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# STUDIES IN INTELLIGENCE



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*Some case histories of disaffection among Chinese Communists trusted abroad and some common factors therein.*

## CHINESE DEFECTIONS OVERSEAS

Henry Flooks

As the number of Chinese Communists stationed abroad or sent out on tours with delegations increases, the possibility of walk-ins and the opportunities to stimulate defections increase accordingly. In an effort to give some definition to the characteristics of such possibilities, the score or so of defections that were attempted or effected by Chinese personnel in the foreign environment up through mid-1964 have been studied. It has been possible to draw a few generalizations about motivation, deterrents, and procedure, centering on the Chinese sense of mutual obligation between protecting authority and protected vassal.

A half dozen of the most instructive cases are presented in capsule below. Names have been changed where necessary to protect sensitive information.

### *Frustrated Penetration Agent*

In Japanese-occupied Manchuria Lao Keng-nung was a college student. His father was a secret Kuomintang agent working against the occupier. Lao came of age and graduated about the time of the Japanese surrender, and the ruthless arrogance of the conquering Russian troops disgusted him; it was the Kuomintang, the Chinese government, that really deserved the credit for driving the Japanese out. But when Mao Tse-tung's troops followed not long after, he was much impressed by their considerate treatment of the people, even helpfulness. He was also pleased with the Communist land reform measures and Mao's program in general, and so, without objection from his father, he went to work for the Party.

In 1949, when all mainland China became the Chinese People's Republic in alliance with the Soviet Union, and anti-Russian elements were being suppressed, Lao indiscreetly spoke up in defense of a Russian-hater who was being purged from the Party. He pointed out how the Russians had dismantled Manchurian industrial plants and carted them off. The upshot was that he had to engage in self-

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Chinese Defections

criticism and write a confession. Yet his misconduct was handled with such seeming earnestness and logic that the incident left no bad taste in his mouth. Nor in the Party's: his confession was accepted and his status cleared of any cloud. He married a Party member at about this time.

Lao's particular Party organ was the United Front Work Department. In 1951 the UFWD asked him to undertake a deep-cover mission to Taiwan. He balked. It would not be safe: a lot of people on Taiwan knew him by sight and knew he was a Party man, and sooner or later someone would recognize him. It took strong and lengthy argument, but he finally convinced his superiors that he should be sent to Hong Kong instead. He took his wife along.

In Hong Kong he had a case officer named Wei, who transmitted UFWD instructions and his reports and passed him a small salary to supplement what he could earn in a cover job; but operationally he was left pretty much to his own devices. His mission was to penetrate the Chinese Third Force group there which opposed both the Communists and the Nationalists. After much difficulty he landed a job as reporter for a Third Force newspaper. He was to write exposés unmasking Communist double-dealing and showing how ruthless the Party was. The trouble was, Wei refused him permission to write about Party secrets, even when they were well known outside, and wouldn't approve articles that put the Party in a too unfavorable light. His colorless copy was therefore rarely accepted, and he made no progress toward getting inside the Third Force. This lack of accomplishment in his mission, in turn, made the UFWD more and more dissatisfied with him.

Early in 1953 Wei told him bluntly that if his work didn't improve he would be recalled to China to explain his failures. Alternatively he could go to Taiwan as originally scheduled. Frustrated and resentful, Lao now began to question privately the decency of a Party that would insist on the dangerous mission to Taiwan, impose impossible conditions and then punish for failure, encourage mutual distrust among people, and throw a man out when it had got all the use it could out of him. Undoubtedly Mao was the greatest leader China had had in modern times; but the apparatus, especially in its international aspect, was too rigid, dogmatic, and intolerant, too much afraid of criticism. More particularly, it disregarded its obligations to those who served it loyally.

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In June and July Lao had several stiff arguments with Wei. Taiwan, he was told, was still open to him, but his usefulness here in Hong Kong was zero, and his Party salary would accordingly be that from now on. This was the crunch. For the first time he discussed the situation with his wife. They could go on to Taiwan and turn themselves in as soon as they got there. But they really had no sympathy with the Kuomintang, did not trust it, and further were not confident Taiwan would hold out against the Communists. They could ask asylum of the Crown Colony authorities; but the British were friendly enough with the People's Republic that that might not be safe. Moreover, the long arm of violent Communist justice might reach them if they deserted and stayed in Hong Kong.

