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OF
MAO TSE-TUNG

The Concept of Operations for
the Huai-Hai Campaign
(October 11, 1948)

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Mao Tse-tung

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THE HUAI-HAI CAMPAIGN**

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THE CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE HUAI-HAI CAMPAIGN

October 11, 1948

Here are a few points for your consideration concerning the dispositions for the Huai-Hai campaign. [\[1\]](#)

1. In the first stage of this campaign, the central task is to concentrate forces to wipe out Huang Po-tao's army, effect a breakthrough in the centre and capture Hsinanchen, the Grand Canal Railway Station, Tsaopachi, Yihsien, Tsaochuang, Lincheng, Hanchuang, Shuyang, Pih sien, Tancheng, Taierhchuang and Linyi. To achieve these objectives, you should use two columns to wipe out each enemy division, that is to say, use six or seven columns to cut up and wipe out the enemy's 25th, 63rd and 64th Divisions. Use five or six columns to hold off and attack enemy reinforcements. Use one or two columns to annihilate the one brigade under Li Mi at Lincheng and Hanchuang and strive to capture those two towns in order to menace Hsuechow from the north so that the two armies under Chiu Ching-chuan and Li Mi will not dare move east in full strength as reinforcements. Use one column plus regional formation in southwestern Shantung to make a flank attack on the Hsuechow-Shangchiu section of the railway in order to tie down a portion of Chiu Ching-chuan's army (as three enemy divisions under Sun Yuan-liang are about to move east, it is hoped that Liu Po-cheng, Chen Yi and Teng Hsiao-ping will dispose their troops at once to attack the Chengchow-Hsuechow line and so tie down Sun Yuan-liang's army). Use one or two columns to operate in the Suchien-Suining-Lingpi area to hold down Li Mi's army. These dispositions mean that before the objective of annihilating the three divisions of Huang Po-tao's army can be achieved, more than half our total force has to be employed against the two armies under Chiu Ching-chuan and Li Mi to tie down, check and destroy part of them. The dispositions should, by and large, be similar to those of last

* This telegram, addressed to the Eastern China and Central Plains Field Armies and the Bureaus of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in those two areas, was drafted by Comrade Mao Tse-tung for the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Party's Central Committee. The Huai-Hai campaign was one of the three greatest campaigns of decisive significance in the Chinese People's War of Liberation. The campaign was fought jointly by the Eastern China and Central Plains Field Armies and the regional troops of the eastern China and Central Plains areas. In this campaign over 555,000 Kuomintang troops were wiped out. The concept of operations set forth by Comrade Mao Tse-tung in this telegram led to complete success; in fact, the campaign proceeded more smoothly than expected, and the victory was therefore quicker and greater. After this campaign, Nanking, the capital of the reactionary Kuomintang government, became subject to direct threat by the People's Liberation Army. The Huai-Hai campaign was concluded on

January 10, 1949, and on January 21 Chiang Kai-shek announced his "retirement"; after that, the reactionary Kuomintang ruling clique in Nanking fell apart.

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September for capturing Tsinan and attacking the enemy's reinforcements;[2] otherwise it will be impossible to achieve the objective of annihilating the three divisions of Huang Po-tao's army. You must strive to conclude the first stage two to three weeks after the start of the campaign.

2. In the second stage, use about five columns to attack and wipe out the enemy in Haichow, Hsinpu, Lienyunkang and Kuanyun and capture these towns. It is calculated

that by then the enemy's 54th and 32nd Divisions will very likely have been transported by sea from Tsingtao to the Haichow-Hsinpu-Lienyunkang area.[3] Altogether three enemy divisions will be in that area, including the one division already there; therefore we must use five columns to attack them and employ the remaining forces (our main strength) to tie down the two armies under Chiu Ching-chuan and Li Mi, again on the principle underlying the dispositions made in September for capturing Tsinan and attacking the enemy's reinforcements. You must strive to conclude this stage also in two to three weeks.

3. In the third stage, it may be assumed that the battle will be fought around Huaiyin and Huai-an. By that time the enemy will have increased his strength by about one division (the Reorganized 8th Division in Yentai is being shipped south); therefore we must be prepared again to use about five columns as the attacking force, while using the rest of our main force to strike at and hold down the enemy's reinforcements. This stage will also take about two to three weeks.

These three stages will take about a month and a half to two months.

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4. You are to complete the Huai-Hai campaign in two months, November and December. Rest and consolidate your forces next January. From March to July you will be fighting in co-ordination with Liu Po-cheng and Teng Hsiao-ping to drive the enemy to points along the Yangtse River, where he will dig in. By autumn your main force will probably be fighting to cross the Yangtse.

