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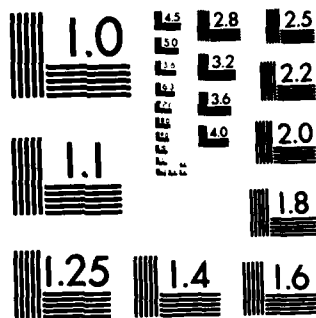
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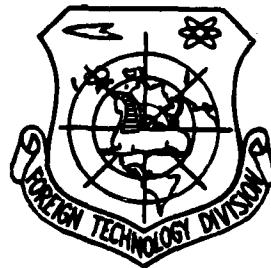
FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY DIVISION



FOR THE SACRED AIR SPACE OF OUR MOTHERLAND
AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR COUNTRY'S FAMOUS AIRCRAFT
DESIGNER, LU HSIAO-P'ENG

by

C. Liang-chin and K. Ching-po



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EDITED TRANSLATION



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FOR THE SACRED AIR SPACE OF OUR MOTHERLAND

— AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR COUNTRY'S FAMOUS AIRCRAFT DESIGNER,
LU HSIAO-P'ENG

Chang Liang-chin and Kuo Ching-po

/2*

This evening before the Sixth People's Conference, we interviewed the chief designer of a certain aircraft manufacturing plant, Comrade Lu Hsiao-p'eng, who is also a delegate to the Sixth People's Conference, and the designer in charge of the first supersonic jet fighter made in our country.

Chief Designer Lu, who is over sixty years of age now, has been through the ups and downs of Chinese aviation, and has fought for the development of aviation in our country for over forty years

He said, "Aviation was like a blank sheet of paper in old China. In 1937, the Italian government signed an agreement with the Nationalist government to build an aircraft plant in China. At that time, in the so-called 'Sino-Italian Aircraft Manufacturing Plant', not only were the fuselages shipped ready-made from Italy, but even the bolts and nuts were imported. The total work done in our country amounted to less than 20%. Not long after the Sino-Japanese War broke out, the 'Sino-Italian Aircraft Manufacturing Plant' was almost completely wiped out."

"It was the backwardness of our country that gave me the determination to study aviation. I wanted China to make her own aircraft to win wars against her enemies."

With such an ideal at heart, Chief Designer Lu took the entrance examination to the Department of Aviation Engineering of Central University. In 1941, after graduating from college, he participated

* Numbers in margin indicate foreign pagination.

in the design of the "Chung Yün" aircraft. Afterwards, he went to the United States and Great Britain to study aircraft design.

Under the corrupt and inept Nationalist government, China was unable to undertake independent aircraft design and manufacture. There was no use for Chief Designer Lu's talents and skills. When news reached his ears that a New China was going to be born, he yearned even more for his motherland. He reminisced, "I remember how excited we were when we read Chairman Mao's 'On a United Government' and 'On New Democracy'. We immediately decided to contribute our knowledge to the aviation of our motherland."

Thus Chief Designer Lu and his two classmates and best friends, Lu Kuang-yü (Chief designer of a certain research institute, who was persecuted and killed during the 'cultural revolution', but vindicated today) and Kao Yün-shou (Professor of Nangching Aeronautical Institute), abandoned the great research conditions and comfortable life offered them abroad, and returned to the bosom of their motherland in August of 1949 after three months of roundabout journey via Hong Kong and South Korea, to escape the watch and blockade set up by Nationalist secret agents.

The Party and our government gave much importance to patriotic intellectuals. Not long after Chief Designer Lu returned home, he was given the responsibility of aircraft repair in the plant. It was during the early stage of the anti-American and pro-Korean period, when U.S. aircraft frequently bombed indiscriminately at our borders. In order that more aircraft could be made available to join in the war in time, Chief Designer Lu gave training to technicians, and at the same time speeded up the repair jobs. Soon afterwards, a lot of airplanes became available. When they had the first plane fixed, a foreign pilot did not dare to fly it, so Chief Designer Lu accompanied a Chinese pilot on the test flight. This action educated and stimulated everybody. That pilot smoothly completed the test flight. When he disembarked from the plane, he said excitedly, "All right! We Chinese can repair airplanes now."

Not only can we repair, we can also design and manufacture! In 1956, Chief Designer Lu became the chief designer of our country's first jet coach plane. Two years later, this plane soared freely in the sky, and Commander-in-Chief Yeh Chien-in happily joined ten thousand people in the celebration.

Later, Chief Designer Lu accepted the responsibility of heading the design of our country's first supersonic jet fighter. Chief Designer Lu appeared to be much agitated when he talked about this part of his past. He said, "These types of jet planes are entirely the result of independent and difficult struggles. There were doubts at home and abroad about our ability to design and manufacture such planes. The conditions were really very unfavorable. Nevertheless, we had the support of the Party and the vast majority of workers. Everybody believed that no matter how difficult the task, we would be able to build our own fighters!"



