The People's Liberation Army as Organization
Reference Volume v1.0

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PREFACE

This volume is the product of a conference, jointly sponsored by the RAND Center for Asia-Pacific Policy (CAPP) and the Taiwan-based Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies (CAPS). The meeting was held at Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia from 3-6 August 2000, and brought together many of the nation’s top experts to evaluate issues of structure and process in the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The resulting volume is a pathbreaking reference work on PLA organization.

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Comments are welcome and should be directed to the chief editor, Dr. James Mulvenon:

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# CONTENTS

Preface ....................................................................................................................... iii
Figures ....................................................................................................................... xiii
Tables......................................................................................................................... xv
Editor's Note.............................................................................................................. xvii
Acknowledgments .................................................................................................... xix
  Glossary ................................................................................................................... 1

1. Introduction to the PLA's Administrative and Operational Structure .................. 1
   PLA Operational Organization Structure ............................................................... 2
   Functional Groups .................................................................................................. 6
       Central Military Commission .............................................................................. 7
       General Departments ......................................................................................... 7
       Theaters of War ................................................................................................. 8
       *Buddai and Fengdu* ........................................................................................ 8
       Levels of War ..................................................................................................... 9
   Origins of the Red Army ......................................................................................... 10
       Agrarian Revolutionary War Period (1927-1937) ................................................ 10
       The 3-3 System .................................................................................................. 11
       Military Unit Cover Designators ..................................................................... 12
       Expansion in the 1930s .................................................................................... 13
       War of Resistance Period (1937-1945) ............................................................... 13
   The PLA Emerges .................................................................................................. 14
       War of Liberation Period (1945-1949) ............................................................... 14
       PLA Field Army Reorganization .................................................................... 15
       1948 Military Region Reorganization ............................................................... 17
       1955-1985 Military Reorganizations ................................................................ 18
   PLA Navy ............................................................................................................... 21
       PLAN Administrative Structure ....................................................................... 21
       PLAN Operational Structure .......................................................................... 22
   PLA Air Force ....................................................................................................... 22
       PLAAF Administrative Structure .................................................................... 22
       PLAAF Operational Structure ......................................................................... 24
   PLA Second Artillery Corps .................................................................................. 26
   PLA Administrative Organization Structure ..................................................... 28
       PLA Ranks, Rank Categories, and Grades ....................................................... 28
       CMC and General Departments ....................................................................... 35
       Ministry of National Defense .......................................................................... 38
       Current Administrative Structure .................................................................... 39
   Protocol Order in the PLA .................................................................................... 41
       Military Regions ............................................................................................... 41
The Soviet Legacy ............................................................... 131
Personnel Assigned to the GSD ............................................. 131
GSD Leadership ....................................................................... 132
Relationship To The Military Regions and The Services .......... 133
Historical Background ............................................................ 133
Pre-1949 .............................................................................. 133
Post-1949 ............................................................................ 135
The GSD Today ....................................................................... 140
Science & Technology Committee (Kejiwei) ....................... 143
Operations Department (Zuo zhan Bu) ............................... 143
Second Department (Er Bu) .................................................. 145
Third Department (San Bu) .................................................... 155
Communications Department (Tongxin Bu) ......................... 160
Fourth Department/Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department ...................................................... 167
(Dianzi Duikang Yu Leida Bu) ................................................ 167
Military Affairs Department (Junwu Bu) ............................... 171
Mobilization Department (Dongyuan Bu) ............................. 184
Political Department (Zhengzhi Bu) ........................................ 192
Service Arms Department (Bingzhong Bu) ......................... 196
Army Aviation Bureau (Luhang Ju) ....................................... 207
Guards Bureau (Jingwei Ju) ................................................... 209
Management Bureau (Guamli Ju) ............................................ 212
Meteorological Bureau (Qixiang Ju) ...................................... 214
Survey and Cartography General Bureau (Cehui Zong Ju) .... 216
Legal Advisory Office (Falu Guwen Chu) ............................. 220
Retired Officers Office (Xiuguan Chu) ................................. 221
Observations and Closing Comments .................................. 221

4. The General Political Department and the Evolution of the Political Commissar System ....................................................... 225
   Background on the General Political Department ............... 229
   The GPD Functions Suspended ........................................... 232
   Mission and Functions of the GPD ...................................... 233
   The Structure and Organization of the GPD ....................... 234
   Cultural Functions ............................................................ 236
   Security, Promotion and Discipline Functions ................... 237
   Administrative Functions in the GPD ................................. 238
   The System of Cadre Secretaries ....................................... 239
   A Case Study of the Sino-Indian War: Party Membership, Combat Leadership, and Casualties ....................... 240
   Reform and Change if the Roles of the GPD ....................... 242
   Conclusions .................................................................... 243

6. The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) General Logistics Department (GLD):
   Toward Joint Logistics Support .......................................... 247
   Introduction .................................................................... 247
   Organizational History ...................................................... 249
Revolutionary and Anti-Japanese Experience (1930s-1949) ........................................250
Korean War and Soviet Alliance and Assistance during the 1950s .......................251
Political Struggle and Modernization (1959-1979); Troubles North and South
(Sino-Soviet Border Conflict 1968 and Sino-Vietnam Border War) ...............253
1980-1989: Opening to the West ...........................................................................254
1990 Gulf War, Taiwan Exercises (1995-96) ..........................................................258
Intellectual Infusions: Education and Training .....................................................264
Chinese Military Diplomacy with Logistics Characteristics ..............................266
Logistics Strategy and Doctrine .............................................................................267
Reforms and Restructuring ....................................................................................269
Logistics Force Structure .......................................................................................269
Role and Influence of the General Logistics Department ..................................269
Conclusions - Implications ...................................................................................270

Appendix A Leadership .........................................................................................272

7. The General Armament Department ................................................................273
   Introduction .........................................................................................................273
   Organizational History, and Emerging Roles and Missions .........................274
      The Demise of COSTIND and Rise of the GAD ........................................276
   Manufacturing Facilities ....................................................................................278
   Missions and Priorities .......................................................................................278
      Contracting and Market Competition .............................................................279
      The 126 Program ............................................................................................281
      Legal Provisions .............................................................................................282
      Education, Training, and Careers .................................................................282
      Military Representatives Bureaus .................................................................283
   Foreign Acquisitions ..........................................................................................284
   Structure Accidents ............................................................................................285
      Getting Organized ............................................................................................285
      China Defense Science and Technology Information Center (CDSTIC) ....285
      Science and Technology (S&T) Committee (Keji Weijuanhui, or 'Kewei for short') ..................................................................................................................286
      Foreign Affairs Bureau (Waishiju) ................................................................287
      Comprehensive Planning Bureau (Zonghe Jihua Bu) ....................................288
      General Office (Bangongting) ........................................................................288
      Political Department (Zhengzhi Bu) ...............................................................288
      Logistics Department (Houqin Bu) .................................................................289
      Department of Electronics and Information ...................................................289
      Department of Service Arms Equipment .......................................................289
      Army Equipment Research and Purchasing Department ..........................290
      Joint Equipment Maintenance Department ..................................................290
      Vehicles and Boats Department ....................................................................291
      Budget Department .........................................................................................291
      Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Activities ..............................................291
      PLA Units under the GAD ............................................................................293
      Space Program ...............................................................................................294
Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP) ........................................ 294
Lop Nur Test Site (21 Base) ................................................................. 297
Service Arms Organizations ................................................................. 298
Unit Armament Departments ................................................................. 299
“Mass Innovation” .............................................................................. 300
Decision Making And Relative Power ................................................. 300
“Degenerate” Practices ......................................................................... 300
Conflict with SCOSTIND ....................................................................... 301
Conflict with the GLD ........................................................................... 301
Conclusion ............................................................................................ 302

8. **PLA Ground Forces: Moving Toward a Smaller, More Rapidly Deployable**

Modern Combined Arms Force .......................................................... 309
General Structure ................................................................................. 310
Command and Control ......................................................................... 311
Military Regions (*da junqu*) ............................................................... 311
Military Districts (*sheng junqu*) .......................................................... 313
Military Subdistricts (*junfenqu*) ........................................................... 313
Garrison Headquarters (*weishu qu* or *jingbei qu*) ............................ 314
Operational Ground Force Units .......................................................... 315
Group Army (*jituan jun*) .................................................................... 315
Division (*shi*) .................................................................................... 317
Brigade (*lu*) ...................................................................................... 321
Rapid Reaction Units or Forces (*kuaisu fanying budui*) ....................... 322
Army Aviation Units/Groups/Regiments (*lujun hangkongbing *budui* farkui/dadui) .......................................................... 323
Special Operations Forces (*tiezhong zuozhan budui*) .......................... 325
Reductions and Reorganizations Underway Since 1996 ......................... 325
Ground Order-of-Battle Specifics ......................................................... 326
Beijing MR ......................................................................................... 327
Chengdu MR ...................................................................................... 329
Guangzhou MR .................................................................................. 330
Jinan MR ............................................................................................ 331
Nanjing MR ....................................................................................... 333
Shenyang MR ..................................................................................... 334
Insights Gained from the October 1*st* Parade ..................................... 336
Concluding Remarks ........................................................................... 344

9. **PLA Air Force Organization** .......................................................... 346
The Uneven Road to Modernization .................................................... 348
The Early Years ................................................................................... 348
The Cultural Revolution ....................................................................... 350
Fifteen Years of Change ..................................................................... 353
Leadership ......................................................................................... 353
Strategy, Doctrine, and Missions ......................................................... 364
Strategy and Doctrine ......................................................................... 364
Missions ............................................................................................. 368
Administrative Structure ........................................................................................................ 370
   PLAAF Branches .................................................................................................................. 373
   Early Administrative Structure .......................................................................................... 376
Headquarters PLAAF Today .................................................................................................... 382
   Operational Structure ......................................................................................................... 384
   Organizational Changes Affecting Pilot Training .............................................................. 391
Summary .................................................................................................................................. 393
Appendix A. Air Force Leaders: 1949-2000 ........................................................................ 395
Appendix B. PLAAF Commander Biographies .................................................................... 397
Appendix C. PLAAF Foreign Relations.................................................................................. 400
Appendix D. Headquarters Air Force Command Organization .............................................. 402
   Headquarters Air Force, Headquarters Department .......................................................... 403
   Headquarters Air Force, Political Department .................................................................. 408
   Headquarters Air Force, Logistics Department ................................................................. 411
   Headquarters Air Force, Equipment Department .............................................................. 417
Appendix E. Organizational Structure below Headquarters Air Force .................................. 423
   Military Region Air Force Headquarters ........................................................................... 425
   Air Corps .............................................................................................................................. 429
   Command Posts .................................................................................................................. 429
   Bases .................................................................................................................................... 431
Appendix F. PLAAF Branches, Troops, and Support Units .................................................... 432
   Aviation Troops ..................................................................................................................... 432
   AAA and SAM Troops .......................................................................................................... 435
   Radar Troops ........................................................................................................................ 436
   Airborne Troops .................................................................................................................... 437
   Communications Troops ...................................................................................................... 438
   Logistics Troops ................................................................................................................... 439
Appendix G. Origins of PLAAF MRAFs, Air Corps, Command Posts, Bases, Air Divisions, and
Independent Regiments ....................................................................................................... 441
Appendix H. PLAAF Research Institutes ............................................................................. 453
Appendix I. Bibliography ........................................................................................................ 456

10. The Organization of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) ...................................... 458
   Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 458
   Imperial China ..................................................................................................................... 459
      Song Dynasty .................................................................................................................... 459
      Ming Dynasty ................................................................................................................... 460
      The Qing Navy .................................................................................................................. 462
   Republican China (1911-1948) ........................................................................................ 464
   A New Beginning: The People's Republic of China (PRC) .................................................. 466
      The Early Years: 1949-1954 ............................................................................................ 466
      1950s ................................................................................................................................. 468
      1960s .................................................................................................................................. 469
      1970s .................................................................................................................................. 470
      1980s .................................................................................................................................. 471
   Administrative Organization of the Navy ............................................................................ 473
Seven Roles of the PLAN Commander ................................................................. 475
Force Structure ................................................................................................. 481
Administration ................................................................................................. 482
Geographic Fleet Organization ........................................................................ 487
PLANAF Operations ......................................................................................... 494
Coast Guard ........................................................................................................ 495
Doctrine and Organization ............................................................................. 497
Conclusion ........................................................................................................ 498
Appendices A-I .................................................................................................. 501

11. The Chinese Second Artillery Corps: Transition to Credible Deterrence ........ 510
Introduction ........................................................................................................ 510
China’s Nuclear Weapons Principles .............................................................. 512
No First Use ........................................................................................................ 513
Negative and Positive Security Assurances .................................................... 514
Nuclear Weapon Free Zones ............................................................................ 515
Conceptual Contradiction and Evolution ......................................................... 516
History of the Second Artillery Corps .............................................................. 517
Organization of the Second Artillery Corps ..................................................... 520
Headquarters (Silingbu) ................................................................................... 521
Logistics Department (Houqinbu) .................................................................. 525
Technical and Equipment Department (Jizhuangbu) ....................................... 526
Base Units (Jidi) ................................................................................................. 526
Brigade Units (Nuclear) .................................................................................. 527
Brigade Units (Conventional) ......................................................................... 528
Academies and Schools (xueyuan/xuexiao) ..................................................... 529
Research Institutes (yanjiusuo) ...................................................................... 529
Second Artillery Force Structure ..................................................................... 530
History ................................................................................................................ 530
Current Force Structure .................................................................................. 536
Future Nuclear Posture ................................................................................... 548
Conclusions ........................................................................................................ 556

12. The Institutional Lessons Of Disaster: Reorganizing The People’s Armed Police
After Tiananmen .............................................................................................. 587
Organizational History To 1989 ...................................................................... 589
Tiananmen and Struggles Over Its Lessons ..................................................... 600
Succession Politics and the Restructuring of PAP Leadership and Management ......................................................................................... 604
The PAP’s Specialized Subunits ..................................................................... 608
Strengthening PLA Influence Over Political Work After Tiananmen ............... 613
Logistical Issues: The Organization Of PAP Finances and Budgets .............. 620
Technical-Logistical Issues: Anti-Demonstration Weaponry and Tactics .......... 625
Conclusions: Assessing The “Reorganized” PAP ........................................... 632
FIGURES

Figure 3.1  Central Military Commission ......................................................... 96
Figure 4.1  GSD Organizational Overview ...................................................... 129
Figure 4.2  GSD General Office (*Bangongting*) ........................................... 141
Figure 4.3  GSD First Department (Operations Department) ......................... 143
Figure 4.4  GSD 2nd Department ..................................................................... 146
Figure 4.5  GSD 3rd Department ..................................................................... 155
Figure 4.6  GSD Communications Department ............................................... 160
Figure 4.7  GSD Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department ................. 167
Figure 4.8  GSD Military Affairs Department ................................................ 171
Figure 4.9  GSD Military Training Department ............................................... 174
Figure 4.10 GSD Mobilization Department ...................................................... 184
Figure 4.11 GSD Political Department ............................................................ 192
Figure 4.12 GSD Service Arms Department .................................................... 196
Figure 4.13 GSDArmy Aviation Bureau .......................................................... 207
Figure 4.14 GSD Guards Bureau ................................................................... 209
Figure 4.15 Relationship Between GSD Guards Bureau, CCP Central Committee General Office, and Possibly Beijing Garrison Command ........... 212
Figure 4.16 GSD Management Bureau ............................................................ 213
Figure 4.17 GSD Meteorological Bureau ......................................................... 214
Figure 4.18 GSD Survey & Cartography General Bureau ............................... 216
Figure 4.19 GSD Legal Affairs Office ............................................................... 220
Figure 4.20 GSD Retired Officers Office .......................................................... 221
Figure 5.1  PLA Awards for Heroism in the 1962 Sino-Indian War ................... 233
Figure 6.1  General Rear Service Department - 1977 ..................................... 256
Figure 6.2  General Logistics Department - 1985 .......................................... 257
Figure 6.3  General Logistics Department - 1989 .......................................... 258
Figure 6.4  General Logistics Department - 1991 .......................................... 259
Figure 6.5  General Logistics Department - 1994 .......................................... 260
Figure 6.6  General Logistics Department - 1995 .......................................... 261
Figure 6.7  General Logistics Department - 1996 .......................................... 262
Figure 6.8  General Logistics Department - 1997 .......................................... 263
Figure 6.9  General Logistics Department - 1998 .......................................... 264
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6.10</td>
<td>Military Logistics Academies and Universities</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7.1</td>
<td>Organization of the General Armament Department</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9.1</td>
<td>PLAAF Headquarters, November 1949 – May 1953</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9.2</td>
<td>PLAAF Headquarters, May 1955 - 1965</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9.3</td>
<td>PLAAF Headquarters, 1965 - 1969</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9.4</td>
<td>PLAAF Headquarters, 1969 - 1976</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9.5</td>
<td>PLAAF Headquarters, 1976 -</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9.7</td>
<td>Current PLAAF Command Organization Status by MRAF</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.1</td>
<td>PLAN Headquarters</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.2</td>
<td>PLAN Political Commissar Leadership</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.3</td>
<td>PLAN Headquarters Department</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.4</td>
<td>PLAN Political Department</td>
<td>504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.5</td>
<td>PLAN Logistics Department</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.6</td>
<td>PLAN Equipment Department</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.7</td>
<td>North Sea Fleet</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.8</td>
<td>East Sea Fleet</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10.9</td>
<td>South Sea Fleet</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.1</td>
<td>National Wartime Second Artillery Command Structure (Conventional Weapons)</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.3</td>
<td>Known Second Artillery Headquarters Department Units</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.4</td>
<td>Known Second Artillery Political Department Units</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.5</td>
<td>Known Second Artillery Logistics Department Units</td>
<td>565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.6</td>
<td>Known Second Artillery Technical and Equipment Department Units</td>
<td>566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.7</td>
<td>Known Base Unit Headquarters Units Second Artillery</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.8</td>
<td>Base Headquarters Department (silingbu) Second Artillery</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.9</td>
<td>Known Base Political Division Units (zhengzhi chu) Second Artillery</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.10</td>
<td>Known Base Logistics Department Units (houqin chu) Second Artillery</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.11</td>
<td>Known Base Technical &amp; Equipment Division Units (jizhuang chu) Second Artillery</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.12</td>
<td>Known Nuclear Missile Brigade Units</td>
<td>571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11.13</td>
<td>Known Conventional Missile Brigade Units</td>
<td>572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 12.1</td>
<td>PAP Organizational Structure</td>
<td>634</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Red Army and PLA Major Reorganizations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Red Army and PLA Organization Levels: 1920s-1980s</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>PLA Functional Groups and Missions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Eighth Route Army Organization in 1937</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>New Fourth Army Reorganization in 1941</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1949 Field Army Units</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Military Regions and Military Districts</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>PLA Grades: 1952</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>PLA Ranks: 1955-1965</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>PLA Grade and Rank Structure: 1988</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Administrative Level Comparison</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Central Military Commission, 1925-1928</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Central Military Commission, 1928-1936</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Central Military Commission, 1937-1949</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Central Military Commission, 1949-1959</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Central Military Commission, 1959-1969</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Central Military Commission, 1969-1981</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Central Military Commission, 1982-1999</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>CMC General Office (junwei bangongting)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Major CMC Enlarged Conferences, 1954-75</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Major CMC Plenary or Enlarged Conferences, 1977-1989</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Central Military Commission Members (2001)</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>GSD Internal Organization, 1949 - 2000</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>PLA General Departments, 1949 - 2000</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Identified Organizations and Responsibilities Taken Over by the</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Armament Department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Identified Military Representatives Bureaus and Offices</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Some of the Organizations under the General Armament</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>PLAAF Commanders’ Ages</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>PLAAF Political Commissars’ Ages</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>PLAAF Commander Political Appointments</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>PLAAF Political Commissar Political Appointments</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>PLAAF Command Organization and Operational Unit History</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>PLAAF Air Corps Status</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>Origin of PLAAF Air Divisions</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>Origin of PLAAF Independent Regiments</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>Range of Estimates of Chinese Nuclear Weapon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delivery Vehicles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>Suspected Chinese Strategic Missile Bases (derived from open sources)</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>Basic Organizational Structure of the PAP</td>
<td>598</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12.2  Public Security Departments by Geographical/Administrative Level (1995) .......................................................... 599
Table 12.3  PAP Subunit Leadership Relations ........................................... 612
EDITOR'S NOTE

This volume is a landmark contribution to the field of Chinese military studies. For years, the Soviet military studies field was replete with detailed organizational analyses, but a variety of factors, primarily the opacity of the Chinese system, prevented similar progress in research on the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Nor was study of PLA organization a high priority for members of the field, given the dearth of knowledge across the board. Instead, the first four decades of PLA studies in the non-governmental realm focused on topics that lent themselves to exploration via limited, official open sources, such as political work or civil-military relations. The avalanche of new open sources and so-called “grey literature” (internal or unofficial military-related publications) in recent years, however, now permits highly detailed examination of the Chinese military’s organizational structure.

In June 2000, CAPS and RAND co-hosted their annual PLA field conference. The title of the conference was “The PLA as Organization.” Paperwriters were carefully chosen for their specific expertise on service branches or organizations within the PLA. Many of the researchers had spent their careers primarily focusing on one organization, though few had taken the time to draw a detailed organization portrait. The organizers distributed explicit criteria for the papers, and staffed the panels with discussants almost equally as familiar with the topic. The results of the conference exceeded all expectations. It was clear that the usual annual edited volume would be different in tone and content from all previous CAPS-RAND books.

One special challenge for the editors was the issue of military unit code designators (MUCDs). The paperwriters had been able to assemble many of the MUCDs for units in the PLA, sometimes down to very low levels of the system. While some concerns were raised that the publishing of these MUCDs might compromise various signal intelligence collection efforts by the US government or cause the PLA to more carefully police its open source publications, the editors felt that this data was already in the public domain largely and therefore should be included where possible. A second problem arose in October 2000, when the PLA scrapped its previous MUCD system and replaced it wholesale. Some of the paperwriters upon revision have been able to piece together the new system, but most of the MUCDs in this volume are derived from the pre-October 2000 system. For readers, pre-October 2000 MUCDs are listed in normal font, while MUCDs of the new system are bolded.

The title of this volume was also chosen carefully. The top-level title “The PLA as Organization” reflects the editor’s core belief that fundamental knowledge about the PLA can be ascertained from study of its organizational structure, and that this type of structure and process analysis is the critical first step towards a revolution in our understanding of the central issues, including how the PLA will fight. The sub-titling of this report as a “reference volume” is admittedly immodest, but the organizers of the 2000 CAPS-RAND conference strove hard to enforce comprehensiveness and maximize comparative value in the selection and execution of the submissions to the research project. The rich content of this report is testament to the success of the effort, but our picture of PLA institutional structure is far from complete. Thus, the explicit notation that
this is simply the first iteration of a multi-volume effort. It is the hope of the editors that the field will regard this volume as a collective, public good. Any corrections or additions to the data are not just welcome, but are considered essential to the long-term growth of the field. Contributors may forward corrections to the authors, but please also send the additions to myself at RAND, so that the data of the reference volume can be assembled in one place and included in all future volumes.

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The editors would like to acknowledge first the financial support of CAPS for the annual CAPS-RAND Chinese military conference, as well as the perennial logistical excellence of Andrew and Yi-Su Yang. The financing of this publication was provided by RAND’s National Security Research Division, especially Kevin O’Connell. This volume would never have seen the light of day without the tireless dedication to mind-numbing detail of our resident template guru, Heather Roy. Finally, the editors would like to thank the members of the growing CAPS-RAND family, whose dedication to objective research has transformed our annual gatherings into the premier field conference.
GLOSSARY

AAW  Anti-Air Warfare
ADM  Admiral
AOR  Area of Responsibility
ASW  Anti-Submarine Warfare
ASUW  Anti-Surface Warfare
CCP  Chinese Communist Party
CMC  Central Military Commission
DDG  Guided-Missile Destroyer
Dept  Department
FFG  Guided-Missile Frigate
GSD  General Staff Department
IRBM  Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
KMT  Kuomintang
LSM  Landing Ship Mechanized
LST  Landing Ship Tank
MW  Mine Warfare
NM  Nautical Miles
MR  Military Region
MSA  Maritime Safety Administration
PAP  People's Armed Police
PLA  People's Liberation Army
PLAARF  People's Liberation Army-Air Force
PLAN  People's Liberation Army-Navy
PLANARF  People's Liberation Army-Navy Air Force
RADM  Rear Admiral
ROTC  Reserve Officers Training Corps
SAR  Search and Rescue
SCOL  Senior Colonel
SEATO  Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SRBOC  Ship Rapid Blooming Offboard Chaff
Sr. Capt.  Senior Captain
SS  Diesel/Electric-powered Attack Submarine
SSB  Diesel/Electric-powered Ballistic Missile Submarine
SSBN  Nuclear-powered Ballistic Missile Submarine
SSN  Nuclear-powered Attack Submarine
UN  United Nations
VADM  Vice Admiral
1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLA'S ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

By Kenneth Allen

Throughout its history, the organizational system (zuzhi tizhi) of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has been shaped by numerous components, including operational and administrative organizations, operational areas, service arms, training units, logistics and maintenance support units, schools and academies, and research institutes. The political structure, including Party Committees and Party Standing Committees, has also been an integral part of the PLA, especially during the period when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the army were virtually synonymous.

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2 The author would like to recognize Dr. Paul Godwin, John Corbett, and Ellis Melvin for the time they spent reviewing drafts and making substantive comments.

3 Every headquarters within the PLA has a Party Committee (dangwei) and a Party Committee Standing Committee (dangwei changwei). The political commissar is generally the secretary and the commander is the deputy secretary of each committee. The deputy commanders, deputy political commissars, chief of staff (director of the headquarters department), deputy chiefs of staff, and the three other first-level department directors make up the rest of the Standing Committee. The Party Committee consists of the Standing Committee members plus senior representatives from lower-echelon organizations.

4 For example, Deng Xiaoping served in several military posts, including field army political commissar positions, chief of the general staff, and vice chairman and chairman of the CMC. He also held key Party and State positions, including CCP secretary-general and vice premier. Deng was born in 1904 and went to France to study after World War I, where he became good friends with China’s future premier, Zhou Enlai. Deng went from France to Moscow to attend Sun Yat-sen University, then returned to China in 1929, where he became the secretary-general of the Communist Party and a deputy premier in 1954. The following year, he was named to the Politburo. After Mao removed him from all of his posts at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, he quietly reappeared as the deputy premier and Party vice chairman in 1973 with the help of his mentor Zhou Enlai. He became the PLA’s Chief of the General Staff.
The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of how the PLA’s operational and administrative structure has evolved over the past seventy years. The remaining chapters will deal with the individual components of the PLA.

**PLA OPERATIONAL ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE**

The People’s Republic of China (PRC) celebrates its Armed Forces Day on August 1st (bāiyì), which represents the birth of the Red Army (hóngjun) on 1 August 1927. Since its founding, the Red Army and PLA have undergone several major reorganizations, involving both administrative and operational structures. The Central Military Commission (CMC) did not begin designating units as part of the PLA until the mid-1940s. As the fluid nature of the civil war against the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang/KMT) forces progressed through the late 1940s, Red Army units, particularly the Eighth Route Army (bālùjun) and New Fourth Army (xīnsìjun), were consolidated into the PLA as they moved around China. Other units were still being incorporated into the PLA in late 1949. Most of these changes were initiated by the

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6 The term Central Military Commission or CMC is actually a misnomer. The Chinese term is zhongguo gongsheandang zhongyang junshi weiyuanhui, which literally means Military Commission of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese term is most commonly shortened to zhongyang junwei or junwei. Properly speaking, zhongyang refers to the Central Committee. While the Chinese term has not changed since its creation, the English translation has changed over the years. In the 1960s and 1970s, the commission was commonly referred to as the Military Affairs Commission (MAC).

7 Biographies of PLA officers reflect the importance of the different events from the 1920s through the 1950s. These biographies highlight the following periods: participation in various uprisings during the mid-1920s, such as the Nanchang Uprising in 1927; the Agrarian Revolutionary War period (tudi geming zhanzheng shiqi) from 1927-1937; the War of Resistance against Japan (kangri zhanzheng shiqi) from 1937-1945, when the Red Army was organized into the Eighth Route Army and New Fourth Army; and China’s War of Liberation (jiefang zhanzheng shiqi) from 1945-1949. The period following the founding of the PRC in 1949 is divided into participation in the War to
CMC, and have been implemented over one or more years after the decisions were made. The year each major reorganization was initiated is shown in Table 1.1, and will be discussed in detail below.

Table 1.1  Red Army and PLA Major Reorganizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Major Reorganization Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>First corps established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Junjuan and front armies created; 3-3 system codified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Eighth Route Army and New Fourth Army created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>New Fourth Army restructured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Field Armies created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>PLA formalized; Bingtuan established; 5 military regions (MR) and 4 MR levels created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>PLA Navy and Air Force established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>National Defense Council and Ministry of National Defense created; Field Armies and Bingtuan abolished; Corps subordinated directly to MRs; 6 MRs renamed and expanded to 13 MRs; 3 fleets established; 6 MRAFs formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>PLA Air Defense Force abolished and merged into PLA Air Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>8 General Departments reduced to 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>PLA Second Artillery Corps established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>13 MRs reduced to 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>11 MRs reduced to 7; major demobilization initiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>General Equipment Department created</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the early days of the Red Army, the PLA has tried to systematically organize its forces into regional areas and functional groupings that would allow centralized control and decentralized operations. As Table 1.2 shows, the PLA has had three larger groupings for area control – front armies (fangmianjun), field armies (yezhanjun), and military regions (juntuan). The names of the organizations that formed the second and third tiers changed over time, but they served the same basic function of controlling large groups of ground force units. The Chinese terms for these organizational entities include juntuan during the 1930s, bingtuan and zongdai during the 1940s, jun during the 1950s-1980s, and jitianjun since the mid-1980s. The PLA’s Academy of Military Science (AMS) translates juntuan as a large formation, bingtuan as a formation, jitianjun as an

Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea (kangmei yuanchao shiqi) from 1950-1953 and the post-war period. Biographies also include several key individual events singled out during these periods: when they joined the Red Army, participation in the Long March (1934-1935), attendance at various Red Army political schools, and participation in the Korean War.

army, and jun as a corps. The term zongdui is generally translated as column and reflects an organization composed of several brigades at the corps level. Subordinate to these are the operational units (zuozhan budui) at the division level and below.

Table 1.2 Red Army and PLA Organization Levels: 1920s-1980s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1930s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1980s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front Army (jiangmianjun)</td>
<td>Field Army (yeyzhanjun)</td>
<td>Military Regions (junque)</td>
<td>Military Regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juntau</td>
<td>Bingtau</td>
<td></td>
<td>Juntau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corps (jun)</td>
<td>Column (zongdui), Corps (jun)</td>
<td>Corps (jun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division</td>
<td>Division</td>
<td>Division/Brigade</td>
<td>Division/Brigade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigade</td>
<td>Brigade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regiment</td>
<td>Regiment</td>
<td>Regiment</td>
<td>Regiment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the Chinese clearly understand the terms juntau, bingtau, jitianjun, and jun, they are not easily translated into English. Although the table shows the juntau, bingtau, and jitianjun as organizations at the same level, they are not equal. It is better to look at them in terms of levels of headquarters. If the PLA had first, second, and third-level armies, then there would be a fairly accurate delineation. At the top would be

9 The US Government identifies a jitianjun as a group army.
13 This framework is based on discussions with John Corbett.
the juntuan, which more closely translates as an army group. A juntuan is a formation that, if used in the US Army, would command more than one bingtuan, which is essentially a group of armies. In the Chinese case, an army equates to a US Army corps-level organization (i.e. composed of more than one maneuver division). If bingtuan was an operational concept today for maneuver units, then a bingtuan would be composed of two or more jitianjun or corps-level units, which would in turn have subordinate division-level maneuver units and assorted lower-level units based on specialty. In other words, the jitianjun would be the operational units that are subordinate to the bingtuan or the juntuan. Although the PLA no longer has juntuan and bingtuan as organizational entities, these terms are oftentimes used to depict certain organizational levels within the overall PLA structure.

Some PLA writings refer to a division as an “operational and tactical bingtuan” at the combat (zhandou) level of war. What exactly does this mean? Historically, the PLA has divided its twelve organizational entities (from the general departments to the squad level) into various functional groups or tiers (cengci jiegou). PLA writings use the following six groups and assigned organizational entities to refer to the armed forces’ organizational structure during the period of the Red Army and early PLA years.14

- Zongbu: General departments
- Zhanqu: Theaters of War/Military regions
- Juntuan: Front army, army
- Bingtuan: Corps, division, brigade
- Bu: Regiment
- Fendui: Battalion, company, platoon, squad

Although these categories are still evident in some PLA literature,15 according to discussions with PLA officials, the PLA ceased using the juntuan and bingtuan categories

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14 Yao Yanjing, Lai Mingchuan, Wang Yamin, Junshi zuzhi tizhi yanjiu [Military Organization System Research], Beijing: NDU Press, June 1997, p. 36; and Xun Zhenying, ed., Jundui ganbu guanlixue [Military Cadre Management Studies], Beijing: NDU Press, December 1989, p. 267. The term cengci jiegou literally means a tiered or ordered structure. For lack of a better term, the author used “functional groups” merely to indicate that the PLA categorizes certain organizational entities into groups in order to assign certain characteristics to each group.

15 The PLAAF describes its military region air forces (MRAF) as zhanyi juntuan, air corps as zhanyi zhanshu bingtuan, air divisions as zhanshu bingtuan, air regiments as zhanshu budui, and flying groups and squadrons as zhanshu fendui. Xin Ming, ed., Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun kongjun shouce [People’s Liberation Army Air Force Handbook], Qingdao: Qingdao Publishers, June 1991, pp. 98-99.
during the 1950s and currently uses the following four groups and assigned organizational entities to describe the armed forces:  

- **Zongbu**: General departments  
- **Zhanqu**: Theaters of war/Military regions  
- **Budui**: Group army, corps, division, brigade, regiment  
- **Fendui**: Battalion, company, platoon, squad

In order to further define the organizational structure, the PLA assigns specific missions (*shiming he renwu*) to each functional group. The three missions are strategic (*zhanlue*), campaign/operational (*zhanyi*), or tactical (*zhanshu*). In addition, the PLA discusses its functional groups and missions in terms of three levels of war (*zuoizhan dengji*) – war (*zhanzheng*), campaigns (*zhanyi*), and combat (*zhandou*). Unfortunately, as with other Chinese words, the translations of these terms do not necessarily convey the same concept in English as they do in Chinese.

### Table 1.3  PLA Functional Groups and Missions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Groups</th>
<th>Organizational Entity</th>
<th>Missions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zongbu (General Departments)</strong></td>
<td>General Departments (<em>zongbu</em>)</td>
<td>National Military Strategy (<em>zhanlue</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zhanqu (Theaters of War)</strong></td>
<td>Military Regions (<em>dajunqu</em>)</td>
<td>Theater Strategy (<em>zhanlue</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budui (Units)</strong></td>
<td>Army (<em>jituanjun</em>)</td>
<td>Operational and Tactical (<em>zhanyi zhanshu</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corps (<em>jun</em>)</td>
<td>Operational and Tactical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Division (<em>shi</em>)</td>
<td>Operational and Tactical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brigade (<em>liu</em>)</td>
<td>Tactical (<em>zhanshu</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regiment (<em>tuan</em>)</td>
<td>Tactical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fendui (Elements)</strong></td>
<td>Battalion (<em>ying</em>)</td>
<td>Tactical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Company (<em>lian</em>)</td>
<td>Tactical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Platoon (<em>pian</em>)</td>
<td>Tactical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Squad (<em>ban</em>)</td>
<td>Tactical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

16 Interviews.

17 The term *zhanyi* is oftentimes confusing, because it can be translated as either campaign or operations. In addition, the qualifiers advanced (*gaoji*) or main (*jiben*) are oftentimes used with these three missions, such as *gaoji zhanyi bingtuan*.

18 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, pp. 690, 748, 763.
Table 1.3 depicts how these concepts fit together. Admittedly, there are holes in the table and some missions overlap, but it provides a general picture of how the PLA views its organizational structure in terms of missions and levels of war. In order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of these missions, the table is followed by an examination of the principal organizations involved in planning and executing war.

Central Military Commission

Although PLA writings do not specifically identify the Central Military Commission as one of the functional groups, with Jiang Zemin dual-hatted as its Chairman and General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the CMC functions as the PRC’s national command authority. In this role, the CMC provides guidance for China’s national military strategy and overall war effort. The PLA describes the CMC as the unified command authority for all of China’s armed forces; it determines the operational policy (zuozhan fangzhen) for military strategy and armed force; it leads and manages the PLA’s “army building”; develops plans; approves weapons development and purchases; determines the PLA’s organizational structure, missions, and responsibilities; approves promotions and awards for senior officers; and coordinates the PLA’s budget with the State Council. While it is the members of the CMC who revise the national military strategy, the CMC’s general office (bangongting) is responsible for coordinating the effort among the general departments, services, Academy of Military Science, and National Defense University (NDU) to flesh out the strategy so it can be implemented throughout the rest of the PLA.

General Departments

The four general departments (General Staff, Political, Logistics, and Equipment) as a group, whose leaders are all members of the CMC, are responsible for developing policies for the entire PLA under guidance of the CMC. The PLA describes the General Staff Department as the military leadership organization responsible for organizing the development of the armed forces and for operational command (zuozhan zhihui) of the

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19 Chart 3 was created based on interviews with PLA officers, definitions of the different organizations and concepts in various PLA dictionaries and the AMS encyclopedia, plus AMS and NDU books on the PLA’s history and organizational structure. The column for missions (using the terms shiming he renwu) came specifically from the definition of a bingtuan in Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu [Chinese Military Encyclopedia], Beijing: Academy of Military Science Publishers, July 1997, Volume 2-13.


PLA. As the command organization for the ground forces, the General Staff Department is also responsible for the policies, plans, training, and equipping of the ground forces.

Theaters of War
The military regions (junchu) are the military command and control authority for the combined military units within China's strategic areas, and are responsible for establishing the unified military organization to carry out the nation's strategic and operational (zhanlue zhanyi) missions at the campaign level. Although the PLA uses the terms theater of war (zhanchu) and military region interchangeably during peacetime, only the term zhanchu will be used during wartime. Whereas a military region includes only the permanent units assigned within its boundaries, a theater of war refers to these units plus any other units deployed to the military region or chopped to the headquarters for operational purposes. According to China's National Defense University, "The PLA has a unified military region and theater of war structure, whereby the military region's command organization during peacetime is the theater of war's command organization during wartime." The Navy, Air Force, and Second Artillery headquarters are also at the military region headquarters level, and are responsible for the plans, policies, and equipping for their forces.

Budui and Fendui
Information on the specific missions and operational levels for the functional groups below the theater of war level are more clearly defined in the PLA's writings. While brigades through group armies are involved in carrying out campaigns and combat at the operational and tactical level, regiments and below carry out combat at the tactical level.

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22 Ibid., p. 102.
23 Ibid., p. 102.
24 Interview with PLA officials.
26 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, pp. 275, 321, 401.
Levels of War

PLA writings refer to war, campaigns, and combat as its three levels of war. As Mao Zedong observed, however, war has two separate but intimately related aspects. First is the political objective of the war. Second is the military objective. The CMC determines the war’s political objective. The military region commanders’ objective is to defeat the enemy in their theaters of war. In Mao’s terms, the military objective of war is to deprive the enemy of his will to resist. According to the Academy of Military Science, “a campaign is a series of operational activities carried out by a group army level element of the armed forces under unified command according to a unified plan to achieve the local or overall objectives of war,” and “combat is organized operational activity carried out in a short period of time in a relatively small space by budui and fendui elements of the armed forces.” Combat is normally part of a campaign, and can sometimes be carried out independently.” According to PLA officials, the higher authorities are involved in all three levels of war. While the CMC is responsible for the overall war, it may very well micromanage the campaign down to determining which regiment or battalion will be engaged in combat.

Although PLA Navy and Air Force writings mention the broader PLA doctrine and strategic concepts of people’s war, people’s war under modern conditions, and people’s war under modern high-tech conditions, the services tend to focus more on campaign strategy, campaign tactics, and tactical training. As an arm of the PLA, the PLAAF has traditionally conducted its combat operations as a series of subordinate campaigns within the PLA’s overall campaign. The PLAAF describes a campaign as “using from one to several aviation, air defense, or airborne units to carry out a series of combined battles according to a general battle plan to achieve a specified strategic or campaign objective in a specified time.” During 1997, the PLAAF’s commander, Liu Shunyao, stated, “The PLAAF must improve its capabilities in actual combat by highlighting campaign and

29 According to the Academy of Military Science, a campaign is a series of operational activities carried out by a juntuan level element of the armed forces under unified command according to a unified plan to achieve the local or overall objectives of war. Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, p. 748.
30 According to the Academy of Military Science, combat is organized operational activity carried out in a short period of time in a relatively small space by bingtuan, budui, and fendui elements of the armed forces. Combat is normally part of a campaign, and can sometimes be carried out independently. Ibid., p.690.
31 Interview.
32 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, 312-331, and Teng and Jiang, p. 152.
tactical training. He emphasized that campaign training involves air deterrence, air interdiction, air strikes, and participation in joint exercises.\(^{33}\)

**ORIGINS OF THE RED ARMY**

**Agrarian Revolutionary War Period (1927-1937)**

When the Red Army began in 1927, it was called the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (gōngnóng hóngjun), but was still a mix of many different groups under a common name.\(^ {34}\) At that time, the Red Army began organizing its forces into the 4\(^{th}\) and 5\(^{th}\) corps (jün),\(^ {35}\) each of which had subordinate divisions, regiments, and battalions.\(^ {36}\) The Academy of Military Science (AMS) defines a corps as an operational and tactical bīngtiān composed of three divisions or brigades.\(^ {37}\) This was a logical structure, since the corps had been the basic operational unit within China for 2,000 years. Although the Red Army was based on corps, the organizational structure and designation for the corps have differed over time.

Below the corps level, the division and brigade are often considered the first real operational level. Over the years, the brigade structure has changed several times. During the 1930s, brigades were placed between the division and regimental level. In the 1940s, however, brigades were established that were directly subordinate to the columns or corps. As these brigades grew in size, most of them were redesignated as divisions in the late 1940s. Today, there are still some brigades, but they are directly subordinate to the group armies. The structure below the division and brigade level has remained constant since the 1920s, consisting of regiments, battalions, companies, platoons, and squads. For the most part, PLA brigades today consist of battalions rather than regiments, but some independent brigades still have regiments.

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34 Wang Zhenxi, pp. 3-8.

35 Between 1927 and 1949, the Red Army and PLA had created a total of seventy corps, but only thirty-five of them existed when the PRC was founded in 1949. Zhao Gongde and Zhang Minjin, ed., Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun lishishangde qishige jun [History of the PLA’s Seventy Corps], Tianjin: Tianjin People’s Press, December 1993.

36 According to former PLAAF commander Wang Hai, Mao Zedong is the one who designated the Red Army’s first corps as the 4\(^{th}\) corps. There were no 1\(^{st}\) through 3\(^{rd}\) armies. By do so, he set a precedent for numbering all succeeding units. For example, the first PLAAF unit was designated the 4\(^{th}\) combined brigade instead of the 1\(^{st}\) combined brigade. Wang Hai, Wang Hai Shangjiang: wode zhandou shengya [General Wang Hai: My Combat Career], Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe [Central Literature Publishers], February 2000, p. 49.

37 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, p. 321.
Through its formative years and into the 1950s, the Red Army remained primarily an infantry force.\(^{38}\) However, as it expanded through the 1930s and early 1940s, it began to include small cavalry, artillery, engineering, and signals units. During the second half of the 1940s, the PLA was preponderantly an infantry force, but also had some artillery divisions, armored (\textit{zhanche}) divisions, railway corps (\textit{tiedaobing}) divisions, and engineering regiments. After 1949, the PLA created and increased the number of artillery divisions, tank (\textit{tanke}) divisions, railway corps divisions, engineering regiments, signals regiments, and chemical defense regiments. The PLA’s infantry forces also modernized by adding motorized (\textit{motuohua}) infantry divisions and mechanized (\textit{jixiehua}) infantry divisions. As the PLA entered the 1980s, it added advanced tanks, armored vehicles, rockets, missiles, and helicopters to its force.

The 3-3 System

From the beginning, the Red Army tried to systematically structure its forces using the 3-3 system (\textit{sansanchi}), which, as a general rule, means that each element in the chain of command has three subordinate elements.\(^{39}\) For example, a corps has three divisions or brigades, which in turn have three subordinate regiments each, on down the chain of command. In 1930, the Red Army Congress formalized this structure when it decided that the entire military would be organized into \textit{juntuan}, corps, divisions, regiments, battalions, companies, platoons, and squads.\(^{40}\) In November 1948, the PLA underwent a major reorganization and used the 3-3 system as a basis.\(^{41}\)

This system also incorporates a methodology for numbering each unit for the division level and below. For example, the 10\(^{\text{th}}\) division would have three subordinate regiments numbered the 28\(^{\text{th}},\) 29\(^{\text{th}},\) and 30\(^{\text{th}}\). These designators are derived by multiplying the division by three, then subtracting one and two (10 x 3 = 30, -1 = 29, -2 = 28). This was not a hard and fast rule, as there were always exceptions, such as having regiments numbered out of sequence or having either two or four subordinate elements, rather than three.

Traces of the 3-3 system are still in effect today.\(^{42}\) Within regiments, the 3-3 system for battalions still holds fairly well. Within divisions, however, the 3-3 numbering system for regiments (infantry or armor) is breaking down as some units are deactivated and replaced with regiments preserved from divisions which are being


\(^{40}\) Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, p.401.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., p. 330.

\(^{42}\) Based on discussions with John Corbett.
disbanded. The 1985 reorganization also brought about big changes for the division numbering system inside the armies (jituanjun). Even more drastic has been the conversion of the fourteen army divisions to the People’s Armed Police (PAP) and deactivation of three armies and the subsequent reshuffling of their divisions.

Military Unit Cover Designators

Since the 1950s, the PLA has used a series of numerical cover designators (budui fanhao or budui daihao) to protect the identify of its units, such as the 53010 unit instead of the 41st Group Army.43 These cover designators are used on stationery letterhead, banners, in newspaper and magazine articles, and on signs at the entrance to military facilities. They are commonly called military unit cover designators (MUCD) in the West. According to one longtime analyst, the PLA has changed its MUCDs at least four times since the early 1950s. Two separate sets of four-digit designators were used from the early 1950’s to 1975, when a five-digit system was instituted.44 The PLA apparently implemented a new five-digit system during October 2000.

Some units also used special designators during the 1960s-1970s. For example, the designators for the PLAAF’s 2nd Aviation School, which was located in Changchun, Jilin Province, from 1949-1966 when it moved to Jiajiang, Sichuan Province, were as follows:45 Zhujiang Unit (December 1949-1951), 902 Unit (1951-September 1953), 2532 Unit (October 1953-December 1958), no designator (January 1959-November 1960), 2260 Unit (December 1960-June 1962), Air Force (kongzi) 017 Unit (July 1962-May 1963), Air Force 507 Unit (June 1963-July 1975), 86162 Unit (August 1975-present). Although the 2nd Aviation School used three-digit Air Force designators from 1962-1975, other PLAAF units, including two of the school’s training regiments, used four-digit numbers at the same time.46

44 The five-digit system was instituted following an expanded meeting of the CMC, which also instituted a 600,000-man reduction in force. Deng Xiaoping had just been rehabilitated and was re-instituted as a Party vice-chairman, Politburo member, CMC vice-chairman, and chief of the general staff. Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun shi de 70 Nian [70 Years of the PLA], Beijing: Junshi Kexue [Military Science] Publishers, July 1997, p. 568.
45 Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun kongjun dier hangkong suexiao jianshi [Brief History of the PLAAF Second Aviation School], Chengdu: Air Force Second Aviation School, August 1982, p. 45.
46 Ibid, pp. 37-38. The PLAAF’s headquarters issued orders implementing each of these changes.
Expansion in the 1930s

As the Red Army grew, it added five more corps (1\textsuperscript{st}, 6\textsuperscript{th}, 7\textsuperscript{th}, 11\textsuperscript{th}, 12\textsuperscript{th}) in 1930. By the mid-1930s, it had as many as sixty corps composed of infantry troops. Each corps had a total of 1,000-3,000 troops. During the early 1930s, the Red Army reorganized to include larger organizations called \textit{juntuan}.\textsuperscript{47} In 1930, the Red Army established the 1\textsuperscript{st} \textit{juntuan}, which had three subordinate corps and a total of 20,000 troops. By the mid-1930s, there were nine \textit{juntuan} (1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 5\textsuperscript{th}, 6\textsuperscript{th}, 7\textsuperscript{th}, 8\textsuperscript{th}, 9\textsuperscript{th}, 15\textsuperscript{th}) plus several newly-created corps that were not part of any \textit{juntuan}.	extsuperscript{48}

As part of its reorganization effort, the Red Army also began consolidating some of its \textit{juntuan} and corps into three front armies (1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 4\textsuperscript{th}) in the early 1930s. These front armies were composed of two or more \textit{juntuan} plus directly subordinate corps.\textsuperscript{49} This structure defined the Red Army's larger organizational structure during the period they were surrounded by Nationalist forces in Jiangxi Province prior to setting out on the Long March. In 1936, most of the \textit{juntuan} were redesignated as corps or divisions.

War of Resistance Period (1937-1945)

Following the Long March and Japan's invasion of China proper in July 1937, the Nationalists and Communists established a united front, whereby the Red Army was reorganized into two primary units. The Eighth Route Army (baltujun) had three subordinate divisions (115\textsuperscript{th}, 120\textsuperscript{th}, 129\textsuperscript{th}), but did not follow the 3-3 system for the brigades and regiments.\textsuperscript{50} Each division had two subordinate brigades, which in turn had two subordinate regiments as shown in Table I.4.\textsuperscript{51} The TO&E for the division was 15,000 troops. By the mid-1930s, the Nationalist Army had over forty armies (jituanchun) composed of numerous corps.\textsuperscript{52} Therefore, when the CCP and KMT formed the united front, the official name for the Eighth Route Army was the 18\textsuperscript{th} jituanchun. When the Eighth Route Army was established, the Red Army's front army and \textit{juntuan} disappeared.

\textsuperscript{47} According to AMS, a \textit{juntuan} encompasses front armies and armies. The PLA's front armies are considered strategic and operational (\textit{zhanlue zhanyi}) \textit{juntuan}, and armies are considered operational \textit{juntuan}.\textit{Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu}, p. 401.

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Zhongguo renmin jiefang jun da shiji}, 1927-1982, pp. 120-130.

\textsuperscript{49} The AMS describes a front army (\textit{jangmianjun}) as an organization composed of several armies (\textit{jituanchun}). A front army is subordinate to the supreme command department (\textit{tongshuaibu}) or to a theater of war (\textit{zhanqu}), and is a combined arms strategic and operational \textit{juntuan}.


\textsuperscript{51} The brigade designators are derived by multiplying the division by three, then subtracting one and two (115 x 3 = 345, -1 = 344, -2 = 343), but the regiment designators are derived by multiplying the brigade by two, then subtracting one (343 x 2 = 686, -1 = 685).

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ibid.}, Vol. 2, p. 276.
as organizational entities. However, as noted above, the terms are still referred to in order to depict organizational entities above the army-level today.

Table 1.4 Eighth Route Army Organization in 1937

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>115th</th>
<th>120th</th>
<th>129th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brigade</td>
<td>343rd</td>
<td>358th</td>
<td>385th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regiment</td>
<td>685th, 686th</td>
<td>715th, 716th</td>
<td>769th, 770th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigade</td>
<td>344th</td>
<td>359th</td>
<td>386th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regiment</td>
<td>687th, 688th</td>
<td>717th, 718th</td>
<td>771st, 772nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independant Regt</td>
<td>689th</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Troops</td>
<td>15,500</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>13,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second Red Army organization formed during the united front was the New Fourth Army (xingjun), which had four subordinate detachments (zhidui), with a total of 10,000 troops. These detachments were created from the Red Army Guerilla Force (hongjun youjundui) that remained in the south during the Long March. In 1941, the New Fourth Army reorganized its detachments into seven divisions and one independent brigade as shown in Table 1.5.

Table 1.5 New Fourth Army Reorganization in 1941

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brigades</td>
<td>1st, 2nd, 3rd</td>
<td>4th, 5th, 6th</td>
<td>7th, 8th, 9th</td>
<td>10th, 11th, 12th</td>
<td>13th, 14th, 15th</td>
<td>16th, 18th</td>
<td>9th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE PLA EMERGES

War of Liberation Period (1945-1949)

Immediately following Japan’s surrender in 1945, the Nationalists and Communists began re-deploying their forces to fight each other in their continuing civil war. Over the next four years, several major events took place. The Red Army was renamed the People’s Liberation Army, the Eighth Route Army and New Fourth Army were reorganized into five field armies with subordinate bingtuan and corps, and China was organized into several large military regions.

The CMC began using the terms Liberation Army (jiefangjun) and People’s Liberation Army (renmin jiefangjun) as early as 1945 to identify the concept of a single armed forces. These terms, however, were not formally used with unit designations (i.e.

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53 Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 27
the PLA 32nd division) until the CMC issued a general order to this effect on 1 November 1948.

**PLA Field Army Reorganization**

Between June 1945 and June 1946, the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army combined their forces into twenty-seven field columns (yezhan zongdai), which were equal to divisions, plus six field brigades (yezhan liu). In February 1947, the CMC began consolidating the field columns and brigades into five regional field armies (FA). In November 1948, all of the field columns were redesignated as corps and subordinated under the field armies’ seventeen bingtuan, which were equivalent in status to an army (jituanjun). By the end of 1949, there was a total of 58 corps, consisting of subordinate divisions, regiments, battalions, companies, platoons, and squads. The PLA also upgraded and changed the name of most of the brigades to divisions, and subordinated them to the corps. By 1950, each bingtuan had 2-4 corps.

The bingtuan had actually existed since the early days of the Red Army, but it did not become prominent until 1948. Under the Eighth Route Army in 1937, the Yanan Garrison bingtuan had one subordinate brigade and nine regiments. During the late 1940s, the Huabei Field Army (yuezhan bingtuan) had two subordinate columns (zongdai) and two brigades. In 1948, the Huadong Field Army, the Dongbei Field Army, and the Huabei Military Region had eight bingtuan composed of several columns, divisions, and brigades.

In February 1949, the PLA, already numbering more than 2.5 million men, underwent another major reorganization whereby four of the field armies were given numerical designators as shown below. The Huabei (North China) field army did not change its name. At that time, each of the field armies consisted of 2-4 bingtuan, plus one or more directly subordinate corps. Initially, the Huabei field army consisted primarily of columns and their subordinate brigades, until they were upgraded to corps and divisions, respectively, and placed under three newly-created bingtuan. As the PLA

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55 Ibid., pp. 224-226.

56 Some columns were retained as railway, engineering, or special forces units.

57 The AMS states that a bingtuan encompasses corps, division, and brigade level operational units. A corps is considered an operations and tactical bingtuan, a division is a main tactical bingtuan, and a brigade is a tactical bingtuan. Zhongguo junshi baike guanshu, Volume 2-13, 2-276, 7-529.


consolidated its territorial gains, units within the field armies were often resubordinated to one of the other field armies. Following the founding of the PRC, the bingtuan organizational structure was gradually abolished, leaving the corps as the largest unit below a military region. Although the term bingtuan was discontinued, it is still used to depict a particular organizational level within the PLA.

- The Xibei (Northwestern) FA, established in 1947 under the command of Peng Dehuai, was renamed the First FA;
- The Zhongyuan (Central Plains) FA, established in 1947 with Liu Bocheng as the commander and Deng Xiaoping as political commissar, was renamed the Second FA;
- The Huadong (East China) FA, established in 1947 under the command of Chen Yi, was renamed the Third FA;
- The Dongbei (Northeast) FA, established in 1947 under the command of Lin Biao, was renamed the Fourth FA; and
- The Huabei (North China) FA was formed in May 1948. In February 1949, all of the existing units were upgraded and renamed. The three existing bingtuan were renamed and subordinated to the CMC; almost all of the columns were renamed as corps and subordinated to the bingtuan; and all of the brigades were renamed as divisions and subordinated to the corps.

Table 1.6 shows the five field armies plus their subordinate bingtuan, corps, and divisions at the beginning of 1949. As can be seen, the PLA used the 3-3 numbering system to designate the divisions. As usual, there were exceptions, whereby a few of the corps had four divisions.

Table 1.6 1949 Field Army Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Army</th>
<th>Bingtuan</th>
<th>Corps (Division)</th>
<th>Corps (Division)</th>
<th>Corps (Division)</th>
<th>Corps (Division)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st (1,2,3)</td>
<td>2nd (4,5,6)</td>
<td>7th (19,20,21)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3rd (7,8,9)</td>
<td>4th (10,11,12)</td>
<td>6th (16,17,18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>10th (28,29,30)</td>
<td>11th (31,32,33)</td>
<td>12th (34,35,36)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>13th (37,38,39)</td>
<td>14th (40,41,42)</td>
<td>15th (43,44,45)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>16th (46,47,48)</td>
<td>17th (49,50,51)</td>
<td>18th (52,53,54)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>21st (61,62,63)</td>
<td>22nd (64,65,66)</td>
<td>23rd (67,68,69)</td>
<td>35th (103,104,105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>24th (70,71,72)</td>
<td>25th (73,74,75)</td>
<td>26th (76,77,78)</td>
<td>34th (100,101,102)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>20th (58,59,60)</td>
<td>27th (79,80,81)</td>
<td>30th (88,89,90)</td>
<td>33rd (97,98,99)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

61 Ibid., pp 292-294; and Yuan Wei, ed., multiple sections.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10th</th>
<th>28th (82, 83, 84)</th>
<th>29th (85, 86, 87)</th>
<th>31st (91, 92, 93)</th>
<th>32nd (94, 95)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>40th (118, 119, 120)</td>
<td>45th (133, 134, 135)</td>
<td>46th (136, 137, 138)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th</td>
<td></td>
<td>38th (112, 113, 114, 151)</td>
<td>47th (139, 140, 141, 160)</td>
<td>49th (145, 146, 147, 162)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th</td>
<td></td>
<td>39th (115, 116, 117)</td>
<td>41st (121, 122, 123, 1154)</td>
<td>42nd (124, 125, 126, 155)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td></td>
<td>43rd (127, 128, 129, 156)</td>
<td>44th (130, 131, 132, 157)</td>
<td>48th (142, 143, 144, 161)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huabei</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>60th (178, 179, 180)</td>
<td>61st (181, 182, 183)</td>
<td>62nd (184, 185, 186)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19th</td>
<td>63rd (187, 188, 189)</td>
<td>64th (190, 191, 192)</td>
<td>65th (193, 194, 195)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20th</td>
<td>66th (196, 197, 198)</td>
<td>67th (199, 200)</td>
<td>68th (202, 203, 204)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir Subor</td>
<td></td>
<td>69th (205, 206, 207)</td>
<td>70th (209, 210)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1948 Military Region Reorganization

As part of the November 1948 reorganization, the CMC also established four levels of military regions (MR): first-level (yiji or da junqu); second-level (erji junqu) which are sometimes referred to as military districts (MD/sheng junqu); third-level (sanji junqu); and subdistrict (junfenqu). There were literally tens of military regions, each of which was associated with a specific field army and its subordinate bingtuan and corps. While some of the existing MRs covered several provinces, some provinces were divided into two or more MRs. For example, the Second Field Army had three subordinate bingtuan and as many as seven military regions. Today, the PLA has four levels, including the military regions, military districts at the corps level, subdistricts at the division level, and the county armed police troop (xian wuzhuang budui) at the regiment level. The five first-level MRs and their commanders in 1948 were as follows:

- **Zhongyuan** (Central Plain) MR under the command of Liu Bocheng. This MR was later renamed the Zhongnan (Central South) MR and covered Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Guangdong, and Guangxi;

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63 Interview with PLA officials.
- 18 -

- Huadong (East China) MR under the command of Chen Yi covered Shandong, Jiangxi, Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang, and Fujian;
- Dongbei (Northeast) MR under the command of Gao Gang covered Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Liaoning;
- Huabei (North China) MR under the command of Nie Rongzhen covered Hebei and Shanxi; and
- Xibei (Northwest) MR under the command of He Long included Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai, and Xinjiang.

As the PLA prepared to move into Tibet in February 1950, the CMC established its sixth MR, designated the Southwest (Xinan) MR, with He Long as the commander and Deng Xiaoping as the political commissar. This MR included Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Tibet.

1955-1985 Military Reorganizations

During 1949 and the early 1950s, the Soviet Union had a major influence on the PLA’s organization. Based on the Soviet model, the PRC’s 1954 Constitution established the National Defense Council and the Ministry of National Defense. The PLA also implemented some major organizational restructuring in 1955.

The CMC began abolishing the bingtuan and column organizational levels in February 1952; however, some engineering units are still designated as columns but are no longer at the corps level. Each of the corps that were subordinate to the various bingtuan were either abolished or resubordinated to the military region commanders. The process was apparently completed during the 1955 reorganization, which left the PLA with thirty-five infantry corps.

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67 Zhongguo Renmin Jiefang Jun da shiji 1927-1982, p. 333; Yuan Wei, ed., Wu Da Yezhan, p. 284. According to one PLA officer, some units were still designated as a bingtuan into the mid-1990s, at which time the term was abolished.
In February 1955, the CMC renamed and reorganized the PLA’s six MRs into the following twelve MRs for ground operations: Shenyang, Beijing, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Chengdu, Kunming, Lanzhou, Xinjiang, Nei Menggu (Inner Mongolia), Xizang (Tibet).69 The PLA also established six air regions for air defense and three naval districts to control fleet operations in the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea.70

In 1956, the Fuzhou MR was established in preparation for operations against the Nationalist forces on Taiwan and became the thirteenth MR.71 In May 1967, the Nei Menggu MR was downgraded to a provincial military district (sheng junqu) and subordinated to the Beijing MR. In December 1969, the Xizang MR was downgraded to a provincial military district and subordinated to the Chengdu MR.

As a result of these changes, when the 1970s began, the existing eleven MRs were Shenyang, Beijing, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Chengdu, Kunming, Lanzhou, Xinjiang, and Fuzhou.72 The Xinjiang MR was renamed the Wulumuqi MR in May 1979.73

Finally, in 1985, China further consolidated its eleven MRs into seven as shown in Table 1.7, and reorganized the remaining corps into armies (jituannian).74 Eight of the original eleven MRs were merged into four – Chengdu, Jinan, Lanzhou, and Nanjing –

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70 Chaffee, p. 614. Unfortunately, Chaffee does not list the nine air regions, since other sources cited in this paper indicate that only six MRAFs were established in 1955. He could have been referring to air corps or command posts that were established to control areas not covered by the six MRAFs. The three fleet headquarters were designated the North Sea, East Sea, and South Sea Fleets.
74 This MR reorganization included cutting the MR headquarters staffs by fifty percent. See Zhongguo Renmin Jiefangjun shi de 70 nian, p. 623.
and three key MRs—Beijing, Shenyang, and Guangzhou—remained intact. This structure remains today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Region</th>
<th>Military District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shenyang</td>
<td>Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>Hebei, Shanxi, Nei Menggu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanzhou</td>
<td>Gansu, Shaanxi, Xinjiang, Ningxia, Qinghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinan</td>
<td>Shandong, Henan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanjing</td>
<td>Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Fujian, Jiangxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guangzhou</td>
<td>Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan, Hubei, Hainan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chengdu</td>
<td>Yunnan, Xizang, Guizhou, Sichuan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the military districts, there are several garrisons that are equivalent to military districts. These include the Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Chongqing Garrisons.

From the mid-1950s to early 1980s, the corps remained the largest ground force organization. In 1983, the PLA began reorganizing its ground fighting forces from an infantry-heavy field army structure to corps-size units called jituankan, which the US government refers to as group armies. The Academy of Military Science translates a jituankan as an army and defines it as a main campaign (jiben zhanyi) juntuan that is composed of several corps or divisions.

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76 According to the 1985 issue of Shijie Junshi Nianjian [World Military Yearbook], the protocol order for the seven MRs is Beijing, Shenyang, Guangzhou, Nanjing, Jinan, Lanzhou, and Chengdu. However, beginning with the 1987 yearbook and subsequent yearbooks, the order changed to Shenyang, Beijing, Lanzhou, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou, and Chengdu. Unlike PLAAF documents which have remained consistent when listing its MRAFs (see Wang Hai, Wang Hai Shangjiang: Wode Zhendou Shengya [General Wang Hai: My Combat Career], Beijing, Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe [Central Literature Publishers], February 2000, p. 300), it is not clear why the PLA was not consistent in its MR order until 1987. According to Srikanth Kondapalli, China’s Military: The PLA in Transition, Dehli: Knowledge World, April 1999, p. 32, the seven military regions cover the following provinces: Shenyang (Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang), Beijing (Hebei, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia), Lanzhou (Gansu, Shaanxi, Xinjiang), Jinan (Shandong, Henan), Nanjing (Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Fujian, Jiangxi), Guangzhou (Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan, Hubei, Hainan), and Chengdu (Yunnan, Tibet).

77 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, p. 275.
Generally, the PLA’s *jituanjun* combine several infantry divisions with armor divisions or brigades, as well as artillery, engineering, anti-aircraft, signals and other specialty forces into an integrated, combined arms fighting force. As explained in Dennis Blasko’s chapter on PLA ground forces, by 1988, the former thirty-five infantry corps had been consolidated into twenty-four *jituanjun*. During the 500,000 man reduction from 1996 to 2000, three *jituanjun* headquarters were eliminated, leaving only twenty-one today.

**PLA NAVY**

The PLA Navy (PLAN) celebrates 23 April 1949 as the day of its founding. On that date, the CMC created the Northeast China Military Region Navy headquarters (*Huadong junqu haijun*) in Taizhou, Jiangsu Province. However, PLAN headquarters in Beijing was not established until April 1950.

**PLAN Administrative Structure**

When PLAN headquarters was established in Beijing, it had three first-level departments – Headquarters Department, Political Department, and Logistics Department. In April 1952, Naval Aviation was added as a fourth first-level department.

During the 1950s, the PLAN also formed various other first-level departments, but they were eventually abolished or merged with other departments. These included the Engineering Department (*haijun gongchengbu*), Health Department (*weishengbu*), and the Ship Building Department (*jianchuan zaobu*) which changed its name to the Ship Repair and Building Department (*jianchuan xiazaobu*).

In early 1961, the PLAN began reorganizing its equipment leadership and organizational structure in order to overcome various repair and maintenance problems. The Ship Repair and Building Department became the Equipment, Procurement, and Production Supervision Department (*haijun zhuangbei dinghuo jianzaobu*), and the Logistics Department’s second-level Armament Department (*houqinbu jinxielbu*) became the Equipment Repair Department (*zhuangbei xilubu*). In 1963, they were reorganized again and the Equipment, Procurement, and Production Supervision Department, the Equipment Repair Department, and the Technical Department (*jishubu*) were united and became the Equipment Department (*haijun zhuangbeibu*).

In 1974 following the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, the Equipment and Technical Department (*zhuangbei jishubu*) was formed to supervise equipment R&D, building inspection, and repair. In 1985, the Navy reorganized and re-established the Equipment Repair Department, incorporating weapon systems, communications, radar, ______

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78 "Performance Marks Navy’s 50th Anniversary," *Xinhua*, 27 April 1999.

sonar, navigation support equipment, and defense rescue equipment. Following the establishment of the General Equipment Department in 1998, the PLAN combined the Equipment Repair Department with the Equipment Technical Department into the Equipment Department (zhuangbeibu). Therefore, the PLAN's current organization includes four departments – Headquarters, Political, Logistics, and Equipment.

**PLAN Operational Structure**

The PLAN operates out of three fleet headquarters – North Sea at Qingdao, East Sea at Ningbo, and South Sea at Zhanjiang – which are considered as operational (zhanyi) juntuan. These fleets were originally established under the existing military regions in 1949-1950. In the late 1980s, the fleet commanders also became deputy commanders of the Jinan, Nanjing, and Guangzhou military regions, respectively.

The PLAN's fleet system is organized into three levels: zhidui (division equivalent), dadui (regiment equivalent), and jianting (single ship). Like the Air Force, Naval Aviation is organized into divisions, regiments, groups, and squadrons. Similar to the Army, the PLAN's artillery is organized into regiments, battalions, companies, platoons, and squads. The PLAN's logistics system is organized into four levels: Navy Headquarters (haijun), fleet headquarters (jiandui), base (jidi), and ship (jianting).

In April 1949, the CMC created the East China MR Navy Headquarters (huadong junqu haijun) in Taizhou, Jiangsu Province. In October 1955, the name was changed to the PLA Navy East Sea Fleet (donghai jiandui). At some point thereafter, the headquarters moved to Ningbo.

In September 1950, the Navy established a base at Qingdao with Soviet assistance, using the PLA's 11th Corps as the foundation. In May 1960, the Ministry of National Defense formally created the North Sea Fleet (beihai jiandui) with its headquarters at Qingdao.

In December 1950, the Central China MR Navy Headquarters (huazhong junqu haijun) was established in Guangzhou, incorporating former Nationalist naval forces. The name was changed to the PLA Navy South Sea Fleet (nanhai jiandui) in October 1955. Sometime thereafter, the headquarters moved to Zhanjiang.

**PLA AIR FORCE**

**PLAAF Administrative Structure**

The PLAAF's organizational system includes the administrative structure (lingdao zhihui jiguanyuan), five operational branches/service arms (bingzhong), specialized support units (zhuanye baozhang budui), and logistics and maintenance support units (houqin

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81 Dangdai Zhongguo haijun, p. 100.
82 Dangdai Zhongguo haijun, p. 126.
jishu baozhang budui), and research institutes (yanjiusuo). There are also maintenance and logistics support units such as repair facilities (xiulichang), hospitals (yiyuan), and sanitoriums (liaoyangyuan). In addition, there are various types of training regiments (xunlian tuan) and training groups (xunlian dadui) that are directly subordinate to either Headquarters Air Force or the seven Military Region Air Force Headquarters.

Since its founding in November 1949, the PLAAF’s chain-of-command has basically been organized into four administrative and operational levels: Headquarters Air Force (HqAF/kongjian); military region air forces (MRAF/junqu kongjian); air corps (jun), command posts (zhihuisuo), and bases (jidi); and operational units (budui). Depending on the type of unit, operational units are organized into divisions (shi), brigades (li), regiments (tuan), groups (dadui), squadrons (chongdui), battalions (ying), companies (lian), platoons (pai), squads (ban), and flights (fendui). Operational units can be directly subordinate to HqAF, the MRAF headquarters, an air corps, a command post, or a base.

Over the past fifty years, the overall administrative organization at PLAAF headquarters can be compared to a deck of cards that occasionally gets reshuffled. Almost no new cards have been added and the existing cards have merely been moved to a different location in the deck, where the offices still retain the same responsibilities. Headquarters Air Force, located in Beijing, is equivalent to the US Air Force’s Air Staff and is organized into four first-level (yi) or major (da) administrative departments (bu) – Headquarters Department (silingbu/kongsu), Political Department (zhengzhibu/kongzheng), Logistics Department (houqinbu/konghou), and Equipment Department (zhuangbeibu/kongzhuang) – and their subordinate second-level (erji) functional (yewu) departments (bu), bureaus (ju), divisions (chui), offices (ke), sections (zu), and branches.

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84 In the PLAAF, aviation units are organized into air divisions, regiments, groups, and squadrons, and aviation maintenance units are organized into groups, squadrons, and flights. The air defense and support units are organized into divisions, brigades, regiments, battalions, companies, platoons, and squad. A command post/base is slightly lower than an air corps (the commander is equal to a deputy corps commander); a brigade is slightly lower than a division (the brigade commander is equal to a deputy division commander); a battalion and aviation group are equal; a company and aviation squadron are equal; and a platoon and flight are equal. See Xin Ming, pp. 97-98.

85 For example, over the years, the training department and schools department have been first level departments, have merged, and have been separated several times, but their functions have not changed.
(gu). Historically, the Headquarters, Political, and Logistics Departments have always existed as first-level departments, while other departments have moved between being first-level and second-level departments. These three departments are virtual mirror images of the PLA’s three general departments (GSD, GPD, and GLD).

In May 1976, the Aeronautical Engineering Department (hangkong gongchengbu/kongggong), which had been downgraded to a second-level department in 1969, was re-established as the fourth first-level department, and changed its name to the Equipment-Technical Department (kongjun zhuangbei jishubu) in November 1992. Following the April 1998 creation of the General Equipment Department, the PLAAF changed the name of the Equipment-Technical Department to the Equipment Department (kongjun zhuangbeiibu/kongzhuang).

**PLAAF Operational Structure**

Although the PLAAF is subordinate to the PLA, the uneven growth of the Air Force led to operational areas that were sometimes different than those of the ground forces. This situation lasted until the 1985 military region consolidation mentioned above, when the PLAAF operational boundaries were finally matched to those of the ground forces. While most of the PLAAF’s aviation and air defense units are subordinate to an MRAF, air corps, command post, or base, some of the PLAAF’s aviation and air defense units are directly subordinate (zhishu budui) to PLAAF Headquarters.

Between August 1950 and May 1952, the six PLAAF Aviation Divisions (kongjun hangkongchu) that had been created in the six ground force MRs became MRAF headquarters. The six MRAFs and their locations are shown below.

- Dongbei – Shenyang
- Huabei – Beijing
- Xibei – Lanzhou
- Huadong – Nanjing
- Zhongnan – Wuhan (moved to Guangzhou in May 1955)
- Xinan – Chongqing (moved to Chengdu in 1950 and Wuhan in May 1955)

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86 In most cases in the PLAAF, the term *jishu*, normally translated as “technical” refers to maintenance, but the meaning is generally clear from the context. For example, the PLAAF’s *jishu budui* are maintenance troops for equipment and weapons systems other than aircraft.

