

Chinese Migration to North-West China and Inner Mongolia, 1949-59

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DURING the first decade of their mainland rule, the Chinese Communists sent considerable numbers of people from the densely populated provinces to develop China's frontier regions and to ensure that the minority peoples there were assimilated into the new Chinese Communist order of things. While some Chinese were sent to the minority areas of the southwest, the overwhelming majority migrated to the North-West¹ and Inner Mongolia. From examining the available evidence, which has not been used comprehensively before, it becomes clear that the pattern of migration is essentially the same for each region in the three phases of migration which took place during the period under consideration—the small scale migration until 1955; the first organised mass migration which coincided with the Leap Forward of 1956 and the subsequent period of consolidation in 1957; and the migration during the Great Leap Forward of 1958.

All total figures on this subject need to be treated cautiously. There are obvious omissions because data are not available. Moreover, the Chinese sometimes did not give the number of people involved or just mentioned that "large numbers" (*i ta p'i*) were moving to the frontier regions. At other times there was considerable overlapping of news releases. For example, one or more provinces may send people to Sinkiang, Tsinghai and Kansu without specifying how many went to each province. Although I have tried to eliminate double-counting the difficulties mentioned above make a complete elimination of this hazard virtually impossible. Also my total figures are conservative. Whenever the Chinese listed a movement of "more than" a certain number of people I used only the number given. Where there were several provinces of destination, some of which are not included in this study, the number of places was divided by the number of migrants involved. This tends to under-estimate the number of people destined for Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang.

¹ The term "North-West," as used in this article, refers to the provinces of Kansu and Tsinghai and the autonomous regions of Sinkiang and Ninghsia.

THE SMALL BEGINNING

During the first six years of Communist rule, officially sponsored migration was only on a very small scale. This is not surprising. Bringing the North-West and Inner Mongolia under control took much longer than expected; China's transport system had been badly disrupted by the civil war; and it was not until after 1953, when economic planning got under way, that the Communist Party could specify what economic development should be undertaken.

According to one Chinese source less than 600,000 people migrated within mainland China between the founding of the Communist state and 1955.² Probably less than 100,000 Chinese migrated to the North-West and Inner Mongolia during this period. Apparently in 1955, the only year prior to 1956 for which figures are available, about 39,600 Chinese migrants went to these areas. In the first few years it seems that only people whose skills were needed were sent.³ By 1954, however, many Chinese migrated on their own initiative or, more likely, were sent by the authorities in their home provinces who had no concept of how few people the borderland could absorb at this time.

The Sinkiang provincial government, meeting on October 11, 1954, discussed the "blind influx of masses" into Sinkiang.⁴ At this time Sinkiang (and other places in the North-West) was faced with the problem of people moving into the cities, such as Urumchi and Kashgar, from the rural areas. It was revealed at the meeting that the authorities did not know the number of people who had come into Sinkiang. It was decided that government bodies in Sinkiang were to find suitable jobs for the people from intra-mural China. On the other hand, a concentrated propaganda campaign which emphasised the importance of agricultural production, was to "persuade" the local peasants who had come into the cities of Sinkiang to return to their villages. The campaign's effect seems to have been only temporary. The regional assembly complained in 1957 that during the first nine months of the year some 20,000 people from Sinkiang and other parts of the North-West had "blindly flowed" into Urumchi, T'ach'eng, Hami and Ch'angchi.⁵

Three main categories of people moved into the North-West and Inner Mongolia during 1954 and 1955. First there was a continued dispatch of such specialists as oil engineers, accountants, nurses, statisticians, metal workers, construction company managers together with a handful

² Chiao Yu, "About the problems of resettlement and reclamation," *Kuang-ming Daily*, January 15, 1957.

³ *Ibid.* June 3, 1962; NCNA, Tsingtao, April 5, 1954.

⁴ *Hsinchiang Daily*, Urumchi, June 18, 1954.

