here on NKPA total casualties since November 1950.)

The war was increasingly costly for the Chinese in other ways. It forced the regime to modify its program of long-range economic development and to place the economy on a war footing. The war also subjected the regime to economic sanctions imposed by the West, increased inflationary pressures, and strained economic relations between urban and rural areas. The Chinese Communists became increasingly dependent on the USSR, partly because the Chinese were unable to replace from their own resources the stocks of material being expended in Korea.

The first step toward ending the commitment in Korea was to begin negotiations for a cease-fire, the calculation apparently having been that political concessions could be gained by combining protracted talks with propaganda accusations, while the fighting was kept limited.

Following a series of statements made by American and United Nations' officials in late May and early June 1951 regarding the UNC's willingness to end the fighting without demanding a surrender of Communist forces, the Chinese Communists and the Soviets apparently decided to gain a breathing-spell. Prior to the 23 June radio speech of Soviet United Nations' delegate Jacob Malik, there apparently were no indications that the Chinese were willing to accept these Western proposals. On the contrary, the indications continued to point to Chinese intransigence. (For example, early in June 1951,
Vice Foreign Minister Chang Han-fu had been completely negative in a talk with Indian Ambassador Panikkar in Peking and insisted that the war must be settled only "in a military way." Unexpectedly, in his radio speech, Malik indicated a change in the Communist position when he avoided linking the Communists' proposal for a cease-fire to their earlier demands that the US must withdraw from Taiwan and that Peking must be admitted to the United Nations. "The Soviet peoples believe that as a first step, discussions should be started between the belligerents for a cease-fire and an armistice providing for the mutual withdrawal of forces from the 38th parallel."

The Chinese, too, were careful not to admit they had dropped preconditions. On 25 June, the Peking People's Daily frontpaged Malik's proposal without acceding to truce talks. The Chinese did not accede to truce talks publicly until 1 July, and on 2 July they rationalized the change in their basic position without acknowledging explicitly that it had changed. That the Chinese were anxious to deny that they were operating from a position of weakness is suggested by their statements to Burmese embassy officials in Peking shortly after Malik's speech. They insisted that "China and the USSR are confident of their joint strength, as none is equal to them." The Chinese also indicated to the Burmese that they had moved into the war's political phase in order to attack—that is, "to brand" the US and its allies as "warmongers" and to create dissension in the Western camp, their strategy having been to wage a low-risk, high-volume propaganda war in order to gain concessions at the truce talks. The Chinese later formulated their switch to the talking phase as follows:

After the five great campaigns [i.e., offensives from November 1950 to May 1951], the Volunteers switched over in good time to the strategic line of "engaging in protracted warfare while conducting positive defense" and strictly subordinated the military struggle to the political struggle. (NCNA commentary of 20 November 1950)

The Chinese used the military breathing-spell to improve their impaired over-all combat capabilities. By the time the armistice negotiations started on 8 July 1951, the Chinese had improved their artillery and small-arm stores and had replaced their manpower losses while the NKPA divisions were rebuilt. Politically, they had already exploited the theme of seeking peace and of opposing American "warmongering" with considerable
success, gaining face internationally and placing themselves in a favorable propaganda position as the initiators of the truce talks. They were unwilling to move the talks along to a mutually acceptable conclusion within any short period. On the contrary, they used Mao's tactic of wearing down UNC negotiators in a "protracted struggle" (Peking's phrase of 3 September 1951) in order to extract major concessions.

This tactic of political attrition succeeded in frustrating UNC negotiators, but it did not gain the Communists major concessions. Small-scale but sustained UNC military pressure on Communist forces in Korea in October 1951 was reflected in the talks. On 26 October, the Communists in effect dropped their demand that the demarcation line be moved down to correspond with the 38th parallel. On the other hand, they gained a 30-day de facto cease-fire from 27 November to 27 December, enabling them to further strengthen front-line defenses and to augment unit strength.