87 Kongjun da cidian, ed., Kongjun da cidian, p. 146.


Although the CMC realigned the ground force operational boundaries into twelve MRs in February 1955, the PLAAF did not follow suit. In May 1955, the six MRAFs were renamed. While four of the MRAF headquarters remained in the same location, two of them moved. The Zhongnan MRAF in Wuhan moved to Guangzhou as the Guangzhou MRAF, and the Xinan MRAF in Chengdu moved to Wuhan to become the Wuhan MRAF. The MRAF headquarters changes in May 1955 are shown below:

- Dongbei MRAF
- Shenyang MRAF
- Huabei MRAF
- Beijing MRAF
- Xibei MRAF
- Lanzhou MRAF
- Huadong MRAF
- Nanjing MRAF
- Zhongnan MRAF
- Guangzhou MRAF
- Xinan MRAF
- Wuhan MRAF

During the 1950s and 1960s, the PLAAF created thirteen air corps and several command posts to control aviation and air defense units within geographical areas that may or may not have been within an existing MRAF. During the Cultural Revolution, many PLAAF command organizations ceased to exist and were reestablished during the late 1970s. In addition, as the PLAAF expanded and realigned its operational areas with those of the ground forces, several of the air corps replaced MRAF headquarters, were abolished, or were downgraded to a command post. The key point is that these command organizations are composed of staff members only. When they moved, they did not necessarily have organic aviation and air defense units that moved with them. As these command organizations were moved around to replace existing organizations or establish new command organizations, they then took control of aviation and air defense units that already existed in the command area. Today, only five air corps remain active – 1st/Changchun, 7th/Nanning, 8th/Fuzhou, 9th/Wulumuqi, 10th/Datong. Beginning in 1993, the PLAAF also changed the names of six of its seven existing command posts to bases – Dalian, Tangshan, Xian, Shanghai, Wuhan, and Kunming. Apparently the Lhasa Command Post did not convert to a base. 91

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PLA SECOND ARTILLERY CORPS

Unlike the Navy and Air Force, there is very little substantive information about the organizational structure of the Second Artillery Corps. In December 1957, the PLA’s surface-to-surface missile troops (di di duodan budui), were established and subordinated to the CMC’s artillery troops (paobing). In July 1966, the CMC formally established the Second Artillery Corps (dier paobing) headquarters, using the command staff of the former PLA Public Security Force (gonganjun) and the artillery troops’ surface-to-surface missile troops as the core. The Second Artillery Corps was placed under the direct control of the CMC. In 1967, the missile troops and schools belonging to the artillery troops were transferred to the Second Artillery Corps.

There is very little information available about the administrative structure for the Second Artillery Corps. However, prior to 1998, there were four first-level departments – Headquarters, Political, Logistics, and Technical Equipment (jishu zhuanbei). The latter was responsible for equipment R&D, maintenance, repair, and procurement. Following the creation of the General Equipment Department in 1998, the Technical Equipment Department changed its name to Equipment Department (zhuanbei).

Today, the Second Artillery Corps, with an estimated 90,000 personnel, consists of headquarters elements, six corps-level launch bases (jidi), one engineering design academy, four research institutes, two command academies, and possibly an early warning unit. As key operational strike units, brigades are likely only assigned one

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92 Zhongguo junshi biaoke quanshu, Volume 9, p. 1567.
94 Mark Stokes, “Weapons of Precise Destruction: PLA Space and Theater Missile Development,” China and Weapons of Mass Destruction: Implications for the United States, Conference Report, 5 November 1999, pp. 203-205. Bases are located at Shenyang (80301 Unit); Huangshan (80302 Unit); Kunming (80303 Unit); Luoyang (80304 Unit); Huaihua (80305 Unit); and Xining (80306 Unit). The Second Artillery has one engineering design academy and four research institutes to solve problems associated with operations, TELs, and logistics (First Institute), command automation, targeting, and mapping (Third Institute), and missile and warhead engineering design (Academy of Engineering Design). The Second Artillery’s Command College in Wuhan prepares officers for leadership positions within headquarters elements and launch brigades. The Engineering College in Xian educates technicians associated with equipment and technology departments at various headquarters and field units. General Second Artillery organizational information is drawn from numerous sources, to include open and internal (junren) Chinese publications and from discussions while assigned as the assistant air attaché in Beijing, China from 1992-1995. Also see PLA Directory of Personalities, USDLO Hong Kong, 1996, pp. 48-51; Bill Gertz, “New Chinese Missiles Target All of East Asia,” Washington Times, 10 July 97, p. 1; Hisashi Fujii, “Facts Concerning China’s Nuclear Forces,” Gunji Kenkyu, November 95, in FBIS-CHI-96-036; “Guangrong Bang” [Outstanding Units], [Changying] Flying Eagle, 3 November 93; “Guangrong Bang”
type of missile to facilitate command and logistics. The Second Artillery headquarters and subordinate bases oversee warhead and missile storage facilities; maintenance units; and special warhead/missile transportation services.\(^95\)

The unit headquartered in the mountain resort town of Huangshan, Jiangxi province, is the Second Artillery's most important base for conventional long-range precision strikes against Taiwan.\(^96\) The Huangshan base includes both nuclear and conventionally armed theater missiles. During a wartime situation, multiple conventional brigades would be subsumed into a conventional theater missile jun tüan consisting of a command post, a logistics command post, and a number of subordinate theater missile brigades each with different types of theater missiles. The jun tüan command post would largely consist of command authorities from Beijing and Huangshan.\(^97\)

A typical conventional theater missile brigade has a staff consisting of a headquarters, political, logistics, and equipment departments.\(^98\) Brigade elements include a mobile brigade command post, a central depot (known as a "technical position" or jishu zhendi), a transfer point (zhuanzai changping), and an assigned set of pre-surveyed launch sites (fashe zhendi), as well as a set of reserve (daaji) launch sites. A conventional missile brigade also has a set of "equipment support sub-units" (zhuangbei baozhang fendui). Brigades have at least four firing battalions (fasheying), with each

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\(^95\) "The Strategic Nuclear Force Organization," in Guojia junzhixue [The Science of the State Military System], undated, p.3.

\(^96\) Stokes, pp. 59-61. Prior to the change in MUCDs in October 2000, Huangshan was known as the 80302 unit.

\(^97\) Lianhe zhanyi di erpaobing zuozhan, p. 4. Another article supports the assertion that conventional Second Artillery units would be subsumed into the theater command structure, but notes that Beijing may direct operations though the Second Artillery chain-of-command. See Li Junsheng, "Lianhe zhanyi didi changgui daodan budui zuozhan zhihui wenti tiantao" [Inquiry Into Joint Conventional Theater Surface-to-Surface Missile Unit Operational Command Problems], in Lianhe zhanyi yu junbingzhong zuozhan, [Joint Theater and Service Operations], Beijing: National Defense University Press, 1998, pp. 228-231. Li is from an unidentified (probably Second Artillery) Third Research Institute.

battalion assigned at least three-four companies. Companies subordinate to the launch battalion likely would be assigned at least one launcher, an electric power generation vehicle, a surveying vehicle, a communications command vehicle, and a missile transport vehicle. Battalions and companies would be assigned a zone within which to operate.

PLA ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

PLA Ranks, Rank Categories, and Grades

The Red Army and PLA have always had an officer (cadre) grade and rank system (ganbu dengji zhidu), which has evolved over the years. This system consists of four basic components: grade categories, grades, rank categories, and ranks. The Chinese use four terms to describe the components: zhiwu, jibie, dengji, and junxian. These terms do not always translate directly into English, but their meaning is usually clear from the context. The grade system is based on series of grade categories and a list of specific positions within each grade category. The lowest grade is platoon leader and the highest is chairman of the CMC, with the number of grades in-between changing over time. The PLA’s rank system, which existed from 1955-1965 and was re-instituted in 1988, consists of two parts. The first part is the rank categories: flag rank, field grade (major through senior colonel), and company grade officers (second lieutenant through captain). The second part is the ranks themselves (second lieutenant through general).

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99 For reference to a fourth battalion within a Second Artillery brigade structure, see “Guangrong Bang” [Glorious Honor Roll], Flying Eagle, 2 November 93, p. 10.


101 Zhiwu or zhiwu dengji is translated as position or post and indicates the specific position someone holds. Jibie is translated as grade. These two terms are used interchangeably and refer to a specific position such as regiment commander. The third term is dengji, which means rank, but this term is used more in the sense of an organizational level, such as at the division level, rather than a rank like a colonel. The fourth term is junxian, which means the military ranks, such as general, field grade (major through colonel), and company grade (second lieutenant through captain).
Prior to 1952, cadre in the Red Army and PLA were identified only by their position (zhinu). In 1952, the PLA established a formal unified grade system, which consisted of ten grade categories and twenty-one grades (10 dengji 21 jibie) as shown in Table 1.8. In 1955, the “CMC member” grade category was abolished, leaving nine categories and twenty grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Category</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CMC (zhongyang junwei)</td>
<td>1. Chairman (zhuxi) &amp; vice chairman (fuzhuxi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Military Region (dajunqu)</td>
<td>2. Commander (silingyuan) &amp; Political Commissar (zhengzhi weiyuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. CMC member (zhongyang junwei weiyuan)</td>
<td>3. Member (weiyuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bingtuan</td>
<td>4. Leader (zhengbingtuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Corps (jun)</td>
<td>5. Deputy leader (fubingtuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Division (shi)</td>
<td>6. #3 leader (zhunbingtuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Regiment (tuan)</td>
<td>7. Leader (zhengtuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Battalion (ying)</td>
<td>8. Deputy Leader (futuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Company (lian)</td>
<td>9. #3 leader (zhuntuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Platoon (pai)</td>
<td>10. Leader (zhengying)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Deputy leader (fuying)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. #3 leader (zhunshu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Leader (zhengzhi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Deputy leader (fushi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. #3 leader (zhunshi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. Leader (zhenglai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17. Deputy Leader (fudian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. Leader (zhengpai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. Deputy leader (fupai)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1955, the PLA combined the existing grade system with a new military rank system (junxian zhidu) based on the Soviet rank system, which included five rank categories (dengji) and fifteen ranks (jibie) as shown in Table 1.9. Each grade was assigned at least one rank.

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102 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, Volume 4, p. 40.
103 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Categories</th>
<th>Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Generalissimo (dayuanshuai)</td>
<td>1. Generalissimo (dayuanshuai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Marshal (yuanshuai)</td>
<td>2. Marshal (yuanshuai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. General Grade (jiangguan)</td>
<td>3. Senior General (dajiang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. General (shangjijiang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Lieutenant General (zhongjiang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Major General (shaojjiang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Field Grade (xiaoguan)</td>
<td>7. Senior Colonel (daxiao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Colonel (shangxiao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Lieutenant Colonel (zhongxiao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Major (shaoxiao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Company Grade (weiguan)</td>
<td>11. Senior Captain (davei)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Captain (shangwei)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. 1st Lieutenant (zhongwei)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. 2nd Lieutenant (shaowei)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. Warrant Office (zhuowe)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In May 1965, the military grade\textsuperscript{104} and rank systems were officially abolished and replaced with the State administrative cadre (officer) rank system (\textit{guojia jiguang xingzheng ganbu jibie zhidu}).\textsuperscript{105} Officers were called cadre (ganbu) and enlisted members were called soldiers (zhanshi). All military personnel wore the same hat (Mao hat with a red star) and plain red collar tabs. Each of the three services wore their traditional Army green, Navy blue and white, and Air Force green jackets and blue pants. The only difference between a cadre and soldier was that a cadre’s jacket had four pockets and a soldier’s had only two breast pockets, and the material was different. In 1972, the twenty-seven cadre ranks were reduced to twenty-three.

During the 1979 Vietnam border conflict, the PLA had major command and control problems when different units had to work together and it was difficult to tell who was in

\textsuperscript{104} According to interviews with PLA officials, the military grade system unofficially remained in place. In his autobiography, PLAAF commander General Wang Hai notes that in 1975 he skipped three grades when he was transferred from his position as the PLAAF Headquarters’ Training Department’s Second Department director, which was a deputy corps leader position, to become the commander of the Guangzhou MRAF, which was a binguan leader position. Wang Hai, \textit{Wang Hai Shangjiang: wode zhandou shengya} [General Wang Hai: My Combat Career], Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe [Central Literature Publishers], February 2000, p. 237.

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu}, Volume 4-40.
charge. After several years of wrangling, the National People’s Congress (NPC) adopted the “Regulations for PLA Officers’ Ranks in accordance with relevant provisions of the Military Service Law of the People’s Republic of China,” effective October 1988. The Regulation established a rank/grade system for three cadre classifications – officers (junguan) and non-technical cadre (fei zhuanye jishu ganbu), technical cadre, and civilian cadre (wenzhi ganbu) – and abolished the administrative cadre grade system for the military.106 The description for each rank provides the grade, authorized ranks, and basic rank for each grade. For example, the Regulation stipulates, “Leaders of military regions shall be either general or lieutenant general, with lieutenant general as the basic military rank.”

There are fifteen officer grades (junguan zhiwu dengji) as shown in Table 1.10, which determine every officer’s military rank, pay, and allowances. All PLA officers, regardless of service or duty title, are assigned one of these grades. Military ranks for active duty officers (xianyi junguan) were assigned in three levels (general officer, field grade, and company grade) and ten grades (3 deng 10 ji).

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106 “Regulations for PLA Officers’ Ranks,” Xinhua, 2 July 1988; and Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, Volume 4, p. 392.
Table 1.10  PLA Grade and Rank Structure: 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade (zhīwù dēngjì)</th>
<th>Military Rank (jùnxìan)*</th>
<th>Service Limit Age107</th>
<th>Army</th>
<th>Navy</th>
<th>Air Force</th>
<th>2nd Artillery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CMC Chm (jūnweì zhǔxì), Vice Chairman (fǔzhǔxì)</td>
<td>Chairman – None, Vice Chairman – General</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CMC Member (jūnweì wèiyuán)</td>
<td>General</td>
<td></td>
<td>General Departments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. MR Commander (dáqū zhēngzhǐ)</td>
<td>General/Lieutenant General</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>MR/General Department Dep Ldr</td>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>HQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. MR Deputy Commander (dáqū fǔzhǐ)</td>
<td>Lieutenant General/Major General</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Fleet/Naval Aviation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MRAF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Corps Commander (zhèngjùn)</td>
<td>MajGen/LtGen</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Army (jìtuānjùn)/MD</td>
<td>Base/ Fleet Aviation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Air Corps/ Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Corps Deputy Commander (fǔjùn)</td>
<td>Major General/Senior Colonel</td>
<td>(53)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Division Commander (zhēngshǐ)</td>
<td>Senior Colonel/Major General</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Division</td>
<td>Garrison/ Flotilla (jiàndùi)</td>
<td>Division</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

107 Officers at the senior grades must retire if they are not promoted to a higher grade. Younger officers who are not promoted must leave the service. The PLA has two types of retirement — tíxìu and tíyì. Tíxìu means the officer retires with a full pension and does not have to work anymore. Tíyì means the officer has a civilian job after he leaves the military and does not receive a full military pension.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Division Deputy Commander (fushi)/Brigade Ldr (zhengliu)</th>
<th>Colonel /Senior Colonel</th>
<th>(48)</th>
<th>Brigade</th>
<th>Brigade</th>
<th>Brigade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. Regiment Ldr (zhengtuan)/Brigade Dep Ldr (fuli)</td>
<td>Colonel /Lieutenant Colonel</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Regiment</td>
<td>Group (jianting dadui)</td>
<td>Regiment/Brigade Dep Ldr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Regiment Dep Ldr (futuan)</td>
<td>Lieutenant Colonel /Colonel</td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Battalion Commander(zhengying)</td>
<td>Major /Lieutenant Colonel</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Battalion</td>
<td>Squadron (jianting zhongdui)</td>
<td>Battalion/Group (dadui)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Battalion Deputy Commander (fuzheng)</td>
<td>Captain/Major</td>
<td>(38)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Company Ldr (zhenglian)</td>
<td>Captain/1st Lieutenant</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Company</td>
<td></td>
<td>Company/Squadron (zhongdui)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Company Dep Ldr (fudian)</td>
<td>1st Lieutenant/Captain</td>
<td>(33)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Platoon Leader (zhengpai)</td>
<td>2nd Lieutenant/1st Lieutenant</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Platoon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Platoon/Flight (fendui)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*The first rank noted is the basic rank for that grade. Squad leaders (banzhang) are considered enlisted personnel (zhanshi). The Military Yearbook did not provide the service limit ages for the deputy leaders for the corps and below, so the figures in parentheses are estimates.

In addition, every PLA organization, whether it is a service, branch, administrative office, or operational unit, is categorized into one of these fifteen grade levels, based upon the leader’s grade. For example, the leader of the PLA Navy and Air Force have the grade of a military region leader, therefore the Navy and Air Force as services (junzhong) are equal to a military region. Note that the term leader is used since the commander and political commissar at each level are equals and have the same grade, even if they carry different ranks.

The grade structure also provides the foundation for the administrative organization of every unit within the PLA from the highest echelons to the lowest units, whereby all administrative staff elements and positions are classified as one of the fifteen grades. For example, since the directors of the four general departments are all members of the CMC, the four general departments are classified at the CMC member level. Most of their second-level departments are classified at the corps leader level, and the third tier bureaus are at the division leader level. Historically, the GSD and GPD have always been at the CMC member level. However, the director of the GLD has not always been a member of the CMC, so the GLD as an organization has been a half-step below the CMC member and a half-step above a military region leader level.

Prior to 1994, the PLA had mandatory retirement ages for platoon through corps leaders (30 for platoon, 35 for company, 40 for battalion, 45 for regiment, 50 for division, and 55 for corps). It was not until May 1994, however, that mandatory ages were established for military region deputy leaders and leaders (63 and 65, respectively). There are no mandatory retirement ages for CMC members and heads of the four general departments. For example, CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Wannian is 72, Vice Chairman and Minister of Defense Chi Haotian is 71, and CMC member and Chief of the General Staff Fu Quanyou is 70.

At that time, the PLA tried its best to provide ranks by balancing between the officer’s position and what was correct based on the each officer’s longevity and contributions. The PLAAF admitted that it would take 5-10 years to normalize the rank structure, whereby the older cadres would meet their retirement ages and then the commander could be promoted to the proper rank and the new deputies given a lower rank. For example, the commander for the 14 Air Division was only 31 years old and given the rank of colonel, while his deputies were older than he was and were given the rank of senior colonel. However, once the deputies reached their retirement age, their replacements were given a lower rank.

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109 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, Volume 7 and 9.
110 Interviews with PLAAF officials in 1988.
Pay and Allowances: PLA officers receive their salary based on five criteria as shown below.111

- Base Salary (jichu gongzi): All officers receive the same base salary;
- Grade (zhengwu gongzi): This is based on the sixteen grades described above, but each grade also has about eight separate salary levels based on time in grade;
- Rank (junxian gongzi): This is based on the officer’s rank, which also has about eight separate salary levels based on time in rank;
- Time in Service (junling gongzi): This is based on the total time in the PLA; and
- Bonus (putie): Each officer receives some type of bonus based on his/her specialty.
- Location: Officers receive different amounts of money depending upon where they are stationed.

CMC and General Departments

The PLA’s highest administrative level is the CCP Central Committee’s Military Commission. Directly subordinate to CMC are the four general departments — General Staff (GSD), General Political (GPD), General Logistics (GLD), and General Equipment (GED). Between 1949-1958, the PLA had as many as eight general departments subordinate to the CMC, but these were reduced to three in late 1958. This structure remained constant until the GED was added in 1998.

Following the 4th Party Congress in 1925, the CCP Central Committee established a subordinate Military Department (junshibu).112 In October 1928, a Military Commission (junshi weiyuanhui) was created under the Military Department, along with a staff office (caonanke), Organization Office (zuzhike), Soldiers Office (bingshike), Special Affairs Office (tewuke), and Transportation Office (jiaotongke) that were also subordinate to the Military Department. In 1930, the Military Department was renamed the CCP Central Committee Military Commission (zhonggong zhongyang junshi weiyuanhui) and a Military Commission standing committee was formed with several subordinate elements: Secretariat Division (mishuchu), General Political Department (zongzhengzhibu), Staff Department (caonoubu), Armed Workers And Peasants Department (wuzhuang gongnongbu), Military Affairs Department (junwubu), Health Management Department (jingli weishengbu), Soldier Mobilization Commission (shibing dongyuan weiyuanhui), and a Non-CCP Soldier Work Department (waibing gongzuobu).

In November 1931, the First Chinese Soviet Congress established the Chinese Soviet Republic Central Revolutionary Military Commission (zhonghua suweitai

111 Interview with PLA officials. Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, Volume 4-178.
112 Unless specified, information in this section about the history of the CMC and general departments comes from Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, Volume 9, pp. 1585-1586.
gongheguo zhongyang geming junshi weiyuanhui, shortened to zhong ge junwei). Zhu De was the chairman and there were 14 others were vice-chairmen. The Military Commission was organized into a General Staff Department (zongcanmoubu), General Political Department, General Administration Department (zongjinglibu) which changed to the General Supply Department (zonggonglibu), General Health Department (zongweishengbu), General Depot and Transportation Department (zongbingzhan yunshubu), and a Rear Services General Office (houfang bangongshi). Ye Jianying was the Chief of the General Staff. In 1934, the General Mobilization Armed Force Department (zongdongyuan wuzhuangbu) and the Political Security Bureau (zhengzhi baoweiju) were added.

During the Long March, several different command organizations were formed in conjunction with the movement of the three front armies. In October 1936, a new Central Revolutionary Military Commission was established in Yanan. The Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army General Department was created during the Long March and changed its name to the Chinese People’s Anti-Japanese Red Army General Department, which had a subordinate General Headquarters (zongsilingbu). At that time, the General Headquarters changed its name to the GSD, and was organized into several subordinate elements: four subordinate bureaus (ju) numbered 1st through the 4th; the GPD with a subordinate Organization Department, Propaganda Department (xuanchuanbu), Local Works Department (dijiangbu), Security Department (baoweibu), and Anti-Japanese Battlefront Department (kangri zhanxianbu); and Rear Services Department (houfang qinwubu).

When the CCP and KMT formed a united front against Japan in July 1937, the Red Army’s Eighth Route Army and New Fourth Army were merged into the National Revolutionary Army (guomin gemingjun), but were placed under the direct control of the CCP’s Central Committee Revolutionary Military Commission. Under the Military Commission were the GSD with its subordinate 1st through 4th Bureaus, plus the Supply Department, Health Department, and Depot Department; and the GPD with its Organization Department, Propaganda Department, Counterintelligence Department (chujianbu), and Enemy Works Department (dijongbu).

In August 1938, the Supply Department and Health Department were taken out from under the GSD and placed directly under the Military Commission. In July 1939, the Military Commission reestablished the first-level Rear Services Department and placed the Supply Department and Health Department, along with a Political Department as second-level departments.

After the 7th Party Congress established a new Central Committee Military Commission in August 1945, the Military Commission had a General Staff Department, General Political Department, and General Rear Services Department.

In October 1949, the People’s Revolutionary Military Commission (renmin geming junshi weiyuanhui) was established with Mao as the chairman. Zhu De, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, and Cheng Qian were vice-chairmen, and there were twenty-two other members.

Between October 1949 and mid-1957, the Military Commission created a total of eight directly subordinate general departments and their second-level departments and bureaus shown below:

- **General Staff Department**: Operations Department (zuozhanbu), Intelligence Department (qingbaobu), Technical Department (jishubu), Communications Department (tongxinbu), Military Affairs Department (junwubu), Equipment Planning Department (zhuangbei jihuabu), People’s Armed Forces Department (renmin wuzhuangbu), Military Transportation Headquarters (junshi yunshu silingbu), Political Department (zhengzhibu), Cadre Division (ganbubu), Cartography Bureau (cehuju), and the Administration and Economic Management Department (xingzheng jingji guanlibu);

- **Training Inspector General Department** (xunlian zongjianbu): Planning and Inspection Department (jihua jianchabu), Army Combat Training Department (lijun zhandou xunlianbu), Military Academies and School Department (junshi xueyuan he xuexiaobu), Military Science and Regulations Department (junshi kexue he tiaolingbu), Outside Military Training Department (junwai xunlianbu), Physical Training Bureau (tiyu xunlianju), and Combat Training Material Support Bureau (zhandou xunlian wuzhi baozhangju);

- **Armed Forces Inspection Department** (wuzhuang liliangbu): Army Inspection Department (lijun jianchabu), Air Force Inspection Department (kongjun jianchabu), Navy Inspection Department (haijun jianchabu), and Logistics Finance Inspection Department (houchin caiwu jianchabu);

- **General Political Department**: Organization Department (zuzhibu), Cadre Department (ganbubu), Propaganda Department (xuanchuanbu), Security Department (baowei), Culture Department (wenhuabu), Youth Department (qingnianbu), Liaison Department (lianliaobu), and Secretariat Division (mishuchu);

- **General Cadre Department** (zongganbubu): General Branch Cadre Appointment and Removal Department (yiban bingzhong ganbu renmianbu), Special Branch Cadre Appointment and Removal Department (tezhongbing ganbu renmianbu), Organization Statistics Department (zuzhi tongjibu), Military Ranks Award Department (junxian jianglibu), and Reserve Forces Cadre Mobilization Department (yubei ganbu dongyuanbu);

- **General Logistics Department**: Headquarters Department (silinbingbu), Political Department (zhengshubu), Cadre Department (ganbubu), Quartermaster Production Department (junrao shengchanbu), Health Department (weishengbu), Barracks Management Department (yingfang guanlibu), Fuels Department (youliaobu), Training Department (xunlianbu), Vehicle Management Department (chequanzhu), Horse Administration Bureau (mazhengju), and Veterinary Bureau (shouyiju);

- **General Finance Department** (zongcaiwubu): Organization Planning Bureau (zuzhi jihuabu), Budget Finance Bureau (yusuan caiwuju), Labor Salary Bureau (laodong gongziju), Engineering Construction Funding Bureau (gongcheng jianzhu jingfeiju), Factory Warehouse Funding Bureau (gongchang cangku
jingfeiju), Accounting Bureau (kuaijiu), and Foreign Exchange Bureau (waihuiju); and

- **General Armament Department** (zongjiangjiebu): Organization Planning Bureau (zuzhi jihuaju), Weapons Supply Bureau (wuqi gongjiu), Ammunition Supply Bureau (danyao gongjiu), Basic Construction Bureau (jiben jiansheju), Weapons Procurement Bureau (wuqi dinggouju), Ammunition Procurement Bureau (danyao dinggouju), Radar Searchlight Management Bureau (leida tanzhaodeng guanliju), Armament Scientific Research Bureau (junxiu kexue yanjiuju), Cadre Bureau (gandumu), and Finance Bureau (caiwuju).

Between mid-1957 and late-1958, the Military Commission’s eight general departments underwent a major reorganization, such that by the end of 1958 there were only three general departments – GSD, GPD, and GLD. The General Finance Department was subordinated to the GLD, the General Armament Department was placed under the GSD and then moved to the GLD in 1959; the General Cadre Department, Armed Forces Inspection Department, and Training Inspector General Department were abolished and their second-level elements were redistributed to the appropriate three remaining general departments.

**Ministry of National Defense**

There have been eight Defense Ministers since the 1954 Constitution established the MND.\(^{114}\) Peng Dehuai became the PRC’s first Minister of National Defense in September 1954. Although the MND was modeled on the Soviet Defense Ministry model, it never had the same authority and the Party CMC has often by-passed it to directly control the general departments and service branches. Initially, the MND had some control over the military’s scientific and technological establishment, military schools, and the recruiting-conscription system.

Marshal Lin Biao reorganized and strengthened the MND in late 1959, but still lost control to the CMC of research and development,\(^{115}\) schools, and the general

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\(^{114}\) Dr. Harlan Jeck provided the information on the Ministry of National Defense. There have been eight Defense Ministers since the 1954 Constitution established the MND: Peng Dehuai (Sep 1954-Aug 1959), Lin Biao (Aug 1959-Sep 1971), position vacant (Sep 1971-Jan 1975), Ye Jianying (Jan 1975-Mar 1978), Xu Xiangqian (Mar 1978-Mar 1981), Geng Biao (Mar 1981-Nov 1982), Zhang Aiping (Nov 1982-Apr 1988), Qin Jiwei (Apr 1988-Mar 1993), Chi Haotian (Mar 1993-Present). The absence of a defense minister for over three years not only reflects the chaotic period of the Cultural Revolution, but also reveals that the position was not seen as central to the functioning of the PLA. Of note, in comparison to the lengthy entries on the CMC and general departments, the AMS encyclopedia has one short paragraph on defense ministries in general and merely lists the PLA’s defense ministers.

departments. After Lin's death in September 1971, the minister's position remained vacant until Marshal Ye Jianying was appointed in January 1975. Under Ye, the MND again reasserted control over schools and the military-industrial complex for a time. When Deng Xiaoping regained his authority in 1978, the ministry once again yielded most of its authority to the CMC. The center of gravity of military authority thus seems to have oscillated between the MND and the CMC from 1954 to 1978. In the mid-seventies, the MND still administered the recruiting-conscription system. The MND General Office (bangongting) drafted and published military regulations and manuals, and other MND organs had responsibilities relating to civil defense, the military budget, and possibly some supervision over military industry.

Since approximately 1980, the MND has been a shell organization, consisting of about fifty staff personnel. The MND as an institution, not to be confused with the power of the person who holds the position, exists solely for protocol purposes, so the PLA has an organization and minister equivalent to foreign defense establishments for high-level exchange purposes. The MND nominally controls PRC military attachés, the military mission to the United Nations, the Chinese delegation to the Korean Armistice Commission at Panmunjom, and the PLA's Foreign Affairs Office, but, in reality, the GSD's Second (Intelligence) Department controls them.

Until Mao's death in 1976, the defense minister was generally the most powerful individual in the PLA, not because of the post's inherent power, but because of his concurrent position as senior vice-chairman of the CMC. Moreover, an individual had to be well connected and widely accepted to be appointed to the post by the Politburo in the first place. All defense ministers to date have been Politburo members, an arrangement that is likely to continue. In recent years, however, the almost exclusively diplomatic role of the defense minister has been the apparent reason for the long tenure of Chi Haotian, a career political commissar. Zhang Wannian, a tough career field commander who succeeded Chi as chief of the general staff in 1992, has displaced Chi as senior soldier in the CMC. Although Zhang is now clearly senior to Chi, the latter remains defense minister owing to his experience in handling foreigners.

Current Administrative Structure

Today, the PLA's organizational structure for administration below the CMC is fairly consistent throughout the services from the highest level down to the lowest level. This structure consists of first (yijibu), second (erjibu), and in some cases third-level (sanjibu) elements. At the higher echelons, the first-level generally consists of

Between 1956-1958, the CMC established four research academies under MND, including the 5th (all missiles except air-to-air), 6th (aircraft and air-to-air missiles), 7th (ships), and 10th (electronics). In 1965, all four research academies were resubordinated from MND to their associated ministries of machine building (MMB or MMD): 3rd MMB (aviation) took over the 6th Research Academy; the 4th MMB (electronics) acquired the 10th Academy; the 6th MMB (shipbuilding) received the 7th Academy; and the 5th Research Academy was reorganized and became the 7th MMB (missiles). It is not clear if there was an 8th or 9th Research Academy under MND.
departments (bu), the second-level includes departments (bu), offices (bangongshi), and bureaus (ju), and the third-level consists of bureaus (ju), divisions (chu), or offices (ke). In the lower echelons, the first level consists of departments and divisions, while the second-level consists of divisions, offices (ke), and branches (gu). Table 1.11 provides an overview of how the structure looks from top to bottom. For example, the General Political Department (zongzhengzhibu) has a second-level Organization Department (zuzhibu), which has a subordinate Propaganda Bureau (xuanchuanju). This structure is the same for the services and the military region headquarters. At the army/corps level, there is a Political Department with a second level Organization Division (zuzhichu), with a subordinate Propaganda Office (xuanchuanke). At the regiment level, there is a Political Division (zhengzhichu) with a second level Organization Office (zuzhike) or Branch (zhuzhiyuan). Since the regiment administrative staff is so small there are no third level elements, so the officers in the second-level Organization Office/Branch are responsible for all the duties handled by their counterparts at higher headquarters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>First-Level</th>
<th>Second-Level</th>
<th>Third-Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Departments (zongbu)</td>
<td>4 Departments (bu)</td>
<td>Department (bu),</td>
<td>Bureau (ju)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>office (bangongting),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bureau (ju)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service HQ (junzhong)</td>
<td>4 Departments (bu)</td>
<td>Department (bu),</td>
<td>Division (chu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>office (bangongshi),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bureau (ju)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Region HQ (junqu)</td>
<td>4 Departments (bu)</td>
<td>Department (bu),</td>
<td>Division (chu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>office (bangongshi)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bureau (ju)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRAF/Fleet HQ (junqu/kongji/fiandu)</td>
<td>4 Departments (bu)</td>
<td>Office (bangongshi),</td>
<td>Office (ke)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Division (chu)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army/Corps (jun)</td>
<td>4 Departments (bu)</td>
<td>Division (chu),</td>
<td>Office (ke)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Office (chu)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Command Post/base (zhihuixiu/fidi)</td>
<td>HQ department (bu)</td>
<td>Division (chu)</td>
<td>Office (ke)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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116 First level department directors in the general departments, such as the GSD Operations Department, are major generals and have the grade of corps leader. First level bureau directors have the grade of division leader.

117 According to interviews with PLA officials, in the late 1990s, all of the third-level divisions (chu) subordinate to second-level departments in the four general departments were upgraded to bureaus (ju).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division (shi)</th>
<th>HQ &amp; political departments (bu); logistics &amp; maintenance divisions (chu)</th>
<th>Office (ke)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brigade (lù)</td>
<td>4 Departments (bu)</td>
<td>Division (chu), Office (ke)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regiment (tuan)</td>
<td>Hq department (bu); political, logistics, &amp; maintenance divisions (chu)</td>
<td>Office (ke), branch (gu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battalion (ying)/Group (dadui)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company (lian)/Squadron (zhongdai)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROTOCOL ORDER IN THE PLA**

The PLA is a very protocol oriented institution. When the PLA lists its military regions, services, service branches, administrative organizations, or its key personnel, the lists are almost always in protocol order, what the PLA calls organizational order (zuzhi xujie). The first criterion is generally the date a particular organization was established. For example, the order of the three services (junzhong) is always Army (August 1927), Navy (April 1949), and Air Force (November 1949). Since the Second Artillery Corps (July 1966) is technically a branch/service arm (bingzhong), and is usually not listed with the services. The criteria for listing personnel in protocol order is based on importance within the organization, and is not necessarily based on seniority in grade, rank, or position.

**Military Regions**

The seven military regions are generally listed in the following protocol order based upon the dates they were established (most prior to 1949) and where they fit in the

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118 Zhongguo junshi baike quanshu, Volume 3, p. 856. The PLA lists the criteria as the organization’s cover designator (fanhao), names of the leaders at each organizational level, origins (shijie biancheng), and relationship.

119 According to PLA officials, there has been a running internal debate for several years whether or not to upgrade the Second Artillery Corps to a service.

120 For example, during the late 1980s, the PLAAF had four deputy commanders. Lieutenant General Yu Zhenwu was the youngest and was the last one promoted to this position, but he was listed first in protocol order.
level of importance at the time they were formed: Shenyang, Beijing, Lanzhou, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou, and Chengdu. On the other hand, the PLA Air Force lists its seven military region air forces in a different order based on their priority and dates they were created: Shenyang (1955), Beijing (1955), Lanzhou (1955), Nanjing (1955), Guangzhou (1955), Jinan (1965), and Chengdu (1985). Whereas certain MRs were more prestigious in the past, this is no longer the case. Therefore, the protocol order is more of an administrative tool today rather than a reflection of priority within the hierarchy.

**General Departments**

Administratively, the PLA always lists the general departments in the following order: General Staff, Political, Logistics, and Equipment. This same order is reflected within the administrative structure of the military regions, services, and service arms down to the lowest level.

The subordinate departments, bureaus, and offices within each of the general departments are also listed in protocol order. The first criterion is when they were established, but some elements are placed higher in the order than older elements based upon their priority within the organization (the GSD’s Army Aviation Bureau was not established until 1986, but was placed higher than other GSD bureaus that had been in existence since the 1950s). The second-level elements that are generally identified for the four general departments are as follows:

- **General Staff Department**: operations (zuozhan), intelligence (qingbao), signals (tongxin), training (xuanlian), military affairs (junwu), mobilization (dongyuan), service arms (hengzhong), electronic countermeasures and information warfare (dianzi duikang), army aviation (luhang), and foreign affairs (waishi);

- **General Political Department**: organization (zuzhi), cadre/personnel (ganbu), propaganda (xuanchuan), security (baowei), discipline inspection (jilu jiancha), culture (wenhua), and liaison (lianlou);

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122 This is based on analysis of information obtained on the PLA Air Force over a fifteen year period. This is also the order shown in Wang Hai, Wang Hai Shangjiang: wode zhandou shengya [General Wang Hai: My Combat Career], Beijing, Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe [Central Literature Publishers], February 2000, p. 300.

123 Correspondence with Professors John Lewis and Xue Litai at Stanford University.

• **General Logistics Department**: finance (caiwu), quartermaster (junxu), health (weisheng), transportation (junshi jiaotong), fuels and materials (youliao wuzi), capital construction (jijian yingfang), and audit (shenji); and

• **General Equipment Department**: plans (jihua), service arms (jubingzhong), army equipment research and procurement (junjun zhuangbei keyan dinghuo), general purpose equipment support (tongyong zhuangbei baozhang), electronics and information (dianzi xinxi), and joint equipment maintenance (zhuangbei jishu hezuo).

**Service Arms**

Each of the services also lists its specialized service arms (zhuanye bingzhong) and troops (budui) in protocol order as follows:  

- **Army**: the specialized service arms include infantry (bubing), artillery (paobing), armor (zhuangjiaobing), engineering (gongchengbing), signals (tongxinbing), chemical defense (fanghuabing), and the troops include electronic countermeasure/ information warfare (dianzi daikang), cartography (cehui), and aviation (hangkongbing);

- **Navy**: the specialized service arms include surface vessel units (shuimian jianting budui), submarine units (qianting budui), naval aviation (hangkongbing), coastal defense (anfangbing), and marine corps (luzhandui);

- **Air Force**: the specialized service arms include aviation (hangkongbing), antiaircraft artillery (gaoshempaoxing), surface-to-air missile (dikong daoanbing), radar (leida), and airborne (kongjiangbing). Prior to 1991, the air force also listed signals (tongxinbing) as a specialized service arm; and

- **Second Artillery Corps**: Second artillery does not have any specialized service arms, but does consist of short-range (jincheng), medium-range (zhongcheng), long-range (yuancheng), and intercontinental (zouji) ballistic missile troops, engineering troops, and operations, equipment, and logistics support troops.

**PLA Personnel**

The PLA generally lists its personnel in official announcements according to the following standard order of positions: commander, political commissar, deputy commander(s), deputy political commissar(s), chief of staff (who is also the director of the headquarters department), director of the political department, director of the joint logistics department, and director of the equipment department. Within these lists, the deputy commanders and deputy political commissars are usually ranked in protocol

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125 Analysis of multiple PLA articles over several years.

126 For example, the 1 August 2000 issue of the Sichuan ribao listed the names of the Chengdu Military Region Party Committee Standing Committee (dangwei changwei).
order, which is not necessarily according to the dates they assumed the position. As with any aspect of the PLA, there are always exceptions to the rule. However, combining these types of lists with information from other sources helps provide a better picture of command organizations.
2. THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION AND MILITARY POLICY IN CHINA

By Nan Li

As China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) withdrew from the societal politics of the Cultural Revolution, and more recently from its extensive business activities, its leadership should become more capable of concentrating its attention and energy on major issues associated with PLA force modernization. Similarly, no longer as distracted by major domestic, social, political and commercial concerns, this leadership may also become more inclined to involve itself in formulating China’s national security policy. Both developments can have significant implications for future Chinese security policy and Asian security. However, the central institution that constitutes the core of this leadership, the Central Military Commission (CMC), has not been well understood due to a lack of serious analysis. This study intends to fill this knowledge gap through an in-depth examination of the CMC. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions. What are the central roles and missions of the CMC? What are the origins of the CMC and how has it evolved since its founding? How is the CMC structured, and what are the major institutional norms and mechanisms for its functioning? What is the nature and structure of the CMC’s relationship with major civilian institutions, and with lower level operational departments and units? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the CMC in fulfilling its central roles?

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This study intends to make a contribution to the basic knowledge and understanding of the CMC through a narrative account by illustrating what the CMC is rather than develop a theoretical argument or test a theoretical proposition. Consequently, the bulk of this study will concentrate on a description of the CMC’s roles and missions, origins and evolution, structure, norms and mechanisms, and relationships. On the other hand, since the CMC is located at the key institutional junctures of both the PLA bureaucratic hierarchy and China’s civil-military relations, this study touches on issues regarding the organizational theory and civil-military relations. As a result, the concluding section will address the bureaucratic and civil-military structures and dynamics regarding CMC effectiveness in fulfilling its roles.

The study is divided into four major sections. The first section examines the central roles and evolving missions of the CMC. The second looks into the origins and the historical evolution of the CMC. The third section addresses the CMC structure, norms and mechanisms, and relationships. The concluding section critically evaluates the CMC-based bureaucratic and civil-military structures and dynamics that affect CMC effectiveness.

**ROLES AND EVOLVING MISSIONS**

**Roles**

In a modern democracy, the military is nonpartisan and pledges its allegiance to the Constitution. It is also mitigated by a civilianized defense bureaucracy that answers to the popularly elected executive and legislature based on the requisites of the Constitution. China, however, is not a democracy, but rather an authoritarian Leninist regime where the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has a monopoly on political power. As a result, the PLA, headed by the CMC, pledges its allegiance to the CCP rather than to popularly elected civilian authorities. The CMC functions as the military work department (junshi gongzuo bumen) of the CCP, and answers to the CCP Central Committee and the Politburo. The CMC chair, who is the commander-in-chief of the PLA, also “comes from among the principal leaders of the Party Central (dang zhongyang).” The central roles of the CMC include military policy-making, and coordination in both policy implementation and in managing the PLA, i.e., “as the highest military policy-making institution (zuigao junshi juece jiguan), the CMC conducts uniform command (tongyi zhilun) of the country’s armed forces ... according to the line (luxian), guiding principles (fangzhen), and policy (zhengce) of the CCP Central.”

**Evolving Missions**

While the CMC has been managing military affairs on behalf of the CCP, the specific missions of the CMC have changed over time. This change happened largely

129 Yan Shikun, *Dangdai jundui juedui lingdao lilun yu shijian [The Theory and Practice of the Party’s Absolute Leadership over the Army]*, Beijing: Military Science Press, 1993, pp. 11, 174-175 (hereafter *Theory and Practice*).
because the CCP line and policy have changed over time. After its founding in the 1920s, for instance, the CCP adopted a line of a united front with the Kuomintang (KMT or Nationalist Party), where the CCP assisted the KMT and its army in their attempt to reunify China through expeditionary campaigns against the provincial warlords. Without an army of its own to command, the CMC, in accordance with the CCP policy of the united front, had a minor role to play. Its primary mission was to “direct CCP organizational and liaison work within the KMT Army.” It also coordinated the organization of the workers’ and peasants’ arms to assist the KMT Army’s expeditionary campaigns against the warlords. 130

With the breakup of the CCP-KMT united front in the late 1920s, the CCP line changed. Rather than a moderate policy that placed emphasis on cooperation with the KMT to promote national reunification, the CCP now adopted a radical line. Such a line stressed class struggle-based land reform and an armed struggle against KMT rule. In the meantime, after several failed urban uprisings against KMT forces, several KMT Army units, influenced by the CCP, retreated to the remote mountains of southern Jiangxi Province. Together with local peasant forces in several southern provinces, these units were reorganized into the Chinese Workers and Peasants Red Army, which pledged its allegiance to the CCP. Now that the CCP had its own army and the emphasis of the Party line had shifted to armed struggle against the KMT, the CMC began to embark on more substantial missions. From the late 1920s to the middle 1930s, such missions included coordinating the expansion of the Red Army, directing the development of the Soviet bases, and formulating military strategy to resist the KMT Army’s annihilation campaigns. To the extent expanding the Red Army and developing Soviet bases relied on the success of land reform, the CMC and the Red Army were also heavily involved in radical land reforms. In doing so, the CMC was not only concerned with the military missions but also heavily involved in social and political functions. 131

The setback of a decisive military campaign against the KMT forces in Jiangxi led to a the Long March that brought the CCP Central and the Red Army to the barren loess plateau of northern Shaanxi province. This setback coincided with the beginning of Japan’s invasion of China’s heartland. The CCP’s successful mediation of an incident in the city of Xi’an, where KMT leader Chiang Kai-shek was kidnapped by one of his generals for fighting the CCP rather than the Japanese, led to a second CCP-KMT united front: to fight against the Japanese invasion. The CCP line changed again: this time away from the radical land policy of Jiangxi. Rather than confiscating land from the landlords, the alleged social basis of the KMT, the rural policy emphasis had shifted to reducing land rent and interests of loans to avoid social polarization and division in the countryside. Rather than treating the KMT Army as the primary adversary, the new enemy became the Japanese invaders. Consequently, the missions of the CMC also

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131 Yan, Theory and Practice, pp. 92-94, 204-206; and China’s People’s Liberation Army, p. 341.
shifted. It was now responsible for reorganizing and integrating the Red Army into the KMT National Army, while maintaining its political independence from the KMT and allegiance to the CCP. The CMC was also bestowed the responsibility for designing and implementing a guerrilla warfare strategy based on protraction, dispersion, and combining warfare with social and political tasks, such as developing anti-Japanese bases behind enemy lines through mobilizing the masses.\textsuperscript{132}

The end of the Anti-Japanese War led to the termination of the second CCP-KMT united front, and the resumption of the civil war. The CCP line shifted again, this time toward defeating the KMT forces and establishing a “new democracy” regime where the CCP would dominate, but other social groups would be represented. As a result, the CMC was assigned new missions. These involved formulating and executing an active defense strategy, which stressed annihilating the KMT forces by piecemeal through stratagems and mobility, thus enabling the CCP forces to shift gradually from the defensive to the offensive. The CMC also directly conducted several decisive campaigns, which fatally crippled the KMT forces and contributed to the collapse of the regime.\textsuperscript{133}

The founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in late 1949 was soon followed by the crisis on the Korean Peninsula. To “prevent the failure of the Korean revolution which would jeopardize the accomplishments of the Chinese revolution,” the CCP Politiburo decided to send PLA forces to Korea to “fight the counterrevolutionary alliance of the US, South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan.”\textsuperscript{134} The CMC was instrumental this time in organizing and deploying the People’s Volunteers to Korea, formulating strategies, coordinating operations, and directing major campaigns. The end of the Korean War was followed by a new CCP “general line,” which aimed to achieve “the socialist transformation of means of production in agriculture, handicraft, industry and commerce (referring to nationalization of productive means),” and “industrialization” of the country. For the PLA, rather than directly participating in “socialist transformation” and “industrialization,” its new function was to secure these programs through national defense. As a result, the CMC was bestowed with new missions. These missions involved formulating and coordinating policy programs concerning downsizing the PLA, the PLA work in education and training, arms and equipment development, scientific research, logistics and separating the PLA from civilian functions.\textsuperscript{135}

The focus of the CMC on national defense-related military missions, however, proved to be short-lived. The anti-Rightist campaign of 1957 and the criticism of the

\textsuperscript{132} Yan, \textit{Theory and Practice}, pp. 94-96, 206-209; and China’s People’s Liberation Army, p. 341.

\textsuperscript{133} Yan, \textit{Theory and Practice}, pp. 96-97, 209-212.


\textsuperscript{135} AMS Military History Research Department, \textit{Seventy Years}, pp. 446-467.
CCP’s Great Leap Forward and People’s Commune policy in 1959 by Peng Dehuai (the defense minister and the CMC member responsible for daily affairs) convinced Mao Zedong (the CCP chair) that the bourgeois ideology continued to exercise influence even after the means of production had been socialized, and that bourgeois representatives did exist in the CCP, the government, the PLA, and throughout Chinese society. Therefore, the emphasis of the CCP line should shift from economic construction and industrialization to class and “lines” struggle, which aimed to expose and weed out those in responsible positions who “take the capitalist road.” With the gradual radicalization of the CCP line, the missions of the CMC also began to change. After Lin Biao succeeded Peng in 1960 as the new defense minister and the CMC vice chair responsible for daily affairs, he proposed that the guiding principle of the PLA work was for “politics to take command.” As a result, the attention and energy of the CMC began to shift gradually toward formulating and coordinating politics-related programs, which aimed to promote Mao’s revolutionary ideals and advise vigilance about the “bourgeois representatives” hidden in the PLA.136

The ultimate expression of the new CCP line to “remove those who take the capitalist road” was the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, which caused the paralysis of the civilian Party-state apparatus. As a result, the PLA was called upon to undertake new missions to support the program of “Three Supports” and “Two Militaries” (“sanzhi” “liangjun,” or “supporting the leftists, workers, and peasants,” and “military control and training”) to fulfill the civilian functions previously done by the Party-state bureaucracy. These missions involved formulating, coordinating and supervising policy programs associated with the “Three Supports” and “Two Militaries.” They ranged from propagating Maoist revolutionary ideology and promoting “continuous revolution” and class struggle throughout Chinese society, to managing daily affairs in central, provincial and local governments, and in factories, communes, schools, and other civilian working units.137

With the radical CCP domestic line in the late 1950s came an equally radical foreign policy characterized as changing from attempting to improve relations with foreign governments, to supporting the Maoist radical movements and regimes and promoting “world class struggle and revolution” through armed struggles. These struggles aimed to overthrow the established world order allegedly dominated by traditional US-led Western “capitalism and imperialism” and the new Soviet “bureaucratic capitalism” and “social imperialism.” The shift in foreign policy also had an impact on the missions of the CMC, as it was involved in designing and coordinating programs in providing military assistance and training to the radical Maoist or national liberation movements in various continents of the world.138

With the death of Mao and the removal of the Maoist radicals (known as the Gang of Four) in 1976 and the ascendance of Deng Xiaoping to power in the late 1970s and

136 Ibid., pp. 496-503.
137 Ibid., pp. 553-564.
138 Ibid., pp. 585-594.
early 1980s, the CCP line changed again. Eschewing the Maoist emphasis on class and “lines” struggle and “continuous revolution in the realm of ideology,” the new emphasis was placed on “developing productive forces.” As a result, a nation-building program, couched in the notion of “Four Modernizations (modernizing industry, agriculture, science and technology, and national defense),” was officially endorsed. For the PLA, rather than actively participating in the intense domestic “class” and “lines” struggle and supporting “world revolution” abroad, it was now required to withdraw from the societal politics of the Cultural Revolution and concentrate on peacetime army building and national defense.

Accordingly, two distinctive changes took place regarding the CMC and its parent institution and the missions it is to fulfill. While the CMC continues to answer to the CCP Central, it is also required by the 1982 Constitution to answer to the National People’s Congress (NPC), China’s legislature. In terms of major missions, the CMC is now supposed to fulfill the following:

1) to conduct uniform command of the nation’s armed forces;
2) to decide (jueding) the military strategy and the operational principles of the armed forces;
3) to lead and manage PLA building, which involves formulating programs (guihua), planning (jihua), and organizing implementation;
4) to propose and forward motions (yi’an) to the NPC and its standing committee;
5) to make military laws and regulations according to the Constitution and the laws, and to issue military decisions and orders;
6) to determine the PLA system of organization (tizhi) and organizational scale (bianzhi), and to define the missions and responsibilities of the PLA general departments, the services, and the MR (military region) level organizations;
7) to appoint and release (renmian), cultivate and train (peixun), examine and check (kaohexian), and reward and penalize (jiangchen) the members of the armed forces;
8) to approve the systems of arms and equipment of the armed forces, and the programs and plans for arms and equipment development; and in coordination with the State Council, to lead and manage the national defense scientific research and production;
9) together with the State Council, to manage the national defense expenditure and assets;
10) to fulfill other responsibilities according to law.\textsuperscript{139}

ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION

Origins

The conceptual origin of a communist party which possesses its own military department and forces, such as the CCP, can be traced to Lenin’s theory of revolution. The classical Marxist theory of a socialist revolution is based on the premise that industrial capitalism would create conditions for its own demise: the socialization of workers in organized production in modern factories, which would provide organization and discipline, and the alienation of the working class from the capital and the machines for lack of their participation in the ownership and production decision making, which would generate the necessary revolutionary consciousness. Lenin, however, believed that both organization and revolutionary consciousness would not develop spontaneously as a historical inevitability, particularly in places like Russia where industrial capitalism had not been fully developed. They would rather be cultivated and developed through the workings of a highly centralized, disciplined, politically aware, and cadre-based vanguard party. Also, the bourgeoisie controls state power, including its military force, and would defend itself through armed resistance or suppression against a proletarian revolution. As a result, this vanguard party should also acquire its own military force, for the purpose of armed uprisings against the capitalist class-dominated state power, particularly in the urban areas where the bourgeoisie resides and whose influence dominates.140

To the extent the CCP is a brainchild of the Moscow-based Communist International (Comintern), the Leninist theory of organization and revolution left its unmistakable mark on the organization of the CCP, with its strong emphasis on organization and propaganda. Organization serves the purpose of generating unity, discipline and strength for the revolution, while propaganda serves to awaken and develop the class-based consciousness and identity for the revolution. Finally, it is no coincidence that the idea of a military department such as the CMC to be established within the CCP Central for coordinating military affairs was first proposed by Wang Yifei, the head of the Chinese military class who returned to Shanghai in 1925, after completing his studies in the Soviet Red Army academies.141

Even though the birth of the CCP is related to the theory and practice of the Russian revolution, Moscow was not interested in a working class-based socialist revolution in China where the CCP would play the leading role, largely due to the perceived underdevelopment of Chinese industrial capitalism. Instead, the attention of the Comintern was devoted to the KMT, particularly in reorganizing it into a Leninist style


141 Zhao Gongde, et al., Zhongguo renmin jeifangjun lishi shang de qishi ge jun [The Seventy Corps in the History of China’s People’s Liberation Army], (Tianjin: Tianjin People’s Press, 1993), p. 37. Also see Table 1.
party, and in assisting the establishment of the Huangpu Military Academy. The doctrinal excuse of the Comintern for the neglect of the CCP, which the CCP leaders accepted as an article of faith, was the “theory of two revolutions” ("liangci geminglun"). Such a theory assumes that the CCP-led working class should assist the bourgeoisie-based KMT to carry out a national democratic revolution first. Such revolution would lay the foundation for national unification and industrialization. In the process, the CCP and the working class would also gain economic benefits and political rights for the lawful struggles. As capitalism developed more fully and lawful struggles lead to the winning over of a substantial number of the masses and the soldiers, the CCP would organize and launch urban armed uprisings “at an appropriate time.” Such uprisings would overthrow the bourgeois rule “at one stroke,” making it possible for the CCP to seize state power and realize a socialist revolution.142

The implications of such a theory for CCP development are that it hampered the independence and autonomy of the CCP, which was required to operate as a “block within” the KMT, and denied the CCP the rationale for developing its own army, particularly in the early phase of a “national democratic revolution”. The neglect of military affairs in the early years of the CCP was reflected in several aspects concerning the CMC. First, there was no central military department until after the regional party organizations established their own military departments.143 Also, the early CCP military departments had only the limited power to suggest and discuss (jianyi taolu quan), but not to make decisions and to command forces.144 Finally, even after the CMC was established, it was not headed by the CCP general secretary, who seemed to be genuinely disinterested in military affairs (See Table 2.1). It was not until after the breakup of the CCP-KMT united front in 1927, where the CCP was successfully suppressed by the KMT Army, that the CCP leadership realized the importance of an army that was loyal to the Party and began to pay attention to military affairs.

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142 AMS Military History Research Department, *Seventy Years*, p. 15.
144 Zhao, *The Seventy Corps*, p. 38.
Table 2.1 Central Military Commission, 1925-1928

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Name Changes</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1927 - 1928</td>
<td>CMC downsized to Central Military Section (ke) under CCP Organization Bureau</td>
<td>Zhou Enlai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Some Chinese military historians, however, suggest that the CMC was established in October 1925 at an enlarged conference of the CCP Central of the 4th CCP Congress. See Academy of Military Science Military History Research Department, Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun qishi nian: 1927-1997, Beijing: Military Science Press, 1997, p. 15.

Red Army Period (1928-1936)

This period witnessed the growing importance of the CMC. This was reflected in several policy changes. First, as specified by the Military Work Outline (junshi gongzuo dagang) issued by the CCP Central in April 1928, “the CMC not only has the power to suggest and to discuss, but should also have the responsibility to command the military forces and to manage military affairs under the military movement policy of the Party...” The CCP Central should also establish CMC branches (fenhui) in provinces “where substantial military movements, and significant Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Army units exist.”145 But more importantly, the post-1927 shift of the CCP policy to the radical “land revolution and armed struggle against the KMT regime” meant that a new dimension was added to the traditional mobilization of the workers and peasants through propaganda and organization: the “militarization of the workers and peasants” (gongnong junshi hua) also meant the “workerization and peasantization of the military” (jundui gongnong hua). By the same token, such a policy shift also drove the CCP leaders who traditionally specialized in propaganda and organization to military work. Similarly, the new tasks of radical land redistribution to mobilize peasant youth to join the Red Army, and developing and expanding the Soviet bases meant that the top Red Army officers were also to be well versed in propaganda, mass mobilization, and local administration, hence, the “militarization of the Party cadres” and the “ politicization of the military

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cadres." This is reflected in the membership of the CMC by men such as Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, and Lin Biao, in addition to several top Red Army officers who received formal military education from Huagpu or from the earlier provincial “military lecture halls” (jiangwu tang) and served as officers in the pre-1927 KMT Army. There were also many who were actually Party cadres who received little military training (see Table 2.2). All these developments laid the basis for the political-military fusion of the Chinese communist leadership, which has been extensively discussed in Western scholarly work on communist civil-military relations.146

This political-military symbiosis, or the blurring of the civilian-military boundary, does not mean that such leadership is highly unified. On the contrary, this leadership was highly fragmented during this period. But such fragmentation is not based on a civil-military divide, but rather on cleavages that cut across the civil-military boundary. One major cleavage, for instance, is the divide between the political-military leadership of the local Soviet bases on the one hand, and the Shanghai-based (until 1933) Politburo-CMC leadership on the other. The guiding principle for the armed struggles during this period was to establish the so-called “separate armed regimes of the workers and peasants” (gongnong wuzhuang geju). This principle means that the central task of the Red Army was to develop Soviet bases in remote, isolated, and economically backward inter-provincial border areas neglected by provincial warlords and where the KMT control was also the weakest. Two major characteristics resulted from the development of these bases. First, “the principal Party leaders of each Soviet base were also the leaders of the Red Army units in that area.” Second, “while accepting the strategic guidance of the CCP Central and the CMC, local leaders made decisions about campaigns and battles, and strategic development largely based on the local conditions. The Red Army units in each Soviet base generally fought their battles in their own ways (gezi weizhan).”147

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Name Changes</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June-July, 1928</td>
<td>CCP Central Military Department restored at CCP 6th Congress held in Moscow</td>
<td>Director: Yang Yin. Zhou Enlai replaced Yang in August 1929 after Yang was arrested by KMT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February, 1930</td>
<td>CCP CMC (Shanghai)</td>
<td>Secretary: Guan Xiangying Standing Committee: Zhou Enlai, Guan Xiangying, and Zheng Zhongsheng. Zhou Enlai replaced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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147 AMS Military History Research Department, Seventy Years, p. 76.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Chair:</th>
<th>Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January, 1931</td>
<td>Central Revolutionary Military Commission (CRMC) of the CCP Central Bureau in Central Soviet Area (Jiangxi) established</td>
<td>Xiang Ying</td>
<td>Zhu De, Mao Zedong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 1933</td>
<td>CCP CMC merged with CRMC in Jiangxi as CCP Central moved from Shanghai to Jiangxi</td>
<td>Guan Xiangying</td>
<td>Bo Gu (Qin Bangxian) and Guan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Xiangying were added as members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of CRMC. Guan became acting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>commanding frontline Red Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>chair in May.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Real power was allegedly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>controlled by Bo Gu and Comintern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>China representative Li De.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935 (Long March)</td>
<td>Zunyi Conference in January designated Zhou Enlai and Wang Jiaxiang responsible for military work. A three-person military leadership group was established in March, including Zhou Enlai, Wang Jiaxiang, and Mao Zedong. Zhang Guotao was added in June. A five-person group (wu ren tuan), including Mao, Zhou, Wang, Peng Dehuai, Lin Biao, was established in September.</td>
<td>Mao Zedong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November (end of Long March) 1935</td>
<td>Northwestern Revolutionary Commission of the Chinese Soviet Military established in Northern Shaanxi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wang Jiaxiang, Nie Hongjun, Lin Biao, Xu Haidong, Cheng Zhihua, Guo Hongtuo, Ye Jianying, Nie Rongzhen, and Liu Zhidan were added as members in April 1936.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| October-December, 1936 | CRMC of the Chinese Soviet restored as three Front Red Armies converged | **Chair:** Mao.  
**Vice chairs:** Zhou Enlai, Zhang Guotao.  
**Presidium:** chair and vice chairs, Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, Ren Bishi, He Long.  

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As these local leaders became members of the CMC, clashing over policy and strategies became inevitable with the dominant members of the CMC who were trained in Soviet revolutionary and military strategies and tactics and retained regular and close contact with the Comintern. In 1930, for instance, CCP leader Li Lisan advocated a strategy of “unified organization and command of the Red Army” to “attack the enemy’s vital communication lines (jiaotong yaoda), main forces (zhuli), and central cities (zhongxin chengshi)” so that “a national general uprising” would be ignited. Beginning in early 1931, Wang Ming, the new CCP leader, stressed a strategy of “continuous offensive to take central cities” to ensure “the success of the revolution in one or several provinces.” After the CCM Central and the CMC moved from Shanghai to Jiangxi in early 1933, and while KMT annihilation campaigns intensified, Wang allegedly adopted a rigid

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148 In the CMC during this period, Zhu De (commander), Mao Zedong (commissar), Peng Dehuai and Lin Biao represented the Red Army forces of the gan’nan (southern Jiangxi) minxi (western Fujian) Soviet area, which is also known as the central Soviet area, or zhongyang suqu. He Long represented the Red Army of the xiang (Hunan) erxi (western Hubei) Soviet area. Zhang Guotao, Chen Changhao, and Xu Xiangqian, on the other hand, represented the Red Army of the er (Hubei) yu (Henan) wan (Anhui) Soviet area. The Gan’nan minxi Red Army was reorganized as the First Front Red Army, the xiang erxi Red Army the Second Front Red Army, and the er yu wan Red Army the Fourth Front Red Army in the early 1930s and during the Long March.
“pure defense” (danchun fangyu) stance, which emphasized “warding off the enemy outside the gate of the state” (yadi yu guomen zhiwai) and “fighting the tough with toughness” (“yingda yingpin”).

These strategies, however, ran counter to the view held by most of the leaders at the local Soviet bases. This view stressed the need to develop rural bases and build up the Red Army and not attempt to trigger urban uprisings by attacking and capturing big cities. It also stressed dealing with the KMT annihilation campaigns by using a more flexible strategy of “luring the enemy in deep” and constituting local superiority through mobility to strike the weakest link of the enemy offensive, but not “fending off the enemy outside the gate” and “matching strong force with strong force.” Such differences led to severe friction between the CCP-CMC Central and the leadership in local bases. For instance, to “impose their political line and military strategy, the CCP leaders dispatched central delegations or delegates to the Soviet bases, or established CCP central bureaus, bureau branches, and provincial committees in base areas, displacing local leaders or denying their speaking and voting rights in discussing and deciding strategic questions, and even their commanding power over campaigns and battles. All these local commanders could do was to avoid errors in campaigns and battles in their limited scope of responsibilities.”

The most noted example was the removal of Mao from his commissar position of the First Front Red Army in October of 1932 for his insistence on dispersing his troops to mobilize the masses and in order to prepare for another KMT annihilation campaign, rather than follow the order of the CCP Central to attack westward to capture J’nan or northward to capture Wuzhou, in order to threaten Nanchang, the capital of Jiangxi.

Besides the central-local tension, another major cleavage that cut across the civil-military boundary was the tension among political-military leaders of different Soviet bases. When Red Army units in each Soviet base operated on their own in highly isolated border areas and had little communication or coordination with one another, such cleavages didn’t exist. But when these separate units converged, such as during the Long March, inter-front army tension arose due to disparity in objectives and strength. For instance, when the First Front Red Army (also known as the Central Red Army, headed by Mao, Zhu, and Zhou), and the Fourth Front Red Army (led by Zhang Guotao and Chen Changhao) met in June 1935 in northwestern Sichuan, severe disagreement occurred between the leaderships of the two armies about the objective of the Long March. While the First Front Army leaders proposed to march northward to establish the Soviet base in the interprovincial border region of Shaanxi, Gansu and Sichuan, the Fourth Front Red Army leaders argued for movement either westward to Qinghai and Xinjiang, or

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149 See AMS Military History Research Department, Seventy Years, pp. 62, 105-117.

150 Ibid., p.78.

151 Ibid., pp. 109-110. Mao’s position was taken over by Zhou Enlai. For this, Zhou had to make self-criticism for following the “wrong line” in Jiangxi in almost every CCP rectification campaign thereafter.
southward to the Chuan (Sichuan) - Kang (Xikang, currently eastern Tibet) border region. The disagreement escalated to the point that Zhang Guotao allegedly refused to march northward, mobilized his subordinates to demand that he become the CMC chair (since the Fourth Front Red Army was the largest among the three), and even attempted to establish a separate CCP Central after marching some of the newly integrated Red Army units southward.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 126-130.}

Reflected in the composition of the CMC of the two major cleavages (central-local and inter-front army) is the frequent reshuffling of the CMC membership (see Table 2.2), which also suggests the highly unstable and volatile nature of the CCP-CMC leadership. These cleavages were apparently exacerbated by the failed military policy, strategies and campaigns, and the ensuing factional scapegoating and bickering among this leadership.

**1937-1949 Period**

The CMC membership during this period remained relatively unchanged, which reflected a higher level of leadership unity when compared to the Red Army period (see Table 2.3). Several major factors may have contributed to this leadership stability. The failed “urban strategy” and “fortress defense” in Jiangxi and the fate of the West Route Army in late 1936, discredited the “Moscow returnees” and Zhang’s elements among the top leadership.\footnote{The West Route Army, constituted mainly of the Fourth Front Red Army units, was stranded west of the Yellow River and gradually annihilated by the KMT forces. Since this incident happened after Zhang Guotao made self-criticism about his earlier mistake of “splits,” and the West Route Army was participating in a centrally coordinated campaign, Mao should be held partially responsible for its demise for not providing timely relief or reinforcement. Some Fourth Front Red Army leaders complained that Mao was “borrowing a knife (KMT forces) to kill his political enemy (the Fourth Front Red Army)” (jiadao sharun). Many Fourth Front Red Army survivors also became the targets of criticism and purges during the Yan’an Rectification Campaign of 1943. For official interpretation of the West Route Army incident, see ibid., pp. 141-143.} This failure also validated Mao’s rural strategy and “firing enemy in deep” approach in Jiangxi, and the northern strategy for the Long March. Both apparently contributed to the elevation and consolidation of the power of Mao and his followers. The uprooting of the Red Army units from their southern bases and the tremendous casualties suffered during the Long March, and their convergence in the unfamiliar territory of northern Shaanxi, may have generated a strong sense of vulnerability and thus a heightened desire for a stronger central leadership. The relationships among the 20,000 survivors, hardened by the difficult experience in Jiangxi and during the Long March, enhanced group solidarity and helped Mao and his followers to consolidate power. The newly formed united front with the KMT against the Japanese invaders reduced KMT military pressure on the CCP forces. Similarly, the KMT forces fought the Japanese forces on major fronts, while the CCP forces engaged mainly in guerrilla warfare behind
the enemy lines. The reduced military pressure on both fronts helped to lower the probability of CCP-CMC leadership bickering over strategies, which contributed to leadership stability. The united front also provided the crucial breathing space for the CCP to build up its bases and forces. Thus when KMT military pressure increased after the Japanese surrender and the breakup of the united front in late 1946, the CCP bases and forces had developed to the point where they became strong enough to contest the KMT offensives. Winning numerous smaller battles contributed further to a changing balance of forces that was increasingly favorable to the CCP, which in turn contributed to a higher level of consensus among the leadership about policy and strategies. This consensus also made it possible to plan and fight decisive campaigns. Winning these campaigns further enhanced the leadership unity.

Table 2.3  Central Military Commission, 1937-1949

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August (Outbreak of Anti-Japanese War), 1937</td>
<td>CCP CRMC established at the Politburo Enlarged Conference in Luochuan, Shaanxi</td>
<td><strong>Secretary:</strong> Mao Zedong.  <strong>Deputy secretaries:</strong> Zhu De, Zhou Enlai.  <strong>Members:</strong> secretary, deputy secretaries, Peng Dehuai, Ren Bishi, Ye Jianying, Lin Biao, He Long, Liu Bocheng, Zhang Hao, Xu Xiangqian.  Wang Jiaxiang was added as deputy secretary in November. Liu Shaoqi was added as deputy secretary, and two commission branches (<em>fenhui</em>) established in March 1943, one in North China to coordinate the 8th Route Army, and the other in Southern China to coordinate the New Fourth Army.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945, August</td>
<td>New CCP CMC was elected at the 7th Congress, CCP that remain unchanged virtually to the end of civil war in 1949.</td>
<td><strong>Chair:</strong> Mao Zedong.  <strong>Vice chairs:</strong> Zhu De, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai.  <strong>Members:</strong> chair and vice chairs, Chen Yi, Nie Rongzhen, He Long, Xu Xiangqian, Liu Bocheng, Lin Biao, Ye Jianying.  <strong>Secretary general:</strong> Yang Shangkun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above account does not imply that there were no issues that could have divided the CMC during this period. There was debate in the late 1930s, for instance, on whether protracted guerrilla warfare, if not supplemented by major campaigns, would be sufficient to defeat the Japanese invaders. The annihilation of the New Fourth Army headquarters by the KMT forces in southern Anhui in early 1941 (known as “Southern Anhui Incident,” or wan’nan shibian) raised questions on whether the united front with the KMT was a good policy. As a result, the three Eighth Route Army divisions were dispersed in separate regions to develop separate bases behind enemy lines. There was a concern of the growth of “mountainmost” among their commanders, who represented local perspectives and attended CMC meetings as members, which could trigger the tension between the local bases and the central leadership over strategies as had happened in Jiangxi. During the civil war of 1946-49, there were alleged disagreements between Mao and his field commanders on how to conduct local campaigns. There were also instances where units from different field armies clashed with one another. Finally, some suggested that the tension between the commanders and the commissars of the PLA field armies grew to the point that some commanders requested the CCP Central to remove their commissars to reduce political interference in military decisions.\textsuperscript{154}

These sources of tension and division, however, were marginal if compared to the Red Army period, and they were largely diffused before they became significant to divide the CMC. The “One Hundred Regiments” Campaign of 1940 caused great casualties and loss of bases due to Japanese retaliation, exposed the real strength of the CCP forces, and only temporarily delayed the Japanese march toward southern China. These actions contributed to the consensus on the protracted guerrilla warfare, but not major campaigns, as the correct way to go. The 1941 Southern Anhui Incident may have alerted the top leadership of the need to maintain CCP independence, but not yet to the point for the CCP to end the united front with the KMT, since the cost of the incident was much smaller than the benefit of developing CCP bases and forces under the united front umbrella. The KMT and the Japanese, meanwhile, would devote most of their resources duking one another. Two CMC regional branches were established in 1943 (see Table 2.3) to improve the coordination between the Yan’an-based center and the local bases. The lack of purges of local commanders may indicate that the center-local relationship was relatively good. One major contributing factor may be that unlike the Jiangxi period where the CCP Central represented the view of Moscow, which may have been largely divorced from the Chinese reality, both the central and local leaders now were “natives” who went through similar experiences and supposedly understood the local conditions well. This understanding helped to mediate the relationship, and reduced the odds of

\textsuperscript{154} This point was made by a Mainland China participant at the CAPS/Rand Conference on the PLA as Organization, Airlie House Conference Center, Warrenton, Virginia, August 4-6, 2000.
friction between the center and the local bases. Some PLA historians on the civil war also suggested that unlike the Jiangxi period where the center tried to micro-manage local campaigns through "absolute centralism," the Mao-led central leadership was careful enough to confine themselves to making sense of the relative significance of various regional campaigns to the general objective and progress of the war, but allow local commanders to use their initiatives in conducting campaigns. This freedom also helped to contribute to the improved coordination between the center and the local bases and forces. While it is true that there were "friendly fire" incidents between units from different field armies at the final stage of the civil war, when warfare became highly mobile and chaotic, such incidents took place at lower levels, and their political significance was not comparable to the "Zhang Guotao Affair" of the Long March. Finally, it may not matter much whether field army commanders liked their commissars or not, since little evidence exists to show that commissars' interference contributed to bad decisions, and lead to the loss of any particular major campaign. The low technological nature of the PLA and warfare, the Party committee system that served to mediate and integrate decision making, and the generally positive progress of the war may render the impact of the alleged commander-commissar tension on conducting war marginal. Generally speaking, unlike the Red Army period, leadership consensus and stability appeared to be the norm during this period, while division and fragmentation were the exceptions.

**1949-1959 Period**

The success-based consensus extended to this period. To accommodate Mao's notion of "new democracy" where the CCP would share power with other political parties in the newly established PRC government, CCP-CMC was replaced by a government-based CMC, which also included non-CCP members (see Table 2.4). The CCP, however, exercised its leadership through several mechanisms. First, "the CCP Central (referring to Politbureau) discussed and decided major issues regarding military affairs." Second, "CCP membership constituted the absolute majority (21 out of 28) in the new government CMC." Finally, "the system of Party committees at lower levels ensured the Party leadership over the military." By 1954, however, the CCP CMC was restored to centralize decision making, while a government-based National Defense Commission

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155 The alleged disagreement between Mao and Lin Biao over conducting the Liao-Shen Campaign during the civil war may be exaggerated, since it was revealed only after 1971, and the purpose was to discredit Lin by showing that he was not always Mao's good pupil, as he had claimed.

156 See AMS Military History Research Department, *Seventy Years*, pp. 75, 277-278, 290-293, 320-322.

157 See Li Cheng, *et al.*, *Jianguo yilai junshi baiguan dashi* [One Hundred Major Events in Military History since the Founding of the State], Beijing: Knowledge Press, 1992, pp. 8-9 (hereafter *One Hundred Major Events*).
was established to absorb non-CCP members (see Table 2.4). Also, unlike the relatively decentralized CMC before 1949, where heads of the major field armies and bases were regular members of the CMC, a centralized model was introduced, where membership was confined to the senior PLA leaders and heads of the PLA general departments, services and selected technical arms in Beijing. As a result, heads of the MRs would be informed of central decisions mainly through the CMC enlarged conferences. Moreover, the precedent of chair delegating daily decisions to a senior member responsible for daily affairs was established. Unlike during the war years when a symbiotic relationship existed between Party and PLA leaders, this new relationship symbolized an attempt to create at least a sense of boundary between the Party and the PLA. This would enable the CMC, which was dominated by military members, to focus on military work, while it would allow the chair, who is also the Party leader, to be involved only in major CMC decisions (See Table 2.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Name Changes</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| October, 1949 | People’s Revolutionary Military Commission of the Central People’s Government (including both CCP and non-CCP members) established | Chair: Mao Zedong.  
Vice Chairs: Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, Chen Qian.  
| September, 1954 | CCP CMC restored based on decision of a Politburo conference, and a separate National Defense Commission (NDC) established in the government** | Chair: Mao Zedong.  
Secretary general: Huang Kecheng |
Deputy secretary general: Xiao Xiangrong, Huang Kecheng, Su Yu, Chen Geng, Tan Zheng, Xiao Jingguang, Wang Shusheng, Xu Guangda, Xiao Hua, Liu Yalou, and Hong Xuezhi were added as new members in November 1956.