⁵ *Ibid.* November 24, 1957.

of physicians and professors from Fudan University in Shanghai. There were at least 6,300 migrants of this kind. While some were sent by the central government in Peking and the city of Chengchow, most of them came from Tientsin, Shantung and Shanghai. Almost all of them went to Sinkiang. They were concentrated in the Ch'angchi Hui autonomous chou, the Ili Kazakh autonomous chou, the Uighur centre in south Sinkiang, and elsewhere at the *hsien* and local *ch'ü* levels.⁶ Already it was apparent that the Communists sought to establish Chinese dominance in minority areas where previously there had been few Chinese.

Of course, when politically reliable minority cadres were available, they were used in establishing firm Communist control in the minority areas. This was rather difficult because very few of the minority peoples of the North-West had any sizeable groups of their members living in intra-mural China or serving in the Red army. The one exception were the Hui who lived in relatively large communities all over China. In March 1955, the railway corps of the army transferred some 200 Hui cadres to the Hui autonomous areas in Kansu and Tsinghai.⁷ They could be considered politically reliable because most of them were veterans of the Communist guerrilla units in the war against Japan. They also had taken part in the civil war, were active in the campaign for agrarian reform, and in the hate-America movement during the Korean war.⁸ Most important, 90 per cent. of them were members of the Party or its youth league.

Secondly there were the veterans. The demobilisation of the Chinese army following the Korean war posed employment problems for the authorities. If veterans could not be found suitable jobs elsewhere they were sent off to the North-West and Inner Mongolia. Some of them had none of the technical skills which were needed in Sinkiang at that time, nevertheless they were valuable to the Party in the minority areas. They were Chinese and had received intensive political indoctrination in the army. There were at least 855 of these veterans. In some cases, the Sinkiang authorities sent recruiting teams to East China.⁹

The other main category of migrants to the North-West and Inner Mongolia was young men and women. There are indications that not all of them were volunteers. Usually the Communist Party never lost an opportunity to mention how many Party members and activists were in a given group of migrants, but there was a conspicuous silence about such people migrating with these groups of young people. Moreover, a large

⁶ NCNA, Sian, August 5, 1954; NCNA, Urumchi, January 13, 1955; NCNA-English, Peking, May 12, 1955; NCNA, Tientsin, May 15, 1955; NCNA, Peking, August 23, 1955; NCNA, Urumchi, August 24, 1955.

⁷ NCNA, Peking, March 9, 1955.

⁸ The formal title of the movement was "Resist America and Aid Korea."

⁹ *People's Daily*, June 18, 1955; NCNA, Chengtu, October 16, 1955

MIGRATION TO N.-W. CHINA AND INNER MONGOLIA

proportion of these young people came from Shanghai which always was suspected of being a centre of "rightist" intellectuals. Possibly these people were on their way to be "remoulded" through physical labour. An unspecified number of Shanghai girls were sent to Sining while more than 4,000 youths went to Sinkiang, with about 1,000 of them being assigned to the army's production and construction corps.¹⁰

The largest known movement of 1955 took place in May when 15,000 households, some 60,000 persons, from Shantung moved to Inner Mongolia, Heilungkiang and Kirin.¹¹ Usually, the Party would give the reason for such a large move and the occupations of the people involved. Because no explanation can be found, one is led to suspect that this large group, perhaps several villages or a town, was moved for political reasons.

THE LEAP FORWARD OF 1956

Massive resettlement in the North-West and Inner Mongolia got under way in 1956. The Communists seemed confident that with the earlier transfers of hand-picked political activists the Chinese and non-Chinese Party officials resident in the minority areas were now firmly in control and a massive infusion of Chinese was "safe" even though not all of these new settlers were of the highest political reliability. The dispatch of technicians continued along with, for a while at least, the transfer of army veterans. But the bulk of the new settlers, now young peasants and youths who had just graduated from primary and high schools, were directed to reclaim land and increase the acreage of arable land in the borderlands.

