

China Policy Study Group

BROADSHEET

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EDITORIAL

In recent years, young people in many countries have come forward as an independent progressive force. In the U.S. they spearhead the struggle against the Vietnam war, and in Japan it is they who are rallying the people in the fight to free their country from U.S. domination. In France, student revolt in education escalated into a direct challenge to bourgeois dictatorship; this development has some parallels in events in China's cultural revolution, fought out under the totally different conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In Britain, young people — especially students — are active and militant.

All these young people see the society into which they have been born as one based on competition and violence, in which decent human relations are impossible. But some, believing that they are freeing themselves from the outworn morals and ideas of an older generation that has landed the world in a mess, rebel in ways that lead to a dead end. Others, out of distrust of the political and social values of their elders, retreat into cynicism, while others cry 'revolution' as they fight (in the words of Stokely Carmichael) 'for sex, pot and the freedom to curse'. In this confusion of illusion and reality, aims become personal and libertarian, the central target is missed, and militancy is channeled into activities offering no real threat to the existing order. Such rebellion, for ends that are only superficially political, plays into the hands of the very authorities the rebellious believe they are attacking. Making revolution is a serious matter, over-riding individualism.

The historic role of young people, springing from their receptiveness to new and challenging ideas, has been that of torch-bearers ('path-breakers' as they say in China) in the field of ideas and ideology. The older generation have much to learn from them. But the young people cannot by themselves be the decisive force in changing the social order; they can be a powerful support to the labouring classes, but they cannot supersede them as the main and essential revolutionary force.

The system that alienates the individual also denies to millions at home and abroad the essentials of a decent life. Provided all those who seek a new order in which creative human relations are possible unite against the main target, their strength will prove decisive in the world, as it has done in China.

CHINA'S BORDERS: SOVIET CLAIMS EXAMINED

On 8th October the Chinese Foreign Affairs Ministry followed up the official statement of the previous day (reported in November BROADSHEET), with a long and detailed reply to the Soviet statement of 13th June. We give below a much shortened paraphrase. Direct quotations are in bold-face type.

1. WHAT HISTORY SHOWS

The Soviet statement claims that the 1.5 million square kilometres of land seized by Tsarist Russia never actually belonged to China and that the Ching (Manchu) Emperors committed aggression, just as the Tsars did.

The Communist Party of China and the Government of the People's Republic of China have never evaded the fact that in the historical process of the formation and development of China as a multi-national country, China's feudal rulers, like the feudal rulers of other countries, carried out expansion and committed aggression against some surrounding countries. But after the Opium War of 1840 China was gradually reduced to a semi-colony. . . . China never committed aggression against Tsarist Russia, and it was the military-feudal imperialist Tsarist Russia that committed aggression against semi-colonial China.

The Soviet Government states that only the Hans are Chinese and that none of the regions inhabited by minority nationalities are Chinese territory. The overwhelming majority of the countries in the world are multi-national countries, and one nationality often separately inhabits several different countries. As Engels said, ' . . . no state boundary coincides with the natural boundary of nationality, that of language.' China became a unified, multi-national feudal country as early as more than two thousand years ago.

As regards the eastern sector, the Soviet assertion that the Heilung (Amur) River basin had always belonged to Russia is fantastic. Russia was not unified until the end of the 15th century and did not cross the Urals into Siberia until a century later. Only in the mid-17th century did Tsarist Cossacks invade the Heilung River basin, which China had already governed for many hundreds of years.

As to the western sector, many Russian documents and maps, both Tsarist and Soviet, show that until the 19th century China's frontier was at Lake Balkash (now upwards of a hundred miles inside Soviet territory, Ed.).

2. WHO IS EXPANSIONIST ?

The Soviet Government states that China's territorial claims on other countries occupy a very large place in China's present foreign policy. But the label of **expansionism cannot be pinned on China, which has no territorial claims against any country.** Boundary questions left over by history should be settled on the basis of mutual understanding and accommodation, as China has done with most of her neighbours. It is the Soviet Union, not China, that stations hundreds of thousands of troops outside its borders and is making a show of force everywhere. Is it not clear who is carrying out expansion and aggression and making territorial claims?

