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The Establishment of Chinese Military Academies & the Soviet Aids in 1920s–1950's

Through the aids of former Soviet Union, the Republic of China established the Huangpu Military Academy and Nanking Military Institute, and the People's Republic of China created Harbin Institute of Military Engineering, and other technological institutes of the armed services from the 1920s to the 1950s. Russian ideas, organizational systems, and educational methods and objectives had a significant impact on the establishment of Chinese military academies, especially on military technological institutes. This paper discusses the specific roles played by the Russians on the establishment of Chinese military academies.

Keywords: Chinese Military Academy, Soviet Union, Chinese Military Education History

“Following Russia as an example” and establishing Huangpu Military Academy

From the end of nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, China learned from western countries in military affairs. Its navy took Britain as its example, with army in the wake of Germany and then gradually turning to Japan. The 1920s witnessed Sun Yatsen (1866–1925) as the first man to study from Soviet Union in military education.

In 1911, the Hsinhai Revolution led by Sun Yatsen overthrew the late Qing Dynasty, but due to the weakness of revolutionary force, the victory was in vain, especially considering the rebellion led by Chen Jiongming (1878–1933) in 1922, which was the greatest fiasco during Sun Yatsen's life. Through studying the successful experience of the Great October Revolution of Soviet Union, Sun Yatsen realized that the final success of revolutionary career can only be achieved by establishing a revolutionary army. Then he decided to accept the suggestion made earlier in 1921 by J. F. Malen (1883–1942) — a representative of the Communist International, which was, “We shall establish a military academy as the groundwork of our revolution” (Wilbur, 1986: 128; Shang, 1998: 458). As a result, he began to follow Russia as an example, to establish a military academy, and to organize the Revolutionary Army.

In order to learn the experience of establishing military forces and managing military academy from Soviet Union, Sun Yatsen dispatched the “Doctor Sun Yatsen Delegation”, joined by Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975) as the chief and two communist party members—Shen Dingyi (1883–1928) and Zhang Tailei (1898–1927), on August 16th, 1923. The delegation paid an official visit to Soviet Union, made a probe into the organization, training and equipment of the Red Army of the Soviet Union, and visited all kinds of military academies of the Soviet Union including musketry, military chemistry, high-level gunnery and navy. After the discussion with military officials of the Soviet Union, “a plan of establishing a military academy had been formed” (Ynan, 2001: 255–256), and Liao Zhongkai (1877–1925) and Soviet Adviser Mikhail Borodin (М. Бородин, 1884–1951) were appointed to be responsible for planning and preparing the establishment of the military academy and selection of teaching and administrative staff (Guangdong, 1982: 23). In January 1924 Sun Yatsen ordered to “follow Russia as an example” to establish an academy of army officers joined by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members, which is the famous Huangpu Military Academy. On June 16 of the same year the military academy was formally established in Huangpu Island in Guangzhou. Sun Yatsen served as the part-time principal of the academy. In a speech of the opening ceremony, he pointed out that “My sheer hope by establishing this academy is to form the revolutionary army, for saving China from a fatal crisis” (Sun, 1985: 292).

Learning from Russia, Sun Yatsen sincerely engaged dozens of political and military talented people from the Soviet Union to come to China and assist him to establish the academy (Shang, 1998: 466). Many experts from the Soviet Union occupied the positions of military and political counselors of the Huangpu Military Academy, who were versed in educational theories as well as practical experience and “made great contributions” (Ynan, 2001: 265) in political system, military organization, military guidance, theoretical development and curriculum setting, and so on.