*Adapted from Liao, Contemporary China, pp. 322-323; China’s People’s Liberation Army, pp. 341-342.

**The NDC was allegedly a consultative but not a decisionmaking and commanding institution. It was composed of both the CCP and non-CCP members, many of whom were former KMT officers who led their units to defect to the CCP side during the civil war. The First National People’s Congress (NPC) of 1954 elected a 81-member NDC chaired by Mao. Liu Shaoqi chaired the NDC of the Second (1959) and the Third (1965) NPC. NDC ceased to exist as Cultural Revolution began in 1966. See Liao, Contemporary China, pp. 324-326; AMS Military History Department, Colors Are Fluttering, pp. 75-77.

During this period, consensus-based decision making was the norm, particularly with regard to major decisions on new military doctrine, downsizing and reorganizing the PLA, developing research and learning institutions, formulating rules and regulations, and modernizing arms and equipment. Some disagreements, however, did exist among the top CCP-CMC leaders. There were different opinions, for instance, on whether China should intervene in the Korean War, and on strategies to conduct specific campaigns in that war. The 1958 “anti-dogma” campaign led to criticism of Marshal Liu Bocheng (the CMC member responsible for rules and regulations, and education and training) for uncritically accepting the Soviet model. Also, those who wanted to substitute the Soviet style “one-man command” for PLA’s “dual-leadership system” (shuang shuo zhang zhi, referring to the system of shared responsibilities between the commander and the commissar) were criticized. While these contentions laid the basis for the more severe intra-CMC division later, during this period they were still treated as “contradictions among the people,” which requires “criticism and self-criticism” to resolve them, but not yet as “antagonistic, class contradictions,” where those criticized would be removed from key posts as anti-Party criminals.

1959-1982 Period

This period was characterized by a high level of contention and fragmentation within the CMC. Mao’s belief that a “bourgeois line” existed within the CCP, the government, the PLA, and throughout Chinese society following the Peng Dehuai Affair in 1959 led to the accusation of Peng and Huang Kecheng (the PLA chief of staff) for

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158 See AMS Military History Research Department, Seventy Years, pp. 449-467.
159 For “anti-dogmatism” campaign, see ibid., pp. 467-474.
organizing an “anti-Party military club” and their removal from the CMC. As a result, Lin Biao took over as the new CMC vice chair responsible for daily affairs (see Table 2.5). From 1960 to 1965, Lin’s policy emphasis on “politics taking command” and fighting “Rightist tendencies” in the PLA met varying levels of resistance from other PLA leaders. These resistance led to Lin’s accusation of Tan Zheng (the director of the General Political Department, or GPD) for organizing an “anti-Party clique” by confining political work to literacy education but not ideological work, and Tan’s removal from the GPD and the CMC in late 1960. By late 1964, Luo Ruqing (PLA chief of staff) was accused of representing a “bourgeois military line” for promoting the “great martial competition” (da bivu, referring to a PLA-wide program of intensified military training) at the expense of political studies during 1963-64, and subsequently relieved from his positions in the General Staff Department (GSD) and the CMC.160

The outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 meant more intensified power struggles within the CMC between those who followed Lin’s policy of exposing the “bourgeois military line” by “giving prominence to politics,” and those who intended to limit the scope of the Cultural Revolution in the PLA. The outcomes were the persecution of He Long, and the “sweeping aside” of other CMC senior members such as Zhu De, Chen Yi, Ye Jianying, and Xu Xiangqian by early 1967. Xiao Hua (GPD director) was removed from his positions in the GPD and the CMC in July 1967, and Yang Chengwu (acting PLA chief of staff) from his positions in the GSD and the CMC in March 1968 (see Table 2.5). As a result, the CMC, particularly its newly formed and powerful administrative group, was dominated by Lin loyalists such as Huang Yongsheng (the new PLA chief of staff), Wu Faxian (PLA Air Force commander), Ye Qun (Lin’s wife), Li Zuopeng (PLA Navy commissar), and Qiu Huizuo (director of the General Logistics Department, or GLD) (see Tables 2.5 and 2.6). By late 1970, however, Mao became suspicious of Lin’s political ambitions. To balance against Lin’s expanding power in the CMC, Mao began to implement a strategy of what he called “mixing sand,” by adding non-Lin loyalists to the CMC administrative group (see Table 2.6).161

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160 See ibid., pp. 500, 519-520.
161 Ibid., pp. 555-560.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| September, 1959 | Post-Peng Dehuai Affair Changes | **Chair:** Mao Zedong  
**Vice chairs:** Lin Biao (responsible for daily work), He Long, Nie Rongzheng.  
**Members:** chair, vice chairs, Standing Committee members, Su Yu, Chen Geng, Xiao Jingguang, Wang Shusheng, Xu Guangda, Liu Yalou.  
**Deputy secretary generals:** Su Zhenhua, Xiao Xiangrong. Working Conference (bangong huiyi, established in October under Standing Committee)  
**Members:** Luo Renqing, Tan Zheng, Yang Chengwu, Xiao Hua, Qiu Huizuo, Xiao Xiangrong. Xiao Hua was added as deputy secretary general and Zhang Aiping a member of Working Conference in May 1960. Yang Chengwu was added as deputy secretary general in June 1965. Chen Yi, Xu Xiangqian, Liu Bocheng, Ye Jianying (secretary general) were added as vice chairs in January 1966 and Wang Xinting added as deputy secretary general in March. |
| 1966-1969      | Early Cultural Revolution Changes | Many members were allegedly criticized and “swept aside.” In March 1967, Xie Fuzhi, Xiao Hua, Yang Chengwu, Su Yu were added as Standing Committee members. In August, a four-man small group was established within CMC, including Wu Faxian (responsible person), Ye Qin, Qiu Huizuo, Zhang Xinchuan. By September, it became the CMC administrative group (banshi zhu) headed by Yang Chengwu, with Wu Faxian, Ye Qin, Li Zuoqiang, Qu Huizuo as members. Li Tianhuan, |
### Critical Years | Changes | Members
---|---|---
| Liu Jingping were added as group members in October. In March 1968, Huang Yongsheng replaced Yang Chengwu as group leader, with Wu Faxian as his deputy, and Ye Qun, Li Zuopeng, and Qu Huizuo as members. Li Tianyou was added as group member in January 1969.

*Adapted from Liao, *Contemporary China*, p. 323; *China's People's Liberation Army*, pp. 343-344.*

The Lin Biao Affair in late 1971 led to the removal of Lin loyalists from the CMC. This was followed by three developments. First, those who were persecuted during the early Cultural Revolution such as Ye Jianying and Deng Xiaoping were reinstated and became key members of the CMC, Deng, for example, was appointed the new PLA chief of staff. Second, members of the Gang of Four such as Wang Hongwen and Zhang Chunqiao also became key CMC members with Zhang becoming the director of the newly restored GPD. Neither of these two members, however, had previous military experience. Finally, partly due to the expanding role of the PLA in societal politics due to its involvement in the “Three Supports and Two Militaries,” and partly due to the need for competing CMC senior leadership factions to mobilize support from below, the CMC became decentralized. Unlike the 1950s when the CMC membership was confined only to senior PLA leaders and heads of the PLA general departments, it was now extended to heads of the MRs. These three developments produced two major effects on the nature and structure of the CMC. First, it rendered the CMC much more heterogeneous and fragmented than before, with its military members (those PLA leaders who were persecuted earlier for representing the “bourgeois military line”), political-military members (those PLA leaders who benefited from the Cultural Revolution), and nonmilitary members (those who had no PLA experience before becoming the CMC members). Second, they contributed to the bloating of the CMC, as membership was now extended to lower levels. Both further exacerbated the factional struggles within the CMC. Even after Hua Guofeng came to power following the death of Mao and the removal of the Gang of Four in late 1976, the CMC continued to remain decentralized, heterogeneous and bloated (see Table 2.6). This may also imply that Hua, who had little influence in the PLA, at least tried to consolidate his position in the CMC by mobilizing support from both below and outside of the PLA in his fateful power struggle against Deng and his followers.
Table 2.6  Central Military Commission, 1969-1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1969, April    | CMC produced at the CCP Ninth Congress | Chair: Mao Zedong  
Vice chairs: Lin Biao, Liu Bocheng, Chen Yi, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, Ye Jianying.  
Administrative group: Huang Yongsheng (head), Wu Faxian (deputy head), Ye Qun, Liu Xiaoquan, Li Tianyou, Li Zuopeng, Li Desheng, Qiu Huizuo, Wen Yucheng, Xie Fuzhi.  
In 1970, Wang Dongxing, Ji Dengkui, Zhang Chaiqian, Chen Shiqu were added as administrative group members, the result of Mao’s “mixing sand” strategy. |
| 1971, October  | Post-Lin Biao Affair | Large numbers of members were criticized as followers of Lin and were removed. The adjustments administrative group was abolished and Working Conference restored, with Ye Jianying, Xie Fuzhi, Zhang Cunqiao, Li Xianmian, Li Desheng, Ji Dengkui, Wang Dongxing, Chen Shiqu, Zhang Chaiqian, Liu Xianquan as Conference members. Ye was responsible for daily affairs. Wang Hongwen was added as Conference member in October 1973. Deng Xiaoping become CMC and Working Conference member in December |
In February 1975, CMC Standing Committee was restored to replace the Working Conference, with Ye Jianying, Wang Hongwen, Deng Xiaoping, Zhang Chunqiao, Liu Bocheng, Chen Xilian, Wang Dongxing, Su Zhenhua, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, and Su Yu as members. Ye was responsible for daily work. Li Xiannian and Wang Zhen were added as members later. Ye was dismissed from daily responsibility in February 1976 and Deng was criticized and removed in April 1976. Wang Hongwen and Zhang Chunqiao were removed following Mao’s death on October 6, 1976. Hua Guofeng became CMC chair the same month. In March 1977, Ye was restored the responsibility for CMC daily affairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July – August, 1977</th>
<th>CMC produced by the CCP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Chair:** Hua Guofeng

**Vice chairs:** Ye Jianying, Deng Xiaoping, Liu Bocheng, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen.

**Standing Committee:** Li Xiannian, Wang Dongxing, Chen Xilian, Wei Guoqing, Su Zhenhua, Zhang Tingfa, Su Yu, Luo Renjing (secretary general). Yang Yong (nonvoting, or *liexi*), Liang Biye (nonvoting), Zhang Zhen (nonvoting).

Huang Xinting, Han Xianchu, Zheng Siyu, Liao Hansheng, Tan Shanhe.
In March 1978, Wang Zhen was added as Standing Committee member. In January 1979, Geng Biao was added as Standing Committee member, and became secretary general following Luo Reiqing’s death. In February 1979, Wei Guoqing and Yang Yong were appointed as deputy secretary generals. In November 1979, the CMC Working Conference under Standing Committee was restored, nonvoting Standing Committee positions were eliminated, and Wang Ping was added as deputy secretary general. Conference members included Wei Guoqing, Yang Yong, Wang Ping, Wang Shangrong, Liang Biye, Hong Xuezhi, Xiao Hongda. In January 1980, Xu Shiyou, Yang Dezhi, Han Xianchu, Yang Yong, and Wang Ping were added as Standing Committee members. In February 1980, Chen Xilian and Wang Dongxin resigned from CMC. In March 1980, Yang Dezhi succeeded Deng Xiaoping as PLA chief of staff and became CMC deputy secretary general and Standing Committee member. In June 1981, Hua Guofeng resigned as CMC chair, Deng Xiaopeng became the new chair, and Yang Shangkun became the Standing Committee member and replaced Geng Biao as secretary general.

*Adapted from Liao, Contemporary China, pp. 323-324; China’s People’s Liberation Army, pp. 344-347.

What then is the nature of the fragmentation within the CMC during this period? Ideological rhetoric of the time and some studies suggest that the division was primarily between political commissars who wanted the PLA to stay politically and ideologically “red,” and military commanders who desired expertise-based professionalism, or “whiteness” for the PLA. The reality, however, is more complex than such a simple civil-military dichotomy. People with either commander or commissar experience, for instance, can be found within each of the competing factions of the CMC. A better indicator seems to be the revived historical ties such as the field army system of the civil war period, which really cut across the civil-military boundary. Except for those who existed on the margin of each of the competing factions, Lin Biao’s rise to power largely meant that those with Fourth Field Army backgrounds had a much better chance of being
appointed and promoted to important positions, while those with non-Fourth Field Army background were very likely to be accused of representing the “bourgeois military line” and removed from key positions. Paradoxically, the downfall of Lin Biao meant the reverse of political fortunes for the core members of the competing factions.

What then contributed to such severe fragmentation? Mao’s belief in a hidden but ever-present “bourgeois line” and the following “witch hunt,” certainly triggered the formation and consolidation of competing factions, and the escalation of the balancing behavior between and among them. The escalation in turn damaged the old norms and mechanisms of mediating differences. Small disagreements, for instance, were no longer treated as “contradictions among the people,” but rather as “antagonistic contradictions” which warranted severe struggles and purges. As competing factions mobilized support from below and outside and integrated them into the CMC, the old boundaries of the CMC collapsed and its internal quality declined. As the CMC became more heterogeneous and bloated, it became increasingly difficult to build consensus on policy, but much easier to wage ideology-based struggles and purges. For those who had political aspirations, the collapse of the old bureaucratic norms and mechanisms meant that they could no longer count on them for career security and survival, but rather needed to look for alternative, informal mechanisms. It seems that the old, battle-hardened ties such as the field army affiliations offered such alternative, since they helped to enhance the chances of survival in the new environment of political anarchy.

1982-1999 Period

CMC reforms during this period aimed essentially to restore the old norms, mechanisms and boundaries so that the chances of factional bickering could be reduced. First, the old “lines” struggle-based mobilization methods, geared toward weeding out hidden class enemies, were abandoned. In the meantime, bureaucratic norms and mechanisms (to be discussed later) aimed to build consensus on policy were restored. Second, the decentralization model where membership was extended to the MR level commanding officers, was replaced by the centralization model, where CMC membership was accessible only to the PLA senior leaders and the heads of the general departments. These reforms not only reduced the participation of the lower levels in CMC policy deliberations, but also allowed them to focus their attention and energy on implementing policy and on managing their own units. Third, an attempt was made to gradually reduce the political-military and nonmilitary members so that the CMC would be dominated by military members, or those who spent their life and career in the PLA. This change reduced the heterogeneity of the CMC, which in turn made it easier to build consensus, since a commonly shared career experience may contribute to a more uniform institutional outlook on policy (Compare Table 2.7 with Table 2.6 for changes).

These changes have produced some positive results. The old ideology-based factional purges and counter purges become relatively rare. In the meantime, the CMC has been demonstrating a higher level of unity by churning out new policy programs on

162 Lin was the commander of the Fourth Field Army during the civil war.
PLA doctrine, organization, technology, and education and training. Some may suggest that the ousting of Zhao Ziyang in 1989 and the removal of Yang Shangkun and Yang Baibing in 1992 indicated that the old style purges persisted. These instances, however, are the exceptions. In addition, their removal was not caused by competing agendas on military policy, but rather by disagreements on ways to handle unexpected events such as the student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square. Moreover, Yang Baibing retained his Politburo position even after his exit from the CMC, which was not comparable to the severe purges of the Cultural Revolution. Finally, the exit of the three represented the removal of the vestige of the political-military and nonmilitary members, which further enhanced the homogeneity of the CMC.

163 Zhao was removed from the CMC as a result of the loss of his position as CCP general secretary, and the main reason was his “ineffectiveness” in handling student demonstrations. Though there are various interpretations of the retirement of Yang Shangkun and the removal of Yang Baibing from the CMC, the more plausible reason may be that the two were overly active in suppressing the student demonstrations and took the opportunity to intensify the political activities of the PLA, which was reflected in Yang Baibing’s militant “class struggle” rhetoric as the GPD director. Both therefore may be suspected of forming a factional clique, considering that the two are relatives and militant rhetoric usually serves as the strategy for factional mobilization and struggles in CCP history. For Yang Baibing’s political activism, see David Shambaugh, “The Soldier and the State in China: the Political Work System in the PLA,” China Quarterly, No. 127, September 1991, pp. 553-567.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| September, 1982 | CMC produced at the CCP 12th Congress | **Chair:** Deng Xiaoping  
**Vice chairs:** Ye Jianying, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, Yang Shangkun (secretary general)  
**Deputy secretaries generals:** Yu Qiuli, Yang Dezhi, Zhang Aiping, Hong Xuezhi. |
| November, 1987 | CMC produced by the CCP 13th Congress | **Chair:** Deng.  
**Vice Chairs:** Zhao Zhiyang (executive), Yang Shangkun (secretary general)  
**Deputy secretaries generals:** Hong Xuezhi, Liu Huaqing.  
**Members:** chair, vice chairs, secretary generals, Qin Jiwei, Chi Haotian, Yang Baibin, Zhao Nanqi. |
| November, 1989 | Post-Tiananmen Incident CMC | **Chair:** Jiang Zemin.  
**Vice Chairs:** Yang Shangkun (executive), Liu Huaqing.  
**Secretary general:** Yang Baibing.  
**Members:** chair, vice chairs, secretary general, Qin Jiwei, Chi Haotian, Zhao Nanqi. |
| October, 1992 | CMC produced at the CCP 14th Congress | **Chair:** Jiang Zemin  
**Vice chairs:** Liu Huaqing, Zhang Zhen.  
**Members:** chair, vice chairs, Chi Haotian, Zhang Wannian, Yu Yongbo, Fu Quanyou |
| September, 1997 | CMC of the CCP 15th Congress | **Chair:** Jiang Zemin  
**Vice chairs:** Chi Haotian, Zhang Wannian.  
**Members:** chair, vice chairs, Fu Quanyou, Yu Yongbo, Wang Ke, Wang Reilin |
| September, 1999 | Pre-16th Congress Adjustments(to be held in 2002) | **Chair:** Jiang Zemin  
**Vice chairs:** Hu Jintao, Chi Haotian, Zhang Wannian.  
**Members:** chair, vice chairs, Fu Quanyou, Yu Yongbo, Wang Ke, Cao Gangchuan, Wang Ruilin, Guo Boxiong, Xu Caihou. |

*Adapted from Liao, Contemporary China, p. 324; China’s People’s Liberation Army, pp. 347-348.*
STRUCTURE, NORMS, MECHANISMS, AND RELATIONSHIPS

Structure

The CMC in essence resembles a committee where the CCP and the PLA top leaders meet to make major decisions and to coordinate policy. It is usually chaired by the CCP chair or general secretary. The position of vice chairs is usually limited and confined to the uniformed PLA senior leaders, while other members are the heads of the four PLA general departments. Even though the CMC does not claim to have a hierarchy, certain factors affect the relative power among its members. Since the CMC is a Party institution and all CMC members are Party members, those who hold position in the CCP Politburo may be regarded as more powerful than others, and those who hold position in the Politburo Standing Committee should be seen as even more powerful. Within the CMC itself, chair and vice chairs, who constitute an informal executive committee, are certainly seen as more senior and more powerful than the other members. Among the other members, those who hold position of the full heads of the general departments are regarded as more powerful than those who hold position of the deputy heads of these departments. Furthermore, those who hold position of the full heads of the GSD and GPD are considered more powerful than those who hold the position of the head of the GLD, since the former are recognized as more important departments. Some sources suggest that the newly established General Armament Department (GAD) may reflect a new emphasis on technology, which may render its head equal status with the heads of the GSD and the GPD. But since GAD is relatively new and a supportive department, it probably has the status of the GLD. Military ranks used to be an important factor in determining the relative importance of members (marshals vs. generals). But since all current uniformed members are generals, ranks may not be as an important indicator as before, even though levels of salary (which is determined by the length of military service, an indicator of relative seniority, as well as by ranks) may be an influential factor.

There have been historical exceptions to the current, more regularized CMC structure as described above, particularly during the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, and even thereafter. From 1982 to 1989, for instance, Deng was neither the CCP chair nor its general secretary, but he held the position of the CMC chair, while the CCP general secretary Zhao Ziyang, who should have been the CMC chair, only held the position of the CMC vice chair (see Table 2.7). Moreover, those who had little PLA service experience or who left the PLA for civilian positions since the late 50s, such as Deng (from 1975 to 1976 and from 1977 to 1982), Wang Hongwen (from 1975 to 1976), Zhao Ziyang (from 1987 to 1989), and Hu Jintao (from 1999 to present), held or holds the position of the vice or first vice chair of the CMC (see Tables 2.6 and 2.7). While it is understandable that the “core in waiting” needs to have prior CMC tenure to gain military experience and to cultivate relationship and authority within the CMC and the PLA, some

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165 A deputy PLA chief of staff or a deputy GPD director is equivalent to a full GLD director in level distinction.
regularized norm may be necessary to enhance the legitimacy of such succession-related practice. If Hu Jintao succeeds Jiang as the CMC chair at the same time as he would become the new CCP general secretary, his prior tenure at the CMC may establish a precedent that may serve as a normative mechanism of political-military succession. But if Hu takes over the position of the CCP general secretary at the 16th CCP Congress to be held in 2002, while Jiang continues to hold the position of the CMC chair, as Deng did earlier relative to Zhao, the attempt to normalize the political-military succession would be seriously hampered. This line of succession is unusual because holding the CMC chair position without being the CCP general secretary would be perceived as being abnormal and irregular, even according to the CCP’s own past practice and norm.

Another exception to the current structure is appointing a uniformed senior member or a uniformed vice chair to be responsible for daily affairs (Peng Dehuai from 1954 to 1959, Lin Biao from 1959 to 1971, and Ye Jianying from 1971 to 1976 and from 1977 to 1982), or a standing (changwu) vice chair (Yang Shangkun from 1982 to 1989) (see Tables 2.4, 2.5, and 2.7). Related to this exception is appointing a secretary general to assist the vice chair responsible for daily affairs in managing his daily tasks (Huang Kecheng from 1954 to 1959, Luo Ronghuan from 1959 to 1963, Luo Ruiqing from 1963 to 1965 and from 1977 to 1979, Geng Biao from 1979 to 1981, Yang Shangkun from 1981 to 1989, and Yang Baibing from 1989 to 1992. See Tables 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7). These arrangements, however, are usually seen as concentrating power either in the hands of these two members, or in the hands of one member (if both positions are occupied by one person, as Yang Shangkun did from 1982 to 1989. See Table 2.7). This in turn may lead to a perception of the declining influence over policy by the civilian chair and other members. Since these two members usually work closely together, they may also be suspected of forming a clique (Peng Dehuai and Huang Kecheng from 1954 to 1959, and Yang Shangkun and Yang Baibing from 1989 to 1992). Both may generate a sense of insecurity and anxiety about one’s relative power among other CMC members. Sometimes, however, the two may not get along well, either due to fear of being suspected of forming a clique or for ideological differences (as had happened between Lin Biao and Luo Ronghuan from 1959 to 1963, and between Lin Biao and Luo Ruiqing from 1963 to 1965), leading to severe rivalry between the two at the expense of policy. Since these two positions may contribute to the “relative gain” problem in the CMC and trigger preemptive power struggles, both were eliminated in 1992 to reduce factionalism.

There are other exceptions to the current structure. When the CMC grew rather large, for instance, a standing committee would be established (from 1959 to 1966, and from 1975 to 1982. See Tables 2.5 and 2.6) to differentiate the more senior and influential members from others with the standing committee itself differentiated between voting and nonvoting members (from 1977 to 1979. See Table 2.6). Related to the standing committee is the working conference, which was established either as the mechanism to interpret and operationalize the standing committee decisions (from 1959 to 1966, and from 1979 to 1982. See Tables 2.5 and 2.6), or as a substitute for the standing committee (from 1971 to 1975. See Table 2.6). Moreover, from 1966 to 1971, the heyday of the Cultural Revolution, both the standing committee and the working conference were replaced by a powerful CMC administrative group. Finally, specialized committees were sometimes established within the CMC to manage functional and technical tasks (in military training and education, science and technology, etc.). These arrangements
produced several negative effects. First, they turned the CMC into an overly stratified or compartmentalized bureaucracy, making it difficult to build consensus on major decisions and to coordinate policy. Moreover, they contributed to an excessively uneven distribution of power, which may have caused the relative gain-driven spiral, leading to intense factional rivalry. Furthermore, some extra-institutional arrangements, such as the administrative group, can easily be turned into the tool of intra-CCP power struggles. Finally, specialized committees tended to micromanage tasks that were the responsibilities of the PLA general departments, making it difficult for either to fulfill its tasks due to blurring of bureaucratic ranks. Largely for these reasons, these arrangements have gradually been phased out.

**Major Norms and Mechanisms**

For the CMC to make decisions and coordinate policy, there are two major norms that provide context and guideline. First, the line changes of the CCP Central, which are usually related to leadership changes and a reevaluation of China’s internal and external environment, provide the context within which military policy would be formulated or changed. “Early, total, nuclear war,” for instance, was largely identified with the radical Maoist line of “war and revolution.” As CCP line shifted toward “peace and development” under Deng, the notion of “local war under modern conditions” was articulated and adopted. Moreover, bureaucratic incrementalism provides an important norm for decision making. With the restoration and consolidation of the bureaucracy in the post-Mao era, military policy has become less erratic and more incrementalized. Personnel appointments, for instance, are less determined by competing definition of ideological correctness and more by bureaucratic requisites such as service length, performance, and education. Similarly, decisions on budget and weapons acquisition are less based on revolutionary zeal-driven and unrealizable targets and more on feasibility factors such as how much was spent the previous year; spending relative to government budget, annual economic growth, and the annual gross domestic product (GDP); availability of suppliers; and cost-benefit ratio.

While major norms set the parameters for which debate and consensus on major decisions take place, at the operational level the CMC General Office (GO) is an

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166 Most Lin loyalists in the CMC administrative group also served in the CCP Politburo, and were both active participants and victims in the intra-CCP “lines” struggle of the time.


168 Ibid., pp. 330-331.

important mechanism for the CMC to fulfill its roles. As the PLA has shifted to more quality-based and technology-driven modernization, policy issues also require more sophisticated technical analyses than before. As a result, the GO's Comprehensive Investigation and Research Bureau (CIRB) is playing an increasingly important role in providing such analyses. This analysis is usually done in three major ways. The CIRB's own research staff conducts its own investigation, research and analyses on major policy issues. Moreover, the CIRB can assign specialized research projects to other PLA research institutes such as the Academy of Military Science (AMS), the National Defense University (NDU), and the general departments, services and MR-affiliated research institutions, or collect and aggregate inputs from these institutions on policy issues. Finally, the CIRB's research staff can be integrated into a drafting group that attempts to tackle larger, more comprehensive policy subjects.

The CMC currently consists of the heads of the four PLA general departments so that the relationship among operations, personnel, arms and technology, and finance and logistics can be coordinated, since the four departments are also considered the operational departments (gongzuobo men) of the CMC. There are, however, newly emerging issues that transcend the functional responsibilities of the four general departments, which require central coordination at the CMC level. As a result, specialized bureaus were established and placed under the GO for the purpose of policy coordination. The Rule of Law Bureau, for instance, came into being largely as an attempt to coordinate the numerous newly formulated rules and regulations that transcend the functions of the four general departments and encompass all aspects of the PLA. The Auditing Bureau, on the other hand, was established as a device to impose some central financial discipline through auditing the budgetary expenditures as well as non-budgetary income, largely the

170 Since the early 1950s, the CMC and its GO had been located in the relatively small Sanzuomen compound, which is close to the back entrance of Zhongnanhai (CCP Central) and the front gate of Beihai Park, and contains a small auditorium (well known for showing internally circulated foreign movies in the 1970s) and a few conference rooms and offices. Both have recently moved to a newly built, rather large building next to the Military Museum on western Chang'an Avenue, known as the "August 1st Building." Swaine estimates that the CMCGO has about 100 full time staff. See Swaine, "The PLA and Chinese National Security Policy," p. 120.

171 Senior Colonel Hu Hanlin, the CIRB director, served as deputy head of a drafting group for the book entitled Contemporary World Military Affairs and China's National Defense. The group consisted of 17 analysts and scholars from the CIRB, AMS, and NDU. Other group heads included Major General Li Yu (full head, former director of AMS' Scientific Research Guidance Department) and Major General Su Xisheng (deputy head, deputy dean of NDU). The chief editor is General Zhang Wannian, and the deputy chief editors are Generals Liu Jingsong (former AMS commandant) and Xing Shizhong (NDU commandant). The CCP Central leadership allegedly instructed the CMC to draft the book as the military component of a textbook series for CCP's Central Party School. See Zhang, Contemporary World Military Affairs, p. 363.
outcome of extensive involvement in business by lower level departments and units. Similarly, the Military Trade Bureau was established as an attempt to centralize and coordinate policy over foreign arms sales, which may have foreign policy implications (see Table 2.8 for various GO bureaus). The PLA Disciplinary Inspection Committee and the PLA Confidentiality Committee were also established within the CMC for policy coordination in their respective functional areas (see Table 2.8).

Table 2.8  CMC General Office (junwei bangongting)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Subordinate bureaus:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretariat (mishu chu), Comprehensive Investigation and Research Bureau (zonghe diaoyan ju), Rule of Law Bureau (fazhi ju), Auditing Bureau (shenji ju), Military Trade Bureau (junmao ju).*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The GO Services Department (fuwu chu) and the Guard Department (jingwei chu), responsible for logistical services and security of the CMC, are not listed here since they are not considered major functional departments. The GO is usually directed by a Lieutenant General (Tan Reixin is the current director), who is assisted by several deputy directors who hold the rank of major general. Bureau heads are either major generals or senior colonels. Also associated with the CMC are the PLA Disciplinary Inspection (jilu jiancha) Committee and the PLA Secrecy (baomi) Committee, which are parallel but not subordinate to the GO. The CMC Transportation and War Preparation Leading Small Group and the CMC People’s Arms Committee were abolished and their functions were transferred in late 1994 to the newly established State National Defense Mobilization Commission (to be discussed below).

The major function of the GO’s Secretariat in decision making and policy coordination is the indispensable dissemination of information among CMC members to facilitate agendas. The Secretariat maintains routine communications with the CCP Central General Office for major policy initiatives from the CCP leadership. It also gathers and collates materials from other GO bureaus and PLA lower level departments and units, and circulates them through personal secretaries to CMC members in summaries.172 Both help in shaping the agendas for the CMC meetings. Some scholars of

172 The materials coming down from the CCP Central are usually instructions (zhishi, referring mainly to those handed down from superiors to subordinates). Materials from lower levels are mostly requests for instructions (qingshi) or reports (baogao). The CMC members can make comments on reports to be returned to lower levels (pishi) or issue direct zhishi to lower levels. The speech given by the CMC members in smaller meetings (such as a symposium) is jayuan. The speech given in front of a larger audience at an enlarged CMC conference is jianghua, which can also be called a baogao. Policy
Chinese politics suggest that rather than serving merely as conduits, personal secretaries of major leaders can substantially influence policy agendas. Such a view may be historically relevant. Some personal secretaries, being well versed in ideological doctrines, for instance, acted on behalf of major CCP leaders and directly participated in drafting key policy documents. These actions contributed to many “lines” struggles in CCP history and lead to severe factional purges and counter purges. In such struggles, close relations are also easier to forge between the leaders and their personal secretaries. This means that the rehabilitation and purge of major leaders also implies the rise and decline of political fortunes of their personal secretaries, which in turn lead to either their appointment to more important positions than their credentials warranted (where they would push the policy view of their leaders at the expense of others’), or their removal from important positions.173

The influence of personal secretaries over policy, however, may be declining in the post-Mao era for several reasons. The new emphasis on technical and functional expertise, for instance, means the decline of ideology in policy formulation. Since few personal secretaries are technical and functional experts who can provide sophisticated policy analyses, the CMC and the PLA technical and functional bureaus and departments should have more input into the policy processes than personal secretaries. Furthermore, post-Mao bureaucratic routinization means the decline of the personality-based purges, counter purges, and rehabilitation. Finally, the perception of personal secretaries benefiting from their personal bond with leaders for career advancement may mean that both leaders and personal secretaries would maintain appropriate distance from one another to avoid the perception of favoritism and that personal secretaries would be more regularly transferred to lower levels to gain “grassroots unit work experience” and competence before promotion. All these actions should reduce the conditions for forming highly personalized cliques, and therefore curtail the policy role of personal secretaries.174

options discussed at CMC meetings are plans (jiang’an). A final decision (jueding) is usually a resolution (jueyi). Zhishi and jueyi are usually distributed as documents (wenjian) with four levels of classification: top-secret (juemí), essential-secret (jimi), secret (mimi), and internal (neibu).

173 Such ups and downs can also happen to family members and relatives, and even to bodyguards, chauffeurs, and chefs. Such practice can trace its origin to the palace intrigues of the imperial times. Understanding such historical continuity, however, is beyond the scope of this study and requires a separate analysis.

174 Chen Boda, Mao’s former personal secretary, was a CCP Politburo Standing Committee member and the head of Cultural Revolution Leadership Small Group. Wang Rellin, Deng’s former personal secretary, has become a CMC member and a GPD deputy director. Jia Ting’an, Jiang’s former personal secretary, only holds the position of the deputy director of CMCGO. Chen was also purged from the CCP leadership in 1970. These show that the political role of personal secretaries is declining and that personal secretary experience is no guarantee for political protection from the boss that the
As far as major meetings are concerned, CMC "meets ... at least once per month" in so-called routine sessions (lihui), and "at least twice per year" in sessions that are usually enlarged to include the MR level commanding officers (kuoda hui). 175 To the extent the CMC resembles the Party committee of the PLA, 176 the official norm that guides decision processes at these committee meetings (which applies to Party committees at all levels of the PLA) is a "system of division of responsibilities among commanding officers under the unified and collective leadership of the Party committee" (dangwei tongyi jiti lingdao xia de shouzhang fengong fuzce zhi). Such a norm involves three key principles. The first is the unity principle, which means that all commanding officers, whether military, political, logistics or equipment, are subordinate to the leadership of the Party committee of their unit, and all important issues would be resolved and decided by the Party committee. The second is the collectivism principle. This principle first of all means that major issues would be fully discussed and "all committee members air their views and make suggestions." Secondly, "except for emergencies where a key commanding officer acts promptly at his own discretion (jiduan chuzhi)," major policy issues should be put to a vote (biaojue) at committee meetings where "one man has one vote" and "the minority would subordinate their view to the majority," but not left to the "arbitrary will" of a single leader. "If the result of voting is too close or arguments break out, the decision can be postponed for another vote, while further investigation and research and exchange of views would take place and the minority view reviewed carefully. Under special circumstances, the issue can be forwarded to a higher level for arbitration." The third is the division of responsibilities principle, which has two major elements. The first element is that once a policy decision has been made, a division of labor among members should be clarified (mingque fengong), so that each would fulfill his/her responsibility (gesi qize) in implementing policy. 177 Secondly, to prevent excessive separation of responsibilities, members are

secretary used to serve, even though the boss is very much in power. Moreover, some of those with personal secretary experience can be quite competent and deserve important jobs in spite of such experience. This also means that such experience can be a political liability, since one with such experience may be suspected of favoritism and denied important appointments, even though the person can be quite competent and qualified.

175 Swaine, "The PLA and Chinese National Security Policy," p. 119. For a sample of major CMC enlarged conference decisions over the years, see Tables 9 and 10.

176 The CMC is more similar to the Party committee of a provincial military district (MD), where the civilian provincial first Party secretary serves as the first secretary while the MD commander and commissar serve as secretaries, than the Party committee of a group army, where the first secretary is a uniformed commanding officer (either the commander or the commissar of the unit).

177 In the case of the CMC, a major policy decision (such as the 1985 PLA downsizing and reorganization) usually involves an operational component, a personnel component, and arms and technology component, and a financial and logistical component, which match well with the functional responsibilities of the four general
supposed to cooperate through mutual respect, support and consultation, so that policy would be successfully executed.\textsuperscript{178}

To what extent is such an official norm regularly practiced, particularly in terms of voting at the CMC meetings? There are certainly benefits and incentives from voting on major issues. Votes can be recorded, thus contributing to clarification of positions and responsibilities.\textsuperscript{179} It also enhances the legitimacy of a policy if a majority has voted for it. Moreover, it reinforces the official norm by setting an example for lower level Party committees. Finally, establishing a nonvoting category of CMC membership briefly (see Table 2.6) and extensive literature on Party committee meeting procedures imply that CMC, like Party committees at lower levels, should vote. On the other hand, there are downsides of formal voting. Existence of a significant minority against a policy may raise questions about its soundness, leading to reevaluation and delay of a final decision. This may contribute to prolonged discussions without a resolution (\textit{jiuji bujiue}), thus lowering the credibility of the CMC. Heated arguments and split votes may also evoke the memory of the Cultural Revolution, where small agreements were elevated to the level of “lines” struggle, contributing to severe factional rivalry. Finally, if the more senior members voted on the losing side, their authority and legitimacy may be negatively affected. In a culture that valuates “face” highly, such a prospect may trigger hasty face-saving measures at the expense of sound policy.

Several mitigating strategies and mechanisms exist to minimize the chances and negative effects of formal voting, which may amount to an embarrassing showdown. First, Party committees are required to focus on “significant and major policy issues” (\textit{zhongda zhengce wenti}) and not on administrative issues, in order to avoid “the administratization of the Party committee” (\textit{dangwei xingzhenghua}). This means that Party committee meetings must not mix with “commanding officer meetings” (\textit{shouzhang bangong huiyi}). While the former concentrates on fewer but more important issues based on the collectivism principle of “minority yielding to majority” (\textit{shaoshu fucang duoshu}) through voting, the latter deals with more numerous and trivial administrative matters based on the principle of “lower levels obeying higher levels” (\textit{xiaji fucang shangji}) through issuing and following orders. It also means that “Party committees should not take on (\textit{baolan}) administrative matters, substitute for (\textit{daiyi}) administrative officers, and interfere in (\textit{ganyu}) their routine exercise of responsibilities; but should support them in departments. This apparently allows the two CMC vice chairs, General Zhang Wannian and General Chi Haotian, to preside over the heads of four general departments to coordinate and supervise the implementation of policy. It is also safe to assume a division of general responsibilities between the two. General Zhang, for instance, has reportedly been responsible mainly for operational matters, while General Chi is largely responsible for other major matters.

\textsuperscript{178} For the three principles, see Yan, \textit{Theory and Practice}, pp. 18-21, 40-41; Liao, \textit{et al.}, \textit{Contemporary China}, p. 55.

\textsuperscript{179} I am indebted to Admiral Michael McDevitt for this observation.
carrying out their responsibilities independently.”180 Both should help to reduce the number of issues to be decided at the Party committee meetings.

Second, for those issues that find their way to the agendas of the Party committee meetings, many, such as arbitration of disagreements and coordinating implementation of policy at lower levels, may not require a formal vote. The restoration of a bureaucratic hierarchy may mean that higher level officials tend to take a unified stance in dealing with issues arising from lower level units. This is a significant departure from the bureaucratic breakdown of the Cultural Revolution, where officials of lower levels can exploit the cleavages at higher levels or vice versa to develop vertical, highly personalized factions that cut across bureaucratic ranks. The Party committee can also transmit (zhuancha) the reports from the functional departments of its level to lower levels. These reports may not require a formal vote at Party committee meetings, but they do imply a tacit approval of the policy initiatives in such reports by commanding officers.181 Moreover, some issues, particularly those concerning long-range planning are regularly discussed at these meetings (a mediating process by its own right) and do not require a final decision based on a formal voting. Arranging for next year’s work also may not require a formal vote. All these mechanisms should further reduce the number of issues to be decided through a formal vote.

Finally, major informal mechanisms exist to mediate between Party committee members about major policy issues. It is advised, for instance, that committee members “should be informed of the agendas in advance” (ammin gaoshi), so that they are “well prepared to discuss these issues” (youbei eryi) at the meetings. Also, “based on thorough investigation and research, two or more plans should be forwarded at the meetings so that there will be choices to make.” Moreover, it is necessary to have “more communication, coordination, and solicitations of views to unify thought (tongyi sixiang) before meetings.” This serves “to avoid either delay or hasty decisions” at the meetings. Informal mechanisms of exchanging views include “early notice” (da zhaohu), passing on circulating documents (fa chuanyue jian), symposiums (zuotan hui) and briefings (pengtou hui) among commanding officers, and transition meetings (jiqieban hui), even


181 The CMC, for instance, transmitted to lower levels The Report on Several Issues concerning the Authorized Strength of Military Schools, forwarded by the three general departments in 1975. It also transmitted The Plan on Reforming and Streamlining the System of Military Schools, forwarded by the three general departments in 1986. Li, One Hundred Major Events, pp. 53-54.
though these informal mechanisms “must not substitute for the Party committee procedures and resolutions.” 182 All these strategies and mechanisms should either lower the need for a formal vote at Party committee meetings, or reduce such voting to a mere formality. 183

Relationships

The CMC maintains important relationships with the CCP Central, government institutions, and lower level PLA departments and units. Among these, the most important relationship is with the CCP Central. During the Cultural Revolution, the CMC’s relationship with the CCP Politburo was highly intertwined and symbiotic, with about 50% of the Politburo members being uniformed PLA officers, and a substantial proportion of the CMC membership being nonmilitary and political-military members. Such a symbiosis reflected both the earlier political-military revolutionary experience and Mao’s emphasis on “politics to take command” during the Cultural Revolution. Because of this, intra-Politburo “lines” struggle-based factional rivalry would easily extend into and divide the CMC, which cut across the civil-military divide between the Politburo and the CMC (the Gang of Four and Lin Biao and his generals in CMC on the one side, and Liu and Deng and the marshals in the CMC on the other). The post-Mao years witnessed the gradual decline of uniformed PLA members in the Politburo to two out of 21 members, and neither of the two serves in the powerful Politburo Standing Committee. In the meantime, nonmilitary and political-military members in the CMC have been substantially reduced: with the exception of the chair and the “core in waiting,” all members are uniformed PLA commanding officers. 184 The institutionalization of a nominal civil-military boundary between the Politburo and the CMC means that the PLA role in intra-Party leadership politics is reduced as military votes in the Politburo declined substantially. It also means that the CMC, no longer distracted by intra-Party leadership “lines” struggle, can now focus more on the functional and technical issues of defense modernization, as it is now dominated by the uniformed PLA commanding officers.

However, such nominal civil-military differentiation may also mean that the CMC increasingly resembles a lobbying group that actively articulates the PLA’s institutional interests in the policy arena of the Party. The similarity is particularly evident if the Party moves away from the old revolutionary, one-person dominant, charismatic leadership toward a more technocratic and collective leadership, sustained more by consensus-driven collective bargaining and accommodations than the arbitrary will of one person. For the CCP leadership, while it may continue to accommodate the PLA interests if they are

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183 These probably lead one analyst to state that “the CMC as a body reportedly does not meet to vote and ‘make decisions’ in the conventional sense.” Swaine, “The PLA and Chinese National Security Policy,” p. 119.

perceived as reasonable and justified, it may also attempt to restrain excesses by stressing the Leninist principle of "Party commanding the gun" to remind the uniformed CMC members that CCP Politburo is still its parent organization, and that the CMC functions and formulates policies only within the basic principles and policy framework of the CCP leadership, and by limiting the number of uniformed members in Politburo and its standing committee. Also, since CMC members are more like Party members who wear uniforms than professional officers who hold a party card, the uniformed CMC members would most likely hold on to the same Leninist principle by articulating a view where pursuing functional and technical expertise and institutional interests would not be inconsistent with Party principles and objectives.

Such a mutually accommodating and cordial relationship, coupled with a measure of restraint, can also be detected at an operational level. The CCP Secretariat, which is responsible for managing CCP central bureaucracies, operationalizing Politburo decisions, and supervising their implementation, for instance, retains at least one uniformed CMC vice chair on its board, as does the CCP Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (FALSG), which is responsible for discussing and coordinating foreign policy and supervising its implementation. The single uniformed membership allows for military input into policy as well as civil-military coordination in policy implementation. It also serves to accommodate the institutional perspective and interests of the PLA. On the other hand, limiting military membership to no more than one is apparently intended to restrain the PLA leadership from exerting too much influence over policy.

As for government institutions, the CMC interacts mainly with the NPC and the State Council. The 1982 Constitutional change requires the formation of a state CMC that answers to the NPC, implying that legislative oversight would be exercised over military affairs. In reality, however, the state CMC is identical with the CCP CMC in organization and membership, and its loyalty apparently goes to where real power lies: the CCP

185 This means that the PLA officers are Party members first and professional officers second, and that the PLA is still a Party army with professional characteristics, but not otherwise. Hopefully, however, increased professionalism would gradually build up professional identity and weaken Party identity to the point the latter becomes irrelevant.

186 The current PLA-CCP leadership interaction is confined mainly to mundane bureaucratic politics such as defense budget increases to compensate for losses due to business divestiture, or to augment PLA technology. The probability for the PLA leadership to play the direct and blatant role of kingmaker in CCP leadership politics is relatively low, unless an acute CCP leadership crisis occurs on the scale of the Cultural Revolution or the 1989 Tiananmen Incident. This does not mean, however, the PLA leadership has no role to play in CCP leadership transition politics. Some behind-the-scene political-military negotiations about CCP leadership transition in the upcoming 16th CCP Congress, for instance, can be expected to have already been going on.

187 General Zhang is a member of the CCP Secretariat, and General Chi is a member of FALSG.
Central. This change, however, doesn’t mean that legislative hearings would not take place. As a matter of fact, the policy area where the NPC holds the most regular hearings is military rules and regulations. In such hearings, the CMC entrusts the head of the GPD to report and explain to the NPC in detail the newly formulated rules and regulations, which the NPC regularly approves. Hearings are also held on the more substantial policy area such as the defense budget, where the CMC delegates the head of the GLD the responsibility to report and explain. Such hearings, however, tend to dwell more on general principles and large figures than on spending details. As claimed in one account on the budgetary process:

In countries such as the US, France, England, and Russia, the defense department (or ministry) is both the highest leadership institution of the armed forces and the functional department of the government (or cabinet). It participates in drafting the defense budget on behalf of both the armed forces and the government. In order to get approval from the legislature, the drafted budget needs to be as detailed as possible. Once approved, the budget is strictly executed ... The decision making power (juece quan) of the defense department itself in distributing and managing budget is highly constrained (by the legislature and chief executive)... The highest leadership institution of our army is the CMC. The CMC is not a subordinate functional department of the government. Like the State Council, it is produced by the institution of the highest state power (implying the CMC parallels the State Council in level distinction, but is not a subordinate department within the State Council). Such a relationship between the CMC and the government determines that the CMC has much more decision making power in distributing and managing the defense budget than the defense departments in other countries. The NPC is only responsible for examining and approving (shenpi) the general figures of this budget. The CMC has the highest decision making power in detailed distribution and management.188

The most secretive and the least area of oversight is the PLA’s personnel policy. The CMC makes major decisions about high level personnel appointments and promotions in the PLA. The list of candidates is prepared out of the nomenclature maintained by the GPD’s Cadre Department and the CCP’s Organization Department. The final decisions would be reported to the CCP Politburo for the record (shangbao bei’an), which would then be kept by the CCP’s Organization Department. There is virtually no news report on

188 Ku, Theory of Military Budget, pp. 190-191.
such decisions except for ceremonies where the CMC chair promotes high-ranking PLA officers. This decision process is off limits to the NPC.

Even though one uniformed CMC vice chair holds the position of the defense minister (in this case General Chi), his power comes with the position of CMC vice chair, but not the head of a Ministry of National Defense (MND), since the MND is a public relations facade which does not exist within the State Council. The regular functions of the MND are fulfilled by the four PLA general departments, which answer to the CMC, but not the premier of the State Council. As a result, the executive control of the military through the supervision of a defense department or ministry in his or her cabinet does not exist in China. This does not mean that the relationship between the CMC and the State Council has to be conflictual. On the contrary, the relationship among the uniformed CMC vice chairs and the premier and vice premiers of the State Council can be highly civil and cordial, since they are mostly CCP Politburo members or members of the CCP Secretariat, and do meet often in the regular meetings of these councils. The uniformed CMC vice chair who holds the position of defense minister is also a State Councillor. Below the top level, however, the relationship between the State Council ministries and the PLA general departments can sometimes be problematic, particularly in policy coordination. In recent years, for instance, the PLA general departments and other PLA major institutions have had serious disputes with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State Council over major foreign policy issues. Since the State Council premier has no jurisdiction over lower PLA institutions, such conflicts need to be forwarded to the Party leadership for mediation and arbitration. The outcome can be quite unpleasant for either the CMC or the State Council, thus potentially undermining future cooperation and coordination between the two.

To limit such disputes, an attempt has been made to institutionalize two major mediating mechanisms. The first is a “system of coordination conferences” (xiexiang huiyi zhidu), where “coordination conferences between the State Council and the CMC would be held depending on circumstances, to resolve issues concerning national defense matters.” Moreover, “the State Council and the CMC would organize implementation of the decisions made at such conferences within each’s realm of responsibilities and power.” The second mechanism is the State National Defense Mobilization Commission established in November 1994. This is “a discussion and coordination (yiishi xietiao) institution responsible for national defense mobilization work under the leadership of the State Council and the CMC.” The positions of chair and vice chairs of the commission are “held by the principle leaders of the State Council and the CMC.” Its members “include leaders of the related State Council ministries and commissions, and of the PLA general departments.” The four major offices (people’s arms mobilization, economic

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189 Gaining higher rank implies promotion to higher positions, but it does not tell what positions. Such ceremonies also seem to be a purely internal CMC process (e.g., Jiang handing out new ranks to his top lieutenants).

190 See Li, “Organizational Changes of the PLA,” pp. 322.

191 Ibid.
mobilization, people’s air defense, and transportation and war preparation) under the commission are also staffed by both State Council and PLA personnel.\textsuperscript{192}

The CMC’s relationship with lower level PLA operational departments and units is related to the important question on whether the CMC has sufficient autonomy to make its own policy decisions. There are two views on this. One is that the CMC largely ratifies decisions of the CCP Politburo. The other view is that most CMC policy ideas come from lower levels, and the CMC largely stamps its approval on these ideas.\textsuperscript{193} Both views assume the CMC is mainly a coordinating and mediating institution, which does not normally make major policy decisions of its own. Such an assumption was relevant mainly to the period between the late 1950s and middle 1970s, when the PLA was highly revolutionized, the military hierarchy severely weakened, and the CMC highly divided. Mao’s concern about bureaucratic differentiation and hierarchy breeding “bourgeois consciousness and class,” for instance, led to the CMC’s anti-bureaucratic measures such as requiring generals to spend two months as a soldier in a company every year, narrowing salary scales, eliminating military ranks, closing down military schools, and conducting incessant criticism sessions at all levels to intensify “internal contradictions” in order to expose “hidden class enemies.”\textsuperscript{194} Similarly, the dominance of mass mobilization methods during this period also extended into the PLA, where grassroots initiatives easily found their way to the high policy council of the CMC. The “Three Supports and Two Militaries,” for instance, was based on a report from a local unit in Anhui Province, where local “rebels” requested the protection of the PLA in their mass rallies to criticize and attack the “capitalist roads.” The CMC also stamped its approval on a GLD’s report on expanding PLA’s participation in agriculture and sideline production in 1966, which apparently appealed to Mao’s obsession with reducing the “bourgeois privileges” of the PLA through manual labor and self-sufficiency.\textsuperscript{195}

\textsuperscript{192} The principal leader of the commission from the CMC is General Chi. At the operational level, General Qian Shugen, a deputy PLA chief of staff, serves as secretary general. The commission has also been replicated at the provincial, prefecture, and county levels. For both mechanisms, see Zhang, \emph{Contemporary World Military Affairs}, pp. 219, 263. For replication at lower levels, see Li Jun (head of the Military Affairs and Mobilization Department of the Beijing Garrison District), \textit{et al}, “Tigao guofang dongyuan weiyuanhui de hongguan tiaokong nengli” [Enhancing the Adjustment and Control Ability of the National Defense Mobilization Commission at the Macro-level], in \textbf{National Defense Editorial Department, In Order to Fight and Win Tomorrow’s War.}

\textsuperscript{193} This is the view proposed by a mainland participant at the CAPS/RAND Conference on PLA as Organization, Airlie House Conference Center, Warrenton, Virginia, August 4-6, 2000.

\textsuperscript{194} See Li, \emph{One Hundred Major Events}, pp. 118-119, 147-149, 155-159, 164-166, 300, 359.

\textsuperscript{195} For the origins of the two policy ideas, see ibid., pp. 233, 404-405.
With gradual restoration of bureaucratic hierarchy since the middle 1970s, however, the “bottom-up” approach has gradually been replaced by a “top-down” approach, reflected in major CMC decisions such as terminating the “Three Supports and Two Militaries”; reducing the PLA’s participation in agricultural and sideline production; restoring military ranks; restoring military research and learning institutions; downsizing and reorganizing the PLA in 1985, 1992, and 1997, involving the elimination of a large number of lower level headquarters, departments, and units; and ordering the divestiture of lower levels from commercial activities in 1998.\(^{196}\) To the extent no evidence exists that these policies have failed, even though they clearly reduced the influence and vested interests of lower levels, it obviously weakens the argument that the CMC is mere the captive of lower level special interests.

There are several major reasons why the CMC is gaining more policy autonomy from both the CCP leadership and the lower levels. On the CCP leadership side, the generalized nature of the new CCP policy framework and the collective nature of the new CCP leadership allow substantial leeway for the CMC to exploit and to make policy choices. The CCP policy transition from “war and revolution” to “peace and development,” for instance, has not specified the military policy implications of such transition. It is therefore up to the CMC to articulate these implications in terms of the scope and nature of the PLA’s new missions, and the new requirements for PLA’s operational doctrine, organization and personnel, arms and technology, and finance and logistics. Also, the relative lack of knowledge of military affairs by the new generation of CCP leadership the establishment of a nominal civil-military boundary as discussed earlier, and the technology-driven sophistication of the military profession may all contribute to the increased policy autonomy of the CMC.

With regard to lower level PLA organizations the restoration of bureaucratic hierarchy and the end of mass mobilization methods in the PLA have largely strengthened the authority of the CMC. It has also ensured that lower level organizations function primarily to implement the policy decisions of the CMC. Even though they may have input into the policy processes, they are not primary sources of policy ideas and provide feedback on implementation for higher-level organizations to make policy adjustments. The need to show competence or face-based legitimacy of the CMC also favors a “top-down” approach.\(^{197}\) On the other hand, with the increasing technological sophistication

\(^{196}\) During the 1985 downsizing and reorganization, for instance, the heads of the general departments functioned mainly to flesh out the responsibilities of their respective departments in the new policy, and proceeded to carry out these responsibilities accordingly. For most of the new policy initiatives, see ibid., pp. 237, 300-302, 337-340, 359-364, 405. For the functions of the heads of the general departments, see ibid., pp. 328-332, 341-343.

\(^{197}\) The new emphasis on the “high-tech” nature of future wars and on doctrine-driven (rather than practice-driven or mass line-based) defense modernization, for instance, can be interpreted as a political strategy to reinforce the policy autonomy of the PLA leadership, because the increasing technological sophistication of the PLA would
of the PLA, research and learning institutions may play an increasingly important role in generating policy ideas, particularly if they can bridge the gap between knowledge and practice by developing closer relations with the CMC on the one hand, and with the PLA lower level operational departments and units on the other.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Compared to the period of the Cultural Revolution, the CMC has fewer members, is more streamlined, more homogeneous (as it is dominated by uniformed members), and less contentious (as bureaucratic norms and mechanisms replace ideology-based personal attacks in policy negotiations). It is also better insulated from civilian institutions and lower level PLA departments and units. This new period should translate into a higher level of effectiveness in both policy-making and coordination. On the other hand, there are still major internal and external issues that need to be addressed if the CMC intends to become a more effective policy-making and coordination institution.

Internally, restoring bureaucratic hierarchy, norms and mechanisms have certainly enhanced the institutional stability of the CMC, which should translate into a higher level of policy effectiveness. The new official emphasis on stability and consensus may also provide the incentive for bandwagoning behavior on the part of the members and lower level organizations. An unintended effect of such an emphasis, however, may be discouraging and even stifling innovative and creative policy ideas, which can be seen as being too disruptive. This in the long run may cause institutional stagnation and contribute to mediocrity. The lack of critical voices may also contribute to power abuses. Both may negatively affect the credibility and legitimacy of the CMC, and therefore its policy effectiveness. Also, the sharp contrast between the hyper-stability of the CMC on the one hand, and the constant reshuffling of lower level leaders, departments and units due to years of streamlining and reorganization on the other, and the dominance of the "top-down" approach, may contribute to a sense of insecurity and alienation at lower levels. This sense of insecurity and alienation, if not mitigated well, could translate into passive and tacit obstruction against policy programs handed down from above, thus diminishing policy effectiveness, particularly in policy implementation and coordination.

The relationship between the CMC and lower level organizations is somewhat related to the issue of service representation in the CMC. The current configuration where a CMC presides over the four PLA general departments that serve as the CMC's working arms, is replicated in all levels of the PLA headquarters. Such a configuration is a product of Leninist centralism, since it is a pyramid structure where the top (CMC) exercises control of lower levels through managing strategic factors such as operations, personnel policy, arms and technology, and finance and logistics (the four functional areas matching the four general departments, which penetrate into all services and extend to the lowest level of the PLA). The conventional wisdom that China's CMC resembles the US Joint Chiefs of Staff may be flawed. This is because while the former is a centrally enhance the leverage of the PLA leadership in bargaining with the CCP leadership for resources, and doctrine dominance would reinforce the hands of the CMC in dealing with lower levels.
managed Leninist institution rather than a representation of services, the latter is seemingly a services representation institution designed to mediate and coordinate the sometimes competing and even conflicting interests of various services, the outcome of a more pluralistic context where each service has enjoyed a high level of autonomy and developed strong service identity. Such a difference probably explains why PLA thinkers seem to encounter tremendous difficulties in figuring out how to transform the CMC into a services representation institution, particularly if such transformation implies a new configuration where the heads of the four general departments (who constitute the majority of the current CMC membership) would be replaced by the chiefs of the four major services (ground, naval, air, and strategic rocket forces) in the CMC, and this new configuration would be replicated by all levels of the PLA headquarters: a revolutionary and therefore almost impossible task. On the other hand, as the PLA’s technology-intensive services become more developed and the concept of joint service operations is increasingly seen as necessary to enhance combat effectiveness, allowing for service representation at the PLA’s central policy council also becomes more indispensable in order to achieve better policy and coordination. It is still not clear how the PLA would resolve the contradiction between an old Leninist style institution where service representation is nonexistent, and the need for more versatile forms to accommodate more diversified, technology-driven changes.

Finally, while the collective, committee decision making style of the CMC has certain merits such as lowering chances of arbitrary and hasty decisions, the drawbacks are also apparent. One is that the possible time-consuming process to build consensus (or unify thought) within the CMC may impede fast reaction to crises, leading to loss of “windows of opportunities” for maximizing benefits and reducing cost. Such a drawback becomes particularly glaring at a time when the PLA is supposed to react to local contingencies fast enough to achieve “quick resolution” in the PLA’s favor, as required by the new doctrine of “local war under high-tech conditions.” PLA thinkers may argue that during a crisis, commanding officers can make discretionary decisions; and that a separate crises or wartime command structure can be simulated and practiced to prepare for possible contingencies. But these ad hoc mechanisms still raise contentious issues such as what constitute crises that warrant discretion; and how to make the transition from peacetime collective decision making to a wartime type of command. The possible coexistence of three types of decision mechanisms (a Party committee headed by a first secretary and secretaries; an administrative chain of command headed by a commander and a commissar; and a separate wartime command) may also inflate bureaucracy and complicate policy processes further, making it more difficult to make timely decisions, thus reducing policy effectiveness. Moreover, a Party committee coexisting with an administrative chain of command may lead to debate over what constitutes “major” policy issues to be decided by the Party committee, and what are the “administrative” issues to be resolved by commanding officers. Also, the requirement of an individual commanding officer to fulfill decisions made by the Party committee raises thorny questions on who should be held accountable for these decisions (the committee or the individual), particularly if the policy fails. Until the PLA finds answers to these issues and questions, the policy effectiveness of the CMC will remain much less than optimal.

Regarding external relationships, the central issue is how to separate the CMC from the CCP Central and integrate it into the government institutions of the State
Council and the NPC, so that executive control of the military and legislative oversight over military affairs can be established. The close ties of the CMC with the CCP Central and the lack of such ties with the State Council and the NPC have several shortcomings. One is that since the CMC is accountable to the CCP Politburo and its Central Committee who do not meet regularly to deal with daily affairs, the lack of routine executive supervision of the PLA (due to lack of the jurisdiction of the State Council premier over the PLA institutions) may contribute to frequent policy disputes between the State Council ministries and the PLA general departments. It is still not clear how well the newly established State Council-CMC coordination conferences and the State National Defense Mobilization Commission mitigate such disputes. It seems however that these institutions are designed mainly for the PLA to commandeer civilian manpower, technology and equipment, infrastructure, and properties for military operations, rather than to negotiate the costs of using civilian resources or for the State Council to restrain the PLA from unrestricted access to these resources. It is therefore necessary to establish a genuine MND within the State Council, largely because this would achieve true executive control of the military and more effective civil-military policy coordination. A real MND would also absorb a large number of political-military and administrative functions currently fulfilled by the PLA general departments. The absorption by the MND of some general departments would contribute to true downsizing of the PLA bureaucracy from top to bottom. This would make it easier to develop a more streamlined PLA command structure, and make it more likely to transform the CMC into a service representation institution.

Secondly, with economic decentralization, privatization and development, a substantial middle class is emerging in China. They pay taxes and want to know how the government, for instance, is spending tax money on national defense. The current secrecy of the defense budget stems mainly from weak legislative oversight and the virtual monopoly of this process by the CMC and the CCP Central. It is therefore necessary to establish a genuine MND, which is accountable to the NPC and the State Council in defense budget, personnel policy and other defense-related issues, but not to the CCP Central. Regular and careful legislative oversight over defense spending details (but not just general principles and figures) would increase the transparency of the budgetary processes and reduce the chances of abuse and corruption, thus enhancing both the credibility and legitimacy of the government and the military, as well as policy effectiveness.

Finally, if China eventually moves toward true political reforms, such as introducing multiparty competition for political offices, the current close ties between the CMC and the CCP Central may make it more difficult to transform the PLA into a politically neutral, nonpartisan institution devoted mainly to functional and technical expertise of the military profession. In the initial stage of democratization, for instance, the hard-line faction of the PLA leadership may feel so insecure about the future that it may mobilize its loyalists at lower levels and outside of the PLA to launch a coup to defend one-party monopoly (as had happened in the Soviet Union during a similar transition) or to impose direct military rule, or it can fight the liberal military faction and their civilian allies, thus throwing China into civil war. By gradually separating the CMC from the CCP Central and integrating it into the NPC and the State Council framework, however, the odds of such conflicts would be greatly reduced once China begins to
democratize.\textsuperscript{198} Such a separation also allows for the withdrawal of the CCP from the government and military policy arena, and enables it to become a normal political party that competes for political offices with one or more others through genuine elections.

\textbf{Table 2.9  Major CMC Enlarged Conferences, 1954-75}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Agendas</th>
<th>Resolutions Approved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Geographical division of military regions (MR)</td>
<td>Plan on MR Division</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c) Military training and officers’ education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January, 1957</td>
<td>a) Streamlining and reorganization (reports delivered by Peng Dehuai and Huang Kecheng)</td>
<td>“Resolution on Reducing Quantity and Improving Quality in the PLA”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Relationship between civilian economic development and national defense construction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August – September, 1959</td>
<td>a) Criticizing Peng Dehuai and Huang Kecheng’s “anti-Party crimes” and “bourgeois military line” following criticism of the “Peng-Huang Right opportunism” at the 8th Plenum of CCP 8th Congress. **</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) National defense construction</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>c) The “Three Eight Work Style” (“\textit{sannba zhuofeng}”) proposed by Lin Biao.***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960, September -</td>
<td>a) Strengthening political and ideological work</td>
<td>“Resolution on Strengthening Political and</td>
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</table>

\textsuperscript{198} Such a separation should be accompanied by removing the CCP role from the legislature and the executive branch of the government as well, and terminating partisan activities in the military, thus leveling the ground for the new multiparty competition.
| October |
|----------|----------------|
| b) Criticizing mistakes of Tan Zheng.** |
| Ideological work of the PLA" |
| “Resolution on Mistakes of Comrade Tan Zheng” |

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<tr>
<th>June - July, 1961</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Organization and equipment of war duty units</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) The PLA’s operational plan</td>
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<td>c) Problems in unit management and education, and in military training</td>
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<tr>
<td>d) Streamlining through reducing the bureaucracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>e) Reducing military expenditure and the scope of defense industry to focus on key projects and to assist civilian economic construction.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>June – July, 1975</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Streamlining and reorganization, and placement of surplus officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Deng Xiaoping’s speech alleging that PLA leadership is “soft, lazy, and disorganized” and units “bloated, undisciplined, spoiled, extravagant and lazy,” and that it is necessary to focus on “organization, arms, and training” to rectify these problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>c) Ye Jianying’s speech warning against “interference in military affairs through conspiracy by ambitious persons (implying “Gang of Four”)”</td>
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*Adapted from Liao, A History, pp. 317-318.

**Both criticisms led to the removal of Peng from CMC, and Huang Kecheng and Tan Zheng from CMC and their jobs as PLA chief of staff and GDP director; and removal of many alleged to be members of their “anti-Party cliques.”

***“Three” refers to three adages such as “resolute and correct political direction, hard work and plain living working style, and flexible strategy and tactics.” “Eight” refers to eight characters, the translation of which mean “unity, intensity, solemnity, and liveliness.” One “crime” that led to Tan Zheng’s removal from his GDP director position in the following months is Tan’s alleged comment that PLA style is too rich to be defined by just several adages and characters, and his joke that “three eight” may be misunderstood as the International Women’s Day (March 8 can also be pronounced sanba in Chinese).
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<tr>
<th>Critical Years</th>
<th>Agendas</th>
<th>Resolutions Approved</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| December, 1977 | a) Rectifying policy of 1975 CMC conference and summarizing experience on criticizing “gang of four”
b) Principles and missions for strengthening army construction and war preparation | “Resolution on Strengthening Military Education and Training PLA Regulations on Keeping State Secrets”
“Resolution on Managing Military Schools Well,”
“Plan on Adjusting Military System of Organizations”
“Resolution on Accelerating Arms and Equipment Modernization” |
| March, 1980    | a) Deng's speech on “reducing bloating,” reorganization, approved training, and political work 
b) Xu Xiangqian’s speech on personnel quotas and placement of discharged officers due to downsizing | “Resolution on Question of Military Service”
Resolution on Strengthening Management of Military Factories, Horse Farms and Sideline Production”
“CMC Plan on Army Streamlining and Reorganization” (approved by a CMC Standing Committee meeting in July) |
<p>| 1985, May - June | a) Strategic transition from preparing for “early, total, nuclear war” to peacetime army building, with emphasis on reducing quantity, enhancing quality, on developing better arms and improving quality of personnel, and on more rational organization that optimally combines arms and men to |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
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<tr>
<td>December (enlarged to group army level commanding officers, 1986)</td>
<td>a) Political work in the new period</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b) Arranging military, logistics, and national defense scientific research work</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Drafting documents on cadre work, military training, and management and education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November (enlarged to responsible persons of general departments, services, MRs, and PAP, 1989)</td>
<td>a) Continuation of Deng Xiaoping’s theory, guidelines and principles after his resignation from CMC chair position</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>b) Arranging military work for 1990</td>
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* Adapted from Liao, A History, pp. 319-321.
3. THE PINNACLE OF THE PYRAMID: THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION

By David Shambaugh

The real "nerve center" of the Chinese military system is clearly the Central Military Commission (CMC or Zhongyang Junwei). It is the principal deliberative and decision-making body for all major military and strategic decisions that involve the PLA. Command authority and the complete decision making power to deploy China's armed forces resides with the CMC—although one authoritative and neibuf PLA source states that, "Practically speaking (shiji shang) major questions concerning war, armed force, and national defense building are decided by the Central Committee Politburo. Therefore, in reality, the highest-level decision-making authority is the Central Committee Politburo (Zhongyang Zhengzhi Ju)." In addition making ultimate decisions concerning the deployment of troops, the CMC also has direct control over the Second Artillery (missile forces) and the two principle educational institutions of the PLA, the National Defense University (NDU) and Academy of Military Sciences (AMS). As specified in the 1997 National Defense Law, the CMC also has ostensible command authority over the paramilitary People's Armed Police (PAP), presumably via the General Staff Department, although the CMC's command authority is shared with the Ministry of Public Security of the State Council (the PAP also has some fiscal ties to the Ministry of State Security). The most important command line of authority runs from the CMC to the Four General Headquarters and, in turn, to each of the service branches and military regions. The CMC itself has other subordinate organs, as depicted below:

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202 For the text of the NDL and and exposition of its contents see Xu Jiangrui and Fang Ning, eds., Guofangfa gailun, Beijing: Junshi kexue chubanshe, 1998.
Figure 3.1 Central Military Commission

Central Military Commission

State Council
- State National Defence Mobilization Commission
- Military Products Trade Bureau
- Political Office
- Research Office
- General Office
  - Central Military Commission (CCP)
  - Central Military Commission (State)
  - PLA Security Commission
  - Communications and War Readiness Office
  - Legal Affairs Bureau
  - Auditing and Finance Department
  - Central Discipline Inspection Commission Office
  - General Staff Department
    - Military Regions
    - Military Districts
  - General Logistics Department
  - General Political Department
  - General Armaments Department
  - PLA Second Artillery
  - PLA Ground Forces
  - People's Armed Police
  - PLA Air Force
  - PLA Navy
  - People's Armed Forces Committee
  - People's Militia

National Defense University
- Academy of Military Sciences
- National Defense Science & Technology University

Sources: Directory of PRC Military Personalities, various years; Academy of Military Sciences (ed.), Shifte Junshi Nianjian, various years; Yao Yunchi et al (eds.), Junshi Zuzhi Tizhi Yanjiu; interviews.
HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE CMC

The CMC of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has a lengthy history dating to October 1925. It was reorganized numerous times during the Civil War and Anti-Japanese War, but held the name Zhongyang Junshi Weiyuanhui (CMC) and the administrative level of a Central Committee commission (which rank higher than Central Committee departments such as the Organization, Propaganda, United Front Work, and Investigation Departments) since March 1930. In September 1949, the armed forces were reorganized and centralized into the People’s Liberation Army and the People’s Public Security Forces (Renmin Gong’an Budui) and a Central People’s Government Revolutionary Military Affairs Commission (Zhongyang Zhengfu Geming Junshi Weiyuanhui) was established. After the PRC was proclaimed on October 1st, a CMC was created inside the Party (dang nei). In September 1954, at the First Session of the First National People’s Congress, a new Constitution was promulgated and a new National Defense Commission (Guofang Weiyuanhui) was created under the Central Government, but it is described as having been intended “as a consultative (zixunxing) body, not as a leadership organ over the armed forces.” At the same time, the Central Committee decided to create a new Central Military Commission under the CCP, which would have complete leadership (quan lingdao) over the PLA and other armed forces, and a new Ministry of National Defense under the State Council. This dual arrangement of having state and Party military commissions existed on paper until January 1975 when the Fourth Session of the NPC decided to formally abolish the post of President of the PRC and the National Defense Commission—although, in fact, both had ceased to function after the Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966. President Liu Shaoqi, Chairman of the National Defense Commission, was purged and died in a solitary cell in a Kaifeng prison in 1969.

Like almost all central-level organs during the Cultural Revolution, the CMC’s membership and responsibilities were disrupted. However, it did not cease to function. It continued to meet on several occasions, and when it met the CMC generally sought to insulate the military from the Red Guards and the political radicalism rampant at the time. For example, the CMC convened a prolonged

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204 Ibid.
205 Ibid.
expanded session at the Jingxi Hotel in February 1967. This meeting produced an “Eight Point Circular” (known as the Ba Tiao) aimed at strengthening command and control over geographic military units, protecting weapons stocks from raiding by Red Guards, protecting secret documents and archives, and regularizing the PLA’s training regimen.

Throughout this period, major military decisions were made in ad hoc meetings of Chairman Mao, Defense Minister Lin Biao (prior to his death in September 1971), and several senior PLA Marshals who had the lucky fortune of not having been purged (notably Ye Jianying, Xu Xiangqian, and Chen Yi). Mao relied heavily on these elder marshals during this time, particularly as tensions with the Soviet Union mounted. In fact, it was the triumvirate of Chen Yi, Ye Jianying, and Xu Xiangqian that the Chairman that the Chairman tasked to undertake an assessment of China’s national security environment in the aftermath of the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The marshals allegedly convinced Mao that the situation was extremely threatening, that war with Moscow was imminent (and would likely include nuclear conflict), and that China needed a dramatic opening to the United States to offset the Soviet threat. This was in the summer of 1968. It took three years of discrete signaling by Mao and the Chinese side before Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon took their own initiative in September 1971 to reach out to the Chinese leadership.

While the CMC was moribund during these years, the six subordinate units of the CMC all continued to function to varying degrees, and in effect substituted for the CMC by running the PLA. This was certainly the case with the General Staff Department, which continued to operate thirteen departments and direct forces in the field. Its General Office was merged with the General Office of the CMC. However, the General Political Department was in a state of political chaos and underwent a sweeping purge (see below)—while the General Logistics Department, National Defense Science and Technology Commission, and National Defense Industries Office maintained a modicum of production and research (see chapter

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207 Academy of Military Sciences History Department, ed., Zhongguo Renmin jiefangjun de qishinian, op cit, p. 556.
210 Interview with Chen Yi’s son, Chen Xiaolu, March 1990. This account has been subsequently confirmed by Chinese historians.
212 Ibid, p. 353.
The Academy of Military Sciences, however, was severely disrupted and essentially ceased to function (*tingzhi*). After the worst of the Cultural Revolution chaos, and the opening to the United States (which partially offset the immediacy of the Soviet threat), Deng Xiaoping and the marshals set about rebuilding the PLA in 1974-75. One of the first steps was to reconstitute the CMC. This was particularly needed after the death of Lin Biao, following an alleged *coup d'état* attempt, and the purge of his followers in the upper echelons of the PLA. The CMC was gutted and radically reduced in size (see below). It took several years to weed out the "Lin Biao Counter-Revolutionary Clique" in the CMC, General Headquarters, and services (especially the Air Force and Navy), but once it was done the new CMC met in February 1975. Ye Jianying and Deng Xiaoping were put in charge of overseeing the daily work of the CMC. The revamped CMC convened a major expanded work conference from June 24-July 15, 1975 that took a series of decisions on the restructuring of the PLA and concerning China's international security environment. Even when Deng was purged again in 1976, the revamped CMC continued to function on the leadership of Marshal Ye Jianying.

