



In This Issue:

IN A FORTNIGHT
By Peter Mattis.....1

HU JINTAO DRAWS BLOOD WITH THE WANG LIJUN SCANDAL
By Willy Lam.....3

THE DALAI LAMA CARD REAPPEARS IN SINO-MONGOLIAN RELATIONS
By Alicia Campi.....5

CHINA'S NEW PROPERTY TAX: TOWARD A STABLE FINANCIAL FUTURE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT?
By Eve Cary.....8

PLA AIR FORCE MALE AVIATION CADET RECRUITMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING
By Kenneth Allen.....11



Wang Lijun, the Current Scandal of Succession Politics

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In a Fortnight

By Peter Mattis

ANOTHER LEI FENG REVIVAL: MAKING MAOISM SAFE FOR CHINA

Chinese political culture contains a lot of dangerous ideas for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). This may go a long ways toward explaining Beijing’s fickle relationship with Confucius as a symbol of Chinese culture and, now, with the trappings of Maoism. While criticism of Chongqing’s “Singing Red Songs” (*changhong*) campaign highlights the growing disfavor of the city’s party secretary, Politburo member Bo Xilai, the CCP Propaganda Department announced on February 27—a week before National Lei Feng Day—the revival of a campaign to promote “the spirit of Lei Feng,” the selfless if obedient hero of the Chinese revolution (*People’s Daily*, February 28; China News Service, February 27). The campaign highlights the latest contradiction facing a Leninist party bereft of communist spirit, living on nationalist credentials gained through economic development and patriotic education. How does a governing party based on a foreign ideology find native symbols that encourage support for the regime that do not support the principle of regime change? The answer, as it has been since 1963, is once again Lei Feng.

The problem with once again dusting off the old hero is that Lei Feng may not be prepared for the modern age. Even online editors for the *People’s Daily* asked only a couple of years ago if learning from Lei Feng is outdated. The answer

earlier this week, of course, was an emphatic “no” (Xinhua, February 29; *People’s Daily*, February 28; People’s Net, March 8, 2010). The *Global Times* also reposted an Internet witticism showing how little sticking power Lei Feng has, “the post-1970’s generation learned from Lei Feng, the post-1980’s generation revolted against Lei Feng, and the post-1990’s generation has forgotten about Lei Feng.” Repeated in other CCP-run papers, the words seem to indict widespread public cynicism about Beijing’s promotion of values.

Although the Propaganda Department announced the campaign on Monday, the campaign seems to have been in the works for some time. Last fall, the Sixth Plenum report—known for its focus on cultural issues—mentioned normalizing the study of Lei Feng, but only in passing (Xinhua, February 29; *Guangming Daily*, February 26). The China Media Project also tracked a steady and increasing stream of Lei Feng articles through February that peaked at the Propaganda Department’s announcement. The first real hint of a serious campaign came on February 23 when *The Complete Works of Lei Feng* was published in a massive 200,000 Chinese character-long anthology (Xinhua, February 23).

The campaign to normalize learning from Lei Feng’s activities contains a nine-fold approach, ranging from regular activities to major annual forums and from CCP cadres to schoolchildren. The Propaganda Department directed grassroots organs and cultural associations to produce Lei Feng pamphlets, television and radio programs, scholarly essays and more. Even CCP cadre are not immune, because they need to study Lei Feng to maintain their ideological purity to retain their vanguard status (*People’s Daily*, March 1, February 28; China News Service, February 27). The Ministry of Education also has directed Lei Feng-inspired activities be included in elementary and middle school curriculums as part of moral education (Xinhua, February 28). Apart from the moral considerations, Lei Feng also is being billed as a nationalist and a symbol of the spirit of the Chinese people.

The new Lei Feng campaign is a safer and more politically palatable version of Bo’s “singing red songs” effort—both in terms of factional politics and the CCP’s right to govern—which is a throwback to the days of Mao Zedong. On the former, the princeling Bo has tried to lead

a neo-Maoist revival presumably to bolster his standing. “Singing red songs” joined Bo’s campaign against organized crime and corruption that may have threatened the political prospects of Hu Jintao ally, Guangdong party chief Wang Yang, who preceded Bo in Chongqing. Bo’s “success” in cleaning out Chongqing could be seen as tarnishing Wang for letting such corruption run free (“Bo Xilai’s Campaign for the Standing Committee and the Future of Chinese Politicking,” *China Brief*, November 11, 2011; “The CCP’s Disturbing Revival of Maoism,” *China Brief*, November 19, 2009). The dangers to Beijing of Bo’s invocation of China’s Maoist past however go beyond factional politics. Last year, one Chinese academic opined to the *New York Times* that the so-called “red songs” were really pink, because Mao’s revolutionary zeal to destroy established centers of power could not be found among Bo’s hymn selection (June 29, 2011). In other words, for every song proclaiming “Socialism is Good” there is a song declaring “It is Right to Rebel,” making the *changhong* campaign a slippery slope toward potentially rejecting the CCP’s legitimacy, or at least Hu’s vision of a “harmonious society.”

The same slippery slope also is present in state-run Confucianism, denying the CCP unrestricted use as last year’s placement and removal of a statue of Confucius on Tiananmen Square symbolized (Xinhua, January 12, 2011; Economic Observer [China], April 21, 2011). Outsiders have long misconstrued the emphasis of Confucian thinking with the tame state-run version, which emasculated Chinese society and justified state oppression. Although forms of filial piety in state-led Confucianism have been used to justify subordination to the government for hundreds of years, Confucius’ emphasis on virtue far outweighs obedience: “in the face of a wrong or unrighteousness, it is the duty of the son to oppose his father, and the duty of the servant to oppose his superior.” In an explicitly political context, Confucius was even more clear, pointing out “tyrannical government is more dangerous than man-eating tigers.” Mencius combined these ideas into the Mandate of Heaven, which justified rebellion against incompetent or malignant governments. He wrote “when a ruler treats his subjects like grass and dirt, then the subjects should treat him as a bandit and an enemy.” Mao, a thorough student of the power of principles, understood this, which is why he sought to destroy Confucianism as a Chinese challenger to the foreign-born Marxist-Leninist

ideology he espoused. Due to Chinese disenchantment with foreign rule after the Qing Dynasty, Confucian thought in the hands of nationalists would have been dangerous to the revolution.

These points illustrate the precariousness of the CCP position in living off of nationalism while trying to generate new ways to promote social stability. Beijing has to use Chinese, rather than foreign, ideas; however, important and recognizable strands of political thought, Confucianism and Maoism, explicitly endorse rebellion. Lei Feng is at least obedient as a tame Maoist relic that the Propaganda Department can pitch as a symbol of the Chinese people (Xinhua, March 1; *People's Daily*, February 27). The problem, however, is that few people are likely to live the “Lei Feng spirit” as such, because of mistrust of the government and widespread cynicism—a point even Chinese press concede. As Renmin University sociologist Zhou Xiaozheng said, “If the upper levels of society do not learn from Lei and become good examples to follow, how are the regular people supposed to be willing to?” (*Global Times*, February 23).