To encourage voluntary migration, the Communist Party appealed to patriotism and, sometimes, unrealistically praised life in the North-West and Inner Mongolia. The Communist youth league later admitted that at the beginning of the mass movement, "a rosy picture was painted." Later the official line frankly admitted that prospective migrants face a "tough life" but these sacrifices were necessary to transform China into a powerful industrial country and "to ensure a permanent happy life."¹²

Letters and articles purportedly written by happy new settlers in the frontier regions were "planted" in the press to entice others to follow them. In an interview which was supposedly given by an overseas Chinese who was now teaching in Tsinghai the new settler said that he went there because "Tsinghai is also part of the beautiful fatherland" (but it must be added, that it is one of its more forsaken parts). The article also threw some interesting light on the deplorable school situation in the minority areas. This new settler had no formal education except for two

¹⁰ NCNA, Sining, December 10, 1954; NCNA, Urumchi, October 14, 1955.

¹¹ *People's Daily*, May 4, 1955.

¹² *Chung-Kuo Ching-nien Pao*, January 24, 1957.

years at the 30th middle school in Peking where special "make-up" courses for returned overseas Chinese were held.¹³

It is not certain to what extent the Chinese authorities underwrote the cost of transporting such large numbers of people. While according to one report "the state paid all expenses of moving and setting up homesteads,"¹⁴ another report earlier in the year said that resettlers received a 50 per cent. reduction on railway fares to their destinations.¹⁵ The authorities soon felt the need to make some other concessions which in all probability they had not contemplated at first. Originally the new peasant-settlers were required to pay the universal agricultural tax at the end of the first harvest. But struggling to eke out a meagre living in the hostile environment and knowing that they would have to pay agricultural taxes, many of the new settlers lost any enthusiasm which they may have had in the beginning. The Tsinghai provincial government found it necessary to announce at the end of 1956 that the 70,000 Chinese peasants who had arrived earlier in that province were going to be exempt from the agricultural tax in order "to encourage them to take part in production actively."¹⁶

Difficulties also arose over wages. Most workers coming from eastern China suffered a considerable drop in their wages. It seemed especially large in Tsinghai and preparations for wage reform were taken in May 1956.¹⁷ The authorities stressed that in adjusting wage levels, care was to be taken not to lower the wages of the newly arrived workers. The following month, the State Council in Peking decreed to eliminate the combined wage-point and commodity subsidy system. Instead, wages were to be expressed only in money but with regional variations for the cost of living. Where basic commodities were expensive high wages were to be replaced by cost-of-living subsidies.¹⁸ This was accompanied by a more elaborate wage-grade system.

This policy appeared to insure continued preferential treatment of newly arrived Chinese workers in the North-West and Inner Mongolia. Because most of the minority areas were remote the import of commodities was rather expensive. Chinese workers there were probably eligible for cost-of-living subsidies. But as most of the minority people were herdsmen or farmers, they neither received wages at that time nor qualified for the subsidy.

¹³ *Ch'inghai Daily*, Sining, December 18, 1956. He taught in the Hai-Hsi Mongol, Tibetan, and Kazakh autonomous *chou*.

¹⁴ NCNA, Peking, December 27, 1956.

¹⁵ NCNA, Peking, March 22, 1956.

¹⁶ *Ch'inghai Daily*, Sining, November 20, 1956.

¹⁷ NCNA, Peking, May 17, 1956.

¹⁸ NCNA, Peking, July 4, 1956.

MIGRATION TO N.-W. CHINA AND INNER MONGOLIA

As the Chinese government anticipated that the number of non-Chinese wage earners would increase over the years the new, more elaborate, wage-scale system may be considered as a response. A more sophisticated wage scale would tend to segregate the Chinese and non-Chinese workers because, generally speaking, the former's training was better. Thus, although doing essentially the same type of work, the Chinese workers could be given higher wages under the new system.

