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"New Force" I - The Idea

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Mr. Walter S. Rogers  
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522 Fifth Avenue  
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Dear Mr. Rogers:

Last week, in a small room in Kowloon, I listened to an earnest group of young Chinese political exiles, all in their twenties or early thirties, who were discussing their hopes and the future of their country. Every one of the group has experienced Communist rule - and they have come to the decision that their mission is to fight it. Every one of them has also experienced Kuomintang rule - and they have decided that in their opinion it does not hold much hope for the future. They have dedicated themselves to the creation of a "new force" in Chinese political life.

"During the last one hundred years", the spokesman of the group said, "the Chinese people have had two all-important political aims. One is that China should be a real nation, independent, unified, strong. The other is that the Chinese government should be democratic. This is the "stream of Chinese history". Independence and democracy are the aims. The Kuomintang was unable to achieve these aims and was overthrown by the Communists. The Communists, with their 'lean to one side' policy and so-called 'democratic dictatorship' have already denied these aims. What China must have is a 'new force' which can continue to struggle for independence and democracy. The 'stream of modern Chinese history' demands it."

The hope expressed by the young men and women in this group is shared by a considerable number of Chinese political refugees and intellectuals, and during the past three years there have been efforts, by individuals and small groups, to lay the groundwork for organizing a "new force." Hong Kong, the principal refuge for those mainlanders who fled from Communist rule but did not go to Taiwan, has been the main center for the activities of these people.

Hong Kong is a unique asylum for the victims of China's internal power politics, and its population ebbs and flows in a human tide which follows the upheavals on the mainland. The British tradition of impartiality in the colony has made it possible for refugees of every political color to find safety here.

The present population of Hong Kong, estimated to be between

two and two and a half million, is close to the highest figure ever reached during the colony's hundred and ten year history. Between 1947 and 1949, when the Chinese Communists' armies advanced southward, a stream of refugees poured into the colony, and only a few have subsequently left. Even after 1949 a trickle has continued, but restrictions on both sides of the border have reduced it to a small volume.

The bulk of the refugees in Hong Kong came to escape from politics. Millionaires and paupers, industrialists, factory workers, officials and ex-soldiers, shopkeepers, barbers, dance-hall girls and prostitutes. For various reasons, people of all sorts chose to escape the revolution engulfing their homeland. Although the majority of these "White Chinese" are non-political, a few - intellectuals, students, professional men, government and military leaders - came for political reasons. This minority does not want to escape from the mainstream of the Chinese revolution; it hopes to direct it into new channels and directions.

The tradition of Sun Yat-sen is one which continues to inspire many Chinese political exiles. In the period before the revolution of 1911, Sun, who once attended Queen's College in Hong Kong, spent years travelling through Asia and Europe, organizing support among Overseas Chinese. The fore-runners of the Kuomintang were organized abroad, the Hsing Chung Hui in Macao and the T'ung Meng Hui in Tokyo. Although much has changed in the half century since Sun Yat-sen built his organization, there are still people who believe "if he could do it, so can we." These people have faith that they can exercise a significant influence on the homeland through political activities overseas.

Hong Kong has long been a major base for the overseas political activities of Chinese exiles. The last crop of exiles here, before the current ones, were the many, small, anti-Kuomintang groups who based in Hong Kong in 1946 - 1948 (see my Institute newsletter, Hong Kong, December 1948) and subsequently joined the Communists' nominal coalition in Peking. These "democratic groups", as the organizations were then called, included the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee and the Democratic League. Reports from the mainland indicate that they are now powerless and frustrated, but many of their leaders still have impressive titles and positions. (Li Chi-shen of the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee is a Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government). The same political tide which carried these so-called "democratic groups" to the mainland in 1948-1949 brought back on its return flow a large number of refugees who joined the Kuomintang in Taiwan and a smaller number who were beached in Hong Kong and are now proponents of a so-called "new force".