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Hu Jintao Draws Blood with the Wang Lijun Scandal

By Willy Lam

After apparently engineering the contretemps that have hit Chongqing Party Secretary Bo Xilai, President Hu Jintao is putting additional pressure on other members of the Gang of Princes—the political faction composed of senior cadres’ offspring. The political fortunes of Bo, the high-profile son of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) elder Bo Yibo, have nosedived following the recent detention of his key protégé, Wang Lijun, on alleged “economic crimes.” Regardless of the veracity about the speculation that the 62-year-old princeling offered to resign from the Politburo, Bo’s chances for making the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) at the 18th Party Congress later this year seem over. Last week, Bo

reportedly wrote a “letter of self-criticism” to the PBSC in which he blamed himself for failing to detect the alleged corruption and other misdemeanors of former Chongqing Vice-Mayor Wang, who reportedly tried to seek political asylum in the United States Consulate in Chengdu earlier this month (*Ming Pao* [Hong Kong], February 22; China Digital Times, February 21; Reuters, February 15).

Political observers in Beijing are closely watching two related developments. The first is which senior cadre will likely acquire the PBSC seat which Bo seemed to have a high chance of filling. The second and perhaps more significant issue is the fate of the so-called “Chongqing Model” associated with Bo, particularly the large-scale resuscitation of Maoist values and culture that is symbolized by the popular “singing red songs” (*changhong*) campaign. Since the Wang Lijun saga, however, the mainstream media has been replete with commentaries advocating ideological and political liberalization. Particularly given that other pedigreed cadres such as Vice President Xi Jinping also have taken part in the *changhong* movement, are these pro-reformist articles yet another weapon used by President Hu and his associates to lay into the Gang of Princeslings (*Apple Daily* [Hong Kong] February 27; Associated Press, February 15)? Are there also possibilities that the recent outburst of reformist sentiments will persist beyond the 18th CCP Congress?

Bad blood between the Hu-led Communist Youth League (CYL) faction and the so-called Gang of Princeslings goes back a long way. At the 17th Party Congress in 2007, Hu’s original plan of anointing Vice Premier Li Keqiang—a former CYL Party Secretary—as his own successor was foiled by an apparent collusion between the Gang of Princeslings and the Shanghai Faction, many of whom are also high-born officials. As a result of this unexpected development, the 58-year-old Xi, son of the late Vice Premier Xi Zhongxun, was confirmed “crown prince” at the conclave. (See “Xi Jinping: China’s Conservative Strongman-in-Waiting,” *China Brief*, September 2, 2011). It is also well-known that Hu does not approve of the *changhong* shenanigans in Chongqing. The general secretary has not visited Chongqing since Bo’s appointment as the party secretary of the western metropolis in late 2007. That Hu had a hand in bringing down Wang—and in the process crippling Bo’s promotion prospects—was attested to by reports in Beijing that last year the party

General Secretary asked the Central Commission for Disciplinary Inspection (CCDI) to investigate corruption-related offences allegedly committed by Wang and his colleagues when the latter served as a top police official in Tieling municipality from 1995 to 2003. In January, Gu Fengjie, Wang's successor as Tieling police chief, was sentenced to 12 years in jail on graft-related charges. CCDI agents began questioning Wang himself early this year (Radio Free Asia, February 14; *Ming Pao*, February 11). Moreover, Wang's replacement as Chongqing Police Chief is 42-year-old Guan Haixiang. While Guan spent 15 years in the CYL's regional and central offices, he has no experience in police or political-legal system (*zhengfa xitong*) work whatsoever (*Apple Daily* [Hong Kong], February 24; China News Service, February 18; *Financial Times*, February 8).

That Bo is now out of the running for the PBSC has afforded Hu an opportunity to revise the “tripartite division of the spoils” formula that the CCP's disparate factions had been arrived at late last year. Under this scheme, the CYL Faction and the Gang of Princelings would each get three PBSC seats, with the remaining three positions to be allotted to representatives from other cliques. It is understood that Hu wants the slot for which Bo was once deemed a shoo-in to go either to a CYL Faction member or a cadre with no obvious political affiliations. Before the Wang Lijun scandal, heavyweight CYL Faction candidates for the PBSC included Executive Vice Premier Li Keqiang, Director of the CCP Organization Department Li Yuanchao and Guangdong Party Secretary Wang Yang, while the three front-running princelings were Xi Jinping, Vice Premier Wang Qishan and Bo Xilai. One possibility is that Hu may insinuate Inner Mongolia Party Secretary Hu Chunhua, age 48, into the PBSC. A top member of the Six-Generation leadership—a reference to cadres born in the 1960s—Hu, who is not related to the president, is also a former party secretary of the CYL (Bloomberg, February 14; *Deutsche Welle* [Berlin] February 8; *Apple Daily*, October 15, 2011). However, it also is possible that the position may be awarded to Minister of Public Security Meng Jianzhu. While Meng lacks Politburo status, he has won the top leadership's praise for cracking down hard on dissidents as well as “splittists” in the Tibet and Xinjiang regions (See, “Security Chief's Efforts to Seal Up the Political-Legal Chairmanship,” *China Brief*, February 21).

Of perhaps larger significance is the blow that the Wang scandal has dealt the so-called Chongqing Model, which became famous due to the city's efficacy in nabbing hardcore criminals and in revitalizing Maoist norms. It is instructive that in a mid-February meeting of the Chongqing municipal party committee, Bo heaped high praise on the “contributions that the scientific outlook on development has made to Chongqing's development.” The “scientific outlook on development” is considered to be President Hu and Premier Wen's most important contribution to Communist-Chinese statecraft since they came to power in late 2002. It was the first time that Bo, who usually preferred to dwell on his own political and economic programs, had so lavishly eulogized the pet slogan of the Hu-Wen leadership (*South China Morning Post* [Hong Kong], February 15; *Chongqing Daily*, February 13).

That Wang Lijun, the “anti-triad national hero” is himself under investigation for graft-related charges has undermined the entire law-enforcement mechanism in Chongqing. Li Zhuang, a highly respected lawyer who was briefly imprisoned in Chongqing for allegedly using illegal means to defend one of the triad bosses arrested by Wang, told the Hong Kong media that “the Chongqing model is problematic because the city's leaders do not follow the rule of law.” Yang Fan, a renowned “New Left” scholar who is co-author of the book *The Chongqing Model*, indicated in his blog last week that he might have to reappraise the “Chongqing way of doing things.” Referring to the Wang case, Yang wrote “since a big scandal has hit Chongqing, it is imperative that we take a second look at the Chongqing Model” (Cable TV News, Hong Kong, February 23; Yang Fan's Blog, February 22; *Sidney Morning Herald*, February 11).