Following the political commissar policy of the Soviet Union as a model, the Huangpu Military Academy set representatives of the Party and implemented political work policy. The policy gave important status and rights to the representatives of the Party and the political works, and ensured the Academy, in a real sense, to become a tool cultivating revolutionary cadres with the belief of “Three People's Principles” (i.e. Nationalism, Democracy, and the People's Livelihood). From then on, the policy was promoted and practiced in the armies of the National Revolutionary Army (NRA), and became an important mark for the NRA to be distinctive from any other old armies in the past. In addition, this policy was also fully enhanced in establishment of military academies and armies by the Chinese Communist Party. As it was mentioned in Interview with the British journalist James Bertram by Mao Zedong (1883–1976) on October 25, 1935, the spirits of the Chinese Worker's and

Peasants' Red Army, later the Eighth Route Army, the New Fourth Army, and the Kuomintang Army are "almost the same in general". By that time, the Kuomintang Army set the representative of the Party and the political institution policy, and "the later Red Army inherited and developed this policy" (Yuan, 2001: 289). It was obvious that in the idea and practice of establishing military academies, СССР had come down in one continuous line with the Huangpu Military Academy.

The education and training of Huangpu Military Academy was of speeded-up feature with a comparatively short length of schooling. The teaching and administrative staff was mainly from Baoding Military Officers Academy, military academies in Yunnan, Guangdong and other provinces, and from Japanese Military Officers School and Chinese students in Soviet Union and France of work-study program. The composition of this teaching team redounded to extracting the military education experience of various military schools of the late Qing Dynasty, absorbing education experience from eastern and western capitalistic countries, especially the advanced experience of the Soviet Red Army in establishing military academy.

The teaching guideline of Huangpu Military Academy paid equal attention to conducting military and political education, which emphasized "not only on teaching students military knowledge that junior cadres should gain mastery, but also on providing them with political education, helping them to comprehend social economy, politics, history, party creeds (Yuan, 2001: 288) and cultivating revolutionary officers with political consciousness and military commanding talent.

The political education of Huangpu Military Academy was mainly undertaken by members of the Communist Party (Wen, 1984: 331). Apart from lessons in classroom, some notable persons from different parties and clans, various schools, as well as celebrities may give lectures on the stage. There were many outstanding leaders and political drill masters who made speech at the Academy such as Sun Yatsen, Liao Zhongkai, Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei (1883–1944), Zhou Enlai (1898–1976), Yun Daiying (1895–1931), Xiao Chunu (1893–1927) and etc., and distinctive celebrities of both parties including Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi (1898–1969), He Xiangnin (1878–1972), Lu Xun (1881–1936), Deng Zhongxia (1894–1933), etc. (Yuan, 2001: 271). The Academy's military education was instructed by advisors from the Soviet Union. General Kalon appointed Chainobelav as the general military advisor and organized advisor's staff for the Academy. The Soviet Union advisors, experts, together with Chinese military drill masters formulated practical teaching plans and contents of courses (Yuan, 2001: 268). They selected and used the most updated information and documents of the Soviet Union, "re-compiled laws, standards and orders, as well as the five tutorials including strategy, weapon, fortification, topography and transportation communications" as teaching materials (Qing, 7). Besides, the Soviet Union also provided various weapons and cartridges for training and small arms as well as heavy weapons such as Russian 762 rifles, heavy machine guns, light machine guns, Mauser Military Pistols for military unit drills in the Academy. Up to October 1924 the Soviet Union transported and delivered 8000 pieces of firearms to Huangpu Military Academy (Shang, 1998: 470). In the next year, the ammunition transported at one time to Guangzhou valued 564,000 Ruble, with appropriated funds amounting to 100,000 Ruble. Afterwards, the Soviet Union unconditionally appropriated again 2 million Rubles to the Academy as its outlay (Yuan, 2001: 269). And as Borodin said, the Soviet Union totally donated 3 million Ruble for running of the Academy and for its daily expenses (Wilbur, 1986: 223).