Although the "new force" leaders like to think of themselves as being in the tradition of Sun Yat-sen, in many respects they are also part of the same tradition as the "democratic groups" which joined the Communists in Peking. Like the latter, "new force" supporters are dissidents, disillusioned by one party rule, disenchanted by broken promises and false slogans. There

is an important difference, of course. The "democratic groups" broke with one powerful Chinese party, the Kuomintang, and joined the other, the Communists. At present, the "new force" leaders in Hong Kong are anti-Communist but are also keeping their distance from the Kuomintang - although it is possible some may eventually join or ally with the Kuomintang in the future.

There is, at present, still another difference. The "new force" is even less organized, has fewer committed supporters, and is weaker, than the "democratic groups" which they succeeded in Hong Kong. If the term "force" is used in a literal, political sense rather than in a symbolic, ideological sense, there actually is as yet no "new force" at all. It is a hope rather than a reality. At most, there are only several hundred people in Hong Kong and in scattered Overseas Chinese communities who now associate themselves with, and are actually working for, development of a political movement which would deserve the title. In terms of organization, there are between thirty and forty small groups in Hong Kong, some with titles and others without, which meet together and carry out activities of various sorts. There are numerous links between these groups, but to-date there has been no coalescence, even of this small core of supporters, into a unified, organized movement.

Many observers regard the "new force" groups merely as flotsam and jetsam tossed up by the turbulent politics of modern China. History may well prove that this is the correct interpretation of their significance. There have been other groups like them in the past, which are now forgotten. They were lost in the great struggles between mass revolutionary parties and military politicians which have dominated the scene in China for several decades. The "new force" groups today are completely overshadowed, in terms of real power and influence, not only by the Communists on the mainland but also by the Nationalists on Taiwan who, although defeated on the mainland, still possess a rich island, a large party, a government, a military force of over half a million men, and the support of more political exiles and Overseas Chinese than the "new force" leaders can claim. But many "new force" supporters have faith that they are the torchbearers of important ideas and values which are fundamental in the Chinese revolution; they believe that their political protest will eventually develop to the point where they can gather support and exert a political influence.

"Democracy" has been almost a universal watchword in modern China, but the democratic process has never developed. Many liberal intellectuals have striven for parliamentarianism, a multi-party system, elections, civil rule. Many local politicians and military leaders have demanded autonomy and independent influence. Many ordinary Chinese have resisted the increasing encroachment of authoritarian government power. But the main trend in practical politics has been toward monolithic, militarized, totalitarian, revolutionary, mass parties, which have dominated national life. Instead of democracy, China has had one-party rule, clique politics, and struggles between militarists and warlords.

The result has been frustration and dissatisfaction on the part of large numbers of people. Supporters of "new force" groups have come from these frustrated persons. Some are liberal democrats who continue to hope for democratic institutions and processes in China. Others are persons who wish to share power and are denied this privilege by those now in power both on the mainland and on Taiwan. Persons in both categories are convinced they can achieve their aims only by organizing a new political movement with independent strength.

All of the "new force" groups are anti-Communist, and this is the strongest single bond linking them together. All of them are also either unwilling or unable to join forces with the Kuomintang on Taiwan at the present time. On this point, however, there are considerable differences. Some oppose Chiang K'ai-shek and the Kuomintang for ideological and political reasons; they claim that although the Taiwan Government is preferable to Peking it still has too many totalitarian, anti-democratic features. Others have long-standing personal feuds with Chiang or personal grievances against the Kuomintang. A few would probably go to Taiwan if they could, but they are excluded because of their past records of political deviation or opposition. There are differences, too, in their attitudes toward future relations with the Nationalist Government on Taiwan. Some believe that they should try to build a "new force" which can influence Taiwan in the direction of further reform. Others think that if an independent anti-Communist political movement is organized it will have to be accepted by the Nationalists and that ultimately some sort of political alliance against the Communists can be formed. Still others believe that the Nationalists are "hopeless"; these people want to develop an entirely new revolutionary movement.