Bo's even more controversial crypto-Maoist campaign, which is symbolized by the thousands of *changhong* concerts that have been held across China in the past couple of years, probably is also against the ropes. The keen advocate for political reform, Premier Wen, has criticized certain cadres' nostalgia for the Maoist era, stating, for example, last year “A major obstacle to reform is the remnant poison of the Cultural Revolution” (*Southern Metropolitan News*, May 4, 2011; *Ming Pao*, April 28, 2011). It is therefore probably not accidental that in the fortnight or so after Wang Lijun sought refuge in the American Consulate in Chengdu, a rash of reformist-

oriented pieces has appeared in the official Beijing media. Last Tuesday, the *People's Daily* ran a commentary entitled “While reform carries risk, abandoning reform will bring jeopardy to the party.” Wu Jinglian, one of China’s most famous liberal economists, wrote “China is at a new crossroads” and “Above all, we must be careful not to go back to the old road.” It is significant that a number of these articles cited “vested interest blocs” as the most daunting impediment to reform. For example, Sun Jian, a researcher at the party journal *Seeking Truth*, wrote “we must not allow interest groups to block reform.” Finally, He Chuiyun, a commentator for the *China Business Times*, pointed out that “unless we have the determination and courage to reform ourselves, it will be difficult for us to break up the configuration of interest [groups] in the country” (Chinese Economy Net [Beijing], February 26; *People's Daily*, February 23; *Global Times*, February 17, February 13).

Given that the Gang of Princelings is perhaps the most well-known “interest bloc” in China, there is a possibility that Hu and Wen are using these liberalization-minded articles to cast indirect aspersions at the sons and daughters of privilege for political advantage. At the very least, Vice President Xi, who enthusiastically endorsed Bo’s *changhong* movement during a visit to Chongqing in early 2010, may be in the line of fire. Almost as much as Bo, Xi has the past few years underscored the imperative of heeding the Great Helmsman’s instructions. For example, at the opening of a Central Party School (CPS) semester last year, Xi, who is also CPS President, urged his students to “pay attention to the Marxist canon,” especially Mao’s classic writings. “Cadres must seriously study Marxist theory to ensure that they can maintain political resoluteness,” he said. Xi added that since Marxist classics were voluminous, “we should focus on the salient points, and concentrate on studying the quintessence—particularly the important works of Mao Zedong” (China News Service, May 15, 2011; *People's Daily*, May 14, 2011).

Before the Wang Lijun episode erupted, a number of illustrious party liberals such as Hu Deping, the son of the liberal party chief Hu Yaobang, had tried to resuscitate ideological and political reform through holding a series of salons and seminars (See, “China’s Remnant Liberals Keep Flame of Liberalization Alive,” *China Brief*, February 3). The theoretical possibility exists that the dominant CYL Faction might seek the help of

these remnant liberals in consolidating their grip on post-18th Congress elite politics. It is, however, instructive to note that the powers that be in Zhongnanhai have a long tradition of using radical reformists and genuine liberals as pawns in political intrigues – and then abandoning them once the power struggle is over. A classic example is what took place in 1979 and 1980, when Deng Xiaoping encouraged dissidents such as Wei Jingsheng to attack the party’s unrepentant followers of Chairman Mao. Once he has been ensconced in power, however, Deng closed down the Democracy Wall and threw Wei and a number of his close comrades into jail. Irrespective of the outcome of the on-going contention between the CYL Faction and the Gang of Princelings, the chances that the tattered threads of political liberalization may be picked up again seem abysmally low.

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The Dalai Lama Card Reappears in Sino-Mongolian Relations

By Alicia Campi

The mid-November 2011 surprise four-day visit to Mongolia of the 14th Dalai Lama reignited simmering Chinese worries about how the Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader is using and is being used by its northern neighbor and important mineral trade partner. From China’s perspective, the Dalai Lama’s Mongolian visit, appearing in the guise of a purely private matter to promote his teachings, actually is intertwined with Northeast Asian mineral resources politics as well as interference in Tibetan affairs—thus a deliberate ratcheting up of anti-Chinese sentiment along its borders. From the Dalai Lama’s perspective, who has made eight trips to Mongolia

(the last in 2006), that nation increasingly is seen as an answer to how to handle the sticky question of his own succession and how to wrest it from the control of the Chinese Government. For over a year, rumors have persisted inside Mongolia that a new reincarnation might be found among genetically-Tibetan-blooded Mongols in the country's Gobi provinces. The Dalai Lama reportedly wanted his successor chosen while he is still alive—an impossibility—and that the boy had been selected from among 300 children from Nepal, India, Mongolia and Kalmykia Russia (*Undesnii Shuuden*, September 15, 2011). Although the Mongolian boy's name and location were not mentioned, the same newspaper correctly predicted the November visit.

This religious matter has become a significant factor in the diplomatic game Ulaanbaatar is waging to counterbalance Chinese economic monopolization, which has become a contentious and negative issue in domestic politics. At the same time, Mongolian political leaders appear willing to bet that Chinese public unhappiness over their support of the Dalai Lama will not damage their overall bilateral economic relationship. As the nation prepares for its June 2012 parliamentary elections, leaders of both main parties—the Mongolian People's Party and the Democratic Party—are seizing upon the issue of religious freedom and historical solidarity with the Dalai Lama to project a defiant Mongolian nationalism toward increasing Chinese trade dominance.

Last year saw a quiet series of chess moves involving the Dalai Lama and Mongolia leading up to his November visit. First, there were many months of speculation in the Mongolian popular press—which were never officially denied by the Mongolian Government—that the Dalai Lama would be visiting the country to discuss his permanent move there upon his retirement from public office in March of last year. Next, His Holiness appeared surrounded by some 30 Mongolian lamas, who had specially flown in from Ulaanbaatar, at his July 6, 2011 birthday celebration at the Verizon Center in Washington, DC and at his July 9th public talk about world peace on the West Capitol Lawn. This two-week visit to the United States kicked off a frenzy of summer travel to France, Estonia, Finland, Canada, Mexico, Argentina and Brazil. Finally, the Dalai Lama utilized his 10-day November visit to Japan, which already had endured a contentious year with China, as a springboard to fly to Mongolia directly

and secretly.

The gamesmanship surrounding the Mongolian visit is obvious. The Office of the Mongolian President secretly drafted the invitation to the Dalai Lama and authorized the issuance of his visa by its Delhi Embassy. The Mongolian trip, however, was not announced publicly by the Dalai Lama Office's spokesman until November 6th, on the eve of his arrival. It is clear that the Japanese Government was involved in maintaining the secrecy by facilitating the air travel of the Tibetan religious leader on a special Mongolian Airlines (MIAT) plane from Tokyo to Ulaanbaatar. The Chinese learned about the visit only after His Holiness' November 7th arrival in Mongolia was carried by the Mongolian TV channels and welcoming billboards in Mongolian and English had sprung up in the capital.