Huangpu Military Academy was one of the most influential new revolutionary military academies in history of Chinese military education. Its mode of running an academy had significant influence on the later military education, army building and political situation development. Besides, the Academy provided a base for C.C.P. to put the experience learnt from the Soviet Red Army into practice in establishing and running an academy. There were hundreds of Chinese Communist Party members who acted as leaders and were responsible for education and training, or studied at the Academy. Among 600 students in the first term, over 80 were members of the Chinese Communist Party (Qing, 9). They not only accomplished their tasks outstandingly, but also accumulated precious experience of establishing and administrating an academy, as well as promoting the growth of many excellent leaders and drillmasters, which provided abundant experience and laid a significant foundation for establishing military academies. For example, Zhou Enlai worked as Director of Faculty of Politics in Huangpu Military Academy, Ye Jianying (1897–1986) as Deputy Director of Faculty of Professors in Huangpu Military Academy, Chen Yi (1901–1972) taught politics in Wuhan School Branch of Huangpu Military Academy, Nie Rongzhen (1899–1992) was Secretary of Faculty of Politics, Xu Xiangqian (1901–1990) and Cheng Geng (1903–1961) were graduates of the first term of the Academy; Lin Biao (1907–1971) and Guo Huaruo (1904–1995) were graduates of the fourth term, and Luo Ruiqing (1906–1978) was a student of the sixth term, etc. (Yuan, 2001: 271–272, 290).

Inclining to the Soviet Union to Found the Chinese Air Force & Naval Academy

On the eve of the establishment of People's Republic of China, leaders of the Chinese Communist Party who had worked or taught in the Huangpu Military Academy held traditions of the Academy, determined to seek for aid from the Soviet Union with the policy of "inclining to the Soviet Union", in order to found military academies of the new-borne country.

In a conversation with Zhu De in February 1949, Zhou Enlai highly emphasized that "we wish to ask the Soviet Union to dispatch some experts and provide us with equipments for weapon production, and send some advisers to assist us to train our army, establish military academy and organize logistic works including military industry (Shen, 2003: 59). At that time, Mao Zedong and Liu Shaoqi confirmed in a more comprehensive sense that China should incline to the Soviet Union and seek for its aid. When Liu Shaoqi was talking about the issue of industrial development in China, he said: "without assistance of the Soviet Union and other People's Republic countries, it is hardly imaginable to lay industrial foundation. Their aids will have crucial effect on us" (Shen, 2003: 59). Mao Zedong put forth that "C.C.P. need overall aid from the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of the Soviet Union. We need 2 advisers: an economic and a financial" Mao Zedong addressed at the final report of the Party's second plenary of the 7th Congress Conference that "the Sino-Soviet relationship stands for close brotherhood, and we should stand at a same battlefield with the Soviet Union. We are allies. We must vend proclamation to specify this point in public once we have any opportunities" (Mao, 1996: 262). Afterwards, Mao Zedong delivered the proclamation of "inclining to the Soviet Union". The foundation of military academy of P. R. China began under this background.

The seeking for the Soviet Union's aid to found military academy by P. R. China started from air force. According to the requirement of China to train 350–400 aviators as soon as possible, the air force of the Soviet Union suggested to establish 6 aviation academies during August to October 1949 (Ynan, 2001: 622). After that, the government of China and the Soviet Union achieved an agreement, which promised that each academy will be equipped with 120 Russian experts and a staff of 878 person including ground crew, theoretic teachers, aviation doctors, logistic personnel, and some accredited experts working in the air command (Lv, 1992: 145–146). The Chinese leaders who prepared to establish the aviation academies made on-the-spot investigations together with the accredited experts from the Soviet Union, and chose the locations of the academies. The experts arrived at aviation academies respectively in succession in November 1949. These experts, including principals, teachers, engineers, aircraft crew, and even typewriters, served as professional advisers of different levels and sorts, most of whom were directly in charge of teaching (Chen, 1992: 165). The First Aviation College of P.L.A. Air Force was formally founded on December 12, 1949. Since the main aim was to train aviation crew and ground crew, which were highly demanded by fighter planes and bombing planes corps, the training of the College chose a speeded-up way with the compressed length of schooling for 6 months to 1 year (Zhou, 1992: 171–173). According to the length of schooling and training objectives, the Russian experts were responsible for formulating complete and detailed plans of aviation theory education and flight training, which involved teaching policy, teaching plan, curriculum setting, content of teaching materials, examination and review, and etc. The experts presided over organizing and implementing plans in detail, as well as teaching in person in the classroom. The materials for classroom teaching and 434 airplanes, flight materials, equipments used for flight training were ordered and purchased from the Soviet Union (Yuan, 2001: 622–623). Up till May 1951, the aviators being trained and graduated from the College ensured the air force to successively prepare and establish 17 aviation divisions and 34 aircraft corps (Chen, 1992: 164–167; Zhou, 1992: 171–173) which made great contributions to the establishment and development of air force in the early days of P.R.China. China recruited 4 air force advisor groups from the Soviet Union in 1954 and carried out complicated topic trainings in units of fighter planes and bomber planes respectively (Yuan, 2001: 670).