The present attitude of the Nationalists toward these groups is suspicious and hostile. At one time conciliatory steps were taken, but without success. Lei Chen, editor of Tzu Yu Chung Kuo (Free China), the most liberal magazine in Taiwan, came to Hong Kong to persuade certain "new force" leaders to go to Taiwan, but neither he nor others were able to convince them that they would really be granted freedom of action or speech in Nationalist territory. "New force" leaders reasoned that because no really independent political groups existed on Taiwan there was good cause to believe that they were not tolerated. In any case, the Nationalists' conciliation was not pursued very far, and instead of attempting to attract "new force" groups, the Kuomintang has for some time concentrated its efforts on disrupting, infiltrating, and attacking them. Early this week I was interviewing one "new force" leader in Kowloon when a couple of hoodlums came up to his door and burned his plastic doorbell. "Don't let it bother you", he said, "they are just members of Chiang Ching-kuo's Anti-Communist Youth Salvation League; they do that sort of thing all the time". By contrast with the Nationalists, the Communists in Hong Kong pay relatively little attention to the "new force". Apparently, the Communists believe that "new force" supporters are of comparatively little real importance, while the Nationalists look upon them as competitors for international support versus the Communists.

The general public in Hong Kong is still apathetic toward the "new force" groups and, in fact, knows little about them. One reason for this is the fact that the British authorities in the colony frown upon political activity of any sort; as a consequence the only overt activities in which the groups can indulge are in the field of publications and propaganda, rather than political organization and agitation. Another reason has been the inability of the groups to form a unified organization. "If they can't even agree among themselves", outsiders say, "how can they possibly be of any importance?" For a period of time in 1950 and 1951, the Hong Kong Chinese press gave some attention to their activities. (It generally referred to them as "Third Force" groups. The term "Third Force" has been used by one of the groups, but it is now discredited, and most of the groups object to it.) Recently, however, public interest has declined, and the press now rarely mentions them.

The majority of people in Hong Kong tend to be non-political, and the same is probably true of a large percentage of Overseas Chinese whose interests are primarily commercial. To the extent that there is something which can be called general public opinion on political matters, however, the great swings of the pendulum have been between the Communists and the Nationalists. In 1949-50, people in Hong Kong tended to be pro-Communist, in reaction to Kuomintang defeat, a feeling that the Communists were the "wave of the future," and the fear of reprisals against those who opposed the Communists. In 1951-52, however, largely as a result of first-hand reports of persecutions on the mainland, public opinion shifted against the Communists. Last October 1 and 10, the national days celebrated respectively by the Communists and the Nationalists, Hong Kong produced a peculiar spectacle of flag displays; on October 1 the Communist flag was displayed primarily on banks and other large capitalist organizations under Communist control, while on October 10 the Nationalist flag appeared in small shops and workers' establishments all over the city. The "new force" groups did not gain very much in this shift of opinion, however. Unorganized and not well-known, they have, as yet, little support from the public at large.

Even the bulk of refugee Chinese intellectuals have not been attracted yet to "new force" groups, although many of them are generally sympathetic and are potential recruits. A large number of them share the pessimism and defeatism of a former colonel in the Nanking Government's Ministry of National Defense with whom I talked not long ago. "I don't see any hope for decent government in China during my lifetime or the lifetime of my children", this man said. "The Communists are terrible. The Nationalists are useless. The 'new force' is futile".

In this setting and atmosphere, one significant aspect of "new force" groups is that they are people who have not lost hope, who do have faith in themselves and in the future, and who are working for their ideals. Their activities in Hong Kong at present are of three sorts. On the one hand they are carrying out endless "discussion meetings", exchanging ideas, talking about China's problems, doing research, and planning for the future. They are probably doing some of the most soul-searching thinking about China's problems that is going on anywhere, and it is pos-

sible that some creative ideas and plans will emerge from this intellectual fermentation.