When Deng returned to the stage in 1977, he gradually worked to regain control over the military. By 1982 he had usurped Hua Guofeng's role as Chairman of the CMC and re-installed himself as Chief of Staff. A state CMC was reestablished at the Fifth Session of the Fifth NPC in December 1982, and it was enshrined in a new national Constitution (a revised parallel CCP Constitution reaffirmed the Party CMC). The restoration of a separate CMC under the Government was seen as an important manifestation of the new policy of "separating party from government" (*dang zheng fenkai*), as advocated by reformist Premier Zhao Ziyang and CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang. Certainly Deng Xiaoping supported the initiative. After Zhao was purged in 1989 he was criticized for having tried to usurp Party authority over the military by (re)creating a state CMC, but in fact the move proved purely cosmetic—as the state CMC existed only on paper. The membership was identical, the state CMC never met separately, and it had no separate powers other than ostensibly being responsible to the President of the republic and the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. The two

214 Academy of Military Sciences History Department, eds., Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun de qishinian, op cit, p. 560.
215 For a description of this process, see ibid, pp. 564-568.
216 Ibid, p. 569.
218 Academy of Military Sciences History Research Department, Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun de qishinian, op cit, p. 622.
bodies were the same—described by Chinese as “one overlapping body and one organization” (yitao banzi, yige jigou) or “two signs, one organization” (liangge paizi, tong yige jigou)—and the Party CMC is the one with real power and authority. Other Chinese sources claim that the existence of two CMCs is no contradiction (liang zhe bing bu maodun), and is meant to illustrate that the “Party and state have united leadership and organizational assurance towards national military power,” and that “the Party and Government are not separated, but that the Party leads the Government.”

But it is clear that the state CMC is a hollow body with no autonomous power. In terms of command authority the PLA remains a party-army, although in other realms there is evidence of movement towards more autonomous and corporate roles for the PLA. The PLA remains far from becoming a “national military” or “state military” (guojia jundui), but there nonetheless has been distinct movement in the direction of limited military autonomy from the Communist Party.

While membership in the two CMCs today is identical, the process of selecting members has changed in recent years as part of the process of regularizing and standardizing PLA procedures. In earlier years, the CMC was a large organ that included a wide variety of senior military commanders and leaders. As such it has fluctuated greatly in size and composition. From 1949-54 it had no fewer than 28 members, shrinking slightly to 22 members between 1954 and 1966, before ballooning to 52 members during the 1969-1977 period, and 64 during the 1977-1982 period.

To be sure, during much of this time an “inner cabinet” of the CMC existed which included Mao and perhaps a half dozen senior military leaders and who met and made key decisions—although it was by no means unknown for Mao to convene a full or expanded (kuoda) CMC meeting when warranted. After 1982 and Deng Xiaoping’s regaining of authority over the PLA, the CMC shrunk considerably in size and instituted an ex officio system of membership. Under the new system, the heads of the (then) three General Departments and the Minister of...

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220 This phenomenon is discussed at much greater length in my Modernizing China’s Military, op cit, chapter 2.


222 For a detailed listing of these expanded CMC meetings see Hou Shudong, et al, eds., Guofang jiaoyu da cidian, Beijing: Junshi kexue chubanshe, 1992, pp. 96-97.
Defense would automatically serve on the CMC. In addition, there would be a Chairman (Deng), several vice-Chairmen (usually three but unspecified), and a Secretary-General. After 1992 and the purge of Yang Baibing, the position of Secretary-General was eliminated. Since 1989 the President of the PRC, Jiang Zemin, has served simultaneously as Chairman of the CMC, although this is not stipulated by the Constitution or other regulation. Jiang’s simultaneously dual positions as Party leader and state president blurs the distinction as well as providing some validity to concept of having two separate military commissions. In 1999, after several attempts by Jiang to install him, the Vice-President of the PRC (Hu Jintao) was added as First Vice-Chairman (a position resurrected from the 1980s when Zhao Ziyang held it), becoming only the second civilian member of the CMC. Hu has no background in military matters whatsoever (neither does Jiang\textsuperscript{223}), and reportedly commands little respect from the military brass. The Premier of the State Council, Zhu Rongji, is not a member. In terms of actual power and decision authority the two senior vice-chairmen and serving officers—Zhang Wannian and Chi Haotian today—enjoy overall authority within the CMC. No doubt Jiang Zemin and certainly Hu Jintao, defer to the judgment of these men on most matters. It is not clear if Generals Zhang and Chi share a division of labor in terms of overseeing different elements of defense policy and the military establishment\textsuperscript{224} as was the case with their predecessors Generals Liu Huaqing and Zhang Zhen (Liu oversaw weapons production, defense industries, and military diplomacy, while Zhang was in charge of doctrine, training, deployments, and military education).\textsuperscript{225} The other members of the CMC constitute, in effect, an informal “executive committee” with functional responsibilities for their respective functional bailiwicks (not unlike the “leading small group” system in civilian policymaking).\textsuperscript{226} It remains permissible to include members of the CMC who command Military Regions or have other portfolios (such as Wang Ruilin, Guo Boxiong, and Xu Caihou today), but the day of enlarged and “packed” CMCs ended with the Maoist era.


\textsuperscript{224} One Hong Kong source asserts that Chi is merely responsible for military diplomacy in his capacity as Minister of Defense, while Zhang has authority over all military matters. “Beijing Holds Enlarged Meeting of Central Military Commission: Zhang Wannian Pursues New Ideas for Developing Weapons,” Guang Jiao Jing [Wide Angle], 16 December 1997, translated in BBC, Summary of World Broadcasts/Far East, 30 December 1997.

\textsuperscript{225} Interview with aide to General Liu Huaqing, June 1993.

The CMC usually convenes in full session about half a dozen times per year, always following a Party plenum or Congress, always in December to approve the proposed military budget for forwarding to the State Council, and whenever else it is warranted. These CMC meetings usually stretch out over several days, sometimes taking place in the Jingxi Guest House (a military hotel owned by the General Political Department in central Beijing), sometimes in the Zhongnanhai, or sometimes in the Great Hall of the People. Now that the Ministry of National Defense has built a palatial new office compound on West Chang’an Boulevard, in which the CMC occupies the top floor, it is likely that CMC meetings will henceforth take place in this new building. It is unclear how the meetings are actually run, whether the members actually “vote” on agenda items or deliberate policy on the basis of consensus. Participants include CMC members, but others can be invited on a case-by-case basis (sometimes CMC meetings receive special briefings on specific situations, such as Taiwan). Usually, one or two “Decision” documents are promulgated after a full CMC meeting, but the content of these are likely prepared and agreed in advance. The agenda itself is likely shaped by subordinates in the CMC General Office. Contrary to numerous reports in the Hong Kong media, it is highly unlikely that CMC meetings consider “petitions” put forward by dissatisfied generals or become forums for table-pounding military bluster against Taiwan, the United States, Japan, or other would-be foes. PLA analyst Tai Ming Cheung also distinguishes several other types of CMC meetings (although these are not conformed by other sources):

- A weekly work conference (gongzuo hui) that meets every Thursday to discuss routine administrative and staffing matters. Presumably, this is attended by members of the General Office staff.
- Irregular “knocking-heads” meetings (peng-tou hui), for informal discussion of pressing issues, usually attended by CMC military members and other senior PLA officers.
- Discussion meetings (zuotan hui) last for several days, often after a Party plenum, for detailed discussion of major defense and national security issues.
- Plenary meetings (quanti hui), usually at the end of every calendar year to assess the past year’s work, finalize the next year’s budget and Annual Plan.
- Enlarged meetings (kuoda hui) convened on special occasions and included several hundred military leaders.

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What are the duties and functions of the CMC? According to published Chinese sources,²²⁸ the CMC:

- Establishes unified command over the nation’s armed forces;
- Decides military strategy and the warfighting principles for the armed forces;
- Leads and manages PLA building, formulates regulations, plans and organizes deployments;
- Implements resolutions of the National People’s Congress and its Standing Committee;
- Formulates military regulations according to the Constitution and law, and disseminates decisions and orders;
- Determines PLA structure and personnel, oversees the General Departments and Military Regions, and other organs under the Military Regions;
- Appoints and removes, cultivates, investigates, rewards and punishes armed forces personnel according to military law and regulations;
- Oversees and approves the armed forces’ weapons equipment system and weapons equipment development orders and development plan, and coordinates with the State Council leads and manages national defense science and technology research and production; and
- Jointly organize and manage with the State Council the military budget and national defense investment.

The CMC exercises administrative control and oversight over the Four General Headquarters (General Staff, Logistics, Political, and Equipment Departments). This is ostensibly done via the membership on the CMC of each department director, but apparently there are representatives of each serving in the General Office of the CMC who serve as liaison. The CMC also exercises direct command authority over the seven Military Regions and services, although in practice this is done via the General Staff Department (particularly to the ground forces). The CMC also has administrative responsibility for the armed forces’ two principal institutions of professional military education (PME), the National Defense University and Academy of Military Sciences (the organization of these is described below and in Figures 4:15 and 4:16). Importantly, according to an internal Chinese military source, the Second Artillery (strategic and tactical rocket forces) is “under the CMC’s direct leadership, exercising vertical command” (*Ji Er Pao Bing zai Zhongyang Jun Wei zhidie liangdao xia, shixing chuizi zhidui*).²²⁹

The CMC also has command authority over the unit that offers personal security protection to all Central Committee members and leading military officials—the Central Security Bureau (*Zhongyang Bao’an Ju*), which is more commonly known as

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²²⁸ Pu Xingzu, Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhengzhi zhidu, op cit, p. 560.
the Central Guards Bureau (*Zhongyang Jingwei Ju*). For many years this elite guard regiment was known simply by a four-digit designator: 8341. The number had no meaningful military nomenclature, but rather came from the serial number on a rifle that Mao Zedong had purchased during the 1927 Autumn Harvest Uprising. Mao kept the rifle throughout the Long March and in the Yan'an base area. He was very proud of it, enjoyed cleaning it, and accordingly decided to name his personal guard detachment in Yan'an by the number—and henceforth the 8341 Regiment assumed a lore of its own. While the CMC has direct command over this unit and the CMC General Office oversees it on a daily basis, the Beijing Military District garrison of the Beijing Military Region and the Security Bureau of the PLA General Staff Department apparently share some command authority and provide funds, equipment, training, and barracks for the elite guards. It is apparent, though, that the General Staff maintains a separate guard unit solely for top military leaders, while the Central Guards Bureau protects civilian leaders. The Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of State Security, and People's Armed Police also maintain their own elite guard units, but it is unclear how their jurisdiction is distinguished from the Central Guards (probably for local and visiting overseas officials). Each senior leader receives two types of security protection—a set of one to six bodyguards who are responsible for personal security as well as various daily logistical matters (arranging meals, medical care, clothing, transport, and other personal needs) and a larger military/security detachment, ranging in size from a squad (*ban*) to a company (*tuan*) to secure an area during a leader's visit.

The internal organization of the CMC is not entirely clear—and is, in fact, a state secret. It is known however, that the CMC contains at least five key organs. If the CMC is the "nerve center" of the PLA, then the CMC's General Office is the

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231 No author, "Shuo bu wan dao bu pu de shenmi fuhao: '8341' cong qiyong dao xiaooshi zhimi" [The Endless Story of the Mysterious Symbol: '8341' and the Mystery From its Inception to its Disappearance], *Huaxia*, No. 70 (June 1997), pp. 31-35; and "Zhongnanhai de di yizhi jingwei budui," ibid, pp. 12-17.

232 Interview with former Chinese military intelligence official, 5 August 2000.

233 Ibid and Wei Li, *The Security Service for Chinese Central Leaders*, op cit. The aforementioned interview source described the General Staff's command as yewu zhidao (professional guidance) instead of lingdao guanxi (leadership relations).

234 This includes massages and sexual favors. Chairman Mao, Ye Jianying, and other senior leaders were known to have used the guard units to procure modern-day concubines, "nurses," etc. See, in particular, Li Zhisui (with the assistance of Anne Thurston), *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, New York: Random House, 1994.

nerve center of the nerve center. The General Office (Zhong Ban) processes all CMC communications and documents, coordinates meetings, and conveys orders and directives to other subordinate organs. It was formerly housed in the Sanzuomen complex just north of Beihai Park in central Beijing, and within a short distance of the Zhongnanhai leadership compound (and is reportedly connected via underground tunnel), although it moved along with the CMC to the top floor of the new palatial Ministry of Defense compound in western Beijing when it opened in 2000. The General Office is known to have a Director (Lieutenant General Tan Yuexin since January 2000\(^{236}\)) and a number of Deputy Directors, most of who serve as the personal secretaries (mishu) to CMC members (Jiang Zemin has a separate military mishu, for many years this was Major General Jia Ting’an\(^{237}\). According to one source, the General Office has a total staff of between 200 and 300 members.\(^{238}\) The General Office also has a subordinate Political Office (Zheng Ban), Research Office (Ke Yan Ban), and Foreign Affairs Office (Wai Ban)—which is, in fact, identical to that of the Ministry of Defense.\(^{239}\) In past years, particularly in the late-1980s when General Li Jiun was Director, the General Office was a source of innovative ideas and reform initiatives—although it seemed to revert to a more bureaucratic role in the 1990s.

The CMC also has at least five separate first-level departments (yi ji bu), although they do not all bear the administrative title of “department.” These are all depicted in Figure 3.1 above. The Communications War and Readiness Office is the central command and control organ for disseminating orders and commanding forces in both peacetime and wartime. This Office thus liaises directly with the General Staff Department, Military Region commands, and but not the Second Artillery (which is under direct CMC control). It is probably into this Office where early warning, air defense, and other critical signals intelligence is channelled from the

\(^{236}\) Institute of Asian Affairs (Hamburg, Germany), China Monthly Data, April 2001, p. 12.

\(^{237}\) Jia Ting’an has served as Jiang’s mishu for more than twenty years since Jiang was Minister of Electronics. He became his chief military secretary in the early 1990s and subsequently became director of the Jiang Zemin Office (Jiang Ban). He is thought to often represent Jiang at CMC meetings. In the summer 2000, however, Jia was reported to have been removed from his position and come under investigation for an alleged connection to the nation’s largest smuggling and official corruption case, in which a Xiamen-based company (Yuanhua) with close ties to senior central-level leaders smuggled autos and a variety of other products worth nearly $10 billion in Fujian. See BBC Monitoring, “Hong Kong Source Reports Removal of Jiang Zemin Aide Suspected of Corruption,” 14 August 2000.

\(^{238}\) Tai Ming Cheung, “The Influence of the Gun,” op cit.

\(^{239}\) Personnel in the Wai Ban have name cards that list both organs.
PLA's growing number of transmitters and sensors. It is also known that the PLA is embarked on a comprehensive upgrading of its communications systems for command and control. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, the PLA now possesses a completely automated command and control system, and is developing a new type of Integrated Battlefield Area Communications System (IBACS) that includes speech signal processing and broadband integrated services digital networks (B-ISDN).

The CMC also has a Legal Affairs Bureau (responsible for drafting military laws and regulations, and possessing sharing oversight of the military judicial system with the General Political Department), an Auditing and Finance Department (responsible for formulating the defense budget and liaising with the Ministry of Finance and State Council, as well as the General Logistics Department financial system), a Military Products Trade Bureau (set up in 1989 to oversee both the import and export of weapons and other military equipment), and a Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC) office. The CDIC is a subsystem of the Communist Party within the military, which has the principal function of monitoring the performance of Party members and policing them for malfeasance, corruption, and other breaches of Party discipline and regulations. Since the CDIC was established within Party Committees (dangwei) in the PLA in September 1978 on the order of the CMC, it has been jointly administered by the CDIC of the Central Committee and the CMC. During the time that General Yang Baibing served as Secretary-General of the CMC (1987-92), the CDIC committees reported directly to him, but subsequently a separate CDIC office was established in the CMC.

The CMC also has responsibility for the People's Armed Committees (Zhongyang Junwei Renmin Wuzhuang Weiyuanhui), and jointly administers (with the State Council) the State National Defense Mobilization Commission (Gujiu Guofang Dangyuan Weiyuanhui). The People's Armed Committees (PAC) exists within Party Committees at the levels of province, autonomous regions, centrally-administered cities, prefecture, county, and township levels is described as the "a specialized organ

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240 For a list of these command and control facilities see: www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/facility/c3i.html.


for the masses' armed construction."\textsuperscript{243} Its duty is to disseminate national defense information and CMC directives to the civilian population, and to "resolve any problems concerning the militia" (see section on People's Armed Police for discussion of militia).\textsuperscript{244} They apparently also have some responsibility for PLA recruiting. The PACs are supposed to liaise closely with Military Region and District commands, and were formally "aligned with" (\textit{xu lié}) the PLA by CMC order on April 1, 1996.\textsuperscript{245} Thereafter PAC officers began wearing PLA uniforms, whereas previously their uniforms were similar but distinct.\textsuperscript{246} The PACs have existed since at least the Great Leap Forward and became important for providing local security during the Cultural Revolution.\textsuperscript{247} The State National Defense Mobilization Commission (SNDMC) has other responsibilities for civil defense. It is under the "joint leadership" (\textit{shuangzhòng lǐngdào}) of the CMC and State Council, although it is not clear precisely at what levels of government it exists (presumably it parallels the PACs). The SNDMC itself is described as having at least four constituent offices: State People's Armed Mobilization Office (\textit{Guójìa Renmín Wuzhuang Dōngyuán Bāngōngshì}), State Economic Mobilization Office (\textit{Guójìa Jīngjì Dōngyuán Bāngōngshì}), State People's Anti-Air [Defense] Office (\textit{Guójìa Renmín Fānkōng Bāngōngshì}), State Transportation War Preparedness Office (\textit{Guójìa Jiàotōng Zhànbei Bāngōngshì}).\textsuperscript{248} Both of these organs are no doubt remnants of the period in the 1960s-70s when China anticipated war with the former Soviet Union, and would only become active in time of war and invasion.

Clearly, however, the most important set of command relationships for the CMC are those to the Four General Headquarters (Departments) of the PLA. These organs are not only the principal conduits through which the CMC commands the services and military regions, but they are large and powerful organizations in their own right. They are dealt with in other contributions to this volume, and hence I will not detail them here.\textsuperscript{249}

\textsuperscript{244} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{245} Pu Xingzu, \textit{Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhengzhi zhidu}, op cit, p. 566.
\textsuperscript{246} I am indebted to Dennis Blasko for this observation.
\textsuperscript{247} See Harlan Jencks, \textit{From Muskets to Missiles}, op cit, especially pp. 167-68.
\textsuperscript{249} Also see vmy \textit{Modernizing China's Military}, op cit, chapter 4.
THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

As of 2001, the Central Military Commission today is chaired by CCP General Secretary and President Jiang Zemin and is composed of three Vice Chairmen (Hu Jintao, Zhang Wannian and Chi Haotian), and seven regular members (Fu Quanyou, Yu Yongbo, Wang Ke, Wang Ruilin, Cao Gangchuan, Guo Boxiong, Xu Caihou).

Table 3.1  Central Military Commission Members (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Date of Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiang Zemin</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>November 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hu Jintao</td>
<td>Vice-Chairman</td>
<td>September 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi Haotian</td>
<td>Vice-Chairman</td>
<td>September 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhang Wannian</td>
<td>Vice-Chairman</td>
<td>September 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cao Gangchuan</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>November 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fu Quanyou</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>October 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guo Boxiong</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>September 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Ke</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>September 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Ruilin</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>September 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xu Caihou</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>September 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu Yongbo</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>October 1992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jiang Zemin is by far the most important civilian playing an active role in the civil-military arena. Indeed, notwithstanding vice-president and Politburo Standing Committee member Hu Jintao, one is hard-pressed to identify any other party or government elites who have any influence or contact with the PLA High Command. Nor should Hu Jintao’s influence be exaggerated. He has no personal military experience, but did serve as the first party secretary of the Tibet and Guizhou military districts during his service there (1985-88). Hu’s elevation to the CMC at the Fourth Plenum of the Fifteenth Central Committee in September 1999 was a

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transparent move by Jiang Zemin's to continue the grooming of his chosen successor by giving him some military responsibility and exposure.

Jiang was not unlike Hu Jintao when he was suddenly appointed to become chairman of the CMC in November 1989. Upon his appointment Jiang reportedly confessed:

At the Fourth Plenum I said I am not worthy of being elevated to [the position] of General Secretary, I do not have the ideological preparation. This decision to promote me to Central Military Commission Chairman, has also left me without proper ideological preparation. I have not undertaken work in military affairs, I have no experience in this regard, I deeply feel the responsibility, but my ability is insufficient (li de congxin). The Party has placed a big responsibility on me. I will certainly assiduously study military affairs, will quickly strive to become familiar with the situation in the military, and will diligently and quickly carry out the duties [of the position].

Despite his understandable uncertainty, over the course of the last decade Jiang Zemin has done a remarkably good job of cultivating a base of support in the PLA. He has certainly done a better job of winning military support than either of his predecessors Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang (both of whom drew lukewarm support or opposition from the PLA High Command). Of course, one will not know the ultimate success of Jiang's efforts until he is tested in a crisis—although he weathered the 1995-96 Taiwan crisis, oversaw the removal of the Yangs and a wholesale turnover of the High Command, and felt confident enough to order the armed forces to divest themselves of their commercial holdings in 1998. As such, it appears that Jiang's position as commander-in-chief of China's armed forces is quite secure.

In cultivating a base of support in the PLA, Jiang has been careful, persistent, and methodical in his strategy and tactics. He has certainly been attentive since the beginning of his tenure in office—frequently visiting bases and units, cultivating relationships with various high-ranking officers, and staking out palatable positions on issues of key concern to the PLA. His has been a building-block strategy—establishing bases of support among different institutional sub-constituencies in the military, but always being mindful of cultivating relations with key allies in the Central Military Commission, central departments, and regional commands. He has hitched his horse to certain individuals, but he has not been afraid to switch positions and abandon some when it was expedient. He has astutely sensed sentiments in the armed forces and adapted his speeches and activities accordingly—a characteristic

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that previously earned Jiang the nickname "the weathervane" of the "wind faction" (feng pai). Jiang's strategy has included several key elements:

- personnel changes;
- supporting military modernization and professionalism;
- being receptive to military sentiments in foreign and domestic policy matters.

After disposing of the Yangs, Jiang Zemin paid close attention to personnel policy in the armed forces. He has personally promoted more than fifty officers to the rank of full general. It is reported that, in the early 1990s, Jiang himself insisted on reviewing the files of any officer recommended for promotion down to the level of division commander. In personnel matters, Jiang has also had to rely heavily on the advice and influence of Generals Wang Ruilin, Yu Yongbo, and Zhang Wannian. Jiang's military secretary (mishu) on the CMC, Jia Ting'an, has also played an influential role as Deputy Director of the CMC General Office.

During his tenure as Chairman of the Central Military Commission a wholesale turnover of personnel has taken place in the CMC itself, in the three General Headquarters (General Staff, Logistics, and Political Departments), in Military Region and District commands, at the Group Army level, in elite military academies, and in the paramilitary People's Armed Police. Not since the aftermath of the Lin Biao Affair in the early 1970s or the housecleaning after the purge of the "small Gang of Four" in 1981-82, has the PLA experienced such widespread turnover of personnel. There is considerable evidence that Jiang Zemin has overseen and approved this process, and has been personally engaged in many of the specific removals and appointments. He has certainly benefited from the turnover, even if he cannot claim true personal "loyalty" from many of those promoted. Jiang has overseen the promotion of numerous officers he has met during his tours of the military regions, but otherwise there are only really two examples of promotions directly tied to Jiang: General Ba Zhongtan and his successor General You Xigui as head of the Central Guards Bureau. Thus, in one respect, Jiang has appreciated one of the cardinal tenets of being a Leninist leader—control of the nomenklatura—as control of personnel is central to political survival and power in a communist political system. It is also key to policy implementation, as one must be able to trust their subordinates to carry out dictates and implement policy.

Another key facet of Jiang's strategy vis-à-vis the PLA has been to reach out to various constituencies within the armed forces, trying to mobilize as broad a coalition of support as possible (which might be described as "pork barrel politics with Chinese characteristics"). In various ways and at various times, Jiang has played to and placated the political commissars (General Political Department), the military-industrial complex (General Logistics Department and five defense ministries), the

defense science and technology establishment (COSTIND and GAD), the nuclear forces (Second Artillery), military academics (NDU and AMS), People’s Armed Police, the General Staff Department, and all three services. Jiang has at various times supported all the key themes of importance: politicization of the military and loyalty to the Party; professionalization of the armed forces; modernization of equipment, doctrine, and research and development; and protection of state sovereignty and core national security interests. He has been a proponent of “army building,” a harsh critic of corruption and laxity, a supporter and then opponent of commercial activities in the PLA, and a proponent of increased military budgets and improved living standards. And throughout he has wrapped himself in the garb of Deng Xiaoping’s teachings on “army-building in new historical circumstances.”

Jiang has been all things to all quarters, and has demonstrated in his moves toward the PLA the same political strategy he has demonstrated towards other constituencies in the Chinese political system. Jiang is a consummate politician — playing to, balancing, and placating different constituencies. Chinese politics should be thought of as an endless web of bureaucratic and political constituencies that compete and bargain for position and resources within a vertically organized Leninist system. In this respect, Jiang is a new breed of Chinese politician, not cut from the cloth of his Leninist or Maoist predecessors (or even his colleagues Li Peng and Zhu Rongji) — both of whom show more autocratic tendencies. Rather than commanding, Jiang conciliates and arbitrates between competing interests, trying to build support amongst individual components that can be forged into a broad-based coalition. Jiang is not prone to backroom factional maneuvering or strong-arm tactics, but is capable of both. He is not beholden to one or another bureaucratic or geographic base of support (although he has clearly promoted his colleagues from Shanghai). His inclinations are politically conservative, but this serves him well during times of succession indeterminacy. Prior to 1997 Jiang seemed contemplative, plodding, careful, deliberate, and cautious, but subsequently he has become much more assertive in policy advocacy (including towards the military). Importantly, Jiang Zemin’s political style may reveal a move away from a hierarchical Leninist system to a more constituency and coalition-based political system (albeit within a single party system) — more characteristic of other newly industrializing countries and proto-democracies.


255 For more on Jiang Zemin’s political style see Bruce Gilley, Tiger on the Brink: Jiang Zemin and China’s New Elite, Berkeley: University of California Press,
The third facet of Jiang's strategy for earning support from the PLA has been to be more sensitive to PLA concerns in foreign and national security affairs. To some extent, he has had no choice, as the military has asserted itself on several issues of their concern. Also, it is not unnatural for the PLA to express its views on matters of national security — and they have done so with respect to Taiwan, relations with the United States, the U.S.-Japan Revised Defense Guidelines, the denotation of nuclear devices by India, and potential U.S. development and deployment of Theater Missile Defenses (TMD). In all these instances Jiang has been receptive and responsive to military concerns. The closest he has come to being challenged by the PLA came in the wake of the 1995 visit by Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui to the United States. Jiang was held personally responsible by the PLA brass for the policy "failure" that permitted the visit, as he and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen were forced to make self-criticisms before the Central Military Commission during the second week of July 1995.\footnote{Interviews with knowledgeable sources in Hong Kong and Beijing, July 1995. Interestingly, one source argued that in Chinese political culture Jiang's self-criticism was an astute move. This source claimed that Jiang's self-criticism was self-initiated, and thus Jiang was able to earn kudos by voluntarily taking blame. He could thereafter position himself to "get tough" with both Taipei and Washington.} Qian was held accountable as he had assured the Politburo Standing Committee that "under no circumstances" would Lee Teng-hui be granted a visa to the U.S.\footnote{This was because U.S. Secretary of State Christopher has personally assured Qian of this. Of course, President Clinton overruled Christopher and the State Department.} Jiang apparently acquiesced at the CMC meeting to PLA demands that a "military option" be activated vis-à-vis Taiwan.\footnote{See Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "Get Tough with Taiwan and U.S., Generals Tell Jiang," \textit{South China Morning Post}, 17 July 1995, p. 4; \textit{idem}, "Jiang Flexes Muscles," ibid, 26 July 1995, p. 4.} Immediately following Jiang's self-criticism, the PLA announced two rounds of ballistic missile tests just off the northern coast of Taiwan, undertook conventional military exercises in the Taiwan Strait, and continued nuclear testing in defiance of the international moratorium. On these and others foreign policy issues, Jiang has been sensitive to PLA concerns, but more importantly the military has been forced to defer to civilian management since the mid-1990s. This is another indication that the PLA's policy jurisdiction has been limited strictly to the military realm.

\textbf{Zhang Wannian}  
Of PLA members of the CMC, clearly Zhang Wannian is the most important. Although Zhang had unspecified health difficulties in 1997-1998 (reportedly a heart
condition), he continues to hold the *de facto* top spot. Zhang emerged as the most senior member of the PLA High Command in 1996-97, a fact underlined by his inclusion as the military representative in the four-member official delegation for the Hong Kong reversion ceremonies (along with President Jiang Zemin, Premier Li Peng, and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen).

Zhang Wannian’s background is typical of the new military leadership; he is a soldier’s soldier. His age and career bridge the pre and post-1949 periods and make him typical of the “third generation” of military leadership. A career field officer from the Fourth Field Army system (under Lin Biao), Zhang took part in the final campaign of the civil war. His star really began to rise in the wake of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese border war. Zhang distinguished himself during the war, particularly when he led the 127th Division in the battle of Liang Shan, an offensive that turned out to be one of the PLA’s few tactical accomplishments in the war. Zhang consequently was decorated and received personal praise from Deng Xiaoping. This put Zhang on the fast track for promotion. In 1982 he became Deputy Commander of the Wuhan MR and in 1987 was appointed Commander of the Guangzhou MR. While in the latter position Zhang created the PLA’s first rapid reaction unit (*kuaisu fanying budui*) and convened the first joint-service exercises—thus establishing two core components of contemporary PLA doctrine. Perhaps for recognition of these achievements, in 1988 Zhang Wannian was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General, and in 1990 he was shifted to command the important Jinan MR. It appears that Zhang’s transfer out of his southern stronghold had to do with Yang Baibing’s machinations to rotate commanders and build up a power base loyal to him and Yang Shangkun following the crackdown in Beijing. Yang Baibing personally visited Zhang in Guangzhou in May 1990, apparently seeking Zhang’s retirement. Yang was sharply rebuffed, and it took an intervention by Deng Xiaoping and Yang Dezhi to transfer him to Jinan, while replacing him with Deng loyalist Zhu Dunfa.\(^{259}\) This was a significant appointment for Zhang for several reasons. First, as a native of Shandong (Longkou City in Yuanhuang County), this gave him an opportunity to establish his credentials with the important “Shandong faction” in the PLA—many of whom now occupy high positions in the armed forces. Secondly, having worked his entire career in southern and central China, it was important for Zhang to command a military region with a different set of missions. The Jinan MR is home to the North Fleet and is central to contingencies regarding Korea, Japan, the United States, and Taiwan. As the Jinan MR contributed several units to the Tiananmen crackdown (at least one regiment of the 20th Group Army, two infantry divisions from the 54th Group Army, and one division of the 67th Group Army), Zhang thus took command at a sensitive time. Prior to June 4th it was rumored that Zhang sided with Zhao Ziyang and refused to commit Guangzhou MR forces to Beijing, but this does not seem to be the case (airborne rapid-reaction units were dispatched but did not take part in the

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\(^{259}\) As recounted in “The Resurgence of Fourth Field Army Veterans,” *Kaifang* (Hong Kong), November 1992, p. 25.
assault on the city). Third, having taken his new command, in 1992 the Jinan MR was visited by new CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin. Jiang’s tour of Jinan and other MR commands during the previous two years was instrumental in the promotion of new officers to key central-level positions following the purge of the Yang clique, and Zhang Wannian was to be one of the main beneficiaries. He soon found himself transferred to Beijing to head the General Staff Department, a position he held until 1995. Being an outsider to central-level positions, possessing a solid set of previous command credentials, having not been involved in politics or closely aligned with any particular faction, all accrued to Zhang’s promotion. To be sure, Zhang’s unequivocal support for the June 4th Beijing massacre and ties to Zhang Zhen also aided his meteoric rise to the top spot in the PLA. Since joining the Central Military Commission in December 1995 Zhang Wannian has increasingly taken over Zhang Zhen’s portfolio of operations, training, tactics, and doctrine. He has closely identified himself with high technology weapons and innovative tactics related to limited war, but his public speeches conform closely to standard rhetoric. In his speeches and published articles, Zhang has also been notably sycophantic in support of Jiang Zemin.

While currently the most senior PLA officer, General Zhang is over seventy years old and he is known to suffer a heart ailment and other health problems. In all likelihood general Zhang will retire at the 16th Party Congress in October 2002. When this occurs, Zhang’s influence will still be felt through a number of officers tied to him that have filled important central and regional military posts in recent years. These currently include Beijing MR Commander Li Xinliang, Shenyang MR Commander Liang Guangjie, Guangzhou MR Commander Tao Bojun, Guangzhou MR Political Commissar Shi Yuxiao, Jinan MR Commander Qian Guoliang, Beijing MR Political Commissar Du Tiehuan, Air Force Commander Liu Shunyao, Naval Commander Shi Yunsheng, People’s Armed Police Commander Yang Guoping, NDU Commandant Xing Shizhong, and former Nanjing MR Commander Gu Hui. There also remain a number of officers in the Jinan and Guangzhou MRs who were Zhang’s subordinates during his time there.

Chi Haotian

The second most important CMC officer is General Chi Haotian. As Minister of National Defense since 1993, Chi has had extensive foreign travel and interaction with foreign military and civilian leaders—including a visit to the United States in December 1996. He has also played a key role in brokering the PLA’s growing ties with the Russian military and defense industrial sector. General Chi is thought to be the closest of any PLA leader to CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin, and he has extensive ties with military elders Liu Huaqing, Zhang Aiping, Yang Dezhi, You Taizhong, and formerly to Deng Xiaoping and Xu Shiyu. Chi proved his political loyalties during

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crucial junctures—as Chief of Staff during the June 4th crackdown (having ultimate command over the troops) and playing a role in coordinating the arrest of the Gang of Four in 1976. Following the 1989 massacre, Chi was a staunch public defender of the actions taken, but also subsequently developed a fierce rivalry with Yang Baibing. His standing has been enhanced since the dismissal of Yang in 1992, and he is a key member of the “Shandong faction” now dominant in the upper echelons of the PLA.

Chi Haotian has had a distinguished career in the armed forces. He joined the PLA in 1944 and fought in several key battles of the Sino-Japanese and civil wars, including the final phase of the famous Huaihai campaign. He was wounded five times in battle and was decorated as a People’s Hero in 1949. He subsequently fought in the Korean War and was again decorated for valor in combat. From 1958-60 Chi studied at the Military Academy in Nanjing under Commandant Zhang Zhen, in the class just before Zhang Wannian (they overlapped by a year). Chi rose to prominence in the Beijing MR in the early-1970s, having been transferred there to serve in a succession of sensitive political commissar posts following the Lin Biao Incident in 1971. Throughout the 1970s he oversaw propaganda in the region, and following the arrest of the Gang of Four was appointed to be deputy editor-in-chief of the People’s Daily. When Deng Xiaoping returned to power and became Chief of Staff in 1977, Chi was transferred to be his deputy. Inexplicably, Chi dropped from view in 1982, only to reemerge as political commissar of the Jinan MR in 1985. In 1987 he returned to Beijing to become Chief of General Staff.

Chi Haotian is known to be a key advocate of the politicization of the PLA, particularly the subordination of the army to the Communist Party, but he has also been a public advocate of military professionalization and modernization. Given his background as a political commissar and his exposure to foreign militaries as Defense Minister, Chi is a good complement to the more technical, apolitical, and distinctly less cosmopolitan Zhang Wannian and Fu Quanyou. Chi appears to have few enemies in the PLA (save Yang Baibing) but—aside from Jiang Zemin—neither does he have PLA superiors to whom he is closely tied. His two previous patrons, Marshals Ye Jianying and Nie Rongzhen (both of whom promoted Chi for his role in the arrest of the Gang of Four), have died. His longevity as Defense Minister seems the result of his antipathy for the Yangs, his support for Jiang Zemin, and possibly the support of Zhang Zhen stemming from their days together in Nanjing. Thus, at 69, Chi’s chances of remaining one of the top two or three military leaders during the next five-ten years are good. He is younger than Zhang Wannian and Fu Quanyou and may indeed succeed Zhang Wannian as the most senior PLA member of the CMC following the 16th Party Congress in 2002—but, on the other hand, Chi is also over the retirement age and may well join these other senior officers in stepping down. If he does so, Generals Wang Ke or Cao Gangchuan will probably become the senior vice-chairmen of the CMC.

Fu Quanyou

At present, the third most important member of the new PLA leadership is Fu Quanyou, currently Chief of General Staff and previous head of the General Logistics Department from 1992-95. Fu is another example of the strong professional
background and ethic characteristic of many of the new PLA leadership. Another highly decorated veteran of the Korean and 1979 Vietnam conflicts, General Fu has served in a series of ground force commands along China's minority-occupied restive borderlands throughout his career. A native of Shanxi and veteran of the famous First Corps of the First Field Army, Fu has spent most of his career in the Lanzhou MR—which he wound up commanding in 1990. Fu has the distinction of being a "model soldier," based on his command of the legendary "Hard Bone Sixth Company." Fu also fought in the Korean War, and engaged in intensive combat with South Korean troops during 1952. He was noted at this time for his combined use of tanks and artillery. Fu was also selected as the premier student of his class of 1960 at the Nanjing Military Academy. Fu also served as Chengdu MR Commander from 1985-1990, during which time he enforced martial law in Tibet (perhaps working closely with rising Party star Hu Jintao). His lifelong ties to Marshal He Long clearly benefited Fu, although he was purged along with He Long during the Cultural Revolution.

Fu's background has also been that of a soldier's soldier—having experience in strategy and tactics, commanding large numbers of troops, combat experience in large-scale battles, and functional expertise working in artillery, armor, infantry, and engineering corps. His background is ideal to head the GSD and to oversee the modernization of the PLA under the new doctrinal requirements. As Chief of Staff, Fu began to travel more widely overseas, but he is described by those who have met him as being uncomfortable in meeting with foreigners and discussing global strategic affairs (frequently reading from a script), as well as possessing "earthy" personal habits. Fu's age would suggest his retirement in 2002.

**Yu Yongbo**

The fourth most important member of the CMC is Yu Yongbo, currently Director of the General Political Department. Yu has served as head of the GPD since November 1992, the longest-held position of any member of the High Command. Throughout this period Yu has shown his loyalty to Jiang Zemin. In fact, the Jiang-Yu relationship dates to the 1980s when Jiang was Mayor of Shanghai and Yu director of the political department of Nanjing MR, responsible for liaison with local civilian leaderships. As head of the GPD today, Yu is not only responsible for propaganda and political work in the armed forces, but he also plays a key role in vetting personnel promotions. In this capacity, Yu has worked closely with General Wang Ruilin. The two men had direct responsibility for ferreting out followers of Yang Baibing, following his dismissal in 1992. It was once thought that Yu was a member of Yang's faction, but it seems that Yu was all along reporting to Jiang Zemin and Deng Xiaoping about the Yang's machinations. For his loyalty, he has been maintained in this sensitive position during a period when there has been tremendous turnover elsewhere in the High Command. Yu's age (b. 1939) also suggests retirement at the 16th Party Congress—indeed General Xu Caihou is being groomed to succeed him (see below).
Wang Ke

Wang Ke owes much of his career rise to PLA elder Zhang Zhen, who personally trained him in the Fourth Division of the New Fourth Field Army during the civil war. Zhang Zhen subsequently followed and oversaw Wang Ke’s career development. A veteran artillery commander, Wang has been described as a “jack of all guns.” 261  Geographically, Wang Ke has served most of his career in the northwest — primarily in the Xinjiang Military District of the Lanzhou MR. Wang has thus also enjoyed career-long ties to Fu Quanyou, and undoubtedly to the late PLA elder Wang “Big Cannon” Zhen, who oversaw Lanzhou and Xinjiang as his personal military fiefdoms during his lifetime. Wang Ke was also praised by Jiang Zemin during his 1991 tour of Xinjiang, and soon found himself propelled to be Commander of the important Shenyang MR (another example of regional commanders with whom Jiang met during his 1991-92 tours now occupying top positions). Wang Ke is also known to be a leading advocate of reforming tactics in line with the new “limited war under high technology conditions” doctrine. After the Gulf War, Wang submitted a report on Desert Storm to the CMC, which was reportedly well received. 262

Thus, Wang Ke also perfectly fits the profile of the new Chinese military leadership: mid-60s, ground force background, combat experience, extensive regional command experience (in more than one region), functional expertise (artillery in his case), connections to Jiang Zemin and important PLA elders, and an interest in reforming doctrine and tactics commensurate with making the PLA a modern military. Wang will likely remain on the CMC following the 16th Party Congress in 2002. Born in 1932, Wang will turn seventy before the Congress. Even though beyond retirement age, Wang Ke remains several years younger than Fu Quanyou and Zhang Wannian and, for the interests of continuity, will likely remain on the CMC. He may well succeed General Fu as Chief of General Staff, giving his position at the GLD to General Guo Buoixiong (see below), with whom he has some career ties.

Cao Gangchuan

Although relatively new to the CMC (promoted in November 1998), General Cao Gangchuan has rapidly earned the respect and support of Jiang Zemin and other senior members of the CMC. He is also a leading candidate to become a leading officer and vice-chairman of the CMC after October 2002—although, if the retirement age of 65 is strictly enforced, this would not be possible. 263

262 Ibid, p. 84.
263 Born in December 1935, Cao will be nearly 67 years old at the time of the Congress.
Two characteristics distinguish Cao Gangchuan's career path: expertise in conventional land armaments and ties to Russia. These two attributes were fused together when Cao was promoted to the position of Director of the Military Products Trade Office of the CMC in 1990 and consequently became the PLA point man for negotiating weapons purchases and military cooperation with Russia. For the previous five years Cao had served as Deputy Director of the Armaments Department of the Headquarters of the General Staff Department, and in November 1992 he was promoted to the position of Deputy Chief of Staff with overall responsibility for PLA equipment and weaponry. In 1996 Cao succeeded Ding Henggao as Director of COSTIND, and presided over its dismantling. He had been known to previously express great frustration with COSTIND and its many failings to produce high-quality weaponry. General Cao was therefore the logical choice to be appointed to be the inaugural Director of the General Armaments Department when it was created in 1998 (he may well, in fact, have been responsible for conceptualizing the new body and the revision of COSTIND).

From the time he joined the army at the age of 19, Cao was associated with artillery. A native of Henan, he was sent to the Third Artillery Technical School in Zhengzhou. From there he was selected to attend the Russian training School in Dalian. After two years of Russian language study, Cao was sent to Moscow's Artillery Engineering Academy, where he studied for six years. He returned to China in 1963 after the full rupture of the Sino-Soviet Split, but fluent in Russian and with extensive knowledge of the Soviet Red Army's artillery development. For much of the next fifteen years Cao worked in the Ordnance Department of the General Logistics Department, but in 1979 was sent to the frontlines of the Sino-Vietnamese conflict to help coordinate artillery attacks. This earned Cao a place in the advanced class of the National Defense University. After a two-year year stint he embarked on the fast track through the GSD to his appointment as Director of the new GAD. He was promoted to the rank of full general in March 1998, and shortly thereafter became a full member of the CMC.

Wang Ruilin

The fourth ranking member (not including the three vice-chairmen) of the current CMC is General Wang Ruilin. Wang rose not through any of these aforementioned qualities, but rather as an administrator. His current position and career path has been closely tied to the late Deng Xiaoping. Deng chose Wang to be his personal military secretary (mishu) in the early 1960s and he became one of Deng's most important confidants and assistants thereafter. When Deng was purged during the Cultural Revolution and sent to work in a tractor factory, he was allowed to select and take one assistant with him; Deng chose Wang Ruilin. During the time

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264 Much of this biographical information derives from Jerry Hung, “Cao Gangchuan—Deputy Chief of Staff, People’s Liberation Army,” Inside China Mainland, January 1995, pp. 84-86.
Deng chaired the CMC in the 1980s, Wang acted as director of the CMC General Office — thus handling all confidential material. In this capacity Wang is reported to have routinely represented Deng in CMC meetings and other communications. But Wang’s power and influence was not limited to military affairs, as he was also appointed Deputy Director of the General Office of the Central Committee—the key staff position for the Politburo and high-level Party affairs. From the late-1980s Wang also assumed responsibilities as senior secretary of Deng’s personal office (Deng Ban). In Deng’s final years this made Wang quite possibly the most important official in China (similar to the role played by Mao Yuanxin and Wang Hairong during the Chairman’s final days). General Wang was the key conduit between the ailing leader and his family (including his powerful daughters), with the Politburo and other senior leaders. This made General Wang a very powerful man—controlling access to Deng and interpreting his wishes and dictates. This office was disbanded following the patriarch’s death, but Wang Ruilin continued his duties as a CMC member and GPD Deputy Director.265 In 1992 he also became Director of the CMC’s Discipline Inspection Commission.

Not only did Wang Ruilin handle key staff work and confidential material for Deng for thirty-five years, he had the sensitive and difficult job of executing the former patriarch’s orders in the armed forces. Probably one of the toughest tasks Deng gave Wang was to weed out and dismantle the Yang Shangkun-Yang Baibing network in 1992-93. As the network was anchored in the General Political Department and the GPD serves as the principal PLA organ for vetting personnel assignments, Wang was installed as Deputy Director in December 1992 (a position he still holds). In engineering the purge of the Yang network, Wang made himself indispensable to Jiang Zemin and his attempts to cultivate support in the PLA. In fact, as a “talent spotter” and individual experienced in high-level military personnel affairs, it is quite likely that Wang Ruilin has been the guiding hand behind assembling the new PLA leadership and carrying out Deng’s wishes to help Jiang Zemin solidify loyalties in the military through promotions and appointments. While Wang possesses no independent power base (despite an Eighth Route Army background and being a member, by birth, of the Shandong faction), this role and his work for Deng and Jiang has made Wang an important player in civil-military relations.

Guo Buoxiong and Xu Caihou

In September 1999, at the Fourth Plenum of the Fifteenth Central Committee, two new members were added to the CMC: Lieutenant Generals Guo Buoxiong and Xu Caihou. It is assumed that each will move into functional positions in one of the four general headquarters in the next few years. At the time of appointment, General Bo was commander of the Lanzhou Military Region, while General Xu was the political

commissar of the Jinan MR. As such, Xu is tipped to replace Yu Yongbo as GPD Director, while Bo may succeed Fu Quanyou as Chief of the General Staff. Both represent the “fourth generation” of military leaders, as they are 57 and 56 years of age respectively.

General Guo rose through the ranks of the Lanzhou MR, serving successively as a squad leader, platoon leader, regimental propaganda cadre, headquarters staff officer, and eventually MR Deputy Chief of Staff. From 1994-97 he was transferred to the Beijing MR, where he had the opportunity to travel abroad with Defense Minister Chi Haotian and domestically with President Jiang Zemin. In 1997 he was sent back to Lanzhou as MR commander. Guo has longstanding career ties to Chief of Staff Fu Quanyou, who was his commander in the 47th Group Army, as well as former Lanzhou MR commander Wang Ke. Eventually, he is likely to succeed one or both in the PLA leadership.

General Xu Caihou has had a career in PLA political work. Geographically, he has spent most of his career in Jilin Military District of the Shenyang MR — although at the time of his promotion to the CMC he worked in the Jinan MR. In Jilin, Xu held a succession of propaganda and GPD jobs. In November 1992, he was transferred to Beijing where he became the assistant to GPD chief Yu Yongbo, but also worked closely with Wang Ruilin. With this backing, Xu is undoubtedly on track to head the GPD following their retirements. In mid-1993, Xu also assumed co-editorship of the Liberation Army Daily. This was a sensitive time following the purge of Yang Baibing, and the need to garner control over the GPD apparatus. Xu performed well and was promoted to deputy director of the GPD in July 1994. From 1997 to 1999 he served as political commissar of the Jinan MR.

These are the current proximate players in civil-military relations in China today. The current CMC appears to be relatively faction-free, very professional (rather than political) in its orientation, technically competent, and focussed on implementing the various programs associated with “building an elite army with Chinese characteristics.” It is in this body where the nexus of civil-military relations lies, although it is ostensibly a Party organ. This is important, as channels of interaction outside the CMC have been radically reduced in recent years. The PLA no longer has a representative on the Politburo Standing Committee, and its representation on the Politburo is presently limited to Zhang Wannian and Chi Haotian. It will be interesting to see if this changes at the 16th Party Congress, although traditionally there has not necessarily been a military member of the Politburo Standing Committee.

**SUMMARY**

Although the CMC is the most important institution in the Chinese military, and is a central locus of decision making on national security affairs as well as certain important domestic matters, it is also one of the least transparent and accessible institutions in the PLA. It is thus very difficult to research. No CMC records are declassified from Chinese archives and culling basic information about the body is an exercise in frustration. The discussion above has drawn upon some published documentation from China and a few other sources, and has hopefully illuminated the
essential organizational features of the CMC and its current leadership. Yet, clearly, there is far more that remains unknown about the functioning to the CMC. A more detailed exploration of historical records and the Liberation Army Daily could illuminate and build a fuller account of this, the most important of all, PLA institutions. This preliminary effort, and that of a few other analysts,\(^{266}\) will hopefully lay the basis for further explorations in the years ahead.

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\(^{266}\) See the works of Tai Ming Cheung, Yan Kong, and Michael Swaine cited above.
4. THE GENERAL STAFF DEPARTMENT OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY: ORGANIZATION, ROLES, & MISSIONS

By David Finkelstein

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This purpose of this paper is to describe and discuss the organization, roles, and missions of the General Staff Department (GSD) of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). This is an ambitious undertaking for two reasons. First, the GSD is a large organization. Second, the Chinese defense establishment does not consider such information, in any real detail, suitable for public domain consumption. Hence, there is no officially released PLA guide to the GSD available to the public.

Anyone who would like to acquire a relatively detailed organizational understanding of the U.S. Department of Defense, the Joint Staff, the Service Staffs (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps), or the joint unified and specified commands has a wealth of officially released public data from which to draw upon. Not so for

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China, where even the telephone directories of the most mundane organizations are usually considered controlled items. Odds are, some of this will change over time due to the ongoing efforts within the PLA to institute regulations, laws, and "standard operating procedures" (SOPs). These very efforts will cause the PLA to discuss their own organizations more and more openly in their own publications as they attempt to reform and regulate them.

The point of bringing up the challenges in attempting a paper such as this is to alert the reader at the start that this study cannot be considered conclusive. The very nature of the subject and the nature of the data available predetermines that there will be mistakes, misunderstandings, and missing data points in the pages ahead. Yet, this paper may likely be the most detailed study on the GSD published in English to date.

Therefore, this effort is best viewed as an initial baseline of understanding that deserves to be scrutinized and challenged. It will also need to be updated on a regular basis as new data becomes available and new systemic understanding is gained. This is the beginning, not the end.

The Value of Organizational Studies

By their very nature organizational studies are usually difficult reads. Organizational charts, relationships, hierarchies, mission statements and the like usually fail to elicit much excitement from the casual reader. So why bother? The answer is simple. Through an understanding of organizational structures and organizational processes we can hope to gain a better appreciation for the PLA as a professional military institution.

The PLA is much more than the weapons and equipment it purchases or produces indigenously, though this is what popular discourse about the PLA tends to revolve about. Like any professional military organization, the officers and soldiers of the PLA view themselves and the world around them through their institutions. How they interact with each other is through the medium of their organizations and institutions. How they go about their professional business is shaped by their organizations and institutions. And, hasten to add, how the PLA will modernize and how it plans to conduct combat operations in the future will be determined by its organizations and institutions.

Simply put, an understanding of PLA organizations and institutions must be the starting point for understanding PLA "corporate culture." If that professional culture is not understood, then our understanding of the PLA will never be deeper than our ability to count and categorize weapons.

Sources of Data

As mentioned above, the Chinese defense establishment does not make a study of this nature easy; especially when some of the organizations are involved in sensitive operational matters. At the same time, it is possible to get at the "guts" of the GSD. So what is the basis of this study? What are the sources of data? What are the cognitive filters through which the data has been sifted?

First, the Directory of PRC Military Personalities (hereafter, DPMP) served as the foundation and superstructure upon which the organization of the GSD was built.
for this study. The *DPMP*, produced by SEROLD Associates of Hawaii, offers an extensive listing of PLA personalities by organization based upon Chinese (mainland) open source literature. Its volumes, which go back over more than a decade, are in and of themselves a valuable source for tracking organizational change over the years for many key PLA organizations, not just the GSD.

Second, this study relies very heavily on Chinese mainland press articles, many from PLA periodicals, available through the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereafter, FBIS). A very careful reading of these articles (from *Jiefangjun Bao*, *Xinhua*, *Liaowang*, etc.) resulted in the addition of more organizations and sub-organizations to the skeleton constructed by starting off with the *DPMP*. In addition to identifying additional GSD sub-organizations, these articles were absolutely invaluable for providing insights into the roles, functions, and inter-relationships of and between the various GSD sub-organizations. Five years' worth of FBIS holdings were sifted through for GSD-related information. There were literally hundreds of articles that provided snippets of insight. After going through so many articles, one comes to find out that although the PLA does not release organizational data for public consumption per se there are many GSD sub-organizations that are in the Chinese news very often. Examples would be the Mobilization Department and the Military Training Department. Others, however, are almost never discussed in the Chinese press. Examples of these would be the two intelligence departments of the GSD and its Operations Department. Consequently, not all GSD sub-organizations receive equal treatment in length or detail in this study.

Third, some academic secondary source material (books and Internet web sites) was utilized. This was especially the case when there was simply no mainland press coverage for such organs of the GSD as the intelligence and operations departments. Because one's level of confidence in the data decreases the further one travels away from mainland sources, the "foreign" (non-Chinese) academic literature used in this paper receives additional caveats when it is utilized.

The fourth source of information for this study was the extensive open source holdings of Master Sergeant Ellis Melvin, U.S. Army (Retired). Master Sergeant Melvin graciously shared with me organizational data points for the GSD that are the result of decades of open source database building. He not only shared data, but his own analytic comments on various organizations, as well as expert linguistic guidance and support. Without his assistance this study would not be as rich in granularity in some sub-organizations as it turned out to be. Although MSG Melvin provided this assistance, he is in no way responsible for any errors, mistakes, or incorrect assessments that may be folded into this study. Any weaknesses in this paper are solely the responsibility of the author.

What about sources that were not used? Frankly, this study did not utilize to its fullest extent the plethora of publicly available (*gongkai*) Chinese books and magazines produced by the PLA and other mainland publishing houses that sometimes provide incidental insights into the GSD and other Chinese defense institutions. This was strictly a function of having no hardcopy collections at hand. The mainland press is an increasingly rich resource that will be utilized more fully in future iterations of this study.
Finally, one ought to recognize and declare the subjective lenses through which one's research is refracted. Because some "notional" sub-organizations are offered in this paper, and because a good deal of speculation about organizational roles and functions is bandied about, the subjective lens becomes important: it not only has the potential to enrich a study but also has the potential to lead it astray. I worry more about the latter. In my own case, the baggage includes many years of studying the PLA within the context of a professional military career serving in tactical field units from platoon through brigade level, on the staff of a U.S. Army MAJCOM (Major Army Command), as an instructor on the staff of a military academy, and in the Pentagon to include service on the Joint Staff. Therefore, while a student of the PLA, I am also a creature of U.S. military institutional thinking. While these experiences are helpful, one has to work hard not to "mirror image."

With these introductory remarks behind us, we can proceed to the business at hand: the General Staff Department of the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

THE GSD: AN OVERVIEW

The "guts" of this study is in Section IV in which the sub-organizations of the GSD are discussed in detail. But before diving into them some basics and some contextual comments about the GSD are in order.

The GSD in the PLA Hierarchy

The first thing to do is to "fix" the GSD in the hierarchy of the PLA. The GSD (Zongcanmou Bu) is one of four "General Departments" directly under the command and control of China's highest-level military organ; the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The CMC is a party organization and can be considered the Chinese equivalent of the National Command Authorities (NCA) in the United States.

The other three General Departments (Zong Bu) are the General Political Department (GPD, Zong Zhengzhi Bu), the General Logistics Department (GLD, Zong Houqin Bu) and the recently established (1998) General Armament Department (GAD, Zong Zhuangbei Bu). The four general departments constitute the second line of organizations in the PLA hierarchy in as much as they fall directly under the CMC.

The next level of military organizations are the headquarters of the three services---the PLA Navy (PLAN, Jiefangjun Haijun), the PLA Air Force (PLAAF, Jiefangjun Hangkongjun), the Strategic Rocket Forces (also known as the 2nd Artillery or Er Pao)---the seven Military Regions (Jun Qu), the Academy of Military Science (AMS, Junshi Kexue Yuan), and the National Defense University (NDU, Guofang Daxue).

As an important point of organizational curiosity we note that the GSD is also the headquarters of the PLA Ground Forces. There is no separate "Ground Force Headquarters" as there is for the PLAN and the PLAAF.

Moreover, it would incorrect to think of the GSD as a "joint" organization as is the U.S. Joint Staff. The GSD is "joint" in its responsibilities, not, by and large, in its personnel makeup and composition. Even though the GSD has "joint" responsibilities for the entire PLA---meaning all of the services---it is dominated by
Ground Force officers. There are likely very few sub-organizations within the GSD to which PLAN or PLAAF officers are assigned. (The Operations Department is probably one of the few GSD sub-organizations with any meaningful number of PLAN, PLAAF, and 2nd Artillery personnel). Indeed, only up until very recently, circa 1998, those few PLAN and PLAAF officers that were assigned to the GSD were required to wear Ground Force uniforms, not the uniforms of their services.\textsuperscript{268} This state of affairs reflects the degree to which the entire PLA—all of the services—is dominated by the Ground Forces as a matter of historical legacy.

**Functions of the GSD**

The official PLA description of the general roles and functions of the GSD were publicly stated in February 1997 when the *Liberation Army Daily (Jiefangjun Bao)* carried an article outlining some (but not all) of the major features of the newly revised "Headquarters Regulations of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army." These regulations committed to paper the roles and missions of all levels of PLA headquarters and included, for the first time, a separate chapter on the GSD. According to the PLA’s own regulations, then:

The Headquarters of the General Staff of the PLA is a military organ of the Central Military Commission (CMC), a leading organ of the military work of the armed forces nation-wide, and the general headquarters of the PLA. Under the CMC leadership, it organizes and leads the military building of the armed forces nationwide and organizes and directs the military action of the armed forces nation-wide.\textsuperscript{269}

\textsuperscript{268} Conversation with PLA officer, 1998.

\textsuperscript{269} "Expert Group for Revising Regulations of Headquarters, Campaign and Tactics Research Department, Academy of Military Science. Distinct Characteristics, Strategic Advantage—On The Main Characteristics of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Headquarters’ Regulations," *Jiefangjun bao*, 4 February 1997. We take note of the implication in the title of this article that the regulations that govern the GSD and other military headquarters may have been drafted by an experts group at the Academy of Military Science and not within the GSD itself.
The same article goes on to summarize some of the specific responsibilities of the GSD as written in the revised regulations. These include:

- Planning, organizing, and directing military operations
- Conducting staff work for the top leadership of the PLA to assist them in decision-making
- Serving as the lead organization in the PLA for military modernization program decisions
- Coordinating the work of the (then) three General Departments
- Administering the military legislation and military legal system
- Providing guidance for logistical support
- Providing guidance for military science research
- Providing guidance for defense science and technology studies
- Providing information support.

Beijing’s October 2000 defense White Paper, “China’s National Defense in 2000,” gave a very brief but similar overall description of the mission of the GSD (which is sometimes referred to by the Chinese as the General Staff Headquarters):

The General Staff Headquarters is the leading organ of all military work of the nation’s armed forces. It organizes and leads the military construction of the nation’s armed forces, and organizes and commands their military operations. Under it there are departments in charge of operations, intelligence, training, adjutant and force structure, mobilization, etc.

Clearly, then, we can see that the two key roles and functions of the GSD is directing PLA combat operations and directing the plans, programs, and policies that guide the modernization of the PLA—"Army Building" (jundui jianshe)—in PLA parlance. These are two enormous tasks.

We also note that although there are separate general departments for logistics and equipment development, the GSD provides them guidance and that the GSD is responsible for "coordinating" the work of the other general departments.

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270 This particular FBIS article was likely translated by someone with very little knowledge of military organizations or terminology. Therefore, while maintaining the essence of the GSD responsibilities in the bullets as presented in the article, I have taken some license to use clearer English terms.

In a 1997 speech to an enlarged meeting of the GSD's Party Committee Chief of the General Staff Fu Quanyou enjoined "all GSD organs" to "play their full role" in five key areas (below) which also provides some interesting insight into the functions of the of the GSD and its staff officers.

- **The GSD "planning role."** GSD organs should serve as "excellent advisors" to the party Central Committee and the CMC.
- **The GSD "guidance role."** This means GSD organs should take the guidance of the CMC for combat operations and military work and develop specific "implementation proposals."
- **The GSD "coordination role."** GSD organs should work hard at coordination with other organizations.
- **The GSD "rendering service role."** GSD organs should "cultivate the attitude of serving the troops" and try to solve the problems of "grass roots" units.
- **The GSD "exemplary role."** GSD organs should "influence and motivate the troops with their exemplary conduct."272

So while the GSD, GPD, GLD, and GAD are technically at the same level in the formal PLA hierarchy the GS is *primus inter pares* and clearly has the lead for combat operations and enabling the PLA's vision for military modernization as set forth under the authority of the CMC.

**Organizational Structure of the GSD**

To carry out its planning, guidance and coordination responsibilities, the GSD is organized into functionally-oriented sub-organizations.

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Figure 4.1  GSD Organizational Overview

Building Blocks

Usually, the largest GSD sub-organizations are called "departments" (bu), such as the "Military Training Department" (Junxun bu). These major "sub-departments" of the GSD are categorized by the PLA as "Grade 2" departments (er ji bu), the GSD itself being considered a "Grade 1" (yi ji bu) level organization.273

273 For usage of this term in the Chinese press see "PLA Headquarters Launch Three Stresses Campaign," Xinhua. 23 June 1999, in FBIS. FBIS translated er ji bu as "secondary departments" but in the PLA the character for ji usually refers to and is translated as "grade" as in First Grade General or yi ji shangjiang.
These "Grade 2" departments are themselves further broken down into "bureaus" (jia). Bureaus, in turn, are sometimes subdivided into "offices" (chui). Under an "office" usually come "sections" (ke).

Some major sub-organizations of the GSD are "bureaus" (jia), such as the GSD’s Management Bureau (Guandli Ju). It is not clear if these sub-organizations are also "Grade 2" departments because they are in fact major organizations in the GSD, or if they would be "Grade 3" (san jia) organizations because they are "bureaus" and not "departments."

Protocol Order

As an overall organization, the PLA is keenly aware of its own institutional history. It is also quite sensitive to the “pecking order” of its military leadership, which is not merely based upon formal rank but on such factors as time of entry into the CCP, organizational position, and time in service. Consequently, whenever institutions or individuals are publicly or internally listed in sequence, they are presented in what Western analysts refer to as “protocol order” and what the PLA refers to as “organizational order” (zuzhi xujie).274 The criteria for the protocol order of organizations and institutions is primarily a function of when they were formally established. However, sometimes relatively new organizations receive a higher listing than others based upon their relative importance at the time of listing.

To the best that can be determined, the protocol order of most of the major sub-organizations within the GSD is currently listed by the PLA as follows: Operations Department; Intelligence Department; Communications Department; Training Department; Military Affairs Department; Mobilization Department; Service Arms Department; Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department; and Army Aviation Bureau.275 It should be noted that the organizations discussion of the sub-elements of the GSD in this study (See the section entitled, “The GSD Today”) are not necessarily presented in protocol order.

As Viewed From the “Inside”

As we shall see in the sections of this study that follow, most of the sub-organizations of the GSD derive their power and influence over the greater PLA by virtue of the fact that they provide direction, directives, orders, and oversight over the rest of the military in the name of the top leadership of the Central Military Commission (CMC). This is accomplished through the staffs of the Military Regions and the service staffs (Navy, Air Force, and Second Artillery). The GSD is clearly a very powerful organization.

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274 This sub-section on Protocol Order is derived from the work of Kenneth W. Allen’s introductory chapter in this volume.

275 This listing is not complete. It does not “fix” the positions of other bureaus that part of the GSD.
However, internal to the GSD itself, staff officers view certain organizations to be powerful beyond their protocol order for the simple reason that these key departments or bureaus have as their primary duty the management or support of the GSD. The work of these organizations affects the professional lives and, to some extent, even the personal lives of the staff officers assigned to the GSD. Specifically, we refer to the Political Department, the General Office, and Management Bureau. The Political Department’s influence over the rest of the GSD derives from its responsibilities for personnel matters. The power of the General Office is a function of its ability to control access to the top leadership of the GSD—the Chief of the General Staff and the various Deputy Chiefs. The internal clout of the Management Bureau is a direct reflection of the fact that it is responsible for the logistic support of the GSD. (For more details on each of these organizations see the section entitled “The GSD Today”).

The Soviet Legacy

It should also be pointed out that the GSD as an organization and institution has been heavily influenced by the military legacies and institutional practices of the Soviet Union. The Soviet influence over many PLA institutions goes back to the late 1920s when Russian advisors were sent to assist the “Red Army.” And since the 1920s, and continuing today, unknown thousands of PLA officers have attended Soviet (and now Russian) professional military institutions. So we see in the GSD today what we might term a “Chinese model with Soviet characteristics” whereas in the immediate post-1949 period what we had was a “Soviet model with Chinese characteristics.” In fact, knowledgeable individuals point out that in the early 1950s, Soviet military advisors were assigned to the PLA GSD down to and including the chu (office) level; a testimony to the impact of Soviet staffing practices on the PLA during its early post-1949 period.

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<th>Chiefs of the General Staff 1949-2000</th>
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<td>Xu Xiangqian: 1949-1954</td>
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<td>Nie Rongzhen: 1954</td>
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<td>Su Yu: 1954-1958</td>
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<td>Huang Kecheng: 1958-1959</td>
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<td>Luo Ruiqing: 1959-1966</td>
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<td>Yang Chengwu: 1966-1968</td>
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<td>Huang Yongsheng: 1968-1971</td>
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<td>Ye Jianying: 1971-1975</td>
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<td>Deng Xiaoping: 1975-1980</td>
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<td>Chi Haotian: 1987-1992</td>
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<td>Fu Quanyou: 1995-Present</td>
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Personnel Assigned to the GSD

There is no publicly released official figure for the total number of personnel assigned to the GSD. Moreover, there is almost no empirical basis for estimating this figure because the number of personnel assigned to any one of the major suborganizations is not known (by this student at least) and even if it were the various suborganizations are clearly different in size. In addition, one has to differentiate between the numbers of personnel assigned to the GSD serving at headquarters in Beijing, and the number of personnel outside of headquarters assigned to field units that are organic to the
GSD or its subordinate departments and bureaus. At a minimum such units include: Signal Corps Regiments, Engineer Corps Regiments, the regiments of the Central Guards Bureau, Survey & Cartography Regiments, Meteorological Bureau sites throughout the country, the vast number of troops assigned across China that belong to the 3rd Department (SIGINT), and likely others we do not know about. It would not be surprising if the total number of GSD personnel (headquarters and organic field units) were close to 100,000.

**GSD Leadership**

The usual leadership structure for the GSD is one Chief of the General Staff (CoGS) who usually carries the rank of general (shangjiang), a few Deputy Chiefs of the General Staff (DCoGS) at the rank of Lieutenant General (zhongjiang), and possibly one or two "Assistants to the Chief of the General Staff" at the rank of major general (Shaojiang). 276 In practice, over the years, the number of DCoGS's and the number of Assistants to the Chief of the General Staff (sometimes none) have varied depending on the circumstances of the times. 277 We are, however, still talking about just a handful of individuals. As of this writing there are five DCoGS's: one whose title is "Executive DCoGS" and four who are referred to simply as DCoGS. At the moment, there is only one Assistant to the CoGS. 278 As a general rule over the years, each of the DCoGS's has had a particular portfolio within the GSD for oversight below and for advising the CMC above. The key areas of oversight are usually training, operations, and foreign relations and intelligence. At the er ji bu levels of the GSD, we usually find that the Director of a major department is a major general and subordinate bureau directors are senior colonels. We do find exceptions from time to time when a GSD department or bureau director is actually a lieutenant general. For example, the Guards Bureau (Jingwei Ju) of the GSD, which is responsible for the physical security of the top CCP and PLA leadership, is usually at the lieutenant general level.

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276 It should be mentioned that in the PLA formal military ranks are not "attached" to institutional billets as in the U.S. military. For example, a DCoGS in the PLA could have the personal rank of a Lieutenant General or a General for that matter. In fact, the rank system that matters to PLA officers is one that categorizes them as "company-level officers," regimental-level officers," "division-level officers," etc. This rating, which is a function of both tenure and performance, determines which types of assignments one is eligible for.

277 Li Guo-Ching lists a near-identical line-up of former CoGS's as that in the sidebar textbox with the exceptions of (1) the addition of Nie Rongzhen (no dates given) and (2) the omission of Ye Jianying. Li Guo-Ching "Deputy Chief of the General Staff Kui Fulin, Special Administrative Region Preparatory Committee Member From General Staff Department," *Kuang chiao ching*, 16 February 1997, in FBIS. Also, Li does not provide dates.

278 See *DPMP*, 1999, p. 17.
Relationship To The Military Regions and The Services

The various sub-organizations of the GSD exercise their authority over the rest of the PLA, carry out their programmatic responsibilities, and perform their oversight functions through counterpart staffs below the level of the GSD. Specifically, each of the Service Staffs (PLAN, PLAAF, 2nd Artillery) and the staffs of the Military Regions have departments and bureaus that mirror the key departments and bureaus of the GSD. These are usually to be found in the Headquarters Department of a Service Staff or a Military Region. The GSD departments and bureaus draft and issue "circulars" and "directives" (under the authority of either the CoGS or the CMC) to communicate policies or missions to their counterpart organizations below. PLA officers sometimes refer to this process as the "vertical system." For example, if the CMC has decided that a new training initiative needs to be developed, the Training Department of the GSD will do the staff work that results in draft policies. After the CMC approves the initiative, a directive will be drafted by the Training Department of the GSD that will be sent to the Training Departments of the seven Military Regions and the three services. These, in turn, will be sent further down the chain to "grass roots units." Often times, such circulars and directives will be heralded or further explained by articles submitted to Jiefangjun Bao in order to insure maximum attention and compliance with the initiative. Moreover, it appears that GSD staff officers spend a good deal of time travelling around China to educate lower level staffs and units about programs and policies, to inspect units and staffs for compliance, or to "investigate" problems and situations that require GSD-level solutions or fixes.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Pre-1949

The organizational history of General Staff Department as we know it today really begins in 1949 with the establishment of the PRC and the Central People's Government. At that time (1949) the GSD (as well as the GPD and GLD) was subordinated to the People's Revolutionary Military Council of the Central People's Government.

There are organizational antecedents that actually go back to the periods of the first civil war (1927-1937), the war against the Japanese (1937-1945), and the second...

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279 This general description of staff processes is the result of distilling what was learned by studying each of the GSD departments and bureaus in Section IV of this paper.
280 See, for example, the organization of the Guangzhou MR (DPMP, 1999, p. 96) or the PLAAF (DPMP, 1999, p. 43).
281 Comments by PLA officers to author.
civil war (1945-1949). However, the pre-1949 general staff system of the "Red Army" was nowhere as complex nor always as empowered as the GSD system that was established after the establishment of the PRC. Indeed, in the 1920s and 1930s the "Red Army" general staff system was whipsawed into and out of existence, and into and out of relevance as a reflection of three sets of tensions:

- First, the policy tensions between those in the CCP who favored irregular warfare and those who believed a more conventional force was needed to combat the encirclement campaigns of the KMT.
- Second, the systemic tension between the traditional regional autonomy enjoyed by the Field Armies of the Red Army and the need of the "center" to direct and coordinate all operations.
- Third, the political and ideological tensions between those in the CCP who favored "Soviet" models of organization, plans and policies (COMINTERN advisors, the '28 Returned Bolsheviks, Li Lisan, etc.) and (for lack of a better term) those "nativists" (Mao and others) who usually rejected out of hand models that did not take the "objective conditions in China" as a starting point.

Needless to say, if one were to provide rationales for all of the organizational changes and developments in the pre-1949 general staff system, one would in effect be writing a lengthy political and military history of the CCP; an endeavor obviously outside the scope of this paper.²⁸³ Consequently, for now it must suffice merely to note and register below some of the key organizational events of the pre-1949 period.²⁸⁴

- **1930**: CMC decides to create a "Red Army" general staff divided into the following sections: operations, training, transportation, intelligence, and industry and agriculture. It is not actually stood up until November 1931. The first Chief of Staff is Ye Jianying.
- **1932**: Liu Bocheng becomes Chief of the General Staff.
- **1936**: Four departments are established under the general staff: (1) operations; (2) intelligence; (3) communications; (4) order of battle.
- **1937**: Name changed back to Headquarters of the General Staff (GSH).

²⁸⁴ The source of this particular list is *Zhongguojunshi baiketuanshu* [Military Encyclopedia of China], Beijing: Military Science Publishing House, 1995, pp. 29-34, (hereafter, *MEC*).
• 1938: GSH is reduced to 3 departments with the "order of battle" department absorbed by the operations department.

Post-1949

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, today's GSD is much more a creature of the post-1949 structure than the organizations in the pre-1949 periods. There are however two important continuities. First, today's GSD, like the pre-1949 general staff headquarters, is a variant of the Soviet general staff system. Second, the GSD is still directly subordinate to the CCP via the CMC, which is a party organ.

Putting the continuities aside, however, the post-1949 GSD was destined to become a complex organization. For one thing, the post-1949 GSD had to reflect the command and control requirements of the national military establishment of a sovereign nation, not that of an "outlawed" revolutionary army as the "Red Army" had been previously. Second, in the last phases of the civil war the PLA had been fighting as a conventional military force, not an irregular force. And within one year of the founding of the PRC, the PLA would be fighting a conventional war once again, this time in Korea. It was not unreasonable that a very large conventional force required a rather large central staff organization.

