

The T'ung-meng-hui Central China Bureau and the Wuchang Uprising

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There is a considerable literature on the development of the revolutionary movement which led to the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty in China in 1911. Historians have extended their interest far beyond the scope of Sun Yat-sen 孫逸仙 and the T'ung-meng-hui 同盟會 to spheres encompassing the activities of radical intellectuals, the constitutionalists, modernizing gentry and merchants, members of the new armies, as well as the organizations of regional groupings. There has been a tendency to approach the subject on a provincial basis, that is, to study developments in a particular province or provinces where certain features characteristic of the revolution were exhibited. Considerable attention has also been given to the relationship between reform and revolution during the last years of Manchu rule and to the range of alternatives available in China prior to the revolution.

The Wuchang uprising of October 10, 1911 has been well documented, and the role of the two Hupeh revolutionary societies, the Kung-chin-hui 共進會 (Society for Common Advancement) and the Wen-hsüeh-she 文學社 (Literary Society), which had amalgamated shortly before, can now be more fully understood. It is generally agreed that one principal factor in the success of the uprising was the strength of the revolutionary organizations that existed within the Hupeh modern armies. The part played by the new-style soldiers in the genesis of the revolution has thus been set in its correct perspective.

Yet despite an accumulation of evidence which shows the independence and resourcefulness of the Hupeh revolutionary organizations, the view has survived that the T'ung-meng-hui Central China Bureau provided centralized leadership for the subversive movement in the Yangtze region and significantly influenced the developments in Central China that led to the Wuchang uprising.¹ The creation of the Bureau represented an attempt by some leading members of the T'ung-meng-hui, who were disappointed with the South-China-based strategy

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¹ See, for example, Tso Shun-sheng 左舜生, *Huang Hsing p'ing-chuan* 黃興評傳 [A Critical Biography of Huang Hsing] (Tapei, 1968), pp. 50-51. A typical formulation is in K. S. Liew, *Struggle for Democracy: Sung Chiao-jen and the 1911 Chinese Revolution* (Canberra & Berkeley, 1971), p. 100: "The existence of the Central China Office, as one of its founding members pointed out, provided an important link between the revolutionary organisations of eight provinces (Kiangsu, Chekiang, Anhwei, Kiangsi, Hupeh, Hunan, Szech'uan, and Shensi) and was the pivot of the Wuchang uprising."

of Sun Yat-sen, to strengthen and centralize command over the revolutionary activities in the Yangtze Valley, where it was evident that the situation was volatile. It played an important part in the revolution, particularly in leading Shanghai and Nanking to declare for the new order not long after the revolution was under way. However, evidence shows that, despite all it had attempted to achieve, its influence over the Hupeh revolutionary organizations and over events in Wuhan prior to the uprising was marginal.

It is the purpose of this article to define the relationships between the Central China Bureau and the Hupeh revolutionaries, to show the gap between the Bureau's programme and performance, and thereby to refute the claim that the Bureau contributed significantly to intensifying the activities that led to the outbreak of the revolution. It does not intend to provide a comprehensive account of the Bureau, and omits some of the details which have been adequately covered and correctly interpreted in previous studies.

I. Formation of the Bureau

Although the Bureau was not founded until August 1911, the idea of establishing it dates back to the middle of 1910 when a number of T'ung-meng-hui leaders met in Tokyo to discuss means of expanding the revolutionary movement. Its origins and actual founding can be studied in the context of the factionalism of the revolutionary leadership and the revolutionary situation in China in 1911. As is well known, the revolutionary movement was markedly fragmented. A multiplicity of disparate elements made up the pre-1905 revolutionary societies, and threatened the unity of the movement even after the T'ung-meng-hui was formed. Differences over the style of leadership and strategy they had in large measure; mutual trust and co-ordinate action were in shorter supply.

Intra-party strife found expression in various forms,² the major issues appearing to focus on the leadership of Sun Yat-sen. Despite the attributes that made for his rise to the presidency (*tsung-li* 總理) of the T'ung-meng-hui, Sun failed to command sufficient respect from his non-Cantonese colleagues. T'an Jen-feng 譚人鳳, for instance, described him as

China's outstanding personality. It was, however, a shame that while his aims and ambitions were great, his breadth of mind was small, and while his determination was strong, his tactics was mean.³

In the opinion of Sung Chiao-jen 宋教仁,

Sun Yat-sen has never been sincere, open, modest, or frank with others and his way of handling things is almost dictatorial and intransigent to an unbearable degree.⁴

Neither T'an nor Sung ever openly clashed with Sun, both being concerned to promote closer

² See Hsüeh Chün-tu, *Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution* (Stanford, 1961), pp. 50-51; Harold Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley, 1968), pp. 363-365; Michael Gasster, *Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911: The Birth of Modern Chinese Radicalism* (Seattle, 1969), pp. 51-55; Liew, pp. 68-73.

³ T'an Jen-feng 譚人鳳, "P'ai-tz'u" 牌詞 [Memoirs]. The original manuscript, copies of which are available in the Kuomintang Archives in Taipei, contains T'an's commentaries on events taking place in the 1911 period as well as on Sun's leadership and personality. It has been published, with some omissions, under the title "Shih-shou p'ai-tz'u hsiu-lu" 石叟牌詞叙錄 [Memoirs of T'an Jen-feng], *Chin-tai-shih tzu-liao* 近代史資料 [Source Materials on Modern History], x, No. 3 (August 1956), pp. 26-76. With the exception of this quote, which is among the omissions, all citations are from the article.

⁴ Quoted in Liew, p. 71.

and more amicable relations among the revolutionaries. Yet, it was none other than they who were to take the initiative in creating the Central China Bureau.

Criticism of Sun's personality and leadership stemmed in large measure from differences in the family backgrounds, education, life experiences, social contacts, provincial affinities, and the like, of the revolutionary leaders. It must be noted, too, that much of the resentment he provoked was due to the top priority he accorded to South China as a base of operations, to the neglect of the Yangtze region. It was natural that leaders coming from the central provinces should feel impelled to arrogate to themselves the functions and duties of a regional centre at the heart of China Proper. If this was insufficient cause, the military failures of the T'ung-meng-hui in the south lent additional weight to their demand for a shift of the focus to the north. The call for separatist action was to be heard from many radical activists, and this led to the founding of the Kung-chin-hui in Tokyo in the summer of 1907.⁵

The Kung-chin-hui can be interpreted as a splinter group of the T'ung-meng-hui, and as such it anticipated the formation of the Central China Bureau three years later. Indeed, they shared some common traits. Both chose Wuhan to be the seat of the revolutionary outbreak (although the Bureau's office was in Shanghai); both set great store by the subversion of the new-style armies;⁶ both had a political platform which slightly deviated from that of the T'ung-meng-hui;⁷ and both were free from the control of the organization from which they sprang.

Given the continual attacks to which Sun Yat-sen was subjected, and given the separatist movement of the Kung-chin-hui, it looked as if the Bureau could have come into being earlier than it did. The revised 1906 constitution of the T'ung-meng-hui provided for the establishment inside China of five regional bureaus charged with the supervision and co-ordination of activity of local branches in provinces under their jurisdiction. They broke down as follows:⁸

<i>Bureaus</i>	<i>Headquarters</i>	<i>Areas of Jurisdiction</i>
West China	Chungking	Szechwan, Kweichow, Kansu, Sinkiang, Tibet
East China	Shanghai	Kiangsu, Chekiang, Anhwei
Central China	Hankow	Hupei, Hunan, Kiangsi, Honan
South China	Hong Kong	Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Fukien, Yunnan
North China	Yentai	Shantung, Shansi, Chihli, Shensi, Mongolia, Manchuria

The first bureau to be formed was the South China Bureau in Hong Kong in 1910, designed primarily to direct military operations in Kwangtung and to subvert the new-style armies in Canton. The only other bureau that was formed subsequently was the Central China Bureau under review. But it must be noted that it was sited in Shanghai, with an extensive area of

⁵ For a general account of the society, see Edmund S. K. Fung, "The Kung-chin-hui: A Late Ch'ing Revolutionary Society," *Journal of Oriental Studies*, xi, No. 2 (July 1973), pp. 193-206.