The third course lay to the U.S. consulate, and they took it. The United States was strong enough to protect them from any enemy. On 18 July Lao wrote a careful letter to the consulate—in Chinese, his only foreign language being a bit of Japanese—saying that he had been doing clandestine work for the Party but no longer believed in it and wanted to work against it; he had important information for the Americans. He particularly stressed his wanting to work against the Communists and the importance of the information he had. He assumed that he would be valuable enough in U.S. eyes to be offered sanctuary; and he was right.

#### *Premeditated Abduction*

Chung Jen-lung was a member of the Youth League and a student at Peking's Institute of International Relations. He wasn't particularly fond of political science; he'd have preferred medicine, and he rather resented the arbitrary way the Communists had made the choice for him. In fact, although he wasn't foolish enough to let on to anybody, he resented Communist authoritarianism generally, and he had fallen into the habit of tending to believe the opposite of what they told people to believe.

Take America, which they painted so black. A cousin of his had learned a lot about it when he worked for an American aid mission, and he had talked of it as a prosperous, generous land where anyone with ability could find fulfillment. He himself had seen something of American generosity in the rehabilitation of Manchuria, after the Russian plundering. That was before the Communists came in and swallowed up his family's money in the new China's universal egalitarian poverty. And now at the Institute he was able to read trans-

lations from the American and European press; the bad capitalists, he observed, told you what was so, while the righteous Communists told you what they thought was good for you to think.

At the end of 1958, when he was graduating from the Institute and preparing for a study tour in Southeast Asia—to polish up his language skills—he came across a *London Times* story about the young pianist Fu Tsung, just escaped to England. Fu, it seemed, in Warsaw on a scholarship, had made some critical remarks about the suppression of the Hungarian uprising. Later someone had tattled on him and he was ordered home. What "labor reform" might do to a pianist's hands! His escape seemed so simple. That's for me, thought Chung, but America, not England.

The first chance was at the Hong Kong stop en route to his Southeast Asian post. But Chung had the impression that only embassies, not consulates, could grant political asylum, and he didn't want to make any false breaks. Even when he reached his post he spent a week getting the lay of the land and writing up a bitter denunciation of the Communists with which to sell himself to the Americans. Then one day when everyone else was leaving the Chinese hostel to go to work at the embassy, he begged off, saying he had to finish up some homework first. As soon as they were out of sight he walked a few blocks away and took a pedicab to a corner near the U.S. embassy.

Chung had no doubt that the Americans would be happy to receive him, but he was conscious of violating his obligation to his family. They would surely be made to suffer in one way or another if they had nurtured a defector. He had therefore taken care to leave his papers and personal effects spread out as though he had been kidnapped while in the midst of work. At the U.S. embassy he begged that his whereabouts be concealed, and he steadfastly refused to be used in any propaganda play. He even denied knowing how to reach a brother of his in the Chinese air force.

#### *Cultured Misfit*

Tung Chi-p'ing's family, in Shanghai, though mentally well endowed, was an unhappy one. The father was a niggardly and callous man who got what he could out of his wife and children and subordinates without doing anything for them in return. He suffered financially when the Communists took over, but as the children grew up they fared quite well, though they had no interest in the new

ideology. Two brothers got good jobs in factories in the area. One sister became a college teacher and married a physicist. The other married a Foreign Trade officer; she was the only one to join the Youth League. Tung's ideal for himself was the cultivated intellectual, and he pointed his schooling to this end.

In 1957, in the course of a rectification campaign, several of Tung's middle school teachers were sentenced to labor reform, and he felt keenly the injustice and the degradation of it. Then came the futility and mismanagement of the Great Leap Forward; he himself was put to work at a backyard steel furnace. The Communists were like his father, driving you and then not taking care of you. But he did like school. He had a particular interest in the ways of the outside world; he was fascinated to learn that the French National Assembly could reject the EDC treaty after the French government had signed it, and he stood at the top of his class in Russian studies.

He was therefore given a chance at the entrance examinations for the Shanghai Foreign Language Institute, passed with flying colors, and put to studying French. Here he had a teacher, born in England of a French mother and Chinese father, whom he greatly admired for her competence and knowledge of life abroad (life in such contrast to the grinding poverty all around him here, especially starting with the bleak winter of 1960-61). She had once been put in jail for associating with a foreign missionary—another bit of crude oppression by those that represented the unfeeling masses. Then there were those endless indoctrination sessions of the Party's that took time away from higher learning. He got himself branded a "backward element" for disdaining political study and Youth League membership.