Secondly, they are doing a great deal of writing about developments in China, much of which is filtering to Overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world. A considerable amount of the writing is mediocre, and it suffers from a lack of any commonly-accepted, positive program, but it is probably the most significant non-Communist literature now being produced in the Chinese language. Some competent Chinese observers in Hong Kong believe that the anti-Communist writing of the "new force" groups is more effective than that being written in Taiwan, and is more likely to influence Overseas Chinese, because it is less confined to shop-worn slogans and arguments, is more imaginative, and tends to be more objective. "New force" groups are publishing a number of magazines in Hong Kong. Chung Kuo Chih Sheng (China's Voice), Tu Li Lun T'an (Independent Forum), Tsai Sheng (Renaissance), Tzu Yu Chan Hsien (Freedom Front) and Jen Sheng (People's Life) are among the major ones. They put out one newspaper - Chung Sheng Wan Pao, which is not very effective however. They are also publishing and translating a considerable number of books; among the organizations most active in the book field are Tzu Yu (Freedom) Publishing Co., Yu Lien (Union) Press, and P'ing Fan (Platitude) Press. The significance of these publications is that they are competing with the mass of Communist propaganda going to Overseas Chinese, and are partially filling the vacuum which has existed in the field of non-Communist Chinese literature. Their influence is difficult to estimate, but they have undoubtedly contributed to the general anti-Communist trend in Overseas Chinese opinion.

Thirdly, these groups are trying to lay the groundwork for future organization. The political atmosphere in Hong Kong precludes any real efforts toward creating a strong organization or attracting active public support, but links are being slowly welded between groups in Hong Kong and elsewhere among Overseas Chinese. I know one youth group in Hong Kong, for example, which has formulated and published a platform, which has a group name and small organization, which maintains close liaison with most of the other groups in Hong Kong, and which has continuous contacts with 16 Chinese youth groups in other parts of the world: 5 in Taiwan, 2 in Macao, 2 in Malaya, 3 in Japan, 3 in the U.S. and 1 in Canada. These are seeds which might develop into organizations later. As one Chinese friend of mine here puts it: "The time is ripe for a new political movement, and the seeds have been planted. No flower has bloomed, because Hong Kong is not good soil. But a flower will bloom in time". Hong Kong, although it is the present center for "new force" activities, is not the only place where seeds have been planted. There are groups, some of them actively publishing, propagandizing, and organizing, in Tokyo, Bangkok, and other places.

There are many different sorts of people in the thirty to forty groups and among the several hundred active supporters of

the "new force" now in Hong Kong, but in one respect they can be classified into two types. On the one hand there are the people with the "big names". These are generally older men. Many have had distinguished or notorious public careers, and some have been active leaders in the Chinese revolution since their youth. Almost all of them previously belonged to either the Kuomintang or Communists, or both, and they include intellectual leaders, politicians, and military commanders. In this group are such persons as a former president of National Central University, founders of both the Democratic Socialist Party and Youth Party (two minor groups which had no power but were tolerated by the Nationalists on the mainland and still have small splinter organizations on Taiwan), a past president of the Legislative Yuan, a founder and former Politburo member of the Chinese Communist Party, Sun Yat-sen's one-time military commander-in-chief, leading military leaders of Kwantung and Kwangsi provinces, and ex-Ministers under the Nationalists. Most of these men have small coteries or cliques of personal followers.