According to available evidence, about 5,000 Chinese migrated to Tsinghai, including the Tsaidam basin and the Tung-kuan Hui autonomous area. They came mostly from Peking, Canton, Swatow, Hunan, Honan and Anhwei.¹⁹ Also some 15,727 Hui were sent from Honan. Surprisingly they were not settled in Hualung, Menyüan, and other Hui areas as might have been expected. Instead, they were sent to regions of "fraternal nationalities," presumably the Tibetan autonomous areas.²⁰ Official sources claimed that during the first five months of 1956, almost 50,000 Chinese arrived in Tsinghai.²¹

From January through October 1956, more than 79,000 settlers came to Kansu from Peking, Shanghai, Honan and Shensi.²² Some Chinese at least were moved into the autonomous *hsien* of T'ienchu (Tibetan), Sunan (Yüku), Supei (Mongol), and Ak'osai (Kazakh). Soon there followed 64,000 peasants evacuated from the site of the proposed Sanmen-hsia reservoir on the border of Honan and Shensi. Those from Honan were to move to the Hohsi corridor while evacuees from the Shensi side of the reservoir were assigned to the Yin-ch'uan plains—which was also the main resettlement area for Chinese coming from Peking and Shanghai during the latter part of 1956.²³

Apparently encouraged by the results of the resettlement movement during the first half of 1956, the Peking Government made long-range plans to move some two to three million Chinese into Kansu between 1957 and 1968.²⁴ The experience of later years proved this to be unrealistic. The yearly average of this plan would be about quarter of a million, far higher than the total for 1956 and more than two-thirds of the entire mainland's inter-provincial migration of that year.

¹⁹ NCNA, Sining, January 9, 1956; *ibid.* December 14, 1956.

²⁰ NCNA, Chengchow, October 9, 1956.

²¹ Lei Ling, "On resettlement and land reclamation in Tsinghai," *Ch'inghai Daily*, Sining, September 6, 1956.

²² NCNA, Lanchow, March 24, 1956. They were settled in Chang-yeh and Yin-ch'uan *chuan-ch'ü* and Wu-chung Hui autonomous chou.

²³ NCNA, Chengchow, July 11, 1956; *Kuang-ming Daily*, August 13, 1956; *Kansu Daily*, Lanchow, November 25, 1956; *China Youth*, October 26, 1956; NCNA, Lanchow, October 31, 1956. In the first nine months of 1956, Honan alone sent 165,169 Chinese to the North-west and Heilungkiang. Among them were 50,495 members of youth land reclamation teams. See *Honan Daily*, Chengchow, November 2, 1956.

²⁴ *Kuangming Daily*, August 13, 1956.

The plans to resettle 1,200,000 Chinese in Tsinghai between 1957 and 1968 were equally utopian.²⁵ This would mean an annual influx of 100,000 new settlers into a province which only had 1,800,000 inhabitants in 1956. Even with the best organisation and the full support of the people involved, Kansu and Tsinghai probably could not have absorbed so many new settlers. Moreover, the transport system to the North-West was not capable of handling so many people.

But the Party had to face human resistance too. During the session of the Tsinghai provincial assembly at which the eleven-year plan was revealed, it was admitted that certain difficulties had already cropped up in resettling Chinese in that province. Reclamation seriously disrupted animal herding and also aroused the active resistance of the resident Tibetans.

From the very beginning, co-operation between the Chinese and the minorities left much to be desired. The Communists stated that only "some [Chinese] work hard and were fair with the [minority] nationalities."²⁶ The Moslem minorities of Tsinghai, *i.e.*, the Hui, Salar, Kazakh, T'u, etc., also resisted strongly the enforced mingling with the Chinese resettlers for religious reasons, it was also alleged that the Chinese resettlers were assigned the least desirable jobs on the joint agricultural co-operatives, that they received less than their fair share of labour points, and that periodically firewood for the Chinese was held up.

The Chinese resettlers not only had disagreements with the Chinese cadres, but also fights. Many of the migrants sent to farm in Tsinghai either were not interested in doing so or else were discouraged by the harsh living conditions.²⁷ Large numbers left for home. Between May 1955 and October 1956, more than 207,000 workers and students left Shanghai, Kiangsu, Shantung, Liaoning and Szechuan for Kansu, Tsinghai and Sinkiang. Of them, more than 63,000 came from Shanghai but, the Party admitted, that only 80 per cent. of those from Shanghai and Shantung settled down.²⁸ In other words, a minimum of 13,000 Chinese migrants, and possibly far more, fled the North-West back to their home provinces or sought better employment in the cities. In Tsinghai, these "resettler refugees" streamed into Sining.