He emerged from the Institute in September 1963 as a French expert and was put on the staff of the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. More disillusionment. He did once get to interpret for Guinean President Sékou Touré, but that was the one bright spot in day after day of menial drudgery, making travel arrangements for visiting delegations and submitting routine reports, and moreover getting criticized for being late with these. Was it for this he had sharpened his wit and enriched his mind in the bright world of French literature?

He decided to make an escape when he could. There were some jobs in China that would offer a satisfying life and work, but these were all held by old Party hands; no chance for a young man, especially without Party pull. Nor was he interested in Chiang Kai-shek's

regime, with its corruption and nepotism. No, he would go West, where his ability would be rewarded. He didn't let his family in on this decision; he no longer felt close to them. But he wanted to show the people he most respected that he was not going to succumb to frustration here, and he told his old French teacher and several of his classmates. They kept his secret.

His chance came the following spring, May 1964, when he was sent as assistant cultural attaché to Burundi with the flattering explanation that the need for French-speaking representatives was so acute that they just had to use him in spite of his being only 24 years old, inexperienced, and politically backward. He would have left the plane the first time it stopped at a city that had an American embassy if he had known any English; he'd better wait until he got to the former Belgian trust territory. In Bujumbura he spent one night at the Chinese embassy, then next morning after breakfast disappeared.

#### *Back to America*

When Wu Nai-chi was four years old his father, an army officer, was killed, and he was brought up by a rather too indulgent mother. The family was now quite poor, but it enjoyed the protection of the father's former commanding officer, a warlord in Yunnan. A year or so after the Japanese were defeated, when Wu was in his early twenties and ambitious to become a doctor, this patron sent him to the United States for schooling.

He enrolled in pre-med courses but didn't buckle down to them. His fellow Chinese students were rather ashamed of him. He gambled a great deal, was forever in debt and trying to borrow more money. He had girl trouble more serious than normal; once the Chinese embassy had to arrange an out-of-court settlement for him. No medical school would accept him. A friend introduced him to Communism; he began to read Communist literature and grew progressively more leftist. Finally, in 1951, another friend persuaded him to go back to China and "devote himself to the socialist revolution."

In China he was given a six-month indoctrination course and then assigned an English instructorship in the Institute of Foreign Languages. He became a probationary member of the Party and married a Party girl. Faced with the realities of Communism in practice, he never wavered in his belief in it. He remained convinced that

socialism was the best system for a backward country like China; the Chinese needed a paternalistic, authoritarian regime. An overwhelming majority of them supported this one. It was doing wonders in health and education; it had liberated Tibet. He only regretted its anti-Americanism, because otherwise China might qualify for American aid, as some other Communist countries had.

In the summer of 1958 his turn came for the intellectuals' tour of duty at manual labor. He had to work for a year on a collective farm, then three months at a backyard steel furnace. This he approved too, and he took pleasure in being commended publicly for his performance on the labor tour. When it was over, in October 1959, he was sent to the Middle East to hold Chinese language classes for Arab students. He had to leave his wife behind with the children, but this did not bother him much. A rift had grown between them. She was such a militant Communist that she had told the Party her husband had an unprogressive attitude.

And it was true. Although Wu retained his firm faith in the Party's program for China, he personally had by now had about all he could take of it. He was fed up with having absolutely no freedom of ideas, expression, or action. Even the Arabs were better off. He couldn't stand the thought of another session of self-criticism at which everyone was passed around "the same old piece of gum to chew and each in turn praised it as absolutely delicious." (At one session he had picked up the wrong piece of gum: praising Khrushchev's program of peaceful coexistence and disarmament, he was jumped on for his backward thinking and thereby learned that all was not well with the Sino-Soviet alliance.) He recalled the laissez-faire intellectual atmosphere in America. He spent more and more time listening to the Voice of America and BBC (which the Party approved for the sake of keeping up his English) and reading English news magazines (which it did not). He especially liked a BBC program that compared what Communists said with what they did.

After much debate with himself, particularly on the point of deserting his family, Wu decided in the spring of 1960 to give up and have another try at life in America. He was sure he could hold up his end of the deal this time. At 37 he was still young enough to start anew, and he had the advantages of knowing English and of his previous experience. He decided to wait until the end of the school term. That would neatly round out his responsibilities to his Arab

students; moreover, the lump-sum check for his services he would get then might come in handy.

