

III

DEMCHUGDONGROB'S EARLY CAREER 1919-1928

The Ruling Prince of His Own Banner

After the old Prince Namjilwangchug died, there was not an actual ruling prince of the Sunid Right Banner for almost seventeen years. Therefore, Demchugdongrob's assumption of power as *jasag* was a momentous and happy occasion for the whole banner. It also relieved, at least ostensibly, his "official" mother (the Tumed *khatun*, the first wife of his father) and the elderly officials of the banner of their heavy responsibilities.¹

During 1919, Prince De's first year in charge of the banner administration, a group of Buriyad Mongolian intellectuals initiated the Pan-Mongolian movement, and in late February convened a meeting of delegates from Buriyad and Inner Mongolia at Dauria, in Siberia. They decided to organize a government for all Mongolia and sent representatives to the Paris Peace Conference to strive for international recognition of Mongolia's independence. Because it had already established its own government, Outer Mongolia rejected the invitation, but some Inner Mongols, especially the leaders of the Hulunbuir area in the far north of Inner Mongolia, were willing to join, and the Naiji-Toyin Khutugtu of Hohhot Tumed (Inner Mongolia) was recognized as their leader.

Though this movement failed to achieve its goal of recognition at the Paris conference, it influenced all of Mongolia. Even though the activities of Japanese militarists and the White Russian leader, Semenov, overshadowed this movement, it still helped to rouse a common Mongolian desire for unity and independence. Although Demchugdongrob was not involved in these matters, he was inevitably influenced by them. This movement was to inspire him in the future to work for the unification of all Mongolia.

On May 4 of the same year, a patriotic student demonstration broke out in Beijing because of the Chinese government's failures at the Paris Peace Conference to ward off the Japanese takeover of Germany's colonial possessions in China and the Western Pacific. The focus of this demonstration soon shifted from foreign policy concerns to a more general demand for democracy, modernization, and the breaking down of tradition. Though this important event in modern Chinese history did not directly or immediately

¹ Because Sangrubnorbu was an elderly relative of Demchugdongrob, his influence over the boy was considerable. He earnestly guided his young master to assume the burden of becoming an outstanding figure among the princes of the Shilinghol League. At this time, the Tumed *khatun* still wielded a great deal of influence over the young prince; all important decisions had to be made by her. Later on, Prince De, a man who always remembered his old friends and followers, promoted Jungnai, son of Pandei, to Pandei's position. However, Jungnai was inefficient and unable to achieve what his prince had hoped of him.

affect the Inner Mongolian banners, it did influence the minds and conduct of the Mongol students in Beijing, especially those of the Mongolian-Tibetan Academy. These young Mongol intellectuals also started demanding democracy and participated in anti-feudalistic activities. These activities not only deepened the division between the old and the young Mongols, but also increased the antagonism between conservatives and liberals. All these factors greatly affected Demchugdongrob, who had the inherited responsibility to maintain the feudalistic institutions.

Outer Mongolia, which by this time had already achieved a degree of independence or autonomy, gradually lost confidence in itself as a viable nation-state. This loss was due to the changing international situation, the conflict between the powerful Mongol ecclesiastical and lay leaders, and pressure from Beijing. All these factors led to an Outer Mongolian plan to give up its autonomy within China and restore the old prerevolutionary institutions. The government in Beijing, under the direction of northern Chinese warlord Duan Qirui, regarded resolution of the Mongolia problem as a matter of first priority. Duan wanted a solution to this problem in order to reduce opposition to his military buildup (financed by Japanese loans) and to turn the focus of public opinion away from his political problems. Duan designated himself the superintendent of frontier management, and appointed his right-hand man, Xu Shuzheng, as Minister of Northwest Frontier Management. He also appointed Xu as commander-in-chief of the Northwest Border Defense Army to lead Chinese troops northward and force the Outer Mongols to relinquish their autonomy. Xu's high-handed military policy did temporarily achieve its goal, but it eventually caused the Outer Mongols to carry out their second independence movement.

Negotiations for "Abolition of Autonomy" in Outer Mongolia led to long discussions between Ulaanbaatar and Beijing. In order to present the demands of the Jebtsundamba *Khutugtu* to the Chinese government, the Jalkhanza *Khutugtu* was sent to Beijing as a special envoy.² Among his entourage were two pro-Mongol Swedish merchants, Olson and Larson, who were working for *Shenchang yanghang*, an American company in Ulaanbaatar and Kalgan. They were brought along in order to attempt to persuade the Americans to intervene and assist the Mongols in maintaining autonomy. This attempt to involve the Americans was unsuccessful.³

² The Jakhnatzun *Khutugtu* was the most important religious leader of the two western leagues of Outer Mongolia under the Jebtsundamba. The *Dilowa Khutugtu*, who died in the United States some twenty years ago, was a high ranking "living Buddha" under Jalkhanza. It was reported that this *Diluwa Khutugtu* also was among the entourage of Jalkhanza during his visit to Beijing. About a decade later, the *Diluwa Khutugtu* fled to Inner Mongolia with about a hundred families of his disciples and settled within the territory of Prince De's banner. From then on, this high lama of Khalkha became one of the prince's main advisors.

³ During these negotiations, the Outer Mongols had to travel through Sunid, which obliged them to visit the prince of the banner. Larson was quite well known by his Chinese title, *Lan xiansheng*, or Mr. Lan. Through Larson's efforts, many Outer Mongolian leaders, including the Jebtsundamba *Khutugtu*, became acquainted with Westerners. As a token of their esteem, the Ulaanbaatar government conferred upon him the title of *gung*, or duke, and he became known to many contemporary westerners as Duke Larson. After the socialist revolution in Outer Mongolia, Larson settled

Under great pressure from General Xu Shuzheng, Ulaanbaatar's autonomy eventually ended. On November 22, 1919, the Beijing government stated, in the name of President Xu Shichang, that in accord with the "petition" of the Outer Mongolian governing body, the ruling princes, and the lamas, "the abolition of autonomy has been allowed." This collapse of Outer Mongolia greatly affected all the leagues and banners in Inner Mongolia. The Sunid Banner was especially shocked and disturbed because of its location on the main road between Ulaanbaatar and Kalgan.