In Sinkiang, most of the new arrivals were engaged in the oil industry and land reclamation. At least 9,700 Chinese with experience in petroleum engineering and related fields were sent to Sinkiang. Some were

²⁵ Lei Ling, "On resettlement and land reclamation in Tsinghai . . ."

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Ma Shang-wu, "Views on resettlers and state-operated farms in Tsinghai," *Ch'inghai Daily*, Sining, September 12, 1956. There were only an average of ten water tanks for 34 resettler households and five families had to share one kitchen knife.

²⁸ *China Youth*, January 24, 1957.

sent directly to the Wuerhho fields in Karamai. They came mostly from Paoki, Tsingtao, Chungking and Nanking. Plans called for "several thousands" more Chinese to move to Sinkiang later in the year. Besides which perhaps as many as two-thirds of the more than 40,000 primary school graduates in Kiangsu who migrated out of the province in 1956 went to the Tsaidam basin and to Karamai.²⁹

With regard to land reclamation, there were more than 40,000 young peasants arriving in Sinkiang, mostly from Honan. By July 1956 they were expected to be settled in Manassu, Ak'osu, and the Yench'i Hui autonomous *hsien*.³⁰ These Chinese settlers from Honan were not necessarily evacuees from the planned Sanmenhsia reservoir. As mentioned earlier those people were sent to Kansu. The peasants going to the Sinkiang minority areas were likely to be hand-picked political activists whose task it was to help secure Chinese dominance over the non-Chinese who greatly outnumbered them.

Finally, there was the interesting report that more than 500 "overseas Chinese"³¹ returned from the Soviet Union and Mongolia to Sinkiang. There were some Chinese among them, but most of them were Uighur, Kazakh, Hui, Tajik, and Kirghiz.³² Unfortunately, the background of these returnees is not known.

Migration to Inner Mongolia during the Ch'ing dynasty and the republican period was around the border of the region and along railways. But with better transport and communications the Communists could assign Chinese settlers to other parts of Inner Mongolia according to political and economic considerations. Most Chinese migrants were set to work on land reclamation and intensified farming and the iron and steel complex at Paot'ou. The Party planned that in 1956, some 330,000 people would migrate from Shantung, Hopei, and Peking to Inner Mongolia, Heilungkiang, and Kirin.³³ But assuming that one-third, or 110,000, were scheduled to settle in Inner Mongolia, it still appears that actual results fell far short of this plan.³⁴ As far as is known, somewhat more than 10,400 Chinese arrived in Inner Mongolia. It was reported that by June, 40,000 were already settled, but this may well have included settlers of earlier years. These migrants came from neighbouring provinces and were assigned to the *meng* of Ik'ochao, Chelimu, Wulanch'apu, and Hulunpeierh. It is interesting to note that the latter *meng's* population at

²⁹ NCNA, Urumchi, March 30, 1956; *ibid.* September 6, 1956; *Chiao Shih-pao*, Peking, February 19, 1957.

³⁰ NCNA, Urumchi, June 11, 1956.

³¹ In this instance, the term "overseas Chinese" is a misnomer. The Chinese term "hua-ch'iao" (literally: Chinese living in guest country) is more appropriate.

³² *Sinkiang Daily*, Urumchi, November 10, 1956.

³³ *Kuang-ming Daily*, March 3, 1956.

