

Some Observations on the Position and Role of The Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression in World War II

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I. China is the first country to resist the fascist aggression in the world, and opens up the world's first anti-fascist battlefield.

The fascist forces waged World War II. Those fascists exercised cruel and autocratic rule internally, and carried out unbridled aggression and expansion targeted at countries of various social systems. In the 1920s-1930s, the fascist forces in Italy, Japan and Germany consecutively came to power, and were too impatient to launch aggressive wars in attempt to dominate the world and enslave the whole humankind. In 1931, the Japanese militarists created the "September 18th Incident", and launched the aggressive war against China, which is also the prelude to World War II. Therefore, China returned the first shot to the Japanese invasion, but also the first gun-shot of the world-wide anti-fascist war, thus having raised the anti-fascist banner in the world.

In 1937, Japanese troops orchestrated "the July 7 Incident" to launch an all-out aggression against China with the "quick fix" strategy, attempted to demise China in a short time, complete the China-Japanese war as early as possible and avoid protracted warfare. China in resistance adopted a "protracted warfare" strategy to tie down the Japanese troops. In the face of invasion by powerful military, China established the Anti-Japanese aggression national united front on the basis of the cooperation between the Kuomintang (KMT)

and the Communist Party of China (CPC), and rapidly formulated the frontline battlefield commanded by KMT government and battlefield in enemy's rear led by the CPC, which interacted to each other to jointly open up the world's first anti-fascist battlefield.

In the frontline battlefield, the Chinese army, in face of the Japanese troops armed with sophisticated weapons and equipments, after several major mass campaigns in Taiyuan, Shanghai, Nanjing, Xuzhou and Wuhan, hit hard at the Japanese troops. According to the Japanese combat records, Chinese garrison troops resisted extremely hard in the battle of Shanghai, refused to retreat even by shelling and siege, and both the soldiers and civilians were fighting together with the common hatred for the aggressors and in high spirits, and the Japanese casualties amounted to more than 40,000 , so the Japanese Chief of Staff commented it as "tragic results". In the battle of Taierzhuang, the Chinese garrison troops fought to finish and filled the trenches with remains and blood and wiped out 11,984 Japanese troops.

In the battlefield behind enemy lines in September 1939, the Eighth Route Army led by CPC eliminated more than 1,000 Japanese troops at the Pingxingguan campaign in Shanxi province and achieved the first major victory since July 7 Incident. After Taiyuan occupied in November the same year, the Eight Route

Army, the New Fourth Army and other anti-aggression armies led by CPC established base areas and carried out guerrilla warfare in North, South and Central China, and had established 6 anti-Japanese aggression bases such as Jin-Cha-Ji, Jin-Ji-Lu-Yu, Jin-Sui, Shandong, South of Jiangsu and North of Zhejiang by October 1938. Thus, the battlefields behind enemy lines were opened up. The CPC resistant armies often took the Japanese troops by surprise with flexible strategy and tactics.

After the start of China's nation-wide resistance, the frontline battlefields and the battlefields in enemy's rear closely cooperated, hence, the Japanese troops in China were forced to fight on two fronts, resulting in failure of the "quick fix" strategy and dropping into China's protracted warfare, symbolized by the campaign of Wuhan, the anti-Japanese war entered the stage of strategic stalemate.

2. The Chinese battlefields always tie up the main part of Japanese troops, and are the Asian main anti-fascist battlefield

During the July 7 Incident of 1937, the Japanese Chief of Staff Sugiyama Hajime boasted that China could be taken in 30 days. But after the outbreak of resistance, Chinese resistance broke the Japanese quick-invasion strategy into pieces, Japan had to gradually increase troops. Until Wuhan campaign, Japan had deployed 32 of 34 military divisions and some naval forces to China.

In frontline battlefields, the KMT government forces held and cracked down on the Japanese aggressors. From 1934 to 1944, the Japanese troops launched a series of offensive operations, but failed to realize its goal of the expected collapse of the national government and the end of war, since the Chinese armed forces were still in military confrontation with the Japanese troops, though with more defeats and less victories. From 1943 to 1945, Chinese forces joined the operations in Burma in accordance with the allies agreement, through untold hardships and heavy casualties, liberated northern Burma and regained border areas of Yunnan province, reopened the Burma Road and restored the road

for China's foreign aid, and also created conditions for allied forces to launch counter-attack in Burma.