⁶ This will be elaborated in the following sections.

⁷ The Kung-chin-hui followed the T'ung-meng-hui's objectives of overthrowing the Manchus, restoring the Chinese, and establishing a republic, but replaced "equalization of land rights" with "equalization of human rights." See Fung, "The Kung-chin-hui," p. 196. The avowed aims of the Bureau were the overthrow of the Manchu regime and the establishment of a democratic constitutional system of government, deviating from the T'ung-meng-hui's platform which emphasized nationalism, democracy, and the people's welfare. Liew, pp. 98-99, provides a thoughtful analysis of the causes of this deviation.

⁸ *Ke-ming wen-hsien* 革命文獻 [Documents on the Revolution], ed. Lo Chia-lun 羅家倫 and comp. the Kuomintang Historical Commission (Taipei, 1953), II, pp. 99-100. Outside of China another four bureaus were to be formed for operation in South-East Asia, Europe, America, and Hawaii, with Singapore, Brussels, San Francisco, and Honolulu as their bases, respectively.

operation encompassing all the Yangtze provinces, indicating that it was in effect a combination of the East and Central China bureaus originally planned in 1906.

There were several reasons why those regional bureaus were either slow in the process of formation or never created at all. Shortage of funds presented a major problem, as the T'ung-meng-hui was not self-supporting, having to rely most of the time on the overseas Chinese for financial aid. Secondly, the T'ung-meng-hui suffered from some serious organizational weaknesses stemming from lax discipline, inexperienced management, uncoordinated planning and lack of a satisfying ideology, which served as constraints on its ability to achieve rapid growth. As a result, only a few branches were formed in the major provinces, owing much of their existence to the initiative of local revolutionaries whose links with the T'ung-meng-hui were tenuous. It is not clear whether the T'ung-meng-hui originally planned to form provincial branches before regional bureaus, or vice versa, or both at more or less the same time. In any case, organizational weaknesses hampered efforts to carry out its programme effectively.

Sun Yat-sen's preoccupation with operations in the southern provinces, where he had established contacts with the secret societies and where his credit stood high, diverted the attention which he could as well have given to the strengthening and revitalization of the already defunct T'ung-meng-hui headquarters in Tokyo. The repeated military failures in the south, coupled with internal dissensions, caused serious damage to revolutionary morale. Sung Chiao-jen, seeing this in Japan, was in low spirits, giving himself "to drinking and smoking, and borrowing money from a maid-servant."⁹ Huang Hsing 黃興, who had lamented the break-away of the group that formed the T'ung-meng-hui, was equally depressed; his attempts to revitalize the T'ung-meng-hui by setting up a new headquarters known as the Ch'in-hsüeh-she 勤學舍 (House of Diligent Study) were largely unsuccessful, and his enthusiasm "soon cooled," when his supporters ceased contributing to its maintenance.¹⁰

Sun Yat-sen seemed anxious to reconcile himself with his critics. In June 1910 he sneaked into Tokyo under an assumed name, Dr. Alaha, with the connivance of the Japanese Government which had expelled him over two years ago. The purpose of his visit was two-fold: first, to sound out the attitude of the Japanese Government towards him and his party, and second, to set up a secret organization (in place of the defunct T'ung-meng-hui head office) with the objective of achieving a new unity among the provincial groups and co-ordinating their activities.¹¹ If the Japanese attitude was favourable, he would stay for an extended period of time, as Japan was a convenient centre for communications with North and Central China. It looked as though he was reviewing the revolutionary situation, with the intention of giving more attention to regions other than the southern provinces. To his disappointment he was ordered to leave Japan on June 25. He was next seen in Singapore.¹²

During his sojourn in Tokyo Sun had some discussions with T'an Jen-feng and Sung Chiao-jen, but they failed to patch up their differences. He appeared arrogant and self-opinionated to them, making no secret of his annoyance with the criticisms levelled against his leadership. Seemingly having doubts about what he could do to repair the breach which kept widening with the passage of time, he suggested that since the T'ung-meng-hui had been dissolved those who were able to establish themselves should do so if they wished¹³—a pointed

⁹ Liew, pp. 78-79.

¹⁰ Hsüeh, p. 74.

¹¹ See Sun's letter to comrades in Honolulu, in *Kuo-fu ch'üan-chi* 國父全集 [The Complete Works of Sun Yat-sen], comp. and ed. Kuomintang Historical Commission (Taipei, 2nd ed., 1961), v, pp. 104-105.

¹² See Sun's letters to comrades in San Francisco and to Wu Ching-heng 吳敬恒, *ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

¹³ T'an Jen-feng (p. 42) justifiably retorted that the T'ung-meng-hui had not been dissolved and that it could not be dissolved at one man's whim.

hint that his critics were free to go so far as to break away from him and the party of which he was head.

Sung Chiao-jen and T'an Jen-feng, who had hoped to inject a new sense of unity into the revolutionary leadership, got the message. They then held an informal meeting with a few associates who shared the view that a revolutionary thrust should be made on the Yangtze. In July 1910 Sung brought together leaders from eleven provinces at another meeting at which he recommended a revolutionary plan which was to be implemented in two stages. In the first stage revolutionary activities should concentrate on the Yangtze Valley, and in the second stage they should be extended to north of the river. This plan could not be rushed; a preparatory period of three years and a closely knit organization were needed to carry it out.¹⁴

In the opinion of those who favoured more prompt and immediate action, three years were too long a period. Chao Sheng 趙聲,¹⁵ for instance, argued that revolution was an act of adventure, the delay of which was likely to dampen the revolutionary spirit. But how quick? No one seemed to know with certainty. T'an Jen-feng then suggested an eclectic formula: that, within the framework of a centralized organization, everyone was to assume responsibility, regardless of the period of time given to preparations. The important part was that the Central China Bureau, when it was established, was to wield central authority over the revolutionary societies of the Yangtze provinces, which in turn were responsible for their own activities and developments.¹⁶

This formula of central authority and separate responsibility had some contradictions. Central authority could hardly be exercised effectively unless the provincial groups were disposed and willing to subject themselves to the control of a higher authority. But when these groups found themselves capable both of assuming separate responsibility and of developing themselves on their own, they were likely to resist, if not to challenge, that control. The formula thus presupposed the existence of a united and still developing movement that would look to the Bureau for inspiration and guidance.

The July meeting did not produce any immediate results; no formal committee of any kind was set up. Nevertheless, T'an and Sung subsequently left for Shanghai, where they met Ch'en Ch'i-mei 陳其美, who was later to become a senior Bureau official, for further discussion. In the spring of 1911 T'an visited Hankow and raised the matter again with Chü Cheng 居正, a native of Hupeh, who had attended the July meeting and returned to his hometown the previous winter. Revealing that a manifesto had been drafted, T'an urged that steps be taken to inaugurate the Bureau speedily.¹⁷

By then no decision on the site of the new organization seems to have been taken yet. What was clear was that Sung Chiao-jen had from his school days in Wuchang set his sights on Wuhan as a base of revolutionary operations.¹⁸ In addition to sending Chü Cheng home to prepare the groundwork, he had asked two other associates to set up a liaison centre in

¹⁴ Chü Cheng 居正, *Chü Chiao-sheng hsien-sheng ch'üan-chi* 居覺生先生全集 [The Complete Works of Chü Cheng] (Taipei, 1954), II, p. 473.

¹⁵ Chao Sheng, a native of Kiangsu, was originally a regiment commander of the Kwangtung modern army stationed in the neighbouring area of Lienchow. He resigned from his post and left for Hong Kong when he was suspected by the provincial authorities of entertaining revolutionary ideas. After joining the Hong Kong branch of the T'ung-meng-hui, he took an active part in the preparation of the Canton uprising of January 1910. Subsequently, he spent some time in Singapore whence he went to Japan in 1910.

¹⁶ Chü Cheng, II, p. 473.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Liew, p. 17.