The complicated structure of arms of services and high level of technology in equipments made navy in urgent need of experts from the Soviet Union. In August 1949, the military committee of the Central Committee of CCP assigned Zhang Xuesi (Yuan, 2001: 618) to pay a visit to Moscow and investigated the Navy Academy of the Soviet Union. Standing for Chinese government, he reached relevant agreements with the Soviet Union on the issue of appointing Russian advisors to assist China to found naval academy. A group of 84 experts led by Klochkov arrived at Shenyang on September 25th (Yuan, 2001: 670) and discussed with Chinese leaders the issue of foundation of the academy. They submitted the file *The Initial Opinion on Education in the Academy* to the military commission of the Central Committee. On November 22nd, Mao Zedong approved the establishment of the Naval Academy of the Chinese P.L.A., which was the first formal academy of navy to train junior cadres for naval vessels. It set Navigation Command Faculty and Machinery Engineering Faculty in its branch, to cultivate chiefs in navigation, firearm, torpedo & mine, observation & communication, machinery & electrics, and etc. (Yuan, 2001: 619–620).

In virtue of actively studying of military education and training experience of the Soviet Union and using for reference, China established elementary cadre academies to cultivate

good command of weapons and equipments. Afterwards, China entered an era of overall learning of military education experience from the Soviet Union and setting normalized army academy step by step.

“Learn from the Soviet Union”, Found the Top Military Academy in China — Nanking Military Institute

Nanking Military Institute, namely the P.L.A. Military Institute was the first academy that the Soviet Union assisted China for training secondary and high rank military officers and cadres. In Report on Issue of Establishment of Military Commission and Military Academies on March 10th, 1950, Nie Rongzhen suggested to Mao Zedong that “we plan to prepare and found Army Academy in the location of Changxindian where North China Military Academy stood currently. After comrade Liu Bocheng comes back to Beijing, he should take charge of it. It will enable the cultivation of senior military cadres at the time that the national units are being reorganized. It will also become a training center for establishment of national defense army, and its research results will be the pattern of army establishment of the nation” (Yuan, 2001: 612). According to the order from Mao Zedong, Liu Bocheng left Chongqing and went to Beijing on October 27th 1950 to preside over the preparation and founding of the comprehensive Land Army University for training of secondary and high rank military cadres. As Liu Bocheng suggested, the Land Army University changed its name to the Military Institute later, and was located at the address of the previous East China Military and Politics University. On November of the same year, the military commission of the Central Committee appointed Liu Bocheng as Principal of the P.L.A. Military Institute, (he also served as part-time political commissary in February 1951). On January 15th, 1951, the P.L.A. Military Institute was formally established, and Mao Zedong wrote the epigraph which said “study hard and protect national defense”. He emphasized that the founding of the military institute was to cultivate and train senior military cadres for normalization and modernization of our Army, and “on the basis of the present quality and military ideology our cadres and military officers have to be familiar with and in command of current arms of services, and organize them to join together in action. At the same time, they must know well of staff and duties as well as communications and liaison, and get ready for fighting against the invaders leading by American imperialism” (Yuan, 2001: 612).