Looking at the internal organization of the GSD back across time (1949 to today) one is struck by the fact that today's GSD is not at all that much different from the GSD that was established in 1949. One sees that some GSD departments or bureaus have come and gone, and others have been merged or moved over time. But the essential structure remains, as do the main departments. Table 4.1 below is a modest attempt to show the GSD organization over time.\footnote{Table 1 is based on the holdings of Ellis Melvin (to include the CPLA), the \textit{DPMP}, and various open source articles. This table is not definitive. It is the best one can do with the data at hand. For example, the fact that some sub-organizations are not listed under the columns for certain years is not meant to be a definitive statement that they did not exist at that time. What the table does show with a relatively higher level of confidence is the degree of continuity over time on a macro-organizational level.} The dates chosen for display in Table 1 are admittedly a function of the availability of data. But these are not insignificant dates either. 1949, of course, is the year of the founding of the PRC and the formal establishment of a GSD. 1959 reflects the results of the "decision" in 1957 to streamline the PLA. Formally known as the CMC "Decision to Reduce Quantity of Armed Forces and Strengthen Quality," (January 1, 1957) the GSD structure was adjusted along
Table 4.1  GSD Internal Organization, 1949 - 2000

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</tbody>
</table>
with the rest of the PLA's national headquarters system. Many students of the PLA forget that by 1955 fully 8 General Departments had been created by the CMC. The "Decision" reduced the number down to three. 286 (See Table 4.2 below) The year 1982 reveals the GSD on the eve of the major PLA reorganization of 1985 at which time 1,000,000 troops were demobilized and the former 11 Military Regions were merged into today's 7 MRs. 1993 shows the GSD at the time of the merging of the former technical departments (Engineers, Artillery, Anti-Chemical, Armored Force) into the newly established "Service Arms Department." Finally, 1998 reflects the year that the GSD's Equipment Department was disestablished along with the creation of the General Armaments Department (see Table 4.2).

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286 For an excellent overview of the changes in the numbers of general departments over the years see Chang Ching-you, "General Equipment Department's New leaders -- Cao Gangchuan and Li Jinai," Kuang Chiao Ching, No. 310, 16 July 1998, pp. 66-68, in FBIS. Table 4.2 is based almost entirely on this article.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Organizational Action</th>
<th>Number of General Departments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1949 (October)</td>
<td>GSD, GPD, GLD founded</td>
<td>3 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 4 December</td>
<td>General Cadres Management Department (GCMD) founded</td>
<td>4 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD, GCMD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952 (July)</td>
<td>General Cadres Management Department renamed General Cadres Department (GCD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954 (November)</td>
<td>CMC Ordnance Department becomes separate Department: General Ordnance Department (GOD)</td>
<td>5 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD, GCD, GOD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 (April)</td>
<td>General Training Supervision Department (GTSD) established by taking the following organizations out of the GSD: Military Training Department, Military School Management Department, Military Publications Bureau.</td>
<td>6 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD, GCD, GOD, GTSD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 (June)</td>
<td>CMC establishes Armed Forces Supervision Department (AFSD) as separate Department.</td>
<td>7 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD, GCD, GOD, GTSD, AFSD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 (August)</td>
<td>General Finance Department (GFD) created by extracting Finance Department from GLD.</td>
<td>8 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD, GCD, GOD, GTSD, AFSD, GFD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1957 to December 1958</td>
<td>January 1957: &quot;Decision to Reduce Quantity of Armed Forces and Strengthen Quality&quot; issued by CMC. Streamlining and Contraction: GFD, GOD, GCD, AFSD, GTSD, all disestablished and their functions absorbed by the GSD, GPD, or GLD. For example, the General Cadres Department ceases to be separate Department and is absorbed under GPD as Cadres Department in October 1958.</td>
<td>3 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 (April)</td>
<td>CMC establishes General Armaments Department (GAD). Equipment Department of GSD moves over to GAD.</td>
<td>4 General Departments (GSD, GPD, GLD, GAD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With this background, we now highlight some very few of the key organizational changes that have taken place in the GSD over the years. Clearly, many more changes than those listed below took place. However, the data was not available.

- **1949:** "Headquarters of the General Staff" subordinated to the People's Revolutionary Military Council of the Central People's Government.287
- **1954:** Renamed Chinese People's Liberation Army General Staff Department.
- **1955:** GSD Military Training Department taken from GSD in May 1955 to become part of newly-created Department of the Inspector-General of Training.
- **1956:** GSD Communications Department is redesignated the Signal Corps Department and made directly subordinate to the CMC.
- **1957:** As a result of the CMC "Decision" (see above): (1) the General Ordnance Department is abolished and placed under the GSD; (2) the Department of the Inspector-General of Training and the Armed Forces Supervision Department are abolished and placed under the GSD;288 (3) the Military Schools Management Department and the Publishing Bureau were removed from the GSD and merged; (4) The Management Bureau and the Foreign Affairs Bureau are added to the GSD; (5) the Signal Corps Department is disbanded and moved back under the GSD; (6) the Anti-Chemical Warfare Corps is placed under the GSD.
- **1986:** Army Aviation (rotary wing) created as new branch of the PLA Ground Forces. Placed under GSD. (See Service Arms Department in Section IV).
- **1990:** Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department established.289
- **1993:** Engineer Department, Artillery Department, Armored Forces Department, Aviation Department, and Anti-Chemical Warfare Department of GSD downgraded to bureaus and placed under newly established Service Arms Department. (See Service Arms Department in Section IV).
- **1998:** Equipment Department removed from GSD and placed under newly created General Armament Department.

THE GSD TODAY

In this section of the paper, the specific roles and missions of the major sub-organizations (departments and bureaus) of the GSD will be discussed to the extent that the data will permit. So too will we break down the major departments and bureaus as

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287 Unless otherwise indicated, this chronology is based on entries in the CPIA, ibid.
288 The Armed Forces Supervision Department is sometimes translated as the Department of the Inspectorate of the Armed Forces.
289 Some knowledgeable individuals assert the ECM & RD was established in the mid to late 1980s. This cannot be verified at this time.
best we can. In some cases, there is specific information available. In other cases data is lacking and almost nothing can be said with certainty.

However, in some instances where data is lacking we can engage in informed speculation by inference based upon reading articles in the Chinese press, mainly *Jiefangjun Bao*, that mention these organizations; even in passing. In the organization charts that follow, solid-line boxes represent sub-organizations for which we have a near-certaint degree of confidence. Broken-line boxes represent sub-organizations for which we have either a very low level of confidence or sub-organizations that are purely speculative on the part of the author. Based on the totality of the research conducted for this study, this author assumes that every major GSD sub-organization has both a Political Department and a General Office. In some cases they are in broken lines (no specific data), in others the lines are solid (specific data).

**Figure 4.2  GSD General Office (Bangongting)**

The General Office serves as the key administrative organ in the GSD that directly supports the top leadership of the General Staff. The General Office likely processes administrative actions that are going from the Chief of the General Staff (CoGS) and the Deputy Chiefs of the General Staff (DCoGS, of which there are currently five) down throughout the rest of the GSD organization. Likewise we would expect the General Office to process administrative actions that are going up to the key GSD leaders from below in the organization.
Moreover, the General Office also has key extra-organizational liaison and coordination responsibilities. One would expect the General Office to serve as the administrative link with the general offices of other key PLA organizations such as the Central Military Commission (CMC) and the three other General Departments (GPD, GLD, GAD). We would expect administrative links as well as coordination responsibilities with the headquarters of the Military Regions and perhaps other non-PLA national-level organizations in the government and the party.

As mentioned earlier, the General Office is a very powerful organization within the GSD corporate culture. Its director, deputy directors, and perhaps even its staff officers control access to the top GSD leadership, run their schedules and appointments in conjunction with the military secretaries (mishu) to the top GSD leadership, and determine which pieces of paper get acted upon in which order from below by the CoGS and DCoGS’s. The staff officers of the General Office also draft documents for the top leadership of the GSD and convene meetings in their name.290

Given the fact that the DPMP (1999) identifies at least two Major Generals as deputy directors, there are likely multiple sections within the General Office for which there is no information currently available.

We note that the General Office has a Military Research Section. This section is said to conduct research on domestic and international military issues of interest to the top GSD leadership and it likely serves as a small "think-tank" for them.291

We also note that under the General Office is the Confidential Bureau (Jiyao Ju). In the past, the DPMP has carried the Confidential Bureau as an independent bureau. However, recent interviews indicate that some time in the undetermined past, the Confidential Bureau was merged into the General Office. At the moment, this cannot be verified, but this study shall carry the Confidential Bureau under the General Office for the moment.

Although no data for the internal organization of the Confidential Bureau was found it is likely that it performs the same functions as the Confidential Bureau of the Second Department. Specifically, the handling, storage, accountability, and routing of classified and sensitive documents and materials. (See section of paper on Second Department for documentation). It may also be responsible for the encryption and decoding of secure messages.292 In discussing the Confidential Bureau of the CMC, James Mulvenon offers the following:

290 Based on conversations with knowledgeable individuals.
291 The basis of including the Military Research Section in the organizational chart and the brief description of its functions is the comments of a PLA officer to the author. The DPMP (1999) also lists a Military Research Section under the General Office.
292 The 15 February 2000 issue of Keji bao [Science and Technology] (a PRC newspaper) discussed the encryption expertise of a PLAAF officer serving in the Confidential Section of an Air Force Division in the Guangzhou MR. Of note, the officer was a graduate of the PLA Air Force Electronics Engineering Academy. Based on the holdings of Ellis Melvin.
the Confidential Bureau (Jiyao Ju)...is responsible for disseminating and protecting all important documents...ranging from personnel dossiers to classified and unclassified policy papers.293

Of interest, Mulvenon finds that within the CMC the Confidential Bureau resides within the General Office of the CMC. Hence, the Confidential Bureau of the GSD may in fact also reside within the GSD’s General Office. Of note, it is unclear at this point if the GSD’s Confidential Bureau is performing its functions for the entire GSD, acting as a classified internal post office of sorts, or if it is just servicing the top GSD leadership.

Science & Technology Committee (Kejiwei)

The functions or roles of this committee within the GSD are unclear and its organization is unknown. It is included due to its listing from time to time in the DPMP.

Operations Department (Zuozhan Bu)

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293 Conversation with James Mulvenon, July 2002.
Mission. The Operations Department of the GSD is also known as the First Department (Yi Bu). It is universally viewed as “first” in GSD protocol order in recognition of it being one of the first of the “departments” to be established (pre-dating 1949) and its primacy in the organizational hierarchy of the GSD.294

The Operations Department is responsible for developing PLA war plans and tracking Chinese and foreign military activity on a daily basis in peacetime for the top leadership of the PLA. It also exercises national-level command and control over Chinese military operations on behalf of the CMC in time of war.

According to Michael Swaine, whereas the other GSD sub-orginizations come under the supervision of one of the various Deputy Chiefs of the General Staff, the First Bureau “is directly under the control of the GSD director.”295

The First Bureau is the functional equivalent of the J-3 on the Pentagon’s Joint Staff. Assuming the PLA in fact draws up formal operational plans (OPLANS) or the equivalent of contingency plans (CONPLANS), it is the Operations Department that does them. Hong Kong’s Kuo Chiao Ching ["Wide Angle" magazine] gives the Operations Department mission as "mapping out operational plans" and suggests that, career-wise; the "First Bureau" is likely the organizational heavyweight in the GSD and a prime assignment for those who become its leaders.296

Organization. There is not very much known about the organization of the Operations Department. Much is anecdotal. Some knowledgeable individuals assert that the Operations Department has at least 10 major sub-departments or bureaus.

National Command Center. Some western analysts of the PLA ascribe to the First Department a key role in the manning and operations of the PLA’s national military command and control center. According to Major Mark Stokes,

294 Once again, Chinese language periodicals savvy in the ways of the PLA, usually go through listings of the sub-organizations of the GSD (or any organization for that matter) in a protocol sequence. For example, the Hong Kong periodical Kuo chiao ching [Wide Angle], which is alleged to have excellent access or ties to the PLA, lists the sub-organizations of the GSD in what many savants consider to be very close to the correct protocol precedence. See Li Kuo-chuang, “Deputy Chief of General Staff Kui Fulin, Special Administrative Region Preparatory Committee Member from the General Staff,” Kuo chiao ching, 16 February 1999, in FBIS. The protocol in this article is given as: "operations, intelligence, communications, military training, military affairs, armament, mobilization, artillery units, engineering units, anti-chemical units, electronic warfare, radar units, army aviation units, surveying and cartography, and confidential work." We note that not all sub-organizations are listed here.


296 Ibid. "This is an important department, a post once held by General Zhang Zhen, (then) Vice Chairman of the CMC, in the early 1950s."
The central headquarters of the PLA GSD C4I apparatus is located in the Xishan area of the western suburbs of Beijing. It functions as a communications, intelligence, and combat control center. In short, the Xishan command complex is the operational nerve center of the PLA ground units, air forces, navies, and strategic missile forces, similar in nature to the Pentagon’s National Military Command Center. The Command and Control headquarters includes the GSD First Department (known as Zongcan Zuozhan Bu), key Second Department offices, and the Third Department. The First Department, under direct control of the GSD director, mans the Command and Control Headquarters 24 hours a day.297

Consequently, there is most likely some bureau within the First Department that is responsible for the Yi Bu role in command center operations; hence the notional bureau in the organizational chart above. The General Office is also notional. We do know that the Operations Department does have a Political Department and that the Political Department has a Cadre Office under it.298

**Service Bureaus.** Some students of the PLA assess that each of the services—the PLA Ground Forces, PLA Navy, PLA Air Force, and Strategic Rocket Forces (2nd Artillery)—have a bureau within the Operations Department, a reasonable proposition which is notionally included in this study. Some knowledgeable individuals assert that these service bureaus track and report on the daily activities of their respective services for the CMC in peacetime, and coordinate their activities in time of war.

**Two Other Bureaus?** In the past, the DPMP has consistently carried the Meteorological Bureau and the Survey & Cartography General Bureau as independent organizations within the GSD. However, knowledgeable individuals assert that some time in the undetermined past these two organizations were moved under the Operations Department. There is currently no way to verify this. Therefore, they shall be carried in this study under the Operations Department with the understanding that this may not be correct.

A detailed discussion of the organization, roles, and missions of these two bureaus can be found in subsequent sections of this paper.

**Second Department (Er Bu)**

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298 Jiefangjun bao, 30 December 1999, p. 3.
The GSD's Second Department (or, alternately, Military Intelligence Department, *Qingbao Bu*) is one of two major intelligence organizations under the direct control of the GSD. The other is the Third Department (next section) that is responsible for signals intelligence (SIGINT).

Of all of the GSD sub-organizations discussed in this paper, the Second Department and Third Department are the two that are:

- the most speculative,
- the least grounded in any type of verifiable data, and
- the two in which we should have the least confidence due to lack of data (almost non-existent) in the public domain.

Frankly, given the near-total lack of public domain sources available, it is impossible to know if the organizational discussion that follows has any semblance to
reality. Unlike many of the other sub-organizations of the GSD, there are, for obvious reasons, no insights to be gleaned from a detailed reading of mainland publications such as Jiefangjun Bao. Therefore, this section of the paper (and the section of the paper on the Third Department) will be presented in a somewhat different format from others. First, a very brief discussion of the available sources will be presented. And, second, there will be only a simple listing of the sub-organizations in Chart 4 and information about them as presented in the sources at hand.

**Sources.** This section must of necessity rely on only a meager handful of sources that cannot be verified. First source: the DPMP. The DPMP lists only one sub-organization under the Second Department—the 3rd Bureau (Military Attachés). It is the only box on the chart that is displayed with a solid line. This is because the DPMP usually only lists personalities or organizations which its researchers have found identified in the mainland Chinese press. Therefore, there is certain high-end reliability to its listings. Unfortunately, the DPMP, as mentioned, has only one entry for the Second Department. Second source: the Federation of American Scientists (hereafter FAS). The FAS maintains a web site on world intelligence organizations to include the Second Department (and Third Department) of the PLA. However, the information on this site is based on articles from the Hong Kong press. As a general rule, the Hong Kong press should usually be considered of low (or at best uneven) reliability. Third source: this student found some other Hong Press articles not cited by the FAS site. But here also one should consider these articles as low in reliability. Fourth source: some few insights were provided from the draft of a forthcoming academic volume on the modernization of the PLA. Fifth source: a 1994 volume, Chinese Intelligence Operations, by Nicholas Eftimiades. Frankly, this volume is the mainstay of this entire section and the following section on the Third Department. Consequently, a word or two about the volume is in order.

Besides mining open source materials such as academic articles and court case records, the author informs the reader that the volume also incorporated "...dozens of interviews with Chinese dissidents, defectors, and active intelligence officers..." conducted both by the Mr. Eftimiades and by proxy using another researcher. The

300 There are, of course, exceptions to blanket statement. For example, Kuoang chiao ching [Wide Angle] has a decent track record of explaining ongoing events in the PLA. However, most Hong Press articles are too sensational to be considered good sources in the absence of other corroborating data. But especially in the realm of PRC intelligence issues, our starting point with the Hong Kong press should be a posture of high-end skepticism.
301 Professor David Shambaugh graciously shared some of the raw data from Chapter 4 of Reforming China's Military, University of California Press, forthcoming.
303 Eftimiades, p. 11.
sections of the book of greatest utility for the purposes of this paper are those on organization. This is also the type of information in the volume for which was most dependent upon the interviews (and understandably so). Moreover, the author chose to list his sources only by number; for example, "Source No. 3" (also understandable).

What does this mean for this paper on the GSD? It means that this student has absolutely no way to gauge the reliability of what is presented in the Eftimiades volume as far as the organization or missions of the Second Department and Third Department are concerned. One does not question in any way that the interviews took place. But neither can one assess the reliability of the information derived from them. Nevertheless, in spite of these reservations, and given the paucity of material on the Second (and Third) Department, this student chose to use the information in the Eftimiades volume as a "baseline" for what should be considered a very, very notional organizational structure. The only other option was to leave a big "blank" for two major GSD organizations. With all of the above caveats and warnings, we can proceed to discuss the Second Department.

Mission. The Second Department appears to have two key missions. First, it is responsible for the collection and analysis of strategic-level military and political intelligence. To a certain degree, its strategic intelligence missions may overlap somewhat with those of the Ministry of State Security (MSS). Second, the Second Department may have some responsibility for providing operational-level intelligence to the Military Regions, although there is no authoritative information available to help explain the relationship between the Second Department and the MRs.304

The few sources available on this subject all suggest that the Second Department relies heavily on Human Intelligence, or HUMINT for the collection of raw information. According to the Hong Kong publication Cheng Ming:

The Second Department of the PLA General Staff headquarters is mainly responsible for collecting military information, which can be divided into three major parts: First, sending military attaches to Chinese embassies abroad; second, sending special agents to foreign countries under the cover of various identities; and third, conducting military intelligence analysis based on information publicly published in foreign countries.305

Eftimiades refers to the Second Department as, "...the second largest organization in the PRC involved in HUMINT collection" and that its HUMINT operations support "tactical, strategic, and technological" military intelligence requirements.306 He further assesses that the Second Department's key "consumers" are the leadership of the GSD, the

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304 See Eftimiades, Chapter 9, for discussion of the role of the Second Department in providing operational intelligence to the MRs.
305 Tan Po, "Communist China's Intelligence, External Affairs Research Organs," Cheng ming, 1 September 1996, in FBIS.
306 Eftimiades, pp. 75-76.
leadership of the Central Military Commission, the Ministry of National Defense, the service headquarters, "the military-industrial complex," and "unit commanders." 307

**Organization.** By going through what the sources at hand have provided by way of information on the organization of the Second Department, we will also be able to get a notional glimpse of some of this organization's other missions.

**General Office.** Strictly notional on the part of this author. This office likely handles the administrative work of the Second Department leadership, controls access to the department's leadership, and acts as the conduit for further coordination up the GSD chain and beyond as well as below throughout the Second Department.

**Political Department.** Effimiaides asserts the existence of a Political Department under the Second Department:

This unit reports to the General Political Department (GPD) and reflects a system of Party control that is an inextricable part of the Second Department's structure. The GPD is in charge of counterintelligence as it relates to political control and ideological education of the armed forces. 308

While the above comments about the relationship of the Second Department's Political Department to the GPD and its alleged counterintelligence functions are otherwise unverified (although reasonable), one of Effimiaides' unnamed numbered sources does seem to have it right when it is suggested that another role of the Political Department is to take responsibility for "officer appointments, promotions, and transfer of personnel." 309 Assuming there is a Political Department, it likely has the same generic duties all Political Departments have in each of the sub-organizations of the GSD, and throughout the PLA for that matter, one of which is personnel issues. (See the section in this paper on GSD Political Department).

**1st Bureau.** The two sources that mention this bureau, the Effimiaides volume and the Federation of American Scientists web site, both assert that the 1st Bureau is concerned with collection (as opposed to analysis). Effimiaides tells us that the 1st Bureau has stations around China that he describes as "geographic divisions." They are: Beijing, Shenyang, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Nanjing. 310 According to Effimiaides:

The First Bureau focuses its collection efforts primarily on Hong Kong and Taiwan. However, it also collects against targets world-wide...The five geographically defined divisions also conduct clandestine intelligence operations overseas. For example, the Shenyang division collects against Russia, Eastern Europe, and Japan...The Guangzhou Division also

307 Ibid., p. 75.
308 Ibid., p. 85.
309 Ibid.
310 Ibid, p. 79, citing anonymous numbered sources.
appears to collect against targets based on geographic proximity. Its primary targets are persons in Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan...The Shanghai and Nanking divisions...target Western Europe and the United States respectively. 311

The FAS web site asserts that, "...the First Bureau is responsible for collecting information on Taiwan and Hong Kong." 312

2nd Bureau. Effimiaides is the sole source for the existence of the 2nd Bureau, which he describes as a "tactical reconnaissance bureau" or "Jun Jiancha Jhu." 313 Effimiaides sees this bureau as coordinating operational and tactical-level intelligence support by Second Department headquarters in Beijing for operational units down in the seven Military Regions. Effimiaides' schema also holds that there are operational and tactical intelligence units down in the Military Regions that support their respective commands but which belong to and are controlled by Second Department headquarters.

3rd Bureau. The 3rd Bureau of the Second Department is responsible for PLA Military Attaches. The Directory of PRC Military Personalities (DPMP) has carried a position for "Director, Attaché Department" (of the Second Department) since at least 1988. In 1990, the DPMP identified the "Attaché Department" as the "3rd Bureau." Effimiaides offers that, "The attaché bureau, also called the Third Bureau, is subdivided into several groups (Xiao zu) on the basis of geography." 314 Hence, under the 3rd Bureau on our organization chart we should place notional, subordinate geographic bureaus.

4th Bureau. According to Effimiaides, the 4th Bureau is an analytic organization that focuses on the "political and military policies" of The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Eastern Europe. Its mission is to "...produce and disseminate in-depth intelligence analyses..." 315

5th Bureau. Likewise, the 5th Bureau reportedly focuses its analyses on the United States and Western Europe. According to Effimiaides' research, "It uses primarily open-source publications in its political and economic analyses." 316

6th Bureau. Yet another analytic bureau, the 6th Bureau, we are told, "...focuses its efforts on the Asian nations that border China." 317

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311 Ibid., pp. 79-80.
312 See FAS web site, op. cit. This site cites several Hong Kong press articles in its bibliography on the PLA Second Department, but does not specify the sourcing for this (or any other) particular piece of information. So as with Effimiaides "numbered sources," all one can say is caveat emptor.
313 The following discussion (what there is of it) of the 2nd Bureau comes from Effimiaides, p. 79.
314 Ibid., p. 81.
315 Ibid., p.83.
316 Ibid.
317 Ibid.
According to Efthymiadis, this "functional bureau" is also known as the "Bureau of Science & Technology." The subordinate research institutes listed on the above organizational chart is also provided by Efthymiadis who asserts that, the 7th Bureau mission is to "research, design, and develop technology."

Arms Control. There may be an analytic office in the Second Department that is focused on foreign ballistic missile defense systems and arms control issues. This would not be surprising for two reasons: one substantive and one bureaucratic. On the substantive side, Chinese concern about U.S. Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD) systems, and, most recently, National Missile Defense (NMD) would naturally demand a special analytic focus from both a technical (threat) perspective and from a political-military perspective. The bureaucratic reason for such an organization might be (and here I speculate even further) due to the increasing involvement of the PLA in internal "interministry" meetings on China's policies toward international arms control issues. Moreover, the mere fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has its own Arms Control & Disarmament Department might also impel the PLA to have its own office. A PLA arms control analysis organization would fit comfortably into the Second Department given the fact that intelligence and foreign affairs are both usually the portfolio of a single Deputy Chief of the General Staff. But again, this is all speculation on this student's part.

Institute for International Relations. According to Efthymiadis and the FAS web site, this institute is directly subordinate to the Second Department. Supposedly located in Nanjing, Efthymiadis asserts that, "The Nanjing Foreign Affairs Institute---recently renamed the PLA Institute for International Relations---is the Second Department's school for espionage tradecraft and foreign languages." According to the Federation of American Scientists web site:

The PLA Institute of International Relations at Nanjing comes under the Second Department of the General Staff Department and is responsible for training military attaches, assistant military attaches and associate military attaches as well as secret agents to be posted abroad. It also supplies officers to the military intelligence sections of various military regions and group armies. The Institute was formed from the PLA "793" Foreign Language Institute, which moved from Zhangjiakou after the Cultural

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318 Ibid., p. 84.

319 There is some anecdotal evidence (albeit slight) for suggesting some sort of arms control organization under the Second Department. For example, at major "Track 2" meetings on TBMD some Chinese military attendees are identified as "research fellows" of the China Institute of International Strategic Studies (CISS), a think tank allegedly associated with the Second Department.

320 Ibid, p. 81.
Revolution and split into two institutions at Luoyang and Nanjing.  

This institute should be viewed as one of many colleges—usually called ‘command academies’—that the technical branches of the PLA utilize to train and commission officers in their respective branches.

Also worth noting is a *South China Morning Post* article from August 1999 that asserts that the (then) newly appointed Director of the Second Department, Major General Luo Yudong, was previously the ‘commandant of the Nanjing-based International Relations Academy...’

It is possible that the Institute for International Relations has a sub-unit called the Strategic Research Center.” This, however, is based on only two articles and the affiliation is based solely on the author being identified as a researcher in the Nanjing Institute for International Relations Strategic Research Center.

**Comprehensive Department.** The possible existence of this department comes from the research-in-progress of a forthcoming book on PLA modernization. At this point there is no information on the function of this department.

**Commission Security Bureau.** Effiniades is the only source encountered for this unit, the *Zhongwei jingwei ju*. According to his sources, the Commission Security Bureau “is responsible for the physical security of the CMC members and general department heads.” It may also have some role in providing for the “physical security of Second Department facilities.”

This information contradicts this student’s understanding of

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321 FAS web site, op. cit. Again, no specific citation for this particular information, just a generic bibliography of Hong Kong press. However, this information clearly comes, almost verbatim, from Tan Po’s article, “Spy Headquarters Behind The Shrubs—Supplement to ‘Secrets About CPC Spies,’” *Cheng ming*, 1 March 1997, in FBIS.

322 Willy Wo Lay Lam, “Unsung General To head PLA Intelligence Unit,” *South China Morning Post*, 24 August 1999, in FBIS. The *DPMP* for 1999 lists “International Relations Academy, Nanjing” and the *DPMP* for 1997 lists Luo Yudong as commandant.

323 “Roundup Report: PLA Proposes Establishment of East Asian Security System,” *Sing Tao Jih Bao*, 24 April 2000, in FBIS. This article quotes from an author by the name of Shi Yinhong, who it states is “a research fellow of the Intelligence Department of the General Staff Department of the mainland’s People’s Liberation Army...” Possibly a separate article written by the same author in *Zhanlue yu guanli* (March/April 2000, No. 2) identifies Shi as associated with the “Nanjing Institute for International Relations Strategic Research Center.”

324 Shambaugh, chart (in progress) to be included in Chapter 4.

325 Effiniades, p. 85 spells this in pinyin as “Zhongwei” but this is probably a typographic error.

326 Ibid.
the mission of the GSD’s Guards Bureau, or Jingwei Ju, which also has this mission. (See section on Guards Bureau below).

Confidential Bureau. According to Eftimiades, this bureau is the Jiya Ju in Chinese. His sources also refer to it as the "Secret Documents Bureau." This bureau "...is responsible for handling, and storing classified documents." In addition," according to Eftimiades, "it sets uniform standards for the classification level of documents."327

A possible piece of corroborative data about the generic roles of "confidential offices" comes from the Korean War. The 28 April 2000 edition of Jiefangjun Bao carried an article entitled "The Last 34 Days of Mao Anying on the Korean Battlefield." The article is the result of the recollections of a PLA veteran who served in the "Confidential Office" of the Headquarters of the Chinese People’s Volunteers. The article describes the Confidential Office as decoding encrypted messages, registering classified information, accounting for the destruction of classified information, and securing classified messages and documents.328

Records & Archives Bureau. According to Eftimiades, the sole source for information on this bureau, it is here that open source materials from abroad are catalogued and stored by the Second Department. It has, according to his sources, a "library services section" and "...the Foreign Military Publishing Company, which translates and republishes other nations' military journals."329

General Management Bureau. According to Eftimiades' sources, this organization "...provides Second Department personnel with logistical support in the form of transportation (cars and buses), office supplies, recreation centers, and food service."330

Research Institutes. Eftimiades lists the research institutes in the above organizational chart as subordinate to the Second Department. This student found no other information to either refute or corroborate this information.331

Liaison Bureau. This bureau is identified in Jiefangjun Bao, but its function was not discussed.332

China Institute for International Strategic Studies (CIISS). Formerly known as the Beijing Institute for International Studies, it has long been known that this think tank, now CIISS, is affiliated with the General Staff Department. In 1985 the late Doak Barnett wrote the following about BISS: "Established in 1979, it is the newest...(think tank)...but clearly it is of importance because of its direct link to the Ministry of National Defense and the General Staff Department." Barnett implies a close affiliation with the

327 Ibid.
328 Information provided to author by Ellis Melvin who translated the article and provided a synopsis.
329 Ibid.
330 Ibid.
331 Ibid., p. 84.
332 Jiefangjun bao, 7 March 1996. The article indicates the bureau had as its Director a Senior Colonel who was subsequently assigned as Defense Attaché to Pakistan with the rank of major general.
Second Department through the founding leadership of the institute and his assessment that "other institute staff members divide their time between the institute and the G-2 division of the General Staff Department." 333 Efthimiaes asserts the linkage more directly, but also relies on Barnett's work. 334 In the context of the Chinese system it would be bureaucratically natural to have CIISS fall under the Second Department given that the Deputy Chief of the General Staff who has responsibility for intelligence matters also has responsibility for foreign military relations and analysis of foreign security trends. CIISS publishes a journal in both Chinese and English, International Strategic Studies, which carries very good articles reflecting Chinese views of international and regional security affairs. It is available to foreigners via subscription.

334 Efthimiaes, p. 82.
Figure 4.5  GSD 3rd Department

Third Department (San Bu)

Mission. The Third Department of the GSD is apparently responsible for "signals intelligence" (SIGINT); meaning the interception, processing, and dissemination of communications transmissions from foreign entities. This department, according to Mark Stokes, is somewhat analogous to the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA). Desmond Ball asserts that the Third Department is also known as the "Technical Department," although there is no way to confirm this.335
Caveats. The same caveats that apply to the section on the Second Department above apply to this section; we are in highly speculative territory. Indeed, even less is known about the Third Department than the Second Department. There is nothing at all that can be stated with any confidence in this entire section of the paper which is why Chart 6 above has lines and boxes in dashed lines and every box has a question mark (?) inside of it. (The one exception is the Legal Advisory Office).

Sources. There are even fewer sources on the Third Department than for the Second Department. The Eftimiades volume has almost nothing to say about this organization other than it exists and it conducts the Sigint function. The Federation of American Scientists web site has a page on the Third Department that relies on a few Hong Kong press articles.336 One very short article in Jane's Defense Weekly talks briefly about alleged Chinese Sigint sites in Laos and Burma but offers no sources.337 A relatively longer and very interesting article in Jane's Intelligence Review by Desmond Ball of the Australian National University is the source of the majority of the Sigint sites listed on the chart above.338 But here too, no sources are listed. The article merely states that "All references used in preparing this article can be obtained from the editor." Therefore, in this section of the paper, both this student and the readers of this paper are asked to accept a lot on face value. Consequently, the chart above is not to be considered an organization chart per se but, rather, a way to organize what little open source data there is.

Organization.

General Office. Strictly speculation on the part of the author based on the assumption that all major GSD sub-organizations have their own administrative centers.

Political Department. Strictly speculation on the part of the author. Assuming that Eftimiades is correct in that the Second Department has a Political Department, then so too might the Third Department have one.

8th Bureau. According to a May 2000 Washington Times article, the 8th Bureau of the Third Department is "...the unit in charge of intercepting electronic communications from the former Soviet Union," and that it also targets the Central Asian republics. The

335 Stokes (p. 33) refers to the Third Department, along with the "GSD Electronic Countermeasures and Radar Department" as "China's answer to the U.S. National Security Agency." Eftimiades (ibid., p. 94) asserts that "SIGINT operations are the responsibility of that department." Desmond Ball (see full citation below) tells us that, "The Chinese national SIGINT agency responsible for managing China's strategic SIGINT capabilities and operations is the 3rd or Technical Department of the GSD."

336 See <www.fas.org/irp/world/china/pla/dept_3.htm> Hereafter, FAS.


338 Desmond Ball, "Signals Intelligence In China," Jane's Intelligence Review, Vol. 7 Number 8, 1 August 1995, pp. 365-370. This article also provides two maps showing the locations of alleged 3rd Department Sigint sites.
article asserts that one station is located in Dingyuanchen and is "aimed at the Russian border."339

12th Bureau. The same Washington Times article claims that the 12th Bureau is responsible "...for identifying and tracking foreign satellites—namely, U.S. military satellites." The article asserts that one 12th Bureau facility is located in Changi.340

Other Bureaus. If the Washington Times article is correct (and we have no way of knowing if it is) then it would stand to reason that the Third Department organization is likely comprised of numbered bureaus (ju) that are targeted against specific countries (let's call them "regional bureaus") and other numbered bureaus that are targeted against specific types of communications systems such as satellites, fax, mobile phones, etc. These might be termed "functional bureaus." However, at this point this we are speculating quite a bit. But having said that, if that were the structure of the Third Department, then most, if not all, of the sites listed on Chart 6 above under "Miscellaneous Alleged Sigint Sites in China" would then likely fall under either a numbered "regional bureau" or "functional bureau."

Foreign Language Institute. Within the PLA military intelligence xitong (or community) this school is apparently the "sister institute" to the Second Department's Institute of International Relations. According to the Federation of American Scientists:

The PLA Foreign Language Institute at Luoyang comes under the Third Department of the General Staff Department and is responsible for training foreign language cadres for the monitoring of foreign military intelligence. The Institute was formed from the PLA "793" Foreign Language Institute, which moved from Zhangjiakou after the Cultural Revolution and split into two institutions at Luoyang and Nanjing.341

Miscellaneous Sigint Sites in China. Obviously, this is not a sub-organization of the Third Department, but rather a listing of alleged Sigint sites. All of the alleged site locations on Chart 6 come from the Ball article.342 In each box on the chart is the alleged location of the site and target of its collection efforts. Ball asserts that the Third Department's "net control station" is located in Xibeiwang, in the northwest (Haidian District) quadrant of Beijing. We are not told what this net control station does.

Alleged SIGINT Sites Outside of China. There is some open press reporting that asserts that the Third Department does have a few SIGINT sites located outside of China. Robert Karniol of Jane's reported in 1994 that Vientiane had allowed Beijing to place three collection sites within Laos' southern province of Champasak; one in Khong and the

340 Ibid.
341 FAS, web page
342 Ball, ibid, p. 366.
two others at unknown locations.\textsuperscript{343} Karniol also mentions that China has SIGINT sites in Burma, but does not provide a location. Ball, however, refers readers to previous Jane's reporting in 1992 that passed on rumors that Burma had permitted the Third Department to establish Sigint sites in the Coco Islands in the Andaman Sea; presumably to monitor India.\textsuperscript{344} Moreover, Ball states that "...a SIGINT station has evidently been established on Rocky Island (Shi-tao), near Woody Island (Lin -tao) in the Paracel Archipelago" for coverage of the South China Sea.\textsuperscript{345} Finally, highly speculative U.S. press reporting from 1999 alleges that there may be some Chinese-Cuban collaboration at a Cuban SIGINT site at Lourdes originally established years back with Soviet assistance.\textsuperscript{346} If any of these sites do exist, then it somewhat undercuts the oft-heard PLA mantra that China does not station troops abroad.

\textit{Legal Advisory Office. Jiefangjun Bao} has referred to this office in at least one article in the past.\textsuperscript{347}

\textbf{Internal Monitoring.} As a collateral mission, some who have written about the Third Department assert that it also monitors internal PLA communications as well as foreign communications. One Hong Kong journalist views the monitoring of internal PLA communications as another control mechanism over the PLA:

By taking direct command of military communications stations based in all parts of the country, the CPC Central Military Commission and the PLA General Staff Headquarters can not only ensure a successful interception of enemy radio communications, but can also make sure that none of the wire or wireless communications and contacts among major military regions can escape the ears of these communications stations, thus effectively attaining the goal of imposing direct supervision and control over all major military regions, all provincial military districts, and all group armies.\textsuperscript{348}

\textsuperscript{343} Karniol, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{344} Ball, p. 367.
\textsuperscript{345} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{347} Jiefangjun bao, 12 December 1999. From the holdings of Ellis Melvin.
\textsuperscript{348} Huang Yung-nien, "Intelligence Background of Zhou Borong, deputy commander of Hong Kong Garrison," Chien Shao, 1 April 1996 (FBIS). Desmond Ball
While this might sound a bit draconian—and a bit melodramatic which is often true of the Hong Kong press—the fact of the matter is that monitoring PLA internal communications is a credible mission for spot-checking operational security (OPSEC) of the forces in the field, if not for "loyalty checks."

**Relationship To MRs.** There is some confusion in this student's mind over who controls strategic-level Sigint units in the MRs; is it the Third Department Headquarters in Beijing or the Commander of the Military Region? Most likely, the former is the case, but we just are not sure from the information available. Desmond Ball provides the following:

The principal SIGINT collection and processing stations are operated by the 3rd Bureaus attached to the headquarters of each of the military regions i.e. Beijing, Shenyang, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Lanzhou, Jinan, and Nanjing. These bureaus also control several subsidiary SIGINT stations in each of their respective regions.......349

and,

The large ground stations operated by the 3rd Bureaus of the 3rd Department are attached to the headquarters of the seven military regions. Accordingly, they have different functional and geographic responsibilities, for example: the 3rd Bureau's station at Lanzhou is responsible for monitoring Russian signal traffic and has the critical mission of providing strategic early warning of a Russian missile attack...350

The meaning of the word "attached" is difficult to understand from the context of the discussion. On the other hand, Hong Kong journalist Huang Yung-nien of Chien Shao leaves no doubt that the MR staffs and the MR commanders have almost no authority over the Third Department organizations that operate within their regions.

the communications stations are entirely the 'agencies' of the Third Department of the PLA General Staff Headquarters which have no affiliations to the provincial military district and the military region of where they are based...the personnel composition, budgets, and establishments of these communications stations are

(p. 367) also briefly mentions the Third Department mission of monitoring internal communications.

349 Ball, p. 366.
350 Ibid., p. 367.
entirely under the jurisdiction of the Third Department of the PLA General Staff Headquarters, and are not related at all with local troops. 351

But having presented this last interpretation, the fact is that neither Wall nor Huang give us any indication of how reliable their information is, so we really cannot come down on either side ("attached" or "independent") of the question about who controls Sigint assets in the field.

Communications Department (*Tongxin Bu*)

*Figure 4.6  GSD Communications Department*

The Communications Department is the headquarters for the PLA Signal Corps. But it is much more than just a "branch" of the PLA ground forces. It is the national-level organization responsible for all aspects of military and strategic-level communications and automation. It has no single counterpart in the U.S. military establishment. Like most departments of the GSD, the various functions it performs are found imbedded in multiple U.S. defense organizations. In the U.S., the Communications Department's (CD) roles and missions would cut across portions of the mandates of the following organizations:

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351 Huang, "Intelligence Background of Zhou Borang."
• The Defense Information Systems Agency;
• The National Security Agency;
• The J-6 on the Joint Staff;
• The Director of Information Systems for Command, Control, Communications & Computers, U.S. Army;
• The U.S. Army Information Systems Command;
• The U.S. Army Signal Center and School at Fort Gordon; and
• The U.S. Army Signal Branch Management Office, to name just a few.

Although there is no definitive data spelling out specific CD responsibilities, portions of its probable mandate can be clearly inferred from reading the Chinese press. Its roles, missions, and activities appear to include:

• Developing, constructing, operating, and maintaining the PLA's China-wide operational military command and control system, and the PLA's administrative communication system (the "All-Army Public Data Exchange Network")\(^{352}\)
• Probably installing, manning, and maintaining the C4I systems in the PLA's national command and control center in the Western Hills (Xishan) district of Beijing,\(^ {353}\)
• Working with civilian ministries at the national and provincial levels to enhance China's national communications infrastructure.\(^ {354}\)

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\(^{352}\) See Tang Shuhai, "All-Army Public Data Exchange Network Takes Initial Shape," \textit{Jiefangjun bao}, 18 September 1995 (FBIS). "The army data exchange network is responsible for the all-army automatic transmission and exchange of military information in data, pictures, charts, and writing..." The article asserts the network was begun in 1987. The PLA signal corps has trained over 1,000 technicians so far, it is claimed, to operate and maintain the system that covers "all units stationed in medium and large cities across China and along the coast."

\(^{353}\) Swaine, pp.122-127. Swaine asserts that "The central headquarters of the PLA command and control apparatus is located in the Western Hills area of Beijing. It functions not only as a communications center, but also as an intelligence center and a command and control center." Assuming Swaine is correct in this assertion, then it would stand to reason that the Communications Department would have responsibility for communications in the center. Stokes also asserts the existence of the Xishan complex and mentions secure telephone links, landline comms, and in the future, strategic SATCOM and VSAT links down to the division level from Xishan. See Stokes, pp. 45-46.

\(^{354}\) The Communications Department has been instrumental in working with the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications since 1993 to construct a massive nation-wide
- Providing guidance to and oversight of the communications departments in the Military Regions,
- Developing and disseminating strategic, operational, and tactical-level combat communications doctrine for the rest of the PLA,\textsuperscript{355}
- Managing high-technology communications research and development institutes that are likely organic to the CD,\textsuperscript{356}
- Exercising operational and administrative control (OPCON and ADCON) over strategic-level military communications units (probably mobile and fixed-station units) that are organic to the CD,
- Probably working with other GSD departments such as the Training Department to promulgate training regulations and standards for Signal Corps officers, NCOs, and troops,
- Managing military academies that train officers, NCOs, and soldiers for the PLA Signal Corps,\textsuperscript{357}
- Likely responsible for developing information warfare doctrine,\textsuperscript{358}
- Providing emergency communications and assisting in the restoration of local communications in the interior during natural disasters,\textsuperscript{359}

\textsuperscript{355} Cheng Gang and Guan Ke, "Beijing Hosts Ceremony Celebrating Publication of 'Military Communications,'" \textit{Jiefangjun bao}, 9 November 1995 (FBIS).

\textsuperscript{356} "PLA Develops Mobile Satellite Communications Antenna," \textit{Xinhua}, 14 December 1999, in FBIS. Asserts that "a certain communications technology research institute under the General Staff Department" recently developed a phased-array antenna for satellite communications, thereby achieving "the goal of mobile communications and improving the rapid-reaction capability of its troops."

\textsuperscript{357} Luo Yuwen, "Zhang Wannian Attends Lecture on Military Communications,\textit{Xinhua}, 22 April 1999, in FBIS. This article mentions in passing a "communications Commanding Institute." Cheng Gang and Guan Ke (ibid.) refer to this institute as the Communications Command Academy.


\textsuperscript{359} Hsiao Yueh, "Jiang Zemin Orders PLA to help Combat Floods, Zhang Wannian Orders Emergency Troop Deployments," \textit{Ching pao}, 1 September 1998, in FBIS. According to this article the Communications Department of the GSD provided
• It is possible (just speculation at this point), that the CD shares responsibility for frequency management nation-wide with the Ministry of Information Industry (MII), which was recently formed by merging the former Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications and Ministry of Electronics Industry) and finally,

• The CD reportedly has a role, along with other national-level military and civilian organizations, in providing communications and automation security,

• Finally, the CD apparently designs, develops, installs, and maintains communications and data networks for other PLA entities that require long-haul communications for non-operational applications. For example, the CD was instrumental in the development of the GPD's "All-Army Propaganda and Cultural Information Network," established in 1999.360

Although the PLA was ordered to divest itself from its business enterprises in 1999, and PRC officials claim the divestiture has been accomplished, it is likely that the CD continues to operate its various former telecommunications and computer concerns. By some accounts, the PLA (read, Communications Department) is becoming even more deeply entrenched in the commercial telecommunications sector.361 Previous direct Communications Department concerns included China Electronics Systems Engineering Corporation (CESEC), and may also have included Pinghe Electronics Corporation, Ltd., and China Zihua Corporation, Ltd. 362

It is very clear that aside from its role in managing the PLA's military communications systems the CD is already a leading player in the modernization of China's national telecommunications infrastructure. There are ample examples of the Communication Department's involvement in this endeavor and the trend seems to be one of partnering more and more with Chinese corporations and universities to assist in the development of commercial telecommunications systems with direct military applications.

But while the Chinese press is ample on the commercial and infrastructure-building aspects of CD work, it is extremely difficult to find open source articles that discuss its responsibilities in the more traditional role of managing and directing tactical,

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mobile radio stations, ultra short wave communications, cellular phones, and generators to both restore local communications and support other PLA relief efforts. See also Ma Xiaochun, "PLA Rushes Funds, Equipment to Flooded Areas," Xinhua, 25 August 1998, in FBIS.

360 "Yu Yongbo Reviews Military Propaganda Network," Xinhua, 26 December 1999, in FBIS.


operational, and strategic-level military communications—providing C4I to warfighters. However, one short but telling article in Jiefangjun Bao listed the basic elements of the PLA’s military communications network and it provides some idea of the type of networks over which the Communications Department presides.363 It includes:

- a military telephone network (unsecure)
- a secure telephone network
- the "All-Army Data Communication Network" (probably the "All-Army Public Data Exchange Network" referred to above)
- a "comprehensive communication system for field operations" which "integrates sound, light, and electronics, with air, ground, underground, and submarine links." (Likely the tactical/operational network that also incorporates fiber-optic cable and satcom).

Yet a second article refers to the PLA’s communications system as comprising:

- underground networks of fiber-optic cables,
- communications satellites,
- microwave links,
- short-wave radio stations, and
- automated command and control networks.364

What this probably means is that the CD likely has many, many organic units and troops that are both involved in fixed-station facilities (for example HF, microwave, satcom, telephone switching facilities, or even tropospheric scatterer units) as well as mobile (deployable) strategic-level communications packages. It also likely means that the CD has organic maintenance and logistics units up through depot-level dedicated to the repair, supply, maintenance, testing, and calibration of such equipment and "housekeeping" responsibilities for the facilities that house them. If one had access to the figures involved it would not be surprising to learn that the Communications Department has direct control over multiple thousands of PLA "communicators in the field" that are not organic to the units within Military Regions but that are direct CD assets.

In the final analysis, it would appear that the overarching major military mission of the Communications Department is to plan and direct the complete overhaul and modernization of the PLA's operational and administrative communications networks. In effect, the CD is charged to create a telecommunications system capable of supporting the PLA’s operational aspirations to fight "Local Wars Under Modern High-tech Conditions."


364 Li Xuanqing and Ma Xiaochun, "Armed Forces Communications Become Multidimensional," Xinhua, 16 July 1997, in FBIS.
In this regard, the Communications Department is leading what PLA communicators refer to as the “Six Changes” in military communications. These include “changing”:

1. from analogue communications to digital communications,
2. from electric cables to fiber-optic cables,
3. from single-purpose terminals to multi-purpose terminals,
4. from mechano-electrical switching systems to automated switching systems,
5. from single operation (single-tasking) networks to comprehensive (multi-tasking) networks, and
6. from manual management of telecommunications systems to automated and “intelligent” systems management.\textsuperscript{365}

Given all of the roles and missions described above, one would suspect that the CD is a rather large organization within the GSD, with multiple “bureaus” and “offices” under it. But while our ability to parse Communications Department responsibilities is respectable, the same cannot be said for its specific organization. The best we can do is create a notional organizational chart (see Figure 4.6 above) in which we list organizations for which we have data (solid lines) and speculate about what ought to be there (dashed lines) given what we know. Clearly, this not very satisfying.

*Military Academies and Institutes.* There is no question that the CD has its own teaching academies and institutes.\textsuperscript{366} But whether there is a separate bureau within the Communications Department that manages them (in conjunction with the Military Training Department) is not known.

*Communications Security Bureau.* Strictly notional on part of the author. There is likely some organization within the CD that deals exclusively with “COMSEC” issues.

*Communications Automation Bureau.* Strictly notional on part of the author. Likely works on automation and automation security.

*Strategic Communications Bureau.* Strictly notional on part of the author. There is likely some separate bureau that attends to issues associated with strategic-level fixed telecommunications; a very different world apart from tactical communications. This probably entails communications support to the national command authorities and other national-level PLA organizations. This organization would also provide manning, operations, and maintenance of the communications links within the PLA national command center at Xishan.

\textsuperscript{365} Cheng and Li, See also Li and Ma.

\textsuperscript{366} The Communications Command Academy (Wuhan) is identified in the *DPMP* for 1999 (p. 206). It may well be that the newly created (July 1999) PLA Science & Engineering University comes under the Communications Department. At the moment, it is discussed in the section of this paper that discusses the Service Arms Department of the GSD and, for the moment, listed under the SAD, not the Communications Department.
Tactical Communications Bureau. Strictly notional on part of the author. Looks "down" to the Military Regions and below. The issue is communications support to war-fighting units at the operational and tactical levels of warfare.

Organic Signal Corps Units. Probably regiment or brigade-sized units under direct control of Communications Department in both fixed station and mobile configurations. One unit was identified: the 3rd Signal Regiment.367 These units (1) enable national military command and control communications and (2) probably can be dispatched by the NCA for local disasters, internal unrest, or to supplement capabilities of tactical units (MR and below) during wartime crisis.368

Communications R & D Institutes. Clearly, the CD will have its own R & D institutes. At least one, the Information Engineering Academy, has been identified.369

Military Affairs Bureau. This bureau was listed in the 1996 and 1997 editions of the DPMP, but no other information on its existence was found by this student.

Corporations. As mentioned previously, at a minimum, CESEC likely remains as a Communications Department entity.

Logistics Training Group. Identified in Jiefangjun Bao.370

Engineer Unit. Identified in Jiefangjun Bao.371

368 These roles and missions would be somewhat analogous to author's own experiences in the 11th Signal Brigade.
369 According to Mark Stokes, the "Information Engineering Academy" is subordinate to the "GSD Telecommunications Department." See Stokes, p. 45.
Data on the organization of this GSD department was difficult to come by; almost nil. The *DPMP* series does not list it at all. We do, however, have some idea about its focus and missions. Mark Stokes discusses it in his monograph and Ball also touches on it in his article on PLA signals intelligence, although neither have great detail. As Stokes comments, "there is still a gap in knowledge" about it.\footnote{Stokes, p. 72, footnote 100.} Hasten to add there is also some confusion and disagreement among specialists as to whether or not this department is numbered as the "Fourth Department." Ball and Stokes assert that the Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department (hereafter, ECM
& RD) is known internally as the "Fourth Department." SEROLD's DPMP series all carry the Communications Department (Tongxin Bu, Signal Corps) as the "Fourth Department."

The confusion may be a result, in part, of the hazy operational line that separates Information Warfare (IW) from electronic intelligence (ELINT) as disciplines, and the responsibilities for each carried out by the Communications Department and the ECM & RD may overlap. Of interest, Mark Stokes cites a 1997 PLA NDU Press article authored by Major General Zhang Youcai that discusses theater-level electronic countermeasures. Given the substance of the article (i.e., a discussion of ECM) Stokes speculated that Zhang is "likely director or deputy director" of the ECM & RD (which he refers to as the Fourth Department). However, in the 1999 DPMP, the Communications Department (which the DPMP refers to as the Fourth Department) carries Zhang Youcai as director of the Tongxin Bu (Communications Department-Fourth Department).

Subsequent discussions with knowledgeable individuals during the course of the research for this study indicate that the ECM & RD is indeed numbered as the Fourth Department. The previous discrepancies may have also been a function of the fact that prior to the establishment of the ECM & RD it was the Communications Department that was numbered as the Fourth Department.

Both Ball and Stokes agree that the ECM & RD has the PLA's tactical ELINT portfolio, and that it serves as an important adjunct to the strategic-level SIGINT functions performed by the Third Department. The key point to remember about the ECM & RD is that its focus is at the operational and tactical levels of warfare.

According to Ball, "In 1990 a 4th Department was established at the same level as the 2nd and 3rd Departments and this reflected the upgrading of China's tactical SIGINT and EW capabilities over recent years." Ball further asserts that prior to the establishment of the ECM & RD electronic warfare was a Second Department responsibility. Stokes offers the following:

The GSD Electronic Countermeasures and Radar Department (also known as the GSD Fourth Department), established in 1990, has overall responsibility for electronic warfare, including electronic intelligence collection and maintenance of threat libraries and electronic orders of battle. Besides coordinating PLA electronic warfare doctrine and strategy, GSD Fourth Department units provide electronic warfare defense of

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375 Stokes, p. 73, footnote 101.
376 DPMP (1999), p. 17,
377 Ball, p. 367.
strategic targets, such as the PLA command bunkers in the Western Hills (Xishan) of Beijing.\textsuperscript{378}

In addition to providing ECM to defend key national assets, the ECM & RD, according to Ball, has oversight of all PLA EW units down to the division level. Moreover, Ball tells us that this GSD sub-department "...also manages and directs SIGINT and EW operations for the PLAN and PLAAF."\textsuperscript{379} Ball, posits the same relationship between the ECM & RD and tactical units down in the Military Regions (MRs) that he described for the Third Department and its respective units down in the MRs. Can this be verified? Not at this point; but the concept should not be discounted altogether. Where one does raise some question about the parallel relationship is in one major difference: strategic or operational-level SIGINT sites are clearly national-level assets, hence likely managed directly by the Third Department of GSD. ECM units, especially in the ground forces, might be more in line with traditional maneuver units organic to divisions, therefore local commanders likely have some degree of control over them. At the same time, it is not difficult to envision the ECM & RD directing the missions of PLA Navy and PLA Air Force EW collection assets (airborne collectors and specially equipped naval vessels) to support national-level requirements.

Ball's discussion of the ECM & RD tends to focus on units and detachments, which is not surprising given Jane's usual emphasis on order of battle and hardware issues. What is left out in his discussion (although we take nothing away from what Ball has written), and must be remembered, is that all major GSD sub-organizations have as a primary responsibilities the oversight of programs at the national level, the development of policies, and providing connectivity between the center and the MRs. Consequently, if one were interested in PLA thinking about IW and EW, or PLA programs for either, one should turn one's attention to the ECM & RD of the GSD as well as the Communications Department.

The actual organization of the ECM & RD is unknown at this point. All we can do is posit a notional organization (see chart above). As usual, we posit the hypothetical existence of a General Office and a Political Department. Moreover, we shall hypothesize within the ECM & RD bureaus that provide national level guidance for the ground forces, PLAAF, and PLAN that are not organic to the ECM & RD; ECM and radar units that are organic to the ECM & RD;\textsuperscript{380} as well as research institutes associated with the department.

As far as research institutes are concerned, Stokes identifies three:

\textsuperscript{378} Stokes, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{379} Ball, p. 367.
\textsuperscript{380} Ibid., Ball, asserts that organic ECM & Radar units include detachments at Xibeiwang and Yangfang in the Beijing area as well as a "major unit" at Xishan.
• the Southwest Institute of Electronic Equipment (SWIEE)—also known as the 29th Research Institute in Chengdu. This institute is responsible for radar jammers.

• The GSD 54th Research Institute, which he asserts "supports the ECM department in development of digital ELINT signal processors to analyze parameters of radar pulses." And

• The 36th Research Institute in Hefei, which develops communications jammers.381

In addition to research institutes, the ECM & RD likely has its own associated schools and academies. Stokes believes one is the PLA Academy of Electronic Engineering in Hefei (Anhui Province)382, but this was prior to the consolidation of military academies and schools in 1999-2000, so we cannot be sure of its status at this point.

Also of note, organizationally, both Stokes and Ball focus on the "ECM" aspect of this department—the mandate of which is clearly meant to defeat enemy systems. However, the name of the 'ECM & RD' suggests there is also a "radar" half of the house which may in fact not be concerned with defeating enemy systems but developing the PLA's own radars and training its own "radar troops." Therefore, and purely speculative on the part of this student, we should hypothesize that the ECM & RD has two major organizations, bureaus perhaps; a notional ECM Bureau and notional Radar Bureau. For example, a notional "Radar Bureau" would likely have been responsible for developing the 1996 "General Radar Equipment Technical Service Regulations."383

381 Stokes, pg. 34, 53.
382 Stokes, p. 53.
Military Affairs Department (Junwu Bu)

Figure 4.8  GSD Military Affairs Department

The GSD's Military Affairs Department (MAD) is concerned with the administrative and management processes, procedures, and "systems" by which the PLA is run. It appears to take CMC guidance on the issues of administration and management and:

- Develop specific policies ("rules, regulations and ordinances," as the PLA refer to them),
- Issue guidance to the PLA for their execution, and
- Conduct surveys or inspections to gauge enforcement.

This department, which deals with the entire PLA, seems to have responsibilities that would be found in the office of the U.S. Army’s Adjutant General (developing regulations and policies), the office of the Inspector General (inspecting for compliance or adjudicating questions), the U.S. Army Personnel Command (for developing policies on career tracks), as well as U.S. Army TRADOC (for the promulgation of Field Manuals). Whenever there are new regulations that govern non-combat affairs or non-political (non-Party) personnel issues, spokesmen from the Military Affairs Department are often interviewed in the PLA press to explain them to the rest of the Chinese military establishment.

From what little can be gleaned from the Chinese press, the Military Affairs Department has an extremely broad mandate. It is clear that in carrying out its responsibilities the MAD has to engage in vertical coordination (down to the MRs and services and up to the CMC) as well as horizontal coordination (with other GSD
organizations such as the Legal Advisory Office, the GPD especially, and likely the GLD and GAD) throughout the PLA.

For example, it seems that the Military Affairs Department will take the CMC's guidance on an issue, develop and issue broad "regulations and ordinances" and then oversee the work of the Military Regions in adapting the "central" regulations to local conditions to ensure that the spirit and specific intent of the centrally-issued "regs" are carried out.384

Over the past few years the PLA has placed tremendous emphasis on the "regularization" and "standardization" of administrative and management practices. The Military Affairs Department has likely been on the cutting edge of the CMC's reform agenda in most non-combat related reforms and some "warfighting" reforms.385

The Military Affairs Department has likely been responsible for working out the details of the following recent PLA organizational reform initiatives, some of which are revisions to standing policies and some of which are first-time policies:

- The PLA "Garrison Regulations,"386
- The "Routine Service Regulations,"387
- The PLA "Discipline Regulations,"388
- The PLA "Formation Regulations,"389 and
- The "Guidelines for the Construction of Chinese PLA Headquarters,"390 to name a few.

The "Soldier's Bureau" of the Military Affairs Department has apparently been deeply involved in the recent, total revamping of the PLA's Non-Commissioned Officer

384 Su Ruozhou, "Implementing 'Decision' of the Central Military Commission on Management and Education Work in New Year---Leader of Military Affairs Department of PLA General Staff Headquarters Answers Reporter's Questions," *Jiefangjun bao*, 17 January 2000, in FBIS.

385 The MAD apparently works with the PLA Academy of Military Sciences (*Junshi Kexue Yuan*) in identifying areas in need of revision or reform and working out details. See Zhang Dongwen and Ma Xiaochun, "Conscientiously Enforce headquarters Regulations, Step Up Headquarters Building in Accordance With the Law--Chief of Staff Fu Quanyou Answers Reporters' Questions on Studying, Implementing New-Generation Headquarters Regulations," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 13 November 1996, in FBIS.

386 Ibid.
387 Ibid.
388 Ibid.
389 Ibid.
Corps System as promulgated in the July 1999 revision to the "Regulations on Military Service of Active Duty Soldiers."\(^{391}\)

Moreover, the MAD is also responsible for setting policies on how staff work itself is to be conducted and accomplished throughout the PLA. And by this we probably mean the use of forms, the flow of paperwork, and the unending minutia involved in moving a piece of paper (an "action" in U.S. staff officer parlance) through the universally laborious channels that any officer in any military bureaucracy has experienced.

In addition, to the degree that the MAD was involved in the promulgation of the February 2000 "Guidelines for Construction of Chinese PLA Headquarters" the MAD may also touch on some war fighting issues; at least from an administrative angle. The "Guidelines" seemed aimed at: (1) standardizing the roles and missions of military staffs at all levels, tactical as well as administrative; (2) rationalizing command relationships; and (3) outlining leadership responsibilities.\(^{392}\) To the degree that the MAD promulgates such large documents (the "Guidelines" are said to consist of 8 chapters and 35 articles)\(^{393}\) it also is likely involved in drafting the PLA equivalent of U.S. "Joint Pubs" or U.S. Army Field Manuals (FMs).

Given the mandate that we suspect it has, the MAD was probably the GSD organization that was responsible for organizing and executing the November 1999 "All-Army Chiefs of Staff Conference" at which CoGS General Fu Quanyou discussed the new "demands" placed on headquarters and staffs throughout the PLA as it moves toward being capable of engaging in "Local Wars Under Modern High-tech Conditions."\(^{394}\)

\(^{391}\) Xu Yang, "Jiang Zemin, Zhu Rongji Issue New Army Regulation," China Daily, 13 July 1999, in FBIS. This article interviews Leng Degui who is identified as "the Director of the Soldier's Bureau of the Army Affairs Department under the Headquarters of the General Staff." This article is the basis of the identification of the "Soldier's Bureau." The other bureaus identified come from the DPMP (1993).

\(^{392}\) See "Editorial on Headquarters Building." See also Ma Xiaochun, "Jiang Zemin Signs Order for Building PLA Headquarters," Xinhua, 23 February 2000, in FBIS. "We must strengthen organizational construction and center on strengthening joint combat functions and overall command efficiency, optimize organizational structure, and improve high-efficiency operating mechanisms. We must strengthen building tasks as well as raise our planning and guidance for military building and capability in organizing and commanding high-tech local wars. We must strengthen work style and discipline, and train the army to adopt a swift, accurate, tight, meticulous, and pragmatic work style so as to truly, firmly, and speedily implement the decisions of party committees and leaders and directives of superiors. We must strengthen the modernization of command methods and ensure highly-efficient and stable command control over the troops. The 'Program' goes into effect from the date of its promulgation."

\(^{393}\) Ma, "Jiang Zemin Signs Order."

\(^{394}\) Ma Xiaochun, "Fu Quanyou Addresses Command Staff Meeting," Xinhua, 10 November 1999, in FBIS.
Figure 4.9    GSD Military Training Department
Military Training Department (Junxun Bu)\textsuperscript{395}

The Military Training Department (MTD) of the PLA is executive agent of the Central Military Commission and the Chief of the General Staff for all aspects of military training throughout the entire PLA. At a minimum, it is responsible for:

- providing guidance to the PLA for training,
- establishing standards for training,
- evaluating the state of training,
- developing new training methods, and
- managing the PLA’s training budget.

\textsuperscript{395} The basis of this organization chart is as follows:
Electronic Teaching Bureau: \textit{DPMP} (1997)
Training Bureau: \textit{DPMP} (1997)

Director, Combined Arms Training Center: \textit{DPMP} (1991)
Training Department, Combined Arms Training Center: \textit{DPMP} (1991)
General Office: Notional on part of author.

Over the years, some of these sub-organizations may have been abolished, merged, or renamed. Some may have been upgraded from "offices" to "bureaus." I choose to list all I found in spite of potential redundancy in order to be able to get a better "feel" for what the Training Department does. I also choose to keep all at the "bureau" level unless there is firm evidence to the contrary.
Moreover, the MTD provides guidance to and oversight of the PLA’s massive military academies system.

MTD guidance and policies affect all PLA entities: from the training of the staffs of the four General Departments, to the Training Departments of the Military Regions and the three Services (PLAAF, PLAN, Second Artillery) and their subordinate units, large and small unit training (exercises), individual training, and technical training.

Most important, however, to the MTD has fallen the weighty responsibility of leading the PLA through a paradigm shift in training (i.e., guiding training reform) in order to translate the PLA’s changing operational concepts from theoretical operational requirements into operational capabilities via the medium of training. Reforming PLA training to comport with evolving operational concepts has been the central focus of the MTD since the mid-1990s when the PLA shifted its war-fighting emphasis to “Local Wars Under Modern High-tech Conditions.”

Because training is so central to the PLA in peacetime, there is no dearth of Chinese press reporting on this aspect of military activity. Consequently, while we cannot state with certainty the specific responsibilities of each of the bureaus of the MTD, we can list specific MTD activities and responsibilities. In some cases we can speculate about where in the above organizational chart these activities may take place.

Annual, General Training Guidance to the PLA. Each year, the MTD develops training guidance for the PLA that it issues under the authority of the General Staff Department. This document outlines, in very broad terms, areas of training that the PLA will focus upon for the next training year. In Chinese, the term for the document is Junshi Xunlian Dagang, which Blasko, Klapakis, and Corbett choose to translate as “General Training Program.” This guidance is usually heralded in the PLA press following the annual “All-Army Training Work Conference” (usually held in January or February each year before Spring Festival, or Chunjie). This conference is likely organized and executed by the MTD.

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396 Without question, the best informed overview of the process of training reform that the PLA has been undergoing since the Gulf War is Dennis J. Blasko, Philip T. Klapakis and John F. Corbett, Jr., "Training Tomorrow’s PLA: A Mixed Bag of Tricks," in David Shambaugh and Richard H. Yang, eds., China’s Military In Transition, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Cited hereafter as Blasko. This particular article provides the background of the massive shift in training methods that the PLA has been undergoing since the early 1990s, provides studied and informed assessments of progress and problems, and provides an appendix listing major PLA training exercises from 1990 through 1995. Clearly, there have been more changes since then, but this particular article is an invaluable source for understanding the magnitude of the changes going on in PLA training.

397 Blasko, p. 226.

398 See, Ren Yanjun, "General Staff Department Stresses Need to Grasp Deepening Reform on One Hand, and Grasp Popularization of Results on Another in
As an example, the following is a synopsis of portions of the general training guidance contained in the directive for 1997:

1. Devote more energy to improving the quality of training,
2. Standardize training content,
3. "Regularize" training sequence,
4. Economize training support,
5. Strengthen the use of training simulation,
6. "Step up" training base construction,
7. Increase training standards,
8. Increase use of science and technology in training.\footnote{399}

**Annual, Specific Training Tasks for the PLA.** The MTD also annually issues very specific training guidance to the Military Regions and the Services. For example, in 1995 the following directives were issued:

1. Beijing Military Region will train a number of squads to battalion sized units as opposing forces. Infantry divisions and regiments will deploy to unfamiliar terrain to carry out tactical training starting with company-level subjects. Armored, artillery, and anti-aircraft units will stay in the field until they complete their training missions.
2. The Air Force will intensify opposing forces attack training. Every aviation division will pick the best pilots and most advanced aircraft to form a blue force flight.
3. The Second Artillery will develop new methods for operations under high-technology conditions and emphasize mobility, night and counter-strike operational exercises. Intensified efforts will be used to train guided missile brigades in the combined operations of their launch battalions.\footnote{400}

\footnote{399} Ren Yanjun, "General Staff Department Outlines Military Training Tasks for 1997, Calling for Popularizing, Deepening Reform Achievements, Improving Training Quality," *Jiefangjun bao*, 3 February 1997 (FBIS); and Ren Yanjun, "General Staff Headquarters on Training Reform," *Jiefangjun bao*, 17 January 1998, in FBIS.

\footnote{400} The above extracted verbatim from Blasko, pp. 232-233. The authors list specific tasks for each of the Military Regions and Services.
Circulars, Directives, and Regulations. The MTD, on an ad-hoc basis, issues training guidance to the entire PLA under the authority of the CMC or the General Staff Department. Training "Circulars" apparently discuss the top leadership's views and philosophies on military training and are meant to be distributed down to the lowest levels. They appear to supplement and reinforce the views of the PLA high command as articulated at the "All-Army Training Work Conferences" or are issued as a result of MTD inspections on the state of training. For example, in 1997 the GSD, "with the approval of the Central Military Commission," issued a circular entitled "Report on the Situation of Conducting Training on Popularizing and Using High-tech Knowledge to Enhance Training Reform Achievements in the Whole Army." The purpose of the circular was to reinforce the point that CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin had directed the army to use science and technology to enhance all aspects of army building and that training is no exception.401

"Directives" may be more specific in that they "task" major units to accomplish specific training activities.402 They are likely issued under the authority of the GSD or MTD, as opposed to "Circulars" which seem to carry the imprimatur of the CMC.

Finally, the MTD is likely the source of regulations that govern the military training of the PLA. One theme found throughout this paper is the recent emphasis in the PLA on the promulgation of regulations to standardize various aspects of military activities. Training is no different. For example, in 1997 the "GSD" issued the "Interim Military Training Grading and Appraisal Regulations."403 Also, the MTD likely had a hand in the drafting of the regulations on militia training (see section on Mobilization Department below). But of major consequence, one might speculate that the MTD had some supporting role (if not major role) in the drafting of the "PLA Combat Regulations" (author's shorthand) issued in February 1999. These comprise a series of thirteen "regulations" covering all aspects of PLA combat operations, for all services, and at all levels of war; strategic, operational, and tactical. Besides being a guide to PLA

401 Ma Xiaochun, "CMC Circular on Using High Tech in Military Training," Xinhua, 19 November 1998 (FBIS). This article appeared only one month after the circular was distributed. See also, Zhang Jian and Ren Yanjun, "General Staff Department Circular Requires All Army To Conscientiously Implement New Generation Military Training Program," Jiefangjun Bao, 22 December 1995 (FBIS).
403 Ren Yanjun, "General Staff Department Outlines Military Training Tasks for 1997," ibid.
warfighting doctrine for "Local Wars Under Modern High-tech Conditions" these regulations are also being touted as the central focus of future PLA training.\footnote{Ren Xiangdong, "PLA Ground, Naval, and Air Units Implement New-Generation Combat Regulations," \textit{Liaowang}, No.23, 7 June 1999 (FBIS) and "Interview With Chief of the General Staff Fu Quanyou by staff reporter: ‘Earnestly Implement Operations Decrees and Continue To Enhance Capacity to Win Wars,’" \textit{Jiefangjun Bao}, 25 February 1999 (FBIS). Fu specifically links the operations decrees to the training of the PLA in order to achieve the "Two Transformations" in army-building.}

\textbf{Conducting Inspection Tours of the State of PLA Training.} Apparently, like many GSD officers from other departments and bureaus, staff officers from the MTD engage in frequent travel throughout China. In the case of MTD officers it is to observe training, check for compliance with circulars, directives, and regulations, and in many cases offer assistance. Usually, positive inspection findings are publicized via \textit{Jiefangjun Bao}. For example, in October 1995 an article entitled "Optimistic Trend in All-Army Military Training" began with this statement:

Since early August, departments concerned under the General Staff Headquarters have carried out month-long on-site inspection of military training conducted by ground, naval, and air units and Second Artillery units as well. The inspection teams have just returned after inspecting the units concerned; carried out discussions on and analysis of the situation and quality of the whole army's basic training, cadre training, and command organ training; and concluded that the whole army's training has developed an optimistic trend.

But shortcomings are also addressed head-on. Deeper into the same article above it was bluntly stated that a certain division was incapable of continuing its offensive in an exercise as soon as "blue units" started to use electronic jamming.\footnote{Chen Youyuan and Su Ruozhou, "Optimistic Trend in All-Army Military Training," \textit{Jiefangjun bao}, 8 October 1995, in FBIS. These negative comments about PLA training are in no way meant to convey the impression of an incapable PLA. To the contrary, as a former professional soldier, I view these types of frank criticisms as a testimony to the ever-increasing professionalism of the PLA and the fact that sooner or later they are going to prove quite capable of enhancing their capabilities relative to the past.}

Moreover, in an even franker assessment that was apparently based upon a training inspection tour in 1995, the Nanjing Military Region was "admonished not to evade contradictions or exaggerate results in experimental training demonstration system. Their work will be the basis for revising and perfecting the GTP (General Training Plan)."\footnote{Sec Blasko. The authors cite an article 8 February 1995 in \textit{Jiefangjun bao}, entitled "General Staff Department Outlines 1995 Military Training Tasks," translated by SEROLD Associates, Hong Kong.}
Identification and Development of Modern Training Devices. As part of its mandate to modernize PLA training, the MTD appears to be the lead GSD organization for identifying and developing modern "high-technology" training equipment and devices. At least one article in *Jiefangjun Bao* implies that the Training Support Bureau of the MTD is involved in automation and simulation support for PLA training. Moreover, the MTD appears to work closely with PLA research institutes, academies, and likely commercial Chinese firms to develop modern training equipment. In recent years the development and utilization of automated training simulation packages for FTXs and CPXs has been high on the list of the MTD. It is not known if the MTD has its own associated R & D institutes.

Conducting Training Experiments for New Operational Concepts. The PLA process for developing new operational concepts at the campaign and tactical levels of war (i.e., joint and combined operations, large and small unit tactics, etc.) appears to follow a three stage cycle: (1) theoretical research, (2) experimentation and refinement, and, finally, (3) standardization throughout the PLA. The MTD has a major role in the process. The role of the MTD is to work with the Academy of Military Sciences (*Junshi Kexue Yuan*) to translate the AMS's theoretical doctrines into "on the ground" experiments to test and refine those concepts. Consequently, the MTD can apparently "task" a Military Region to provide the units for operational "experiments." It may also

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407 Zhao Xianfeng, Ren Janjun, and Zhang Zhanhui, "Watching the Tide Through a Window--Viewing the General Situation of Training Reform in 1996 from All-Army Exposition of Results in Research on Methods of Operation," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 8 February 1996, in (FBIS). "Senior Colonel Gao Xianying, director of training support of the Military Training Department under the General Staff Department, believes that a new mass drive to develop combat simulation systems and equipment will emerge in 1996 in response to the objective needs for deepening the research on methods of operations."