The other category is composed of younger men and women - mainly young intellectuals and students who left China after the Communist takeover - who are unknown and anonymous as far as the general public is concerned. A large percentage of the writing, publishing, and other real activities of the "new force" is being carried out by these peoples. There is a significant difference between these categories of peoples, in which age is an important factor. The older men, the "big names", are actually more impatient than the youths. They seem to be more anxious than the younger people to create immediately some sort of organization which can be of symbolic importance, even if it is merely a loose alliance of the major groups and cliques associated with the most respected "big names". The younger people appear to be willing to take a longer-range point of view, and to think in terms of progressing slowly from propaganda to organization to a political movement some years hence. The tradition of secret societies and undercover political work in China, as well as the practical difficulties of carrying out any activities in the face of opposition from the authorities, the Communists, and the Kuomintang, influence all "new force" groups. It is apparent, also that the younger people, although subscribing to liberal democratic ideas, have been strongly influenced by the Communists' revolutionary tactics.

The older "big names" and the energetic young people are co-operating, but they do not see eye to eye on all things. "The future belongs to the youth, but they are not capable of providing leadership now", one of the "new force" leaders said to me recently. "They must be recruited and trained over a considerable period of time". By contrast, a young man in his early thirties had this to say about the older men: "A really 'new force' cannot be created by any of the older generation. Many of them are able, good men, but they are too much influenced by the past. Past solutions will not work. We must have a fresh approach to China's problems. Of course, we want to work with them, however". It is interesting that both the old men and the young concede that the future belongs to the youth.

To-date I have not mentioned the political aims or platform of the "new force" groups. Actually, this is difficult to do in concrete terms, because no generally-acceptable platform has yet been articulated. However, a few individual groups have published statements of beliefs and aims - for example, "The Path of Renascent China" put out by a group called the Democratic Chinese Youth League, "Our Fundamental Beliefs" published by the Freedom Publishing Co., and "The Road to Democratic China" published by the Platitude Press - and there appears to be a general consensus on certain basic ideas even though there is not yet any specific common program.

Perhaps the most fundamental aim of the "new force" groups is a political system or climate in China which provides freedom of expression, the right to assert dissent, and the opportunity for political minority groups to organize parties. They believe in a type of democracy based upon multi-party rule, limitations on government, the rule of law, civil control over the military, and respect for basic individual rights. They are opposed to one-party totalitarian rule. The first step in the direction of their aims, they believe, is the actual organization of parties or groups which support these principles and can make their influence felt. The more thoughtful among them realize that China cannot merely copy democratic institutions from the West, and that perhaps government "for the people" must precede government "of the people and by the people", but they are convinced, for reasons which have considerable validity, that a balance of power in internal politics is required for progress toward democracy to be made. It is interesting that many of them feel that this will be more possible after Communist rule in China than before - even though they regard the Communists as the totalitarian antithesis of what they hope for. They reason that the Communists are arousing the political-consciousness of the masses, and are making them literate. Even though this is being done for purposes of manipulation and control it could mean that in the future, under a different sort of regime, the Chinese masses might insist upon a more active role in, and greater influence over, political life. They also believe that in the process of overthrowing the Communists, whether this comes as a result of international war or internal revolution - they believe it will come and operate on that assumption - many new groups with power and influence of various sorts will emerge; this may make possible, they believe, a new internal balance of power in China, limiting the potentialities of totalitarian control. One can have differing views on how realistic these hopes are, but they nonetheless are hopes which sustain the faith of "new force" followers. A number of "new force" leaders are also thinking in terms of increased regional autonomy in China as a counterbalance to central government power.

In terms of social and economic program, these people, like the majority of politically-conscious modern Chinese, accept land reform and most of the other reform ideas current among all Chinese political groups. They object to complete state control of the sort envisaged by the Communists, however, and could probably



be classed as Fabian Socialists. They object, also, to the methods used by the Communists and believe that although the Government should be responsible for the welfare and economic security of the working classes there should be less coercion used in dealing with the masses. One man with whom I talked not long ago summed up this idea by asserting that "the Communist idea of constant 'struggle' is antipathetical to the Chinese character"; he then quoted a Chinese proverb which means, roughly, "let the people live a peaceful life and choose the profession they love" ("an chu le yeh").