Officially, the Dalai Lama was the private guest in Ulaanbaatar of Gandantegchenlin (Gandan) monastery, the nation's leading Buddhist center. There was much press discussion about the irony of his main public speech being delivered at a new 4000-seat sports complex that was built using Chinese aid funds (*Mongolia Today*, November 8, 2011). He met many Mongolian government leaders, including Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, at a reception, but there were no official governmental meetings like he had in Tokyo. At a concluding press conference, it was stressed that the visit was purely religious and without any political agenda. The head abbot of Gandan monastery Demberel Chojamtsa said, "Mongols revered and worshiped His Holiness for a long time. Buddhist believers and monks and nuns were waiting for his arrival... Faith and religion in democratic society is free, this is why His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, has been invited to visit our country two-three months earlier" [*sic*] (*The Mongol Messenger*, November 17, 2011). In his remarks, the Dalai Lama noted he was very happy to be in Mongolia again and, even though it was a short visit, it was meaningful. He also specifically denied his successor already had been found in Mongolia.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry, caught unawares, denounced the trip only on the second day, stating: "The Dalai Lama always uses the opportunity of furtive visits to publicize Tibetan independence, smear the Chinese government and play up issues related to Tibet" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 8, 2011).

Official Chinese press statements indicated Beijing had made “stern representations” to the Mongolian Government about his activities to split China. In reply, Abbot Choijamtsa declared: “This is Mongolian territory and Mongolian property and we are going to do it even if others opposed it” (Khaliun Bayartsogt for Reuters, November 8, 2011) Nevertheless, the Mongolian Cabinet was called into session to discuss how to handle the Chinese protests in light of the Mongolian public’s pro-Dalai Lama sentiments. In the end, Mongolian Minister of Transportation Battulga Khaltmaa, speaking for the Government to the press, simply announced that other lectures by the Dalai Lama would be relocated to a less controversial location.

The Dalai Lama’s visit was associated with the November 2nd enthronement of the 9th Bogd Javzandamba Hutagt as the new head of Gandan monastery, who just passed away on March 1. The previous 8th Bogd ruled Mongolia from 1911, when the country declared its independence from China, until his death in 1924, when the religious-cum-political position was abolished and the People’s Republic of Mongolia was declared a secular state. The 9th Bogd was born in Tibet in 1932, identified as the incarnation of the 8th, but rejected by Mongolia’s communist leaders. In 1961, he fled to India, but his incarnation was not formally approved by the Dalai Lama until 1992. With the end of Mongolia’s communist era in 1990, the 9th Bogd returned several times to the country, but only obtained Mongolian citizenship and the right to live in Mongolia in 2010, because of the support of Mongolian President Elbegdorj, a committed Buddhist. His enthronement prompted wide public attention and controversy in Mongolia, resulting in a lawsuit against Gandan monastery in the Supreme Court. The Dalai Lama’s presence in Ulaanbaatar so soon after the enthronement was a clear indication of his religious approval for the 9th Bogd, whose primary duties are to act as the spiritual head of Mongolian Buddhism and to continue with the preservation and revival of Mongolian customs and traditions. The 9th Bogd’s position also was openly supported by the Mongolian Government. On February 15, Deputy Prime Minister Miyegombyn Enkhbold met with Mongolian religious leaders and stated the appearance of the 9th Bogd in Mongolia had started a new page in Mongolian religious history (www.infomongolia.com, February 16). The sudden death of the 9th Bogd is likely to make the Chinese

even more nervous because it could serve as a dry run for the Mongols on how to choose a very high ranking reincarnation—something they have not done for many decades.

The recent trip of the Dalai Lama to Mongolia and the Mongolian Government’s involvement in the 9th Bogd controversy indicate government support for a general revival of Buddhist tradition. This is a crucial part of a redefinition of Mongolian national identity as was called for in the National Security Concept of 2010. This Concept (VIII.47.4) makes “the study, instruction and popularization of Mongolian history, religion and culture the special object of the government’s constant care and support.” The Mongols, however, certainly understood that their promotion of traditional Buddhism had real world and potentially dangerous implications. Prior to the Dalai Lama’s visit, there was debate in Mongolian Government circles about how China might react. Everyone remembered that during a 2002 trip by the Dalai Lama, Beijing had retaliated by closing the Mongolian border rail crossing for two days, stopping all commerce and leaving 500 passengers stranded. Additionally, in the last 20 years, China has cut rail links for as long as two months to influence Mongolian elections. With China now the main foreign investor for Mongolia’s booming, mining-dependent economy and some 90 percent of its exports going to China in 2011, some expected that Ulaanbaatar would be an even riper target for Chinese retaliation this time.

The Mongolian political and national security establishment calculated that the economics of the issue was not so simple, since the majority of bilateral trade now involves Mongolian rich mineral deposits in copper, coal and gold that flow to northern Chinese factories for refining and use in the booming Chinese economy. When deliberating the risks involved in allowing the Dalai Lama’s visit, Mongolia guessed correctly that any disruption to the flow of these raw materials would be considered more destructive to China than to Mongolia and so, in all likelihood, would not happen. Mongolian mining companies based near the Chinese border in fact did not report any disruptions to border transport connected with the visit.

How the “Dalai Lama Card” will be used in the future is a question that is destined to roil Sino-Mongolian

relations. It is very likely that Mongolian politicians will continue to mix the promotion of traditional Tibetan-style Buddhism for national identity purposes with the right of the Dalai Lama to visit Mongolia regularly. Such policies tweak the nose of the southern neighbor to the delight of Mongolian domestic opinion without incurring genuine economic damage, at least this time. If the Dalai Lama decides to “retire” to Mongolia for long religious retreats as he has suggested he might, or if his next reincarnation is discovered on Mongolian soil, the Mongols may now believe their booming mineral-based economy will continue to protect them from serious Chinese retaliation. Concurrently, the Dalai Lama himself has been able to use his relationship with the Mongols to promote confusion and concern in Beijing over how to manage the situation without causing major self-inflicting wounds. It is certain that eventually the Chinese will develop a more integrated response to these developments, but when religion, nationalism, economics and politics are all involved, the strategies for all the concerned parties must be both sophisticated and convoluted.

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China's New Property Tax: Toward a Stable Financial Future for Local Government?