At the end of 1950 the new education system of the nation had not been published and the military system had no efficient rules and policies for reference. Taking into consideration of the difficulties of national finance and poor material resources, and referring to the military education experience of the Soviet Union, Liu Bocheng put forth a new educational system in accordance with the training policy and educational objective of the military institute. The Institute set totally 6 classes or sections including Undergraduate Course for Land Army, Accelerated Course for Land Army, Accelerated Course for Navy, Intelligence and Staff Training Course, Russian Training Course and Correspondence Course for Land Army. The training was intended for cadres chosen from army corps, divisions, regiments, camps, and excellent company-levels at whiles as well as relevant operational cadres. The length of schooling included 2 years for undergraduate course and 1 year for other courses or classes. The study time complied with the practices of military academies in the Soviet Union, and applied “6 Consecutive Lessons Policy”. The teaching materials for the initial

stage of the Institute were mainly introduced or translated from ready regulations and teaching materials of the Soviet Union. Afterwards, the battle experience of the P. L. A. was summarized and some advanced experience of the Soviet Army and other foreign armies was absorbed and used for reference to compile various teaching materials. In a word, the Academy was founded and developed by the Chinese Communists on the basis of inheriting the excellent traditions of Huangpu Military Academy, the University of Resistance Against Japan, and University of Army and Politics, and learning the military and educational experiences from the Soviet Union. Fully acknowledging the contributions made by the Soviet Union advisors in founding the Military Institute, Mao Zedong indicated in the first student graduation ceremony of Senior Accelerated Department of the Academy that “the establishment of the Military Institute and the education since last year have made significant contributions to building normalized and modernized national defense army. It must be attributed to the efforts of Principal Liu Bocheng and all advisors from the Soviet Union, as well as joint and unremitting efforts of all commanders, political working staff, logistic staff, teachers and students” (Yuan, 2001: 613). Up to that time, the promotion of P. L. A. cadres through training in standard military academy has begun.

In December 1954, since the P.L.A. Military Institute became comparatively mature, Liu Bocheng suggested that separate a part of the Institute to found another 6 academies including senior military academy, politics academy and academy for armies and arms of services, etc. Mao Zedong nodded to that suggestion. By 1958 the Senior Military Academy, the Politics Academy, the Navy Academy, the Air Force Academy, the Artilleryman Academy and the Armored Forces Academy were established in succession on the basis of the P.L.A. Military Institute. And it basically formed a military officer training system with complete academies of armies and arms of services, joining together junior, intermediate and senior academies and cultivating commanders of various armies and arms of services.

“Learning from the Soviet Union” & Establishing the Top Military and Technological Academy in China — Harbin Institute of Military Engineering

The War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea (1950–1953) kindled Chinese enthusiasm for establishing military engineering institute and stimulated the eagerness for aids from the Soviet Union.

The “United States Force” headed by America used all kinds of modernized weapons and equipments except A-bomb in the battlefield of Korea. The joint operation by its land army, navy and air force used the control of the air and cut off our army’s rear supply, which greatly affected the war. Though the Chinese Voluntary Army was brave and skillful in battle, it was basically formed by infantry with the backward weapons and equipments, which had very few special type of army. China had bought planes, warships and other modernized weapons in large quantities from the Soviet Union, but the biggest problem that China was confronted was the low cultural level of soldiers in the army, who could not master and use those advanced weapons immediately. According to the files in former Foreign Ministry Archives of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union realized that “some commanders of P.L.A. and its corps lack not only in military knowledge, but also in normal education”, and “their experience is too weak to command in modernized warfare” (See: Архив внешней политики Российской

Федерации (АВПРФ). Ф. 0100. Оп. 43. П. 302. Д. 4. Л. 160–198; Кулик Б. Китайская Народная Республика в период становления (1949–1952) // Проблемы Дальнего Востока. 1994. № 6. С. 73–83; Зазерская Т. Г. Советские специалисты и формирование военно-промышленного комплекса в Китае (1949–1960). СПб., 2000. С. 24) (Shen, 2001: 99).