Like most Chinese would-be defectors abroad overtly or under official cover, Wu had some purely tactical obstacles to overcome in order to carry the act off. For one thing, it required some surreptitious research just to find out where the U.S. embassy was, though this was not a serious problem if you had plenty of time, as he had. More difficult was the Party practice of seeing to it that no one was ever left by himself in this dangerous foreign world; Wu was always accompanied to and from school by another instructor named Hsieh. He did get away long enough to telephone the U.S. embassy that he had information to offer and would like to set up a rendezvous with an American in a car; he was told he would have to come to the embassy. This he managed by asynchronizing haircuts.

On the last day of school he took there with him, packed in his briefcase, his toothbrush and shaving kit and a change of underwear. On the way home, after picking up their checks, he and Hsieh stopped at the bank and cashed them. Then he said he had to have a haircut and suggested that Hsieh, who had just had one, could while away the time in the bookstore here while he went around the corner to the barber shop. When Hsieh agreed and went into the bookstore, Wu took a taxi to the U.S. embassy. The Arab guard stopped him at the door, but he lied that he was Japanese and was let through. He explained his situation to an embassy officer and asked if he could stay in the building overnight and be flown to the United States the next day "on a Pan-American flight."

Then the blow. They could not possibly give him asylum on the spur of the moment like this; such a decision would have to be made in Washington, and even if favorable it would take several days at best. Stunned, he raced back to the bookstore. Hsieh was gone; it had been almost two hours. So back to the Chinese embassy, devising on the way a story of how he had gone from one barber shop to another trying to find one without a crowd of people waiting for haircuts. He was desperate enough to be convincing, and it worked.

Realizing now that defecting was more complicated than he had thought, Wu resolved to lay some preliminary groundwork next time. The following spring he learned he was being sent home that summer for leave and reindoctrination. Supposing that he would travel via Hong Kong, he tried to make contact with the British, first talking to an Englishman in charge of a local library that was not off limits for

him and Hsieh. This man didn't want to get involved in political intrigue; he suggested the British embassy. Wu was still trying to get away long enough to follow this up when he learned that he was routed through Athens on a northerly flight instead of Hong Kong after all.

Wu and the steadfast Hsieh emplaned, June 1961, under an injunction to stay aboard during the Athens stop. But the day was hot, even on the Aegean, and it seemed sensible to go into the terminal building for a cool drink. Once inside, Wu used the pretext of a visit to the rest room to get out of sight, and then he just kept on going. As the plane's departure was announced, Hsieh made a frantic search for him, but at the last minute he gave up and boarded the flight taking him home to face the music.

#### *Persistent Juggler*

Yang Shao-heng was born, in 1937, into an acrobatic troupe where everyone was a relative or an in-law. In the old China acrobats were a free-wheeling lot living hand to mouth, and they didn't change much when the Communists took over. They were poor enough to be good proletarians, but they were too gypsyish and wild. Yang's troupe was given some indoctrination, and a brother-in-law of his who took it more seriously than most of them was made security officer on their travels. But by Communist standards discipline was pretty loose.

Yang became a juggler. The juggler section was headed by another brother-in-law, and Yang found himself more and more irked by these two, the boss who threw his weight around on the job and the security officer who poked his nose into what you were doing off of it. He caught some glimpses of a freer life; in Hong Kong the movies were for fun, not about how to "build socialism," and people really lived. In 1959 they had a tour around Latin America, and this was an eye-opener. He began to think about jumping the traces. The trouble would be earning a living, knowing only Chinese and how to juggle. Well, the Chinese would like juggling on Taiwan.

In the spring of 1963 the cultural exchange program gave the troupe a trip to the Sudan. On the first day in Khartoum they had a guided tour of the city, and among the places pointed out was a Sudanese "Refugee Aid Headquarters." That did it. In the wee hours of the next morning Yang sneaked out of the hotel and walked to the Headquarters. He managed to get across to a guard on duty there that

he wanted asylum, and the guard made him understand that he would have to come during office hours. Disappointed, he tried to sneak back into the hotel just before daybreak, but the security brother-in-law was awake.

He was bawled out: he had been expressly warned not to get involved with women here, and the first thing he did was stay out all night! He would have to have a watch set on him. And watched he was; no chance for a daytime search for refuge. But by the next evening they had relaxed enough so he could get away shortly after midnight. By chance or deliberately, people were working at the Headquarters, but the only Chinese interpreter available knew nothing but Fukienese and no characters. He didn't do any better than the guard had on the first trip, but he did know a proper Chinese linguist who could be there the following evening. It was conveyed to Yang that he should come again at 10 p.m. the next day.