The Soviet arguments inevitably bring to mind the old Tsars' plans for carving up China. As Lenin wrote in 1916, Tsarist Russia had 'a premeditated plan . . . aimed at direct seizure of vast territories right up to the Great Wall and the achievement of hegemony in east Asia.'

Recent Soviet proposals for an 'Asian collective security system' are not intended only to further aggression against China but — a more immediate and practical aim — to control Asian countries. The days when this could be done are past.

3. WHO IS FOLLOWING MARXISM-LENINISM?

The treaties relating to the Sino-Soviet boundary are all unequal treaties that were imposed on China. The Soviet Government under Lenin advocated the annulment of the treaties, but owing to the historical conditions of the time this was not done.

The Soviet Government now says that these treaties, being signed by both parties, are equal. But are not all treaties signed by the contracting parties? Are there then any unequal treaties at all?

The Soviet Government refers only to those treaties which suit its purpose, omitting others. An agreement made in

1924 between the two Governments says that the two countries are to 'redemarcate their national boundaries'. If, as the Soviet Government says, there were no problems at that time, what need was there to re-demarcate boundaries?

Quotations from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin give details of Russian imperialist aggression against China. Many earlier Soviet writings recognise that the treaties imposed on China by the Tsars were unequal, and even the Diplomatic Dictionary published in 1961 (edited by Foreign Minister Gromyko, among others) admits it unequivocally.

To enable people to judge for themselves who is following Marxism-Leninism, we ask the Soviet Government to publish the present and previous Chinese statements, with the articles by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin which we have quoted.

4. IS THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT READY TO SETTLE THE BOUNDARY QUESTION ON THE BASIS OF THE TREATIES?

On this question the Soviet stand is equivocal.

For instance, a Protocol of 1884 is the only treaty relating to the boundary in the Pamir area. Yet the Soviet Government says that this has nothing to do with the ownership of the area and that Notes exchanged in 1894 are the documents of demarcation. In fact, by 1892 the Tsarist Government had already violated the 1884 Protocol and occupied further Chinese territory; in 1894 they forced the Chinese Government to agree to maintain the respective troop positions, pending a final settlement. The Chinese Government at that time, however, explicitly reserved its rights and claimed the positions laid down in the 1884 Protocol, until a satisfactory understanding should be reached. The Russian Government, unable to justify itself, did not dare to insist. Now the Soviet Government claims this line as the boundary, though it is not the boundary laid down in the Protocol, which is the relevant treaty.

On the eastern sector, the Treaty of Peking of 1860 clearly states that the Heilung and Wusuli (Ussuri) Rivers form the boundary. The map attached to the treaty is to a scale of 1:1,000,000 and the red line on it shows only that the rivers form the boundary. It cannot possibly show the exact position of the boundary in the rivers.

That the river forms the boundary means that the centre line of the main channel is the boundary. This was recognised not only by the Tsarist Government but also by the Soviet Government in their *Regulations on the Safeguarding of the State Frontier of the U.S.S.R.* The Great Soviet Encyclopedia published in 1926 clearly states this in relation to the Heilung River from Khabarovsk (Poli) upwards. The present Soviet claim, that the boundary runs along the Chinese bank of the rivers, is a claim which even the Tsars dared not make.

These examples make one doubt whether the Soviet Government is really prepared to take the treaties as the basis for settling the Sino-Soviet boundary question.

5. THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT'S STAND PERMITS OF NO DISTORTION.

The Chinese Government's proposals are as follows:

A. Confirm that the present treaties are unequal, imposed at a time when power was in the hands of neither the Chinese nor the Russian people.

B. In view of actual conditions, take these treaties as the basis for an overall settlement. China does not demand the return of the Chinese territory which Tsarist Russia annexed.