Another major aim - one which is fundamental in their opposition to the Communists - is complete independence for China. The Chinese Communists' pro-Soviet "lean to one side" policy disgusts and angers them.

How to achieve these aims is a different matter. In fact, this problem has repeatedly confronted liberal Chinese - even those in a much more advantageous position than the present "new force" supporters - with seemingly insoluble dilemmas. Two things have been required for people to exert a significant political influence in modern China: strong political organization and military power. The process of acquiring these prerequisites of political influence has tended to destroy the liberal aims in the name of which it has usually been justified. The "new force" groups, however, have almost no basis at present for exerting political influence and consequently are faced with the problem of acquiring it. They look upon organization as a first step.

Hong Kong is not regarded as a good base for organization, due to the restrictive attitude of the local authorities. Many "new force" leaders, particularly some of the "big names", are trying, therefore, to move elsewhere, to a place where they can come into the open, make dramatic declarations, appeal for support, and actively organize. They have encountered many obstacles, however, in this age of passports and visas. Last year feelers were put out to the Philippines, Indonesia, and other places, without success. This year, a few leaders have managed to move to Tokyo, and Japan seems destined to be one of the main centers of public "new force" activity. It is reliably reported that the most important alliance of "big names" among the "new force" leaders - a group with which Ku Meng-yu, Chang Fa-Kwei, Carson Chang, Chang Kuo-t'ao and their followers are associated - plan to base in Tokyo and hope before the end of this year to issue a public declaration there. (I will describe specific "new force" leaders and groupings in my next newsletter.) However, many "new force" leaders and groups, unable to move, will undoubtedly stay in Hong Kong and concentrate on propaganda activities. Some of them state that a great deal more propaganda must precede serious organizational activity; whether this is rationalization or not, it is realistic in view of the situation. They will continue, however, to form small groups and to establish contacts with sympathetic persons among scattered Overseas Chinese communities.

Once organization can be undertaken on an active and ambitious scale, "new force" leaders assert, there will be numerous sources for recruits. They believe that many people of the following sorts would support a new democratic, anti-Communist, non-Kuomintang organization if it came into the open with a sound set of principles as a platform and a few well-known respected leaders: refugee intellectuals who are anti-Communist but still disillusioned with the Kuomintang; Overseas Chinese youth who are anti-Communist, who revere the tradition of Sun Yat-sen, and who blame Chiang K'ai-shek for the Kuomintang's failure on the mainland; and liberals on Taiwan who would approve of a political counterbalance to exert pressure on the Kuomintang. There are two different approaches on the part of "new force" groups toward the problem of organization, however. Some, such as the "big name" group which hopes to base in Japan, seem to be thinking primarily in terms of a loose league which can bring together in the near future many different groups and individuals. Some younger "new force" supporters, on the other hand, appear to be striving to build up a strong well-organized political party over a period of years.

All of the "new force" leaders also believe that people on the mainland, disillusioned with Communist rule, are perhaps the main potential support for a "new force" at some undetermined time in the future, if war or revolution provided them an opportunity to declare their position. These people include, they believe, not only disillusioned fellow-travellers, such as those in the "democratic groups" who joined the Communists in 1948, but also many intellectuals who have actually joined the Communist Party and are now important in the lower ranks. A man in Hong Kong who was formerly associated with the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee says: "I know the small parties in Peking well; they are in a bad position. I am sure their thinking is the same as mine; the only difference is that they are in Peking and I am here. But they don't have any hope at present. They could never switch back to the Kuomintang. If there were a 'new force' which they could see outside of China, however, it would be a source of hope to them". Another "new force" leader in Hong Kong says: "The main support for a 'new force' is on the mainland. I still keep contact with some people, including friends who joined the Communist Party. I am convinced they would support a 'new force' if they could". There may be a large element of wishful thinking in these statements, but there may also be an important element of truth. Undoubtedly there are disillusioned persons on the mainland who, because of the past, are unable to look toward the Kuomintang as an alternative to the Communists, and yet who hope for a political change. It is difficult to see under what conditions they could associate themselves with a "new force", however, and certainly in the foreseeable future organizational activities of any "new force" will be confined primarily to Chinese who are not subject to the rigid police controls of Communist rule on the mainland.