Back at the hotel things really popped this time. Within 48 hours Yang was to have ready a full confession about his insubordination and a program for disciplining himself in the future; in the meantime he would be under continuous surveillance, even while in the bathroom. Yet that very evening, while the whole troupe was getting ready to go on stage for an 8:30 performance, he succeeded in slipping out a back door and keeping his appointment. The third time was a charm.

#### *Security Officer*

Chao Fu was born in Manchuria to a family that for generations had been poor peasants. He was only about ten when the Russians drove out the Japanese and brought in the Communists; Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists meant nothing to him. At seventeen, with his peasant background and having shown in two years of middle school that he was quite bright, he was selected for special training. He was sent to military school, made a full member of the Party, and rotated through various positions in the public security administration. He married the girl his mother had selected for him in the traditional way; he found her an adequate wife. In 1960, twenty-five years old, he was put through a one-semester course at the Advanced Civil Police Cadre School in Peking and then sent to Stockholm as security officer for the embassy. He had to leave his wife and baby at home.

It was something of a shock for him to find that Sweden was not really a country of poor slaves mercilessly driven to support the dis-

solite idleness of rich capitalists. And in addition to the workers' prosperity, he also observed with envy the freedom which the Swedes, as well as the foreigners in other embassies, had to come and go as they pleased, make friends outside their own circle, and generally choose their own way of life. If life had been regimented back home, it was much worse here in the embassy: no social mingling outside, no female companionship, and nothing to do in your spare time but play ping-pong, watch a movie once a week, or go on a rare picnic when the weather was right.

And back home things seemed to be getting worse all the time. Just before he left, a cousin who worked in an auto factory had told him it hadn't produced any trucks for a year except a few thrown together for Cuba which he doubted would run; now he heard that the cousin had been laid off for lack of work and sent back to farming. In 1961 the embassy cashier had a few months' leave in China. When he came back he had lost 20 pounds, and when someone complained about the portions of meat served at dinner he bitterly pointed out that in China anything containing a piece of meat the size of your fingertip is called a meat dish. In 1962 the embassy cook got a letter from home with such a distressing description of hunger and want that he cried as he read it aloud to the others.

Chao frequently lay awake at night comparing life as he knew it in China with what he could see around him in Sweden. The Communists had let China down; they had failed. The grass didn't just look greener on this side of the fence; it was incomparably greener. He had heard that not long before he got to Stockholm the embassy administrative officer had simply disappeared. They suspected a defection, but since no news of him came from the West or anywhere, they didn't even have to acknowledge he was missing, just took his name off the diplomatic list the next year. That way he didn't disgrace his family back home and cause them to suffer, either.

Chao had been thinking secretly along these lines for several months when, in July 1962, he heard that the embassy was getting a personnel cut in the course of an economy drive. His own security officer position was vulnerable; it wasn't a full-time job, and he was assigned all sorts of leg work and errand-running to round it out. The prospect of being dumped and sent back home decided him. But he couldn't really just disappear: he would need legal status, concealment, some way to earn a living. There wasn't any reason why the neutral Swedes

should give him these. He would seek the protection of the Communists' arch-enemies, the Americans.

He had long since discovered, in the course of outside errands, where the American embassy was, and one day he had a chance to go by it. He went in. Alas, no one there could speak Chinese. Casting about, he thought of an American Chinese he had known. A few days later, when he was supposed to be running an errand on the other side of town, he met him at the railroad station. This man advised him to get out of Sweden.

As luck would have it, a party from the Chinese embassy was meeting a train at the time and saw this encounter, and reported it. Chao tried to explain it away but was not convincing. He was confined to his room. After everyone was asleep that night, he managed to slip out, taking a pistol and the keys to an embassy car. He drove out into the countryside. He stopped at farmhouses, trying to establish that he was suffering from amnesia after a car accident. A woman gave him a cup of coffee.

Finally he took a train to Denmark, and from there he walked and hitchhiked until he reached the Americans in Germany. The Chinese embassy had meanwhile notified the Swedish police he was missing, saying he'd hurt his head in an accident and disappeared. So he wrote a letter to his wife back home in China, telling her that he had run over a man and killed him and had therefore gone into hiding to escape punishment. Now he was confident the family would not suffer.