In the battlefields behind enemy lines, the Eighth Route Army, the New Fourth Army and other resistant contingents led by CPC fought with the Japanese troops and grew with flexible strategy and tactics in North, Central and South China. On November 7, 1939, the Eighth Route Army in Wutai Mountain, Shanxi killed Lieutenant Colonel Kihide Abe commander of Japanese independent hybrid brigade No. 2. On August 20, 1940, the Eighth Route Army dispatched about 100 groups of troops to counter-attack the Japanese troops in enemy's rear in North China, paralyzed its main lines of communication and transportation, annihilated more than 25,000 Japanese and puppet troops, known historically as the hundred regiments campaign. After that, the Japanese stronghold focused on the battlefield behind enemy lines in China. From 1941 to 1943, the Japanese invaders concentrated forces to carry out "security war" in the main form of "mopping up" and "Qingxiang" in the anti-Japanese rear bases in Northern, Central and Southern China. But as CPC-led anti-aggressors armed forces in countering "mopping up" and countering "Qingxiang" grew up and became stronger, the battlefield in enemy's rear became the main battleground of China's war of resistance, and became the mainstay of China's war of resistance against Japanese aggression. In 1944 battlefields in enemy's rear witnessed local counter-offense, and in 1945 comprehensive counter-offense was launched. The CPC-led regular army in anti-Japanese aggression developed to an army of 0.91 million strong, and the militia of 2.2 million, which were China's main counter-offensive forces.

China's frontal battlefields and battlefields in enemy's rear cooperated with each other, always combated and pinned down the main part of Japanese troops. According to statistics, as the Pacific War broke out, the Japanese army troops had 51 divisions, of which 35 was in China, and 10 in southeast Asia, nearly 70% of the Japanese troops was deployed inside China, and less than 20% troops in the Pacific battlefields. At the end of the war, the number

of Japanese troops in China is far more than that in the Pacific battlefields.

The above facts and figures show that China is a veritable Asian main battleground. On January 6, 1945, Roosevelt addressed in his State of the Union that we also should not forget Chinese people, who resisted the Japanese brutal attack and contained large numbers of the enemy in vast areas of the continent of Asia in more than 7 years.

3. China's Anti-Aggression War effectively restricted the world strategy of Japan, and effectively supported anti-fascist war by the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and other allies.

Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out that the great Chinese war of resistance is neither China's business, nor the Oriental business, but also the world's business. And our enemy is the enemy world-wide, and China's war of resistance is the world-wide war of resistance. In the anti-fascist war, various countries in the world always supported each other, and the world supported China, and China also supported the world as well. China's protracted war of resistance effectively held up Japanese northward expansion strategy, southward expansion strategy and westward expansion strategy, and striking alliance strategy, effectively supported anti-fascist war by the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and other allies.

Japan's northward expansion policy had to use China as the base for capturing Far East of the Soviet Union. To launch offence against the Soviet Union, Japan must first take China, since China fought back tenaciously, Japan had to deploy its main armed forces into the Chinese battleground, and was incapable of launching attacks against the Soviet Union, so it could not put the northward expansion policy on the agenda. In June 1941, the Soviet-German war broke out, so the Soviet Union had to spare no effort to meet with the German aggressors which provided the best opportunity for Japan's northward expansion policy. At that time, the Japanese Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka advocated northward expansion and collaborated with

Germany to attack the Soviet Union, but the Chief of Staff, Sugiyama Hajime retorted that Japan deployed heavily in China, implementation (of northward expansion policy) was practically impossible. In December 1942, Soviet troops met the Germany aggressors fiercely in Stalingrad, Germany asked the Japanese to attack the Soviet Union, but was declined due to Japan's incapability. Since then, Germany repeatedly asked Japan to attack the Soviet Union, but was rejected by Japan. As a result, the Soviet Union could avoid fighting on two fronts, in both East and West, and able to go all out fighting against German fascists, which ensured the victory of its Great Patriotic War. At the same time it also shows that the constraints by China's resistance war kept Japan and Germany fighting individually, which were unable to carry out strategic cooperation and became nominal alliance, and which was in favor of the anti-fascist allies to crush them one by one.

The opponents of Japan southward expansion strategy are the United States and the United Kingdom. Japan's goal is to occupy Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific region. In 1939, as German invaded Poland, and the United Kingdom and France were unable to care of the East Front, which provided an opportunity for Japan's southward expansion. But on September 4th, Japanese declared "no intervention in the European war" due to its inability to get freed from China. In May and June 1940, Germany defeated the British and French allied forces, then France surrendered, the British retreated to the British Isles, the United Kingdom and the United States were already tired out struggling to cope with Germany. Southeast Asia and the Pacific became weak in terms of defense areas, which provided Japan a "very rare" opportunity for southward expansion. On July 26, the Japanese Cabinet decided to put the southward expansion strategy on the agenda, but could not put it into practice due to constraints by the Chinese battlefields. During the Pacific War, China gave strong support to the United States. In February and March 1942, as the Japanese stronghold discussed how to prevent the United States from using Australia as the base to

launch counter-offense, Japanese Navy argued that only occupying Australia could curb the United States military offense, which would be necessary to move a large number of troops from China, but the army rejected. In early 1943, Japan began turning to the strategic defense in the Pacific War and urgently needed a large number of troops, but at this time the main part of the Japanese military was still mired in Chinese battleground, which created good conditions for the U.S. counter-offense in the Pacific. It can be seen that it is China's pinning down main part of the Japanese troops that the United States could successfully launch a counter-offense, and won the Pacific war.