The requirements for any effective "new force" organization, as admitted even by supporters of the idea, include a program with

some popular appeal, strong leadership, a base where there is an opportunity to organize, and sources of adequate financial support, none of which really exist now. The obstacles to organization among Overseas Chinese, furthermore, are greater than in Sun Yat-sen's day. Sun faced a disintegrating Manchu regime; he could travel almost at will to establish contacts and work for support; and he obtained generous financial assistance from Overseas Chinese. The situation is now very different. "New force" supporters face not only the strongest regime in Chinese history on the mainland but also formidable opposition overseas from both the Communists and the Kuomintang. They are also much less free to organize. Overseas Chinese - even those who might approve of some sort of "new force" - are much less willing to make financial contributions, partly from fear of possible retribution. And travel restrictions make it difficult to establish close contacts among Overseas Chinese groups. As to the problem of leadership, one thoughtful Chinese observer in Hong Kong recently said to me: "Dynamic leadership only emerges from action involving risks, not from writing and talking. Even a parade or a demonstration can produce leaders. But this is out of the question in Hongkong". The obstacles to any effective "new force" organization developing are so great that some objective observers think it is improbable in the foreseeable future that it can be anything more than a small clique.

If one asks "new force" supporters in Hong Kong how, even if organized, they will be able to exert a political influence on the China situation, one obtains a number of different answers. A few actually look forward to revolution and action at sometime in the future. This is a small minority, however, and there appears to be little basis for their hopes. Up until about a year ago, quite a few of them talked about consolidating guerilla activities on the mainland under their leadership, but the Communists' success in suppressing guerillas has ended most of this talk. The only vestige of this hope is the belief, on the part of a very few, that a "new force" guerilla base might be maintained, if it obtained foreign support, in the confused Burma-China-India border region.

Most "new force" leaders now think exclusively in terms of exerting a political influence. The very existence of an independent political organization will make possible, they assert, influence on both the mainland and Taiwan. It will create a symbol, they believe, which will help to keep alive the hope of those dissidents on the mainland who are against the Communists but have no confidence in the Kuomintang. It might even attract defections, in their opinion. They also believe it might be able to exert a desirable influence on the Nationalist Government. There is no doubt that some "new force" supporters would like eventually to go to Taiwan to join a united front against the Communists, if they could retain their political independence, but even from a distance, they say, their influence would bolster the most liberal democratic elements on Taiwan.

Influence of both these sorts is possible, but it is by no means certain, even if the "new force" becomes a force. The

development of a real "new force" conceivably could lead merely to more repressive counter-action against any possible influence which they might exert.

Actually, the main practical possibility of an organized "new force" emerging into a role of influence may be one described to me as follows. "If there is a world war or major upheaval which produces a confused, chaotic situation in China, there will be opportunities for a new political movement to arise", one Chinese with long political experience said to me recently. "if the Communist regime is defeated or starts to disintegrate, the Kuomintang, which has an army, may go back to the mainland, but it might not have wide support. Many people will be looking for something new. If there is a new political movement, whether allied to the Nationalists or operating independently, many people would probably support it."

There is little doubt that numerous "new force" supporters are organizing and preparing for the possibility of a situation of this sort. Their future, however, like that of the Nationalists, depends upon history, and upon events over which they have very little control. They might, under certain circumstances, emerge into a role of some political significance. Or they might turn out to be nothing more than flotsam and jetsam, destined to drift in foreign waters and be stranded on foreign shores.

Sincerely yours,

*A. Doak Barnett*

A. Doak Barnett

Received New York 9/10/52.