#### *Those Left Behind*

Although the Chinese never admit such defections to the outside world, keeping them quiet if they can and otherwise usually charging abduction, within the delegations and installations where they have occurred they earnestly discuss them in meeting after meeting, trying to explain how they could happen and seeking ways to guard against them in the future. The case histories, moreover, are posed at indoctrination sessions in other installations as object lessons from which to take warning. The kinds of explanations and remedies offered at these meetings and in less formal discussions among the comrades are also instructive.

Recently a member of a Chinese delegation abroad, a man we shall call Chen, tried to break away from the delegation and get to the U.S. embassy, failed, and was immediately sent back to China. The

rest of the delegation were then moved from their hotel into the Chinese embassy, and there they held several group meetings. A later defector has reported what went on at some of these meetings. The delegates were anxious lest Chen's action be held against the rest of them and prevent them from going abroad again. They took comfort in the ambassador's report on the incident, which tried to absolve them of serious blame.

Speaking in turn, nevertheless, they admitted that if Chen had been properly watched, his disaffection could have revealed itself and the attempted defection been prevented. They stressed the need to tighten the bond between the delegation leaders and other members; proper leadership would have prevented Chen from straying about and being contaminated by outside influences. Yet everyone, not just the leadership, was at fault to some extent. Chen was not basically bad; he had been entrapped by evil influences. No one had stopped him when he visited prostitutes in several countries, and these women had been agents of the dirty and unscrupulous U.S. imperialists, who will do anything to achieve their aims. One of the delegation leaders, it was reported, summed up the sentiments of the group something like this:

"In order to get us, the enemy uses all means. If someone, particularly a young comrade, has a weakness or unhealthy thoughts, he can fall into the enemy's trap. Chen's conduct was not generated in one day, and backward thinking is not spontaneous or accidental. He had this dangerous frame of mind some time before it came into the open and must have revealed somehow to intimate friends some sign of his intended action. We were lacking in political knowledge and alertness not to have seen such signs. Everybody is responsible in part for what happened."

The members of the diplomatic installation, according to our defector, also analyzed among themselves this case and others of potential, abortive, or successful defection—among them Chao Fu's and the earlier one from the embassy in Sweden, a "high-level cadre" in Cuba, one Chang Chien-yu who in 1959 had defected in Bombay and redefected the next morning, our juggler Yang Shao-heng, pianist Fu Tsung who had fled to England, a chauffeur in England who visited houses of prostitution on the way back from the airport but was caught at it in time. Speakers pointed out by hindsight the signs of potential defection which closer watching would have revealed.

The ill consequences for the defector were also stressed, on the re-defector Chang Chien-yu along these lines:

"Chang wouldn't have come back if they had promised to let him settle down in America. Instead, they told him he would first be sent to America to have some training and get married to a beautiful American woman, and then sent back to Asia to do intelligence work. The poor fellow was scared to death to learn that he would have to face the Chinese again. He pondered over his predicament and his future and made up his mind."

In a similar vein of Chao Fu: "He will regret doing that. Of course he will. After they have pumped all the information out of him, he will be kicked out and his sorrow will begin. I imagine he was told that he will get some training in America and then be sent back to Asia to work for them." Of juggler Yang Shao-heng it was said that the imperialists had exploited him for propaganda purposes and then pawned him off on the Kuomintang on Taiwan and forgotten about him.

Much discussion was devoted to the danger of Kuomintang or imperialist agents, especially women. Chen had been seen in unauthorized conversation with a "tall foreigner" before his attempt. The U.S. embassy had Chinese-speaking officials who were especially engaged in this sort of thing. Chao Fu's predecessor in defection in Sweden had been contacted by a "beautiful woman." A member of this embassy had recently been approached by an English woman on the street and asked about his job. Another told about an Italian woman who had invited a colleague of his to her room; she wanted money. In Switzerland women followed you around wherever you went, said another. An American woman in a very scanty bathing suit had flirted with another at a swimming pool. For that reason yet another never went to the swimming pool with fewer than two companions.

A defector from another Chinese diplomatic mission has reported how the principal officers discussed the defection of one Chu Heng-pan, secretary of a mission in West Europe, to the USSR. The chief was deeply concerned in particular over the question of the responsibility of a chief of mission for defections, considered as a failure in leadership. After speculating about what might have gone wrong and comparing the case with six or eight previous defections in various countries, he turned to the question of prevention and began to go through the list of his own staff:

"Counselor A doesn't like to go out by himself. Comrade B has acquired a very pretty wife, which should eliminate the possibility for him. But about Comrade C there is something that nobody knows. As for D, if she goes back to China she should not be allowed to travel by herself; nobody questions her loyalty, but we have to take precautions for her safety. Then there are three blue-collar workers we will have to watch, along with E. And F and G have to go out on official business, and very often they do not have anyone with them.