On January 1, 1920, the special envoy of the Beijing government, Xu Shuzheng, carried out a grand ceremony at Outer Mongolia's main temple, Gandan Keid, and "conferred" upon the lama the revived title of Jebtsundamba *Khutugtu*. Xu used this occasion to emphasize China's sovereignty over Outer Mongolia and thereby insult this Mongol religious-political leader. His arrogance greatly provoked Mongols and led to the second independence movement. The lay and lama leaders, including the Jebtsundamba *Khutugtu* himself, advocated sending delegations to both Baron Roman von Ungern Sternberg of the defeated White Russians and to Lenin. The envoys who visited Lenin supposedly included Sukhbaatar and Choibalsan, who later became the founders of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. In addition, a delegation was sent to Harbin to negotiate, unsuccessfully as it turned out, with the Japanese for loans to buy arms.

Meanwhile, in North China, a confrontation was breaking out between the warlords of the Anhui faction, headed by Duan Qirui and Xu Shuzheng, and the warlords of the Zhili faction, under the leadership of Cao Kun and Wu Peifu. Xu Shuzheng left Mongolia and returned to Beijing in order to consolidate the power of the Anhui faction. However, the Anhui group was defeated after a short war. The victorious Zhili group announced the abolition of the office of Superintendent of Frontier Management and the Northwest Border Defense Army.

Ever since Chinese armies returned to Ulaanbaatar, endless struggles had occurred between Chinese soldiers and the Mongols. These grew worse over the years, and by 1921 had reached a climax. In February of 1921, the remnants of the White Russian army were invited by the Ulaanbaatar leaders to attack the Chinese encampments. The Mongols in the city cooperated with the Russians and helped drive the Chinese out. The Chinese officers and civilian officials fled northward to Kiakhta and abandoned their troops in the Gobi. These Chinese troops all perished either at the hands of the herdsmen or from the severely cold weather. In March, the Outer Mongols declared their independence, and the Jebtsundamba *Khutugtu* once again ascended to the throne as Bogda Khan. Also in March, a small Mongol force was sent to Chahar. These events greatly affected the Shilingol League banners, especially the Sunid Banner of Prince Demchugdongrob. Meanwhile, Sukhbaatar, Choibalsan, and their group had already come under the influence of the Communist Third International and were beginning to organize the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army to struggle for dominance in Mongolia.

down in Aduuchin (later the Shangdu Banner) of Chahar until the Japanese invasion. He could speak Mongolian fluently and was a good friend of Prince Demchugdongrob. Larson later became a liaison between the prince and many Westerners.

In April, the Ulaanbaatar regime sent a delegation to Beijing to engage in negotiations for a cease-fire and also autonomy. The northern Chinese warlords, however, held a conference among themselves in Tianjin and decided to demand that the Beijing government appoint the Fengtian (present-day Liaoning) warlord Zhang Zuolin as *Meng-jiang jinglüeshi*, or Minister of Management in Mongol Territory, to try to solve the Mongolian problem through military means. This appointment was never made because of financial difficulties and the fact that Zhang's ambitions were directed more toward North China than Mongolia.

Following the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution, there occurred a political division among the employees of the Russian consulate and the common Russians in Ulaanbaatar. Pro-Communist factions revealed their opinions openly and created a sharp confrontation between themselves and the non-Communists. After the troops of the "Mad Baron" von Sternberg entered Ulaanbaatar, the anti-Communist group carried out an indiscriminate massacre of the Reds. This created a pretext for the Soviet Red Army and the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army to march toward Ulaanbaatar, which they captured in July. In order to appease the Mongolian people, the victorious Communist forces supported the Jebtsundamba *Khutugtu* Khan as the nominal figurehead chief of state and established the *Aradun jasag*, or the People's Government. From then on until recent years Outer Mongolia remained under Communist rule.

Soon after its takeover of Outer Mongolia, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party implemented a series of drastic social revolutions. All feudalistic ruling princes and nobles, high lamas, and so-called counterrevolutionaries were denounced and severely persecuted. These unprecedented political moves were somewhat attractive to the new intellectuals of Inner Mongolia, but aroused great fear among the conservatives south of the Gobi. Of course these events did not escape the attention of Demchugdongrob, who had already been ruling for two years.

In 1923, a civil war broke out between Wu Peifu, the head of the Zhili faction of warlords, and Zhang Zuolin, the leader of the Fengtian warlords. Wu put pressure on the Beijing government to strip Zhang of his title as minister for management of Mongolian territory. During this war, the banners of the Josotu and the Juu-uda leagues of southeastern Inner Mongolia suffered badly.

Together with the defeat and withdrawal of the forces of the Fengtian faction, the three special regions of Rehe, Chahar, and Suiyuan, established on Inner Mongolian soil, all fell under the power of the Zhili warlords. The Beijing government appointed General Wang Huaqing of the Zhili clique as *Xunyue shi*, or governor-superintendent, of these three regions. It was at this time that the Chinese government combined all Chinese-style local administrative institutions south of the Gobi into one unified body and placed them under the control of a single Chinese warlord. Though this arrangement had no immediate effect on Inner Mongolian politics, it was to become a great obstacle to autonomy in later years. Whenever Inner Mongols initiated some political or economic proposals, these three special regions (later provinces) always joined together in opposition and forced the Chinese government to turn down the Mongol proposals.

Also during this year (1923), the Soviet Union and the Beijing government held a series of talks on the Outer Mongolia problem. Of course these talks pleased most of the political leaders and intellectuals of Inner Mongolia. In this same year, Sukhbaatar, founder of the Mongolian Socialist regime, died; and in Beijing, General Cao Kun was elected as president of the Republic of China thanks to a bribe.