³⁴ It should be remembered that this plan did not include Shansi, Shensi, Shanghai and other places from which Chinese came.

that time was possibly only 250,000, yet in one of its subdivisions alone, more than 2,000 Chinese were settled to bring about "unity among nationalities" between themselves and the outnumbered Mongols.³⁵

With the development of China's third iron and steel centre at Paot'ou³⁶ there was a continuous influx of Chinese, particularly from neighbouring provinces and skilled steel workers from the Anshan works. Between 1955 and 1958, Shanghai, Anshan, Shenyang and Peking sent more than 100,000 people to Paot'ou.³⁷ It seems certain that a large number of residents of Inner Mongolia were among those seeking employment in the new industries of Paot'ou. Just as in the North-West, the drift of rural people into the towns increased rather rapidly. The city of Chining on the newly constructed Peking-Ulan Bator railway doubled its population to 80,000 between 1951 and 1956.³⁸

The migration to the cities adversely affected the better use of land and the growth of industry. The number of peasants and resettlers who abandoned farming and moved to the cities nearly always exceeded the demands of the newly developing industries for unskilled labour. Living conditions deteriorated in the overcrowded cities and food shortages added to these difficulties. On the other hand, the disruption caused to agricultural plans was on such a scale³⁹ that it is quite probable even with all the land reclamation in the North-West and Inner Mongolia, the net gain in food production was minimal. This in turn accentuated the food shortages in the larger cities of these areas.

Confronted by these difficulties the Party drastically cut back its resettlement programme. The keynote for 1957 was "consolidation." People from the proposed reservoir sites were to be removed "properly" and suitable reception areas were to be prepared for Chinese resettlers.⁴⁰

Unlike the Chinese migrants of earlier years, those of 1957 were not forced to move in large numbers into minority communities. Rather, they were to be settled in "dispersed form" in agricultural co-operatives and frequently in entirely new villages exclusively for the Chinese resettlers. The reason for this is quite clear. Despite great efforts by the Communist officials to bring about harmonious relations between the Chinese and the minority nationalities, the age-old discrimination continued to exist.

³⁵ NCNA, Taiyuan, March 22, 1956; *ibid.* Huhehot, May 5, 1956. The sub-division was the Hsinpaerhhu *tso ch'i*.

³⁶ The first two steel centres were at Anshan and Wuhan.

³⁷ *People's Daily*, January 8, 1957.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ This was revealed at a conference of CCP committees called by the Inner Mongolia party leadership. See NCNA, Huhehot, December 24, 1956.

⁴⁰ *Kuang-ming Daily*, February 6, 1957.

This readjustment lasted a whole year. According to available information, the total number of Chinese migrating to the North-West and Inner Mongolia during 1957 was very small indeed.⁴¹

THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD

During the Great Leap Forward of 1958 the Party announced plans for more than 530,000 people to be resettled in the entire mainland—of whom only 300,000 were destined for “long-distance” migration.⁴² This was little more than half the number of people moved from one province to another in 1956. However, to this figure we must add more than 140,000 dependants of earlier resettlers who were slated to join them in the North-West and Inner Mongolia. By October 1958 more than 600 were already in Western Tsinghai. It was admitted that pressure had to be used to force the settlers to ask their dependants to join them.⁴³ Apparently, most of them still hoped to return home.

An attempt was made in 1958 to get earlier resettlers who had gone back to their home provinces to return to the borderlands. The Tsinghai provincial government sent some sixteen so-called “work teams” with over fifty cadres to Honan to help the local authorities to get these people back to the North-West. It was reported that more than 8,000 of these “deserters” returned but this campaign was far from successful. The Communists cited the case of Lu-shan *hsien* in Honan where 80 per cent. of the “deserters” decided to return to Tsinghai,⁴⁴ as proof of the campaign’s “success.” This means that at least 10,000 Honan settlers had “deserted” Tsinghai. Added to those who returned to Shanghai and Shantung (see above), the number of Chinese sent to the North-West during 1956 and who refused to stay was at least 23,000. Besides aggravating the already desperate transport difficulties and playing havoc with production schedules in the borderlands, this “Great Leap Backward” also seriously undermined the morale of those Chinese who were still “sticking it out” in the North-West. As the *Ch'inghai Daily* put it, “if only we can get these migrants back, we will do a lot of good in stabilising the feelings of other immigrants.”⁴⁵

Once the Chinese arrived in Tsinghai and other places in the North-West, they were immediately put to work to forestall any ideas of going elsewhere. Also, a concentrated programme was inaugurated to strengthen the political and ideological education of migrants by way of

⁴¹ NCNA, Lanchow, October 8, 1957; *Kansu Daily*, Lanchow, December 28, 1957. There were more than 10,000 evacuees from Sanmenhsia and some 260-odd college graduates, all going to Kansu, especially to Changyeh and Yinch'uan *chuan-ch'ü*.