408 See Gao Xianying and Su Ruozhou, "Important task for Army Modernization," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 28 November 1996. According to this article, in 1996 the GSD organized an exhibition to display advances recently made in developing "high tech" training devices. The article asserts that "last February, the General Staff Headquarters Military Training Department organized 15 military units, military academies, and scientific research institutes under the army, navy, and air force to jointly tackle key problems, taking aim at the present world's new technology. The used an distributed interactive simulation technique to simulate operations of all arms and services and combine them into an organic whole, showing on the screen: the situation of the combined tri-service operations; local conflicts; the movements of various units; shootings; and activities involving logistics support....a simple, economical, an effective instrument for the middle rank and senior commanders and staff officers of the three forces to regularly practice combined operations."
be that the MTD works with the AMS and the MR units in question to devise, conduct, and evaluate the operational experiments, although this is less certain.\footnote{For more on the PLA and training experiments see Blasko. See also Gao Xianying and Su Ruozhou, ibid., and Zhang Xianfeng, Ren Jianjun, and Zhang Zhanhui, ibid. the latter refer to the experimentation process as "theoretical research-actual drills-further improvement of fruits of research." They also infer that the AMS's "Campaign and Tactics Department" works with the MTD on operational experiments. The DPMP (1999) lists the AMS as having an "Operations and Tactics Department."} MTD Relationship With The Military Regions. The relationship between the GSD's MTD and the Training Departments on the staffs of the seven military regions (MRs) can be described as one of "guidance from above and execution below, and inspection from above and compliance below" (author's phrase). We have already mentioned the fact that the MTD issues both general and specific training guidance to the military regions with which the latter must comply and which MTD officers inspect on a regular basis. However, the linkage between the MTD and its counterparts in the MRs may very much closer.\footnote{In 1995 the "new generation of GTPs" system for the PLA was first being worked out (see Blasko, et al, p. 226) and the GSD/MTD-MT/TD relationship was likely evolving. At that time an article written by "the training department of the Beijing Military Region" offered its own views on what the relationship should be.

"The headquarters of the general staff should set different training topics for different units in light of their special combat missions, forming a general training outline. Using the general training outline as a guide and taking into account its own circumstances and the combat mission it may be asked to take up, each war zone, along with the navy and air force and the second artillery division, should then work out its own training sub-outline. In the main, the group army and the units underneath it should train its forces and meet quality specifications by following the topics in the training sub-outline and complying with the training requirements set by higher authorities."}

For example, some knowledgeable individuals assert that the MTD must approve the annual training plans promulgated by the Training Departments of the MRs. Moreover, whereas the MR Training Departments can develop and conduct their own training programs up to the division level, only the MTD of the GSD can authorize and approve exercises that involve Group Armies.\footnote{Comments by knowledgeable individuals, 2000.} If this is in fact the case, then what this implies is that the commanders of military regions do not necessarily have total authority over the training of their own units. But the MTD can also be a helpful entity for the MRs. For example, it has been asserted that if an MR Training Department needs additional funds for the execution of its training programs it can request additional funding support from the MTD.\footnote{Ibid.} Additionally, Blasko, Klapakis, and Corbett mention that in 1995 the services and some MRs established "mobile training teams" to assist
units in assimilating new equipment, understanding new operational concepts, and adjusting training accordingly. One can speculate that the MTD is at the root of such an initiative and likely has its own mobile training teams being dispatched throughout the PLA. Finally, the MTD sponsors and hosts "training symposia" (author's term) to which the Training Departments of the MRs can send representatives to learn about the latest developments in training, or symposia in which the MTD sends teams out to the MRs to pass along successful training techniques or activities in other MRs.

**Studying How Foreign Armies Train.** As part of its mandate to reform PLA training, the MTD often sends delegations abroad to learn about foreign military training and military academy management.

**Oversight of PLA Training Bases.** Over the past few years the PLA has moved to larger and more complex field training exercises that encompass combined arms training, joint-like exercises, the use of high-tech systems, as well as the utilization of opposing forces (OPFOR) units ("Blue Forces" in PLA parlance). Consequently, there has been a greater need for training bases and facilities that can accommodate them. The MTD clearly has a role in insuring that the PLA has the training grounds and facilities it needs to train for "Local Wars Under Modern High-tech Conditions." Indeed, given the fact that the **DPMP** lists a bureau under the MTD for a "Combined Arms Training Center" it is highly likely that the MTD oversees a national-level training center, similar to the U.S.'s National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California, at which large scale, large unit training can occur; under the most sophisticated and controlled conditions, where operational concepts can be tested and refined, and through which PLA units can be cycled for readiness testing. Clearly, the MTD also provides oversight of and guidance to the training bases and facilities that are established and maintained by the MRs. In February 2000, Chief of the General Staff General Fu Quanyou authored a long essay in **Junshi Kexue** (Military Science, the journal of the PLA Academy of Military Science) devoted to training issues. Among the many issues he addressed, General Fu emphasized the need for the building of more modern training bases to support joint training. He stated that new training bases must provide for the "five major systems"---"systems for directing and dispatching, and monitoring; for simulating battlefield situations; for

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413 Blasko, et. al, p. 229.
supporting evaluations; for providing comprehensive logistics support; and for base management." 416 Insuring that this vision is executed will fall to the MTD.

Reform of PLA Military Academy System. Like all armies around the world, the PLA realizes that its military academies and training schools are the key to its future reforms. In the U.S. this is referred to as the Professional Military Education or PME "system." Since 1999 the MTD has undoubtedly been involved in overseeing the implementation of an ambitious reformation of the PLA's PME system. Realize that the PLA's PME system is massive. The PLA PME system is rather decentralized with each of the seven MRs sponsoring its own schools and academies. Prior to 1999 (when the latest reforms began to be implemented) the PLA reportedly had more than 100 separate major military schools and academies. 417 Many were redundant, the curricula were antiquated, and most were not necessarily using the most modern teaching or training techniques. Moreover, given that Jiang Zemin announced another 500,000-man reduction of the PLA at the 15th Party Congress in September 1997 (which the PLA asserts was accomplished by 1999), it was clear that the PME system was a lucrative target for cutbacks. This was because of the incredible number of personnel that have been involved in the PME system at any one time. Knowledgeable individuals place the pre-1999 figure at 400,000 personnel: 200,000 students, 100,000 faculty members, and another 100,000 support personnel to make the system run. 418 Consequently, since 1999 there has been a program in place to abolish many academies, merge others, create new ones that deal with "high-tech" issues, and retire, demobilize, or transfer unneeded support personnel and faculty. The reform touts a four-point slogan: "(1) reduce numbers; (2) optimize structure; (3) rationalize relationships; and (4) improve effectiveness." 419 It will fall to the bureaus under the MTD that oversee military academies to track progress and insure compliance.

Sports Events. On a final note, the MTD apparently has a role in the organization and execution of military sports events, both within the PLA and in the field of international military sports competitions. 420 In carrying out this role it likely works with the General Political Department.

416 General Fu Quanyou, "Push Forward Military Training by Innovative Scientific and Technological Means," Junshi Kexue, No. 1, February 2000, in FBIS. This important article is an excellent guide to current PLA training philosophies, priorities, and difficulties.

417 For an excellent account of the history of reforms of the PLA PME, system see Kuan Cha-chia, "Military Authorities Define Reform Plan, Military Academies To be Reduced By 30 Percent," Kuo ut chiao ching, No. 306, 16 March 1998, in FBIS.

418 Comments by knowledgeable individuals, late 1998.


420 See Shu Wen, Dan Lei, and Ma Xiaochun, "The 46th Military Pentathlon World Championships End in Beijing," Xinhua, 16 September 1998. This article lists a
Mobilization Department (Dongyuan Bu)

Figure 4.10  GSD Mobilization Department

As stated in the PRC "White Paper," China's National Defense, the Chinese armed forces are comprised of four major organizations: (1) the active-duty PLA; (2) the PLA reserves; (3) the People's Armed Police (PAP); and (4) the militia.421 The Mobilization Department of the GSD is responsible for oversight of various aspects of two of the four components: the PLA reserves and the militia. Moreover, the Mobilization Department also has some oversight responsibilities for conscription.422 These, then, are the three

422 The basis of the MD organization chart is as follows:
Military Training Bureau: Identified in DPMP (1999)
key areas of Mobilization Department work: militia affairs, reserve affairs, and recruitment.

Given the constant revisions to the PLA reserve system in the last fifteen years, the massive scale of the militia system, and the fact that its work must be accomplished in peacetime, the Mobilization Department (hereafter MD) is likely as busy as any organization within the GSD. Moreover, the intensity of MD work has probably picked up in the last couple of years in as much as the 500,000-man reduction in the "active" PLA announced by Jiang Zemin at the 15th Party Congress involves, in part, the wholesale transfer of units to the reserves as well as the transfer of individual officers and NCOs to the reserves. Overall, then, the MD is a relatively high-profile GSD organization.

Directing the work of the MD probably also requires keen political awareness. Militia work and conscription affairs are clearly "rice and mantou" issues. They are issues that hit home at the local level because they have an impact on local people and local resources. Militia work and conscription are also issues that cut across every conceivable Chinese bureaucratic organizational line: civilian and military, national government and local government, state and party.

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1996. This article identified Wang Cubin as "director of the organization and planning bureau of the mobilization department of the General Staff Department."

Recruitment Bureau: Identified in DPMP (1999)

Reserve Units Bureau: Identified in DPMP (1999). Some editions of the DPMD list this as the "Reserve Service Bureau."

Militia Bureau: Xie Fenfen, "Zhejiang Militia Reserve Units Stage Science, Technology Military Drills," Zhejiang Ribao, 26 October 1999, in FBIS. This article identifies MG Li Suibin as the director of the "militia bureau under the General Staff Department's mobilization department."


People's Armed Forces Department Bureau: Strictly notional on the part of the author. It is highly likely that some sub-organization in the MD exists to coordinate with or oversee the conscription work and militia and reserve training responsibilities of the People's Armed Forces Departments. Such a sub-organization may be subsumed in one of the other identified bureaus.

Equipment Section: Very tentative. Based on a biography of General Wang Ruilin that mentions that he was a staff officer in the Equipment Section of the MD from 1966-1967. See "Xinhua Profiles CMC Member Wang Ruilin," Xinhua, 17 March 1998, in FBIS.

423 For an excellent (albeit brief) overview of the evolution of the militia and reserve systems since 1949, see Liu Hsiao-hua, "Jiang Zemin Convenes Enlarged Meeting of Central Military Commission, Policy of Fewer But Better Troops Aim at Strengthening Reserve Service Units," Kuang Chiao Ching, 16 May 1998, in FBIS.

424 Ibid.
Because its responsibilities are so broad the MD is clearly involved in a great deal of coordination. The Chinese press infers that the MD works closely with the Mass Work Department of the General Political Department (GPD/MWD) with which it shares responsibilities for different aspects of the militia and reserve systems.\footnote{For example, see Zhao Yong and Liu Yushu, "General Staff Department, General Political Department Make Arrangements for Deepening Readjustment, Reform of Militia Work," \textit{Jiefangjun Bao}, 26 October 1997 (FBIS); and Lu He, "Heilongjiang Holds Forum on Building Armed Forces," \textit{Heilongjiang Ribao}, 1 September 1997 (FBIS).} Besides probable coordination internal to the GSD (such as with the Training Department) the MD also likely deals with a host of other organizations:

- the CMC (guidance for mobilization, reserve, and militia work),
- some committees of the National People's Congress (mobilization, militia, and reserve legislation),
- the staffs of the Military Regions (to which reserve units are attached),
- and perhaps Provincial Governments (which share National Defense Mobilization Committee work---a provincial responsibility---with the MRs).

As far as one can determine, the MD probably carries out the following eleven types of specific activities or responsibilities with regard to militia work, the reserves, and conscription.

1. The MD is undoubtedly a key player in drafting, or coordinating on, the various national-level laws, regulations, and CMC directives that specifically guide, or touch on the militia, reserves, and conscription systems. Examples of such national-level dictats would include:

- "The Military Service Law" (1984 and revisions through 1999),
- "The Regulations on Militia Work" (1990),
- "The National Defense Law" (1997),
- "Certain Rules on Military Training of the Militia" (date unknown),
- "Outline of Militia Training Program" (date unknown),
- "Standards for Evaluating Results of Military Training of the Militia" (date unknown),\footnote{This preceding list of laws and regulations come from Liu, ibid., and "Lecture Two from the Nanjing Army Command Academy People's Armed Forces Department Teaching Research Office: 'Members of the Militia Must Undergo Military Training in Accordance With the Law,'" \textit{Zhongguo Minbing}, 9 February 1998 (FBIS), hereafter, "Lecture Two."}
• "Regulations for Management of People's Militia Weaponry and Equipment" (Issued sometime after 1984).427

2. The MD likely coordinates on supplemental local laws and regulations on militia work, reserve work, and conscription that are developed and promulgated by the Mobilization Departments on the staffs of the Military Regions in conjunction with (and issued under the authority of) the local governments. Typical of such provincial and municipality-level ordinances are those currently in force in the Beijing Military Region:

- "Regulations on Civil Militia Reserve Work" (issued by Beijing Municipal People's Congress, 1994)
- "Shanxi Province Militia Reserve Work Regulations" (date unknown)
- "Hebei Province Militia and Reserve Work Procedures" (date unknown)428

3. The MD may have a role in validating the justification for the activation of new reserve units. According to Kuang Chiao Ching, since 1983, at least 50 reserve divisions have been created. These units currently provide the equivalent of "round-out" divisions for active duty PLA units in wartime. Moreover, press reports infer that the Military Regions and the Services (Navy, Air Force, and Second Artillery) are responsible for "creating" the reserve units they require.429 It would be highly unlikely if the MRs and Services were able to unilaterally decide on what types or how many reserve units they can create without reference to guidance contained in some centrally-managed reserve units program. Given the fact that the creation of reserve units has personnel implications (a GPD responsibility430), equipment requirements (GAD, GLD), and mobilization plan implications, it stands to reason that somewhere in the GSD is an office that validates the desires of the MRs and Services to create reserve units. Perhaps this responsibility resides in the MD's Reserve Units Bureau.

4. As stipulated in Article 40 of the "Law of the PRC on Reserve Officers," the General Staff Department has responsibility for directing the military training of reserve officers. This is probably the purview of the MD. However, the political training of


428 Han Ping, "Implement a Policy of Governance According to Law To Strengthen National Defense Reserve Development," Guofang, No. 1, 15 January 1999 (FBIS). This article is a long interview with the Director of the Mobilization Department of the Beijing Military Region.

429 See Liu Hsiao-hua, ibid.

430 Some reserve divisions Staffs, to include the command element, are actually filled with by active duty officers. Liu, ibid.
reserve officers and the management of the reserve officer system is the responsibility of the General Political Department.431

5. The MD is responsible for setting the standards for various aspects of the military training of the local militia. This includes: the durations of training periods, the content of training syllabi, and the training standards to be met.432

6. The MD (perhaps the Equipment Section) may have a role in insuring that reserve units have the equipment they require both for training and for times of mobilization and incorporation into active PLA units. Sometime in 1998 the Central Military Commission issued a directive to the Military Regions instructing them to set aside "some of their advanced weapons and equipment" for the use of their reserve units instead of only providing decommissioned older weapons.433 One can imagine that this was likely the result of an assessment of the standards of equipment for training that the MD might have conducted.

7. The MD may have some responsibility for assessing the quality and/or management of reserve and militia training areas. According to the PLA press, between 1984 and 1999 more than 2,190 basic military training bases and technical training facilities had been constructed that were dedicated for militia training.434

8. The MD is responsible for activating the national mobilization system. The various non-active components of the Chinese armed forces (reserves and militia) can be mobilized in times of war, in times of internal unrest, and to "fight" natural disasters. The Central Military Commission is the national-level authority that mobilizes the reserves and militia with an "order." The MD, citing CMC authority, apparently issues "circulairs" to the local-level People's Armed Forces Departments (see below) nation-wide with instructions that specify the "who," "what," "when," "where," and "why." Moreover, during times of mobilization, the MD also sometimes disburses emergency funds and equipment to activated militia or reserve units.435

432 "Lecture Two," ibid.
433 Liu, ibid.
434 See "8th Roundup," ibid. Technical troops in the reserves also have dedicated facilities. Examples of PLA technical troops would be chemical warfare units, telecommunications units, meteorological units, certain logistics and maintenance units, etc. See Xie Fenfen, "Zhejiang Militia Reserve Units Stage Science, technology Military Drills," Zhejiang Ribao, 26 October 1999 (FBIS).
435 The 1998 floods in China resulted in a partial mobilization. See Ma Xiaochun, "PLA Mobilizes Militia, Reservists in Flood-Hit Areas," Xinhua, 13 August 1998 (FBIS). "The Mobilization Department under the General Staff Department of the People's Liberation Army issued an urgent circular today..."
9. Along with the GPD, the MD has a role in the oversight of the People's Armed Forces Departments (PAFD) that reside at the local levels. The PAFDs have their roots in the days of the pre-1949 "Red Army" when Mao and the CCP were fighting both the Kuomintang and the Japanese. Originally, they were party (CCP) organs at the village, township and county levels used to mobilize local civilians and local militia to support PLA operations. They were the backbone of logistic and personnel support to operations in the locales in which the PLA was operating, both in regular and guerilla operations. After 1949 the PAFDs became formal institutions and have gone back and forth over the years as either formal organizations of the PLA or as the military departments of the local Party Committees. As part of the massive demobilization of the PLA in the mid-1980s, the PAFDs were apparently taken out of "active service" as organs of the PLA and placed under local government control. However, with the renewed emphasis in China on building a reserve system (a "lesson" from Gulf War), PAFDs, in 1996, were reportedly made active duty organs of the PLA once again. The PAFDs are still organizations that link the local military, local party committee, and local government. The difference is now probably that PAFDs have active duty officers assigned to them to provide overall supervision of local work and insure accountability to PLA central authorities in the GSD/MD and GPD/MWD. The PAFDs have the following responsibilities:

- meeting conscription quotas,
- organization and training of local militia,
- mobilization of local forces when ordered, and, since 1996
- working with the MRs to build reserve units.

436 For brief background on the history, roles, and missions of PAFDs, see Zhao Jiuchang and Wu Guolu, "On Adapting to New Conditions, By Going All-Out to Reinforce Our People's Armed Forces Department Establishment," Xinhua, 15 May 1996. This is a lengthy interview with then-Deputy Chief of the general Staff LTG Cao Gangchuan. Cao was subsequently promoted to General and is currently the first Director of the General Armaments Department (GAD). At the time of this interview Cao, a LTG and DCoGS, has principal responsibility for mobilization, conscription, militia, and reserve issues.

437 See Liu, ibid, and Ting Yi, "People's Armed Forces Establishment Reportedly Returned to People's Liberation Army," Ming Pao, 20 March 1996. According to Liu, "Jiang Zemin personally instructed in 1996 that people's armed forces departments of counties (including county-level districts and cities) which had been put under the administration of local governments be reincorporated into the PLA...This laid the organizational foundation for the present strengthening of reserve service units."

438 For sampling of the areas of conscription work in which the MD has primacy see Zhang Min and Li Suibin, "Strengthening Quality Development In Deepening Reform; Deputy Director Fan Xiaoguang of the GSD Mobilization Department Answers Reporters' Question," Zhongguo minbing, 9 January 1997, in FBIS.
For these reasons, the MD has a role in supervising the work of PAFDs. The above organizational chart of the MD lists a "PAFD Bureau" as a notional bureau of the MD. Although no data was found to verify this, it is the author's suspicion that one likely exists; especially if the PAFDs have once again become active PLA organs as reported. Even if there is no specific bureau dedicated to PAFDs, there is no question that the MD, along with the GPD, is responsible for them, and those responsibilities may very well be subsumed under the other MD bureaus.

10. The MD is responsible for monitoring compliance with national-level policies on conscription, militia organization and training, and plans for mobilization. Officers from the MD are often reported in the Chinese press travelling around China inspecting the work of "grass roots" militia units, the state of training of the militia and reserves, and assessing the state of conscription. In this regard, the MD has a national-level "Inspector General" (IG) role for its particular portfolios. As an example of the MD "IG" function, in 1997 wide-scale defrauding of new recruits in local conscription centers was uncovered in which local PAFDs may have been complicit (or did not stop) local commercial firms from entering depots and "persuading" new inductees to buy life and accident insurance policies, magazine subscriptions, and generally, "wantonly collecting charges from young conscripts." Once uncovered, the MD issued a "circular" to all local PAFDs outlining the abuses and ordering them to stop.440

11. Finally, the MD likely has some role at the national level in providing guidance to National Defense Mobilization Committees (NDMCs) throughout the country. NDMCs are Military District/Provincial-level military mobilization organizations. They may very well have been in existence for quite some time. However, this student had not come across references to them in the Chinese press before 1997. According to Liaoning Ribao (the official newspaper of Liaoning Province), that province established an NDMC in July 1997, leading one to suspect that prior to that time there was no centrally directed requirement to have an NDMC. If Liaoning's NMDC is at all typical, then the membership if a NDMC probably looks like this:

- Secretary of the Provincial Party Committee: First Chairman, NDMC
- Provincial Governor: Chairman, NDMC
- Deputy Secretary, Provincial Party Committee: NDMC Vice Chairman, NDMC
- Commander, Provincial Military District: NDMC Vice Chairman

439 Zhao and Wu, "On Adapting to New Conditions."
440 See "PLA Calls for Stopping Malpractice in Conscription Work," Xinhua, 2 December 1997, in FBIS; and "General Staff Headquarters Issues Circular on Resolutely Banning Forced Insurance on Conscript Youth," Jiefangjun bao, 3 December 1997, in FBIS.
• Political Commissar, Provincial Military District: NDMC Vice Chairman
• Provincial Vice Governors: NDMC Vice Chairmen

Likewise, Liaoning's NDMC claims the following roles and missions for the province:
  Coordination of military and economic affairs between the army and government as they pertain to mobilization issues,

• Assessment of manpower and material resources for mobilization,
• The formulation of local laws and regulations for mobilization,
• To enlist economic mobilization into general armed mobilization,
• To rationalize provincial air defense and transportation for mobilization,
• To identify civilian facilities for conversion to military use during mobilization,
• To insure provincial compliance with CMC directives for mobilization.441

Moreover, at the national level there is a "State National Defense Mobilization Committee" (SNDMC) to which the provincial-level NDMCs are accountable. The current Vice Chairman of the SNDMC is Defense Minister and CMC Vice Chairman General Chi Haotian.442 This may be one of the institutional portfolios (among others) of the Defense Minister. Certainly, the MD would at least be a major player at the national level, assisting General Chi in his role as SNDMC Vice Chairman.

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441 See Zhao Xiaoyu and Xu Shuangxi, "Liaoning Defense Mobilization Committee Established 7 July, Liaoning Ribao, 8 July 1997, in FBIS.
442 Chi Haotian is identified as SNDMC Vice Chairman in Ma Xiaochun, "Chi Haotian Stresses Adhering To Idea of People's War, Speeding Up the Pace of Building Civil Defense," Xinhua, 8 May 2000 (FBIS). For another reference to the State National Defense Mobilization Committee see Zhou Yinnan Gang Boyou, "Nanjing PLA Mobilization Committee Meets," Zhejiang Ribao, 7 May 1999, in FBIS. This article also goes into more background on the "dual leadership nature" (military-civilian) of provincial-level NMDCs.
Political Department (Zhengzhi Bu)

Figure 4.11  GSD Political Department

The Political Department (PD) of the GSD provides the linkage between the officers, men, and organs of the GSD to the Chinese Communist Party and its programs and policies. Like all political departments in the PLA it is responsible for "ideological work" and "party work" for the work unit (danwei) to which it is organic; in this case the entire GSD. This means organizing and supervising the work of the party committees that reside within the sub-organizations of the GSD, carrying out ideological education, and vetting the political bona fides of the officers and troops throughout the GSD organization.\(^{443}\) In a nutshell, to borrow a phrase from Harlan Jencks, the PD, through its work, has the dual function of "education and control."\(^ {444}\)

The PD of the GSD likely takes its lead from the General Political Department (GPD) on party and political matters (with the GPD issuing its directives under the authority of the CMC). The PD then insures that subordinate GSD organs and personnel comply with policies. For example, it would fall to the GSD’s Political Department to ensure that all GSD organizations and personnel are engaged studies supporting the


\(^{444}\) Jencks, p. 141.
"Three Stresses Campaign" ("San Jiang Yundong") that Jiang Zemin initiated in 1999 and which continues as of this writing. Guidance on the amount of time required to be devoted to such political study and probably the actual lesson plans to be used by GSD party committees would probably come from the PD which, in turn, would receive guidance and teaching materials from the GPD.

But in the PLA, the Political Department system is involved in much more than ideological work. It is concerned with "rice bowl" issues near and dear to the members of the command: nearly all personnel issues. Housing assignments, "IG complaints," retirement and separation benefits, demobilization assistance, authorization for dependant travel or changes of residence, permission to travel abroad or even "out of area" travel within China, annual leave, etc. are all part and parcel of the responsibilities, to one degree or another, of Political Departments.445

Moreover, since PLA political departments maintain control over the military mass media, they play an important role in "getting the word out" to a massive organization, far flung across China. And "the word" it gets out is not just the political line of the CCP, but often important news on professional military issues and policies. Indeed, if the GPD's official newspaper, Jiefangjun Bao (Liberation Army Daily), did not also write extensively about professional military issues, this very paper would be near impossible to attempt.

It would not be too far-fetched, then, to think of political departments as a combination of ideological watchdog, public affairs office, personnel office, IG office, "morale and welfare" office, security clearance adjudication office, athletics office, and the like. There simply is no single analogue in the U.S. system. But Political Department officers (members of the political commissar system) are much more than mere "party hacks" within the PLA system, although they personify and enforce the grip of the party over the military establishment.

Before presenting the organizational structure of the PD, brief digression on the issue of personnel transfers is warranted. We take note that Article 208 (Service Personnel), Section (2) of the "PLA Routine Service Regulations" issued in October 1997, spells out personnel transfer procedures and shows the importance of the PD in these matters.

The selection and employment of service personnel is subject to the examination and recommendation of the user units and the authorization of senior officers, and their transfer formalities are handled by military affairs departments. Service personnel for important posts must pass the

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445 These points are based on conversations this author has had with knowledgeable individuals since 1998 on a variety of subjects related to "grass roots issues" of life in the PLA.
screening of political organs before they are transferred to a unit.
Unqualified service personnel must be promptly transferred away.446

Organization. The organizational chart of the PD above is likely incomplete, hence
the box in dashed lines listed as "Others?" However, there is a pretty high level of
confidence that the sub-organizations listed are valid in as much as they are either
identified in various issues of the DPMP or in other mainland press holdings on hand.
Still, little information was found on the roles and missions of these few sub-
organizations of the GSD's PD. Therefore, some speculation is called for; speculation
mainly derived by looking at counterpart organizations in the General Political
Department as listed in the DPMP for 1998:

General Office (Bangong Ting). Strictly notional on the part of the author in
keeping with the assumption that all of the major sub-organizations of the GSD have their
own administrative organ.

Organization Department (Zuzhi Bu).447 Working from the 1998 DPMP, the
GPD's Organization Department has such sub-organizations as the "Party Affairs Bureau"
and the "Youth Bureau." Assuming some parallelism, the GSD/PD organization
Department may be the hub of CCP activity for the GSD to include oversight of party
committees.

Cultural Department (Wenhua Bu).448 Using the same methodology as above, the
1998 DPMP has the GPD's "Cultural Department" as having the following bureaus:
Literature and Arts Bureau; Sports Bureau; Drama Troupe; Opera Troupe; Song/Dance
Troupe. Therefore, within the GSD the PD may be responsible for entertainment and
recreational activities.

Propaganda Department (Xuanchuan Bu).449 Within the GPD, according to the
1998 DPMP, the Propaganda Department has a PLA television center. So within the GSD
the Propaganda Department is likely in control of mass communications media within the
GSD.

Cadre Department (Ganbu Bu).450 The GPD's Cadre Department (DPMP 1998)
has a "Civilian S & T Bureau," a "Reserve Service Cadre Bureau," and "Welfare Bureau."
The cadre department within the GSD's PD is likely the organization that maintains
personnel records and deals with transfers or assignments.

Mass Work Department (Qunzhong Gongzuo Bu).451 The GPD's Mass Work
Department (again, the 1998 DPMP) has within it a "Mass Work Bureau," a "Militia

446 "People's Liberation Army Routine Service Regulations (Articles 207-276),"
Jiefangjun bao, 14 October 1997, in FBIS. Italics added.
447 Identified in various issues of the DPMP (see 1995) as well as in Melvin's
files.
448 Identified in Melvin's files and the DPMP (1995).
449 Identified in Melvin's files and the DPMP (1998).
Bureau," and a "Militia Political Work Bureau." Although this is very speculative, it may be that the Mass Work Department of the GSD PD works with the GSD's Mobilization Department and Training Department as well as with the GPD in managing some aspect of militia and possibly even reserve affairs at the national level. (Recall from previous sections in this paper that militia work is multifaceted: the Mobilization Department and the Training Department of the GSD involved in professional military aspects of militia and reserve work while the GPD has responsibility for political work.)

Military High-Tech Office.\textsuperscript{452} This is the author's shorthand (given the constraints of the organization chart program) for what Ellis Melvin translates as the "Military High-Tech Application and Management Professions Examinations Committee Office." The Chinese for this office, which Melvin identifies in the 30 December 1999 edition of \textit{Jiefangjun Bao}, is: \textit{Zongcanmoubu Zhengzhibu Junshi Gaoji Zhuyingyung Yu Guanli Zhuanye Kuoshi Weiyuanhui Bangongshi}. Melvin speculates that this committee conducts some sort of proficiency testing. Another speculative role one could imagine for this committee is a function of the fact that it is located within the GSD's Political Department. Specifically, this committee may be involved in ensuring that Jiang Zemin's emphasis on high-tech training and learning in the PLA---both in formal unit training and in individual professional education---continues to receive proper emphasis within the GSD. Again, this is very speculative.

\begin{footnote}
\textsuperscript{452} Ellis Melvin is the only source for the existence of this committee. He provided to this author the citation in \textit{Jiefangjun Bao}, as well as the Chinese characters for the committee, his preferred translation of the name of the committee, as well as some speculation on his part about what this committee might be involved in.
\end{footnote}
Service Arms Department (*Bingzhong Bu*)

Figure 4.12  GSD Service Arms Department
Background. The Service Arms Department (SAD) manages the "technical" branches of the PLA ground forces. It is a relatively new department of the GSD created out of long-established GSD organizations.

The SAD was established in 1993 by subsuming what were previously autonomous department (bu) level organizations under the GSD and placing them under a new department-level headquarters. Specifically, the SAD absorbed the former Armor Department, Artillery Department, Engineer Department, and Anti-Chemical Warfare Department. All of these are now bureaus (ju) under the SAD. Also brought under the SAD was the Army Aviation Department. Note that the SAD does not have a separate bureau for infantry.

The SAD manages what would be called "branches" of the ground forces in the U.S. Army but that are considered to be "technical branches" by the PLA. These "branches" are sometimes referred to by the PLA as "corps," such as the "Armored Corps," "Artillery Corps," "Engineer Corps," etc. Sometimes they are referred to as "forces," such as "Armored Forces," "Anti-Chemical Warfare Forces," etc.

In a 1997 interview in Wen Wei Po former SAD Director Major General Xiao Zhentang asserted that the "branches" managed by the SAD "...now take up more than two-thirds of the entire ground force establishment." If taken at face value, then there are two implications attendant to this statement. First, today, the PLA ground forces are predominantly a mechanized infantry and armor force, not a predominantly "light infantry" force as in years past. Second, if true, the SAD has oversight over a massive portion of the PLA ground forces establishment, to include its internal infrastructure, its academics, its research institutes, etc.

Terminology for this department gets confusing. This author has adopted the term "Service Arms Department" (Bingzhong Bu) following the most recent usage in the DPMP (1999). "Bingzhong," however, literally translates to "branch (of the army)" in Chinese, not "Service Arms." In the 1993, 1994, and 1995 editions of the DPMP this organization was listed as the "Specialized Arms Department" (Tezhongbing Bu), but in...
1996 the term was dropped by the DPMP in favor of "Service Arms Department." At the same time, an official Chinese biography of Major General Chen Benyan (first Director of the SAD) provided to this author in 1998 by a PLA-affiliated research institute referred to the SAD in English (no Chinese given) as "Special Arm Department." Moreover, various articles about this organization carried by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) refer to the SAD as the "Arms Department" of the PLA General Staff Headquarters.

Finally, by way of background, one might ask why the SAD was created. Clearly, some serious "rice bowls" were broken within the GSD by downgrading the old-line autonomous departments to bureaus. Frankly, one can only speculate at this point. One possible reason could have been to continue the general trend of headquarters streamlining (eliminating redundancy); an ongoing effort within the PLA for quite some time. However, a significant reorganization of this sort may have had some operational rationale behind it. One possible explanation is circumstantial. It was at about this point in time, circa 1993, that the lessons of the Gulf War were being studied by the PLA, and at about this time that Jiang Zemin had declared that "Local Wars Under Modern, High-Tech Conditions" would be the focus of PLA modernization programs and reform. Consequently, one can speculate that the creation of the SAD would both reduce the size of the staffs involved and allow for a greater focused and coordinated modernization and reform effort for these critical PLA branches of the ground forces.

Roles & Missions. The key functions of this department were implied by former SAD Director, Major General Xiao Zhentang, in a 1997 interview when he referred to the need to insure that the PLA is "well-equipped, well-trained, and technically competent." Moreover, when reviewing the skeletal organizational chart for the SAD that has been pieced together above we are able to surmise that each of the "branches" under the SAD probably:

- provide oversight of the management of their respective "branch" schools,
- develop tactical and technical doctrine for their respective branches,
- determine special equipment requirements,
- develop branch-specific training standards,
- manage organic technical research institutes that support their branch, and,
- manage branch "proving grounds" for either new systems or new tactics.

In fact, the roles and missions of the SAD may be quite similar to those performed by the headquarters of the other major PLA services: the PLA Air Force, the PLA Navy, and the Strategic Rocket Forces (2nd Artillery). Indeed, these roles and missions would

457 According to the biography provided by the Chinese institute, "From 1985 to 1992, he (MG Chen Benyan) became the director of the Armored Force Department under the General Staff. From 1993 to 1995, he assumed the office as director of the Special Arms Department under the General Staff."

458 Hua Chun, Chang Hung, and Tu Hsueh-neng, ibid.
not be too much different than the roles of the Services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines) in the United States: "to equip and train."

If in fact this is anywhere close to being an adequate description of the functions, roles, and missions of the SAD, then, clearly, in performing these tasks SAD bureau directors and SAD "branch" staff officers are likely engaged in a tremendous amount of coordination outside the SAD. Within the GSD itself SAD officers are likely coordinating a good deal with counterparts in the Training Department (training and schools) and Military Affairs Department (regulations and management issues). Outside of the GSD, SAD staff officers would need to be coordinating with elements of the newly established General Armaments Department (equipment requirements), the General Logistics Department (equipment maintenance and logistic issues), and possibly with research institutes or laboratories outside of the PLA proper, such as within the new COSTIND. SAD staff officers are also likely in constant contact with appropriate sections of the Academy of Military Sciences as they ponder the question, "how do we translate fighting 'local wars under modern, high-tech conditions' into branch-specific doctrine and tactics?" This in turn, becomes a SAD training and schools issue.

Organization. The organization chart for the SAD above is far from complete. If the SAD in fact has the functions, roles, and missions outlined above, then each bureau should have schools, academies, and research institutes associated with it that are spread across China. Indeed, one could easily envision SAD staff officers constantly travelling around China on "temporary duty" inspecting SAD assets—schools, training grounds, research institutes, units, etc. The schools issue is becoming very confusing at this point because of the ongoing reform of professional military education in the PLA. Whereas once the "branches" had many schools, they are now being consolidated and merged. We simply do not know how many are left under "branch bureau" management.

In the sub-sections on organization that follow it will not be possible to present the entire structure of each "branch bureau" given the relative paucity of data at hand. What is listed are those sub-organizations for which there is data and some we can speculate to exist (broken lines on the chart). But the reader should envision the SAD as probably one of the larger departments in the GSD in structure, if not in personnel, and as a "core" department as far as managing the fighting forces go. Where interesting tidbits about a branch or SAD organization has been uncovered it will be presented, even when its position in the section seems a bit out of context.

General Office. Notional on the part of the author. The General Office would serve as the administrative headquarters of the SAD.

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459 Based on numerous articles in the PLA press and by Xinhua it is important to point out that the training experiments carried out by the Training Department of the GSD, and described in the previous section of this paper on the Training Department, involve a significant amount of coordination and cooperation with the Service Arms Department. Moreover, it appears that the branch bureaus under the SAD are conducting their own training experiments as well.
Political Department. Also notional, keeping with our assumption that all major GSD sub-organizations have a Political Department.

Armament Bureau.460 It is unclear what this bureau does. It may have some role in coordinating the equipment and weapons requirements of the branches under the SAD. Since the creation of the General Armaments Department (GAD, Zong Zhuangbei Bu) in 1998, the GSD’s “old” Armament Department (Zongquannou Bu Zhuangbei Bu), sometimes called the Equipment Department in English, seems to have been abolished as a separate department under the GSD. The Armament Bureau under the SAD may have taken its place in a much watered-down and more focused role.

Armored Force Bureau. This bureau is responsible for the modernization, reform, and training of the PLA’s Armored Force, a branch of the ground forces that was established in 1950 and which today is considered by the PLA to be one of the "high-tech" and "science and technology intensive" branches of the army.461 By reading what we can in Xinhua and Jiefangjun Bao we can come away with a pretty good idea of the role this bureau plays in managing the armor force. And by extension, we might even say that the generic functions below are the same for all of the major branch bureaus under the SAD:

- Develops standards for large unit armor training, small unit armor training and individual "tanker" training.462
- Develops armor tactics and doctrine.463
- Dispatches armor specialists and experts down to the brigade level to provide technical guidance or education.464
- Dispatches experts to "train the trainers" (author's term), at armor force schools, academies, and in units down to the brigade level.465
- Has some role (unclear at this point) in the development of new weapons systems and equipment for the branch.466

461 "PLA Armor Force Improves Weapons Systems," Xinhua, 16 December 1997, in FBIS.
462 "Armed Forces Increase Armored Units Combat Strength," Xinhua, 17 May 1999, in FBIS.
463 Ibid.
464 Ibid.
465 Ibid.
466 "PLA Armor Force Improves Weapons Systems," Xinhua, 16 December 1997, in FBIS.
• Develops branch-specific maintenance programs and maintenance training programs to include promulgating maintenance regulations, and dispatching maintenance experts down to units.467
• Provides oversight of "branch" schools and academies.

In the case of the Armored Force Bureau, two academies were identified, Armored Force Command Academy468 and the Armored Force Engineering Academy (AFEA). The Armored Force Command Academy is now part of the Shijiazhuang Army Command College and no longer under this bureau (see section below on SAD schools and institutes). The AFEA may no longer reside under the Armored Force Bureau. The DPMP for 1999 lists it as under the General Armaments Department. For the moment, we shall continue to carry it under the SAD. According to one article in Guangming Ribao the AFEA is "the only tertiary institution of the Armored Corps for engineering technology." It is likely located near the Lugouqiao (Marco Polo Bridge) in the vicinity of Beijing but traces its roots to the Department of Armor of the Harbin Military Engineering Academy.469 The AFEA is probably a four-year institution that graduates newly commissioned armor officers. But it also confers graduate-level degrees (MA, Ph.D.) in technical subjects.

In the 1988, 1990, and 1991 editions of the DPMP a "Training Office" was listed under the "old" (pre-SAD) Armor Department. Whether this office followed the Armor Department when the latter became a bureau under the SAD is unknown. One suspects that the only reason it would not have followed is if the SAD had established a centralized "Training Bureau" that had elements from all of the former "branch" departments. There is no evidence at this time of such a centralized training bureau under the SAD, however. Do the other "branch" bureaus (Engineers, Aviation, Anti-Chemical, Artillery) have training offices? Probably, but no hard evidence was found by this student at this point.

Artillery Bureau. Another of the older "branch" organizations that traces its roots to the late 1940s. It likely has near-identical roles and functions as the Armored Force Bureau. We speculate that the Artillery Bureau has many schools and institutes but note that at least two were recently combined to form the PLA Artillery Corps Institute. It is

467 Guo Zhenfeng, "Unify Train of Thought in Line with New Programs—Arms Department of General Staff Department Assembles Technological Guarantee Officers of Armored Force for Training," Jiefangjun bao, 5 March 1996, in FBIS.
468 For mention of the Armored Force Command Academy see "Central Military Commission Chairman Jiang Zemin Signs Commendation Order," Jiefangjun Bao, 2 April 1997 (FBIS). A certain Zhang Jinjin, former Deputy Director of the "General Staff Department Armored Force Command Academy Military Affairs Department" received a posthumous award.
unclear at this point if the new institute resides directly under the Artillery Bureau or is under some more generic (notional) office in the SAD providing oversight to the new combined academies. (See section below on SAD Schools & Academies).

**Engineer Bureau.** The Equipment Office, Force Design Office, and S & T Office listed under the Engineer Bureau were organizations previously listed in the DPMP (prior to the creation of the SAD) when the Engineer Corps had a department-level organization under the GSD. The functions of these offices are not known. Nor is it clear if these offices "carried over" when the engineers were subsumed by the SAD. For the purposes of this paper we shall assume they did come over to the SAD.470

Since 1993, and the creation of the SAD, the DPMP has carried under the Engineer Bureau various unidentified organic engineer brigades.471 We can probably have a high degree of confidence, given the nature of the diverse work of army engineers, that the Engineer Bureau has a good number of organic units directly under its control as national-level assets. Indeed, we continue to see oblique references to such units in the Chinese press. For example, an April 2000 Xinhua article noted the following:

> The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has established 18 special fast-reaction units to fight natural disasters, according to army sources. The emergency units, which are part of the PLA engineering corps, are the first of its kind in army history...The PLA headquarters plans to build these units into powerful task forces within three to five years.472

Clearly, the Engineer Corps will also have its own schools and academies and likely have its own research institutes as well. The "schools and academies" question is as confusing for the engineers as it is for the other branches given the ongoing consolidation and reform of the PLA professional military education system. For example, the "new" PLA Science & Engineering University (created July 1999) incorporated the "old" PLA Engineering Institute along with other non-Engineer Corps schools and is likely no longer under the Engineer "branch" bureau. (See section below on SAD Academies and Schools). We do include the following academies and schools under the Engineer Bureau on our chart based on their inclusion in the DPMP for 1999 and the fact no data on their status has been found as a result of the reform of the PLA school system:

- Engineer Corps Command Academy (Xuzhou, Jiangsu)
- Engineer Corps NCO School (Beijing)473

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472 "PLA Sets Up Fast-Reaction Units To Combat Natural Disasters," Xinhua, 4 April 2000, in FBIS.
The issue of R & D institutes is also subject to some confusion due to the creation of the GAD in 1998. Nevertheless, we can say that the focus of Engineer Corps equipment and systems development and research is likely more geared to combat engineer functions than civil engineering requirements. For example, PLA and other Chinese press articles that do discuss PLA Engineer Corps systems tend to focus on mine-laying, mine-clearing, and field camouflage issues.474

Anti-Chemical Warfare Bureau. Like other "branch" bureaus under the SAD, the Anti-Chemical Warfare Bureau (ACWB) mission is to "equip and train." In the case of the ACWB the mission is to insure the PLA can operate effectively in a nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare (NBC) environment.

The Anti-Chemical Warfare Corps (ACWC) of the PLA became a formal "branch" of the ground forces in 1956 when the Central Military Commission established the "Anti-Chemical Warfare Department" (presumably under the GSD), although the PLA had established an anti-chemical warfare school as early as 1950.475 The PLA continually refers to its Anti-Chemical Warfare force as a "defensive force." However, in a 1997 interview a SAD spokesman, in reviewing the history of the ACWC, indicated that in the past the use of flame-throwers by ground troops was a ACWC responsibility. According to the spokesman:

In 1955, the flame throwing company of a certain division, together with the infantry, took part in a battle to liberate Yijiangshan Island, thus creating the first successful example of using flame-throwing soldiers in battle. In the Sino-Indian self-defense counterattack war, the flame throwing detachment of the anti chemical warfare corps annihilated a total of 81 enemy firing points.476

What is of interest here, is that in the U.S. Army a flame-thrower would be considered just another weapon for an infantrymen whereas in the PLA, at least in the past, it required special Anti-Chemical Warfare troops to use it, or even have it in the unit table of organization and equipment (TO & E). Whether or not this is still the case is unknown.

474 For example, see Zhao Xichuan, "Engineering Corps Develops Mine Laying, Other Equipment," Xinhua, 15 December 1997, in FBIS and "PLA, U.N. Confirm PRC's World Standards in Clearing Mines," Xinhua, 14 April 2000, in FBIS. Of interest, this latter article notes that over 1,000 PLA "mine-clearing troops" have been involved in clearing landmines from the Sino-Vietnamese border since 1992.

475 Zhu Fengqi and Huang Chuangxin, "China's Antichemical Warfare Corps Already Possesses a Whole Set of Anti-Nuclear and Anti-Chemical Technology and Equipment," Zhongguo xinwen she, 13 July 1997, in FBIS.

476 Ibid.
The same interview mentions, without providing any detail, that ACWC troops also "took part in experiments on China's first atomic bomb and hydrogen bomb." But this is not surprising given that in the U.S. Army the Chemical Corps is responsible for teaching troop protection and conducting decontamination as a result of the use of nuclear weapons by an enemy.

Like the other "branch" bureaus of the SAD, the ACWD has its own academies and schools. According to Xinhua, "The cultivation of personnel constitutes the major task of the Anti-Chemical Corps. It was learned that over the past 10 years and more, China has gradually established regular anti-chemical colleges and schools. At present, there are anti-chemical schools in the south and anti-chemical schools in the north."\(^{477}\) The DPMP (1999) identifies at least one of those schools: the Anti-Chemical Warfare Command & Engineering Academy located in Beijing (Changping).\(^{478}\)

Moreover, claims in various articles that the ACWC has developed a multitude of NBC defense-related equipment allows us to speculate with some confidence that the ACWB also has affiliated research institutes.\(^{479}\)

Special Operations Forces Bureau. No written information was uncovered to suggest that "special operations" is a separate "branch" of the PLA or a responsibility of the SAD. The inclusion of a notional "Special Operations Bureau" is presented solely on the basis of a passing comment made by a former GSD Department Director to the author that the SAD "includes" special operations forces.

Research Institutes. The 1994, 1995, and 1996 editions of the DPMP carry entries for unidentified research institutes under the Service Arms Department. Consequently, I have chosen to display an organizational "block" on the SAD chart above as a placeholder. This is not meant to imply that there is a central organ (bureau, office, etc.) under the SAD that oversees SAD-affiliated research institutes, but to remind that the SAD likely has a number of institutes affiliated with it that are engaged in the research and development of weapons or other equipment for the branch bureaus. That affiliation may be under each of the "branch" bureaus that the research institutes support, not under the SAD headquarters per se. Moreover, it is unknown if the branch research institutes even continue to reside within the GSD/SAD. They could well have been transferred to either the newly-created GAD or the newly-civilianized COSTIND.

Management Bureau. The inclusion of a Management Bureau under the SAD is based on data provided by Ellis Melvin in which PLA periodicals identify a "1st Management Office," a "3rd Management Office," and a "750 Farm."\(^{480}\)

\(^{477}\) "PLA Anti-Chemical Corps Improves Ability," Xinhua, 26 December 1997, in FBIS.


\(^{479}\) Ibid. The ACWC "...has developed about 1,000 kinds of protection equipment, with more than 600 items of them having won the state- and army-level sci-tech progress awards."

\(^{480}\) Melvin's date comes from PLA Health magazine (March-April 1998, p. 4), Jiefangjun Bao (11 July 1999), and Jiefangjun Bao (15 April 1999), for the 1st
description of the "General Management Bureau" under the Second Department is correct, then the two offices and the farm identified by Melvin would suggest that the SAD also has a bureau that provides support services to the SAD. 481

Proving Ground. This is a very tentative entry. An unidentified "proving ground" under the SAD was referenced in the PLA press in 1995. 482 Given the roles and functions of the branch bureaus under the SAD, it would not be out of the question that "branch" proving grounds continue to exist. However, it is also possible that whatever proving grounds were previously under the branch bureaus (from pre-SAD days as autonomous GSD departments) may have been transferred to the new GAD. We just do not know.

Schools & Academies. As mentioned previously in this paper, the PLA began a major restructuring and consolidation of its professional military education system in 1999. The picture is still confusing. But it appears at first glance that the first wave of consolidations that we know about affected military schools and academies that were previously under the "old" pre-SAD "branch departments" and the post-SAD "branch bureaus." It is not clear to this student if the new academies (listed below) are actually under the SAD headquarters or if they "stand alone" as part of the greater GSD. But they are affiliated in function with the SAD (except in at least one case) so for now we shall place them under the SAD (under a "notional " box labeled "Academies and Schools"). All of the newly consolidated academies and schools listed below were authorized in the summer of 1999 by order of Jiang Zemin in his capacity as Chairman, Central Military Commission:

- Shijiazhuang Command College. Likely affiliated with the Armored Force Bureau of the SAD. It was created by merging the former Army General Staff College and the Armored Forces Command Academy. It will be responsible for "training army command cadres and staff of medium ranking, Armored Forces cadres in charge of growth, and Armored Forces cadres specializing in education technology." It will offer master's degrees and doctorates in military science and

Management Office (Zongcan Bingzhong Bu Yi Guanli Chu), 3rd Management Office (San Guanli Chu), and 750 Farm respectively.

481 I chose not to use Eftimiades' terminology for the Second Department (General Management Bureau) for the SAD, although I believe he accurately describes the functions of both management bureaus as providing services and support to their respective departments. Two reasons for rejecting his usage for the SAD. First, the DPMP identifies a Management Bureau (Guanli Ju) for the GSD and I have been using the DPMP series as a baseline throughout this study knowing that it is based on the close reading of PLA periodicals. The sources that Eftimiades uses to give us his terminology, on the other hand, cannot be verified. Second, the term "general" (zong) in front of an organization usually connotes a higher place in the PLA bureaucracy than this organization (the Management Bureau of the SAD) would warrant.

482 This data point was provided to the author by Ellis Melvin.
technology. "The college is a more highly integrated medium-level command academy that combines command, management, and technology."^483

- **PLA Information Engineering University.** The result of the merger of the PLA Institute of Information Engineering, the PLA Electronic Technology College, and the PLA Survey and Mapping College, this institute plans to have an enrollment of over 10,000 students.^484 One infers from the articles cited that this institute has actually expanded in scope of syllabus and size of student body. It will offer master's degrees in 22 subjects and disciplines and will also have 8 fields of doctoral studies.^485

- The "University" likely consists of several "colleges," and those colleges, in addition to their teaching functions, likely have subordinate "institutes" engaged in research and development. For example, one Xinhua article identifies the "Information Security College" as part of the University and under the college is an "Information Technology Institute" that was credited with developing a "mobile telecommunications exchange platform" for wartime use buy the PLA.^486

- Clearly, this university was created by merging an Engineer branch school with a Communications Department (4th Department) school, and a Survey & Cartography Bureau school. It may rightly reside under the Communications Department, not the SAD. We are just not sure at this point.

- **PLA Science & Engineering University.** Created by merging the PLA Institute of Communications Engineering, the PLA Engineering Institute of the Engineer Corps, the Meteorology Institute of the PLA Air Force, and the GSD's No. 63 Research Institute. Of special interest, the reported mission of this university will be to train "almost 1,000 researchers each year" in the fields of "information warfare, communication and command automation, engineering for the Engineering Corps, military meteorology, and combined arms command."^487 According to a Hong Kong newspaper report the University will host a newly created "Institute of Computer and Command Automation," the focus of which will be information warfare and "counter-information."^488 Again, this university

^483 Ma Xiaochun, "PLA Sets Up Four New Academies," Xinhua, 2 July 1999, in FBIS.

^484 "PLA Establishes New Military Schools Per Jiang Decree," Xinhua, 2 July 1999 (FBIS).

^485 Ma, "PLA Sets Up Four New Academies."


^487 Ibid.

^488 "PLA Trains Personnel for Information Warfare," Tai yang pao, 15 September 1999, in FBIS. This article lists Major General Si Laiyi as first President of the
seems to be a better fit under the Communications Department, or even under the GSD itself given the organizations from which its component institutes came.

- **PLA Artillery Corps Institute.** This institute was formed by the merger of the Hefei Artillery Corps Institute and the Nanjing Artillery Corps Institute. "It is in charge of the academic education of Artillery Corps officers and the training of doctorate and master's degree students and other high-level Artillery Corps personnel." Of note, according to *Xinhua*, this institute has been designated by the CMC and GSD as an "advance unit" in "joint foundation training." It appears to be mainly an undergraduate institution for field artillery, and "unmanned machine engineering." It will also offer five "new" undergraduate disciplines: command automation engineering, computer science and technology, mechanical engineering and automation, electrical engineering and automation, and information engineering.489

**Army Aviation Bureau (Luhang Ju).**

![Diagram of Army Aviation Bureau]

**Figure 4.13  GSD Army Aviation Bureau**

University. The *DPMP* for 1999 lists MG Si as Commandant of the Science & Engineering University (located in Nanjing) as of 25 June 1999. The *DPMP* for 1998 listed MG Si Laiyi as Commandant of the Communications Command Academy of the GSD in Wuhan. In as much as the Communications Command Academy is a Communications Department school, we have further evidence to support the hypotheses that (1) the Communications Department of GSD has the lead for Information Warfare and (2) the new University may actually come under the Communications Department, not the SAD. For now, however, we shall leave it under the SAD.

489 Ma, “PLA Sets Up Four New Academies.”
The Army Aviation Corps (AAC), the newest "branch" of the PLA ground forces, is comprised of rotary wing aircraft (helicopters). The following passage from a 1996 Kuang Chiao Ching article on the AAC is worth quoting in its entirety as it gives an excellent overview of AAC organizational history.

For the purpose of improving the combined combat strength of the newly organized group armies after the large-scale streamlining and reorganization of the army in 1985, the CMC approved on 3 October 1986 the establishment of Army Aviation as a new People's Liberation Army arm. The first to be established was the Army Aviation Preparatory Command Headquarters with the Army Aviation Administration of the General Staff Department as the main force. After that, the command headquarters transferred many outstanding officers and men from more than 100 Army and Air Force units at and above the division level and deployed some helicopters from the Air Force to form the first Army Aviation preparatory unit in mid-1987. While the preparatory unit was busy undergoing training, the CMC adopted the decision to attach Army Aviation groups (da dui) and regiments to various field group armies and to abolish cavalry regiments under group armies.490

A key point taken from above is that the creation of the AAC was a result of operational imperatives: to enhance the combat capabilities of the newly-created group armies (jituan jun) and the new emphasis at the time (1985) on combined arms warfare. This point is reiterated in an article written by Army Aviation Bureau Director Major General Li Xiyuan for Hangkong Zhishi (Aerospace Knowledge) shortly after he took over the bureau in 1996.491

We would expect that the Army Aviation Bureau should have under it several schools and academies. The DPMP (1999) identifies one: the Army Aviation Corps Academy in Beijing.492

As a final point of interest, the Kuang Chiao Ching article on Army Aviation ascribes to the bureau generic roles and functions that corroborate our general understanding of what the branch bureaus under the SAD are charged to do. "In


491 Major General Li Xiyuan, "China's Army Aviation Units," Hangkong zhishi, 6 November 1996, in FBIS. As related by General Li, "...so as to raise PLA combat capability on modern war terms, in 1985, along with our million-man troop cutback, the Central Military Commission (CMC) acted with foresight and good timing, resolutely making the historic strategic decision to organize the PLA Army Aviation, and clearly setting forth the need to establish the troop unit resolutely."

492 DPMP (1999), p. 204.
accordance with CMC regulations, the Army Aviation Administration of the General Staff Department is directly in charge of Army Aviation equipment allocation, training programs, and personnel training while individual group armies are responsible for combat command and personnel deployment." 493 (Note the distinction in roles between the Army Aviation Bureau and Group Armies.)

**Guards Bureau (Jingwei Ju)**

![Figure 4.14 GSD Guards Bureau](image)

What little information that was encountered that discusses the GSD Guards Bureau is mainly from the Hong Kong Press and hence, by definition, should be treated with extreme caution. 494 Moreover, what little one can read about the GSD Guards Bureau is more confusing than informative. So while we can state with a high degree of certainty that there is a Guards Bureau, its internal organization remains unknown. 495

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493 Tseng, "China's Youngest Arm."

494 See the following articles. (1) Lu Chia-li, "Yang Dezong Keeps Body Guards Bureau Under Remote Control," Kuang chiao ching, 16 March 1996, in FBIS. Of the articles listed, this author puts the most stock in this one given Kuang Chiao Ching's excellent track record over many years of responsible reporting on PLA issues. (2) Bruce Gilley, "Yang Shangkun Said to Replace Bodyguards," Eastern Express, 28 July 1995, in FBIS. While the author of this article, Bruce Gilley, is a responsible and serious journalist, this student is not certain how much stock to put in this paper and this particular article. (3) Li Tzu-ching, "Security Arrangements for 50th Anniversary," Cheng ming, 1 May 1999, in FBIS. Cheng Ming is typical of many non-PRC owned Hong Kong periodicals; there is often a grain of truth to the reportage, but it is usually cast in a sensational manner.

495 The DPMP has carried a GSD Guards Bureau for many years. There is no question about its existence.
We can state with some assurance that the mission of the Guards Bureau is to both plan for and provide for the physical protection and safety of the top CCP and PLA leadership and possibly the physical security of key national military facilities. How exactly the Guards Bureau goes about doing this is also unknown.496

From what one can gather, the GSD Guards Bureau does have operational control over a unit known as the "Central Guard Regiment." It is likely this Central Guard Regiment that carries out the physical security mission of the GSD Guards Bureau.497 We note from the 1999 edition of the DPMP that the current Deputy Director of the GSD Guards Bureau (LTG Sun Yong) is also the Commander of the Central Guard Regiment.498 However, it is not clear that it would be correct to assume that the Central Guard Regiment is "organic" to the GSD Guards Bureau. Clearly, the GSD Guards Bureau has operational control over the Central Guard Regiment. But it may be the Beijing Garrison Command that has administrative control over the regiment.499 Therefore, the line to the Central Guard Regiment on the organizational chart above is dashed, not solid.

The Central Guard Regiment may also be the same physical security organization that is often referred to as the "8341 Unit." This unit has acquired a notorious aura about it over the years. This is likely the result of its alleged mission of protecting the top party leadership, its role in the arrest of the "Gang of Four" in 1976, but most likely, because it is a "secret" unit and the Hong Kong press loves intrigue.500

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496 According to Li Tzu-ching, the (current) Director of the Guards Bureau, LTG You Xigui, was a member of an alleged "Leading Group For Security and Safety in the Celebration of the 50th Anniversary" established by the CCP in April 1999 to oversee security for the 50th anniversary of the PRC.

497 Lu "Yang Dezhang" claims that today, "This regiment has now developed beyond the size of a division, with its total number of officers and men exceeding 8,000." DPMP (1999), p. 19.

498 According to Gilley, "Overall responsibility for the protection of state leaders lies with the Central Guards Bureau, part of the General Staff Headquarters. The provision of guards, all of them men, and the organisation of day-to-day arrangements is handled by the Central Guards Regiment, part of the Beijing military region of the PLA." Frankly, I do not know if this is correct. Gilley further states that the regiment is responsible for guarding the PRC leadership complex at Zhongnanhai.

500 According to John Pike's Federation of American Scientists (FAS) website (http://www.fas.org/irp/world/china/pla/8341.htm):

"The Beijing-based Central Security Regiment, also known as the 8341 Unit, was an important PLA law enforcement element. It was responsible over the years for the personal security of Mao Zedong and other party and state leaders. More than a bodyguard force, it also operated a nationwide intelligence network to uncover plots against Mao or any incipient threat to the leadership. The unit reportedly was deeply involved in undercover activities, discovering electronic listening devices in Mao's office..."
One last interesting item about the GSD Guards Bureau is worth mentioning. The current Director of the GSD Guards Bureau (LTG You Xigui), is also the Deputy Director of the General Office of the CCP Central Committee. This was also the case with the former GSD Guards Bureau Director, General Yang Dezong. According to Kuang Chiao Ching, the General Office of the CCP Central Committee has a Bodyguards Bureau that may also be part of the mandate of the GSD Guards Bureau Director. So we have a curious set of interrelationships when looking at the Guards Bureau of the GSD.

First, the Director of the GSD Guards Bureau is concurrently a Deputy Director of a Central Committee organization (the CCP Central Committee General Office) which is a higher level organization than the GSD bureau that he directs. This seems to be a standard practice from the past and not just a current anomaly. Second, the Deputy Director of the GSD Guards Bureau is concurrently the Commander of the Central Guard Regiment. The Central Guard Regiment may be under the operational control of the GSD Guards Bureau but it may also be under the administrative control of the Beijing Garrison, not the GSD per se. Hence, the confusion alluded to in the beginning of this section. These relationships are depicted on the Figure 4.15 below.

and performing surveillance of his rivals. The 8341 Unit participated in the late 1976 arrest of the Gang of Four, but it was reportedly deactivated soon after the event."

Pike speaks interchangeably about the 8341 Unit and the Central Guard Regiment with more confidence than this student has at this point. In Pike's defense, however, Lu, in Kuang Chiao Ching states that, "The Central Bodyguards Regiment is also widely known as the '8341' Troop both at home and abroad, and in the eyes of foreign reporters, it is the 'Palace Guard' of Mao Zedong." However, the Central Guard Regiment has not been deactivated as the FAS website claims.

502 Lu, "Yang Dezong."
Figure 4.15  Relationship Between GSD Guards Bureau, CCP Central Committee General Office, and Possibly Beijing Garrison Command.

Management Bureau (Guanli Ju)

The Management Bureau provides services and support to the General Staff Department, its subordinate organizations, its assigned personnel, and perhaps even dependants. Recalling what we were told about the "General Management Bureau" of the Second Department, the Management Bureau of the GSD likely performs the same functions, that is, "...provides...personnel with logistical support in the form of transportation (cars and buses), office supplies, recreation, and food services." Figure 4.16 below outlines the structure of the bureau:
Clearly, the Management Bureau also provides medical services, given the identification of numbered clinics.

Moreover, the identification of a "Datong Production Base" which includes a coal mine infers that the Management Bureau is (was?) responsible for "off-budget" revenue generating operations that support the operations of the GSD. Whether the GSD Management Bureau is still "in business" after the order to the PLA to divest itself in 1998 is unknown. But it would not be surprising to learn (and we speculate here) that these types of business operations, that likely are for the purpose of troop quality of life and are not morally reprehensible in and of themselves, are still permitted to exist. More than likely, for example, the "Shunyi Farm" was providing food for GSD mess halls, which are themselves likely run and operated by the Management Bureau. 503

So when we think about the Management Bureau we should be imagining all of the motor pools, mechanics and drivers, supply sections and supply officers and NCOs, all of the warehouses, facilities engineers, power plant specialists, mess halls (and cooks),

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503 We do note that if Management Bureaus in general have the keys to the supply warehouses and the keys to the motor pool, then they may be highly susceptible to unauthorized transactions. Any U.S. officer who has ever served as a supply officer or unit property book officer as an additional duty can imagine the possibilities for malfeasance. Some of this is alluded to in Tong Ruiou and Ren Yanjun "Whole Army Management and Education Scores Marked Results," jiejiang jun bao, 15 December 1995.
medical clinics (with doctors and nurses)—everything it takes to keep the GSD running on a day to day basis.

The organization chart above is far from complete. But what it does offer is enough to verify our sensing so far for the roles of "management bureaus" as generic organizations. We have run into them twice before in this paper: once under the Second Department and again under the Service Arms Department.

Meteorological Bureau (Qixiang Ju)

Figure 4.17  GSD Meteorological Bureau

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504 The basis of this organization chart is the primary source research of Ellis Melvin, who kindly shared the information with this student.

General Office: Notional on the part of this student.
Legal Advisory Office: Jiefangjun Bao, 12 December 1999, p. 3.
Datong Production Base and subordinate Panjinyao Coal Mine: Jiefangjun Bao, 31 August 1990.
The Meteorological Bureau of the GSD is responsible for providing near-term, mid-term, and long-term weather forecasting for the PLA in support of military operations. Previously thought to be an independent bureau under the GSD, it may have recently been moved under the Operations Department.

Clearly, this is a GSD organization that also has tremendous value-added for the PLA's collateral mission of "supporting national economic construction." Only one article of note provided any insights into this organization, and most of what we learn is from inference.\textsuperscript{505} We come away with the impression that the Meteorological Bureau has at least two key functions: (1) actually providing weather forecasting services for the PLA (and possibly the national government), and (2) working with research institutes to develop meteorological equipment.

In the case of the first function, the Meteorological Bureau apparently mans and operates weather forecasting stations throughout China. While these are likely "fixed" stations, one wonders if the Meteorological Bureau also has airborne or maritime assets, or whether these are PLA Air Force and PLA Navy assets. We do not know at this point.

In the case of the second function, \textit{Renmin ribao} reports that experts from the Meteorological Bureau worked together with the University of Science & Technology for National Defense (part of the "old" COSTIND) in 1997 to develop the "Galaxy-III Computer" for the PLA. Apparently, the 9th Five-Year Plan included a major PLA weather forecasting project and the development of this computer was part of it.

It is unclear if we can even speculate about the Meteorological Bureau having its own academies, schools, or institutes; we have no basis for it at this point.\textsuperscript{506}

\textsuperscript{505} Yang Jian and Xi Qixin, "Galaxy-III Giant Computer Used in Army Weather Center," \textit{Renmin ribao}, 5 October 1998, in FBIS.

\textsuperscript{506} We note with interest that in a long article by Major General Liu Jixian of the PLA Academy of Military Sciences highlighting his views of key areas of military science to focus on for the future, he devotes a lengthy passage to the increasing importance of meteorology; especially the effect of weather upon missiles and other "high-tech" systems. See Liu Jixian, "The Military Science Research Mission," \textit{Junshi kexue}, 20 August 1999, in FBIS.
Survey and Cartography General Bureau (Cehui Zong Ju)

Figure 4.18  GSD Survey & Cartography General Bureau

Previously thought to be an independent bureau under the GSD, the Survey & Cartography General Bureau, like the Meteorological Bureau, may have recently been placed under the Operations Department of the GSD.

The Survey & Cartography General Bureau (SCGB) of the GSD manages another of the older "branches" of the PLA. The PLA's "surveying and mapping corps" celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding on 11 May 1950.507 The SCGB is responsible for:

- Assigning surveying and mapping missions to its organic units (which are GSD assets),
- Promulgating regulations for the management of PLA survey and mapping activities and units.508

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508 In January 1996 the PLA, under the authority of Jiang Zemin, issued its first-ever "PLA Surveying Regulations." The entire set of regulations consists of 6 chapters
• Issuing circulars to surveying and mapping units on a range of issues that include training, personnel matters, and equipment maintenance,
• Providing oversight to surveying and mapping schools and academies,
• Working with research institutes (its own and others) to identify surveying and cartographic systems requirements to support PLA operations and national (civilian) requirements,
• Fielding surveying and cartographic equipment for the PLA,
• Providing cartographic support to PLA operations; especially to commanders,
• The SCGB apparently must approve, prior to publication, all non-PLA produced maps of China that include more than one province or any map depicting Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Macao,
• The SCGB is also responsible for approving the results of any surveying done by non-PLA PRC government cartographic entities in support of bilateral frontier demarcation talks.  

**Organic Units.** Organic to the SCGB are numbered “Groups,” which seem to be regimental size units. The “Groups” are likely further broken down into numbered “Detachments” and then into numbered “Teams.”  

Two Groups were identified, the 1st Survey & Cartography Group and the 4th Survey & Cartography Group.  

There are probably others, but how many remains unknown. In the past, FBIS has translated the names of these units as “Surveying & Mapping Regiments.”

One mission of these units is to survey, map, and chart remote areas of China that are difficult to access. Other likely missions of these units could include (and we speculate here) the following:

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and 27 articles. Clearly the SCGB was involved in drafting these regulations. See Cao Weifeng and Zhang Dongwen, “Central Military Commission Chairman Jiang Zemin Signs Order Promulgating The Chinese People’s Liberation Army Surveying Regulations,” *Jiefangjun Bao*, 19 January 1996, in FBIS.

509 The last two bullets are derived from a Hong Kong article explaining the 1996 PLA Military Surveying Regulations. See Didi Kirsten Tatlow, *Cartography Law Laid Down on Map Vetting*, *Eastern Express*, 1 February 1996, in FBIS. Bullets without footnotes are derived from several *Jiefangjun Bao* and *Xinhua* articles that discuss the SCGB and which are specifically cited within the remainder of this section of the paper.


- 218 -

- Support to demarcation agreements between China and bordering nations such as Russia, the Central Asian nations, and Vietnam, and
- Tactical cartographic support to PLA field operations as needed.512

The 1st Survey & Cartography Group was awarded the title “Heroic Surveying and Mapping Regiment” (FBIS terminology) by the Central Military Commission. It is sometimes mentioned by the top PLA leadership in inspirational talks. For example, Chief of the General Staff Fu Quanyou referred to this unit in a 1997 Jiefangjun Bao article published under his name entitled, “Always Persist In Carrying Forward The Spirit Of Plain Living And Hard Struggle.” His comments tell us a little bit about the conditions under which some of these unit operate:

The First Surveying and Mapping Regiment of the General Staff Department which has been awarded the honorable title, “Heroic Surveying and Mapping Regiment” by the Central Military Commission works in small units in the wilderness year round, going up to the snowy fields on high mountains and into the Gobi Desert and prohibited areas in northern Tibet. They have gone through all kinds of hardships, overcome many unimaginable difficulties, and filled empty gaps in surveying and mapping work in our country. Their deeds fully embody the characteristics of plain living and hard struggle.513

Academies & Schools. Prior to the 1999 military academy reorganization and consolidation, the SCGB had at least one academy associated with it that we know of: the PLA Survey & Mapping College. However, as of July 1999 this college was absorbed into the newly created PLA Information Engineering University.514 It is likely that the SCGB has other academies, but no data was available to confirm this. However, one Jiefangjun Bao article on new surveying regulations mentions in passing that the regulations apply to all “surveying units, academies, and schools” leaving the impression that there are many such institutions under the SCGB.515

Research Institutes. In a May 2000 Jiefangjun Bao interview, the Director of the SCGB (Li Zhiuang, probably a major general) mentioned that the SCGB has been engaged in the development of a good deal of surveying and cartographic equipment over the years (over 400 major projects “in recent years”).

One gets the impression that this bureau has quite a few research and development institutes associated with it. Whether these institutes have transferred to the GAD is unknown. During the course of research for this paper only one institute was identified:

512 We note that these units have vehicles that were recently fitted with satellite Global Positioning Devices. See “Military Vehicles in Hong Kong, Macao Installed With GPS,” Shaxi Ribao, 7 April 2000, in FBIS.
513 Fu Quanyou, “Always Persist In Carrying Forward The Spirit Of Plain Living And Hard Struggle,” Jiefangjun Bao, 31 July 1997, in FBIS.
515 Cao Wenfeng and Zhang Dangwen, ibid.
the PLA Geodetic and Cartographic Institute in Xian and its associated (subordinate) Technology Innovation Center (established in June 2000).516

In any event, the SCGB claims to be at the cutting edge of high-tech in the PLA. The list below, derived from the Chinese press, is some of what the PLA claims it has developed by way of surveying and mapping systems in recent years. If any of this is correct (and we cannot know for sure), then the SCGB ought to be viewed as leading one of the more advanced pockets of technology in the PLA, and not just the headquarters for "plain living" surveying units slogging across the snows of Tibet. Examples include:

- Three dimensional topographic simulation system to assist commanders in planning operations,517
- "Satellite positioning technologies,"518
- "Aerospace telemetry systems" to provide precise coordinates for precision strike weapons,519
- Digital mapping systems on 3D displays for PLA C3I systems,520
- Remote surveying systems,521
- GPS-equipped vehicles with digital mapping capabilities for employment in the field,522

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516 "PRC's Military Establishes Technology Innovation Center," Xinhua, 2 June 2000, in FBIS.
517 "PLA Modernizes Surveying, Mapping Technology," Xinhua, 14 October 1999, in FBIS.
518 Ibid.
520 Ibid.
521 Ma Xiaochun, "Fu Quanyou Stresses Need To Accelerate Modernization of Military Survey and Mapping," Xinhua, 15 May 2000, in FBIS.
522 Ibid.
Legal Advisory Office (Falu Guwen Chu)

Figure 4.19  GSD Legal Affairs Office

The last time the DPMP carried this office was in the 1997 edition. Therefore, we are not sure that it is still a separate office under the GSD. However, China's July 1998 defense "White Paper" (China's National Defense) devoted three pages to "Military Legislative Work." Given the emphasis in the PLA over the past few years on the promulgation of regulations and standardized administrative procedures it is likely, then, that some legal affairs office still exists in the GSD.

Clearly, many of the regulations that have been promulgated have a direct impact on the daily work of various GSD's sub-organizations. For example, the "Regulations on Conscription Work" and "Regulations on Militia Work" undoubtedly have a direct impact on the GSD's Mobilization Department. Likewise, the "Regulations of the PLA Headquarters" should have an impact on the entire GSD.

Moreover, although many of these regulations are issued under the authority of the CMC, most are likely drafted and developed by the pertinent sub-organizations of the GSD. Consequently, some type of legal office is needed to coordinate with the various sub-organizations of the GSD that are involved, as well as to coordinate with the legal offices in other national-level PLA organizations, 523 and perhaps with the Ministry of National Defense, or even the appropriate committees of the National People's Congress.

523 The DPMP (1999) lists the CMC as currently having a Legal Affairs Bureau.
Retired Officers Office (*Xiuguan Chu*)

**Figure 4.20  GSD Retired Officers Office**

The GSD's Retired Officers Office is located at A-1, Huayuan Road in the Haidian District of Beijing. Its apparent function is to provide services to retired PLA officers such as medical services as indicated by the fact that it has at least one subordinate medical clinic. One could imagine that the office would also assist retirees with pension assistance, and whatever other "perks" are authorized to retired career PLA officers. What is not clear is if this office's sole function is to provide services to local retirees, or, if its mission is actually to manage retirement services for the entire PLA by setting policy, providing oversight, etcetera.\(^5\)

**OBSERVATIONS AND CLOSING COMMENTS**

As stated at the start of this paper this effort is a beginning, not an end, to our understanding of the GSD. There are many, many data gaps in seemingly basic areas that remain. Some of this basic information may be revealed over time. As the PLA marches toward increased "regularization" their own publications will likely provide more insights. But many of the gaps probably never will be filled given the closed nature of the Chinese system. Moreover, some of the speculation in this paper and some of the interpretations of roles, missions, organizations, and relationships offered may ultimately prove incorrect. This is to be expected, and critical commentary is welcomed.