The year 1924 was a very important year in the history of modern Mongolia. The Bogda Khan, the "God King" of Outer Mongolia, the Eighth Jebtsundamba *Khutugtu*, died in May. In June, the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party proclaimed the official title of the nation as *Bugude Nairamdakhu Monggol Arad Ulus*, "The Mongolian People's Republic," and changed the name of the capital city that had hitherto been called Urga to Ulaanbaatar, "Red Hero."

In Tibet, the long-standing confrontation of the two top religious leaders, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the Ninth Panchen Lama, ended in an open division and the flight of the Panchen Lama and his group from Tibet. This incident greatly astonished the devoutly Buddhist Mongols and had an enormous but subtle impact on the stability of Inner Mongolian political and economic life.

Shortly thereafter, the Second Zhili-Fengtian War broke out in northern China. Feng Yuxiang, a powerful leader of the Zhili clique, suddenly launched a mutiny. This unexpected conspiracy caused the downfall of Wu Peifu and his entire Zhili faction. Feng invited Duan Qirui, head of the Anhui clique, and Zhang Zuolin, head of the Fengtian clique, to Beijing to solve the remaining problems. In the winter of 1924, Feng ignored the agreement the republic had made with the Manchu Imperial Household at the time of the 1912 abdication and drove the last emperor from his palace in Beijing. This perfidious act created uneasiness among the Mongolian feudal leaders, including young Prince Demchugdongrob.⁴

In addition, Duan Qirui was installed as the provisional head of the government. In order to reach a settlement, Duan suggested inviting all leading national figures to Beijing for a "Rehabilitation Conference" to reunify China. Duan also sent an invitation to Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Kuomintang, who at that time had his own independent government in Guangzhou. Sun's political priorities were the implementation of his *San min zhuyi* (the Three Principles of the People), the completion of the national revolution, and engaging in cooperation with the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communists to liberate China from the yoke of imperialism and feudalism. Sun accepted Duan's invitation and left for Beijing via Japan in spite of a serious illness. His proposed solution for the nation's problems involved convening a "National Conference" which would include laborers, peasants, and intellectuals; this would have had a far broader participation than the Rehabilitation Conference Duan had initiated. Sun's arrival in Beijing brought tremendous excitement to liberals and intellectuals, including some young Mongols.

Earlier, in 1912, when Sun Yat-sen first came to Beijing, the only Mongolian leaders who had contact with him and his group were probably Gungsangnorbu, Prince of Kharachin, and Yao Shan, a parliamentarian from the Keshigten Banner of the Juu-uda League. Although these two joined Sun's Kuomintang, they could not maintain contact with him because he was always in southern China engaging in revolutionary struggles against the government in Beijing. Later, during the civil war, the Mongolian parliamentarians Uribatu, Chidaltu, Bai Rui, and Altanwachir (also known by his Chinese name, Jin Yongchang) proceeded to Guangzhou to join Sun's camp. They were from Prince Gung's Kharachin Right Banner. Altanwachir had been one of the students sent by Gungsangnorbu to Japan. Sun's doctrine, already too radical for most conservative Mongols, became even more so after the founding of a socialistic regime in Outer Mon-

⁴ Arthur Waldron, *From War to Nationalism: China's Turning Point, 1924-1925* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

golia and Sun's announcement that the Kuomintang would have Communists within its ranks.⁵

Deputy Head of the Shilingol League

The year 1924 was quite important for Demchugdongrob's future career. It was the first year he became involved with Mongolian politics outside his own banner. Prince Yangsang, who had been head of the Shilingol League since 1895, decided to retire from this honorary position. Nevertheless, the old prince was not willing to follow the regular procedure of stepping down and having the deputy-head, Sodnamrabdan (Prince of Ujumuchin), promoted to league head. Instead, he transferred his position to the young and capable *jasag* of the Sunid, Demchugdongrob. Of course this move was made in consideration of the traditional political entanglements and intrigues of the three powerful banners of Abaga, Ujumuchin, and Sunid. Prince Yangsang did not wish to have the Ujumuchin prince lead the ten banners of the Shilingol League but instead wanted to do for Demchugdongrob (hereafter called "Prince De") what Prince De's father had previously done for Yangsang by stepping down from the position of league head and passing it on to Yangsang.

Promotion of the deputy head to the post of league head was the customary procedure, but there was no definite restriction against another capable and prestigious noble being appointed as league head instead. However, the Abaga-Sunid alliance against Ujumuchin had to depend on the final decision of the Beijing government, which in turn usually based its decisions on the recommendation of the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry. Although by 1924 the power of this ministry had been undermined by the warlords, Prince Gungasangnorbu still possessed the power to settle leadership problems among the Mongolian leagues and banners. Unfortunately, neither the leading officials of the Sunid Right Banner nor Buyandalai, Prince De's trusted relative, had any way to reach Gungasangnorbu to negotiate such a secret political arrangement. So as not to lose this opportunity to increase their political power, the Sunid officials sent Sangrubnorbu (the old *Jagirugchi* and the maternal uncle of Prince De) to Beijing to lobby for a favorable decision.

Sangrubnorbu was acquainted with my father, Lobsangchoijur, an acting resident and trusted confidant of Prince Gung, who had many friends in the Shilingol League. My father was an especially good friend of Sodnamrabdan, the Prince of Ujumuchin Banner. For this reason, Sangrubnorbu tried hard to persuade my father to influence Ujumuchin to make some concessions. As a present from Sunid Banner, Sangrubnorbu brought a famous horse and eight thousand silver dollars to my father, who ac-

⁵ Ever since the May Fourth movement of 1919, a great deal of ideological change had been occurring among the students of the Mongolian-Tibetan Academy in Beijing. A few of them had even joined Sun Yat-sen's Kuomintang. The most active of these liberal intellectuals was Serengdongrob, much better known by his Chinese name, Bai Yunti. Bai was a young man from the Khara-chin Central Banner. After joining the party, he often traveled between Beijing and Canton, acting as a liaison officer for the party. The arrival of Sun Yat-sen in Beijing gave him greater hopes for advancing his career. Bai won the support of Sun and also of Feng Yuxiang, who was then already openly collaborating with the Soviet Union. Soon thereafter, Bai began establishing a politically liberal party called the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary party.

cepted the horse but rejected the money. At the same time, an Ujumuchin envoy also arrived in Beijing to lobby the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry to follow the normal procedure and recommend their prince as future head of the Shilingol League. In consideration of these circumstances, my father related to me later that he had admonished Sangrub-norbu as follows:

Prince Sodnamrabdan is an elder and has held the position of deputy head of the league for years. If your prince jumps past Prince So and becomes the head, there will be great disharmony between Sunid and Ujumuchin, and that would be a loss to the Shilingol League. Moreover, your prince is younger; he can certainly become the head in the future. Why should you be so concerned to hurry along like this? If you agree, I will do my best to influence the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry to recommend your prince as the candidate for deputy head, and I will petition the president for his appointment.