⁴² *People's Daily*, April 21, 1958.

⁴³ *Ch'inghai Daily*, Sining, October 21, 1958.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* March 18, 1958.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

holding mass debates combined with a "liberal application of rewards and punishments"; to educate the cadres on agricultural co-operatives to view migrants as "constituent parts" of these units; and to help the new settlers with their problems.⁴⁶

The Chinese settlers received certain incentives which the native minority population did not get. A high Communist official in Tsinghai stated that "newcomers occupy higher positions."⁴⁷ Also labour points were biased in their favour. The case of a "deserter" was cited who, when first arriving in 1956, received less than 100 points all year but after he returned to Lotu *hsien* in 1957, he earned more than 200 points in less than two months.⁴⁸ Although the Communists used it as an example of improved living conditions, the huge difference in points—an increase of at least twelve times—strongly suggested manipulation of the point system in favour of the Chinese migrants.

The bulk of the migrants in 1958 again seemed to have been those from the San-men-hsia reservoir site in Honan and Shensi. During the first half of the year, some 42,300 of them were sent to the *hsien* of An-hsi and Yung-ch'ang in Kansu and Tao-lo in the newly established Ninghsia Hui autonomous region.⁴⁹ Besides, there were at least 26,000 Chinese from Honan, Hupei and Shanghai moved into Sinkiang and Kanau but mostly into Tsinghai. Generally there were few political activists. In one instance where such information was stated, only 3 per cent. were Party members. At least 7,000 members of "youth shock corps" were sent to Huangnan autonomous *chou*, Hungho and T'ungjen *hsien*, both in the Hainan autonomous *chou*.⁵⁰ It is likely that these Chinese were to "shock" the minorities into submission. The two areas were scenes of the 1958 uprising against the Communist régime.

As for the new Ninghsia Hui autonomous region, the régime claimed that 70,000 Chinese and Hui had arrived by October 1958.⁵¹ This figure seems a bit high but not improbable. On the basis of my own calculations, there were 3,600 arrivals during the same period. They were usually unskilled workers and teachers.⁵²

The pace of resettlement was stepped up with the onset of the so-called high tide of socialist construction in summer of 1958. One of the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* The programme's slogan was "Riding the wind and breaking the waves."

⁴⁷ Chang Kuo-sheng, *People's Daily*, October 26, 1958. Chang was secretary of the secretariat of the CCP Tsinghai provincial committee.

⁴⁸ *Ch'inghai Daily*, Sining, March 18, 1958.

⁴⁹ *Kansu Daily*, Lanchow, June 14, 1958.

⁵⁰ *Ch'inghai Daily*, Sining, December 5, 1958; *Honan Daily*, Chengchow, December 13, 1958; Fei Fei, "The arrival in Tsinghai of young people to assist in border area construction work," *Min-tzu T'uan-chieh*, February 1959. From 1958 it became increasingly difficult to ascertain the actual number of migrants in any given move. Unlike in previous years, the Communists in 1958 and 1959 were quite reluctant to divulge such information.

⁵¹ NCNA, Yin-ch'uan, October 20, 1958.

⁵² *Kuang-ming Daily*, March 11, 1959; also NCNA, Yin-ch'uan, June 20, 1958.

reasons why the Communists ordered a renewed upsurge in the migration of Chinese to the minority areas of the North-West was that these non-Chinese areas had still not "leapt" like China proper in its "Great Leap Forward" campaign. According to Hsü Li-chih, cadres in the minority areas were to induce the ethnic minorities to welcome Chinese migrants "genuinely." He also ordered that these Chinese were to extend the commune system to the outer provinces and to eradicate all opposition by minority members.⁵³