By Eve Cary

Just over a year ago, the Chinese government took the unprecedented step of launching a trial property tax in response to rising real estate prices. Since the mid-2000s in China, real estate prices have been going through the roof. In 2010, home prices in Shanghai rose 26.1 percent and in Chongqing, 29.4 percent, according to Soufun Holdings, China's biggest property website (Bloomberg, January 6, 2011). The tax, announced by the Ministry of Finance's Tax Policy Department in December 2010,

marks a significant departure from pre-existing taxation policies, which include a one-time transaction fee for residential sales and a minimal tax on commercial real estate (Business Daily Update, December 6, 2010). The property tax also may represent a new step forward for China's market liberalization in that it will require new institutions and systems such as land and property registration that could lead to stronger private ownership laws and other aspects of a more liberal economy. As significant as the property tax may become, however, it is far from clear whether the property tax is having the intended effect on the real estate market or whether it will resolve local governments' financial woes.

Trials and Tribulations of the Property Tax

Shanghai and Chongqing were announced as the trial cities for the new property tax, and began levying the tax on January 28, 2011. The cities were given the power to set the details of the tax themselves, leading to a number of differences. For one, the Chongqing tax includes preexisting and new properties, while Shanghai taxes only properties purchased after January 28 (Global Strategic Advisors, November 6, 2011).

The Chongqing tax is on a sliding scale. Based on the transaction price, villas and apartments priced less than three times the average price will be taxed 0.5 percent annually, those priced three to four times the average price will be taxed 1 percent annually, and those four times or higher will be taxed 1.2 percent (Global Insight, January 28, 2011).

In Shanghai, the property tax applies to Shanghai residents purchasing their second homes or nonresidents purchasing their first homes. To be subject to the tax, the area of the second home, when added to that of the first home, must exceed 60 square meters per person. The value of the home determines tax rate. If the value is less than double that of average prices, the rate is 0.4 percent. If it is more than double, the rate is 0.6 percent with the tax calculated on 70 percent of the home's purchase price (Xinhua, January 28, 2011).

The property tax goes in tandem with other slowing measures, such as increases in bank reserve ratios and increasing down payments, and would ostensibly cool the real estate market by increasing the holding costs

of properties and, thus, reducing speculation. Ideally, it would in the long term adjust the market and reduce inefficiencies, preventing a property bubble. Chinese officials also have noted the tax is intended to narrow the income gap and provide social assistance, partially by using property tax revenue to build low-income housing.

A year later, what is the status of this tax? Has it accomplished what it was established to do or have there been other consequences?

In the short term, research conducted by the Chongqing Municipal Land Resources and Housing Administrative Bureau showed a precipitous drop in visits to sales offices of high-end properties (30-50 percent), and showed that from January 28 to November 30, 2011, the sale of high-end housing fell 4.1 percent from 2010 in Chongqing (Xinhua, January 30). In the long-term, however, there are a number of bureaucratic factors involved in the implementation of the tax and pre-existing structural issues that give us real reason to believe that the tax will not dampen property sales in the long-term.

For example, at a seminar in Wuhan in September 2011 on provincial taxation bureaus in China, Qiu Xiaoxiong, deputy director of the State Administration of Taxation, noted in a speech that there was a long way to go to effective tax administration, noting problems such as “a lack of unified planning for the design of various tax categories,” an “over-centralized tax administration authority” and “the quality of ranks of cadres” (*China Taxation News*, September 28, 2011).

Indeed, there are a number of challenges confronting effective implementation. First, there is the question of how to calculate the property tax. Chongqing and Shanghai are basing the tax off of average market price, but that number varies depending on what statistics one uses. Also, there is the issue of the cost of the home/apartment itself: the tax could be levied on the sale price, or an evaluated price. There are pros and cons to both. The sale price may undervalue housing prices, while an evaluated price, though more accurate, would be nearly impossible logistically to determine.

There is also the issue of how to collect the property tax. The proper collection of a property tax requires a massive administrative infrastructure that can assess property

values. Nie Meisheng, president of the China Real Estate Chamber of Commerce, noted that this is a “a hard nut to crack” because “[the implementation of the property tax] needs millions of professional appraisers and a long time to assess the value of properties” (Business Daily Update, June 1, 2010). It will be difficult to develop this professional capacity, which will require training for officials for the whole property valuation process—appraisal/evaluation, appeals and collection.

Data may also present a problem. A value-based tax would require a data set that according to scholar Ding Chengri, has “historically have not been collected systematically,” or is “stored in different locations and in paper format...the Ministry of Land and Resources records and handles land-related data and information, whereas the Ministry of Construction is in charge of structure-related information” [1].

What about those who evade the tax? In Chongqing, those who do not pay their tax will be subject to fines or will be unable to travel overseas, though it is uncertain how easy these punishments will be to dodge (Global Strategic Advisors, November 6, 2011). For instance, it may be possible that the scofflaw could move to another locality—there is little information available about the consequences for disregarding these penalties.

Bureaucratic complexity also may pose a problem. Among the organizations involved in the tax are the Ministry of Finance, the State Administration of Taxation and the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development. Though the involvement of multiple agencies is not inherently problematic, ministries in China often have conflicting interests, and separate bureaucratic identities may present coordination issues. The more significant issue may be the involvement of local governments, who also are involved heavily in the process. They are responsible for setting the tax rate, the tax standards and when to introduce the tax. Local governments however face a number of counterincentives for proper implementation. First, many local officials have their own hands in the real estate market, or have close personal ties with those that do. Second, competition between local governments to attract investors and buyers may develop with officials offering artificially low property tax rates or declining to implement the property tax at all. As will be discussed later, as a result of the tax share system between

the central and local governments, local governments often have counterincentives to implementing central policies.

Additionally, there are also structural issues that may keep real estate afloat. First, there is a paucity of alternate investment opportunities, in terms of both quantity and quality. Banks are not seen as a good option by many Chinese, both because there is no Chinese equivalent to the U.S. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and periods of political instability and rampant inflation have made Chinese consumers distrustful of banks. Even if banks were positively perceived, the financial benefits are limited. Interest rates, kept low to spur consumer spending, are often outpaced by inflation rates. Overseas investment is also not a viable option as Chinese citizens are largely restricted from investing abroad. Finally, returns from the stock market are no competition for real estate returns.

On a macro-level, urbanization is continuing at a breakneck pace, which supplies the demand needed to maintain such high prices. The urbanization rate is expected to rise 10 percentage points in less than 10 years—from 47 percent in 2011 to 57 percent in 2020 (*China Daily*, March 26, 2011).

In terms of suppressing housing prices, the problem of implementation is just one of the factors that could nullify the tax's impact. In the case of Hong Kong, despite an annual 5 percent tax on the assessed value of a property, the assessed value is so below the actual market value that the effective tax rate is minimal. So far, it has not significantly affected real estate sales (*China Economic Review*, June 2010). Of course, Hong Kong's 5 percent is a great deal higher than those currently in place in Chongqing and Shanghai.

So if the property tax may not dampen prices, what will it do? The most important impact of the property tax will be its role as a carrot to focus on qualitative development for local governments, who depend on revenue from land sales and building construction. Beijing's efforts to rein in growth is choking that revenue off, leaving local governments mired in debt ("Local Debt Problems Highlight Weak Links in China's Economic Model," *China Brief*, July 15, 2011).