Japan's westward expansion strategy was an attempt to enter India, and the Indian Ocean, eventually joined forces with Germany and Italy in the Middle East, forced the British surrender, and fully dealt with the United States. In the spring of 1942, the German "Africa corps" commanded by Rommel launched offense against the British forces in north Africa, the British retreated. In late May, the Germans entered Egypt. The German victory prompted Japan to reconsider its westward expansion operation plan. The Japanese stronghold believed that Japan should interact with Germany and Italy, and entered the West India Ocean. On July 11th, the Japanese army and navy reported to the emperor, and decided to focus the war efforts from the Pacific to the India Ocean. But similarly, the main part of the Japanese troops was deeply trapped inside the Chinese battleground, which disabled the Japanese to implement its westward expansion plan to join Germany and Italy in the Middle East.

The support of the Chinese battleground to the world's anti-fascist battlefields shows that China is both the main Asian anti-fascist battleground, and also one of the main battlegrounds of the world anti-fascist war.

4. China vigorously promotes the establishment of the world anti-fascist alliance, and actively participates in the reconstruction of the post-war international order

After the "July 7 incident", China actively

carried out alliance diplomacy. Except the Soviet Union, countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom took the policy of appeasement to Japan, so that China could not get its due international assistance, but carried out long-term fighting alone in the East and met with all kinds of hardships. In December 1941, on the day when the Pacific War broke out, China proposed to set up a military alliance by China, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, and finally received the response from them. On January 1, 1942, the anti-aggression countries headed by the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and China issued "Declaration by United Nations", marking formal establishment of the world anti-fascist alliance, providing a reliable guarantee for the victory of World War II. China's alliance diplomacy is finally paid off, and China is also recognized as one of the 4 world-leading anti-fascist countries. But since modern times, the Western powers defeated the Qing government with armed forces, and imposed a series of unequal treaties on China, so that China was not equal from the legal perspective. With the strong request of China, the U.S. government and the British government announced the abolition of unequal treaties with China in January 1943, and concluded with China the new equal treaty, and other western countries also followed suit, China finally attained the status of equality with all countries from the legal perspective in international community.

China with the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union together participated in the reconstruction of post-war international order. In October 1943, these 4 countries issued the "Declaration of the 4 Nations on General Security", and announced establishment of an universal international organization as soon as possible. In December 1943, China, the United States and the United Kingdom issued the Cairo Declaration, which declared that the three countries were determined to fight until the unconditional surrender of Japan, deprived Japan of its stolen territory of China and other countries by colonial expansion, provided a solemn

international guarantee for China to recover its lost territory, and also the international law to punish Japan, and to reconstruct a new East Asian order. In February 1945, the leaders of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union confirmed the principles for preparations of the United Nations at the Yalta Conference, and decided the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Soviet Union and China as the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. On July 26, China, the United Kingdom and the United States issued the Potsdam Proclamation, declaring the allies to fight to the end, announcing the allies' basic principles for punishing Japan, stipulating that the terms of the Cairo Declaration must be carried out. The above series of decisions, agreements and announcements made by the Allies summits, most of which were in consultation with and signed by China, then, were publicized to the world, and set up a framework for the post-war international new order, which shows China's important contributions.

The United Nations is the most important international organization for maintenance of the post-war international order. China participated in the whole process from planning to establishment of the UN. During the Cairo meeting in November 1943, the heads of China and the United States discussed questions related to establishment of an international organization in the future, recommended to establish an agency formed by the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China responsible for the preparation of head office of the United Nations, then later confirmed by the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. From August 17 to October 7, 1944, these four countries held preparatory meetings of United Nations in the Dumbarton near Washington, passed the program of United Nations establishment, and adopted its purposes and principles. On April 25, 1945, at the invitation of the four countries, representatives of 50 nations held a conference

in San Francisco, China and other three countries together presided over the formulation of the Charter of the United Nations, which provided the purposes, principles, rights, obligations and the authority of the main bodies of the United Nations. On June 26, a signing ceremony of the United Nations Charter was held, the representatives of countries present signed. Dong Biwu, one of the Chinese delegation members from the CPC, also signed the Charter. On October 24th of the same year, the United Nations announced its establishment, China officially became a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. From 1944 to 1947, China also participated in the creation of the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

In summary, as a weak country, China rose up against the strong Japanese militarists in World War II, opened the world's first anti-fascist war battleground, and also the Asian main battleground, and adhered to the protracted warfare of resistance against Japanese aggression, which was a strong support to operations in all battlegrounds by the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and other allies, promoted establishment of the world anti-fascist alliance, and made significant contributions to the post-war international order building and the creation of the United Nations and other international organizations. History is an eloquent proof that China, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union fully deserve the four major anti-fascist nations. The victory of the Second World War is hard-won by millions of people in China and the rest of the world. To this end, to defend the fruits of the WWII victory and to maintain excellent situation of world peace, development and cooperation is the common responsibility of China and various countries in the world.