Hankow's Russian Concession under the disguise of a mining company for the purpose of co-ordinating activities in the Hupeh and Hunan region.¹⁹

Shortage of funds once again created difficulties which forced T'an Jen-feng to turn to the South China Bureau for support. Huang Hsing had no objection to forming another bureau in Shanghai, but Hu Han-min 胡漢民, then at the helm in the Hong Kong headquarters, disagreed on the grounds that it would exacerbate the discord already existing in the revolutionary camp. After quarrelling with Hu, T'an left Hong Kong in a very indignant frame of mind, bringing back with him only a meagre amount of \$300 raised for him by Huang Hsing.²⁰

Both T'an and Sung took part in the Canton coup of April 1911, in response to Huang Hsing's call, which was sufficiently strong to sink the factional differences for the time being. After the revolt, Sung returned to Shanghai, while T'an left for Hankow, where he met Chü Cheng and other local revolutionaries, including those from Hunan. T'an expressed considerable disappointment with the Canton fiasco, claiming that he was determined to retire to his native home. It was reportedly the revolutionaries' pledge of unfailing support that obliged him to remain in the movement.²¹

The Canton failure provided the decisive impetus which was to bring about the Bureau three months later. Revolutionary morale in Kwangtung was at its lowest ebb. Chao Sheng soon died in Hong Kong, disappointed. Even stalwarts like Huang Hsing and Hu Han-min despaired of the prospects of future uprisings. Desperation forced them to have recourse to terrorism. Two assassination attempts on the life of General Li Chun 李準 were made, but succeeded in killing a Manchu general instead. Huang was so dejected that for four months he did not care to write to anyone personally, and even contemplated committing suicide on hearing of the death of his friend, Yang Shou-chen 楊守仁, in Liverpool.²²

None of the other southern provinces had the necessary forces at their disposal to lead the revolutionary movement. Fukien was debilitated as a result of the Canton coup in which the "cream" of its revolutionary leadership was removed. In Kwangsi the revolutionaries were unable to operate successfully without their Kwangtung comrades because of their small organizations and insufficient military strength.²³ Although a considerable number of military instructors and senior officers in the newly created modern armies were returned students and members of the T'ung-meng-hui, lack of organizational control over the soldiery, as well as the small size of the army itself, made it hardly possible for a successful uprising to start there.

In Kweichow the revolutionary leaders were devoted to legitimate activities such as the

¹⁹ Chü Cheng, II, p. 474. Tsou Yung-ch'eng 鄒(鄒?)永成, "Tsou Yung-ch'eng hui-i lu" 鄒永成回憶錄 [Memoirs of Tsou Yung-ch'eng], *Chin-tai-shih tzu-liao*, x, No. 3 (August 1956), p. 93.

²⁰ T'an Jen-feng, p. 43.

²¹ Tseng Po-hsing 曾伯興, "Huang-hua-kang yü Chung-pu T'ung-meng-hui" 黃花岡與中部同盟會 [The Huang-hua-kang Uprising and the T'ung-meng-hui Central China Bureau], in *Wu-ch'ang shou-i* 武昌首義 [The Wuchang Uprising], the first volume of the second series of documents on the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Republic, comp. the Committee for the Compilation of Documentary Collection on the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the Chinese Republic (Taipei, 1963-64), p. 19.

²² See Huang's letter to Feng Tsu-yu 馮自由, dated September 30, 1911, in Lo Chia-lun 羅家倫 (ed.), *Huang K'o-ch'iang hsien-sheng ch'üan-chi* 黃克強先生全集 [The Complete Works of Huang K'o-ch'iang] (Taipei, 1968), pp. 115-116. The only correspondence Huang had with his friends were official reports on the course and failure of the Canton uprising.

²³ The Kwangsi army created in early 1911 consisted of a mixed brigade of 3,117 men, compared with 23,188 patrol and defence troops and 204 green-standard troops. See Shen Chien 沈鑑, "Hsin-hai ke-ming ch'ien-hsi wo-kuo chih lu-chün chi ch'i chün-fei" 辛亥革命前夕我國之陸軍及其軍費 [The Chinese Army and its Finance on the Eve of the Revolution of 1911], *She-hui k'o-hsüeh* 社會科學 [The Social Sciences], II, No. 2 (January 1927), p. 378.

introduction of social and educational reforms. Nearly all of them were from gentry families occupying positions in the provincial assembly as well as in the civil bureaucracy, but they had little control of the provincial army. In 1909 they had vainly asked the governor to train local militias which they hoped to transform into revolutionary forces. Since then they had begun subverting the provincial army, but with limited success. In fact, no preparation for military action was made, and even when the revolution was in progress, they were slow in declaring for the new order through lack of sufficient military power.²⁴

It appeared that Yunnan, the scene of an insurrection in 1908, was possessed of some of the essential ingredients that went into the making of a successful revolt. The fact that the provincial army had been infiltrated was important. By 1911, of the eleven commanders (regiment and battalion ranks inclusive), nine were returned students and three were confirmed T'ung-meng-hui members. Of the ten training officers (including directors, chief staff officers and instructors), nine were Japanese-educated and seven belonged to the T'ung-meng-hui. The Academy of Military Instruction had become a centre of revolutionary propaganda, where the instructors sought to get their message across through the students who were to return to serve in their units.²⁵

However, the geographical position of Yunnan precluded it from initiating the revolutionary outbreak and forced it to content itself with a supporting role. Furthermore, Yunnan's revolutionary strength was weakened by two other factors. The first was the existence of a Pei-yang officers clique, who were not only unsympathetic to the revolutionary cause but also engaged in a power struggle against the Japanese-educated officers, thus constituting a real obstacle to the subversive process. The other factor was the split between the revolutionary officers over the issue of leadership, with one group favouring native command and the other declaring their preference for Ts'ai O 蔡鄂, Brigadier-General of the Nineteenth Division, who was capable and senior, but a Hunanese.²⁶

If none of the southern provinces was sufficiently equipped to take the first step of rising in arms against the established order, the situation in North China appeared even less promising. There was a general feeling among the revolutionaries that imperial control in the north was far more effective than anywhere else, thus, as it were, precluding Peking and its neighbouring provinces from firing the first salvo.²⁷ Any suggestion that North China was impregnable is, of course, unjustifiable; recent research has shown that the Pei-yang Army was not as loyal as has been sometimes thought and that T'ung-meng-hui members had been active there for some years, especially after the disgrace of Yüan Shih-k'ai 袁世凱 when many of his old

²⁴ William R. Johnson, "China's 1911 Revolution in the Provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (University of Washington, 1962), pp. 157-159.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-41.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70. See also the Chinese Academy of Science (ed.), *Yün-nan Kuei-chou hsin-hai ke-ming tzu-liao* 雲南貴州辛亥革命資料 [Sources on the 1911 Revolution in Yunnan and Kweichow] (Peking, 1959), pp. 14-19, 36.

²⁷ There was a so-called zonal strategy for the revolution, according to which China was to be divided geographically into three zones, north, central, and south. The north zone, with Peking as the centre, was the best place in which to mount a revolution, as the capture of the Imperial capital was bound to have tremendous repercussions in the provinces, but it was also the most difficult zone to control. The central zone was the second alternative, as it was closer to the north. The south zone was least preferable simply because of its great distance from the seat of Manchu power. Sung Chiao-jen put forward this strategy in 1910, arguing in favour of the central zone. See Liew, p. 82; Hsü Hsüeh-erh 徐血兒, "Sung hsien-sheng Chiao-jen chuan-lüeh" 宋先生欽仁傳畧 [A Bibliography of Sung Chiao-jen], in Yeh Ch'u-ts'ang 葉楚傖 *et al.* (eds.), *Sung Yü-fu* 宋漁父 [Sung Chiao-jen] (Shanghai, 1913; reprint, Taipei, 1962), pp. 3-4. Meanwhile, it is fair to believe that other revolutionaries may have seen before Sung did the central zone as the most desirable area of operation.

protégés were replaced by returned military students.²⁸ What is important to note is that the tight control of the Manchus, as well as the relatively late start of the subversion of the Pei-yang Army, gave little cause for thinking that a successful uprising could be staged north of the Yangtze.

It was natural in these circumstances that Central China should become the main focus of attention. For revolutionaries there, the Canton defeat was a psychological booster giving them a new sense of urgency and importance and reinforcing their belief that the revolutionary movement was a large undertaking of which the operation of the Sun Yat-sen group was only a part. The founding of the Bureau can be interpreted in this context as a timely response to the needs of a realistic situation.

