Lesson - Nationalist China

Aim: Did the Guomindang solve the problems of Nationalist China?

I. Why did Imperial China come to an end?

A. Corruption of emperors and the imperial court
1. Role of eunuchs increased their authority over emperors
2. Influence of empresses (i.e. Ci Xi) and concubines
3. Infancy of the last emperor, Puyi

B. Weaknesses of the Chinese military
1. British and other imperialist powers controlled much of China
2. Chinese military officers were too powerful and independent of imperial authority (e.g. warlords)
3. Chinese military was defeated by Japan in the Sino-Japanese War

C. Social problems became unbearable
1. Poor and overpopulated countryside witnessed unemployment and unrest (bloody Taiping Rebellion: 20-30 million dead)
2. Lack of political unity, drug abuse among the youth and moral decline shattered Chinese society (e.g. Opium Wars and the Boxer Rebellion)
3. Government had lost touch with needs of the people

II. How did China become a republic?

A. Sun Yixian [a.k.a. Sun Yat-sen] (1866-1925)
1. Chinese physician who spent many years in the United States (University of Colorado)
   a. Influenced by American ideas and converted to Christianity
   b. Maintained close ties with many Western intellectuals
2. Opposed and attempted to overthrow corrupt emperors of the Qing Dynasty (consequently went into exile)
3. In 1911, Sun was in the U.S. when he learned of a revolution against last emperor, Puyi
   a. Sun returned to China and confronted political choices
   b. Imperial general Yuan Shigai, was originally sent to crush revolutionaries but secretly made a deal with Sun
4. Last emperor abdicated in 1911 and China became a republic
B. **Yuan Shigai (1859-1916)**

1. Became president of China as a result of deal with Sun
2. Betrayed Sun and the democratic ideals of the Nationalist Party (the *Guomindang*) formed in 1912
3. Yuan forced Sun into exile in Japan (1913-16)
4. Proclaimed a new dynasty with himself as emperor
5. Military revolts broke out against him and his own generals refused to follow his orders - Yuan backed down
6. Yuan died in June 1916

C. Sun returned to power

1. Sun’s party emphasized **Three Principles**: “Nationalism, Democracy, Livelihood”
2. Sun lacked leadership skills and strong military support
3. Era of the *warlords* (1916-28) left China very weak and divided
   a. Peasants suffered from attacks of warlord armies
   b. Famine broke out and took the lives of millions
   c. Sun found himself under attack on several occasions
4. China entered World War One in 1917 on the side of the Entente Powers
   a. Chinese expected allied support in regaining foreign-controlled Chinese lands and other territories (e.g. German controlled islands and city of Tsingdao)
   b. Entente powers gave German territories to Japan in the Treaty of Versailles
5. News of treaty provisions led to massive Chinese outcry and demonstrations in Beijing against Japan and Europeans
   a. Known as the **May 4th Movement** (1919)
   b. Sun and the Guomindang shared feelings of the May 4th Movement
6. Sun’s weak leadership disillusioned many against concepts of Western democracy and turned them towards Lenin’s Communist ideology

III. How did the Nationalists view the Chinese Communist Party?

A. Chinese Communist Party was founded in 1921

B. Sun established diplomatic and economic ties with the USSR
   1. Organized Guomindang along Bolshevik lines
   2. Received financial aid and military advisors from Lenin

C. **Jiang Jieshi** [Chiang Kai-shek] (1887-1975) became leader of the Guomindang upon death of Sun (1925)
   1. Middle class origins and supported by rich bankers and businessmen
   2. Feared goal of Communists: creation of a socialist economy
   3. Temporarily joined with Communists to put down warlords
4. In 1927, Jiang turned against Communists
   a. *Shanghai Massacre*: Nationalist troops and armed gangs killed
      any Communist leaders and union members
   b. Almost wiped out Communists

IV. How did Jiang’s presidency cause the Chinese civil war?

A. Great Britain and the United States formally recognized the Nationalist
government
   1. USSR did not recognize Jiang’s government
   2. Soviets were upset with Jiang’s Shanghai Massacre

B. Jiang’s government became steadily less democratic and corrupt
   1. Jiang tried to modernize and develop cities
   2. Jiang did nothing to improve the life of the peasants
      a. Many peasants turned to Communists for support
      b. Communist leader **Mao Zedong** took advantage of Jiang’s
disregard for peasants

C. Mao seized lands from landlords and distributed them to the peasants
   1. Jiang ordered his forces to pursue Mao
   2. Mao fled to the countryside to preach revolutionary ideas to the peasants
      a. Mao believed peasants were the backbone of revolution
      b. Lenin differed with Mao because he believed the cities were better
         recruiting grounds for Communism

V. What were the results of the first phase of the civil war (1930-34)?

A. Civil war broke out in the countryside and the cities
   1. Mao recruited peasants for his **Red Army**
      a. Trained them in guerrilla tactics
      b. Stationed in the hills and mountains
   2. Jiang recruited from the cities
      a. Nationalists attacked Mao’s forces in the mountains but could not
         defeat them

B. In 1933, Jiang led forces in massive attack on Mao’s forces
   1. Jiang’s 700,000 men surrounded Mao’s army and forced them out of
      hiding
   2. Mao decided to evacuate with forces and began 6,000 mile journey
      northwards in what became known as the *Long March* (1934)
   3. Mao’s forces crossed mountains, rivers and swamps
      a. Of 100,000 men, 10-30,000 reach safety in N.W. China
      b. Settled in caves and recruited new followers

C. Japanese conquered Manchuria (1931) and threatened to take coastal areas