That fact deeply shocked the Chinese army and senior generals of the army. They realized that it was crucial to have advanced weapons and equipments, but the most important thing was to have people who mastered these advanced weapons and equipments. As a result, when Stalin put forth his suggestion of the necessity to establish a military engineering institute for modernized war and army, Mao Zedong accepted it willingly (Li, 1993: 1–13; Zhao, 2003: 321–324). While the Korean War was still on in June 1952, Mao Zedong pulled back the Deputy Commander of the People’s Voluntary Army and graduate of first term of Huangpu Military Academy—Chen Geng from the Korean battlefield, and established the first military engineering and technological institute in Chinese history—Harbin Institute of Military Engineering. Considering the influence that those military academies established under the Soviet Union’s aid had on the normalization and modernization of the Chinese armies, if we reckon that the best example to cultivate senior military commanding officers is Huangpu Military Academy and Nanking Military Institute, then, the most credits of training senior military engineering and technological officers should be given to Harbin Institute of Military Engineering. It was blank before in Chinese history of the establishment of senior military and technological institute, and the level of science and technology was low. Therefore, in the aspect of no matter the theoretical and technological level, or the scale and influence, the aid China obtained from the Soviet Union during the foundation of its military engineering institute was unprecedented in the history.

The Soviet Union assigned a delegation to Beijing at the end of July 1952 to “assist to design and prepare the establishment of the institute of military engineering”, which was headed by lieutenant general V. I. Orechov (В. И. Орехов, 1902–1957) and included authoritative experts of air force, navy, artillery and armed force. In early August, Chen Geng, Xu Lixing (1911–1985) and other staff accompanied the Soviet Union delegation to visit Harbin, Changchun, Shenyang, Dalian, Nanjing, Shanghai and other places, and visit military colleges and institutes of land army, navy and air force of China, and relevant units of national defense industry. They made researches of various factors in establishing military engineering institute, and the two sides confirmed Discussion Record on Relevant Issues of Preparation and Establishment of the P. L. A. Military Engineering Institute by the Experts of Soviet Union — V. I. Orechov and etc. (August 1952) (Hereinafter referred to as Discussion Record). It is a guiding documentation of the foundation of Harbin Institute of Military Engineering.

The Discussion Record proposed that the Institute should be developed as a comprehensive senior military engineering and technological institute. And when it was well-timed, the engineering technological institutes of armies and arms of services could be established. “Considering the lack of professors and special cadres, it is impossible to found many special senior military technological institutes recently, and we should establish a united engineering technological institute at present”. “We prepare to develop various faculties into special institutes of arms of services (such as Aviation Engineering Institute and Artillery Engineering Institute); hence each faculty should include a complete structure for future teaching organization.” In fact, the initial intent of establishing the institute was to build a comprehensive senior military technological institute. Several years later, according to the policy of “centralizing top faculties and decentralizing conventional ones” and the suggestion made by Principal—Chen Geng in 1961, the military commission of the Central Committee separated and reorganized

the Institute. "As of 1961, faculties of artillery, armored forces, sapper engineering and atomic chemistry protection moved out successively with totally 26 specialties." After that the Artillery Engineering Institute, Armored Force Engineering Institute, Engineer & Engineering Institute, Chemical Weapon Protection Engineering Institute were founded respectively, and many conventional weapon specialties were separated and merged into relevant institutes. For instance, the 5 specialties including coastal cannon, chase gun director, fish torpedo, and ship degaussing of Navy Engineering Faculty were transferred to Navy Engineering Institute; the specialties including airport construction and aerography of Air Force Engineering Faculty were transferred to Air Force Engineering Institute.

The organization of the Institute was framed clearly in the Discussion Record. From the first conference attended by all academies of the whole Army held in 1950 to the second meeting in 1951, the organization system was adjusted from "Three Departments and One Office System" (i. e. the Training Department, Department of Politics, Department of School Affairs and Office of Cadres Administration) to "Four Departments and One Office System" (i. e. the Department of Training, Department of Politics, Department of Cadres, Department of Material Provision and Office of Alignment). But these were "all set up according to the organization settings of the Soviet Union, and were very similar to organizations of the Soviet Union" (Yuan, 2001: 658–659). In 1953, the list of the organization setting of Harbin Institute of Military Engineering, submitted to the military commission of the Central Committee for approval and implementation, was framed by the organization system chart in the Discussion Record. The only difference lay in the adjustment from "Five Departments and One Office System" to "Six Departments System" (i. e. just changed the Department of Institute Affairs to Department of Material Provision, no substantive changes), by imitating the organization setting and the establishment characteristics of Nanking Military Institute. What was quite different from the military academies of the Soviet Union was that Russian academies carry out "Sole Principal Policy", instead of setting another political commissary. What we implemented was "Double Principals Policy" including a principal and a commissary. Mao Zedong's reaction to that was we should listen to their (Soviet Union advisors) opinions and adjust gradually through practice since we knew little about education planning. Our policy and system were appropriate, however, it was not proper to oppose inside out to the Russian system. (Therefore) "we should keep the root and change the branch". The adjustment was that the Party committee led the institute, setting up political commissary; and the Party led faculties, setting up a deputy director of politics, a political commissary indeed. The deputy director of politics of faculties was changed into political commissary after 1954.