Shanghai was chosen as the site of the new organization not merely because it was a seaport and communications centre. Sung Chiao-jen had served as editor of Shanghai's *Min-li pao* 民立報 (Independent People's Daily) since his return to China in the fall of 1910, and had cultivated close ties with the local revolutionaries, especially Ch'en Ch'i-mei, who was a great help. Wuchang and Hankow may have been considered to be alternative sites, but Sung seems to have realized that, having been out of personal touch with the the Hupeh revolutionaries for years, he might have some difficulties in getting things done there as smoothly as in Shanghai.

It is difficult to tell from available sources how the financial problem was solved eventually. In any case, the Bureau was formally established on July 31, 1911. Of the twenty-nine people present at the inauguration meeting, seven were from Chekiang, another seven from Hunan, five from Fukien, four from Szechwan, three from Kiangsu, two from Anhwei, and one from Yunnan.²⁹ Not a single one was from Hupeh.³⁰ Five departments were set up. Sung Chiao-jen (Hunan), Ch'en Ch'i-mei (Chekiang), T'an Jen-feng (Hunan), P'an Tsu-i 潘祖彝 (Fukien), and Yang P'u-sheng 楊譜笙 (native province unknown), were elected heads of the Secretariat, General Affairs, Communications, Finance, and Accounting, respectively. Sung's influence in the Bureau was no doubt predominant. "As head of the Secretariat whose duties were to counsel and to draft laws and regulations," writes K. S. Liew, "he seems to have taken the initiative in most organisational matters."³¹ By contrast, the absence of Hupeh elements was equally striking.

II. The Bureau's Programme

When we review the events that had occurred in the Yangtze region since the founding of the Bureau, we are tempted to suggest a link between the Bureau's plan and the revolutionary outbreak in Wuchang on October 10, 1911. This link between the activities of the Bureau

²⁸ See Ernest P. Young, "Yuan Shih-k'ai's Rise to the Presidency," in Mary C. Wright (ed.), *China in Revolution: The First Phase, 1900-1913* (New Haven, 1968), pp. 423-428; Stephen R. Mackinnon, "The Peiyang Army, Yuan Shih-k'ai, and the Origins of Modern Chinese Warlordism," *Journal of Asian Studies*, xxxii, No. 3 (May 1973), pp. 414-423.

²⁹ See the Bureau's documents reproduced in *Wu-ch'ang shou-i*, pp. 2-5, 10; also in the Kuomintang Historical Commission (ed.), *K'ai-kuo wen-cheng* 開國文徵 [Documents on the Founding of the Republic] (Taipei, 1963), I, pp. 36-37.

³⁰ Chü Cheng was not at the meeting probably because of his preoccupation with affairs in Hupeh, where he stayed until September 1911 when he visited Shanghai.

³¹ Liew, p. 98.

and those of the Hupeh organizations has sometimes been interpreted as one of the important factors in the success of the Wuchang uprising. Such interpretation may be misleading, however. It is easy to gather from available sources what the Bureau had planned to do, but it is difficult to say with certainty what it had actually done and achieved. Evidence suggests that there was a discrepancy between plan and practice. Apart from establishing several branch offices, the Bureau seems to have made no remarkable accomplishments before the revolution. This was due firstly to the short span of time in between and, secondly, to its inability to exercise as much authority over the provincial groups as has been generally supposed. Its influence was probably well established in Shanghai and Nanking. Elsewhere, however, provincial leaders took matters into their own hands and acted as independently of the Bureau as did the Bureau itself of the T'ung-meng-hui headquarters.

At this point it is necessary to take a look at the Bureau's strategy. Sung Chiao-jen, who had studied in Wuchang's College of General Studies, singled out Hupeh as the province where to start the revolution. His plan included corresponding revolts in Hunan and Szechwan in order to protect Hupeh's rear and to ensure adequate supplies of foodstuffs and arms. Control of the strategic pass of Wu-sheng-kuan on the Hupeh-Honan borders was to be gained to check the imperial troops arriving from the north by the Peking-Hankow railway. In the meantime Shansi and Shensi should be held in readiness to rise in revolts, while revolutionaries in Nanking were to block the Yangtze waterway to prevent the advance of the imperial fleet. This would help to minimize the scope of military operations in Wuhan, thereby avoiding foreign intervention that might result from possible damages to the foreign settlement. Sung was said to have notified this plan to Huang Hsing and the branch offices.³²

It is worth noting that the Shanghai-Wuchang-Nanking triangle constituted the most important part of the strategy. Whenever an uprising occurred in one place, the other two should respond in action immediately, the best being, of course, for the three of them to act simultaneously.

To centralize command over the revolutionary groups scattered in various places was thus an essential part of the planning. T'an Jen-feng was sent to Hankow with the instruction that Chü Cheng should try to effect the amalgamation of the Wen-hsüeh-she and the Kung-chin-hui with a view to transforming eventually the merger into a T'ung-meng-hui branch. Chiao Ta-feng 焦達峯, a Hunanese leader of the Kung-chin-hui, was asked to set up another branch in Hunan, while others were sent to Nanking, Anhwei, Szechwan, and Shensi.³³ Oddly enough, no agent was charged with a similar responsibility in neighbouring Kiangsi.

The Bureau was not prepared to take military action in 1911, however. Sung Chiao-jen had ultimately managed to secure the agreement of his colleagues to a three-year preparatory period. In August 1911 when a branch office was formed in Nanking, the Shanghai leadership announced that the revolution was set for 1912, apparently in order to prevent the branch offices from taking premature action.³⁴

This cautious policy was actually reflected in the Bureau's manifesto with regard to the functions and responsibilities of the branch offices. They were responsible for recruiting their own personnel, as well as for organizing activities in their own areas. But they were warned not to be "too ambitious" or to attempt revolts recklessly. No uprisings should be launched

³² Hsü Hsüeh-erh, "Sung hsien-sheng Chiao-jen chuan-lüeh," pp. 4-5.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁴ T'an Jen-feng, p. 49.

unless and until they were authorized by the Shanghai leadership in consultation with all the branches.³⁵

If there was any foreign event that had an important bearing on the working of Sung's mind at this time, it was the Portuguese Revolution of 1910. Portugal, a constitutional monarchy since 1821, was a decadent country in the nineteenth century. Small and poor, it had had many misfortunes and was confronted with an array of economic and political problems. A rapid succession of monarchs marked its history from Maris II in 1834 to Manuel II in 1910, and this was accompanied by considerable political instability caused by internal strife. For years the government had been an imitation of the British constitutional monarchy system. But, although the forms could be copied, the breath of life could not be injected into them. The political parties which elected deputies to the Cortes were coteries of politicians who played a game without solid backing from the country. Ministries held power for every short periods, and then were replaced by others which showed an equal lack of courage and ability in tackling the nation's real problems.

Democratic ideas grew steadily in Portugal during the last decade of the nineteenth century, after an embryonic republican party had made an appearance in the early seventies. Among the leaders were Dr. Teófilo Braga, professor of literature at the University of Coimbra, and the poet Guerra Junqueiro, who attributed the nation's decadence to the Inquisition, the Jesuits, the Braganças (the royal family), and the English alliance. The Carbonaria Society, named after a much earlier revolutionary organization in Italy, was formed to sow revolutionary propaganda in the army, navy, and the public service. On October 4, 1910, the republicans, backed by the army, struck. There was a little shooting and a little shelling of the royal palace from ships of the navy that had passed over to the republicans. The revolution triumphed in no time, because almost no one lifted a hand to oppose. The following day the young king, Manuel II, and his mother were on their way to Gibraltar aboard a royal yacht and from there to England, where he spent most of his remaining days. A provisional government, headed by the elderly professor, was formed in Lisbon and began to function immediately. When the Portuguese monarchy went down before the republicans, it was nearly eight centuries old.³⁶

While it would be grossly inaccurate to say that the distant events taking place in Lisbon created tremendous repercussions in China's revolutionary circles, some writers of the *Min-li pao* did respond with enthusiasm. Portugal and China were two vastly different countries, but the success of the Portuguese Revolution confirmed the impression that "the world of the twentieth-century is a world of power and of the burgeoning influence of the people."³⁷ It was, significantly, a republican revolution. The failure of the Portuguese constitutional monarchy reinforced the view that a similar system would not work in China. Correctly or incorrectly, the new republic was hailed as a quick solution to Portugal's problems; it provided, in the words of a *Min-li pao* commentator, "a model of intellectual ferment for Western Europe."³⁸ The message was implicit: China might do well to follow the Portuguese example.

