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## SHANGHAI AND AFTER

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1-2 WHEN the din of battle and the nerve-wracking zoom of aircraft is heard no more, it will be time to assess the happenings along the Yangtse in their proper perspective. Materialistic interpreters of history will, then, recall Lenin's prophetic words that "England's back will be broken, not on the banks of the Thames, but on the Yangtse, the Ganges and the Nile." His thesis, it may safely be presumed, will be taught to the next generation of Communists with only one footnote: Communist text-books will include an annotation that, when Lenin wrote these words England embodied the quintessence of capitalist imperialism and, therefore, "England" in Lenin's saying should be regarded as synonymous with Imperialism,

It also is possible that a future Chinese or Malayan research student, aspiring to become the theoretician of the party, will devote a chapter in his thesis to current events in China as a repetition of the fashionable theory of the 'thirties that Lenin's achievement in Russia was a fluke in history. Twice in the past thirty years world events have negated the implicit Marxist assumption that an oppressed industrial proletariat is an essential pre-requisite to the establishment of Communism. Lenin and Mao Tse-tung have convincingly refuted (his theory.

Yet, even now, when the developments in China have not ceased to be contemporary history, similarity in the social structure of pre-1917 Russia and of present day China is much too pronounced to be missed by informed observers. In Russia. Communism replaced a moribund, sordid, depraved Tsarist regime surrounded by a palace camarilla and an inefficient army officered by the decadent

nobility. To-day, in China, a dynasty is passing away because of its incredible corruption, clique and incompetence.

Foreseen by Mr. George Marshall as early as 1945 it is now widely realised that the Kuomintang is tottering because of its "C.C. Clique", the domination by "Four Families" and its self-seeking, power-loving, military leaders, Chiang Kai Shek was offered many opportunities to come to terms with the Chinese Communists. Mr. George Marshall's sincere efforts at rapprochement failed because the Generalissimo was neither willing nor able to rid the Kuomintang of its Tammany Hall practices and reactionary war lords. Had he then listened to the advice of China's well-wishers, he could have saved the people of China from the subsequent suffering and bloodshed.

For the last time, the Nationalist regime lost the chance of a coalition Government of progressive elements in China when Acting President Li refused to accept the Communist term for a thorough reform of the Kuomintang army as a condition precedent for peace talks. What happened after that ill-advised rejection of the Communist demand is well known. Mao Tse-Tung's army crossed the Yangtse almost without opposition; hardly any resistance was offered either at Nanking or at Hankow, and now, Shanghai, the symbolic city, is also a fallen bastion.

Chu Teh, Mao Tse-Tung's military adviser, who has repeatedly surprised and foiled the attempts of Kuomintang war lords at resistance, by guerilla warfare, and by his strategy of indirect ap-

proach, has now his armies in all the key points and strategic centres wherefrom he can leisurely launch a multi-pronged drive for liquidating the Kuomintang Old Guard, splinter by splinter.

Mao Tse-Tung is not the master of the whole of China. He will have to fight many battles before he can consolidate his position in South China. Even so, those who are relying on strong regional resistance by war lords to Chu Teh's well equipped army whose morale is at its top are doing exercises in wishful thinking. They ignore the disintegrating morale of the Kuomintang army on the retreat as well as the numerous cliques and rivalries among Kuomintang military leaders. Chiang and his close associates from Chekiang have now lost their outer defence line in the Nan king-Shanghai section the Kwangsi group is not actively resisting the advancing Communist army; and the Kwantung generals seem reluctant to combine with Chiang's forces.

In the mountainous regions in south-west China, the Kwantung group is likely to offer some pocket resistance. But, with the exception of a group of American senators, a leader-writer in one of America's largest circulating dailies and an editorial writer in a British weekly with international reputation, no one else believes in the emergence of a Kornilov or a Kerensky in China. There is no reason to believe that either Whitehall or White House is preparing for active intervention in South China, although signs are not lacking that reactionary elements in Britain and America are hoping that Mao will "do a Tito" or the Chinese

Communists will split into rival factions.

More sinister are the oblique hints and the inspired propaganda barrage let loose since the fall of Shanghai for a "defensive" Pacific Pact along the lines of the Atlantic Treaty. Such a pact is needed, the argument runs, to protect south-east Asia from aggressive pan-Asian Communism. An idea cannot be fought back with bullets and bayonets. One has only to visualise the social and political structures of the countries concerned to reject the conception of such a Pact; Hong Kong, Singapore, North Borneo and Malaya are outposts of the British Empire; in Japan, General MacArthur has established his zamindari; along with Japan, South Korea is now an American Colony; in Indonesia and Indo-China, two metropolitan powers of Europe are trying to perpetuate semi-colonial conditions; also included in these areas are India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, countries which have recently gained independence.

India, though a member of the Commonwealth, is committed to an independent foreign policy. Her Prime Minister has repeatedly emphasised that India will steer clear of power blocs. Specifically, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has recently observed that a Pacific Pact "could not take shape until present internal conflicts in Asia were resolved." This is the only way to build a democratic defence against Communism. Ideas can only be fought with counter-ideas; political and social improvement and material betterment of south-east Asia are the only democratic antidotes to Communism and not unholy pacts and treaties. To revert

(Continued on page 24)