The Chinese desired a political victory together with a military truce, and as the talks centered on the prisoner issue, they adamantly refused to accept a political setback. The major deadlock on the matter of voluntary repatriation of prisoners prolonged the talks from April 1952 to July 1953, inasmuch as the Chinese insisted on the forcible return of all CCF (and NKPA) prisoners in order to avoid a major propaganda defeat if large numbers were to opt for the West. The Communists would not recognize the UNC stand on voluntary repatriation as a valid principle and argued that it was in conflict with the Geneva Convention which required a compulsory, all-for-all exchange. As an alternative, they calculated that if a relatively small number would resist repatriation—that is, about 16,000 of a total of 132,000 CCF and NKPA prisoners—they could tacitly agree to the UNC screening process.

Both the Communists and the UNC were shocked by the results of the screening process after about only half had been questioned. Over 40,000 of about 65,000 prisoners screened indicated that they would resist repatriation to China and North Korea, but the UNC had given the Communist negotiators an estimate of 116,000 willing to return of the total 132,000 prisoners. When, on 19 April, the Communists were informed that only 70,000 would return without the use of force, the CCF Colonel Tsai was speechless, asked for a recess, and on the following day—apparently on instructions from Peking—

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said that the UNC's earlier estimate of 116,000 was a far cry from 70,000. It was "completely impossible for us to consider" and "you flagrantly repudiated what you said before." Because the Communists had been stung once by the screening procedure, they indicated they would have nothing more to do with it.

Small, division-scale battles continued in the field, but the Communists were still unwilling to change the nature of the war into that of major offensive actions. They tried to deflect politically damaging charges of inhumanity on the prisoner issue by launching a concerted propaganda campaign, accusing the US--starting in late February 1952--of waging "bacteriological warfare" in North Korea and Manchuria.

More importantly, Communist-instigated riots in the POW camps were intended to undercut the UNC position on voluntary repatriation by discrediting the entire screening process. In the POW camps, the Communist soldiers shifted their responsibilities from military to political goals. Close coordination was established between the POW camps and the Panmunjom truce talks. On 20 May 1952, after forcing a contrived confession of "compulsory screening" from General Dodd, who had been held prisoner by the prisoners of the Koje-do camp, chief negotiator Nam Il charged that

The commandant of your prisoner-of-war camp could not but confess before the whole world your inhuman treatment and murderous violence against our captured personnel, and the criminal and unlawful acts committed by your side in screening and re-arming war prisoners by force. (emphasis supplied)

The Communist negotiators adroitly used the Koje-do incident to discredit the UNC figures and insisted that they obtain 132,000 prisoners in exchange for 12,000 prisoners held by them on the principle of an all-for-all exchange and forcible repatriation. Neither side conceded, and at the recess of talks on 26 July 1952, a year of negotiation had produced an estimated 2,000,000 words of discussion and nearly 800 hours of formal meetings. The prisoner issue was the only remaining agenda item.

On the battlefield, a military stalemate continued. Mao had confronted the US with his limited-risk protracted war. He apparently believed that Washington would continue
to avoid pressing for an all-out military victory because of the potential manpower losses such a victory would require. By July 1952, CCP and NKPA ground forces strength had almost doubled since the start of the talks in July 1951—from 502,000 to 947,000. He also apparently believed that he could deter the US from initiating airstrikes against the China mainland because of Washington's uncertainty regarding Stalin's reaction to such strikes. As part of his deterrent effort, Chou En-lai and the Soviet ambassador in Peking told Indian Ambassador Panikkar that the USSR would retaliate with air attacks against Japan if Manchuria was bombed by the US.

While Stalin lived, Communist negotiators at Panmunjom refused to retreat from their demand for forcible repatriation. New Delhi's efforts to smooth the way for a compromise were rejected when Foreign Minister Vishinsky on 24 November 1952 and Chou En-lai on 28 November 1952 attacked the Indian resolution on repatriation as unacceptable. As late as 17 February 1953, in an interview with Indian Ambassador Krishna Menon, Stalin avoided advancing new proposals on Korea and showed no real interest in the Indian compromise effort. Mao, too, remained adamant into 1953, declaring that "however many years American imperialism prefers to fight, we are ready to fight it..." (speech of 7 February 1953). Stalin had raised East-West tensions to a high level, and Mao was prepared to sustain those tensions.