Sung Chiao-jen was impressed by the strategy with which the Portuguese Revolution was brought about, and drew from it some significant lessons on the basis of which he set forth some guidelines for the Bureau. He observed that the "tyrannical and corrupt" monarchy in Lisbon

³⁵ See the manifesto in *Wu-ch'ang shou-i*, p. 9; *K'ai-kuo wen-cheng*, 1, p. 14.

³⁶ H. V. Livermore, *A New History of Portugal* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 280-318.

³⁷ *Min-li pao*, October 12, 1910.

³⁸ *Min-li pao*, November 11, 1910. Between October and November 1910, this paper reported quite frequently on the Portuguese Revolution.

was unseated by an alliance of revolutionary intellectuals and the government's armed forces in a bloodless coup. The republic proclaimed by the revolutionaries had no difficulty in gaining foreign recognition (Brazil being the first to grant it in November 1910, and the main European Powers and the United States following suit by the next summer), thanks to its ability to maintain law and order and to accord due protection to foreign nationals and property in Portugal. No foreign intervention threatened the new regime, although Germany had hoped to seize the opportunity to partition Portugal's overseas colonies with the European Powers. The favourable diplomatic front enabled the new government to consolidate itself and to concentrate its efforts on problems of reconstruction with the aid of foreign loans. The success of the Portuguese republicans showed that no revolution could succeed in the end without foreign sympathy and recognition. To win foreign sympathy and recognition, it was imperative that a revolution, while destroying the old regime with violence, should not be allowed to cause excessive chaos that would pose serious problems to the maintenance of law and order. The actual overthrow of the government must be accomplished as swiftly as possible and must avoid engaging in prolonged fighting. The area chosen to make the initial strike must be small but strategically and centrally located. Not least important, the government's instruments of force must be captured and used to turn against the old regime itself.³⁹

As has been noted, the Bureau's scope of operation was to include all the provinces originally distributed to two separate bureaus. Szechwan, which was initially placed under the supervision of a North China bureau, was now legitimately drawn into the Central China stream. The long belt stretching from the western mountains of the Upper Yangtze to the eastern plains that led to the sea was to be within the sphere of the office in Shanghai.

From the Bureau's plan and Sung's revolutionary strategy, one point stands out in striking relief: the importance attached to Wuhan, which not only lay strategically at the heart of China Proper, but also possessed an army rated to be among the best in the country. The success of the Bureau, if at all, would of necessity involve bringing the Hupeh revolutionary organizations under Shanghai's leadership and control. Did the Bureau have such success? If the answer is in the negative, as we shall argue very shortly, does this not prove that the Bureau had failed to provide the central leadership which it claimed?

III. The Bureau's Relations with the Hupeh Revolutionary Organizations

Sung Chiao-jen's recommendation that the Chinese revolution should begin in Hupeh with the support of the government's armed forces was not a novel idea at all. As early as 1904, a group of Hupeh intellectuals had decided on a long-term programme for the subversion of the new-style armies which were being created in Wuchang. The K'o-hsüeh-pu-hsi-so 科學補習所 (Science Study Society), of which Sung was a member, was the first revolutionary society to be formed locally. It was followed by a succession of others operating behind the fronts of literary societies. From 1908 onwards, those societies led an active existence within the provincial modern army, concentrating on the rank-and-file soldiers. By 1911 the Wen-hsüeh-she, after succeeding the Ch'ün-chih hsüeh-she 群治學社 (Society for Communistic Rule) and the Chen-wu hsüeh-she 振武學社 (Society for the Revival of Martial Spirit), had

³⁹ *Min-li pao*, September 25, 1911.

emerged as the leading society making notable headway in undermining the loyalty of the army.⁴⁰

The Hupeh Kung-chin-hui, which had its headquarters in Hankow, was a late-comer to the local scene. Initially, it sought to build up its military strength through mobilization of the secret societies in the Hupeh and Hunan region. In time, after launching a couple of abortive revolts in 1908, its leadership was convinced that it was necessary to rely on government troops as a source of military power, and quickly followed the example of the Ch'ün-chih hsüeh-she and its successors, with which the Kung-chin-hui was soon in competition.⁴¹

The Hupeh revolutionaries, like many other provincial groups, were locally bound. This is to say that they represented a regional force belonging to organizations which developed locally on their own and which maintained tenuous links with the T'ung-meng-hui and other organizations outside of Hupeh. The Wen-hsüeh-she as well as its precursors maintained their separate identity. Their leaders had never been abroad and had almost no contacts with revolutionary groups in other provinces except Hunan. Partly because of their local education, they had suspicions about returned students, and this, among other factors, made it difficult for them to co-operate with the T'ung-meng-hui, which was an *émigré* group without strong organization in most parts of China. The Kung-chin-hui, too, even though it was formed in Tokyo and shared some of the T'ung-meng-hui objectives, represented an independent movement which was neither controlled by nor subordinate to any higher authority. Its members were revolutionary comrades of course, but they were not *ipso facto* members of the T'ung-meng-hui. Its Hupeh leader, Sun Wu 孫武, for one, did not join the T'ung-meng-hui until October 1909, during his visit to Hong Kong, where he met Hu Han-min and his Cantonese group.⁴² Others who were T'ung-meng-hui members indeed represented a negligible proportion of the Hupeh revolutionaries.

For years the men in Hupeh had been working diligently, and by the time the groundwork was laid for the Bureau, the subversion of the Hupeh modern army was already well under way. But neither Sung Chiao-jen nor T'an Jen-feng seemed to be fully aware of that. As has been pointed out previously, Chü Cheng, after the meeting of July 1910, was sent home to investigate the revolutionary situation in his native province. Chü joined the T'ung-meng-hui in December 1905, with Sung as his sponsor. In 1907 he was among those who contributed to the founding of the Tokyo Kung-chin-hui, of which he was elected chief of staff. In the meantime he was working for the T'ung-meng-hui's party organ, the *Min-pao* 民報 (People's Journal). In October 1907 he hurriedly returned to China to take part in the Hokou uprising on the Yunnan border. When he reached Hong Kong, the uprising had already fizzled out, and so he went to Singapore, where he joined the staff of the local Chinese revolutionary newspaper, the *Chung-hsing pao* 中興報 (The Chinese Restoration). In 1908 he was invited by the Burmese overseas Chinese community to take charge of another Chinese revolutionary newspaper in Rangoon, the *Kuang-hua jih-pao* 光華日報 (The Bright China Daily). Before long a T'ung-meng-hui branch organization was established in Rangoon, and Chü travelled widely in

⁴⁰ For a detailed study of the Hupeh revolutionary organizations, see Edmund S. K. Fung, "The Hupeh Revolutionary Movement 1900-1912: A Study of the Role of the New-Style Army," unpublished Ph.D. thesis (The Australian National University, 1971). For brief accounts, see Josef Fass, "Revolutionary Activity in the Province Hu-pei and the Wu-ch'ang Uprising of 1911," *Archiv Orientalni*, xxviii (1960), pp. 127-149; Vidya Prakash Dutt, "The First Week of Revolution: The Wuchang Uprising," in Wright (ed.), *China in Revolution*, pp. 383-396.

⁴¹ Fung, "The Kung-chin-hui," pp. 198-200, 202-203.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 200, 203.