Concerning the Institute's location, the Discussion Record put forth three conditions—"being adjacent to the national defense industry and universities of engineering, being far from national defense frontier, and having comparatively centralized houses which meet the requirement of teaching". Since "Harbin is a relatively proper location", the Central Committee finally decided to establish the Institute in Harbin.

To build a qualified staff of cadres and teachers was crucial in running a school. The advisors of the Soviet Union indicated in the Discussion Record that "according to the Soviet Union's experience of establishing military engineering institute, you should at first appoint comrades equal to being in charge of the Institute, various faculties and departments, and make them to carry out their duties, preparing adequately." And the actual process went as what they said. On July 11th, 1952, Mao Zedong appointed the graduate of the first term of Huangpu Military Academy, the valiant general Chen Geng, as the principal of the

Institute, who once served as the principal of the Red Army University. A preparatory committee with 8 people was organized on September 1st, including Chen Geng, cadres of the Voluntary Army, vice principal of the Second Senior Musketeer School, and military scientific researchers of Eastern China Military Area. Based on the cadres of three departments mentioned above (Li, 1993: 1–2), Committee of Chinese Communist Party and Commission for Discipline and Inspection (CCCPC) were organized in the Institute of Military Engineering on January 30th, 1953. From April 1953 to October 1954, the Institute adjusted organization setting and strengthened its leadership.

In view of lacking university professors in the initial stage of our country, there were two detailed methods of selection and transfer of teachers in the Discussion Record. One was "to choose some excellent teachers from various universities and transfer them to the Institute under the principle that this would not have much negative impact on their education. And it would be better that the Military Committee presides over the transfer." Secondly, "Some curriculums such as college mathematics are not necessarily to be taught by army man which could be taught by normal university professors. The Soviet Union government made decision in the past that the military school could hire normal university professors, but should be aware of their political qualities." Government should instruct educational departments of universities to regulate and proceed in that method. These suggestions gave great revelatory influence on establishing teachers' staff of Military Engineering Institute. The principal Chen Geng was personally in charge of the works of employing, transferring professors and experts. Since the universities in China were short of qualified teachers and it was difficult to employ and transfer them in large numbers, the Institute could only employ and transfer some professors as hard core, and cultivate tutors by the teachers' staff together with the advisors from the Soviet Union. Referring to the list of the first group of totally 62 professors and associate professors to be demanded by the Institute, Premier Zhou Enlai held a meeting attended by people in charge of Government Affairs Department, relevant departments of the military commission of the CCCPC, Ministry of Education, principals of Tsinghua University and etc., and assigned a task of selecting and transferring professors for Harbin Institute of Military Engineering. In 1952, approved by the Central Committee of the CCCPC and the military commission of CCP 78 professors and experts were selected and transferred to the Institute from state colleges and universities, units of scientific research, enterprises and armies, among whom more than a half had studied abroad in America, Britain, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Japan, the Soviet Union and other countries and had obtained doctor's degrees or master's degrees. Professors who taught at the Institute might join the army, or working as professor in Higher Education Department according to their own choices, which was not the common practice in other military academies.

