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RAILWAY CORPS OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY

The Railway Corps (t'ieh-tao ping-t'uan) is regarded as a special force (te-tung pu-tui) of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. It was formed in June 1949 by reorganizing the Railway Column (t'ieh-tao tsung-tui) of the CCF Northeast Field Army, which was first founded in July 1948. Since its formation, the Railway Corps has not only grown into a formidable force but has been playing an important part in the reconstruction of China's railway system.

During the war of liberation, the Railway Corps contributed greatly to our victory by insuring smooth rail transport for our advancing armies and by undertaking various railway reconstruction projects to restore China's railways. In addition to expanding existing lines, it undertook repair work on 1,643 kilometers of railway lines, on 989 railway bridges and tunnels, and on 2,116 kilometers of telecommunications lines which were destroyed by the retreating enemy. Some of the major engineering work undertaken by the corps during this period included:

1. Restoration of the following lines, which was carried out with great difficulties: Ha-Ch'ang (Harbin--Ch'ang-ch'un), Chi-Ch'ang (Kirin--Ch'ang-ch'un), Shen-Chi (Mukden-Kirin), Kao-Hsin (possibly Kao-shan-tzu--Hsin-min), Ta-Cheng (Ta-hu-shan--Cheng-chia-t'un), Chin-Ku (Chin-chou--Ku-pei-k'ou), Ching-Han (Peiping-Hankow), Ching-Shen (Peiping-Mukden), Ching-P'u (Tientsin--P'u-k'ou), Lung-Hai, Yueh-Han (Kwangtung-Wuhan), Hsiang-Kuei (Hunan--Kwangsi), and T'ung-P'u (Ta-t'ung--Feng-ling-tu).

2. Repair work on steel bridges across the Sungari River at Kirin and T'ao-lai-chao and on important bridges across the Lo Ho, Sha Ho, and Hsiang Chiang, and at Chang-wu, Liaotung.

In accordance with the 1950 Work Plan adopted by the Ministry of Railways of the Central People's government, long-range engineering projects were undertaken by the Railway Corps in 1950 to restore China's railway system. Projects undertaken and completed by the units of the corps on the three major railway lines, Ching-Han, Yueh-Han, and Lung-Hai, and on the northern section of the T'ung-P'u line included repair work on 146 kilometers of railway lines and on

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257 railway bridges, installation of 13,800 kilometers of new teleccommunications lines, and masonry and earthwork totaling 411,470 cubic yards. As a result of the work undertaken, transport efficiency of these lines was improved greatly and traffic over the three major railway lines mentioned above was made safe, even during the rainy season.

In October 1950, the Railway Corps began building new railway lines and completing unfinished lines. On the T'ien-shui--Pao-chi and Lai-pin--Chen-nan-kuan lines, despite countless difficulties, such as the sandstorms of the Northwest, windstorms and rain of the Southwest, etc., the corps was successful in constructing bridges, excavating land to lay the track, etc. In the case of the Lai-pin--Chen-nan-kuan line, the corps was able to complete the task in 5 months.

The Railway Corps has been playing an important role in our national reconstruction; its task in the future is to construct new railway lines and bridges to strengthen our national defense and to develop our national economy.

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