Burma to promote the Chinese revolutionary cause. In early 1910, as a result of his activities, he was expelled from Rangoon by the British authorities in Burma at the request of the Chinese consulate. He then left for Japan via Singapore and Hong Kong.⁴³

Thus Chü's long absence from home created some difficulties for him when he was back in Hankow: he was unfamiliar with the local situation and found himself almost helpless. Later he recalled the friendship of Yang Shih-chieh 楊時傑, a Kung-chin-hui member, who had returned to Hankow some time before and had once written to him about the developments of the Hupeh Kung-chin-hui. He then renewed contacts with Yang, through whom he later came to meet Sun Wu.⁴⁴ A basis on which to co-operate with the Hupeh men was now available, but in spite of this Chü does not seem to have much success in fostering closer links between local groups and outside revolutionaries.

Those flimsy relations can be illustrated by T'an Jen-feng's visit to Wuchang in February 1911. The purpose of his visit was to inform the local revolutionaries about the revolt which was being plotted in Canton, in hopes of fomenting a simultaneous uprising in Wuchang to be based on army support. For this purpose they were given \$800 to make preparations. But when T'an was introduced to the leaders of the Wen-hsüeh-she, he made no secret of his contempt for them, describing its president, Chiang I-wu 蔣翊武, as an old rustic, and two other officials, respectively, as an old pedantic scholar and a dandy.⁴⁵ Obviously, T'an was not well informed of the local situation, much less the extent of subversion already achieved in the Hupeh army.

It is hard to believe then that T'an was instrumental in effecting the amalgamation of the Wen-hsüeh-she and the Kung-chin-hui. Although such amalgamation was desired by the Bureau leaders, and although T'an had discussed it with the Hupeh leaders, the final merger should not be assumed as conclusive evidence of the Bureau's influence. It has been documented elsewhere that amalgamation was contemplated by revolutionaries in Wuhan almost three months before the Bureau was formed, and that during the negotiations they never sought advice from Shanghai or bothered to inform it of their development. It was not until a decision to rise in arms was taken that Sung Chiao-jen was requested to visit Wuchang.⁴⁶

While assuming a new dimension, the amalgamation, which was achieved in September, remained in the stream of the local revolutionary movement and never became a branch of the T'ung-meng-hui, as T'an Jen-feng claimed. Its organizational structure was expanded on the principle of collective leadership, with the setting up of a military preparatory centre, in which Wen-hsüeh-she elements were predominant, and a political preparatory centre, where Kung-chin-hui men gained the upper hand. These organizational changes were largely dictated by local factors.⁴⁷

The decision made after the amalgamation to confer the revolutionary leadership on Sung Chiao-jen or Huang Hsing is no proof that the Bureau had now successfully established its authority in Hupeh. The leadership problem confronting the Hupeh men arose not from a

⁴³ Chü Cheng, II, p. 474; Howard L. Boorman (ed.), *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York, 1968), I, pp. 469-470.

⁴⁴ Chü Cheng, II, p. 474.

⁴⁵ Chang Yü-k'un 章裕昆, *Wen-hsüeh-she Wu-ch'ang shou-i chi-shih* 文學社武昌首義紀實 [An Account of the Wuchang Uprising Initiated by the Wen-hsüeh-she] (Peking, 1952), p. 27. This forced one Wen-hsüeh-she member to explain that although the Hupeh men did not look impressive outwardly they were dedicated revolutionaries.

⁴⁶ For a detailed account of the amalgamation, see Fung, "The Kung-chin-hui," pp. 202-205.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

lack of confidence in themselves, but from the mutual jealousies and suspicions which still lingered on between leaders of the Wen-hsüeh-she and the Kung-chin-hui. To select someone from either society to head the amalgamation would be in danger of renewing their differences, and therefore as an expedient, it was resolved that the leadership should be offered to an outsider who enjoyed their regard and confidence.⁴⁸ But this did not mean that they were willing or prepared to relegate themselves to secondary importance.

There is no evidence to show that the Bureau had a controlling influence on the timing of the revolution in Hupeh, to which Sung Chiao-jen's attitude betrayed some measure of inconsistency. In August 1911, as we have seen, he had fixed a three-year preparatory period, but in the following month when demonstrations, strikes, boycotts, and disturbances broke out in Szechwan in protest against the Imperial Government's railway policy, he seemed anxious to advance the timing of the revolution. In an editorial of the *Min-li pao* on September 14, entitled "The Szechwanese Struggle for Railway Rights," he applauded the struggle of the Szechwanese and the Railway Protection Association, and lamented that the people of Hupeh, Hunan, and Kwangtung, whose interests were also at stake in the railway issues, took no corresponding action. Unsatisfied with the violent struggle going on in Szechwan, he called upon the Szechwanese to advance from a negative approach, which concentrated merely on the railway issues, to a positive one which would place them at the head of a nation-wide movement for a democratic and constitutional government in the interests of the four hundred million people of Hans, Manchus, Mongols, Moslems, and Tibetans, that comprised the Chinese nation. People in all the other provinces were urged to share the objectives of the Szechwanese and to work towards them in concert.⁴⁹

It looked as if Sung was getting somewhat impatient with the progress of the revolutionary movement. According to his biographer, he saw that the time had arrived for a "grand uprising" to take place some time between October and November 1911. He was said to have asked revolutionary leaders in the Yangtze provinces, as well as in Shensi and Shansi, to make necessary preparations.⁵⁰

Sung, of course, had no idea that on exactly the same day his editorial appeared, the insurgents in Wuhan had just decided to mount an uprising in the immediate future (although the date was not yet fixed). Yet, when Chü Cheng arrived in Shanghai on September 25, Sung did not accept his invitation to visit Wuchang.⁵¹ The reason he gave was that he had just received a letter from a Hunanese friend called Hu Ying 胡瑛 saying that Hupeh was not at all ready for action.⁵² It seemed certain that Sung's doubts about the strength and cohesion of the

⁴⁸ Yang Yü-ju 楊玉如, *Hsin-hai ke-ming hsien-chu chi* 辛亥革命先著記 [The First Account of the Revolution of 1911] (Peking, 1958), pp. 47-48.

⁴⁹ *Min-li pao*, September 14, 1911.

⁵⁰ Hsü Hsüeh-erh, "Sung hsien-sheng Chiao-jen chuan-lüeh," p. 5.

⁵¹ T'an Jen-feng (p. 50) claimed that before Chü Cheng arrived, he had already heard about the Hupeh situation and Chü's visit through a man called P'eng Shou-sung 彭壽松, who was in the employ of the Manchu official, Tuan-fang 端方 director-general of railway construction. At a Bureau meeting on September 20, T'an said that if nobody from the Bureau was prepared to go to Wuchang, he would do so even though he was sick. Sung then promised to make a trip on October 11. Relieved, T'an sought admission to hospital the following day.

⁵² Chü Cheng, II, p. 498; Yang Yü-ju, pp. 52-53; Ts'ai Chi-ou 蔡寄鷗, *O-chou hsüeh-shih* 鄂州血史 [A Bloody History of Hupeh] (Shanghai, 1958), pp. 52-53. Hu Ying, born in the same place as Sung, was one of the early intellectuals who enlisted in the engineering units of the Hupeh army in 1904 for the purpose of sowing revolutionary propaganda in the ranks. He became an office bearer of the K'o-hsüeh pu-hsi-so, which was involved in an abortive revolt in Changsha at the end of 1904. Afterwards, he fled to Japan and returned in 1906, when another revolt in Hunan was being plotted. He was arrested by the Wuchang police together with several

Hupei revolutionary organizations were due to a lack of understanding of the situation which the Bureau was supposed to control.