On the battlefield, small-unit actions continued in localized struggles for hill positions and, although the Communists had taken losses in October 1952 that had cut their estimated total strength from 1,008,900 to 972,000 at the end of the month, their total began to climb slowly again in November as fighting tapered off. Both sides made the same calculation, namely, that a major offensive would lead to a very high casualty rate but not a military breakthrough.
The death of Stalin (5 March 1953) permitted the development of an entirely new attitude among the Soviet leaders toward East-West tensions in general and toward concluding an armistice in particular.* Moscow now appeared to be more anxious to negotiate a quick end to the war than did Peking. Soviet statements in March following Stalin's death were more conciliatory toward the West than those of the Chinese. Chairman of the Council of Ministers Malenkov stated on 15 March that "there is no disputed or unresolved question that cannot be settled peacefully by mutual agreement of the interested countries." For the first time since the end of World War II, Moscow Radio on 21 March admitted that the US and Britain had played a role in winning a "common victory" over the Axis powers. This followed Foreign Minister Molotov's unexpected agreement on 10 March to intercede with the North Korean leaders to obtain the release of 10 British diplomats and missionaries interned in North Korea since the start of the war. A further indication of the change in the Soviet attitude was Malenkov's depiction of the Korean war as a "defensive" operation in his 17 March message to Kim Il-sung on the anniversary of a Soviet-Korean agreement. Significantly, it differed from a similar message to Kim in 1951, when Stalin had described the war as a "struggle for liberation of the fatherland," in which any cease-fire would be conditioned on the withdrawal of US forces from Korea.

Three days after Chou's return from talks with the post-Stalin leadership in Moscow, the Communists unexpectedly agreed to a routine UN offer for an exchange of sick and wounded prisoners which General Clark had reiterated in his letter of 26 February. In suggesting that the exchange of the sick and wounded might be the first step leading to the "smooth settlement of the entire question of prisoners of war, thereby achieving an armistice in Korea for which people throughout the world are longing," the Communists indicated

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*The death of Stalin provided the Soviet leaders with the opportunity to jettison Stalin's more senseless and unproductive positions and to use methods of flexibility in diplomacy—such as a variety of goodwill gestures and a diminution of doctrinal hostility to Western governments. Stalin was concerned about the international situation leading to a general war, but for reasons of doctrinal obsessions and personal prestige, he refused to moderate the Soviet attitude toward the West and toward neutrals, and refused to make concessions on important international issues dividing the West and the Communist bloc.
on 28 March a new and real interest in solving the last crucial problem blocking a cease-fire agreement. This was the first indication that the Chinese might be willing to make a concession on repatriation.

But Mao waged a protracted political struggle as he prepared to make his retreat on forcible repatriation as small as possible. The Chinese used ambiguous and face-saving language in an effort to hold a series of fallback positions, which they surrendered only after it was clear the UNC would insist on the voluntary principle. An ambiguous proposal by Chou En-lai on 30 March—that both sides should undertake to repatriate immediately after the cessation of hostilities all those prisoners of war in their custody who insist upon repatriation and hand over the remaining prisoners of war to a neutral state so as to ensure a just solution to the question of their repatriation (emphasis supplied)—left unclear the matter of final disposition of prisoners who were unwilling to return to China and North Korea. The Chinese propagandists described Chou's proposal as a "procedural concession," which it was, as the point that prisoners who were unwilling to be repatriated should be handed over to a neutral country represented a Chinese retreat. Chou had been deliberately vague in not stating Chinese demands for forcible repatriation, but Chinese propaganda returned to the demands by insisting on the principle of total repatriation by way of a neutral state. That the Chinese had made a concession in fact while insisting on the principle to cover their retreat is indicated by the statement of the senior Soviet member of the UN Secretariat, Kas-saniev, who told a member of the Norwegian delegation on 30 March that Chou's declaration on prisoners was "the real thing" and that only "technicalities" remain to be worked out.