"Another bad thing is that when a chauffeur takes someone someplace, very often he comes back by himself and is completely out of control. In a country like this there are many material attractions, and we at the head will just have to set a good example. It is my responsibility, of course, to check on people's thoughts and political consciousness, but how are you going to do it. The man who has wrong thoughts will be the very one to hide them and cover up."

In regard to Chu, the responsibility was similarly laid largely upon the leadership of his mission. Chu had probably had correct ideological views at the time of his assignment abroad, it was said, because his political reliability would have been thoroughly investigated before he was allowed to leave China. His deviation then began abroad and grew gradually over the years until he finally became a traitor. The mission leaders must have known that he had been indulging in personal and material amenities, and it had been wrong not to take corrective measures.

But the foreign ministry's personnel management was also at fault for allowing him to remain abroad for six or seven years. Being away so long, he had not undergone a full-scale thought reform since the 3-Anti and 5-Anti rectification campaigns of the mid-fifties, and so he lacked the ideological strength to counteract the insidious influence of the bourgeois world. Diplomats had a special problem in that they associated primarily with the upper classes in the host country and so did not get a true picture of the decadence of bourgeois society.

In discussing this mission's own preventive measures it was remarked that it would be impossible to watch everyone 24 hours a day, but they should try to keep as close track of each other as possible. The most important preventive measures were to strengthen thought reform and completely eradicate individualism, and as a check to require detailed reports of all social and business contacts

with foreigners. Throughout this discussion little distinction was made between "bourgeois" and "revisionist." Chu was corrupted by the bourgeois environment in West Europe so that he defected to the Russian revisionists. Speakers used the two terms almost interchangeably in referring to alien influences by which they might be entrapped.

### *Some Generalizations*

The defectors have invariably claimed to be ideologically motivated, particularly when they first walked in. They doubtless feel this explanation to be the most eye-catching for convincing Western officials that they are worthy of political asylum, but the initial emphasis on ideological disaffection is by no means a ruse. Until the moment of defection they have been immersed—if unwillingly—in an ideological world. In rejecting this environment so thoroughly imbued with ideological pressures, the totality of the rejection emphasizes, conversely, the same pressures. Deeper probing during the course of debriefing has revealed that almost all have indeed been dissatisfied with some aspects of the Chinese Communist political system, but in most cases what has bothered them has been practical consequences of the regime's program—its failure to take due care of its subjects or the restrictions it imposes on personal freedom—rather than the ideology proper. In addition, there has usually been some pressing personal problem to trigger the defection—failure on the job, dread of an assignment to manual labor, imminent recall, etc.

More than half the defectors were less than 30 years old, and with two or three exceptions all were under 40. None had achieved such high positions that they defected at great sacrifice of status. It would be of importance to be young enough to have reasonable hope for a successful new start in life. One-quarter of the score, curiously, came originally from Manchuria, and three had got an unfavorable impression of the Russian occupation there. The rest lived all over China.

Only one defector, Chao Fu, came from a real peasant family. Several others were very poor, but they were from urban areas and so had more exposure to modern life than the average poor peasant. One obvious consideration in examining backgrounds as a clue to vulnerabilities is that anyone whose personal history would make him look like a non-conformist or troublemaker would not be sent

abroad. The nearest case to an exception here was French linguist Tung.

The defectors' average educational level was fairly high. None was illiterate; even juggler Yang had been taught to read and write by members of his family. Most had some kind of status in the Party. The high percentage of Party members, like the educational level, probably reflects only criteria for selecting Chinese to be sent abroad. Knowledge of foreign languages also seems surprisingly irrelevant to the defections. Only one spoke English, and about half spoke only Chinese.

Family ties are probably the strongest deterrent to defection, as the Chinese Communists themselves recognize. The number of official Chinese abroad accompanied by their entire families, always small, has decreased even further in recent years. Though the main reason for this is probably the one given officially—economy—deterrence from defection is also a consideration. Of these defectors, two intelligence officers working under deep cover and a few others were able to bring their wives and children out with them. Others, though not close to their families, felt the traditional obligation toward them and tried to protect them by their manner of defection, as by staging amnesia or kidnapping. Others were completely alienated from their families.