With Sung's absence from Hupei, the Bureau missed the opportunity of playing a leading role in the outbreak of the revolution. After failing, too, to secure the leadership of Huang Hsing, who was held up by a fund-raising campaign in Hong Kong, the men in Wuhan decided to plot their own course of action. In fact, even before it was known that neither Sung nor Huang was arriving, a meeting of some sixty representatives from various army units was held on September 24, with Chiang I-wu as chairman. An uprising was tentatively set for October 6, the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival, and this was communicated to Chiao Ta-feng in the hope of instigating a simultaneous outbreak in Hunan.⁵³

Unexpectedly, the South Lake incident on September 24, in which some members of the Third Battalion of the Eighth Artillery Regiment clashed at a fare-well party, placed the Wuchang Government on the alert. Armies patrolled the three cities around the clock, and gunboats frequently cruised up and down the Yangtze. Security measures were intensified when the Viceroy later learned from Peking's Foreign Ministry that Huang Hsing was reportedly on his way to Hupei to foment a revolt on the 6th or 7th of October.⁵⁴ Newspapers in Hankow, too, gave wide publicity to rumours that an uprising had been set for October 6. The revolutionary leaders thus felt obliged to review the situation and to postpone the revolt. No final date was fixed.⁵⁵

When this decision was communicated to the Bureau, the Hupei leaders again urged Sung Chiao-jen to be on his way. Seeing a new urgency in the Wuchang situation, T'an Jen-feng asked Sung to do so immediately. On October 3, a central executive meeting was held, at which Sung agreed to leave for Wuchang three days later. When the day came, however, Sung broke his promise on the pretext that he had a cold and that there was no one to take charge of the *Min-li pao* during his absence. T'an, then sick in hospital, was infuriated and discharged himself in order to convene an extraordinary meeting on October 7.⁵⁶ He announced his intention of visiting Hupei and Hunan on the following day, pointing out that his trip was intended to "keep the faith of [our] organization." Nevertheless, he hoped that Sung would follow him in no time, as Sung was more respected and more able.⁵⁷ Sung again promised to do so, but he did not set off until the revolution was under way.

Apparently Sung had some reservations about the extent of subversion claimed by the Hupei revolutionaries. This was reflected in a resolution adopted in reply to the following question: "The disturbances in Szechwan are abating. Neither Hunan nor Nanking is reliable and it is therefore appropriate to remain cautious and to wait. However, how much longer

local revolutionary leaders of the I-chih-hui 日知會 (Society for the Daily Increase of Knowledge), and was sentenced to life imprisonment. Although frequently visited by his associates while in prison, he was not well informed of the subversion already achieved in the provincial army. See Chang Nan-hsien 張難先, *Hu-pei ke-ming chih-chih lu* 湖北革命知之錄 [The Hupei Revolutionary Movement] (Chungking, 1945), pp. 62-63.

⁵³ Hu Tsu-shun 胡祖舜, "Wu-ch'ang k'ai-kuo shih-lu" 武昌開國實錄 [The Founding of the Republic in Wuchang], in *Ke-ming wen-hsien*, iv, p. 21.

⁵⁴ *Min-li pao*, October 1, 8, and 10, 1911. Peking's Foreign Ministry reportedly received the information from the United States and French diplomatic missions.

⁵⁵ Li Lien-fang 李廉方, *Hsin-hai Wu-ch'ang shou-i chi* 辛亥武昌首義記 [The 1911 Revolution in Wuchang] (Wuchang, 1947; reprint, Taipei, 1961), p. 74b. Li claimed that the revolt was postponed to October 11. This date, however, was only a suggestion made by some revolutionaries, and it had not been unanimously agreed or finalized.

⁵⁶ T'an Jen-feng, p. 50.

⁵⁷ See the proceedings of the meeting, in *Wu-ch'ang shou-i*, p. 12; *K'ai-kuo wen-cheng*, i, p. 61.

shall we wait and how shall we judge whether a situation is opportune for revolution?" The answer that "it all depends on circumstances and opportunities" was in effect a decision against immediate action.⁵⁸ As Chü Cheng remarked: "The men in Shanghai did not know how much our Hupeh comrades had achieved in the past few years. Nor did they appreciate the spirit and readiness of the Hupeh men to sacrifice themselves for the revolutionary cause."⁵⁹

On October 8, T'an Jen-feng left for Nanking to brief revolutionaries there on the Hupeh situation. Two days later, after expressing his hopes for their timely response, he sailed for Hankow, accompanied by Chü Cheng. When they reached Kiukiang, the news of the revolutionary outbreak had already spread far and wide.⁶⁰

Available material does not reveal whether other officials of the Bureau had responded actively to the call of Wuchang before the October uprising. There can probably be some doubts about T'an Jen-feng's account above, since Sung died too early (in 1913) to give his version of the story. But we wonder, too, what, if anything, the Bureau had done to help the Hupeh men when they were badly in need of it. It is easy and simple to assume that the Bureau was formed just in time to lead the revolution, but a careful review of the events preceding the Wuchang uprising has shown that this was not so. The Bureau did not play a crucial part in the opening phase of the revolution any more than the T'ung-meng-hui did. On the contrary, it had sought to stop the Hupeh leaders from going ahead, probably because Sung was cautious, falling back on the assumption that 1913 would be more opportune for "grand military action." The fact that the Wuchang group did not hold back demonstrated clearly the Bureau's inability to impose a significant leverage on the other Yangtze organizations. It will be remembered that the Bureau's manifesto required that uprisings in the Yangtze Valley should be approved by the Shanghai leadership in consultation with all the branch offices. In the final analysis the Hupeh organizations were too independent and had too much initiative to be accurately described as part of the Bureau's revolutionary network.

It was the Bureau's loss of initiative and leadership in Hupeh that made for strained relations between Shanghai and Wuchang for many days to come. As soon as Li Yüan-hung 黎元洪, a non-revolutionary, emerged as the new military governor (*tu-tu* 都督) of Hupeh, the stage was set for Sung and his associates to attempt to regain leadership. That was why Sung was anxious to capture Nanking in order to counter Wuchang's growing influence, although he was later convinced by Huang Hsing that they should rush to the aid of Wuchang, which was under severe pressure from the imperial troops arriving from the north.⁶¹ On October 28, when they arrived in Wuchang, Huang was immediately appointed commander-in-chief of the revolutionary army. But the idea of regaining control of events in Hupeh loomed larger still in Sung's mind, and this precipitated the Li-Huang leadership issue, in which Sung proposed through Chü Cheng to dislodge Li Yüan-hung from power by installing Huang as governor-general of the Hupeh military government.⁶²

Huang and Sung represented, respectively, the T'ung-meng-hui and the Bureau, and their alignment in this power struggle brought the two organizations back into line. The Bureau, in spite of the manner in which it was formed, did maintain some useful links with

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Chü Cheng, II, p. 499.

⁶⁰ T'an Jen-feng, pp. 50-51.

⁶¹ Ku Chung-hsiu 谷鐘秀, *Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo shih* 中華民國開國史 [A History of the Founding of the Chinese Republic] (Shanghai, 1917; reprint, Taipei, 1962), p. 49.

⁶² Liew, pp. 118-121, provides an informative account of the Li-Huang leadership issue. It is pursued further in Edmund S. K. Fung, "Li Yüan-hung and the Revolution of 1911," *Monumenta Serica* (in press).

the leadership in Hong Kong through Huang. Always on the best of terms with Sung, Huang had been informed of the Bureau's activities and strategy, which he endorsed with gratification. As one historian has suggested, Huang had attempted to use the Bureau to control the Hupeh revolutionary organizations.⁶³ That would go a long way towards explaining Sung's preference for Huang as new leader of the military government in Wuchang, although Huang did not seem at all eager for this. In any case, the strong objections raised by the Hupeh men, especially by leaders of the Kung-chin-hui, which forced the proposal to be dropped in the end, showed unequivocally that they were quite determined to maintain their freedom of action and to assert their influence in the revolutionary camp.

The course of the establishment of a provisional government from November to December 1911 saw the Shanghai group making another bid for power. The Wuchang leaders were naturally averse to the idea of forming a central government in Shanghai, since it was they who had initiated the revolution and borne the burden through the heat of the day. It was only after both Hankow and Hanyang were regained by the imperial forces which left it almost indefensible that Wuchang was obliged to give up its claim to being the venue of the provisional government. But the political bickering did not stop there. Wuchang's relations with the Shanghai-Nanking coalition during the first days of the Chinese Republic were anything but cordial.