But having gone through this exercise one still comes away with some "feel" for the GSD. So in closing, some final observations and comments are in order:

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524 Ellis Melvin found the citation for this office, its address, and the existence of at least one medical clinic in *PLA Life*, December 1998, p. 59.
- The first thing one walks away with is a sense of the enormity of this organization. The GSD is a big organization! Even if we cannot put a number on its assigned strength we can "feel" its size. Alternately stated, we know we have put our arms around an elephant. We just do not know precisely how large an elephant it actually is.

- Second, we take note of the fact that the GSD is not just the staff officers at headquarters in Beijing, but the officers and soldiers in field units that are organic to the GSD and that are stationed all over China. To recapitulate, the following GSD sub-organizations have (or likely have) organic units stationed across the entire country:
  - The Third Department
  - The Communications Department
  - The Engineer Bureau of the Service Arms Department
  - Possibly the Anti-Chemical Warfare Bureau of the Service Arms Department,
  - Possibly the Aviation Bureau of the Service Arms Department
  - Probably the Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department,
  - The Surveying & Cartography General Bureau
  - Probably the Meteorological Bureau
  - Probably the Central Guards Bureau (Beijing only)

- Third, we come away with an understanding of the pervasive role of the GSD in almost every aspect of running the PLA as a professional military force. Indeed, one should come to view the GSD as one of the centers---one of the core organizations---that has been working to make the PLA an increasingly professional and increasingly competent military organization over the past decades; certainly since Deng Xiaoping's "strategic decision" in 1985. Many of the modernization programs the PLA is undergoing (or may undergo in the future) are being (or will be) managed by some organization within the GSD.

- Fourth, although the PLA continues to become more competent and more professional, it would be a mistake to view this trend as taking place at the expense of the influence of the CCP. The Party's presence in the GSD continues to be pervasive through the various party committees and a personnel system that is still run by the Political Commissars. The same can likely be said for the entire PLA, not just the GSD. Students and observers can argue back and forth about the role of the CCP today in the life of the general citizenry or how viable it is within certain sectors of the Chinese polity. But within the PLA the Party still appears to be a force to be reckoned with. It may not be too much of an overstatement to suggest that today the PLA is the one Chinese government organ over which the Party still has control throughout the entire country.

- Fifth, one is struck by how much organizational continuity there has been in the GSD since 1949. There have not been all that many major changes to the GSD organization. Some departments have been merged; others have been abolished or moved over to other parts of the PLA national establishment. But for the most part,
the GSD today would be very recognizable to a PLA staff officer who served in the GSD in 1949. In other words, there have been many organizational changes and adjustments, but seemingly few systemic changes.

- But sixth, there is some evidence to suggest that the changes that have been made over the past decade or so have been a reflection of adjusting organizational structure for mostly operational reasons. Examples include the creation of the Army Aviation Corps (1985), the creations of the Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department (1990) and probably the creation of the Service Arms Department (1993). Along with many of the recent reforms in PLA-wide programs such as in professional military education, the creation of a NCO system, and the new obsession with regulations and standardization, one is led to believe that, overall, the GSD appears to be a "learning organization."

- Seventh, we note that the GSD remains an organization dominated by officers of the Ground Forces. One could easily walk away with the impression that all that is going on within the GSD goes on almost exclusively for the Ground Forces. This is clearly not the case. Yet, there is little "sense" or "feel" that the GSD is servicing the needs of the PLAAF of the PLAN. This may be a very mistaken impression on the part of this student. It may be that the service headquarters are doing much of the heavy lifting on air force and navy reform. But because of the subordinate status of the service headquarters to the GSD one wonders how much the PLAN and PLAAF can accomplish without one of their own in any of the key positions of the GSD leadership. This is a critical issue for the PLA---or it should be. For the first time since 1949 the PLA's own concepts of operation and their own threat assessments now allow one to ask the question: how relevant are the ground forces to China's security?" If in fact the PLA aspires to some fashion of joint warfare as some of its literature suggests, then it is going to have to see the dawn of a day when PLAN and PLAAF flag officers attain leading positions in the GSD. So far, this has not happened.

- Eighth, we take note of the incredible number of regulations that have been promulgated for the entire PLA by the GSD over the past decade. This is a major indicator of increasing professionalism and competency. However, it begs this very critical question: "If there were no regulations or standardized policies in the past, then how did the PLA operate?" In other words, without PLA-wide standards and procedures one could wonder if, systemically speaking, there have been many PLA's, as opposed to a single PLA.

- Ninth, we note that systemic change takes a long time in the PLA. Whether it was the creation of the Group Armies in 1985, the bureaucratic steps needed to create the Army Aviation Corp, incorporating new operational concepts, or the long lead time one senses it took to enact the current round of PME reform, change takes time. From the study at hand we suspect that systemic change in the PLA goes through as many as nine phases:
(1) Research and "theoretical work"
(2) Experimentation with concepts (experimental units, FTXs, experimental organizations)
(3) Adjustments to theory
(4) The limited establishment of prototypes in the field
(5) The promulgation of regulations (or directives) for the entire PLA
(6) Study of the regulations (or directives) by the greater PLA
(7) Execution
(8) Inspection for compliance
(9) The declaration of "success"

- Finally, we point out that the GSD represents what we might term "the contradiction that is the PLA." On the one hand, we have a massive organization that is grappling with some very basic military issues that leave us with the impression that the PLA is an extremely large but not very sophisticated force. How else to explain a lack of standardization? How else to explain a reliance on local militias? What else to make of the lack, hitherto, of a professional corps of Non Commissioned Officers? But at the same time, the GSD also represents the fact that there are, to borrow Lin Chong-pin's term, "pockets of excellence" in this military establishment that augur well for its ability to become a highly modern force. For example, within the GSD we find organizations that are likely on the cutting edge of high technology within China itself. The (Communications) Department comes to mind. So too does the Third (Sigint) Department and the Fourth Electronic Countermeasures & Radar Department). These organizations and the programs they now manage and will institute in the future have the potential to change at least some parts of the PLA in ways that we may find surprising.

By Larry Wortzel

Since the Gutian Conference of December 28, 1929, the system of communist party leadership and education has been an important institution within units of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Prior to the Gutian Conference, soldiers’ committees in units were designed to give rank in file troops a chance to have a voice in their own affairs. It was at that conference that Mao Zedong managed to abolished the soldiers’ committees. Mao argued for the establishment of a party branch system at the company level of the PLA, giving ordinary soldiers a representative of the CCP in their midst. This served three purposes: it provided the communist party a means to sample and monitor opinion in units; it provided a means to influence soldiers and leaders, organizing them and spreading the communist line; and it provided a visible presence of what the CCP calls the system of “people’s representatives.” Mao’s allies in establishing the political commissar system at the Gutian meeting were Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping.

In attempting to establish the party branch system and political commissars, Mao faced objections from field commanders like Peng Dehuai, Chen Yi, Zhu De, and even Lin Biao, who favored a structured, professional military with traditional training.

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was an argument that Mao won. Thus, from the time of the Gutian Conference to today, political affairs and education, along with personnel, security and discipline, have been the purview of the Political Commissar (PC) system.\textsuperscript{529} There have been some loops and diversions in this policy. From 1967-1969, PLA Cultural Revolution Groups took over ideological functions in the PLA.\textsuperscript{530} During this period PLA Revolutionary Committees replaced the Party Branch and Political Commissar systems in a functional sense.\textsuperscript{531} The GPD was reconstituted in 1969 with Li Desheng as its director, but with what Shambaugh describes as a “skeleton staff” of 200.\textsuperscript{532} Today, however, the Political Commissar system continues to be the way that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) retains its control over the military and shapes the articulation of the party line. At the same time, the Party Branch system remains the basis of “people’s democracy,” and military representatives form a constituency in the Renmin Daibiao Dahui. Alexander George’s excellent explanation of the dual function (political education and “people’s democracy”) in The Chinese Communist Army in Action explains the way that the political commissars ensured that even below the regimental level party branches were established at basic echelons of the PLA and a communist party recruiting system functioned effectively.\textsuperscript{533} George’s paradigm remains the model today.\textsuperscript{534}

As long as the People’s Liberation Army remains and organ of the Chinese Communist Party instead of the state, and until there are other real political parties in

\textsuperscript{529} The political commissar system functions at a series of levels. At the company level, a “political instructor” (zhengzhi zhidao yuan) acts as a leader equal to the company commander. At the battalion level a “political director” (zhengzhi) functions as the counterpart of the battalion commander. At regimental and higher levels of the PLA “political commissars” (zhengzhi wei yuan) and “assistant political commissars” (zhengzhi xieliyuan) oversee party work. General Political Department, Zhongguo Renmin Jiefangjun zhengzhi gongzuo tiaoli [Regulations Governing Political Work in the Chinese People’s Liberation Army], Taipei: Ministry of National Defense General Political Warfare Department, 1965, pp. 16-16, 30-41, 77-78.


\textsuperscript{532} Ibid., p. 541.


\textsuperscript{534} See especially pages 46 and 47 of George, The Chinese Communist Army in Action.
China, the PC system will remain an important institution. Nonetheless, the role of the PC system, and its management in the General Political Department, has evolved since 1929. This paper is an attempt to understand that evolution and to forecast its future direction. Of course, the absence or presence of the system of political commissars and the General Political Department is of little consequence in and of itself. The real issue at the heart of this inquiry, and in the minds of western military thinkers, is whether the political commissar system in the PLA is a hindrance or help in maintaining a professional Army. This paper will argue that it is both, and perhaps more of help than a hindrance today. It is most likely, however, that the evolution of political life in China, and the reflection of that evolution within the PLA will change the role of the GPD.

From the time of the Gutian Conference, the political commissar system “became the institutional expression of the Maoist concept that the joint exercise of authority by commissars and commanders would ensure that military operations were directed toward appropriate political objectives.” PLA histories refer to political work systems within the military from the time of the Nanchang Uprising (August 1, 1927). But it was after the Gutian Conference that “under Mao Zedong’s guidance the (communist) party formally established the political commissar system.” And with the system of political commissars came the party branches as instruments of “people’s democracy” in military units. In March 1930, the CCP Politburo decided to establish the Central Military Commission and to place under its control the “General Political Bureau” (Zong Zhengzhi Ju). The organization was essentially ineffective when first established, however. After a short time, in 1931, in “General Order Number Six,” the CMC elevated the level of the organization and established a formal PLA department, the General Political Department, to manage the PC system. Mao Zedong’s views of how the political

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535 The experience of the Republic of China is instructive here. The Guomindang (Nationalist Party) is structured as a Leninist party, just like the CCP. When opposition parties were legitimized and free elections were permitted in Taiwan, one of the first challenges the ROC had to face was to dismantle the political commissar system in its own military (and party branches in the entire government). See Arthur Shu-fan Ding and Alexander Chieh-cheng Huang, “Taiwan’s Military in the 21st Century: Redefinition and Reorganization,” in Larry M. Wortzel, ed., The Chinese Armed Forces in the 21st Century, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1999, pp. 253-288.


538 Ibid., pp. 37, 39.


540 Ibid., See also Huang, Sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo, pp. 145-226.
commissar system should function, and even whether there should be one, were not always accepted by either professional military officers or by CCP leaders. Wang Ming, for example, is cited as criticizing the political commissar system as “the ideology of the Party trying to run everything” (dăng đi baohan zhuì). 541 At the Ningdu Conference of 1932, while the PLA was still in its formative stages, Mao came under attack “from commanders and senior party administrators alike for his ‘adventurism, guerrillaism (a preference for irregular formations and tactics over conventional maneuver warfare), and escapism’ (attempting to escape from rather than defend the communist base from the Nationalists during the Fourth Encirclement Campaign).” 542 This was a way for some of the more traditionally oriented military officers to criticize the way that, in their view, leadership had been taken away from the commander and put in the hands of the political commissar. Among those who sought to redefine the role of the political commissar and the PC’s relationship to the commander differently from Mao were Zhou Enlai and Peng Dehuai. Zhou and Peng stressed the need for a clearer set of dual lines of specialization among commanders and commissars, adhering more closely to Soviet Army lines (this despite the fact that Zhou was originally Mao’s ally in establishing the system at Gutian). 543 In their view, political commissars were to function more as administrators responsible for specific party matters than as co-commanders of combat units. Mao argued strongly for the co-commander role and the dual leadership structure or the PLA (commander and political commissar).

At the Ningdu Conference, held in mid-October 1932 in the town of Ningdu, Jiangxi Province, the criticism of Mao Zedong and his emphasis on small-unit dispersion and peasant based guerrilla operations reached its nadir. While this was primarily a doctrinal and tactical argument, it also increased criticism within the CCP of Mao’s vision for the political commissar system. After the Nationalist Third Encirclement Campaign, where Communist forces achieved modest successes through conventional operations, the Ningdu Conference decisions began a period in the People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) history where conventional, mobile warfare was the principal tactic emphasized by PLA leaders. Although the PLA continued to use guerrilla operations to a lesser extent than that advocated by Mao Zedong, and relied on the peasantry as a base of popular support for logistic activities, the focus of Communist military leaders shifted in favor of maneuver warfare. More importantly from the standpoint of this study, Mao was relieved of leadership positions at the conference and the views of those PLA leaders who sought a reduced role in combat units for the political commissar prevailed.

After the Ningdu Conference, Zhou Enlai replaced Mao as the political commissar of the Red Army, Mao was expelled from all of his posts, and many of Mao’s supporters were also expelled or persecuted. Xiao Jingguang, for instance, was removed from his

541 Yan, Dang dai jundui zhengzi lingdao, p. 37.
543 Ibid., p. 528.
Party positions and sentenced to five years in prison by Zhou Enlai. Lin Biao, a
traditional Mao ally, may have temporarily abandoned Mao at this juncture, since Lin was
given command of a corps after the conference.

BACKGROUND ON THE GENERAL POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

The CCP always seems to have had some concerns that the military would remain
an organ of the party. To remedy these concerns, in 1931, in order to ensure that the
military forces stayed "red" the General Political Department (GPD) was created. A
model for the creation of the GPD and the role of political commissars was the party
representative system in the Soviet Union, which was instilled in the party leadership of
both the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party as an important means to
ensure party loyalty within the military at the Whampoa Military Academy by Soviet
advisers. William Whitson believes that another reason that the CCP created the
GPD was to ensure that some system was in place to "measure" just how committed a
communist each soldier and commander was. That view is still prevalent among
many military leaders today. Li Jijun, who was the Director of the General Office of the
CCP Central Military Commission, served as a division and group army commander, and
was deputy commandant of the Academy of Military Science makes this point when he
writes that:

"In one form of another, every nation has some form of political work organ to
doctrinize and political thought work in units.... The movement and orientation
of the entire People's Liberation Army is the orientation of the political thought work
done in the military. Political work in the military and the military's basic mission are
inseparable. Political work doesn't exist for itself, but to facilitate the accomplishment of
the military's mission....the checking and inspecting of cadre, training, legal norms, and
discipline are all major functions of political work."

544 Xiao Zhaoran, Zhonggong dangshi ming cidian [A Concise Dictionary of the
545 Whitson, The Chinese High Command, pp. 405-406, 546-550; see also Laszlo
Ladany, The Communist Party of China and Marxism, 1921-1985: A Self-Portrait,
548 Ibid., p. 600-601, ff. 1, 4. See also Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Military
Doctrine, Glenco, IL: The Free Press, 1953, pp. 25-28, 223-253; John Erickson, The
550 Li Jijun, "Budui sifangzuo de renwu yu fangfa" [The Mission and
Methods of Military Ideological Work] in Li Jijun, Junshi lidian yu zhanzheng shijian
[Military Theory and Combat Practice], Beijing: Military Science Press, 1994, pp. 195,
196.
Li’s thinking is consistent with his former position in Deng Xiaoping’s Central Military Commission General Office. It is instructive to note, however, that Li Jijun was consistently a combat commander. He was a division commander in the 24th Group Army and he led the 38th Group Army. Yet he had no reservations as a committed communist party member to the dual command system.\textsuperscript{551} Another experienced combat leader in the PLA, Lieutenant General Kui Fulin, who served in division, group army, and military region commander positions, agrees with Li’s position.

The Zunyi Conference (January 6-8, 1935), conducted on the Long March, is perhaps one of the seminal events in PLA history. It is also significant because by the end of the conference Mao Zedong gained the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) Central Military Commission (CMC). Zunyi was an enlarged meeting of the Politburo of the CCP. The meeting took the name of the location where it was held, a town in Guizhou Province. Zhou Enlai was relieved of his post as chairman of the CMC at the meeting and replaced by Mao. Qin Bangxian (who is also known by his party name Bo Gu), the CCP Secretary General, was removed from that post and appointed director of the General Political Department of the Red Army.\textsuperscript{552}

It was not until the CCP and the Red Army had to flee the base areas and undertake the Long March that the decisions of the Ningdu Conference were modified. Mao was restored to leadership positions at the Zunyi Conference. The debate within the PLA over the extent to which emphasis should be placed on guerrilla tactics versus conventional tactics paralleled the discussions over the role of the Communist Party’s political commissars within units. For the most part, those who advocated more conventional military tactics and maneuver warfare in battlefield formations also advocated the primacy of the field commander over the political commissar. But there was compromise on the issues. Peng Dehuai, who was critical of guerrilla tactics, and therefore Mao’s ideas, emerged as a strong commander, Zhou Enlai was relieved of his post as chairman of the Central Military Commission (a repudiation of the reduced role for political commissars\textsuperscript{553}) and replaced by Mao Zedong, and Mao was concurrently elected into the Politburo standing committee.\textsuperscript{554} A key decision of the Zunyi Conference was to eliminate in some organizations the division level within the PLA, replacing it regimental and brigade organizations. More cadres (political department officers) were sent into these formations.

The debate over the placement of political commissars within PLA units and their roles, which started at the Gutian Conference in 1929, came to a head at the Ningdu Conference, and was, to a certain extent reversed at the Zunyi Conference. Nonetheless, the tension between guerrilla warfare and conventional warfare is a major doctrinal

\textsuperscript{551} Author interview of LTG Li Jijun, August 1997, Fort Monroe, VA.
\textsuperscript{554} Kuo, \textit{Analytical History of the Chinese Communist Party}, pp. 24-27.
conflict in the PLA even today, and this tension is reflected in a parallel discussion within the PLA about the proper role for the political commissar system and the General Political Department in a professional army.555

Although the General Political Department was abolished for a time during the Anti-Japanese War (World War Two) at the request of the Nationalist government as a means to maintain the United Front, it was reestablished in 1946. And despite the temporary abandonment of a General Political Department, the system of political commissars and political education remained a basic element of PLA organization and life.556

After 1949, there were five general departments created in the PLA, all functioning under the Central Military Commission, the: 1) General Staff Department, 2) General Political Department, 3) General Cadre Administration Department, 4) General Logistics Department, and 5) General Financial Affairs Department.557 The GPD in 1950 consisted of an organization department (Zuzhi Bu), a propaganda department (Xuanquan Bu), a security work department (Baowei Bu), a cultural department (Wenhua Bu), a youth work department (Qingniuan Bu), and a system of secretary-generals assigned around the PLA (Mishuzhang Xitong).558

The scope of the GPD was expanded after a 1957-1958 effort to reduce the bureaucracy in the military and the number of General Departments, to include the previously separate PLA General Cadre Administration Department, the military procurate system (Junshi Jiancha Yuan), and the military court system (Junshi Fa Yuan).559 Within the GPD, the Youth Work Department and the Organization Department were combined, as were the Cultural Department and the Propaganda Department. Thus, the GPD of 1958 had seven sub-departments, the: organization department, cadre department, propaganda department, security work department, liaison department, mass work department, and the system of general secretaries.560

The system of general secretaries (mishuzhang xitong) is worth a more complete description. It is probably the most important system in the PLA, and perhaps in the Communist Party. Its major function is to ensure that sensitive, inner party documents and decisions are handled in a discrete (even secret) and expeditious manner. At the

556 Huang Xiaohui, Sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo, pp. 226-241.
557 Chiang I-shan, Chung-kung chun-shih wen-chien hui-pien [Source Book on Communist Chinese Military Affairs], Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1965, p. 837.
558 Zhang Aiping, Zhongguo Renmin Jiefang Jun, p. 357.
senior leadership levels in the PLA, the GPD sends out a centrally controlled group of cadres, the "secretaries-general," who manage and coordinate the most critical and controlled inner party documents and communications. This important function ensures the rapid and secret coordination and approval or modification of major inner-party documents and decisions.

In the early days of the PLA, the system was actually a division of the GPD, and under careful GPD control. The system proved to be very effective, and today appears to have been institutionalized as the way that the CCP does its inner-party business. From all accounts by communist party members in the PLA, decisions and the coordination of major policy positions in the PLA are now part of an institutionalized mechanism within the CCP. The communist party can thus be assured that senior leaders are able to communicate and shape new or important ideas through carefully placed, trusted people in major offices.

The GPD Functions Suspended

At the height of the Cultural Revolution, the work of the GPD was suspended or transferred to some of the revolutionary committees within the PLA. The PLA Cultural Revolution Groups attacked in sequence one after another of the senior PLA leaders associated with Peng Dehuai and emphasis on a military whose mark of excellence was battlefield performance and not political rectitude. By 1969, the PD was restored to its former role and comprised the: organization department, cadre department, propaganda department, security work department, mass work department, and general office. Its total size at that time was limited to 200 people. The cultural department and liaison department were once more added to the GPD in 1975. The military procurate and court functions were also restored to the GPD following the normalization of political affairs in the country after the death of Mao Zedong and the arrest of the Gang of Four. After the removal of Cultural Revolution and Anti-Rightist Movement-related labels from older cadre and the consolidation of Deng Xiaoping's power (the 3rd Plenum, 11th Central Committee), the GPD was comprised of twelve departments and has remained relatively consistent in its structure. Figure 5.1 shows the GPD structure today.

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561 The author relies here on discussions with senior officers of the general office of the GDP.

562 On this matter, it is worth noting that a major series of political commissar training lectures simply ends during the Cultural Revolution and takes up after its end. See Liang Biye, *Jundui zhengzhi gongzuo de xueyi yu shijian* [*The Study and Practice of Army Political Work*], Beijing: Military Science Press, 1994.


564 Ibid., pp. 357-358.
Figure 5.1  PLA Awards for Heroism in the 1962 Sino-Indian War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Medic</th>
<th>Fighter</th>
<th>Asst. Squad Leader/ Squad Leader</th>
<th>Company Grade Officer (Lt/Cpt)</th>
<th>Battalion Level</th>
<th>Political Commissar</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Awards</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Members</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MISSION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GPD

The General Political Department’s primary mission differs little today from that if its inception in the early days of the PLA. Its major responsibilities according to recent doctrinal materials are:

- leading the political organization of the PLA, including party building in the Army, developing political plans, educating the PLA;
- building the communist youth league in the PLA;
- supervising, training and testing political cadres in the PLA;
- managing the missions of the cadre and monitoring their accomplishments;
- providing leadership for the accomplishment of security work for the entire PLA;
- working with the CMC Central Discipline Inspection Committee to ensure compliance with CCP policy and regulations;
- managing cultural work in the PLA;
- supervising “mass work” (civil-military relations);
- managing and conducting “liaison activities” for the PLA (propaganda activities and contacts with foreign armies);
- managing and checking military trials and courts martial investigations;
- carrying out political work in wartime.565

This is a heavy load of tasks, and the PLA devotes a lot of manpower to their accomplishment. This is most evident at the PLA’s Army Command Academy in Nanjing, which trains regimental and division level commanders and Political Commissars, in the structure of the computer simulation and exercise area. The command academy has a mock-up command bunker where simulated division-level exercises are managed on computers and conducted by staffs. In the bunker, the workspaces allocated for the regimental and division political department staffs are

larger, have more communications equipment, and can accommodate more people than the areas for the commanders and their coordinating staffs.566 But problems plague the CCP, undermining its legitimacy and the position of the political commissar.

Jiang Zemin has reinforced the PC and party branch system, seeking to ensure that he can depend on an army that is ideologically reliable. As a means to combat “westernization,” the GPD reaffirmed its policies:

“First, unremittingly safeguard the authority of the Party’s third-generation leading collective with Comrade Jiang Zemin as the core and follow the command of the Party Central Committee and CMC (Central Military Commission) with Comrade Jiang Zemin as the core. This has been taken as the primary task of the Party’s ideological building under the new situation, as well as the most important part of our Army’s organizational principle and political discipline. Second, strenuous efforts have been made for real system and discipline building, so that under whatever circumstances, the whole set of systems that took our Party and Army several decades to form -- including building democratic centralism, and the system of assigning political commissars and political organs to units at and above the regimental level, assigning political directors and political instructors to battalions and companies, and setting up party branches at the company level [emphasis added] – can only be upheld and strengthened, but not be shaken and undermined. Third, in accordance with the development of the situation and new conditions and problems encountered in the course of Party building, much attention has been paid to the honesty and discipline of Party members and leading cadres. Efforts have been made to institute and perfect some new systems, uphold the principle of the Party’s exercising strict control over itself, strengthen the mechanism of supervision and checks, and wage an active ideological struggle, this making inner-Party life more principled and militant. Fourth, highlighting stronger building of grassroots Party organizations has helped enhance the capability of implementing the Party’s line and general and specific policies in light of the actual grassroots situation.”567

This long restatement of organization principles and the need for discipline belies the confidence that the CCP has in its system. Clearly today, as in the past, the CCP is concerned with corruption and the abuse of office. In this “third generation” or leadership, however, there are none who can rely on their participation in the formation of the PLA or the CCP as a basis for their legitimacy.

THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE GPD

This section will first examine each department and bureau of the GPD, defining its role and mission as best it can be understood. Many of the functions of the GPD are common and recognizable, existing in one form or another in all of the major departments.

566 The author has visited the Nanjing Command Academy a number of times in 1988, 1996, and 1997 and toured this facility.

and services of the PLA. Having introduced the common functions, the remainder of this section will be devoted to the more obscure -- but perhaps most important functions of the organization -- the organizations and functions that most directly affect the lives and ideas of soldiers. In general, the GPD penetration of the PLA is summarized in Figure 5.2.

Without focusing too much on individual personalities, it is natural that the CCP would keep a close watch on the operations and activities of the GPD. This task is usually accomplished by keeping a few senior officers who are also CCP Central Committee members as deputy directors of the department. Currently, Generals Wang Ruilin and Zhou Ziyu perform this function. Zhou Ziyu also serves on the "All Army Secrecy Committee." In this way, he also oversees one of the most important GPD functions, the maintenance of security in the organization. Wang Ruilin is concurrently a deputy director of the General Office of the CCP Central Committee, thus the near-complete control of political rectitude and function within the GPD is ensured by the membership of such senior individuals in other leading party organs.568

General Office (Bangongting). The General Office serves as the headquarters management section of the GPD. It controls the flow of paperwork, manages and screens paperwork going to the directors and deputy directors, manages the budget, calendars and daily affairs of the headquarters, and responds to correspondence directed to the headquarters. The secretaries (nishi) for the department and its leaders also are managed by the office. The general office may conduct research and studies of issues or problems, but this author believes that, more routinely, the General Office will route studies to other sections, monitor their completion, and direct the studies to senior leaders in the GPD and the Central Military Commission. The summarized studies probably include recommendations.

Organization Department (Zuzhi Bu). The organization department is responsible for the affairs of the CCP committees in the PLA and for providing them basic guidance. It manages the political commissar system and the youth division of the PLA, recruiting new members for the communist party and vetting their suitability for membership. In addition to the important function of managing cadre and "youth affairs" for the PLA, the department supervises programs and establishes regulations for the various departments.

Cadre Department (Ganbu Bu). The Cadre Department serves perhaps one of the most critical functions within the PLA. It is this organization that maintains the personnel records and manages transfers and assignments within the GPD, and the system of Cadre Departments in the rest of the PLA. One of the most important functions for cadre is the maintenance of the "system of inner military democracy" (jun nei minzhu zhi dui). This the system by which the PLA runs the entire system of democratic centralism within the PLA, ensuring that, in principle, there is an established way for soldiers to

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provide their opinions within the unit to the CCP, and then that once a “party line” is established, the rank and file understand and hew to the line.569

**Mass Work Bureau (Qunzhong Gongzuohu Ju).** This bureau is responsible for managing basic civil-military relations for the PLA. This is especially important since the defensive doctrines of the PLA call for a great deal of support from the militia. It is likely that the Mass Work Bureau also has a role in organizing or providing guidance to the People’s Armed Departments that provide the basic organization of contact between the PLA and local forces, run the recruiting and conscription system, and organize civil defense (including air defense) for China. Mass Work is also a function that includes developing a domestic logistic support framework for the PLA in case of external attack.

**Veteran Cadre Bureau (Lao Ganbu Ju).** Retired or veteran cadres are a potentially volatile group if they are deeply dissatisfied with their lot. The GPD is increasingly interested in formal mechanisms to make life a little better and more reliable for veterans and their families. Demobilization of soldiers, however, made the care and treatment of these veterans a major issue.

**Cultural Functions**

**Propaganda Department (Xuanchuan Bu).** The Propaganda Department manages the promulgation of indoctrination materials, ideology, party mobilization for political campaigns, and party education. This includes the politicization of art and literature (including music and plays) as a major feature of the communist system.570 In the PLA and the CCP, the rationale for the political function of art and literature is the focus of Mao Zedong’s “Yan’an Lectures in Literature and Art.” All of the cultural forms are intended to support the CCP and its line; the GPD is the organ that is supposed to ensure the political rectitude and acceptability of cultural expression.571 Thus, within the GPDs Cultural Department there are sections responsible for film, television and radio, art and printing, literature, drama, opera, and sports. The PLA’s daily newspaper, *Jiefangjun Bao* is published under the supervision of the GPD, as is a literary press and a pictorial magazine (*Jiefangjun Huabao*). One of the more creative film studios in China, *Ba Yi Dianying Chang* (August 1 Movie Studio), is run by the PLA GPD.

**Military Museum of the Chinese People’s Revolution (or PLA Military Museum).** The PLA military museum is the repository of weaponry, artifacts, books and documents. It is devoted to keeping alive the history of the PLA and the honors of its

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leaders and units. The museum’s grounds also contain an association for Veteran Cadre and the offices of a number of front companies associated with the GPD.

**Security, Promotion and Discipline Functions**

One of the most effective ways that the GPD keeps PLA leaders and party cadre disciplined is through the personnel and security management functions that the GPD performs. The communist party refers to PLA leaders and soldiers who are staying for a career as “cadre”.

**Cadre Department** (*Ganbu Bu*). After a specified period (which I believe to be 9 years at present) no soldier stays in the PLA unless he or she moves into cadre ranks. The GPD, in its Cadre Department, maintains their party dossiers and manages their careers. It also manages the promotion system within the PLA and personnel assignments.

**Security Department** (*Baowei Bu*). The Security Department manages their special dossiers dealing with behavior, loyalty, intelligence, counterintelligence and security matters.

**Discipline Inspection Department** (*Jilu Diaoche Bu*). In the event of nonsecurity, discipline or behavior related activities, the Discipline inspection department gets involved. One of the central functions performed by the Discipline Inspection Department is investigating corruption and compliance with party regulations ordering the PLA to divest itself from businesses.572 It is important to remember that we are talking about functions that manage or control the behavior of communist party members. If a rank and file soldier, even a junior officer who is not a CCP member, has a discipline problem it is handled through the normal system of military courts.

**Justice Bureau and the Procurate**. Military judges and the military court system are managed by the supervision of the GPD. There is a close relationship between the Justice Bureau and the Discipline Inspection Department. The GPD administers both infractions of military law and regulation and infractions of internal party regulation, meting out separate punishments. It is entirely possible, therefore, that a party member could be an exemplary soldier, but a less than perfect or even seriously flawed communist party member, and get an award for “soldierly behavior” while being disciplined by the CCP.573

For cadre, the GPD system of dossier management, discipline inspection, counterintelligence, and controls comes most seriously into play when cadre and soldiers are considered for promotion. The best descriptions of the promotion process and its relationship to the leadership of the unit commander came from officers with whom this writer had contact in 1996 and 1997 in PLA units of regimental size:

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At the time that an officer is eligible for promotion, the political director (instructor, or commissar) of unit to which the individual is assigned approaches the commander and deputy commander.

The unit commander is told which officers are eligible for promotion and is asked to rank the officers as he or she sees their performance and future potential.

The commanders make formal recommendations about the promotion. But in the end, the GPD representative system convenes a party branch or department meeting within the organization. It is at that meeting that the political commissar (or appropriate GPD system official), in consultation with the units communist party committee, makes the selection.

Thus a commander may prefer a certain officer (or soldier) for promotion, but ultimately the decision to promote the officer is not made by the commander, it is made by the political commissar system. More importantly, the Security Department may exercise a veto over an advancement within the party system because some breach of party discipline or secrecy that the commander may not have been aware of. There is no need to go through the detail of describing the process at each level of military organization. For the purpose of this study it is sufficient to say that the system functions the same, regardless of level. The significance of this process, however, is that the best leaders, the most innovative officers and soldiers, may not be promoted as long as political rectitude of participation is the main criterion for selection. Moreover, the preferences of the combat commander may be frustrated, if that commander is even making independent choices, since the commander is also a party member.

Administrative Functions in the GPD

**The Subordinate Organization Coordination and Work Department.** The functions of the Zhishu Jiguan Gongzuo Bu are most likely the management of services, technical support, budget support, and administration for the other PLA organizations subordinate and internal to the GPD.

**Foreign Affairs Office (Wai Ban).** This is a function that is mirrored at all levels of the PLA where there is contact with foreign militaries. The officers that staff the section are usually trained in foreign languages, security and counterintelligence, and the gathering of foreign intelligence.

**Security Work Department (Baowei Bu).** The Security Work Department carries out security education, defensive counterintelligence (preventing foreign agents from gathering information), and investigations of security violations.

**Veteran Cadre Bureau (Lao Ganbu Bu).** The GPD manages a system of veterans’ organizations and veteran’s clubs at the military sub-district and local level. It organizes veterans for political work, and ensures that their families are cared for in the event of their death. This bureau serves a mixed function. On the one hand, it provides the necessary care for veterans. But there is a history of veterans engaging in anti-regime and anti-authority outbursts. Veterans have not only been used to carry out regime
programs, such as the collectivization of the countryside, but they have been used to develop outlying areas. When 6.5 million soldiers were demobilized from the PLA between 1956 and 1967, they were organized into work units such as the Production and Construction Corps and sent out to develop remote areas as well as to establish a communist party presence. Veterans have shown themselves to be volatile, however, both in the cultural revolution and in the Tiananmen Massacre in 1989. Therefore, this is a critical function of the GPD.

**Liaison Department (Lianluo Bu).** The Liaison Department is responsible for managing propaganda against enemy forces and for relations with Taiwan. Members of the Liaison Department also conduct prisoner of war interrogations in wartime.

**The System of Cadre Secretaries**

As previously discussed, in most PLA organizations above the regimental level there is a system of secretaries (mishu) who handle the most sensitive inner party materials. These people coordinate positions on political and military related issues for their principal supervisors; maintain the documents in secrecy, and act of their principals to frame out positions when there is disagreement. Handling and mediating the most sensitive inner party work is probably the main function of this department. This is most important at the highest levels, since the consultation on major party issues to sample opinion among senior leaders and establish a consensus on any given issue is managed through the secretariat system. These secretaries are analogous to the functions of “executives” and “flag secretaries” to the major staff directors in the United States armed forces. It is most likely that this function is what the original “system of general secretaries department” evolved into.

The organization of the GPD, its size, and its intrusiveness into what Western professional armies think of as traditional functions of command and military discipline leads to questions about whether the PLA can function effectively in combat. Just what do Political Commissars do when the PLA leaves garrison to fight? And is the commander able to lead his men in combat? These are difficult questions to answer, but the case study below is instructive. It reinforces much of what the author has heard from senior PLA officers.

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576 Ibid. 162-63. During the PLA actions in the period between May 20, 1989 and June 15, 1989, the author observed and spoke to a number of veterans engaged in violent anti-communist party activities.
A CASE STUDY OF THE SINO-INDIAN WAR: PARTY MEMBERSHIP, COMBAT LEADERSHIP, AND CASUALTIES

One of the main critiques of the political commissar system and the function of the GPD is that the political commissar interferes with or usurps the duties of the commander. If this is true, it can be a hindrance in combat, preventing decisive action and costing lives. Many senior leaders, however, deny that this is the case. Instead, they argue that the GPD and the political commissar system is a source of inspiration and esprit d’corps that helps the commander. Alexander George, who did extensive research on the role and function of political commissars in both the Communist and Nationalist armies, found many negative feelings among soldiers and officers about the role of the commissar. In most cases, they were seen to be too ideologically rigid. 577

One way to understand leadership style in the PLA and to gain some understanding of the role of the party member or political commissar is to look at the results of combat. Are PLA commanders leading? Are political commissars out doing the job of the commander leading troops in combat? Casualty rates and awards for heroism give some hint of the answer to these questions. One case study is available that permits some empirical examination of the evidence—that of the Sino-Indian War. 578

In the Sino-Indian War of 1962, the PLA showed great acumen in carefully executing the campaign according to the guidelines formulated by CCP Central Military Commission: 1) "to beat Indian troops soundly," and 2) "to wipe out the invading Indian forces totally and rapidly." During the campaign, the PLA destroyed the fighting strength and captured personnel of three brigades of the Indian Army (the 7th Brigade, including its commander Brigadier Dalvi, the 62nd Brigade and the 4th Artillery Brigade). In addition the PLA seriously mauled five other Indian brigades (the 11th, 48th, 65th, 67th, and 114th). 579 According to PLA records from archives, Indian casualties during the war were 4,897 killed or wounded and 3,968 captured. 580 Indian records differ on this, with Indian Defense Ministry in 1965 showing 1,383 Indian soldiers were killed, 1,696 missing in action, and 3,968 soldiers captured, and 1,047 wounded. 581 In comparison, PLA casualties in the war were quite small, with 722 Chinese soldiers killed and 1,697 wounded. In addition, no soldier of the PLA was captured during the war, a rarity in the

580 Ibid., p. 185.
581 Ibid.
history of warfare. The PLA did all of this damage to the Indian Army with the
equivalent of a reinforced corps (army), deployed and massed at the critical points along
the border.

In that war, according to an appendix of the PLA history of the “self-defensive
counterattack,” some 327 soldiers and officers of the Chinese force were given awards for
heroism. Over half of these awards were given to members of the Chinese Communist
Party or, in the case of younger soldiers, the Communist Youth League. This is a small
case form which to extrapolate the data, but it seems clear that unless party affiliation was
a criterion for being considered a hero, the PLA’s claims that CCP membership and the
existence of the political commissar system may help build esprit d’corps. Moreover, if
one examines the data in Chart 4, it is clear that Chinese military leaders lead from the
front. That is, a substantial number of small unit leaders, whether squad leaders or
platoon and company grade-officers, were given awards for heroism in combat. In fact,
some 160 small unit leaders were cited for heroism, of which 114 were CCP members.
Among basic soldiers, 158 “fighters” and medics were given awards, of which 54 were
party members. Only three political commissars or political directors got awards.

These data are limited, and it is generally not a good idea to generalize from one
case. But this may be the best case we get to work from, since the PLA hasn’t published
its combat records and records of decorations for bravery in the public domain. That
said, from the examination of the combat decorations given for bravery in the Sino-Indian
War, my sense is that PLA leaders lead from the front. Party membership seems to lead
to leadership behaviors in other situations, and the responsibility that seems to flow from
being part of an elite organization like the communist party appears to makes soldier and
leaders take greater risk. The work of the GDP in promoting unit lineage and history
probably also contributes to the willingness of ordinary soldiers and leaders to take
extraordinary risks. The award data seems to imply that political commissars, directors
and instructors, if one can extrapolate from this case, stay out of the way of the
commander in combat. They are probably of more help than a hindrance. And the
influence of the CCP and its members is positive. If commissars were leading “from the
front” one would expect them to have had a much higher casualty rate and rate of awards
for heroism.

The Sino-Indian War data is generally the same as the conclusions that Alexander
George drew in his examination of the way that communist party membership and the
political commissar system worked in combat in the Korean War. However, as
George points out, when morale erodes in the face of serious combat losses, the effect of

582 Xu Yan, Zhong-Yin bian jie, p. 184
583 Xia Liping and Larry M. Wortzel, “PLA Operational Principles and Limited
War: The Sino-Indian War of 1962,” a paper prepared for the Center for Naval Analyses,
1999.
political education is less and the PLA soldier tends to question the political commissar, the purpose of the war, and his message.\footnote{585}

The GPD is learning from the study of other militaries, and is slowly changing its role. It is studying the ways that Western militaries build morale and esprit though incentives and advanced civil education, as well as the personnel, retirement, and legal systems of other armed forces.

**REFORM AND CHANGE IF THE ROLES OF THE GPD**

In the past decade there have been systematic efforts by the GPD to regularize and systematize its role in personnel and the military discipline system of the PLA.\footnote{586} As early as 1988, the GPD and the military procurate system began to reach out to Western armies to examine how due process and family law-related issues are managed.\footnote{587} The GPD has taken on more of a role as a career management organization encouraging the PLA to become a more professional military force with a stronger emphasis on military skills.

At the same time, the communist party is quite clear that, while it seeks to evolve, and seeks to have the GPD take on a wider role as a personnel and legal management organization, it remains concerned about political rectitude. In a broadcast summing up political work in the PLA in the years since the 14th Party Congress, the CCP calls for its political commissars to:

> “Focus on the pervading influence of the Western hostile forces’ political schemes to ‘Westernize’ and ‘separate’ our country, as well as the mistaken thinking of a ‘non-party military, non-political military’.”\footnote{588}

The GPD is thus torn between a focus on the things it must do to improve the lives ensure that Chinese soldiers and their families and what it must do to comply with

\footnote{585}{Ibid., pp. 186-93. One soldier remarked to George that if the political commissar system was destroyed, the PLA would be completely ineffective.}


\footnote{587}{The GPD’s legal department began contacts with the United States Army on military personnel and military justice matters in 1988. The cessation of military-to-military exchanges after the Tiananmen Massacre in 1989 stopped these exchanges, but they restarted in the mid-1990’s. See Central Military Commission Legal Bureau, *Zhongguo Renmin Gongheguo junshi fagui huibian* [A Collection of the Military Laws and Regulations of the People’s Republic of China], Beijing: Zhongguo minzhu fazhi chubanshe, 1991.}

\footnote{588}{“For PRC Military Ideological, Political Education Stressed,” Beijing Xinhua Domestic Service, in FBIS-CHI-2000-0625 (hereafter FBIS), CPP20000625000035, 25 June 2000.}
communist party Chairman Jiang Zemin’s directive to “put ideological and political development in the premier position among all the army’s development projects.”

On the one hand, the PLA is passing new regulations guaranteeing due process and the rule of law in the armed forces. The GPD is developing a system to rotate its cadre at the regimental level and higher on a regular basis to engender a broader base of experience among officers. And the GPD is working to emphasize the need for attention to military training. At the same time, new political campaigns are mounted on a regular basis that cause the political commissar system to function in its traditional role. The “three speaks campaign,” for instance, which started in the summer of 2000, called for the rank and file soldier to “speak of study, speak of politics, and speak of correctness.”

The desire to present the political commissar system as a model for democratic centralism and political rectitude, and the moves toward a regularized role for the GPD as a personnel management system, do not represent mutually exclusive objective. But these seemingly conflicting objectives place a greater burden on the GPD to justify its function in the PLA.

CONCLUSIONS

On balance, given the difficulty of the job and the roles the institutions must perform, the GPD and its political commissar system are probably greater assets than liabilities to the CCP. The role of the political commissar in the unit is probably not a great hindrance so long as China remains a one-party, communist-led dictatorship. Given the CCP’s objectives, the façade of a democratic system that is embodied in “People’s Democracy” in PLA units permits the CCP to claim legitimacy while democratic centralism ensures that a consistent party line is the outcome of any discussion. But it seems that there is some discussion that takes place, giving an outlet for the expression of views, and a pipeline to have those views made known to the senior leadership of the Army.

The failure of socialism has led to a great deal of economic reform in China. This whole process has made the legitimacy of Marxism-Leninism suspect but the repressive nature of the system and its control of the organs of force like the PLA prevents serious change. Nonetheless, many people today probably join the CCP as a way to get ahead rather than out of dedication to the principles of the party and the Army. Certainly this is the case in other Marxist-Leninist systems. But they still may well accept the increased responsibilities for the leadership of soldiers that membership implies.

589 Ibid.
590 Ibid., p. 2
The Political Commissar system is very important because it permits the GPD to control promotions and assignments. However, there are negative sides that are difficult to escape from the control that the system affords. Democratic Centralism and the discipline inspection system ensure overt political conformity (if not reliability and belief). But the rigidity of the system probably stifles initiative, resourcefulness and adaptability in the PLA. The discipline inspection system no doubt provides a model for behavioral and fiscal rectitude in management, but it is also a source of concern and fear. In the end, because of the strength of the requirement for CCP membership and conformity, the best people (that is, the most resourceful, charismatic and caring military leaders) may not rise to the top. And even in cases where such leaders to emerge, the tendency may be to do as they are told instead of as they think is best.

For the present time, the latest statement by the State Council of China in the national defense white paper China's National Defense 2000, published on October 16, 2000, sets out the role of the CCP in managing the military, and by extension the General Political Department, which would be the body charged to carry out the future vision of the state:

The Chinese armed forces adhere to the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of China and persist in making it their aim to serve the people heart and soul, placing the interests of the state and the people above everything else and carrying forward the patriotism and revolutionary heroism of the rank and file. They cultivate in their officers and men a firm faith in revolutionary ideals and a spirit of sacrifice and dedication, foster in them a correct outlook on the world, life and values, educate them to support the reform, to persist in building the armed forces' true political qualities of arduous struggle.

The GPD may not evolve into another form in the near term. In other communist states the removal of political commissars from the military only followed the establishment of a multi-party system and democratic elections. As the national security strategy for the year 2000 sets out, it is the GPD that would cultivate "the correct outlook on the world," and to "educate them [the people] to support the reform." For the present, the political commissar system serves the purpose of the Chinese Communist Party. As long as China is a single-party state with a military subordinate to the party, the General Political Department is not likely to be significantly changed. And party dossiers will give the CCP a lot of control over military leaders. A major function of the PLA and the

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militia continues to be maintaining the CCP's control of the populace, and the maintenance of "civil order." 594 Deng Xiaoping made this clear when he spoke to the PLA units that took part in the Tiananmen Massacre. 595 Thus the major threat faced by the PLA remains the current of reform and political change in China. In the event of real political change in China, reform of the General Political Department and the establishment of an apolitical military that is the instrument of the state will be a confusing process.

595 Huang Xiaozhong, Sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo 70 nian [70 Years of Political Thought Work], Beijing: Guofang daxue chubanshe, 1991, pp. 1029-1031.
6. THE PEOPLE’S LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) GENERAL LOGISTICS DEPARTMENT (GLD): TOWARD JOINT LOGISTICS SUPPORT

By Col. Susan M. Puska, U.S. Army

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INTRODUCTION

"We believe that in the 21st century, when high-technology warfare becomes the main form of war, precision-oriented logistics is inevitably the way forward. Precision-oriented logistics reflects the nature of military logistics in the information age... to achieve effective support... with relatively small input, but relatively high efficiency."

- Cheng Kuaile and Zhang Ping, Logistics Command College, 2000


Of the myriad of modernization challenges the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) faces to prepare to fight a modern, regional war under high tech conditions, logistics is one of the most complex. If the PLA hopes to realize even a limited, power projection capability, likely based around Rapid Reaction Units and other key assets, it must develop an effective joint logistics capability. Without this, China’s conventional regional deterrent and its ability to underwrite its key national security objectives could be affected.

Accordingly, the PLA has targeted improved logistics to support joint combat as the main goal of its logistics reforms. This goal will be challenged by the realities of a large multi-generation inventory of equipment, limited resources, and influences and distractions from the PLA’s continuing and unique involvement in administrative logistics, production, and support to the Chinese economy.

How the PLA, in general, and the General Logistics Department (GLD), in particular, address these challenges to transform PLA logistics into a high tech joint support system remains to be seen. Since China’s ability to project military power will depend upon its logistics capabilities, it is a critical area to investigate. But assessments and measurements of the PLA’s success or failure should avoid simplistic and direct comparisons to other modern military logistics systems, especially evolving Western logistics systems. Analysts should avoid assessments based on perennially limited information, that habitually disdain PLA logistics as a historically weak link. On the contrary, PLA logistics have proven highly adaptable and flexible to the situation. Often PLA logistics was not “pretty.” It lacked efficiency, expended excessive personnel and other resources, or it failed to support decisive engagements. Significant shortfalls do exist. Nonetheless, PLA logistics has been proficient in providing sufficient operational support to massive numbers of personnel and equipment of mixed generations and origins that would make Western logisticians blanch. Their efforts to achieve a sufficiently effective joint logistics system with Chinese characteristics warn sustained objective analysis.

This paper reviews the PLA’s development of its logistics organization with focus on the top structure, examines its recent efforts to develop joint logistics, speculates on the GLD’s influence within the PLA, and provides some thoughts on PLA modernization over the next ten years.
ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY\textsuperscript{598}

In the armed forces of developing countries, logistics has consistently been the slowest component to develop. Yet, logistics...provide one of the greatest constraints upon the buildup of these forces beyond a certain point. Modern China has proven no exception. Logistics...[was] a central weakness of the Nationalist military...Communist military forces...appreciated more fully the role of resupply in military operations, and this comprehension proved an important factor in their victory... Gillespie and Sims\textsuperscript{599}

PLA logistics has been shaped by the unique political and economic history of the People's Republic of China. Through its support of internal revolution, repelling Japanese invaders and periodic border conflicts, as well as its deep involvement in national economic development, the PLA logistics system has developed distinctive characteristics. These will affect its latest modernization effort, which seeks nothing less than credible joint support of combat operations.

The development of PLA logistics has been particularly influenced by key experiences within four phases since the founding of the PLA:

- Revolutionary and Anti-Japanese Experience (1930s-1949)
- Korean War and Soviet Alliance and Assistance during the 1950s
- Political Struggle and Modernization (1959-1979); Troubles North and South (Sino-Soviet Border Conflict 1968 and Sino-Vietnam Border War)
- 1980-1989 - Opening to the West
- 1990-Gulf War; Taiwan


\textsuperscript{599} Gillespie and Sims, p. 185.
 Revolutionary and Anti-Japanese Experience (1930s-1949)

According to a Chinese reference, military logistics was established in the Red Army at the time of the founding of the army. By November 1931, the Red Army had organized to provide military supplies, ordnance, medical, transportation and other support. Red Army re-supply depended upon three sources - captured Japanese and Nationalist materiel and stocks; taxation and requisition; and troop production. Since commanders personally managed logistics as an additional responsibility, specialization in logistical support was slow to develop.

In the second half of 1939, the Central Military Commission established a logistics organization to manage medical and other support. By 1942 the Eighth Route Army established a rear services department （后勤勤务部）with subordinate elements managing medical support, etc.

Logistical requirements expanded during the latter half of the 1940s, when the defeat of Japan and the subsequent outbreak of the Chinese Civil War made a greater amount of supplies and materiel available to the Red Army. During late 1945, the Red Army incorporated 300,000 rifles, 4,836 machine guns, 1,226 artillery pieces and 2,300 vehicles taken from the defeated Japanese army. In April 1946, they acquired armor from the Nationalists at the battle of Changchun, and anti-aircraft weapons from two Mukden arsenals in 1948.

Between 1946-1950, PRC sources claim the military acquired a total of about 3.2 million small arms, over 300,000 machine guns, over 54,000 artillery pieces, 622 tanks, 189 military aircraft, and 389 armored cars, plus extensive stores of supplies. An estimated 60% of all material the U.S. provided the Nationalist forces eventually became Red Army assets.

In addition to equipment and supplies, by 1946 the Red Army logistics support faced the challenge of incorporating 75,000 Nationalist troops into the military, while managing logistics support to about 1.5 million demobilized Nationalist soldiers. These additional resources dramatically increased the Red Army's need for expanded logistical management and control. Consequently, the logistical system became more regularized, and specialized logistics developed. Political commissars also played

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600 Gillespie and Sims, p. 186-187.
601 Ibid., p. 189.
602 Ibid.
603 Ibid, p. 190.
604 Ibid., p. 189.
605 Despite the Nationalists own logistics shortfall, once they were captured or surrendered, Nationalist soldiers and officers, many who had received U.S. training, may have helped the PLA develop a more centralized system. One PRC source noted the Guomindang military established a rear services organization as early as August 1937, and had strengthened centralization by 1946.
an increasingly central role in procurement of labor and materials, which relied on mobilization of local populations.  

By 1949, long experience with persistent shortages and irregular supply had taught the Red Army leadership the value of supply discipline. The revolutionary experience had also dramatized the necessity to adequately care for soldiers to sustain morale and cohesion. The importance of troop production to sustain self-sufficiency and lessen the burden on local populations was also demonstrated, as was the importance of mass mobilization, a primary role of the political commissar. At the same time, the easy acquisition of captured materiel and supplies, as well as the limited role airpower and naval forces played in the Red Army's decisive victory, left the PLA with an Army-centric experience of modern warfare. By the end of the civil war, the PLA possessed a large, but eclectic, supply of foreign equipment and materiel. From a logistical point of view, such a collection of mixed sources and equipment densities may have encouraged a continued tradition of flexibility, adaptability and improvisation, but it came at the expense of standardization, interchangeability, and regularization in supply, maintenance, and production.

Despite the Red Army’s success in providing support to the field, at the time of the founding of the PRC military logistics remained largely decentralized under the five field armies who sustained self-sufficiency. Victory, nonetheless, provided impetus to consolidate and organize PLA logistics under a more centralized system. By 1949, the General Rear Services Department was established under the leadership of Yang Lisan, former head of logistics in the Second Field Army.

**Korean War and Soviet Alliance and Assistance during the 1950s**

The Korean War alerted the PLA leadership to the “the importance of logistic[s]...in a modern war” and the need for major change. When China entered the war, logistics support to the operations was carried out under the policy of “self-reliance and basing ourselves on home supplies.” This policy, which the acting Chief of Staff, Nie Rongzhen, credited to Zhou Enlai, who oversaw details of logistics support of the Chinese People’s Volunteers (CPV) from the rear, depended on the local

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606 Ibid.
607 Ibid., p. 191.
610 Ibid., p. 647.
population for food and the enemy for captured ammunition. It proved inadequate, however, outside China’s borders.

As a consequence, Nie lamented, significant, even decisive, operations were squandered or prematurely cut short because of shortfalls in basic supplies, such as clothing, food, or ammunition.611

By the beginning of the Third Campaign, which began on December 31, 1950, the CPV, under the command of Peng Dehuai, began to lose momentum as its forces pushed retreating UN units below the 38th parallel, capturing Seoul, and penetrated south. Mao Zedong sought a decisive victory that would throw UN forces off the peninsula, but stretched supplies lines and inadequate logistics proved insurmountable, and the CPV was eventually forced to withdraw north. UN forces regained control of Seoul.

In his Cultural Revolution “confessions” Peng explained the predicament his exhausted forces faced to carry out Mao’s expectations. “[Having] fought three major campaigns in a row in severe winter,” he wrote, and having endured relentless punishment from “enemy bombers...our supply lines had now been extended, [so] it was very difficult to get provisions,”612

To address the urgent shortfalls, the Central Military Commission directed the Northeast Military Command to hold a special logistics meeting in early 1951. This convened on January 22-30 in Shenyang, and resulted in several improvements in ground and rail transportation support to the war.613 But problems continued. In May 1951, Peng sent Deputy Commander Hong Xuezhi to Beijing to urge that an operational unified logistics command be set up to direct all support, including protection of supply lines. The military leadership agreed, but to his dismay, Hong was selected the CPV logistics commander. He, like many revolutionary veterans at the time, disdained logistics. He accepted command only with the promise that he would not have any logistics responsibilities after the war.614

From 1950 to 1954, Hong Xuezhi concurrently served as the Deputy Commander and Commander of Logistics of the Chinese People’s Volunteers (CPV). Under his leadership, the basis for a modernized operational logistics system was established. During the war, China’s power projection and support capabilities sufficiently developed to support one million soldiers and underwrite an operational stalemate against a modern, advanced opponent outside China’s territory.

Huang Gezheng, a protégé of Peng Dehuai, served as the Director of the General Rear Services Department (GRSD) from 1954 to 1956. After the war, Hong Xuezhi, also closely associated with Peng, became the GRSD director in 1956, while Huang was

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611 Ibid., p. 646.


613 Shuguang Zhang, p. 168

614 Ibid., p. 171.
promoted to Chief of the General Staff. Together – Peng, Huang and Hong – were closely linked to Sovietization. During most of the 1950s, PLA logistics operations and organization developed along the Soviet model. The major focus of Soviet assistance, however, concentrated on the development of China’s defense industries. About one half of all equipment the Soviet Union delivered to China “was intended for military enterprises and plants,” which closely involved military production organs of the GRSD.

**Political Struggle and Modernization (1959-1979); Troubles North and South (Sino-Soviet Border Conflict 1968 and Sino-Vietnam Border War)**

The deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations beginning in 1958, the fall of Minister of Defense Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference in 1959, and the subsequent Soviet decision to withdraw its advisors from China in July 1960, all affected GRSD operations as national politics devolved toward the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Qiui Huzuo replaced Hong Xuezhi within two months of the purge of Minister of Defense Peng and the rise of Li Biao, former commander of the Fourth Field Army.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the GRSD became involved in advanced weapons (nuclear) production, as well as its traditional role in conventional military and civilian types of production. The organization, unlike the General Political Department (GPD), weathered the rough waters of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1967), especially the excesses of 1966-1967, but the experience left a complex legacy on PLA logistics.

The organization was credited with protecting military production from disruption and sustaining critical operations of the essential national rail system, but it could not avoid being drawn into political struggle. Many older professional soldiers were purged, and some operations were disrupted. Weapons were taken from logistics storage facilities to arm competing factions. Political commissars suffered most, as did those who were closely associated with Peng Dehuai and Soviet-style professionalism.

Up until Soviet border tensions in the late 1960s abruptly ended the escalating internecine violence and the Red Guards were sent down to the countryside, the GRSD was also credited with providing effective logistical support and transportation to over 50 million Red Guards. Once the military intervened in the day to day running of the country, the GRSD continued to play a key role in sustaining and operating vital national logistical systems.

615 Gillespie and Sims, p. 197.


617 Ibid., p. 361.

618 Former Red Guards marvel at how efficiently the train system supported them as they freely traveled throughout China – enjoying free transportation, food and lodging wherever they went.
For the PLA, the 1968 border tensions with the Soviet Union were a mixed blessing. The tensions provided good reason to contain the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, but also revealed PLA operational and logistics weaknesses, as the PLA shifted its attention to the threat of a stronger, nuclear power along its entire northern border. Mao responded to the nuclear threat by exhorting the people to "dig deep and store grain" to survive attack of the capital and elsewhere throughout the country, stressing cover and concealment of vital operations.

By the end of the 1970s, PLA logistics retained its unique traditions of self-sufficiency and military production, as well as its foundational Soviet influence. As Deng Xiaoping returned to power and initiated a national policy of reform and opening to the West, the basis for "macro-level policy management of the military economic production system" that would balloon into PLA, Inc. in the 1980s and 1990s, was well-established within the GRSD by 1977.

1980-1989: Opening to the West

Following the Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee in December 1978, the sixty-seven year old Hong Xuezhi, once again, assumed responsibility for PLA logistics. He headed the successor organization to the GRSD, the General Logistics Department (GLD), from 1980 to 1987. Between 1985-1987, Hong concurrently served as GLD Director and Political Commissar.

The conflict with Vietnam in 1979 "proved to be a testing ground for Chinese military doctrine, its soldiers and equipment." The "lesson" revealed numerous logistics weaknesses to the GLD:

- **Transportation and supply.** Both were inhibited by shortages in ground and air transportation. Transportation was provided with a mix of foreign and domestic ground vehicles, including some armored vehicles. PLA forces moved primarily on foot. Vietnamese forces, in contrast, were mobile.

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621 One Chinese source claims the GRSD was renamed the GLD as early as 1960, but this contradicts other sources.
624 Singler, p. 9.
• **Communications.** Below the regimental level communications were insufficient to assure secrecy and effective coordination. In contrast, Vietnamese forces were well supplied with modern radios and field phones. Poor communications between the front and support elements caused supply convoys to miss their rendezvous with combat troops.

• **Ammunition.** Lacking tactical air support, PLA combat forces expended excessive rates of ammunition. Supplies were exhausted at the regimental level before resupply could be provided.

Analysis of China's war in Vietnam caused the PLA to make major shifts in its doctrinal thinking, to emphasize "firepower, synchronization, and economy of force." 625

By 1985, the GLD's organization was not significantly different from that of the GRSD. In 1977, for example, (see Figure 6.1) the GRSD had ten subdepartments. It also exercised direct control over GRSD Enterprises and the Military-Industrial Complex and elements of the Service Arms (Railroad Engineers and Construction Engineers). Additionally, the GRSD coordinated with the Capital Construction Engineering Corps and had staff supervision over logistics support within the Main Forces and the Military Region.

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625 Ibid., p. 10.
By 1985, GLD consisted of ten subdepartments (Figure 6.2). Functional elements included – Armament, Finance, Fuel, Health, Military Supplies, Science and Technology, and Capital Construction and barracks. The new Science and Technology Subdepartment, headed by Ye Daxun, was added to oversee acquisition and development of technological improvements, while the addition of the Capital Construction and barracks subdepartment formalized and centralized GLD command and control.
Figure 6.2 General Logistics Department - 1985

Additional, a Political Subdepartment and the Foreign Affairs Division, headed by Director Zhang Shiyun, were added. The latter provided an interface for the GLD's increasing business contacts with the outside world.

In 1986, the Production Management Subdepartment (PMD) was established in the GLD to manage PLA enterprises and businesses. Production Management Offices (Shengchan jingying banggongshi) were created at each level of the PLA logistics system to oversee the management of "regional and unit-level conglomerates." 627

By 1989 (Figure 6.3), the GLD staff expanded to include 15 subordinate elements: Armament Department, Capital Construction Department, Financial Department, Fuel Department, Health Department, Material Subdepartment, Military Supplies Department, Military Transportation Subdepartment, Political Department, Qinghai-Xizang Army

626 Mulvenon, Soldiers of Fortune.
627 Ibid.
Depot Subdepartment, Vehicles and Vessels Department, Foreign Affairs Office, HQ Department, Wuhan Base Command, and Xi'an Base Command.

**Figure 6.3 General Logistics Department - 1989**

![Diagram of the General Logistics Department - 1989](image)

Figure 6.3, based on *Directory of P.R.C. Military Personalities*, Defense Liaison Office, U.S. Consulate General, Hong Kong, 1989, pp. 27-29.

**1990-Gulf War; Taiwan Exercises (1995-96)**

After the Tiananmen crisis in June 1989, the PLA logistics' traditional involvement in production and business significantly expanded, and the GLD staff grew accordingly to manage these highly diversified operations. In 1991 (Figure 6.4), the GLD had 20 subordinate elements: Armament Department, Capital Construction and Barracks Department, Finance Department, Fuel Department, Health Department, Material Department, Military Supplies Department, Military Transportation Department, Political Department, Qinghai-Xizang Army Depot Department, Vehicles and Vessels Department, Management Bureau, All-Army Land Management Bureau, Foreign Affairs Office, HQ Office, All-Army Birth Planning Office, Wuhan Base Command, Xi'an Base Command, Engineering General Unit, and Directly Subordinate Subdepartments.
By 1994 (Figure 6.5), the GLD grew to 23 elements. Compared to the 1991 structure cited above there were several changes and additions. The Fuel and Material Departments were combined into the Material and Fuel Department, headed by Director Su Shuyan. The Military Supplies Production Department, Production Management Department, Army-Run Enterprise Bureau, Office in Shenzhen were added to manage the PLA’s burgeoning business operations. The Military Mine Bureau, which oversees all precious metal exploitation, and Nenjiang Base were also added.
Between 1995 (Figure 6.6) and 1996 (Figure 6.7), the GLD remained at 24 staff elements directly under GLD, but made some changes. First, the Military Mine Bureau appears to have been at least temporarily dropped from the GLD organizational chart. Second, a Headquarters Department (Siling Bu), under the Chief of Staff, Major General Yang Chengyu, was added. Also added was the Military Communications and Transportation Department (Junshi Jiaotong Yunshu Bu).
Figure 6.6 General Logistics Department - 1995

Figure 6.6, based on, Directory of P.R.C. Personalities, Defense Liaison Office, U.S. Consulate General, Hong Kong, October 1995, pp. 25-29.
Figure 6.7 General Logistics Department - 1996

In 1997 (Figure 6.8), on the eve of the order for the PLA to withdraw from business, the GLD, under General Wang Kc, reached a record size of 25 staff elements. Compared to 1996, the PLA General Hospital Number 301 was highlighted as a separate element of the Health Department. The Military Mine Bureau was once, again, shown as part of the GLD subordinate staff, but the Armament Department was removed.
Figure 6.8  General Logistics Department - 1997

Figure 6.8, based on *Directory of PRC Military Personalities*, SEROLD Hawaii, Inc., Aiea, Hawaii, August 1997, pp. 25-27. Prominent business related staff are highlighted. See Mulvenon, *Soldiers of Fortune*.

In 1998 and 1999 (Figure 6.9), following the move to have the PLA withdraw from business, the GLD staff dramatically downsized back to early 1980 levels more consistent with its traditional span of control, although the Armament Department most likely remained under the newly created General Armament Department (GAD). Sixteen subordinate staff elements remained: the Headquarters Department, Capital Construction and Barracks Department, Finance Department, Health Department, PLA General Hospital (301) under the Health Department, Material and Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants Department, Military Supplies Department, Military Communications and Transportation Department, Political Department, Production Management Department, Qinghai-Xizang Army Depot Department (Unit 59264), All-Army Land Management Bureau, Military Mine Bureau, Wuhan Rear Base, Renjiang Base, and the General Engineer Unit.

Seven staff elements associated with the megalithic PLA, Inc. that were eliminated included:

- Military Supplies Production Department (*Junshi Jiaotong Yunshu Bu*)
- Army-Run Management Enterprise Bureau (*Junying Qiye Ju*)
- Economic and Trade Bureau (*Jingmao Ju*)
- 264 -

- Management Bureau (Guanli Ju)
- Directly Subordinate Departments (Zhishi Fenbu)
- Office in Hainan
- Office in Shenzhen

The Vehicles and Vessels Department, which dated back to the early 1990s, may also have been removed from GLD, due to its business connection, or it may have been incorporated into staff elements within GAD.

The All-Army Birth Planning Office (Quanjun Jihua Shengyu), headed by Senior Colonel Ou Lijuan since its appearance in 1990, was also eliminated. This, however, had no effect on GLD command and control since it likely cut a non-operational and non-profitable administrative distraction.

Figure 6.9 General Logistics Department - 1998

General Logistics Department - 1998

GEN WANG Ke
Director
PC - LGEN ZHOU Kunman

Health Department
(Weisheng Bu)
DIR - MGEN BAI Shuzhong

Military Communications & Transportation Department
(Junshe Jiaotong Yunshi Bu)
DIR - MGEN JIANG Shiliang

All-Army Land Management Bureau
(Quanjun Tudi Guanli Ju)
DIR - XIANG Yusheng

INTELLECTUAL INFUSIONS: EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Technological innovation, application, and production are essential to the transformation of the PLA’s logistics into a modern joint logistics system. Without an indigenous production capability, however, foreign acquisition of technology and materiel can only
take the PLA so far. It may be possible to buy advanced materiel and equipment, but if operators and logisticians cannot provide adequate maintenance and sustainment, it will perform below its operational capability. Although this may prove good enough for a deterrent and/or response, the PLA clearly seeks to improve its logistics. Recognizing the importance of people to logistics innovation and high-tech efficiency and operations, the GLD has sent more than 2,000 people overseas to study in such areas as logistical command, medicine and health, logistical engineering, military economics, and linguistics. Since the early 1980s, over one half of all PLA people sent abroad to study have been sent by the GLD. They have been sent to over 30 countries, including the United States, Great Britain and Japan. In recent years, GLD scientists and technicians have also made over 6,000 trips overseas for academics exchanges and other short visits.628

Although the actual rate of return of GLD personnel who have studied abroad is not known, returned students and researchers have been credited with major contribution in military medicine, for example. One of China's historic challenges has been to effectively infuse the knowledge and experience of its returned intellectuals into its own modernization efforts. Too often returned intellectuals who could conduct advanced research and apply this to production and operations suffered sanctions upon return to China for their foreign connections, or were ignored. Even under the best of times, intellectuals often have found their research inhibited by poor working conditions, underfunding, and bureaucratic and/or political micro-management. If the GLD hopes to develop an effective joint support capability, it will have to depend upon its intellectual talent, as well as its increasing ties to civilian research institutions and universities to enhance its capabilities through experimentation and innovation. Its internal logistics academies (Figure 6.10) will also need to keep pace with advanced logistics technologies and methodologies, while developing indigenous solutions and innovations within its own conditions and capabilities.

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Figure 6.10  Military Logistics Academies and Universities

Chinese Military Diplomacy with Logistics Characteristics

In addition to sending GLD personnel overseas to study, attempting to attract young intellectual talent into logistics work, and enhancing its ties to universities and relevant research institutes, the GLD, as part of an overall PLA diplomacy effort, has also actively sought to expand and deepen its understanding of advanced logistics operations through military-to-military contacts, such as functional exchanges and high level visits. General Wang Ke, Director of the GLD, and members of his staff have headed numerous logistics delegations to various countries, including the U.S. within the last several years. In addition, other members of the GLD have also been included in other visits. Delegation members are characteristically well versed and well prepared to learn from these visits. PLA personnel, including logisticians, characteristically ask very specific and insightful questions of their hosts that reflect a very specific and professional knowledge of all aspects of modern logistics within a high-tech environment.

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630 Based on discussions and personal experience with PLA delegations between 1996-1998.
Some observers assert that logistics may be one of the most beneficial areas of the PLA’s foreign military exchange program over the last ten years. It has also become one of the most sensitive areas, since it can directly enhance the PLA’s power projection capabilities. In combination with the GLD’s research of military logistics information readily available on the Internet and elsewhere, as well as international logistics exhibitions that China has hosted in Beijing in 1987, 1993, and, most recently, in May 1998, the GLD has collected extensive information for consideration in carrying out its ten year logistics modernization program.

LOGISTICS STRATEGY AND DOCTRINE

“The focus of logistics support will shift from reliance on quantity to reliance on speed and information, making full use of the technologies of informationization and digitization and delivering an appropriate amount of resources to the front in the right place at the right time. The degree of precision of logistic support in terms of time, space, variety, quantity, and the deployment of strength becomes a sign of effective support.” Cheng and Zhang, Logistics Command College, 2000.

After an initially stunned reaction, more sober assessments of the Gulf War in recent Chinese military writings have targeted deficiencies in U.S. logistical support. These analyses closely parallel American logisticians and operators own conclusions. Among the U.S. logistics shortfalls discussed in Chinese writings are: insufficient strategic mobility, high expenditure of munitions and other classes of supply, excessive time needed to establish sufficient stockage prior to start of operations, etc.

Recognizing the operational and conceptual challenges of logistics support in a high-tech environment, but also understanding the realistic constraints the PLA’s faces in modernizing its logistics support, reform since the mid-1990s has concentrated on increasing efficiency. To accomplish this, units have been exhorted to reduce or

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631 Allen and McVadon, pp. 35-36. See also Xinhua (English) on 25 and 28 May, 1998, regarding the China Military Logistics ’98 Exhibition. Logistics ’98 attracted over 300 companies from over 20 countries. Displays range from low-tech subsistence and other basic support items to high-tech equipment and materials. Like previous exhibition, the 1998 like the previous two, attracted numerous foreign logistics displays, ranging from low-tech subsistence to high-tech.


eliminate lingering business operations, through “socialization” (i.e., civilianizing). Under the goal of establishing a joint logistics system, some types of common support, such as medical, petroleum, and ground vehicle maintenance are being consolidated as joint support operations for all Services.

Chinese military writers have paid attention to the U.S. Army concept of “focussed” and especially the U.S. Marines’ concept of “precision” logistics. These American concepts developed from recognition that it took far too long to build up stockage for the Gulf War, while some supplies were duplicated or wasted because of tracking difficulties, and port distribution was hampered.

Influenced by its revolutionary heritage and its post-1979 business involvement, the PLA is challenged to support overall economic development, provide for the basic needs and quality of life of the soldiers and officers, continue approved military production, as well as support operational joint logistics.

In April 2000, General Wang Ke article’s entitled “Less investment, higher efficiency” discussed the key requirements of PLA logistics under President Jiang Zemin’s modernization guidance, in order to accomplish its multifaceted goals:

- Joint logistics of the armed forces
- Standardization of military supplies
- Monetary system of officers’ welfare
- Socialized logistics supply system
- Scientific management of logistics

While logistics reforms stress the essential need to realize efficiencies and civilianize logistics, all these efforts are ultimately focussed on improving joint logistics support to combat operations.

In addition to making major changes to internal logistics operations and developing an effective logistics system, PLA military writers have also evaluated ways to maximize their efforts by exploiting potential vulnerabilities of more advanced militaries’ logistics systems. Using the U.S. military logistics in the Gulf War as a case study for analysis, the PLA has assessed how a weaker power might defeat or deter a stronger power by applying tactics under a strategy of defeating the superior with the inferior (yiruo shengqiang).

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635 See “Weaknesses in Logistics,” pp. 73-83.
REFORMS AND RESTRUCTURING

Logistics Force Structure

In late 1999 General Wang Ke, GLD director, discussed the Central Military Commission decision to carry out a major overhaul of the PLA logistics system. The new structure integrates “fragmented logistics units” of the PLA Army, Navy, and Air Force to provide regional joint support under the “joint battle zone logistics support” concept. Under the new joint logistics system, the “military regions’ logistics departments and...branches...will be responsible for the unified supply of materials and...general services” to units within the three battle zones or where required. The joint logistics system is charged with providing “unified leadership, management, planning, construction, and use of...home-front facilities [such] as warehouses, hospitals and material stations” to support joint operations.636

Earlier in 1999, President Jiang Zemin signed the “PLA Joint Logistics Regulations,” which was said to be “the single most crucial change in the PLA logistics support systems since the founding of the PRC.” This system, which is the first time in its history the PLA will practice “joint logistics.” By the end of 1999, General Wang Ke announced the PLA had reduced “7,600 military logistics forces” through a redistribution of logistics tasks in 850 units, which resulted in a savings of 80 million yuan.637

ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF THE GENERAL LOGISTICS DEPARTMENT

“Logisticians are ‘unheroic, spineless, and sterile’.” Hong Xuezhi638

The role and influence of logistics operations and leaders within the PLA has been unique to the PLA’s history and its special relationship as the ultimate guarantor of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). In the history of other militaries, such as the U.S., logisticians have played a secondary role to combat leaders. Logistics force structure is often the first to be cut or relegated to the reserves during budget cutbacks and force reductions, and significantly, no logistician has ever reached the level of Chief of Staff of the Army or Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The role and influence of logistics within the U.S., consequently, has depended on the logistical awareness of combat leaders themselves.