To make migration to Sinkiang more attractive, delegations were sent to East China.⁵⁴ The plan was to concentrate the influx of Chinese in the Hui, Mongol and Uighur centres in Sinkiang.⁵⁵ But this intensified the resentment of the non-Chinese population who felt that this area had become a "Chinese colony." Although unemployment in Kashgar, the main centre of the Uighurs, was rising, more and more Chinese arrived and were called "locusts" by the local people.⁵⁶ Living conditions and social tension were such that large numbers tried to return to their homes.⁵⁷

The total number of Chinese migrants to the North-West and Inner Mongolia during the first ten years is very difficult to determine. The Communists issued no migration statistics for this period nor for the entire area under consideration. The régime did claim, however, that during the four years from 1955 to 1959, 1,300,000 Chinese settled in the North-West. Compiled at a time when it was more important for statisticians to be "Red" rather than "expert," this figure is, in my opinion, most unreliable. It counted each individual *arrival* in the North-West and the large numbers of "deserters" were not deducted from the total of 1,300,000, while those returnees who were rounded up in 1958 and 1959 and sent back to the frontier areas were, in effect, counted twice. Moreover, although proof is not available, there is reason to believe that this figure may have included the large number of Chinese troops and corvée labour as well as their periodic replacements.

According to my calculations, 271,643 Chinese migrated to the North-West during the same period, *i.e.*, from 1955 to 1959. As the method of calculation, which was explained earlier, is quite conservative, the

⁵³ Hsü Li-chih, "Political thinking of youths engaged in borderland construction must be deeply and completely indoctrinated and controlled," *Min-tzu T'uan-chieh*, December 6, 1958. Hsü was associate director of the migration office of the ministry of land reclamation in Peking.

⁵⁴ Chao Cho-yün, "The favourable situation in nationalities minority districts of North-West China," *Min-tzu T'uan-chieh*, March 6, 1960.

⁵⁵ *Kuang-ming Daily*, March 23, 1959; *Sinkiang Daily*, Urumchi, March 13, 1959. The *New York Times* of December 27, 1959, stated that in a little more than six months, about 100,000 Chinese were sent into Sinkiang. I would question this extraordinarily high figure because it was based on a report given by Sai-fu-ting. Figures cited by the Communists after 1958 were usually exaggerated.

⁵⁶ *Sinkiang Daily*, Urumchi, September 6, 1958.

⁵⁷ *Worker's Daily*, August 7, 1959.

figure of 271,643 is probably very close to the minimum. Estimating the margin of error not to be larger than 50 per cent. the net migration during that period was about 400,000. The annual totals for Chinese migration to the North-West and Inner Mongolia, tabulate as follows:

1954-55	...	...	...	...	7,733
1956	...	...	...	...	246,600
1958	...	...	...	...	64,600
1959 (to September 30)	...	...	...	...	4,500
					323,433

The high tide of migration was undoubtedly 1956—a major share of which was caused by the evacuation programmes around the proposed San-men-hsia reservoir.

During the first ten years of Communist rule, the major objectives of migration to the North-West and Inner Mongolia may be called banishment, sinification, industrialisation and land reclamation. Clearly, political banishment and land reclamation went hand-in-hand. This was especially true in Sinkiang where the production and construction corps operated. Large-scale migration to new industrial centres was restricted to Paot'ou in Inner Mongolia and, to a much lesser extent, Lanchow in Kansu.

To achieve and maintain domination in the North-West and Inner Mongolia all Chinese migrants, except political prisoners under military guard, were used. In areas of relatively large minority populations, most migrants from China proper were Party members or political activists, which reflects the non-co-operation and even outright resistance by the various ethnic minority groups in the frontier regions.

We are inclined to judge the overall success or failure of Communist migration policy mainly on the migrants' attitude toward their new environment. The harsh physical conditions and the continuous clashes and mutual discriminations between Chinese newcomers and non-Chinese residents resulted in at least several tens of thousands of Chinese migrants returning to their native provinces in the east. The resulting loss of manpower made a shambles out of agricultural planning and production in these areas. It also lessened the chances of establishing firm Chinese control and seriously undermined the morale of Chinese resettlers still remaining in the North-West and Inner Mongolia.