Fiscal decentralization, instituted in the mid-1990s, reduced local governments' share of the central revenue stream, but increased their responsibility for providing social goods. Local governments are currently responsible for 80 percent of public spending, but receive just half total government tax revenue (*The Economist*, February 4). Local governments have become desperate for revenue streams, and real estate is an excellent source. Officials can appropriate land or buy land at very low cost and sell it to developers for a tidy profit. Land revenue is particularly attractive as it counts as extra-budgetary income, which does not count in the central government's accounting of local government budgets. This means local governments are allowed to retain all monies received and spend it however they wish.

As a result, the revenue coming from commercial and residential land leasing and sales have become a crucial part of local government budgets. According to the Ministry of Land and Resources, land-transfer fees totaled 1.59 trillion yuan (\$232.91 billion) in 2009, which accounted for 24 per cent of China's total fiscal revenue (*Asia Pulse*, March 3, 2010). These revenues are used to attract investment, build substantial public works projects and provide services.

Tightening measures launched in 2010-2011 have put a dent in these crucial revenues: one report shows that "land sales in 130 major cities fell 30 percent year-on-year to reach 1.18 trillion yuan (\$185 billion) during the first 11 months of the year" (*China Daily*, December 8, 2011).

There is hope that revenue from a property tax would help to relieve local governments' addiction to land sales by providing a more consistent form of revenue. This is important for two reasons. First, reducing local government dependence on land sales would help to cool rising real estate prices. Second, the revenue from land sales and leasing cannot be expected to last forever—there is a finite amount of land in China and if the price bubble pops, revenues from these sources will plunge. Reducing local government dependence on land sales may also help to reduce social unrest, which is often caused by farmers protesting the unlawful seizure of their land or inadequate compensation for their land.

A Difficult Future for the Property Tax

The property tax however cannot be relied on as a short-term (or even medium-term) fix for rising housing prices—it faces too many implementation challenges and is too limited at present. If and when the property tax becomes a legitimate revenue generator, it has the real potential to fix the central-local fiscal divide and minimize some of the negative externalities that have resulted from it, including excessive land appropriation and mismanaged growth. In short, it may have a much more positive impact than just slowing housing prices in the short-term.

It is expected that the government will expand the tax to more cities this year, including potentially Guangzhou and Nanjing (*Caijing*, January 6). Additionally, in order to counter potential implementation problems, China will be launching a database this year that will include housing information for 40 major cities (Xinhua, January 31).

The tax has the potential to be a major source of revenue. In 2009, property taxes accounted for over four percent of Great Britain's GDP, about 3.5 percent of Canada's GDP, and just over 3 percent of the United States' GDP (*The Economist*, March 29, 2011). Indeed, a major report issued in February 2012 by the World Bank and China's Development Research Center calls for social spending in China to be drawn more from property taxes (among other sources) than from land sales. The report also points to the property tax as an incentive for local governments to focus on maintaining property values rather than turning them over [2].

Implementation problems however could keep property taxes from becoming a reliable revenue stream. In the first 10 months of the tax in Chongqing, revenues from the tax accounted for just 0.2 percent of Chongqing's total tax revenues for that period due to the limited scope of the tax, which affected just 8,500 homes (*The Economist*, February 4, 2012). Additionally, if property prices fall, so will property tax revenues. The property tax has the potential to be a game-changer in terms of central-local fiscal relations, but only time will tell whether the Chinese state can overcome the bureaucratic and logistic hurdles it faces trying to collect on the property tax.

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Notes:

1. Ding, Chengri. "Property Tax Development in China," *Land Lines*: July 2005, Volume 17, Number 3, http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1041_Property-Tax-Development-in-China.
2. *China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious and Creative High-Income Society*, World Bank and the Development Research Center of the State Council, February 2012, pp. 23, 44–45, 102–103.

PLA Air Force Male Aviation Cadet Recruitment, Education and Training

By Kenneth W. Allen

China's People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) is still searching for the best way to recruit, educate and train its male aviation cadets (*feixing xueyuan*). After graduation, they serve as aviators (*feixing renyuan*), which includes fighter, attack, helicopter, bomber and transport pilots (*feixingyuan*), as well as bomber and transport navigation officers (*Air Force Dictionary*, 1996, p. 168–168; *PLAAF Officer Handbook*, 2006, p. 338). Historically, the PLAAF recruited high school graduates and enlisted members, but it has gradually increased the recruitment of college students and graduates. For education reasons, recruiting targets Han Chinese from specific provinces and municipalities. The PLAAF also separates male and female aviators during training and, with only a few exceptions, at their operational units. In addition, the PLAAF retains some of the best graduates as instructors for their entire career.

During late 2011, the PLAAF reportedly consolidated its seven flight colleges and at least six of its seven post-graduation transition training bases into three corps deputy leader-grade training units (Harbin, Xi'an and Shijiazhuang) in an effort to help streamline its pilot

and navigator basic flight training curriculum (*Wen Wei Po*, January 21; December 31, 2011). It is not yet clear exactly how this consolidation will be carried out or if it will be successful.

This article, which complements “Chinese Air Force Officer Recruitment, Education and Training” (*China Brief*, November 30, 2011), is organized into the following five sections.

1. Cadet recruitment
2. Cadet education and training
3. Flight training curriculum
4. Post-graduation
5. Conclusions

Cadet Recruitment

The PLAAF Headquarters Department’s Aviator Recruiting Bureau (*Kongjun Zhaofei Ju*), which has a regional selection center and multiple selection sites subordinate to each of the seven Military Region Air Forces (MRAFs), is responsible for all aviation cadet recruiting activities (*Xinhua*, June 4, 2006). The bureau also has its own website (<http://zhaofei.cgw.cn>). The PLAAF Headquarters Department’s Training Department manages the overall program. Each MRAF Headquarters manages the flight colleges and transition training base in its area of responsibility [1].

Traditionally, the PLAAF recruited most of its cadets from the pool of graduating high school students and enlisted members (*China Air Force Encyclopedia*) [2]. For example, from 1987 to 2007, the PLAAF selected a total of 25,000 high school graduates and only 800 college graduates as aviation cadets (*China Air Force*, 2007-5). In terms of academic degrees, the PLAAF did not begin granting bachelor’s degrees to non-aviation cadets until 1982 and to aviation cadets in 1987 [3].