Most of the defectors had had some contact with non-Chinese influences before their final assignment abroad, and most had considerable opportunity to observe life outside China. Western publications and radio broadcasts were of secondary significance in one or two cases. All those who walked into U.S. installations felt that the United States was the strongest and most determined antagonist of Communist China and could provide them the greatest security. The economic opportunities in America were not ignored, but at least superficially they were less important than the security of a sanctuary.

A characteristic of most Chinese seems to be a particular need for sanctuary, for the protection of a strong authority to which in turn they give obedience, deference, and loyalty. This need is filled in their society by the traditional family system, and it may help explain both their allegiance to the authoritarian Communist Party and their disaffection when it fails in its reciprocal obligation. They tend to be docile before superiors, dictatorial with inferiors, and uncomfortable when treated as equals. When the defector breaks away

from the system that has been his life, his most pressing need is for another sanctuary, a new authority that will give him protection as well as exact obedience from him. He needs and wants a clear understanding of what his obligations to this new protector are. This is our best lever for getting him to undertake intelligence missions like working for us in place.

Knowledge of previous successful defections provided encouragement in several of these cases, though it seems not to have been a decisive factor. None had any substantial knowledge about how previous defectors had been received. We have no information as to whether knowledge of unsuccessful attempts or difficulties previous defectors have faced has ever deterred a Chinese from defecting, as the Communists seek to make it do.

Only one defection was the direct result of a relationship with a woman in the host country. But it seems clear that the enforced celibacy of most of the Chinese abroad is perturbing to them as a vulnerability of which they are aware.

Three of the defectors at one time or other threatened suicide, and three others seemed emotionally disturbed or in the midst of some sort of psychological crisis. Although the very fact of defecting suggests a failure to adjust, however, the majority were moved by quite rational considerations. Most weighed the alternatives carefully before defecting.

Only four of the defectors had some realistic idea about how they might be received and made their first approach to U.S. authorities in such manner, time, and place that they could immediately be accommodated. Three others seem to have had no great problem once they got in touch with other Western authorities. But all the rest had difficulty finding a way to defect, and some failed altogether. Mere knowledge of a place where they could defect was a critical factor in many cases. Language was often a barrier. The tactical difficulties are aggravated by security measures consciously taken by the Communists.

There is a standing rule in all Chinese Communist installations that no one may go outside alone except on official business. This rule is strictly enforced. The efficacy of the rule is illustrated by the difficulty many of the defectors found in breaking away and even in getting the address of a Western installation. Another security

## Chinese Defections

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measure is to lock up passports in safes. At least four of these defectors had had their passports locked up.

Wherever possible, traveling Chinese are routed through cities where official Chinese installations are located, and these installations are notified to meet the travelers at the airport. This is done "to avoid kidnapping."

When there is any reason for suspicion, a preventive measure is confinement within the installation, and the ultimate one is return to China.

### *A Few Inferences*

These security practices have several implications for us. When a defector walks in, the chances are strong that he will have made a considerable effort and taken considerable risks in breaking away; he may not always be able to do so again. There is a strong chance that walk-ins will have inadequate or no identification. If a defector agrees to go back and remain in place, it is highly possible that at a later time he may be confined to the installation or even taken out of the country under guard.

No attempted defection has been demonstrated to be a provocation. To set up a Chinese official in such a way that he would look attractive to a Western intelligence service and then willingly place him in its hands would require both a realistic estimate of the reception he would receive and complete trust in the individual. The Chinese Communists have yet to show they can meet these requirements.

Although the Chinese criteria for selecting personnel for foreign duty are heavily "political," in the Communist sense of the word, the process of screening, being an inexact science, will occasionally permit a wrong-thinking, individualistic, or potentially unreliable person to go abroad. The process is also compromised by practical necessities; a person's technical qualifications may counterbalance a less than perfect security assessment.

Political theory per se appears to play little part in defection. More important is whether the system based on the theory is compatible with the Chinese social tradition, conforms to the individual's sense of what is right, or seems effective in practice. The regime's preventive measures against defection, ranging from ideological to physical, seem sometimes themselves to help create doubts about the system.

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*Chinese Defections*

As would be expected, self-interest, both individual and family, can make or break a defection. Lack of strong family ties, assessment of future possibilities for a reasonably good life, and personal and political problems—present or potential—all appear as basic motivations.

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