The UNC appraised this concession as indicating no change on the substantive matter of voluntary repatriation, and they pressed the Communists to clarify their position on where screening would take place, on its duration, and on whether the voluntary principle would be part of a cease-fire agreement. After manipulating the language of their counter-proposals throughout April, on 7 May the Communists
made two more key concessions. They dropped the requirement that no repatriates should be sent physically to a neutral state and reduced the explaining period from six to four months. Finally, on 4 June, the Communists' chief negotiator, Nam Il, using language designed to conceal the Chinese capitulation on forcible repatriation, stated that "according to the application of each individual, those who elect to go to the neutral nations shall be assisted by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and the Red Cross Society of India." That is, men who refused to return to the Communist countries could reach non-Communist countries through the channel of a neutral-nations commission stationed in Korea, if explanations failed to persuade them to return home. In this way, Mao accepted voluntary repatriation in a disguised form. His propagandists stated that ex-prisoners may go to "neutral states," without making it clear that they were in fact free to go wherever they chose.

Mao was anxious to still extract a degree of political prestige before the cease-fire agreement was signed. Face-saving offensives were launched in June and July by the Communists to achieve several objectives: (a) to move the line farther south, (b) to give ROK forces a bloody-nose in order to convince Rhee that his forces could not "March North," and (c) to convince international opinion that the CCF and NKPA were not weaker than UNC forces and that the Communist motive in seeking an armistice was not that of avoiding military defeat. Although suffering heavy losses between April and July 1953—an estimated total of 134,412—there were over one million CCF and NKPA forces in Korea, well-fed adequately clothed, and effectively supported by massed artillery by the time of the signing of the armistice on 27 July.

Mao's capitulation on the principle of forcible repatriation—a capitulation which provided the West with a major propaganda victory—apparently stemmed from several major considerations.

1. One was pressure from the post-Stalin leadership. The Soviet leaders were clearly anxious to consolidate their internal position and to relax international tension. They were alert to the harder policy taken toward the China mainland by the new administration of President Eisenhower. Neither the Soviet nor the Chinese leaders could be certain that the new administration would keep the war limited in the event that truce talks remained deadlocked. Chinese apprehension over the possibility of an attack, or at least a series of substantial raids, from Taiwan was reflected in
the resumption of recruiting in Shanghai in February and March 1953 and in defense activity along the south China coast. Implicit warnings from U.S. officials that Washington would not accept an indefinite deadlock and Secretary of State Dulles' explicit statement to Nehru on 22 May--viz., if a truce could not be arranged, the U.S. could not be expected to continue to refrain from using atomic weapons--further increased Communist apprehensions. They were also aware that in the spring of 1953, the U.S. had moved atomic missiles to Okinawa. The post-Stalin leadership desired to move a greater distance from the brink of involvement in the Korean war than Stalin had believed necessary; they were unwilling to risk an escalation on the battlefield which might well have provoked extension of U.S. air-strikes to the China mainland.

2. Mao could perceive no further advantage in continuing the limited war. He was aware that the talking phase--i.e., the war of political attrition, intended to reduce the staying power of the UNC on the voluntary repatriation issue--had failed. The blackmail accusations--that is, American "warmongering" and "bacteriological warfare," which were components of the talking phase--had not forced a UNC concession. His plan of attrition, requiring policy critics in non-Communist countries to soften up the leaders of enemy governments (while policy critics in the Communist countries were effectively eliminated), did not provide him with the advantage he calculated would be decisive in inducing a major retreat. Despite his efforts during the talking phase, the UNC prevailed on the issue of repatriation, announcing on 21 July that 69,000 Koreans and 5,000 Chinese would return to Communist control, but 7,800 Koreans and 14,500 Chinese would be non-repatriates. (Earlier, on 18 June, Rhee had released 25,000 Korean prisoners.) Obviously, these figures represented a political embarrassment to his regime which the new Soviet leaders had to convince him to accept.