Historically, the PLAAF has selectively recruited aviation cadets from specific provinces and municipalities. For example, in 1989, cadets were chosen from only 14 provinces and municipalities (*China Air Force*, 1989-3). In 2006, the recruiting notice was issued to 29 of China’s 32 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, but cadets were chosen from only 16 (*China Air Force*, 2006-5). In recent years, the PLAAF has expanded its

recruiting of non-Han Chinese by including a small number of cadets from minorities in Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Yunnan and Qinghai, but it still does not recruit from Tibet and Hainan (*China Air Force*, 2006-5; *PLAAF Officer Handbook*). Minority cadets, who probably receive even greater scrutiny for political reliability, are most likely relegated to flying small transports and helicopters in remote areas.

In the early 2000s, the PLAAF progressively introduced new programs to recruit graduates from PLA colleges and students and graduates from civilian colleges with a science and engineering background. The programs are shown below (*People’s Liberation Army Air Force 2010*):

- 2000 (4+2+1 program): PLA college graduates with a 3-year senior technical or 4-year bachelor’s degree in missiles or telecommunications receive a second (2-year) Bachelor’s in Military Science plus 1 year of transition training.
- 2003 (4+2+1 program): Civilian college graduates with a 3-year senior technical or 4-year bachelor’s degree in science or engineering.
- 2006 (2+2+1 program): Civilian college students in their second or third year with a major in science or engineering receive 2 years of basic aviation theory along with basic and advanced flight training, after which they receive a Bachelor’s in Military Science followed by 1 year of transition training.
- 2011: New enlisted members who already have a college degree began basic flight training in a CJ-6 (*China Air Force*, 2011-4). No further information is available about this program.

In 2011, the PLAAF’s Political Department launched a new aviation cadet program in the PLAAF’s Defense Student (*Guofangsheng*) Program at Tsinghua University, whereby 32 students will receive three years of education at Tsinghua followed by one year of education at the Air Force Aviation University in Changchun (*China Air Force*, 2011-10). No information is available about their flight training schedule.

In early 2010, the PLAAF dispatched about 400 recruiters to 170 locations in 30 of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities. In the end, the new class consisted of 1,100 cadets, including 836 high

school graduates, 200 college students/graduates and 64 enlisted members already enrolled in PLAAF officer colleges (Xianfeng Jiaoyu Wang, August 30, 2010; *China Air Force*, April 2010).

Each province apparently has a quota for high school graduates but not for college students and graduates. For example, Henan Province has a quota of 55 high school graduates for the 2012 class but no quota for college students and graduates (Phoenix Online, September 29, 2011).

To meet its goals of recruiting better educated members as aviation cadets, the PLAAF has had to adjust the maximum age for recruits. The maximum age for being accepted as an aviation cadet is 20 for high school graduates, 22 for second-year college students and 24 for military or civilian college graduates (*PLAAF Officer Handbook*).

Cadet Education and Training

The PLAAF has different education and training programs for high school graduates, college students and college graduates. New cadets are divided into two levels (*benke yipi*, *benke erpi*) and receive a one-time bonus of 3,000 or 5,000 yuan (\$476 or \$794), respectively (Xinhua, November 17, 2006).

High School Graduate Cadets

In May 2004, the PLAAF created the Air Force Aviation University in Changchun, Jilin Province, which has a subordinate Flight Basic Training Base and a Flight Training Base. Cadets who come from high school graduates receive 30 months of basic education and aviation theory at the Air Force Aviation University's Basic Flight Training Base. Some cadets also receive six months of follow-on training in a basic trainer at the University's Flight Training Base (*PLAAF Officer Handbook*). During this period, they also parachute out of a Y-5 transport and conduct survival training. While most cadets become pilots, some become transport and bomber navigation and communications officers.

Upon completing their basic education at the university, cadets transfer to one of the PLAAF's seven Flight Colleges, where they complete their undergraduate

aviation training and receive a Bachelor's in Military Science. Each college is organized like an operational air division with subordinate regiments, flight groups and flight squadrons. Each college averages about 100 students per year, which are divided into several basic and advanced trainer regiments. (*Air Force News*, August 23, 2003 and February 16, 2006).

Whereas graduates from the 1st and 2nd Flight Colleges (transports and bombers) are assigned to their operational unit to transition into that unit's aircraft, graduates from the remaining five flight colleges (fighter and attack) are assigned to one of the PLAAF's seven transition training bases (one in each MRAF) for one year of transition training in yet another advanced trainer (JJ-6 or JJ-7). After that, they are assigned to their operational base, where they finally transition into that unit's aircraft. The seven flight colleges are discussed below (*PLAAF Officer Handbook*).

- 1st Flight College (Harbin, Heilongjiang) trains transport and bomber (tanker) pilots and navigation and communications officers, which includes six months of basic trainer and one year of advanced trainer training.
- 2nd Flight College (Huxian, Shaanxi and Jiajiang, Sichuan) trains bomber (tanker) and transport (early warning) pilots, navigation officers and other officer and enlisted crew members. Pilot cadets receive six months of training in a basic trainer and one year in an advanced trainer. Navigators receive ten months of navigation theory training followed by one year of transport or bomber training. In 2010, the 2nd Flight College's 2nd Regiment took over flight training from the Army for all new PLAAF helicopter pilots (*PLA Daily*, March 16, 2010).
- 3rd Flight College (Jinzhou, Liaoning) and 5th Flight College (Wuwei, Gansu) train fighter pilots, which includes one year of advanced trainer training. The cadets receive their basic trainer training at the Aviation University's Flight Training Base.
- 4th Flight College (Shijiazhuang, Hebei), 6th Flight College (Zhuozhou, Hebei) and 13th Flight College (Bengbu, Anhui) train fighter pilots, which includes six months of basic trainer and one year of advanced trainer training.

The PLAAF uses the CJ-6 as its basic trainer for all aircraft. It uses the Y-7 as an advanced trainer for bomber and transport pilots and the K-8 and JJ-5 as an advanced trainer for fighter and attack pilots.

The PLAAF did not begin specialized training for weapon systems officers (WSOs) in two-seat multirole aircraft (JH-7) at operational units until early 2011 (*Kongjun Bao*, March 2, 2011). Previously, pilots merely switched between the front and rear seats.

College Student and Graduate Cadets

There is a lack of information about just how the PLAAF manages programs for PLA college graduates and civilian college students and graduates. However, it appears they receive 24 to 28 months of basic aviation theory as well as basic and advanced trainer training at one of the flight colleges. Upon graduation, they receive a Bachelor's in Military Science followed by one year of transition training before being assigned to their permanent unit. About half of the cadets to date have elected to become a Communist Party member by concurrently receiving two years of preparatory education and training (*PLAAF Officer Handbook*). It does not appear the cadets who already have a bachelor's degree are mixed with the high school graduate and civilian college student aviation cadets during their training.