Because of this persuasive argument, an agreement was eventually reached between the Sunid and Ujumuchin banners. Prince So was nominated as league head and Prince De as deputy. This compromise not only eased tension between Ujumuchin and Sunid but also increased the harmony between the two princes. Afterward, Prince De always addressed Prince So as *bagshi* or "teacher," because of his seniority. As it turned out, Prince So, who had no political ambitions, always deferred to Prince De's judgment. This made it easier for the latter to achieve great success. Another result was that because of my father's honorable behavior, Prince De had confidence in me and often said to me, "Your father is an upright, honest person who cannot be bribed. He is a person able to resist the temptation of money. You ought to take your father as your model." This shows the standards Prince De used in measuring his followers.

During this period, Prince De frequently traveled from his own banner to Hohhot, Kalgan, and Beijing. His official mother, the Tumed *khatun*, also occasionally accompanied him to provide personal guidance. In Beijing, they usually stayed at the famous Lamaist temple *Songzhu-si*, which a Manchu emperor had built for the Janggiya *Khutugtu*. I remember the young Mongolian prince as quite smart in appearance. He was slim, had large eyes, and a high, small nose. There was an aura of nobility about him. But because he held to conservative Manchu-Mongol tradition by wearing a queue, he was excluded from many social activities in Beijing and other Chinese cities for participants in which the queue was a symbol of obstinacy and backwardness. He was also constantly criticized by liberal Mongolian intellectuals. He finally cut the queue off, but not until 1945, when Outer Mongolia's independence was at last formally recognized by the government of the Republic of China.

Prince De has been criticized for going to see Puyi in Beijing even after the young ex-emperor had been expelled from his palace by Feng Yuxiang, and for giving Puyi money after the young man moved to Tianjin and for continuing to be submissive to him in a manner befitting a vassal of the Manchu court. But if one considers the education that Prince De received during his younger days and the environment in which he was raised, it is obvious that he considered loyalty to his lord an extremely important virtue. In light of this, his actions are understandable. Nevertheless, Prince De's attitude of subordination toward his former Manchu overlord brought him caustic criticism and ridicule from most of the nationalistic Mongol intellectuals. Under such pressure, by the end of the 1930s he finally gave up this "foolish obedience and loyalty."

After Prince De was nominated as deputy head of the Shilingol League, the old *Jagirugchi* of the Sunid Banner, Sangrubnorbu, retired, having fulfilled his obligation to the princely family. When Sangrubnorbu retired, Prince De was released from the "guidance" of his old advisors, gained a free hand in managing banner affairs and thereafter could determine his own destiny. Nevertheless, the formal appointment of Prince De was delayed for two years because of the absence of the Chinese president.

His First Political Experience in Beijing

In 1925, political events in Beijing and elsewhere had major repercussions in Inner Mongolia. Among these events, the formation of the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party was especially significant. As mentioned earlier, the establishment of the Mongolian People's Republic and the ideology of Sun Yat-sen and his Kuomintang both attracted many young Mongolian intellectuals. The arrival of Sun Yat-sen in Beijing provided a good chance for these Mongol liberals to form a political party of their own. The leaders of this movement were Serendongrob (Bai Yunti), Altanwachir, Engkeburin, Dechin (also known as Yi Dechin), Prince Gungsangnorbu's students who had studied in Japan; Mandaltu (Li Danshan), the former clerk of the Harbin Mongolian language newspaper; and Merse (Guo Daofu) and Fumingtai—both Dahur Mongol intellectuals.

Earlier, through the intervention of the Communist Third International (Comintern), a special Outer Mongolian delegate had been sent to Canton to meet with Sun Yat-sen to negotiate possible cooperation between the two regimes. Sun and his party recognized the Mongolian revolution and the principle of self-determination. Consequently, the formation of an Inner Mongolian party gained support from both the Comintern and the Outer Mongolian MPRP. Because of the influence of the Comintern, the pro-Soviet Chinese warlord Feng Yuxiang and the Chinese Communist Party also supported the formation of this Inner Mongolian party.

In the spring of 1925, the founding congress of this party was held in Kalgan. The Chinese name which members adopted for their party was *Nei Menggu Guomindang*, or Inner Mongolian Kuomintang. The party's Mongolian name, however, was *Totugadu\Dotogadu Monggol-un arad-un khubisgaltu nam*, meaning "the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary party." The difference between the Mongolian and Chinese titles clearly suggests the party's complicated political background. It was designed to appeal to both Mongols and Chinese and implies that this new party was an extension of neighboring fraternal parties.⁶

The party wanted to eradicate all Mongolian feudalistic institutions; to overthrow the ruling Mongol princes, feudal lords, and Chinese warlords; to struggle against foreign imperialists; and to implement social reform. It published pamphlets to propa-

⁶ The congress elected Serendongrob (Bai Yunti), Merse, Bayantai, Yi Dechin, Sainbayar, Murungga (Yao/Yue Jingtao), Fumingtai, Mandaltu, Altanwachir, and others as members of the central committee, with Serendongrob as chairman, Merse as secretary general, and Altanwachir as director of the organizational department. Later, however, Bayantai, Yi Dechin, Sainbayar, and Mandaltu all joined the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement under the leadership of Prince De.

gandize its doctrines. Because of the region's longstanding conservative traditions, the great majority of Inner Mongolian people did not look favorably on the party's doctrines. The noble class, the high lamas, and elderly conservatives in general regarded party members as enemies and even as evil beings. Although the conservative Mongolian elements in Beijing were greatly disturbed, Prince Gungsangnorbu did not openly interfere with the activities of party members. This encouraged these liberals to go ahead with their plans.