3. Mao wanted to get on with the job of industrialization. Although political and economic conditions in China and North Korea probably were not exerting compelling pressure on the Communists to conclude an armistice in the summer of 1953, the war was probably viewed as injurious to long-term economic development programs. Political controls had been increased in China during the war and the
economic strains on the Chinese were probably less severe in the spring of 1953 than they had been in 1950 and 1951. But Mao was anxious to begin China's First Five-Year Plan of economic development, and the North Koreans were aware that they would have to start virtually from scratch to rebuild.

To sum up, Mao moved into the talking phase in Korea because his best field armies had suffered very heavy losses and were retreating under UNC military pressure. He apparently viewed the enormous loss of human lives with revolutionary callousness, but was forced to draw back because the military capability of his armies had been greatly reduced. When confronted with the UNC's demand that no prisoners should be forced to return to Communist control, he engaged in a "protracted struggle" in the hope of forcing a major concession from the Western powers by combining division-level battlefield pressure with political wearing-down tactics. But he decided to end the Chinese commitment when UNC persistence and Soviet pressure convinced him that further intransigence was purposeless and even harmful to the mainland's economic construction.

C. Vietnam (1953 to 1954)

Near the end of the Korean war, Viet Minh prestige was steadily increasing, and its military successes and organizational effectiveness bolstered Ho Chi Minh's confidence that he could attain a decisive military victory. He was determined therefore, to prosecute the revolutionary guerrilla war more actively and felt under no real compulsion to move toward the talking phase of his long-term effort against the French. On the other hand, lack of French military success and increasing domestic political pressure to reduce or close out the commitment in Indochina made a succession of French premiers and cabinets pessimistic about ever attaining a military decision over Ho's forces.

Even after General Navarre assumed command in Indochina on 8 May 1953, the French were unable to revise their losing strategy in the field despite a much touted (but never implemented) plan for mobile warfare drawn on paper. The force of 150,000 Vietnamese regulars, 50,000 Vietnamese auxiliaries, 15,000 Laotians, and 10,000 Cambodians that Navarre commanded proved unable to take over effectively the job of static defense, so Navarre was impelled to fall back on the
old losing policy of tying down and dispersing French and French Union regulars to defend a series of key strongpoints. Out of a total of 175,000 regulars and about 55,000 auxiliaries, there were only seven mobile groups and eight parachute battalions—the equivalent of three divisions—that were not assigned to immobile, defensive duties.

In contrast, the Viet Minh was not tied down to static defense and with about 125,000 regulars, 75,000 full-time regional and provincial troops, about 150,000 part-time guerrillas—in short, the operating equivalent of nine regular divisions—moved freely through the countryside and chose the place to attack the enemy forces. For example, strong Viet Minh guerrilla elements together with two Viet Minh divisions sufficed to contain the 114,000 regular French Union forces in the Tonkin Delta. The Viet Minh skill in guerrilla warfare and in infiltrating into areas under French control seriously reduced Navarre's ability to take the offensive.

While the French were cursed with the necessity of defending a number of politically important but militarily unimportant points, Navarre was also under political restraint from Paris. Because of domestic criticism of the war in Indochina, the French government had directed its commander in the field to incur the fewest possible number of French casualties. The Viet Minh, on the other hand, was receiving strong support, both military and political, from its allies. The armistice in Korea had enabled Mao to increase significantly his aid across the southern China border to Ho's forces, strengthening their unit firepower and overall military capability. All along, Viet Minh regular forces in northern Indochina continued their gradual evolution from lightly armed guerrilla bands to a regularly organized military force with Chinese and Soviet equipment.

For all these reasons, Ho clearly preferred a complete military victory and gave no indication that he would be willing to attain less in a negotiated settlement than his forces could seize on the battlefield.

The post-Stalin Soviet leadership, however, viewed a softer policy toward East-West military conflicts as a necessary element in their long-range effort to dissolve the Western alliance in Europe. They tried to temporize on every major East-West difference in order to increase