

◆ Aperçu IA

In 1948, the situation in China was dominated by the final stages of the Chinese Civil War, with the Communist Party rapidly gaining the upper hand over the Nationalist government. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) won decisive victories in Manchuria, seizing vast amounts of territory and equipment. Economically, the Nationalist government's currency collapsed amid hyperinflation, despite attempts at reform, which further eroded public support. The PLA was now approaching victory, having surpassed the Nationalists in troop numbers and equipment, and was on the verge of taking control of major cities. [↗](#)

Military situation

- **Communist advances:** The PLA won key battles in 1948, gaining control of major areas like Mukden (now Shenyang) and cutting off Nationalist forces.
- **Territorial control:** By late 1948, the Communists controlled about one-third of China, including Manchuria and large parts of northern and central China.
- **Military strength:** The PLA's troop strength surpassed the Nationalists', and they had captured significant amounts of Nationalist equipment, including heavy artillery and armor.
- **Nationalist defenses:** The Yangtze River was the Nationalists' last major line of defense, with their capital, Nanjing, and major cities like Shanghai, directly threatened. [↗](#)

Economic situation [↗](#)

- **Hyperinflation:** The Nationalist currency, the gold yuan, collapsed due to hyperinflation, rendering it almost worthless and severely impacting the economy.
- **Government response:** The government implemented strict price controls and criminal penalties for economic crimes, but these measures failed to restore confidence and were seen as ineffective, especially when followed by the return of inflation.
- **Loss of resources:** The ongoing Communist offensive disrupted commerce and cut the government off from natural resources, further worsening the economic crisis. [↗](#)

Political situation

- **Nationalist government instability:** The government's corruption and mismanagement led to a loss of popular support.
- **Communist consolidation:** The Communists established the North China People's Government in September 1948, signaling their intent to form a new, unified republic.
- **International relations:** The U.S. continued to provide aid to the Nationalists, though not at the level Chiang Kai-shek desired. A separate issue occurred in Mukden when U.S. Consul Angus Ward and his staff were held under house arrest by Communist troops after the consulate refused to surrender its radio transmitter.
- **Negotiations:** The year ended with Nationalist President Chiang Kai-shek indicating a willingness to negotiate, while the Communists published a list of 25 "war criminals," topped by Chiang's name. [↗](#)

year 1948 the situation in china

In 1948, the situation in China was dominated by the escalating Chinese Civil War, which reached a decisive turning point with major **Communist military victories** that severely weakened the ruling Nationalist government. The year was marked by the Nationalists' military collapse in key regions and a severe economic crisis that eroded public support for their regime. [↗](#)

Military Situation

The military balance shifted decisively in favor of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and their People's Liberation Army (PLA). [↗](#)

- **Key Communist Offensives:** The PLA moved from guerrilla warfare to conventional warfare tactics and launched major offensives that determined the war's outcome.
- **Decisive Campaigns:** The "Three Great Campaigns" began in late 1948:
 - The **Liaoshen Campaign** (September-November) resulted in the Communist conquest of all of Manchuria, a vital industrial region.
 - The **Huaihai Campaign** (late 1948-early 1949) was the largest and most decisive battle, resulting in the destruction of over half a million Nationalist troops and securing east-central China for the Communists.
 - The **Pingjin Campaign** began in November, aiming to capture Beijing (then Beiping) and Tianjin in North China.
- **Territorial Control:** By the end of 1948, the Communists controlled much of northern China and the countryside, while Nationalist forces were largely confined to isolated garrisons in major cities and along railway lines. [↗](#)

Political and Economic Situation

The Nationalist government, led by Chiang Kai-shek, faced a critical crisis of legitimacy and control. [↗](#)

- **Political Instability:** The government attempted to transition to a constitutional democracy with the first elections for the Legislative Yuan and President (Chiang Kai-shek was elected President in April), but these efforts were overshadowed by the ongoing war and internal disunity.
- **Hyperinflation and Economic Crisis:** The Nationalist-held cities suffered from massive hyperinflation, with the currency (the gold yuan, introduced in August 1948) quickly becoming worthless. This economic meltdown alienated the middle class and professionals, who were a key support base for the Nationalists.
- **Loss of Morale:** Widespread corruption, perceived government ineffectiveness, and military defeats led to a collapse in public and military morale, with many Nationalist troops deserting or defecting to the Communists.
- **Foreign Relations:** The United States continued to provide economic aid through the China Aid Act of 1948 but generally maintained a policy of non-intervention in the military conflict, as American officials noted the situation was too precarious for a successful aid program. [↗](#)

By the close of 1948, the tide of the Chinese Civil War had irrevocably turned, setting the stage for the Communist conquest of the mainland and the establishment of the People's Republic of China the following year. [↗](#)