They had no single party line for the national survival of Inner Mongolia. Bai (Serengdongrob) told me much later during a conversation in Taiwan that while he was visiting with Prince Gung and seeking support for his party, the prince warned him that if the Mongols fought among themselves, they would be weakened and handicapped in their struggle against their external enemies. Likewise, when Dambadorji, the nationalist leader of Outer Mongolia, was in Kalgan to celebrate the founding of the Inner Mongolian party, he also advised Bai that the Mongols' first priority should be to maintain internal unity and to defend themselves against external enemies. Internal struggle among the Mongols would pose a dangerous threat to Mongol interests. As it turned out, however, the advice from these two outstanding statesmen was not sufficient to help the party decide on its basic line.

Through the Comintern's involvement in the activities of the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary party, a famous Mongolian writer named Buyannemeku was sent to Beijing to try to win over the intellectuals, especially the students of the Mongolian-Tibetan Academy. Several student groups were also sent to Ulaanbaatar and Moscow for further political training. Yun Ze (later known as Ulanfu), Yun Run (Ulanfu's older brother), Dugurengsang (also known as Bai Haifeng), Oljeiochir, and Rong Zhao were among them.

Sunid was not a target of this movement, but because of its geographical location, many of the people associated with it traveled through its territory. The Sunid leaders had no choice but to be alert to these new occurrences that they could not help but view with a conservative eye.

While the Inner Mongolian Kuomintang carried on its activities, Duan Qirui was conducting the Rehabilitation Conference in Beijing. This was the first time Prince De had attended a national political gathering of the Republic of China. Prince De represented the Shilingol League. The opening session convened on February 1, 1925. Formal discussions began on February 13, and the conference ended on April 21. Because the parliament had been dissolved, Duan announced the establishment of a Preliminary Committee for Political Consultation to act in its stead. Because Prince De's attitude differed from that of the elder Mongol princes, he was named a member of that committee.

During this period, Prince De became aware of the activities of Bai Yunti and his leftist revolutionary group, and soon understood the goals of this new party in the changing political climate. Since he was a feudal prince and a target for overthrow, the impact of these events was very strong; he became more conservative in his thought and retained this conservatism in his later political life.

Another important event that greatly shaped Prince De's future activity also occurred in 1925. This event was the arrival of the Ninth Panchen Erdeni Lama in Beijing. I was then only ten years old. Because I accompanied my father to the magnificent welcome ceremony at the west station of Beijing, I still clearly recall that event. The Mongols and those Tibetans who had no close connections with the Dalai Lama's rival

regime in Lhasa all gathered at the station. Prince Gungsangnorbu, General-Director of the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry, was the head of this group and one of the main delegates of the Beijing government.

After his arrival, the Panchen Lama was accommodated at Yingtai, a small island where the Empress Dowager Cixi had imprisoned the Guangxu Emperor at the end of the Qing Dynasty. During the early republican period, this place became a part of the garden at the presidential residence and this stage for historical tragedy, immediately became a Mongolian center for worship. Countless Mongol pilgrims, both nobles and commoners, laymen and lamas, poured into Beijing from all the leagues and banners. They offered money, gold, silver, jewels, and ornaments—whatever they had—to this Tibetan spiritual leader. Poor commoners donated more generously than did the powerful and rich. The Panchen Lama, because of his religious zeal and political interests, was friendly toward these Mongol pilgrims. His disciples, however, especially the *khambus* (high-ranking lama officials), who had whipped up the conflict with the Dalai Lama's regime, paid attention only to the nobles and neglected the commoners.

After the arrival of the Panchen Lama, Beijing became a prime gathering spot for Inner Mongolian princes, nobles, and dignitaries. Their first priority was, of course, to seek religious blessings for this life and the next. Nevertheless, in the course of making these contacts, the subject of politics was unavoidable. These social contacts greatly aroused Prince De's interest and provided him his first experience in the art of making political contacts. He was quite attracted to both the Panchen Lama and his *khambus* and the friendship he established with them continued to develop and greatly influenced Mongolian politics in the future.

This religious and political environment made it possible for Prince De to get reacquainted with his old friends and to meet more Mongolian dignitaries.⁷ It seems, however, that Prince Gungsangnorbu, the leader of Mongolian officialdom in Beijing, and Ayulugei, chief of the General Affairs Bureau of the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry, did not pay much attention to this young, ambitious but inexperienced prince. Prince De was able to establish personal contacts with some conservative Mongol leaders, but he was unable to become acquainted with the more enlightened, moderate, and experienced leaders of that time. Naturally this had an impact on his later political activities. In addition, because of the conflict between the old conservatives who befriended him and the new leftist liberals, Prince De remained unsympathetic to the latter's proposals.

After the Rehabilitation Conference was over, Duan Qirui organized the Preliminary Committee for Political Consultation, and on July 29, 1925, he appointed four more Mongols (Amurchinggelu, Prince De, Rinchinwangjil, and Lingsheng), three Tibetans, two Manchus, three Chinese, and two Chinese Moslems as committee members. Prince De learned much from his resulting experience in Chinese politics.