Famous aircraft designer of our country, Comrade Lu Hsiao-p'eng.
(Photo by Chu Ch'ang-sheng)

During our country's period of hardship, Chief Designer Lu never winced. He joined the workers in riveting and assembly. It was with such enthusiasm that the first model plane was completed. When this model plane was wheeled out of the garage, all

the workers came out to take a look at it, and automatically formed a long welcoming line.

However, the road of progress was not always smooth. The static force test on the model plane went on nicely until, near the end of the test, a cable broke, and the test had to be terminated. Chief Designer Lu felt very bad. He could not eat nor sleep well. At this moment, the leading comrades of the Air Force and related departments gave immense support and encouragement to Chief Designer Lu. Deputy Commander Ts'ao Li-huai and Minister Sun Chih-yüan both affirmed Chief Designer Lu's design, and decided to appropriate parts and components for continuing the manufacture. Chief Designer Lu led the comrades into the struggle with doubled enthusiasm. After incessant improvements, a prototype was finally made. This was brought to Peiching to perform air shows. During the show period, Commander-in-Chief Yeh consulted the delegates to the military Commission Expansion Conference, and decided right there to start small-scale production. After that, Chairman Mao himself approved production of the aircraft in lots. From that time on, China started her history of designing and manufacturing supersonic jet fighters in lots. /3

With a desire to develop China's aviation and build a strong air force, Chief Designer Lu has always been thinking about how to overtake the world's leaders in aviation. During the ten years of turmoil, he was once confined in a "cow barn". When Premier Chou himself made inquiry about this matter, Chief Designer Lu regained his right to work. Right from the first day he was released from the "cow barn", Chief Designer Lu concentrated on his design work. He remarked emotionally,

"I believe the Party and the people understand me. I grieve not for my personal loss, but we do not have the right to waste time. Our country cannot afford delays!"

This is how he thought, and he acted accordingly. Every day he worked until 1 or 2 o'clock past midnight. Not long afterwards, he finished the design of a new product.

After the "Gang of Four" was shattered, this old aircraft designer welcomed with undaunted spirit the springtime of China's scientific undertakings. Vigorous and energetic, he participated in the National Science Conference, and was included in the presidium. Soon afterwards, he made a trip to Europe and the United States of America to absorb the most advanced technology to be applied to the development of our country's aviation.

The aviation industry involves a knowledge of other branches of science. With the continual development of science and technology, the older technical personnel in the aviation industry face the problem of updating their knowledge. Although Chief Designer Lu is already sixty-three years old, he is still tirelessly acquiring new technology, and applying the most advanced technology to the design of products. He is the chief designer, and has original and unique understanding and ideas about many different academic subjects. His learning often surprise comrades engaged in the study of specialized subjects. Moreover, Chief Designer Lu does not waste one second of time. Even when he was confined in a hospital due to illness, he would still ask some comrades over to the ward and discuss problems with them. The discussions usually lasted three to four hours, and caused the doctors to 'protest' to the military unit. This April, a conference was held in Peiching on new technologies in aviation. At first, Chief Designer Lu declined the invitation to attend because he was too busy. But those in charge of the conference insisted that he attend it. After he took care of the business and rushed to Peiching, it was already past nine o'clock in the evening. The comrades saw that he was tired from the trip, and urged him to go to bed early. He replied, "Work is more important." He worked all the way till past 2:00 a.m., and gave a technical report on the conference the following day, which was favorably received by the specialists and people in the same profession who attended the conference.

Chief Designer Lu, with his selfless work attitude, has mounted one peak after another in the design of aviation products. This old intellectual, who possesses strong patriotism and career drive, unselfishly dedicates his wisdom and ideas to furthering the cause of China developing her own aviation industry, and to the defense of the sacred air space of our motherland. In February of this year, he gloriously joined the Chinese Communist Party, and realized a long-fostered wish. In March, he was re-elected standing administrator of the Chinese Society of Aeronautics and Astronautics. In May, he was elected again deputy chairman of the provincial government. In early June, he attended the Sixth People's Conference.

With regard to his success and glory, Chief Designer Lu said modestly, "What little I have done is just my duty. Several decades of experience have shown that only the Communist Party can save China, and only socialism can save China. Without the Communist Party, the aviation industry of our motherland would not have become what it is today; neither would Lu Hsiao-p'eng have become what he is today. One should not lag behind. Our country gave me the responsibility of advancing technology. I have to accomplish this mission no matter what happens. This unshaken belief is the source of my strength."

We sincerely congratulate Chief Designer Lu on his accomplishments in politics and his career, and thank him for his valuable contribution to our motherland and her people.

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