Flight Training Curriculum

Flight training is guided by the latest version (2009) of the *Outline of Military Training and Evaluation (Junshi xunlian yu kaohe dagang)* (*PLA Daily*, July 25, 2008). During six months of CJ-6 training—much of which occurs on sod runways—cadets conduct cockpit familiarization and simulator training as well as takeoffs, landings, navigation, aerobatics and instrument flying before and after they fly their first solo. Once they move to an advanced trainer regiment, fighter and attack cadets conduct the same type of skills training as in the CJ-6. After they conduct their first solo, they fly two-ship formations, barrel rolls, diving, loops, Immelmans and high- and low-altitude flights plus flying at night and in inclement weather. Even after they fly their first solo, instructors continue to fly with them. Fighter and attack cadets only recently have begun conducting

any type of tactics training in the K-8, such as 4-ship formations and dropping bombs and firing guns at ground targets. Bomber cadets conduct training in night optical bombing, radar bombing and deploying to other airfields at night (*Air Force News*, November 2, 2004; *People's Liberation Army Air Force* 2010).

During the 18 months of flight training, cadets fly approximately 200 to 220 hours (about 80 hours in a basic trainer and 120 to 140 in an advanced trainer). Cadets can fly multiple sorties per day for a maximum of five hours. Inclement weather often affects how often the cadets can fly (*Air Force News*, April 3, 2004). One PLAAF article provided information about the same training for several countries—Italy (300 hours), Japan (360-390 hours), England (310 hours) and France (275 hours)—and assessed that the PLAAF's hours were inadequate [4]. Even so, the PLAAF's goal is to reduce the total number of hours to 110 and to include the L-15 advanced trainer for fighter and attack cadets [5].

Upon graduation, cadets at the 1st and 2nd Flight Colleges are assigned directly to their operational unit, where they transition into that unit's aircraft. Cadets from the five fighter and attack colleges are assigned to a transition training base, where they receive about 12 months of training in a JJ-6 or JJ-7. During this period, they continue their skills' training, which includes flying over water plus night training under visual flight rules (VFR) and instrument flight rules (IFR). They are then assigned to their permanent operational unit, where they transition to that unit's aircraft for skills and tactics training (*PLAAF Officer Handbook*).

Post-Graduation

The PLAAF does not publish information about the wash out rate for aviation cadets; however, the flight colleges do everything possible to have cadets graduate. Those who do not graduate are sent to another PLAAF college to finish their education and training in a different specialty. Upon graduation in June, all aviation cadets receive the grade of company deputy leader and the rank of first lieutenant. Outstanding graduates can immediately receive the grade of company leader (*PLAAF Officer Handbook*). Based on the author's analysis of PLAAF aviation cadet activity, there appears to be about one instructor for

every one to three cadets. According to one article, flight instructors assigned to the flight colleges reportedly comprise more than one-third of all PLAAF pilots. Furthermore, the majority of the flight instructors are selected from among the best graduating cadets where they will continue to serve throughout their career. Under recent reforms, the PLAAF has begun to reassign small numbers of operational pilots to instruct at the flight colleges and sent career flight instructors to observe operational unit training [6].

Furthermore, the majority of the flight instructors are selected from among the best graduating cadets where they will continue to serve throughout a career. Under recent reforms, the PLAAF has begun to reassign small numbers of operational pilots to instruct at the flight colleges and sent career flight instructors to observe operational unit training.

All aviators are considered military-track officers and move up the promotion ladder in this career field. As a result, they attend their intermediate (battalion/major and regiment/colonel) and advanced (division/senior colonel) professional military education (PME) for one year at the Air Force Command College in Beijing, where they receive a diploma. More pilots however are also starting to receive a master's degree within and outside military colleges. For example, several J-10 test pilots reportedly received their master's degree at Northwestern Polytechnical University in Xi'an (Xinzhong Chuanchang Blog, October 19, 2009).

Conclusions

It is too early to assess if the PLAAF's new programs to recruit college students and graduates have produced better pilots and unit leaders. If the PLAAF determines it is successful, it will most likely gradually decrease the number of high school graduates recruited in the future. The number of high school graduates, however, actually increased from 2010 to 2011. One problem is the PLAAF does not mix high school graduates with college students and graduates or with female aviation cadets during their training, so it has had to create new training models and organizational structures to deal with this—the recent consolidation and reorganization of some of the training institutes could signal such a shift is under way (*Wen Wei Po*, January 21; December 31, 2011).

Although the PLAAF continues to recognize the shortcoming of retaining some of its best graduates as instructors for the rest of their career and of not bringing in instructors from operational units, it has yet to change the system to any degree. Furthermore, there are no indications this will change over the next several years.

Whereas the PLAAF's logistics, equipment and technical support officers receive graduate degrees, the PLAAF only recently provided the opportunity for its command track officers and pilots to receive graduate degrees. This is an important move as the PLAAF tries to foster a more educated senior officer corps dominated by pilots who are capable of conducting combined-arms and joint operations.

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Notes:

1. Shen Xiaoqing and Yan Gonghe, "Kongjun Siling Bu Gongzuo [Work of Air Force Staff Command]," in Yao Wei, ed., *Zhongguo Kongjun Baike Quanshu* [China Air Force Encyclopedia], Beijing: Aviation Industry Press, November 2005, Vol 1, p. 173-174. See also Tan Guolin and Jiang Yi, "Zhong Wai Junshi Feixing Jiaoyu Tizhi Bijiao yu Qishi [China and Foreign Military Aviation Education System Comparison and Enlightenment]," in *Xin Shiji Xin Jieduan Kongjun Yuanxiao Zhuanxing Jianshe Yu Rencai Peiyang Yanjiu* [Research on New Century New Period Air Force Academic Institution Transformation Building and Personnel Education and Culture], Beijing: Blue Sky Press, July 2009, p. 117-124.
2. Liu Yazhou and Yao Jun, eds, *The History of China's Aviation (Second Edition)*, Changsha: Hunan Science and Technology Press, August 2007, p. 602.
3. Chen Daojin and Liu Yuan, "Feixing Yuanxiao Kuayueshi Fazhan de Zhanlue Dingwei yu Gao

Suzhi Feixing Xueyuan Peiyang [Flight Academic Institutions Leap Ahead in Developing the Strategic Position and High Quality of Educating and Training Aviation Cadets],” in *Research on New Century New Period Air Force Academic Institution Transformation Building and Personnel Education and Culture*, p. 55–66. As a benchmark, USAF undergraduate pilot training is accomplished in 12 months with approximately 85 hours in the T-6 primary trainer and 95 hours in the advanced T-38 trainer. Fighter pilots subsequently receive 20 T-38 hours in fighter fundamentals prior to attending a fighter transition course that runs four to seven months long with 40-60 flight hours.

4. Wang Zhansheng, “Gaige Feixing Yuanxiao Xunlian Tizhi Bianzhi De Shijian Tansuo [Exploring the Reform of the Training System for Flight Academic Institutions],” in *Research on New Century New Period Air Force Academic Institution Transformation Building and Personnel Education and Culture*, p. 310–314.
5. *Ibid*, p. 310–314.