On July 30, 1925, two days after Prince De's appointment as a member, the Preliminary Committee for Political Consultation had its first meeting. In reality, this committee was nothing more than a political tool for Duan and had no real power. The

⁷ Two such dignitaries were Lingsheng, a Duke of the Hulunbuir League in the north of Inner Mongolia and son of Guifu, the most influential leader of that area, and Amurchinggelu, a parliamentarian from Jerim League, southeast of the Hulunbuir League, and the lama uncle of Chimed-sampil, head of that league.

political situation in Beijing was also uncertain, and many of the old Mongol politicians assumed a wait and see attitude, unwilling to become involved. Nevertheless, Beijing still needed to resolve certain legislative matters and therefore needed Mongolian delegates to attend Preliminary Committee sessions. Without these delegates, there would have been no one to speak on behalf of the Mongol people. For this purpose, Prince Gungsangnorbu and his advisor, Ayulugei, recommended that Wu Heling⁸ of their own Kharachin Right Banner attend the Rehabilitation Conference. They later helped him to be elected a member of the Preliminary Committee for Political Consultation.

After his betrayal of the Zhili faction, Feng Yuxiang had titled himself Superintendent of the Northwest Border Defense, and had placed the three special regions of Rehe, Chahar, and Suiyuan (Hohhot) under his own control. This placed most of the Inner Mongolian leagues and banners under his sway. To settle his surplus soldiers and to secure a steady source of military supplies, food, and provisions, he advocated cultivation of Mongol grazing fields. This affected those areas near the centers of Chinese settlement, such as the Chahar, Tumed, Yekejuu, Alashan, and southern Ulanachab Banners.

In the meantime, decline in the condition of herders in eastern Inner Mongolia was approaching the low level of the west. Collaborating with shrewd merchants to steal Mongol land was an artful device used by Chinese warlords, officials, and their followers for getting rich. Such maneuvers had already begun by the end of the Qing Dynasty but worsened during the early Republican years. Zhang Zuolin often sent in his army to pressure Mongol herders into abandoning their grazing fields. By this time, both Zhang and Feng supported Duan Qirui in his position of supreme leader. To reward Zhang for his support, Duan agreed to accept Zhang's request and in January of 1925 formally appointed him as Superintendent-Commander of Northeastern Border Cultivation and Defense. Zhang promulgated official procedures for legalizing earlier illegal seizures of Mongol land. Zhang subsequently appointed Zou Zuohua as commander of military cultivation, and Zou used his artillery to force the Mongols from their good pastures.

Because of their dependence on Feng Yuxiang, Bai Yunti and his liberal group could not protest this seizure of Mongolian land. This failure diminished the reputation of Bai's group and exposed it for what it was: a weak organization that adopted tough attitudes toward internal rivals, but dared not utter even one word in opposition to external oppression.

According to Wu Heling, Prince De protested this Chinese takeover and cultivation of Mongolian pasture land. This was his first political move connected with the

⁸ Unenbayan, better known by his Chinese name Wu Heling, was the eldest son of Lamajab, the organizer of the Mongolian volunteers who fought the fanatically superstitious Chinese *Jin dan dao* (Red Caps) rebels and protected the western half of the Kharachin territory. Wu Heling studied at the Beijing College of Law and Politics and later graduated from the Department of Chinese Literature of Beijing University. He served in both the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry and the Mongolian-Tibetan Academy. In emulation of his father's career, he displayed very strong nationalistic aspirations. Politically, he was rather moderate and practical. He was only five or six years older than Prince De, and so it was natural that these two young Mongol members should meet. Both were conservatives allied against the leftist movement led by the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, but because both were strong-willed, they were from the first unable to cooperate with each other. The nature of their relationship changed over time, and both of them remained engaged in the political struggles of Inner Mongolia.

future of Mongolia. During this period, no Mongolian political initiative in Beijing could have been smoothly carried out without the support of Prince Gungsangnorbu and the other elder leaders, but also of such younger men as Wu Heling. Because the goal of this initiative was to secure national survival and economic protection, the Mongols in Beijing and the entire student body of the Mongolian-Tibetan Academy responded positively to it. On April 27, 1925, they gathered at the academy, marched to the personal residence of Duan Qirui, and submitted a petition clearly stating that all Mongols opposed Chinese immigration onto and cultivation of Mongol lands and demanding that Chinese takeovers stop immediately. Because this was the first Mongolian demonstration in the capital since the establishment of the republic, the Beijing government was caught off guard and accepted the demand in the petition. The newspapers published both the Mongols' petition and Duan's order that Chinese cultivation in Mongolian territory be stopped.

The government's decision had no effect on the powerful warlords, however, and there was no response from either Feng Yuxiang or Zhang Zuolin. Consequently, the order to protect Mongol land remained a dead letter. As this failure became apparent, Prince De came to more fully realize the incompetence of the central government and the arrogance of the local warlords. He realized that in the future, he could not rely on mere bureaucratic orders to solve Mongolia's problems. Later, in 1933, when Prince De initiated the Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement, the declaration of this movement stated, "At first there were migration and cultivation. Then came the establishment of [Chinese] provinces and *xian* [counties or districts]. The so-called policy for developing [Chinese] national wealth and strength is nothing but a mortal wound for Mongolia." Perhaps these thoughts had already entered his mind by 1925.

In the fall of 1925, Prince De resigned from his post as a member of the Preliminary Committee for Political Consultation; this resignation was later accepted by Duan Qirui. The reason for his resignation was not made clear.

The Eve of the Kuomintang's Northern Campaign

In late September of 1925, the Mongolian People's Republic government telegraphed the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry in Beijing to seek recognition of its self-determination. The telegram expressed willingness to send a delegation to Beijing to negotiate a lasting peace between Outer Mongolia and China. This peace offer evoked no response from Beijing. It did, however, attract the attention of some Mongols in Beijing, being especially noticed among the young intellectuals.

Soon after, war broke out among the North Chinese warlords, and Zhang Zuolin emerged the victor. By the end of March 1926, the defeated Feng Yuxiang went to Russia via Sunid and Ulaanbaatar to seek help. During this war, the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary/Kuomintang and its troops sided with Feng. Following Feng's defeat, they were forced to retreat south to the Yekejuu League in southwestern Inner Mongolia.