NOTES

^[1] The Huai-Hai campaign was a campaign of decisive importance fought by the People's Liberation Army over a large territory in Kiangsu, Shantung, Anhwei and Honan Provinces, centring on Hsuehchow, and extending as far as Haichow in the east Shangchiu in the west, Lincheng (now renamed Hsuehcheng) in the north and the Huai River in the south. The Kuomintang forces massed in this theatre of war consisted of 5 armies and the troops of three Pacification Zones -- the 4 armies and the troops of three Pacification Zones under Liu Chih and Tu Yu-ming (respectively Commander and Deputy Commander of the Kuomintang's "Bandit Suppression" Headquarters at Hsuehchow) and the army under Huang Wei, which was later dispatched there from central China as reinforcements. On the side of the People's Liberation Army, a force more than 600,000 strong took part in the campaign -- it included 16 columns from the Eastern China Field Army, 7 columns from the Central Plains Field Army and regional armed forces from the Eastern China Military Area the Central Plains Military Area and the Hopei-Shantung-Honan Military Area (then a part of the Northern China Military Area). The campaign lasted sixty-five days, from November 6, 1948 to January 10, 1949; 22 corps, or 56 divisions, of the Kuomintang's crack forces, comprising 555,000 men, were completely wiped out (including 4 1/2 divisions which revolted and came over), and 2 armies under Liu Ju-ming and Li Yen-nien (reinforcements from Nanking) were repulsed. As a result of the campaign, those parts of the eastern China and Central Plains areas north of the Yangtse River were almost entirely liberated. The campaign took place in three stages. During the first stage, November 6-22, the Eastern China Field Army, in co-ordination with the Central Plains Field Army, surrounded and wiped out the army under Huang Po-tao in the Hsinanchen-Nienchuang sector east of Hsuehchow, killing Huang Po-tao and liberating large territories on both sides of the Lunghai Railway east of Nienchuang, on both sides of the Hsuehchow-Pengpu section of the Tientsin-Pukow Railway, and to the west and north of Hsuehchow. In the Taierhchuang-Tsaochuang sector, 3 1/2 divisions of the Kuomintang 3rd Pacification Zone, totalling over 23,000 men, revolted and came over to us. During the second stage, from November 23 to December 15, the Central Plains Field Army, in co-ordination with the main force of the Eastern China Field Army, surrounded and wiped out the army under Huang Wei at and around Shuangtuichi, southwest of Suhsien, capturing Huang Wei and Wu Shao-chou, the commander and deputy commander of the army; 1 division of this army revolted and came over to us. At the same time, our forces wiped out the army under Sun Yuan-liang which was fleeing west from Hsuehchow. Only Sun Yuan-liang managed to escape. During the third stage, from January 6 to 10, 1949, the Eastern China Field Army,

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in co-ordination with the Central Plains Field Army, surrounded and annihilated in the Chinglungchi-Chenkuanchuang sector, northeast of Yungcheng, 2 Kuomintang armies which were fleeing westward from Hsuehchow and were commanded respectively by Chiu Ching-chuan and Li Mi, under the personal command of Tu Yu-ming. Tu Yu-ming was captured, Chiu Ching-chuan was killed and Li Mi barely escaped. This marked the successful end of the great Huai-Hai campaign. [p. 279]

^[2] "Capturing Tsinan and attacking the enemy's reinforcements" refers to the tactics employed by the People's Liberation Army during the Tsinan campaign in the middle of September 1948. Tsinan, a strategic position of the Kuomintang in Shantung Province, was garrisoned by over 110,000 men of the Kuomintang 2nd Pacification Zone. In addition, 23 brigades of the Kuomintang's main forces, with some 170,000 men, which were disposed in the Hsuehchow area, were ready to move north to relieve Tsinan. Our Eastern China Field Army formed a group of 7 columns to assault the city and another group of 8 columns to strike at the enemy's reinforcements. The onslaught against Tsinan started on the evening of September 16, 1948. On September 24, after eight days and nights of continuous fighting, the enemy garrison was completely wiped out (1 corps revolted and came over to us), and Wang Yao-wu, Commander of the Kuomintang 2nd Pacification Zone, was captured. Our forces took Tsinan so rapidly that the enemy at Hsuehchow did not dare to go north to its rescue. [p. 280]

^[3] In fact, these 2 enemy divisions did not dare to come. [p. 280]