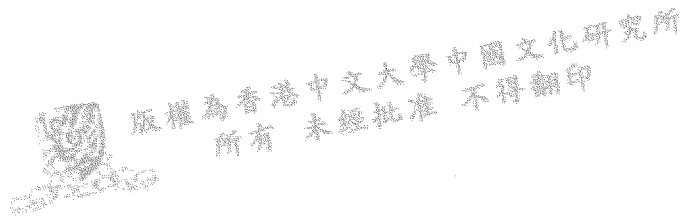
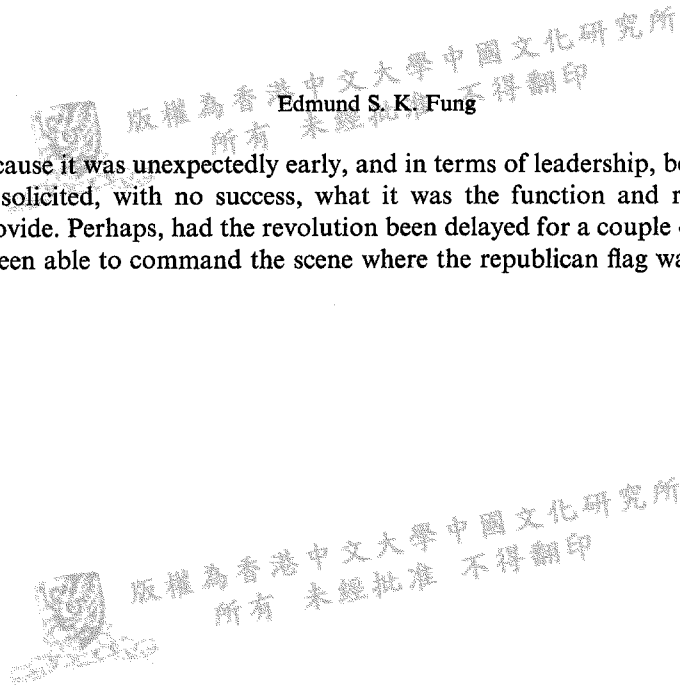
IV. Conclusion

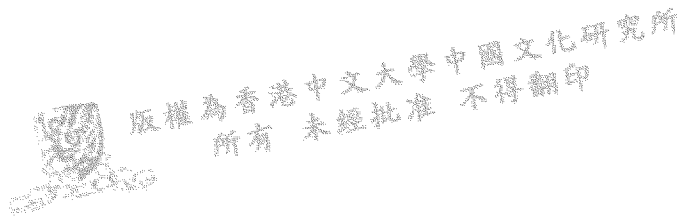
While this article has attempted to place the relationships between the Bureau and the Hupeh revolutionary organizations in a proper perspective, it is not intended to deny the Bureau's contributions to the revolutionary movement. Its formation at a time when the T'ung-meng-hui leadership was threatened with disintegration by elements within itself, and when the movement stood in greater need than ever of vigorous reinforcement, was a timely response to a situation which might otherwise have developed in a way detrimental to the republican cause. It served as a new symbol of unity and authority around which revolutionary groups in the Yangtze Valley could rally. It provided a link, still loose as it was, for the organizations which had hitherto been left largely on their own. It also created an atmosphere of vigour and excitement, adding to the drive and momentum of the movement in the region. Its failure to achieve central leadership and authority was the result of a combination of factors. The period from its founding to the revolutionary outbreak was too brief for it to perfect its organizational structure and to establish its influence in a region consisting of no less than eight provinces. Shortage of personnel, as well as the inconvenient system of communications, added to the magnitude of the task with which the Shanghai leadership was confronted. Besides, the policy of central authority and separate responsibility, when it was implemented, generated centrifugal forces, in that revolutionary organizations such as those in Hupeh were prone to maintain their separate identity and subsequently to vie for authority and legitimacy.

Probably with the exception of T'an Jen-feng, hardly anyone in the Shanghai leadership seriously thought that the conditions in 1911 were ripe for revolution, even though Sung Chiao-jen had had moments of impatience and optimism at the height of the disturbances in Szechwan. The news of the Wuchang uprising undoubtedly came as a surprise both in terms

⁶³ Hsüeh Chün-tu, "A Chinese Democrat: The Life of Sung Chiao-jen," in Hsüeh Chün-tu (ed.), *Revolutionary Leaders of Modern China* (New York, 1971), p. 260.

of timing, because it was unexpectedly early, and in terms of leadership, because the mutinous soldiers had solicited, with no success, what it was the function and responsibility of the Bureau to provide. Perhaps, had the revolution been delayed for a couple of years, the Bureau might have been able to command the scene where the republican flag was first to fly.





同盟會中部總會與武昌起義

(中文摘要)



最近十年來，有關辛亥革命運動之中外著述頗多。武昌起義之經過及其成功之因素，歷史家已有深入之研究。然而，儘管現存文獻足以證明湖北革命組織是獨立性的，在革命行動上有自動自發臨機應變之才能，一些學者還認為武昌首義事前之發展和部署，是受了同盟會中部總會之影響。他們相信，自中部總會在上海成立以後，就把整個長江流域之革命領導權接受過來，一面重整黨之組織，一面策劃軍事行動。是以武昌首義得以成功，中部總會實為樞機。這個說法，與事實不符，中部總會與武昌起義之關係，當有重新商榷之必要。

中部總會發端於一九〇九年，成立於一九一一年七月。其目的在領導長江流域之革命運動，計劃以湖北為策畧中心，武漢為倡義之區。一俟湖北舉事，則令各省響應。可是計劃與實際行動有很大差別。從中部總會之發展及其與湖北革命團體之關係，可以看到下列各點：

(一) 中部總會對湖北革命運動情形缺乏深刻之認識——湖北革命運動，始自一九〇三年，是時武漢少數知識份子俱認為革命非運動軍隊不可，遂投身軍旅聯絡士卒。革命團體相繼成立，如科學補習所、日知會、群治學社、振武學社，以迄文學社，實一系相承，始終以軍隊為革命運動中心。此外，還有從日本回國之湖北同志成立之共進會，自一九〇九年，也專意從事顛覆新軍活動。故革命力量集中而堅強。黃花岡一役，湖北黨員，蠢蠢欲動，遂有促進內部團結，聯合文學社與共進會之意。斯時，中部總會還在籌備中。

(二) 中部總會在武漢沒有成功地建立領導性之聯繫——中部總會成立前，黨員譚

人鳳已受命促使文學社、共進會按照同盟會章程，從新組織為湖北中部同盟分會。可是這不足證明文學社、共進會聯合之策動力乃來自中部總會。反之，事實證明湖北同志在八、九月舉行聯合會議，主要是由於內部組織所需，並沒有受外來勢力支配。當他們決定兩團體統一指揮，計劃起義時，中部總會不僅沒有參與其事，而且事前一無所知。事後宋教仁、黃興等雖被邀蒞鄂，領導起義，鄂人獨立進取之氣性，顯而易見。

(三) 中部總會對武漢發難之期缺乏影響力——舉義之期，中部總會本採慎重之態，其宣言有云：「舉義必由總會召集各分會決議，不得懷抱野心，輕于發難。」當南京支部於八月相繼成立時，宋教仁定一九一三年為大舉之期，蓋恐各處過於急躁，故有此宣告。九月中，川、湘、鄂、粵四省紳民反對清廷鐵路國有政策之風潮日趨擴大，宋氏突感起義時機已臻成熟，乃促川人由消極之爭路鬥爭進於積極之爭取真正民權之立憲政治，同時命長江上下游及秦、晉各省，速為整備于十月十一月間起義。九月底，鄂代表居正等抵上海，催請宋等迅速往漢主持大計，宋竟猶豫不決，蓋甫獲鄂友人一函，力言湖北不能發難。宋之慎重，固見乎簡端，惟對鄂同志多年運動之情形，猶有所未悉，乃錯過領導武昌起義之大好良機。

(四) 中部總會與鄂同志起義前後之關係引致民初寧、漢齟齬——革命爆發不久，中部總會與同盟會企圖奪回湖北革命之領導權，計不逞，結果與武昌政權發生磨擦。其後臨時政府組織時，武昌與上海、南京互相爭權奪利。南京臨時政府成立後，寧、漢之爭，猶未息也。

儘管如此，中部總會成立於「橫流之日」，力圖進取，對革命運動亦功不可抹。它象徵一個新的團結力量，在長江流域革命組織內起了一個前所未有的聯繫作用，並給革命運動帶來新的元氣、刺激和動力。倘使革命爆發能延遲兩年，也許中部總會可以扮演一個更為重要的領導角色。