In early April of 1926, the troops of Tang Yulin, under the command of Zhang Zuolin, occupied Chengde, the capital of the Rehe Special Region. Soon afterward, Tang Yulin was appointed governor-general. From that time until the Japanese occupation in 1933, all the Chinese *xians* and the Mongolian banners of both the Juu-uda and Josotu Leagues, west of the lower Liao River, came under Tang's despotic rule.

Tang Yulin was Zhang Zuolin's old friend. In their youth they belonged to the same bandit gang. Tang was able, therefore, to perpetrate many evil deeds at will. But because he was restricted by law, Tang was unable to interfere in the administration of the Mongol leagues and banners. He did have enough military power to pressure some weak and cowardly Mongol ruling princes and officials to assent to Chinese cultivation of their territories' pastoral land. His high-handed measures in the Mongolian banners were similar to those of Yigu in the Suiyuan (Hohhot) area at the end of the Qing Dynasty. However, Tang's greediness and corruption far exceeded those of his predecessors. Under Tang's rule, the territory of Rehe virtually became an opium factory from which he smuggled opium to Beijing and Tianjin. He also pillaged the Khitan Liao tombs at War-mangkha in Baarin Banner, just east of Shilingol, appropriating their treasures as his personal possessions.

Tang Yulin's illegal activities greatly damaged Prince Gungsangnorbu's prestige, even within his own power base, the Josotu and Juu-uda Leagues. Tang's tyrannical rule increased the antagonism of the young intellectuals toward China and worsened Mongol-Chinese relations in general. Actually, Tang Yulin was not liked by the Chinese either, though all his collaborators were Chinese. In 1933, when the Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement began, more young people from this area than from most other areas flocked to join the movement. Tang Yulin's tyranny was probably the main reason.

Someone later asked Prince De, "Antagonistic feelings against warlordism were universal in those days; why did you Mongols turn these feelings into a nationalistic movement?" Prince De's answer was: "Tang Yulin's oppression of the Chinese people imbued them with a deep hatred only against the tyrannical warlords. This bitterness was similar to that felt by the Mongol people against the bad Mongolian ruling princes. Neither could create any nationalistic problem. Tang Yulin is, however, a Chinese, and his transgressions against the Mongols could not help but create a Mongol national antagonism against alien rule."

On April 20, under pressure from both Zhang Zuolin and Wu Peifu, Duan Qirui stepped down as head of state. From this time until the Kuomintang occupation in the summer of 1928, Beijing came under the control of Zhang Zuolin. Zhang gave one of his daughters in marriage to the eldest son of Namjilsereng, prince of the Darkhan Banner of the Jerim League, and through this relationship Zhang was able to persuade the prince to agree to still more Chinese cultivation of Mongol lands. Later, the fury of the Mongols caused the herdsmen to gather under the leadership of Gada Meiren, the head of the banner's military forces, and begin violent resistance against cultivation. However, this group of "Mongol bandits" was completely exterminated in the valley of the Laukha River. Zhang Zuolin's policy was to create divisions among the Mongols, draw the friendly nobles to his side, and then eliminate his remaining opponents one by one. In order to damage the personal prestige of Prince Gungsangnorbu, Zhang deliberately downplayed the importance of the Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry through malign neglect. His aim was to eliminate the leadership of the Mongols by dissolving their unity.

By late summer of 1925, Zhang Zuolin occupied Doloonnor, an important city in the center of Inner Mongolia; and he put the eastern half of Chahar and Shilingol Leagues under his influence. In early September, Zhang Zuolin sent his son Zhang Xueliang to Taiyuan to negotiate conditions for collaboration with the Shanxi warlord Yan Xishan. As a result of these talks, the Fengtian clique agreed to let the Shanxi clique occupy the territory of Suiyuan (Hohhot) as its exclusive domain.

According to Manchu custom, the ordinary administration of the Yekejuu League and the Tumed Banner was handled by the *Li-fan Yuan* (Ministry of Dependencies) of the central government. Only the military supervision was the responsibility of the *Suiyuan-cheng Jiangjun*, the general of Suiyuan (Hohhot) city. Later, because of the increase in Chinese immigration, the Manchu government gradually established *ting*, *zhou*, and *xian* administrative geographic units for these settlements to handle Chinese affairs. These Chinese-style administrative units were placed under the jurisdiction of the governor (*xunfu*) of Shanxi Province.⁹ Following the aforementioned agreement between the Fengtian and Shanxi factions, the latter took possession of the Suiyuan area and firmly controlled it until 1949. All these events were inseparably connected with Mongolian politics and the future life of Prince De.

Yan Xishan, the Shanxi head, was a man with many new ideas. He was educated at the Japanese Military Academy, and since the founding of the republic in 1912 had been head of both civilian and military affairs of Shanxi Province. Because of his shrewdness, he was the most resilient of all the North Chinese warlords and the most qualified to sustain his rule over Shanxi, which he did until the Communist takeover in 1949. Though, modeling himself on Mussolini, he brought some modernization, new construction, and enterprises to his native province. His ambition, however, was directed solely at making Shanxi Province an independent kingdom under his personal leadership. Even the railroad he built from Kalgan, on the Shanxi border, to Taiyuan, the provincial capital, was of a narrower gauge than all the other trunk line railroads in China.

Yan's own home was Hebian Village of Wutai *xian*, in the vicinity of the famous Buddhist Wutai Mountain. Because of a common belief among the Mongols that this mountain is the shrine of the Bodhisattva Manjushiri, multitudes of pilgrims, laymen, and lamas poured into this area every year, particularly from Mongolia. This holy site, as a result, turned into a haven for commercial activities. The money the Mongols brought to donate to Buddhist temples and lamas usually wound up in the hands of Shanxi merchants. Hebian Village, located on the road to the holy mountain, gave Yan Xishan the chance to get acquainted with the character of the Mongols, especially their shortcomings. Yan's policy toward the Mongols took advantage of their ignorance and disunity, encroaching upon their land and undermining the integrity of Mongolian administration, increasing the volume of Chinese immigration, and changing Mongolian pastoral fields into Chinese farmlands. He cleverly used threats and bribes to make the Mongol nobles accept his demands. All this made confrontation between Yan and the nationalistic leaders of Inner Mongolia and the Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement of 1933 seem inevitable.