Although an operational bias against logisticians also has existed in the PLA since its foundation, as Hong Xuezhi’s quote above indicates, the influence of logisticians in

638 Shu, p. 171.
the PLA has been complicated by the interrelationship between the General Political Department's Political Commissar system and support. Up until at least the 1980s, leaders of the GRSD and GLD moved back and forth between political and logistics assignments. At the lower levels a core of younger technicians did develop, but these logisticians have yet to assume top-level positions.

The heritage of politicized logistics from the Red Army period until at least the Cultural Revolution provided GLD leaders with a considerable degree of political influence. There is no indication, however, that this was translated into more resources and support, as one might expect in a Western military. It may, however, have provided the basis for sustained tolerance, even enthusiastic support, of escalating and diversified business operations throughout the 1980s and 1990s, despite signs of abuse and corruption.

Since the late-1990s, Jiang's order for the PLA to withdraw from business has resulted in a dramatic cut to the GLD staff. More than one half of its headquarters has been eliminated or reassigned. The creation of the General Armament Department (GAD) and the loss of the GLD armament subdepartment may further reflect a decline in the GLD's power and influence. If this assessment is correct, it remains to be seen how durable and significant (either as help or hindrance) this downsizing and withdrawal from business will be for the GLD to lead the effort to develop effective joint logistics for combat operations within the next ten years.

The GLD will likely continue to play a key role in the military budget through the finance office. It will also remain involved in some types and levels of production, and will still be in a position to take advantage of some business opportunities as it socializes logistics functions.

The GLD already has made significant progress in improvements in quality of life, monetization, etc. that directly affect the morale and quality of the PLA officers and soldiers. Now the challenge is to revolutionize logistics support to combat for a regional high-tech war context.

CONCLUSIONS - IMPLICATIONS

The weight of available information on the PLA modernization appears to support the prevailing analytical view that routinely stresses PLA weaknesses and shortfalls; perennial gaps between aspirations and implementation; and evolutionary (rather than revolutionary) change. Logistics is no exception. The unique link between logistics support and inefficient military and civilian state production, as well as the diversion of personnel and resources into self-sustainment, suggest that PLA logistics will be severely challenged to develop an effective joint logistics system within the next ten years. We should not count PLA logistics out of the high-tech support game just yet, however. The PLA/GLD leadership is taking appropriate steps in the right direction to realize this goal.

Based on its history of flexibility, adaptation, and continual improvement, PLA logistics has the potential to ruin someone's day in a regional crisis, and to effectively ensure deterrence during peace. PLA logistics may not be able to support a decisive large-scale war without major additional investment, but the PLA may be more successful in developing a modest, modern conventional force projection capability.
The PLA leadership does appear to fully realize the military shortfalls. They also understand how future wars will be fought. While making major improvements to the force, they will aggressively search for shortcuts and/or vulnerabilities that their less advanced military can exploit. They also will continue to demonstrate a mastery of the psychological dimension of national security. While displaying some selective transparency, they will continue to conceal their strengths and weaknesses. They continue to reassure regional and global powers of their peaceful intentions and insecurities. They also, however, will keep people guessing about the PLA's actual and future potential to underwrite a credible deterrent.

In many ways, this is an excellent time for China to pursue regional and international security objectives. It can enjoy the benefits of a divided American polity, and rather benign assessments of China's military potential and capabilities. This period of uncertainty outside China's borders can provide China and the PLA with continued breathing space to address internal problems and continue to enhance its comprehensive strength.

For analysts of China's military, only hindsight may likely settle any argument over how successful China will be in achieving its military aspirations, and what this mean for the U.S. and its allies, as well as regional powers. In the end, the PLA, including its joint logistics support, will do what it can with what it has at whatever cost it takes. This may or may not prove to be enough at the time it is needed.

We do know, however, that the PLA actively seeks a high-tech military capable of fighting a regional war, if necessary. We know China combs the world for military knowledge, materiel, and equipment that will help it fight a high-tech war. We also know the PLA extensively studies the strategy and operations of world militaries, including the U.S., which it has at least indirectly identified as a future opponent. These in themselves warrant fresh investigation, reflection, and debate over the development of PLA military operations that seriously considers the implications of even limited and focussed success in the development of its joint logistics and combat operations.
APPENDIX A LEADERSHIP

Yang Lisan (1949-53)
Huang Gezheng (1954-56)
Hong Xuezhi (1956-59)
Qiu Huizuo (1959)
Zhang Zhen
Zhang Congxun (1975)
Hong Xuezhi (1980-87); also PC 'til 1987
Zhao Nanqi (1988-92)
Fu Quanyou (1992-94)
Wang Ke (1995-present)

The current director of the GLD, General Wang Ke, was born in 1931 in Xiaoxian, Anhui Province. He joined the CPC in 1947. Wang Ke has some political commissar experience. He was a deputy political instructor of the Third Field Army in 1949. He participated in the Jiaozhou-Jinan counter-attack and Huai Hai Campaign. He served as a battalion commander in the Korean War in 1953. In 1956 he served concurrently as the deputy commander and chief of staff of an artillery regiment of the CPV in 1956. After the Korean War he served in various artillery-training assignments in the Beijing area and Lanzhou Military Region, including political commissar of the garrison division from 1972-1978. He was granted the rank of Lieutenant General in 1988, and promoted to General by 1994. He was identified as the Director of the GLD in 1995. Wang replaced General Fu Quanyou, who was promoted to Chief of the General Staff. Unlike previous GRSD/GLD directors and General Wang Ke, General Fu official biography does not reflect any political commissar positions. He commanded from the company to the army level, and served in numerous chief of staff positions. He served in Korea as a battalion commander during 1953-56. See Who's Who in China: Current Leaders, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1989, and Directory of P.R.C. Military Personalities.
7. THE GENERAL ARMAMENT DEPARTMENT

By Harlan Jencks

INTRODUCTION

The official creation of the General Armament Department (GAD) in April 1998 marked a significant change in the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The three-way division of the PLA High Command into the General Staff Department, General Political Department, and General Logistics Department has been an organizational constant in the PLA since 1957. The parallel division into headquarters staff, political, and logistical departments runs all the way down to regimental level throughout most of the PLA. Hence the introduction of a fourth General Department, with a new parallel staff system running down to regimental level was an important organizational innovation. The Air Force, Navy, and Second Artillery already had headquarters-level departments with comparable responsibilities; but even there, creation of the GAD provoked some significant organizational reshuffling.

Because it is less than three years old, the GAD is still establishing its organizational "turf." It was created from components of other military and non-military organizations, and acquired most of its responsibilities, personnel, and assets at their expense. Not surprisingly, it is still competing with a civilian organization—the State Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense (SCOSTIND)—

639 The opinions expressed herein are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory or any of its sponsors.

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641 For their insights, observations, and assistance, I am indebted to Kenneth Allen, Dennis Blasco, Arthur Ding, David Finkelstein, John Frankenstein, Iain Johnston, Richard Latham, John Lewis, Evan Medeiros, Ellis Melvin, Jonathan Pollack, Wen Hsu, and Xue Litai; as well as a number of others. Especially, I wish to express my profound admiration and gratitude to Ellis Melvin.
and with other parts of the PLA. The GAD is pushing itself into areas of responsibility previously controlled by the former Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND), and by the PLA General Staff and General Logistics Departments. The contradictions and competition involved are discussed further in the section on "Decision Making and Relative Power."

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, AND EMERGING ROLES AND MISSIONS

At the Ninth National People's Congress (9NPC) in March 1998, Premier Zhu Rongji ordered a radical restructuring of government and of the state-operated scientific and industrial systems, including the "Big Five" state-operated military industrial corporations. Among the leading state organs formally abolished was COSTIND. Since its creation in 1982, COSTIND had occupied a unique position in the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), with one organizational foot in the civilian defense scientific, and industrial complex directly under the State Council, and the other in the PLA directly under the Party Central Military Commission (CMC). COSTIND was charged with coordinating and mediating the often contradictory requirements and interests of the operational PLA, on one hand, and the defense scientific-industrial system on the other. It was supposed to supervise the research, development, testing, and evaluation of all new PLA weapon systems and equipment; but it never fulfilled these responsibilities very successfully. The PLA had to buy what was built, and had little input into the design or procurement processes. This not only kept the PLA technologically backward, it was inefficient and wasteful.

Confusingly, the 9th NPC abolished COSTIND and then created a new "COSTIND"—with exactly the same name (in both Chinese and English). Through 1998, this reuse of the organizational title added confusion to an already murky picture. While "old COSTIND" continued to function well into the summer of 1998, "new COSTIND" attempted to get its organizational act together. Where the identification might be in doubt, this study refers to "State COSTIND" or "SCOSTIND"(which is solely under the State Council) to differentiate it from "old COSTIND" or "former COSTIND" (which was under both the State Council and the CMC).

SCOSTIND was supposed to assume the former COSTIND's functions of governmental regulation of defense industrial management, and take over the State Planning Commission's Defense Department (guofangshi). It also was to take direct control of the "Big Five" military industrial corporations under the State Council, and supervise their restructuring. (See Sidebar)


643 Most reports have simply used the term "COSTIND" and left it to the reader to deduce which organization is meant. The issue is no longer in doubt; Any reference to "COSTIND" after July 1999 refers to the new State COSTIND (SCOSTIND).
Sidebar: THE "BIG FIVE" BECOME THE "BIG TEN"

Prior to March 1998, there were five huge state-owned defense industrial corporations, which produced the vast majority of China’s military arms and equipment. These so-called "Big Five" were:

China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC)
Aviation Industries of China (AVIC)
China Ordnance Industry Corporation (COIG, better known as NORINCO)
China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC)
China Aerospace Industry Corporation (CASC)

The March 1998 reorganization was intended, in part, to correct the chronic indebtedness, massive overstaffing, and bureaucratic unresponsiveness of state-operated enterprises (SOEs). However, "restructuring" in 1998-99 produced little real change. On 1 July 1999, Premier Zhu announced the formal reorganization of the former "Big Five" military-industrial SOEs into ten new Industrial Enterprise Groups (IEGs). Contrary to the March 1998 directive to organize competing IEGs that would sink or swim in the free market, Zhu twice said the new structures would promote “moderate competition.” Yet there hardly can be even moderate competition, since each of the “Big Five” merely divided into two IEGs, each of which continues to monopolize one or more product lines.

**CNNC has been reorganized as:**
China Nuclear Industry Group Company (CNNC)
China Nuclear Industrial Construction Group Company (CNEC)

**AVIC has been reorganized as:**
China Aeronautics Industry First Group Company (AVIC-1)
China Aeronautics Industry Second Group Company (AVIC-2)

**COIG has been reorganized as:**
China Ordnance Industry Group Company (COIGC)
China Ordnance Equipment Industry Group Company (COEGC)

**CSSC has been reorganized as:**
China Shipbuilding Industry Group Company (CSIGC)
China Shipbuilding Heavy Industry Group Company (CSHIGC)

**CASC has been reorganized as:**
China Astronautic Science and Technology Group Company (CASTGC)
China Astronautic Mechanico-Electronic Group Company (CAMEGC)

In July 1999, Zhu said that a major future task is to "step up the pace of restructuring," indicating that detailed reorganization of the new "Big Ten" still
remains. Yet, at the NPC session of March 2000, SOE reorganization was scarcely mentioned.

End of Sidebar

The Demise of COSTIND and Rise of the GAD

In November 1996, former COSTIND director Ding Henggao was replaced by Lieutenant General Cao Gangchuan, formerly First Deputy Chief of the PLA General Staff. Cao probably presided over the demise of COSTIND with a good deal of satisfaction. Having devoted most of his career to the PLA’s modernization and acquisition process, he was one of those PLA leaders who were frustrated and angered by COSTIND’s chronic failures.

Officially created in March 1998, SCOSTIND got off to such a poor start that it might never recover. Well into 1999, it remained ineffectual and invisible, particularly compared to the PLA’s assertive new General Armament Department. Formally, the GAD should rank below SCOSTIND. As a Commission of the State Council, SCOSTIND formally ranks higher than a ministry—two full steps above a PLA General Department. Moreover, the GAD was not announced until 5 April 1998, so it is "younger." Yet, Chinese sources consistently list GAD ahead of SCOSTIND. In a culture where prestige and "face" are crucial—where even common folk instinctively note the rank order of names and faces in news releases and photographs—this consistent slight is not accidental. Perhaps most humiliating of all was the official guest list for the 1 July 1999 announcement of the new "Big Ten" Industrial Enterprise Groups. Both Beijing Central Television and Xinhua News Agency listed General Cao ahead of Liu Jibin, Minister in charge of SCOSTIND.

Sidebar: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

According to Chinese officers, the General Armament Department (Zong Zhuangbei Bu) was modeled to some degree on the French Délégation Générale pour l'Armement (DGA). This helps explain why official Chinese sources, like Xinhua News Agency’s English language service, fairly consistently call it the "General Armament Department," (or occasionally "General Armaments Department").

The Department’s Chinese name, Zong Zhuangbei Bu (STC: 4920 5944 0271 6752), literally translates as "General Equipment Department (GED)." "GED" sometimes appears in official publications, and is frequently used by foreign translators, including

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644 Beijing Central Television, 1 July 1999; and Renmin ribao [People’s Daily], 1 July 1999.
646 South China Morning Post, 6 April 1998.
the English language press in Hong Kong, and the United States’ Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). In all cases, including this chapter, the terms “General Equipment Department,” “GED,” “General Armament Department,” “General Armaments Department,” and “GAD” all refer to the same organization.

**End of Sidebar**

In the first weeks of the reorganization in 1998, old COSTIND gave up all its military personnel (including General Cao) to the new GAD, along with its most prestigious and profitable assets. The GAD took over China’s leading overt collector, translator, and publisher of technical intelligence, the China Defense Science and Technology Information Center (CDSTIC), as well as all the former COSTIND test ranges and facilities (including the satellite launch bases at Xichang, Sichuan and Taiyuan, Shanxi; and the nuclear test site at Lop Nur, in Xinjiang). GAD also took over many of old COSTIND’s teaching and research institutions, including its Command Technical Academy and the Aerodynamics Research and Development Center. 647 Reportedly, GAD also took over old COSTIND’s main import-export firm, Xinshidai Company (a.k.a. New Era Company).

Although it established itself much more quickly and effectively than State COSTIND, the GAD’s early months were not without problems. In addition to assuming control of the former COSTIND assets mentioned above, GAD took over various parts of other PLA Departments, including some functions and units of the General Logistics Department. It took over the General Staff Department’s arms export control responsibilities; in addition to its Bureau of Military Equipment and Technology Cooperation (BOMETEC), which oversees foreign military aid and sales from PLA stocks. Perhaps most importantly, GAD took over most missions and personnel of the GSD Equipment Bureau (responsible for ground forces and general-purpose equipment development) and of the GSD “Military Services Department” (bingzhong bu) responsible for Air Force, Navy and Second Artillery equipment development. (See Table 7.1)

Each of these diverse elements brought along its own organizational culture, preferences, and agendas, as well as its own networks of personal relationships (guanxi). GAD reorganization was behind schedule in September 1998, with only a few senior positions filled. The relationship between PLA officers formerly with COSTIND vis-a-vis those formerly with the GSD and GLD must have been particularly strained. Moreover, in 1999 the GAD began encroaching on the GLD’s logistics functions. (see below).

In late 1998, PLA leaders told foreign visitors that whereas research and development (R&D) had been separate from procurement under the old COSTIND system, GAD now would combine them. “Integrated management and production” under the GAD was to be modeled after the “General Armaments Bureau in France” (Délégation Générale pour l’Armement). GAD would be responsible for the whole process of arms production, from “research to testing to production to deployment to

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retirement to replacement, as well as spare parts." The reorganization also would introduce "competition" and a bidding system into the procurement process.648

The division of functions, roles, and missions between the new SCOSTIND and GAD is still not entirely clear. GAD officers indicate that they are responsible for "purely military equipment," in contrast to SCOSTIND, which is responsible for "civilian industry." Similarly, Liu Jibin, the director of SCOSTIND, has indicated a strong emphasis on production of civilian goods and services. Nevertheless, after more than two years of official existence, GAD roles and missions still impinge on those of others.

MANUFACTURING FACILITIES

In 1998, there was a good deal of speculation as to whether or not the GAD would exercise direct control over certain particularly important military manufacturing operations. Multiple sources have reported that the nuclear weapons manufacturing facility in Sichuan ("Special Parts Factory" or "903 Factory") was transferred to the China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) early in the reorganization.649 Surely, one would think, if the GAD were going to retain control of just one factory in all of China, it would have been that one. On the contrary, however, the GAD did retain direct control of some "purely military" manufacturing plants that were formerly run by old COSTIND. There is virtually no information about these plants, indicating that they may produce secret or particularly sensitive equipment.

MISSIONS AND PRIORITIES

GAD officers speak of their responsibility for "comprehensive equipment management" over the "full life cycle" of equipment. The GAD is responsible for the research and development of "key state armaments projects," but mainly as a supervisor and contractor. Most of the actual work at the "front end" of the process (i.e., research, development, and production) will be done under contract, not by the GAD. The GAD is also responsible for "ordering, purchasing, management, repair technology, and support." This work is done by the GAD headquarters and by the subordinate Armament Departments of PLA units.

On 1 December 1998, Cao Gangchuan laid out his "three future work priorities" at the All-Army Equipment Conference:

1. "We are giving key place in our equipment work to the building of our legal system...aimed at governing and managing equipment by law.
2. "We are...strengthening our armed forces through science and technology.

648 Personal e-mail communications, 15 December 1998.
3. "We are ...focusing our equipment management on converting new equipment into combat might, making the development of quality talent a very pressing ...mission."\textsuperscript{650}

A year later Cao claimed that, "Weaponry cost management levels and use effectiveness have been markedly enhanced." In his speeches, he repeatedly invoked the formula of "turning new weaponry into combat strength," emphasizing the depth of PLA frustration at the old system's failure to get weapons into production and into the hands of the troops. \textsuperscript{651}

**Contracting and Market Competition**

Under the pre-1998 system, there was essentially no competition in the military-industrial sector; therefore little incentive to innovate, or to operate efficiently or quickly. In certain respects, the old system was also disadvantageous to military industry. The PLA acquired weapons at highly subsidized prices and industrial enterprises simply had to absorb the losses—which were then compensated by subsidies from the state (in the form of non-recoverable loans from state banks). This is one of the reasons why the official defense budget was only half or a third (or even less) of actual PRC military expenditures. Competitive bidding was promoted in 1998, and recommended by Finance Minister Xiang Huaicheng in his March 1999 budget report to the NPC.\textsuperscript{652}

Under the new system, the GAD contracts with civilian industrial organizations (the "Big Ten," et al.) and is expected to pay market prices. That means the official military budget will have to be considerably larger than in the past. Recent increases in the PLA budget may just be a larger proportion of actual military expenditure than we have seen before, rather than an actual increase.\textsuperscript{653}

The most detailed endorsement of PLA commercial contracting was published in February 1999. "Big Five" reorganization was still undecided, but it was apparent that defense industry bureaucrats were successfully resisting "marketization." The Beijing rumor mill already indicated that there would be little competition in the "reformed" industrial sector. In that environment, *Jiefangjun Bao* (*Liberation Army Daily*) published a long article entitled, "Comprehensively Promote Socialization of General Equipment

\textsuperscript{650} Quoted in Hong Kong *Kuang chiao ching*, No. 316, 16 February 1999, pp. 30-31, translated in FBIS, FTS19990126000945.


\textsuperscript{652} "Government Procurement Again Recommended at NPC," *Xinhua*, 8 March 1999.

Supply.”654 In this particular article, the euphemism “socialization of supply” clearly meant the same as “marketization.”

Inter alia, the article noted that information is critical to monitoring a healthy, open market system. It also noted that capital is an effective lever for state (read: PLA) participation in the market. The state exerts an influence when it purchases goods, or invests in research, planning, production, and maintenance. Moreover, used military equipment is returned to the market (a procedure which evidently has been practiced for a long time).

Liberation Army Daily approvingly noted the use of competitive bidding and commercial contracting by foreign military forces. It cited the example of the United States, which in 1996 contracted with private companies for “90% of its military products, including aircraft, guided missiles, air defense weapons, and ammunition.” This is possible, said JFJB, because of a market economy regulated by competition. “Before the production of military equipment, the best research unit and manager...are chosen through competition, which raises the research and production level, and the quality and rate of success.” 655

At this writing, Premier Zhu’s effort to introduce market principles and to force competition among state-operated industrial enterprises appears to have failed. The PLA will seldom pay “market prices” for weapons and equipment, because there still is no market competition for major defense industrial products. Contrary to the expectations and the directives of March 1998, the “reorganization” of the “Big Five” industrial enterprises, as seen in the above sidebar, was mostly cosmetic. The “Big Five” were reorganized into the “Big Ten,” but none of the ten is in serious competition with any other. Unless it goes to foreign suppliers, the PLA can only buy transport planes from AVIC-2 and warships from CSIGC; etc.

In its 1998 conception, the division between SCOSTIND and the GAD was roughly that GAD would be responsible for research and development of “purely military equipment,” whereas SCOSTIND would preside over the industrial enterprises which would contract with GAD to produce those products. In briefings later on in 1998, GAD officers indicated that both GAD and SCOSTIND would engage in research and development. The various industrial enterprises under SCOSTIND will continue to do R&D on new products and services, both for the commercial market and for the PLA. However, they are to do so on a commercial basis. Having developed a process or a piece of equipment, it supposedly will be up to the enterprise to sell it to the PLA.

In contrast, critically important items, which the PLA believes it absolutely must have, can be developed by military research institutions directly under the GAD and the PLA service arms. In some critical product areas, these even can be produced by GAD factories. A lever the GAD has to force civilian industry to strive for better and cheaper

655 Jiefangjun bao, 9 February 1999, p. 6. The PLA obviously does not realize how US procurement really works, and the problems we have had with reform. See the various works of Jacques Gansler on this issue.
products is that the GAD is authorized to procure foreign equipment and technologies if neither internal PLA nor civilian industry can provide them.

The 126 Program

A good indication of what is regarded as “purely military” high-technology was provided with the announcement of the 126 Program. “126” refers to the 26 January 2000 National Conference on Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense, where the program was announced. The 126 program was signed into effect by Jiang Zemin, in his capacity as CMC Chairman, in early March 2000. It involves development, primarily by the military itself, of six major technology projects. This program is similar to, and follows up on, the 863 Program.\textsuperscript{656} The latter began in 1986, and was supposedly fulfilled in 1996, though it continues to be reported.\textsuperscript{657} John Frankenstein observes that the “126 program” looks suspiciously like a program outlined in a CDSTIC publication in the early 1980s—yet another example of the chronic failure of COSTIND and the defense scientific and industrial systems to produce what the PLA needed.\textsuperscript{658}

The 126 Program consists of six major project areas and 35 specific projects. The six major projects are:

- Aerospace Technology
- Electronic Information Technology
- Strategic Defense Technology
- Deep-Strike Counterattack Technology
- Laser-Optic Technology
- Non-Conventional and Conventional Materials Technology

The entire program is under the direction of CMC Vice-Chairman Hu Jintao and is supposed to be fulfilled in 12 to 15 years. Under Hu’s supervision, there is a 126 Program Committee chaired by Vice-Premier Wu Bangguo. It members include Wang Zhongyu (Secretary-General of the State Council General Office), General Cao Gangchuan (GAD director), Liu Jibin (SCOSTIND minister), and others.\textsuperscript{659}


\textsuperscript{657} For recent news, see \url{http://www.863.org.cn/publication/863n1201.html} (accessed 7 July 2000).

\textsuperscript{658} John Frankenstein, e-mail, “Additional comment on GAD paper,” 13 August 2000. I am especially grateful to Dr. Frankenstein for his thorough critique of an earlier version of this study.

\textsuperscript{659} There have been a number of official announcements of the 126 Program. The most detailed, however, appeared in the Hong Kong publication \textit{Tai yang pao}, 21 March 2000, p. A19.
Legal Provisions

An additional area of GAD concern in its first two years have been “armament-related legal systems building.” At the All-Army Armament Work Conference of November 1999, General Cao said that “the work of building a legal system and weaponry work has been fully launched.” A number of rules, regulations, and systems had been formulated, and the first book of “PLA Weaponry Regulations” was about to appear. He was probably referring to the “Weaponry Regulations” promulgated in early April 2000.660

General Cao even mentioned intellectual property rights (IPR) protection as an aspect of legal reform. It is extremely unlikely that IPR considerations will be allowed to inhibit the GAD’s technical intelligence effort, but IPR may ameliorate the traditional PRC practices of “reverse-engineering” and un-licenced copying/modification foreign of equipment. Although “reverse-engineering” resulted in fairly successful copies and modifications of some 1950s-era Soviet equipment, the process has proven to be of diminishing utility vis a vis more modern and sophisticated gear. Accordingly, the Chinese may be coming around to the recognition that licensed tech-transfer often is more cost-effective than copying and “reverse-engineering.”

Education, Training, and Careers

Still another area General Cao has heavily emphasized is technical training. In December 1999 he told a meeting of military academies in Beijing that it was “imperative to step up the training of qualified personnel.”661 According to the “Weaponry Regulations” of April 2000, “All armament and command personnel will be trained at the [GAD Command & Technical Academy in Beijing] before they become middle-ranking officers.” This training will be in one of two specialties, either armament procurement and purchase, or armament management and maintenance.662

During 1999, a certain amount of modern equipment was acquired by the People’s Liberation Army. As it was assigned to top priority units, and in the course of a major ground forces reshuffling, some relatively modern equipment was “cascaded” down to units which previously had much older equipment. This provoked a remarkable phenomenon. Liberation Army Daily reported that, “People long for new weaponry and equipment, yet when it arrives, they get scared.” Some PLA units actually “locked up their new weaponry and equipment in the warehouse without touching it or using it, and have instead continued to train their troops with old weaponry and equipment and with the old methods of operation. This is mainly the result of lack of basic knowledge.”663

661 Xinhua, 10 December 1999.
662 Xinhua in English, 11 April 2000.
General Cao is determined to change this. He and his senior officers have repeatedly invoked the slogan “It is better to have qualified people waiting for modern equipment than to have modern equipment waiting for qualified people.”

Speaking at an Air Force Equipment Conference in January 2000, Cao said that once equipment is deployed to units, “Keeping up the talent for use management and maintenance support and bringing it up to combat capability by the set deadlines and keeping it combat ready will all mean that we definitely need to treat talent development as a top priority” and establish the idea that “talent is capital.” He called for “diverse steps...to create a good climate for talent to show forth.... to steadily develop and keep key officers with real talent and academic achievements.”

In the summer of 1999, Jiang Zemin signed a decree consolidating a dozen or more PLA schools into four new university-level educational institutions, two of which may now belong to the GAD. One is the PLA Information Engineering University, which combines the former Institute of Information Engineering, Electronics and Technology College, and Survey and Mapping College. The other is the PLA Science and Engineering University, which combines the former Institute of Communications Engineering, Engineering Institute of the Engineer Corps, the Meteorology Institute of the Air Force, and the General Staff Department’s Number 63 Research Institute. Alternatively, one or both of these Universities may now fall under the purview of the General Staff Department’s Military Training Department (See David Finkelstein’s Chapter on the GSD). It is certain that the GAD inherited from former COSTIND the National Defense Science and Technology University in Chang’an, and the Command and Technical Academy in Beijing.

Military Representatives Bureaus

To assure contract compliance and quality control at civilian factories and research institutions that are working on military projects, the GAD has a system of “Military Representatives” (jundai biaoa). There are bureaus (jia) in large cities (e.g., the GAD Wuhan Military Representatives Bureau), probably controlled by the GAD’s Army Equipment Research and Purchasing Department. PLA and local newspapers have identified Military Representatives Bureaus in Beijing, Shenyang, Changsha, Shanghai and Wuhan (See Table 2). Evidently, these GAD city bureaus supervise the area offices (chu) identified with the various service branches (e.g., the “GAD Engineer Corps Wuhan Area Military Representatives Office”). There are Service Branch Area Military Representatives Offices in (at least) Wuxi, Fuzhou, and Baotou. Each of these is...

665 Xinhua, 2 July 1999.
666 Ellis Melvin, e-mail exchanges, summer 1999.
presumably supervised by a GAD City Bureau. There are also Military Representatives Offices and Military Inspection Teams in individual factories.\textsuperscript{668}

There appears to be a variation to the Military Representatives system in the case of the three separate service arms which have Armament Departments of their own (i.e., Air Force, Navy, and Second Artillery). These have their own factory representatives, who may or may not be supervised or supported by GAD City Bureaus. In August 1999 a relatively detailed story about factory representatives of the Second Artillery did not mention the GAD or Military Representatives City Bureaus at all. \textit{Liberation Army Daily} simply reported that the Second Artillery’s Armament Department provides military representatives to factories producing Second Artillery equipment.

The \textit{Liberation Army Daily} article said that formerly, all had not been well with the Second Artillery representative system (which no doubt existed under COSTIND, in the Bad Old Days), because many factory representatives were not qualified. There was no formal training school for them until training and classes were set up for them in 1998-99. In addition to schooling, the representatives had to have practical experience in equipment “life-cycle management” \textit{(chuan shou ming guanli)}. The Armaments Department of the Second Artillery had taken the initiative to “give full play to the role of military representatives and extended” their duties from just checking on orders and examining prices and quality of items to following the research and manufacturing of weapons and checking follow-up technical services in troop units. Military representatives at plants were encouraged to engage themselves in the research and manufacturing processes, although it is difficult to imagine how they could do that without getting in the way.\textsuperscript{669}

\textbf{Foreign Acquisitions}

The GAD is now a major purchaser of foreign military hardware and technology. Leading examples of foreign end-item purchases are well known and politically sensitive; for example, Sukhoi-27 fighters and \textit{Sovremyennii}-class destroyers from Russia, and the abortive Airborne Early Warning aircraft deal with Israel. Less-widely noted, but perhaps more important, are the purchases of components and technologies from foreign vendors; primarily from the former Soviet states and Western Europe, but also, through various subterfuges and front companies, from Japan and North America. Cao Gangchuan has been involved in a number of foreign interactions in 1998-2000. He accompanied CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Wannian to Russia in March 2000, along with a delegation that also included Liu Jibin, minister in charge of COSTIND.\textsuperscript{670} General Cao also participated in meetings with the Ukrainian Vice-Defense Minister in May 2000.\textsuperscript{671}

\textsuperscript{668} Ellis Melvin e-mail, 10 February 1999.

\textsuperscript{669} “A Number of Military Representative Have Joined the Ranks of Missile Experts,” \textit{Jiefangjun bao}, 14 August 1999, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{670} Xinhua, 3 March 2000.

\textsuperscript{671} Xinhua, 31 May 2000.
STRUCTURE ACCIDENTLY

Getting Organized

The top-level organization of the GAD is depicted in Figure 7.1. There is some official information about GAD organization. In addition, it is safe to assume that the GAD follows well-established PLA organizational practices. For example, although official sources never refer to the Confidential Department, there is certain to be one in GAD Headquarters. It also is safe to assume that each of the GAD staff organizations described below has certain standard components, such as a General Office, a Political Department, and (usually) a Logistical Department and Confidential Department. According to official briefers, GAD headquarters has one center (zhongxin), one committee (weiyuanhui), two bureaus (ju) and at least eight departments (bu). Press reports and several informants disagree as to the precise names of some of these organs, and about their functions. The following discussion of these headquarters organs and their responsibilities is highly tentative. Virtually everything in this section is subject to revision as more and better information becomes available—and as organizational boundaries are established within the GAD and among the GAD, the other General Departments, and SCOSTIND.

Directly subordinate to the commander of the GAD are two special organizations: the China Defense Science and Technology Information Center and the Science and Technology Committee. Both of these organizations were inherited from the former COSTIND, and seem to have the same duties they had before. They appear to have brought over virtually all of their former personnel, and so include some of the few civilians in GAD Headquarters.

China Defense Science and Technology Information Center (CDSTIC)

The CDSTIC is primarily an overt intelligence agency, which systematically canvasses the world for scientific and technical publications. It has been characterized as a “giant vacuum cleaner,” in tribute to its assiduous acquisition of conference papers, scientific publications, advertising literature, and every other imaginable sort of technical information. It maintains a large library and translation service. According to a mid-1990s visitor, “The CDSTIC is a monument to open-source collection: their library has just about every military [magazine] in just about every language you could imagine.... And acres of microfilms: US Army [Field Manuals], American Chemical Society, etc., etc. Pretty impressive.”

In addition to collecting, archiving, and translating, the CDSTIC disseminates information to relevant organizations in China’s scientific-technical-industrial complex. The CDSTIC had computer links all over the country as early as 1993. CDSTIC publishes the monthly magazine China Defence Science and Technology Information (Guofang Keji Yaowen) and several other domestic defense industry newspapers; as well

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672 Personal e-mail communication 1 July 2000.
as the Hong Kong magazine CONMILIT (Xiandai Junshi), which is aimed at an overseas Chinese readership.

CDSTIC always has disseminated technology information without any regard to IPR, and will no doubt continue to do so.

The CDSTIC probably is involved in secret technical intelligence analysis, but probably is not directly involved in illegal or covert collection. CDSTIC probably houses most arms control and disarmament activities within GAD headquarters (See the discussion below).

Science and Technology (S&T) Committee (Keji Weijuanhui, or Kewei for short)

The former COSTIND S&T Committee continues to function as part of the GAD, and its membership appears to be roughly the same. Under the former system the COSTIND S&T Committee was "a highly autonomous body of leading military scientists and cadres of very high political and technical prestige. Its director, the physicist Zhu Guangya, held a bureaucratic rank equivalent to that of the COSTIND's director. This meant that Zhu could circumvent his nominal boss," and appeal straight to the CMC and State Council.

According to Feigenbaum, General Qian Shaojun "exercised de facto oversight over the entire Chinese nuclear weapons R&D complex from his perch as director of the nuclear group" under Zhu's S&T Committee. The S&T Committee has a number of such "consultative groups." For example, in September 2000, aviation propulsion expert Liu Daxiang, who is an Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, was described as "General Armament Department Science and Technology Committee Part-time Committee Member and Conventional Propulsion Expert Consultative Group [Member]."

It is not clear whether the S&T Committee still has its former high degree of autonomy, for the organizational and political environments have changed. Since 1998 the research planning and budgeting processes may have opened somewhat to new players. Appearing at an official GAD gathering in November 1999, Zhu Guangya was named first on the guest list, only as a "leading comrade," but ahead of the GAD Deputy Directors. In February 2000 he was again first on a long and distinguished guest list, identified only as a Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative

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673 Personal e-mail communication and Beijing interviews, March 2000.

674 Evan A. Feigenbaum, pp. 111-113.

675 Ibid.

676 Ellis Melvin, e-mail, 19 September 2000, citing Chinese Academy of Engineering web site.

Clearly, his prestige is undiminished—but it is not clear whether he retains his organizational clout.

In December 1998, the S&T Committee still retained its own Communications system. A PLA Life article reported on soldiers assigned to the S&T Committee Main Communications Station, which had at least four sub-stations in the Beijing area.

A PLA Life article, December 1998. I am especially grateful to Ellis Melvin for his analysis of kewei. Its communication station presumably links the S&T Committee to the various GAD research institutions, and might still link it to the research institutions of the “Big Ten” (which are now nominally under SCOSTIND). If so, the S&T Committee may have a channel to by-pass both the SCOSTIND and GAD chains of command.

If the S&T Committee functions the same way under the GAD as it did under old COSTIND, it will be able to continue by-passing its nominal boss (Cao Gangchuan is a relatively junior general), with unpredictable but important consequences. Cao will no doubt attempt to assert his own authority at the expense of Zhu Guangya and Qian Shaojun, both of whom—though quite elderly—still are actively involved in the S&T Committee’s work. The S&T Committee’s leaders may be in a position to advance their own R&D agendas by exploiting the continuing competition between GAD and SCOSTIND. At this writing, it is unclear how (or whether) the S&T Committee functions, how much its membership has changed (if at all), and what its relative prestige and political access is, compared to the formal authority of GAD Director Cao.

In keeping with his oft-stated desire to put weapons R&D decisions into the hands of “war-fighters,” General Cao may very well attempt to push decision making about R&D projects and priorities down into the PLA arms and services. This would mean increased importance for the comparable science and technology committees within the Armament Departments of the Air Force, Navy, and Second Artillery headquarters.

Foreign Affairs Bureau (Waishiju)

In most respects, the FAB has similar functions in all PLA organizations. Its primary purpose is “barbarian handling.” It hosts foreign visitors; and takes the lead in organizing and escorting GAD officers traveling abroad. It also provides GAD guides and spokesmen to the foreign press and foreign scholars.

Currently, the FAB appears to be involved in a turf war between SCOSTIND and the GAD. Although the Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP) is subordinate to the GAD in most respects, it still is subject to some degree of SCOSTIND supervision regarding foreign interactions. At the October 1998 ISODARCO Conference on arms control and non-proliferation in Shanghai, participants from CAEP said their attendance had to be approved by the SCOSTIND International Cooperation Department, which also had to approve their visa applications for foreign travel. SCOSTIND also appears to

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679 Personal e-mail communications and Beijing interviews, March 2000.
control CAEP representatives to Inter-Governmental Organizations and international activities, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the CTBT Preparation Conference. Possibly, this inefficient arrangement is justified as a measure to obscure CAEP's subordination to the PLA and provide a "civilian" fig leaf for CAEP scientists when they interact with foreign scientists.

The FAB also is a logical department to supervise the GAD's foreign military trade and aid activities. Accordingly, we can speculate that it controls BOMETEC and the GAD's foreign trading companies (if any). Despite the July 1998 directive to the PLA to divest itself of most commercial enterprises, GAD trading companies, both overt and covert, almost certainly do exist, to facilitate GAD's role in importing selected foreign equipment and technologies.

Initial reports that the GAD took over Xinshidai Company (a.k.a. New Era Company), old COSTIND's main import-export firm, have not been confirmed. In fact, Xinshidai still seems to seems to be functioning under SCOSTIND.

Comprehensive Planning Bureau (Zonghe Jihua Bu)

The precise functions of the Comprehensive Planning Bureau are not known. Former COSTIND had a Comprehensive Planning Department (bu) and possibly SCOSTIND still does. The Bureau's responsibilities appear to overlap those of the GAD General Office, in that it is the organizational locus for "big picture" policy making and long-range strategy formulation. Adding to the mystery, its only reported sub-division is a Management Support Bureau (guanli baozhang ju). The Comprehensive Planning Bureau is probably involved in budget development, forecasting and lobbying; in which case the Budget Department is simply responsible for cost accounting and management.

General Office (Bangongting)

The Headquarters, Political, and Logistics Departments of the GAD are the same traditional three major components found in every PLA organization. The General Office includes the general staff offices responsible for operations and training. It probably exercises staff supervision over the educational and training organizations under the GAD, as well as GAD factories and research facilities. Where the functional line is drawn between its planning functions and those of the Comprehensive Planning Bureau is unknown.

Political Department (Zhengzhi Bu)

The Political Department carries out the normal staff political functions of indoctrination, motivation, and personnel security, as well as maintenance of personnel records. As in all PLA units, the political office and the political commissar are central to personnel management, career planning, promotions, demotions, and so forth—especially for officers.

Political commissars have traditionally been responsible for personal security and operational security in the PLA, and political departments/offices have security sub-departments/bureaus. Commissars are also responsible for morale, welfare, and cultural activities.

**Logistics Department (Houqin Bu)**

The Logistics Department at GAD headquarters is responsible for the logistical support of the GAD itself, and probably has staff responsibility for the logistical support of subordinate organizations and activities, including educational and research organizations. One source refers to the “Logistics and Depot Department,” which suggests that the GAD maintains a system of supply depots separate from the depots of the General Logistics Department. The current conflict between the GAD and the GLD over roles and missions is discussed further below, in the section on Decision Making and Relative Power.

**Department of Electronics and Information**

This is the only GAD department charged with specific technologies, which emphasizes the importance attached to electronics and information technology by China’s military leaders. Nevertheless, the department’s mandate is not entirely clear. It definitely is responsible for military earth satellites; including R&D and some actual manufacture. This department also seems to be in charge of both R&D and production of certain other high-priority specialized electronic devices and technologies. Examples mentioned by various observers include laser applications and cryptologic technologies and equipment.

**Department of Service Arms Equipment**

The Department of Service Arms Equipment was formed from most of the former Service Arms Department (SAD, bingzhong bu) of the General Staff Department. It appears that the old SAD was split up, with most of it going to the General Armament Department, and a vestigial SAD remaining in the GSD. The latter probably is charged with determining equipment and technical requirements, which are then passed on the GAD in the form of directives. The General Staff Department also retains its responsibilities for operations and training.

The GAD Department of Service Arms Equipment oversees the development of equipment and armaments that are unique to the Air Force, Navy, and Second Artillery, each of which has an Armament Department (AD) and research institutes of its own. In addition, this department oversees the development of specialized equipment for the armored forces, field artillery, army aviation, military engineers, antichemical troops, signal troops, transportation troops, et al. It is clear from press reporting that the Department of Service Arms Equipment has staff responsibility for the PRC Space program, which extensively overlaps the personnel, technologies, and R&D institutions of the Second Artillery.

Because the old SAD probably constituted the largest single sub-department of the General Staff Department, the latter probably did not give it up easily. Moreover—because the GSD is by far the most prestigious of the general departments—SAD officers
who were transferred to the new GAD in 1998 resented their loss of status and tended to look down upon officers transferred in from “lesser” parts of the PLA.

**Army Equipment Research and Purchasing Department**

The Army Equipment Research and Purchasing Department, as its name implies, is responsible not only for ground force equipment R&D, but also for purchasing equipment from Chinese and foreign suppliers. It probably presides over the system of military factory representatives, and over some dedicated research institutes.

Since it is the only department that has the word “Purchasing” in its title, it appears to be the organization responsible for purchasing most PLA weapons, plus whatever equipment is not purchased by the GLD.

The title of this department implies that the Air Force, Navy, and Second Artillery have considerable autonomy with respect to their own equipment research and purchasing.

**Joint Equipment Maintenance Department**

In December 1998, GAD briefing officers referred to a “Technical Support Department.” However, on 14 February 1999, Liberation Army Daily referred to it as the “General-Purpose Equipment Support Department” (Tongyong zhuangbei baozhuang bu). It appears that the name was changed (again?) after the Central Military Commission promulgated “PLA Joint Logistics Regulations” in the summer of 1999 (see below). The 1999 edition of the official World Military Yearbook (Shijie Junshi Nianjian) appears to refer to the same GAD department as the “Joint Equipment Maintenance Department” (Zhuangbei Jishu Hezuo). These alternate names all imply that this department has staff responsibility for the technical support of equipment common to all of the PLA. The precise scope of that “technical support” is not clear.

Neither is it clear what is defined as “general-purpose equipment” or “joint equipment.” The definition presumably excludes major weapons systems that are unique to the three separate arms (e.g., fighter planes, warships, strategic missiles) or to the ground forces (e.g., field guns, tanks, land mines). General-purpose equipment may include small arms and their ammunition, or it may refer exclusively to “equipment” (zhuangbei) and not armaments of any kind.

It is not at all clear what distinction, if any, is made between “general-purpose equipment” and ground forces equipment in terms of GAD Departmental responsibilities. Moreover, since there are electronics applications in most modern equipment, the Department of Electronics and Information must be involved in many programs, as well.

There are many responsibilities that quite reasonably might have been assigned to any of several organizations—and may still be disputed within the PLA command structure, and within the GAD. Whatever command choices are made to address these

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682 I am grateful to Ken Allen for drawing my attention to this source.
disputes—as in any large organization—there will always be overlapping responsibilities and turf battles over individual programs and technologies. Staff coordination is vital—but will be complicated by the conflicting backgrounds, guanxi networks, and organizational cultures brought to the GAD by its various constituent parts.

Does the Army Equipment Research and Purchasing Department write all the contracts for all GAD-funded research, development, and production; or do some of the other departments write their own? Are all Air Force, Navy, and Second Artillery contracts written autonomously by their Armament Departments?

The Joint Equipment Maintenance Department may supervise some GAD educational and training organizations, and some GAD manufacturing facilities.

Vehicles and Boats Department

The Vehicles and Boats Department (Chechuan Bu) reportedly was moved from the General Logistics Department to the GAD in spring 1998. As Susan Puska notes in her chapter, it no longer is a first-level sub-department of the General Logistics Department. Moreover, there was one press report that “boat units of the General Armament Department” assisted relief efforts during the summer 1998 floods. However, transportation is a logistical function. Subsequent news items have been ambiguous, and GAD briefers have not mentioned the Chechuan Bu to visitors. It now may be a department of the GAD; it may remain in the GLD in a lower-level status; or it may have been somehow divided up between the GAD and GLD.

Budget Department

The Comprehensive Planning Department is probably responsible for forecasting and developing future budgets. The Budget Department is responsible for developing the details, plus managing and accounting the current budget.

Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Activities

The GAD took over the General Staff Department’s “703 Group,” (Qilingsan Xiaozu) which is probably the informal title of the Military Material Import-Export Control Office (Junpin Chukou Ban'gong Shi)\(^{683}\) which is in charge of reviewing and vetting exports of conventional weapons and biological/chemical warfare related materials and technologies.\(^{684}\) The PRC Nuclear Export Control Regulations of September 1997 invested COSTIND with responsibility to review and vet the exports of nuclear weapons-related technologies. That responsibility was transferred to GAD in March 1998.\(^{685}\) In July 1998, GAD was given similar responsibility under the PRC


\(^{685}\) Discussions with Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Delegation at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, June 1998.
Regulations for Controlling the Export of Dual-Purpose Nuclear Goods and Relevant Technologies. Export control authority over nuclear materials, formerly vested in the old CNNC, was reassigned to the China Atomic Energy Agency (CAEA) when it became part of SCOSTIND under the 1998 reorganization.

In 1999, General Qian Shaojun reportedly was attempting to get virtually all nuclear export review authority centralized in the GAD—presumably within a considerably expanded 703 Group. He and others within GAD were contesting with SCOSTIND over export review authority. If they succeeded, they would have effectively placed all arms control and non-proliferation export control review and vetting authority in the hands of the GAD.686

Distinct from export vetting responsibility is the mission of arms control and non-proliferation (AC/NP) research, training, briefing, policy advice, and representation at international fora. At this writing, it is not clear who, if anyone, within the GAD is in charge of the AC/NP portfolio. Organizationally, arms control and non-proliferation activities are divided among at least two GAD headquarters departments and two different parts of the Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics. In late 2000, there reportedly was a struggle over these arrangements, pitting Qian Shaojun against Hu Side, the recently (1998) retired President of the Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP). Both men are nominally retired, though they both retain their places on the S&T Committee, and Hu is still a Professor of CAEP’s Institute of Applied Physics and Calculational Mathematics (IAPCM).687

Hu Side presumably advocates that the Arms Control Research Division of IAPCM, with its long-established program, remain the leading AC/NP agency within the GAD system. Qian probably prefers to concentrate arms control and non-proliferation activities at GAD headquarters—probably within the S&T Committee or CDSTIC.

According to a recent visitor, substantive arms control and non-proliferation research work is definitely not conducted in the GAD Foreign Affairs Bureau. That Bureau does have an Arms Control and Disarmament Desk, but it’s mandate is largely confined to treaty implementation, not to research or policy advice.688

Because it is the repository of information on foreign science and technology, CDSTIC seems the most likely locus of arms control and disarmament activity among GAD’s first-level organs. It already has a substantial AC&D role in translation and reporting. Moreover, it’s Director, Professor Liu Haqiu, has long been active in arms control and disarmament research, and on the international academic conference circuit; and has acted as advisor to Chinese arms control negotiators. A further indicator is that two internationally known PLA arms control and disarmament experts were both transferred from old COSTIND to the GAD, initially to the Foreign Affairs Bureau. One

686 Personal communication, 5 May 1999.
687 Discussion, 28 September 2000.
688 Discussion, 28 September 2000.
of them, Bai Aili, remains assigned to the Foreign Affairs Bureau AC&D Desk; but the other, MG Zuo Junhua, transferred to CDSTIC.\textsuperscript{689}

None of this is to say that GAD sets national arms control and disarmament policy. The GAD provides data and briefings, particularly technical data, but does not "sit at the table" when major policies are decided by the Foreign Ministry, State Council, and the Communist Party Politburo.\textsuperscript{690}

In 1999-2000, State budgets included a lot of money for arms control and non-proliferation research; many Chinese organizations have been "getting in on the act."\textsuperscript{691} Seemingly every civilian and military agency with the remotest plausible claim to interest or expertise appears to be setting up an arms control and disarmament operation of some kind. There are few qualified people to fill all the new positions. GAD had lots of funding for arms control and disarmament in 1999-2000—most of which was contracted out to various government agencies and think tanks. This was mostly for technically oriented research on subjects like test-ban monitoring technologies.\textsuperscript{692}

**PLA Units under the GAD**

Subordinate to the General Armament Department are a range of organizations and activities, some of which are listed in Table 3. Some of these organizations can be identified as GAD-subordinate only because of their military cover unit designators (MUCDs, \textit{junshi danwei daihao}). Prior to the October 2000 revamping of the MUCD system, all units in the MUCD 89xxx series appeared to be former COSTIND organizations, now subordinate to the GAD. Additionally, organizations formerly under the GSD Equipment Department retained their old MUCDs in the 88xxx series. An example of the latter was the Unidentified Armored Equipment Depot, MUCD 88361, which was reported under the GSD in January 1997, and under the GAD in December 1998.\textsuperscript{693} Some former GSD Equipment Department organizations were listed with new service branch MUCDs, indicating they have been re-subordinated to the service branches.\textsuperscript{694}

Exactly how the various research institutes, factories, base units, and schools are subordinated to the GAD is not clear. Normal military practice would place them all in the direct chain of command under GAD headquarters. However, in late 1998, officials of the Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP) indicated to at least one visitor that

\textsuperscript{689} Personal communication 5 May 1999 & 19 August 1998; E-mail communication 10 & 11 August 1999; Discussion, 28 September 2000.

\textsuperscript{690} Discussions, 28 September 2000.

\textsuperscript{691} Personal communication, March 2000.

\textsuperscript{692} Discussions, 28 September 2000.

\textsuperscript{693} \textit{Jiefangjun bao}, 17 January 1997; and \textit{Jiefangjun bao}, 2 December 1998

\textsuperscript{694} Ellis Melvin, e-mail 26 March 1999. Melvin believes these units still are under GAD control, despite their service branch MUCDs.
they hoped they would be subordinate to the GAD through the S&T Committee, rather
than directly under GAD headquarters. In all probability, this wish was denied, since the
whole point of the reorganization was to get all of the former COSTIND research
institutes, including the CAEP, directly under military control. Under the former system,
military control was mediated by COSTIND’s soldier-scientists (who were more
scientists than soldiers). Today, the S&T Committee is the last stronghold of the soldier-
scientists.

Space Program
Many of the identified GAD units are involved in missile and space activities.
Press coverage of the first unmanned launch of the Chinese manned space capsule
"Shenzhou" in November 1999 made it quite clear that the GAD is in charge of all of the
PLA’s missile and space activities. The PLA, in turn, has long been recognized as being
in charge of all Chinese missile and space activities, including commercial satellite
launch and space exploration. The GAD’s comprehensive control of all this explains why,
for example, the GAD controls the Telemetry Ship Base (Base 23).

Much R&D for the space program, particularly the basic research, is actually done
outside of GAD research institutes, much of it by universities and the aerospace industry.
The two “new” aeronautics industrial enterprises, China Astronautic Science and
Technology Group Company (CASTGC) and China Astronautic Mechanico-Electronic
Group Company (CAMEGC), still control a large number of R&D organizations of their
own. In addition to contracting with universities and the aerospace industry, GAD
conducts some space-related R&D in its own research institutes and may contract some
with foreign institutions.

Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP)
Headquarters of the Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (also known as the
Ninth Academy) is in “Science City” at Mianyang, Sichuan. It is the PRC’s nuclear
weapons R&D organization, functionally equivalent to Arzamas-16 and Chelyabinsk-70
in Russia; and Los Alamos, Livermore, and Sandia National Laboratories in the United
States.

Separate from the arms control and non-proliferation activities of GAD
headquarters, CAEP has an arms control and non-proliferation research organization of
its own in Mianyang. Moreover, the Institute of Applied Physics and Computational
Mathematics (IAPCM, 909 Institute) of the CAEP, in Beijing, has an older, larger, and
more prestigious Arms Control Research Division of its own.

695 The following discussion is based upon John W. Lewis and Xue Litai, China
Builds the Bomb, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988; CAEP brochures; CAEP
briefings to US National Laboratory personnel, the author’s discussions with CAEP
personnel; and personal observations shared by Marco DiCapua, Bill Dunlop, John
Frankenstein, Wen Hsu, Iain Johnston, John Lewis, Xue Litai, and others.
Unrelated to the governmental restructuring announced in March 1998, the CAEP was internally reorganized in 1993-1998; evidently in response to the end of nuclear weapons testing. The only effect of Zhu Rongji's restructuring program seems to have been the transfer, probably in the spring of 1998, of the nuclear weapons manufacturing facility (Special Parts Factory, 903 Factory) to CNEC.

In order to partially support itself, and to facilitate "defense conversion," CAEP and its institutes formed at least a dozen commercial companies in the early 1990s. The CAEP was not subject to Jiang Zemin's July 1998 order for the military to cease entrepreneurial activity, so it continues to engage in commercial pursuits, under the rubric of "One Institute, Two Systems." CAEP enterprises include import-export, consulting, and research operations, as well as some manufacturing. Trading companies include the Ocean Sky (Haitian) Corporation, the Ninth Academy (Jiu yuan) Company, and the Galaxy (Yinhe) Company. CAEP and all its institutes provide services to Chinese military and civilian clients. IAPCM provides computation and computer modeling services, for example.696

In June-July 1998, just prior to his retirement as CAEP Director, Professor Hu Side visited Stanford University,697 Sandia/Livermore, Sandia/Albuquerque, and Los Alamos National Laboratories. At each venue, he presented an overview briefing on CAEP. Inter alia, he said CAEP should no longer be referred to as the "Ninth Academy," nor should its subordinate institutes be designated by the numbers 901 through 912, nor were any of them to be referred to as "Southwest" Institutes. Moreover, the former twelve institutes had been "consolidated" into the following ten:

- Institute of Fluid Physics
- Institute of Nuclear Physics and Chemistry
- Institute of Chemical Materials
- Institute of Structural Mechanics
- Institute of Electronic Engineering
- Institute of Machinery Technology
- Institute of Applied Electronics
- Institute of Computer Application
- Institute of Laser and Plasma Physics
- Institute of Applied Physics and Computational Mathematics

Hu Side's remarks have been taken to mean that a major restructuring of CAEP's institutes took place in the spring of 1998. Yet, the only certain change, mentioned above, was that the Special Parts Factory (903 Factory) was removed from CAEP and attached to CNEC. Beyond that, it appears that Hu was describing an extended restructuring process that began perhaps four years earlier.

697 Specifically, the Stanford Linear Accelerator (LINAC) and the Center for International Security and Arms Control.
During a dinner at CAEP's "Science City" in September 1995, Hu Side and laser program director Peng Hansheng told a visiting scientist from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) that there were twelve CAEP institutes; then corrected themselves, saying there were originally twelve, which had consolidated to ten. Then they gave their guests momento picture books that said there were twelve.\textsuperscript{698} Evidently, the consolidation had taken place recently (circa 1995) or was anticipated shortly. Moreover, in briefings at Mianyang in October 1994\textsuperscript{699} and at LLNL in December 1995,\textsuperscript{700} CAEP officials listed exactly the same ten institutes, in exactly the same order, as Hu Side presented at Stanford in June 1998.\textsuperscript{701} Neither the CAEP's own viewGraph slides nor the oral presentations mentioned the 900-series numbers in any of those briefings. "Southwest" was not part of any institute name in the December 1995 slides.

It appears that the 900-series designations were formally abolished well over a decade ago. A reasonable guess would be 1982, when the numbered Machine-Building Ministries were all given formal names. In informal conversations and even formal briefings, however, Chinese continue to refer to "Southwest Institutes," and to use the 900-series numbers as a convenient shorthand.

Of special interest on Hu Side's June 1998 list was the Institute of Laser and Plasma Physics. The Shanghai Institute of Optics and Fine Mechanics (SIOFM) was jointly under CAEP and the Chinese Academy of Sciences as of 1995. Housed within SIOFM was the Shanghai Institute of Laser and Plasma Physics, one of the lead organizations for China's Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF) program.\textsuperscript{702} This appears to be the same as the "Institute of Laser and Plasma Physics" on Hu Side's list.

\textbf{SIDEBAR:}
\textbf{A MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT CAEP'S INSTITUTE OF MACHINERY TECHNOLOGY}

According to two witnesses, Hu Side said two CAEP organizations had been consolidated: the Research Center of Environmental Engineering and the Institute of Machinery Technology. Their combined organization is now known simply as the Institute of Machinery Technology (IMT). The director of the IMT is Professor Zhou

\textsuperscript{698} Foreign Trip Report, LLNL, 29 September 1995.
\textsuperscript{699} CAEP Briefing for LANL Visitors (viewgraph slide copies), Mianyang, October 1994.
\textsuperscript{700} CAEP Briefing by Du Xiangwan (viewgraph slide copies), LLNL, December 1995.
\textsuperscript{701} CAEP Briefing by Hu Side (viewgraph slide copies), Stanford LINAC, June 1998.
\textsuperscript{702} CAEP Briefing by Du Xiangwan (viewgraph slide copies), LLNL, December 1995.
Deye. This was puzzling, because Zhou Deye had been director of the [Southwest] Institute of Structural Mechanics (SWISM) since 1995, and still was in 1998. 703

The Research Center of Environmental Engineering is well known. It was formed in the early 1990s as part of the effort to attract Chinese and (especially) foreign civilian investment for "military conversion." 704 It was directly under CAEP headquarters; directed by Zhu Zuliang, who succeeded Hu Side as CAEP Director in November 1998. Although it was a Center (zhongxin), not an Institute (suo), CAEP hosts used the more prestigious term suo, when pointing it out to Sandia National Lab guests in May 1998. 705

It appears that Hu Side, briefing in English, misspoke himself, saying "Machinery Technology" instead of "Structural Mechanics." 706 Assuming that Hu simply got the English names mixed up, the explanation is quite simple: The Research Center of Environmental Engineering was absorbed by SWISM. That accounts for Zhou Deye being the Director of the "new" institute. It also explains why both the Institute of Machinery Technology and the Institute of Structural Mechanics appeared on Hu's briefing slides.

**End of sidebar**

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Although they were ordered to reduce staff as early as 1995, CAEP officials said throughout the 1990s that they had about 8,000 personnel, including 4600-4800 scientists and engineers. Since nuclear test explosions ended in 1996 officials also have complained about reduced funding, loss of experienced personnel to retirement, and difficulty in attracting China's best and brightest in competition with business enterprises on the coast.

**Lop Nur Test Site (21 Base)**

The Lop Nur Nuclear Test Center in Xinjiang employs civilians, but is wholly military at top and bottom: the Test Site is supported by a number of PLA units, including engineer construction, communications, transportation, and logistics troops.

21 Base commanders are technically competent uniformed PLA officers, who often move on to influential senior positions. The test base's first commander, General Zhang Aiping, went on to be COSTIND Director and Defense Minister in the 1980s. Another prominent former commander (in the 1970s) is retired LTG Qian Shaojun, a radio chemist with a nuclear physics degree, who is a member of the China Academy of

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703 CAEP Briefing by Du Xiangwan (View graph slide copies), LLNL, December 1995.


705 Personal communications, May 1998.

706 One interlocutor confirms that Hu spoke English.
Engineering. He has been mentioned above, as a member of the S&T Committee and as a leading force in arms control and non-proliferation activities—both in old COSTIND and in the General Armament Department.

After its last underground nuclear test explosions in July 1996, Beijing announced a unilateral testing moratorium and then signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that September. This presumably resulted in “downsizing” at Lop Nur.

Service Arms Organizations

In its first two years of existence, the GAD established Armament Departments (ADs, zhuangbei bu, 5944 0271 6752) at all levels of the PLA, down to brigade and regimental Armament Offices. The Navy, Air Force, Second Artillery, and the People’s Armed Police (PAP) all organized ADs of their own.

In fact, the three specialized service arms anticipated the creation of the General Armament Department. Long ago, all three established a fourth first-level department concerned with equipment. All three continue to maintain research, development, test, and evaluation organizations of their own. It appears that the majority of R&D funding will be meted out by the GAD to the research institutes of the service arms, as well as to civilian industry, universities, et al.

The PLA Air Force (PLAAF) has had a Headquarters-level Aeronautical Engineering Department since 1976; which changed its name to Equipment-Technical Department (Zhuangbei Jishu Bu) in 1992. In 1998, some sub-departments of the PLAAF Headquarters Department and Logistics Department were moved over to the Equipment-Technical Department, to align with the newly created GAD, and the standard PLA terminology “Armament Department” was adopted. Similarly, the Navy has had an Equipment Repair Department for some time.

Second Artillery units, from the headquarters down to the missile launch brigades, had “Equipment & Technical Departments” (zhuangbei jishu bu) as early as the mid-1980s. Those departments were reported in the press to be concerned almost

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707 US Embassy, Beijing, 130742Z Aug 98 (Unclassified message).
710 See Ken Allen’s PLAAF Chapter.
711 See Bud Cole’s Chapter on the PLA Navy.
exclusively with missiles and nuclear warheads. In early 1998, various Second Artillery launch brigades reportedly had “technical departments,” “technical support departments,” “technical battalions,” and/or “engineering offices.” One missile base even had a “science and technology committee.”  

By October 1998, however, the standard PLA terminology was adopted: Liberation Army Daily reported the 802nd Missile Brigade (MUCD 80402), subordinate to Missile Base 53 (MUCD 80303) had an “Armament Department.” The standardized name was probably reflected, as in the Air force, by some reshuffling of technical support and management organizations within Second Artillery headquarters.

Unit Armament Departments

In troop units, the ADs are responsible for receiving, managing, and maintaining equipment throughout its service life. In April 2000, Liberation Army Daily reported on an armored division of the Beijing Military Region which had established a new mechanism of support that “caters to the characteristics of their new equipment and meets the requirements for imparting new fighting capabilities to the new equipment.” Moreover, the GAD was “disseminating the practice across the whole army.” The division’s new system of equipment handling featured “just-in-time supply of materials.” It used computers and “other new technologies, an equipment repair system with modern inspection, testing, and on-demand maintenance.” The materials supply management system achieved “breakthroughs through information technology-based means and new packaging technology.” Technical training used “multimedia platforms and ... ‘integration of peacetime and wartime operations.’” The division AD also devised some sort of electronic monitoring system for computer diagnosis of some of their armored vehicles’ engines. Having expended every imaginable high-tech buzz-word, the Liberation Army Daily reporter concluded with the revealing statement that, “The new technical support mechanism has superseded the conventional methods of maintenance based on experience, whereby engineers listen with their ears, look with their eyes, and feel with their hands.”

Much of this, particularly the material supply and monitoring systems, appears to overlap the supply functions of unit Logistics Departments. In fact, since the announcement in 1999 that the PLA was adopting a comprehensive “joint service system” for logistics, the GLD and the GAD seem to be competing for resources, responsibility, and authority (See the following section).

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713 Ellis Melvin, e-mail, 9 April 1998

714 For example, see “Strategic Missile Unit Forms New Higher Type Technical Support System,” Jiefangjun bao, 28 April 2000, p. 1.

"Mass Innovation"

The above press report about the innovative armored division, and other stories like it, indicate that—for all their talk about centralization and high-tech—PLA equipment managers at all levels are still engaging in something very like Maoist-style "innovation." Moreover, they are being encouraged in this by the highest levels of the PLA command. For example, in March 2000, Defense Minister Chi Haotian commended Xu Guangfeng, the director of a unit AD in the Nanjing Military Region, who had developed "a self-protection device for new equipment of a certain model." General Chi not only commended Xu, but encouraged him to continue in his studies and innovations. Xu had compiled a technical procedures manual of over 600,000 characters for this particular new piece of equipment. His maintenance procedures "had filled in many gaps in the self-management and self-maintenance of the troops using the new equipment of the said model." Adaptation of these procedures by the rest of the PLA is officially encouraged.\footnote{Chi Haotian Encourages Xu Guangfeng, Director of Armament Department of Certain Unit..., Jiefangjun bao, 27 March 2000.}

Similarly, in October 1999, General Cao visited a demonstration of weaponry innovations in the Jinan Military Region, and called on the whole army to emulate the "typical experiences" of ADs in the grassroots units.\footnote{Wen Wei Po, 17 November 1999, p. A3.}

This is all reminiscent of unit-level "innovation" during the Maoist period—which produced "technical innovations" that were often unworkable and primitive—and sometimes downright dangerous—in the name of "learning from the masses."

These incidents unwittingly expose a fundamental shortcoming in Chinese military equipment development: How was it that neither the GAD nor the industrial enterprise that developed Xu Guangfeng's unidentified new equipment hadn't developed the maintenance procedures simultaneously with developing the equipment? Why did it fall to an AD director in a using unit to write up the procedures?

Moreover, in this and other instances, unit-level innovations are being "commended" to the rest of the army, which is "encouraged" to "emulate" them. In January 1999, Jiang Zemin told the First Enlarged Party Committee Meeting of the GAD that the decision to establish the GAD was, inter alia, to "enhance centralized leadership over weaponry and equipment development." Evidently, standardization and "centralized leadership" continue to elude the PLA in the equipment sector.

**DECISION MAKING AND RELATIVE POWER**

"Degenerate" Practices

The GAD is supposed to get competitive market-priced contracts for military equipment, but GAD contract officials still find themselves dealing with monopoly suppliers. That being the case, an official at some level above GAD and the industrial supplier must administratively adjudicate the price, which is still likely to include...
substantial subsidies. That is, industry will still be selling below real cost, even though the PLA will be paying more than it would in a free market.

Alternatively, the GAD purchasing officer and the industrial seller can make a deal that profits them both—personally. The situation is ripe with opportunities for collusion, kick-backs, and bribery, which is already rumored. GAD procurement officers and factory “military representatives” are ideally positioned for lucrative abuses of authority. Because they are dealing with monopoly suppliers in something of a legal and regulatory vacuum, “irregularities” are all but certain. This helps explain the considerable emphasis Cao Gangchuan and GAD Political Commissar Li Jinai have both accorded to promulgating better rules and regulations. General Cao was referring to this problem at a political work meeting for GAD academies and schools in May 2000, when he said, “Ideological and political building should be based on ‘the ability to win’ and ‘the ability not to become degenerate’.”

Conflict with SCOSTIND

As indicated above, in the section on “Organizational History, and Emerging Roles and Missions,” the GAD was created principally at the expense of the former COSTIND, which was reincarnated as State COSTIND (“SCOSTIND”) with drastically reduced roles, missions, resources, and prestige. In addition to continued wrangling over control of various projects (and their funding), SCOSTIND and the GAD have been competing for control of entire categories of military technologies and products during the formulation of the Tenth Five Year Plan, which will cover the years 2001-2005.

Even if military R&D and acquisition budgets increase substantially during the 10 FYP, the GAD-SCOSTIND conflict is a fairly zero-sum game. That is because (as indicated above in the sub-section on “Contracting and Market Competition”) the increased official budgets will largely reflect more transparency, rather than more actual expenditure.

Conflict with the GLD

In the summer of 1999, “PLA Joint Logistics Regulations” were promulgated by the Central Military Commission. The PLA has been attempting to unify its logistical system for at least the past decade, against considerable resistance from the service arms and military regions. (The new joint logistics service system is discussed in greater detail in Susan Puska’s chapter on the General Logistics Department). Official commentary has made the point that creation of the joint logistics services system went hand-in-hand with the creation of the General Armament Department system.719 In the fall of 1998, the seven Military Regions established Armament Departments (ADs), and re-designated their Logistics Departments as “Joint Logistics Service Departments.” The Logistics

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Services Departments are supposed to manage, plan, build, and implement logistical support for all the arms and services, to include warehouses, hospitals, supply stations, and other logistics services—but not weapons, and not some equipment. 720

However, it is not clear which equipment is to be exclusively managed by the GAD, and what remains in the hands of the GLD. Moreover, maintenance, which has always been a logistics service, is now a GAD function, at least for weapons and major end-items. But there is a vast array of equipment for the two departments to argue over, with the dividing line lying somewhere between tanks (GAD) and tents (GLD). In the absence of clear regulations, the situation is provoking conflict throughout the entire PLA. Every such conflict will require GLD and GAD officers at the relevant command level to work out a modus vivendi, probably adjudicated by their unit commander.

CONCLUSION

The PLA General Armament Department is still a work in progress. It has not yet established its boundaries vis-à-vis SCOSTIND with respect to R&D. Nor has it yet established its boundaries vis-à-vis the GLD with respect to “joint service support.” Nor has it yet settled important internal divisions of responsibility (e.g., arms control and disarmament activities). Some of the badly-needed regulations have been written; a few promulgated; none openly published.

Much will depend upon personalities. General Cao Gangchuan appears to be a critical actor, who reportedly has strong political backing. Even observers who are not particularly impressed with Cao’s abilities as a leader or organizer have noted that he has the ear and patronage of General Secretary Jiang Zemin. Cao repeatedly has been noted in Jiang’s company during inspection trips and meetings with foreign military officials.

Cao has been promoted three times since Jiang consolidated his power at the 14th Party Congress in 1992. That same year, at the age of 57, Cao was promoted from being Director of the Arms Trade Office of the CMC to PLA Deputy Chief of Staff in charge of equipment acquisitions. He was promoted again to be Director of old SCOSTIND in late 1996, and joined the Central Committee in 1998. In April 1998 he became Director of the GAD and was promoted to three-star rank. On 4 November 1998, he was named a member of the CMC. 721

The Hong Kong press seems to be convinced that General Cao is destined to end up as Chief of the General Staff. Willy Wo-Lap Lam predicted in October 1999 that, at the 16th Party Congress in 2002, Cao will be promoted to vice-chairman of the CMC and to the Politburo. 722

Precisely because its future is so uncertain, the personal connections and bureaucratic clout of its leading personality are important to the GAD’s fate. The entire

722 South China Morning Post, 5 March 2000, p. 6; South China Morning Post, 21 October 1999, p. 12.
organizational history of COSTIND and its predecessor, the Party's National Defense Science and Technology Commission (NDSTC), was largely determined by the procedures, mandates, and organizational culture established by Marshal Nie Rongzhen when he first set up the NDSTC in the 1950s. Marshal Nie, his protégés, and his family dominated the NDSTC and COSTIND from then until his son-in-law, MG Ding Henggao, was replaced by MG Cao Gangchuan in December 1996. It is reasonable to expect that, just as COSTIND was the house that Nie Rongzhen built, the GAD will be the house that Cao Gangchuan builds.
Figure 7.1. Organization of the General Armament Department
Table 7.1  Identified Organizations and Responsibilities Taken Over by the General Armament Department

From the General Logistics Department (GLD):

Armament Department (*Junxie Bu*)

Motor Vehicle & Boat Maintenance (*Chechuan Bu*) [possible but not confirmed]

From the General Staff Department (GSD):

Equipment Department (*Zhuangbei bu*)

Military Services Department (*Bingzhong Bu*) [most functions and personnel. Some probably remained in GSD]

Bureau of Military Equipment and Technology Cooperation (BOMETEC)

“703 Group” (Arms Control Leading Group)

From (old) COSTIND:

Former COSTIND Office Building

All military personnel

All test sites and ranges

China Defense Science and Technology Information Center (CDSTIC)

Science and Technology Committee

Export vetting responsibilities

“Purely military” R&D responsibilities

Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP)

Some research institutes

Some production facilities

COSTIND Command Technical Academy
Table 7.2 Identified Military Representatives Bureaus and Offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bureau</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GAD Changsha Military Representatives Bureau</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GAD Shanghai Military Representatives Bureau</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GAD Shenyang Military Representatives Bureau</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GAD Wuhan Military Representatives Bureau</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GAD Engineer Corps Wuhan Area Military Representatives Office</td>
<td>Military Representatives Office, 5124 Factory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD Engineer Corps Wuxi Area Military Representatives Office</td>
<td>Military Inspection Team, 9352 Factory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD Engineer Corps Fuzhou Area Military Representatives Office</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GAD Armor Baotou Area Military Representatives Office</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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723 Bureau (ju, STC 1444); Office (chu, STC 5710).
726 Jiefangjun bao, 4 January 1999.
Table 7.3 Some of the Organizations under the General Armament Department

National Defense Science and Technology University (Changsha, Hunan)
General Armament Department Command and Technical Academy (Beijing)
PLA Information Engineering University (probable)
PLA Science and Engineering University (probable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>MUCD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics (9th Academy)</td>
<td>89950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Institute of Nuclear Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/I Armored Equipment Depot</td>
<td>88361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiuchuan Satellite Launch Center (Base 20)</td>
<td>89710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lop Nur Nuclear Test Base (Base 21) Malan, Xinjiang</td>
<td>89800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telemetry/Survey Ship Base (Base 23) Wuxi, Jiangsu</td>
<td>89960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center (Base 25)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xi'an Satellite Monitor and Control Base (Base 26)</td>
<td>89710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashish Tracking Station</td>
<td>89760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanning Satellite Monitoring Station</td>
<td>89761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xichang Satellite Launch Center (Base 27)</td>
<td>89710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerodynamics Research &amp; Development Center (29 Base) Mianyang</td>
<td>89952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baicheng Conventional Weapons Test Center (31 Base)</td>
<td>89870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/I GAD Base Technical Service Station</td>
<td>89878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/I Testing and Training Base, Luoyang, Henan</td>
<td>89820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/I Base, Nei Monggol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huayin Conventional Weapons Test Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD U/I Research Institute (possibly 56 Institute) Wuxi, Jiangsu</td>
<td>89001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD Engineering First Research Institute (Wuxi, Jiangsu)</td>
<td>89604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer Corps Technical Equipment Research Institute</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


731 Informant A.
733 Jiefangjun bao, 19 May 1999.
737 Wuxi Daily, April 1999.
GAD Anti-Chemical Warfare Research Institute
Nanjing Engineering Research Institute
Hospitals 513, 514, 515, and 520
GAD Wuhan Ammunition Inspection and Refurbishing Shop

740 The 520 Hospital serves the Aerodynamics Research & Development Center (29 Base) in Mianyang, Sichuan. See *Sichuan Daily*, 14 May 1999; and *Sichuan Daily*, 25 August 1999.