At the initial stage of the Institute, all kinds of issues were carried out under suggestions that the advisors made through actual situations and their experiences at military schools in the Soviet Union, except the insistence on the leadership of the Party Committee in the system of the Institute. Those matters included the setting-up of faculties, length of schooling, cultivating aims, teaching plans, teaching contents, teaching material and organization management. Cao Hesun (1912–1998), the first Educational Director in Department of Education Affairs, recalled that "the teaching plans for the first term of the Institute were made fully by the experts from the Soviet Union"; "in 1953, not long after the advisors and experts from the Soviet Union arrived at the Institute, they combined teaching and working rules and regulations of various military engineering institutes and drafted Basic Rules of Teaching Process and Organization for the P.L.A. Military Engineering Institute. It was submitted to the

Principal Chen Geng for approval, and publicized by an order for implementation.” It was an essential documentation to guide teaching works of the Institute. It made explicit prescriptions on the purposes, requirements, tasks and practices of teaching methods, on the checks, examinations, and tests of teaching process, on the natures, tasks and inter-relations of teaching and researching offices, labs, offices of specialized studies; on the duties of directors, vice directors, chief teachers, tutors of teaching and researching offices; and on the responsibilities and inter-relations between teaching and administrative leaders and teaching affairs departments, as well as on the graduation examination and thesis design (defense). On the basis of the Rules, the Institute stipulated many other rules and regulations in detail to meet the demands of the teaching works. The timely formulation and strict implementation of these rules and regulations had significant effects on assuring the teaching works in the right direction from the beginning. And it also had positive influence on cultivating teachers and students to have strict, serious and rigorous scientific attitude and work style.

The peak of aid from the advisors and experts of the Soviet Union lay in the first 5 years of establishing the Institute. An incomplete list of the Soviet Union experts demonstrated that the staff room of each faculty was assigned at least one advisor or expert of the Soviet Union. Chen Geng put forth in the Report on Renewal of Employment of Soviet Union Advisors in October 1952 that since the teaching plan had not been drawn out, it was impossible to confirm the number of advisors by counting the staff rooms. He suggested employing 50 advisors of the Soviet Union for the Institute, faculties, and 23 offices to assist in preparatory works for commencement of studies, such as training of teacher’s qualifications, compilation of teaching material, plan of educational facilities, and etc. As the fully implementation of the preparatory works went on gradually, on April 11th, 1953, the Institute put forward a plan of appointing experts relevant to 72 subjects and professional fields, and it was inclusive of all staff rooms of faculties. The plan listed very specific requirements on the time that the experts arrive at the institute and their tenure. The terms of employment varied from 1 year to 2 years. On May 13th, 1953, the first group of advisors and experts from the Soviet Union arrived Harbin. A total of 57 advisors and experts from the Soviet Union got to the Institute as of November 19th, 1954. A List of Advisors and Experts from the Soviet Union on December 27th, 1957 indicated that the 51 experts in the field of military technologies of the Soviet Union, working in the Institute from August 1955 to January 13th, 1958, were at least captains or engineers in their identities, with some lieutenant colonels and senior colonels. They were assigned to relevant staff room to work. Although the September 1959 witnessed the Sino-Soviet Union relations deteriorated, there were still 18 experts of the Soviet Union assigned to work at the Institute with employment terms between 1 and 2 years. The accurate number of Soviet Union experts who came and worked at the institute during 1952 to 1960 was still the swing of pendulum with one parlance recording 84 people and another which was said by the first education director Xu Lixing indicating 161. But according to the already incomplete archives of the Institute of Military Engineering consulted by the author, the latter is more believable, because from a name list of the Soviet Union experts on October 1957, there were 150 people and it had clear indication of their names, specialties and faculties.

Due to the break-up of Sino-Soviet Union relations, the experts of the Soviet Union working at the Institute all returned to their country on August 17th, 1960. However, their achievements in the establishment of military engineering institute in China could not be effaced in any sense. The deep kindness and profound friendship of the advisors and experts of the Soviet Union were engraved in the hearts of Chinese people. Owing to their great assistance, China

established its own military engineering institute in a very short time, and cultivated so many qualified military engineering and technological elites. It was said by Liu Juying (1917–), the Second Principal of Harbin Institute of Military Engineering (Vice Principal in 1954, principal during 1961–1966), “we have always considered that during that period of time, the Soviet Union advisors were sincere to offer assistance to our Institute, and it is internationalism. Without their aid, our Institute can hardly be established properly” (Zhao, 2003: 326).

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