⁹ Because the Chinese settlers were all from Shanxi, the settlements in Ulanhab, Yekejuu, and Tumed in effect became Shanxi colonies, and the economies of these areas were monopolized by Shanxi Chinese. After the republic was founded in 1912, involvement with the Outer Mongolia problem and the difficulty inherent in immediately establishing provinces in Inner Mongolia, led the Beijing government to establish three *tebie qu* (special regions), Suiyuan, Rehe and Chahar, and to place these areas under the jurisdiction of *jiangjuns* (generals) or *dutongs* (governors-general). Nevertheless, according to law, the administration of the Mongolian leagues and banners remained independent of the jurisdiction of the *tebie qu*, and the function of the governors-general was limited to supervision, not domination of the leagues and banners.

While the Northern Chinese warlords were occupied with the confrontation among themselves, Chiang Kai-shek, commander-in-chief of the Kuomintang party army, announced in Guangzhou on July 1, 1926 the beginning of the Northern Expedition. This historically important event did not draw the attention of ordinary Mongols, but the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party did take careful note of it.

In the winter of the same year, Feng Yuxiang returned from Russia through Outer Mongolia and reinforced his troops in Wuyuan and Baotou. The headquarters of the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party were also located there. Members of this party resolutely carried out their social revolution in some banners of the Yekejuu League, and this occasioned a counterattack from several quarters.

The Northern Expedition of 1926-27 was a success: the Yangzi River valley quickly fell under the control of the Kuomintang. An anti-Communist movement had meanwhile emerged inside the party, and a split between its right and left wings became inevitable. The right wing, under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek in Nanjing, expelled the Communists and the Soviet advisors from the party and began an open struggle against the KMT's own left wing, which was under the leadership of Wang Jingwei (also known as Wang Zhaoming) in Wuhan. This struggle ended with the victory of the right wing and led to a "party purge." The Communists, who had been purged somewhat before this, hid underground or escaped to the countryside, where they later joined other Communists engaged in guerrilla warfare.

Meanwhile, Zhang Zuolin had sent armed men and police to seize the Soviet embassy in Beijing. His men found many secret documents and arrested the well-known Chinese Communist leader Li Dazhao, then the main liaison officer between his party and the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

Impressed with the Kuomintang victories, the North Chinese warlords Feng Yuxiang and Yan Xishan joined the party and turned against Zhang Zuolin. In Ulaanbaatar, at the instigation of the Comintern delegate, the leftists criticized Bai Yunti (Serengdongrob) and his right-wing associates. Bai's group was protected and spirited out of Outer Mongolia by Dambadorji, who was able to return them to their old headquarters in Ningxia. Supported by his old comrades, Bai issued an anti-Soviet, anti-Communist declaration. In November of that year he went to Nanjing as a representative of his party with instructions to petition for unification with the Chinese Kuomintang. Bai's request was accepted by both the Kuomintang party officials and the government, and he became a Mongolian dignitary in the new KMT regime. This new political alignment became the root of endless problems among the Mongols after the Northern Expedition.

While Chiang Kai-shek's army was achieving military victories in the south, Japan dispatched an army division to Shantung to impede his further progress to the north. This Japanese interference did not, however, stop the Northern Expedition. Perceiving the changes in the Chinese military situation, Zhang Zuolin established a military government in Beijing and made himself generalissimo. This move made apparent to all the political bankruptcy of the Beijing regime. The local warlords continued to encroach into lands of the leagues and banners of Inner Mongolia, and Gungsangnorbu's Mongolian-Tibetan Ministry could not find a satisfactory solution to this state of affairs. Prince Gung submitted his resignation, but the Beijing government did not accept it. In order to release himself from such a difficult situation, Prince Gong claimed illness and remained

at home for some time. This political setback temporarily deprived the Mongols of their leader, but it served to encourage ambitious and idealistic Mongolian youth to strive for the leadership of Inner Mongolia.

During these years, Prince De traveled continually between Beijing and Inner Mongolia and increased his experience in, and understanding of, Chinese politics. He realized that without military force there could be no resolution of any of the problems faced by the Mongols, and that he could not achieve his objectives through his personal capability and prestige alone. He saw that the Mongols must ultimately depend on their own collective strength for protection. This realization led him to begin consolidating the military forces of his own banner.¹⁰

Prince De's first step was to reorganize the forces of his banner and appoint a *mergen janggi* (tertiary banner official) as the head of the troops according to the old system. Prince De did his best to provide these forces with modern arms and made a valiant but fruitless attempt to train them in modern military tactics.

As part of his military reorganization, Prince De built a camp about two kilometers west of his residence to accommodate his troops and their arms. He soon found someone able to introduce comparatively modern forms of training and techniques to the troops. He also established a weapons-repairing facility and an automotive repair shop. Later, the Panchen Lama came and stayed at Sunid. Because the Lama's bodyguards were stationed at this camp, Prince De's people obtained many new ideas from them, and this made it possible for them to improve their factories and training. Although Prince De laid these foundations during the early stage of his political life, they did not bring great success. All his later achievements were the results of contributions from other sources.

¹⁰ The feudalistic Manchu system in Inner Mongolia organized every one hundred fifty families into one *sumu*. Except for lamas, all males ages eighteen to sixty (by Mongolian calculation) were enlisted in the military. Of every three men, one would be a *khuyagh*, or soldier, and the other two were *ere*, or probationary soldiers. The ruling *jasagh* was the commander. By the end of the Qing, however, this system was functional in name only. For self-defense, the banners usually organized military units according to this system and mobilized small military forces to deal with emergencies. After the establishment of the Republic, these forces were called "peace preservation corps."

Most of the weapons these forces possessed were old and inefficient; had they had machine guns, the banners could have stopped the invasions of local bandits and defeated the minor warlord troops. Some weapons were donated by the government or the powerful warlords, and some were given by the warlords in exchange for horses; most were bought illegally at exorbitant prices.