C. Any territory occupied in violation of the treaties must, in principle, be returned unconditionally. But necessary adjustments may be made by consultation on an equal footing, with mutual understanding and in consideration of the interests of the local inhabitants.

D. Conclude a new treaty to replace the old one and demarcate the boundary.

E. Pending an overall settlement maintain the status quo and avert armed conflicts by withdrawing troops from all the disputed areas.

RUSSIA AND ASIA

A quotation from Lenin about the Russian press in 1900: 'The press is conducting a campaign against the Chinese; it is howling about the savage yellow race and its hostility towards civilisation, about Russia's tasks of enlightenment, about the enthusiasm with which the Russian soldiers go into battle, etc., etc. Journalists who crawl on their bellies before the Government and the money-bags are straining every nerve to rouse the hatred of the people against China.'

'THE WAR IN CHINA', ISKRA (THE SPARK), DECEMBER 1900

Russia is becoming increasingly acceptable to Thailand as a replacement for the withdrawing British and American powers in South-East Asia. . . .

In an interview, Thanat Khoman (Foreign Minister) left no room for doubt that if the Americans withdraw from South-East Asia and regional alliances and fail to provide adequate security, then Mr. Brezhnev's proposals for a mutual collective pact will be regarded as an acceptable way of filling the power vacuum.

Denis Warner, Bangkok, *Daily Telegraph*, November 24, 1969.

'CULTURAL REVOLUTION'

The extremist students and the far left wing groups have had deeper effect on the workers than is normally supposed. . . . 'Among the Turin workers,' a Catholic trade unionist said in the summer, 'a little cultural revolution has taken place. The worker no longer talks of football in order to escape, but of his problems: as a worker and a citizen.'

Peter Nichols, *The Political Worker's Impact in Northern Italy*, *Times* (London), November 26, 1969.

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Book Review

IN CHINA NOW, by Kurt Mendelssohn. Paul Hamlyn, price 30s.

This is a well-produced picture book — 69 pictures in colour and 196 in black and white — with 27 pages of commentary. Dr. Mendelssohn, a distinguished Oxford physicist, visited China in 1960, 1962 and the autumn of 1966. It is with the last visit that he is concerned here, the two previous trips serving as a useful basis for estimating rates of progress.

In the autumn of 1966 the Cultural Revolution was still in an early phase. Dr. Mendelssohn's account of the period is full of interest; what he saw for himself in Shanghai is significantly different from what was reported at the time in the Western press.

The photographs excel in their authentic evocation of life in China today. That their technical quality is a little uneven does not matter; they have been chosen with skill. Those illustrating industry, science and technology are particularly interesting because the writer's specialised knowledge adds to the value of his comments.

The text is no mere formal introduction or travelogue. It contains careful, but not pedestrian, descriptions of the land of China, its history and its people, followed by sections on daily life, agriculture, science and technology, and on the way in which the ideas of Mao Tse-tung influence young people and workers. Dr. Mendelssohn is very appreciative of China's achievements in his own field.

The book may be recommended as excellent value for money and a worthwhile gift.

ERA OF RADICAL CHANGE

In last month's BROADSHEET Professor Cyril Offord, writing on 'China and Peace', recalled Lenin's analysis of how imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, is inevitably driven by internal and external contradictions to make war.

In his study 'On Contradiction', written to combat dogmatist thinking within the Chinese Party, Mao Tse-tung wrote (1937):

'According to materialist dialectics . . . changes in society are due chiefly to the development of the internal contradictions between the productive forces and the relations of production, the contradiction between classes and the contradiction between the old and new; it is the development of these contradictions that pushes society forward and gives the impetus for the supersession of the old society by the new . . . Materialist dialectics . . . holds that external causes are the condition of change and internal causes are the basis of change, and that external causes become operative through internal causes.

'The dialectical world outlook teaches us primarily how to observe and analyse the movements of opposites in different things and, on the basis of such analysis, to indicate the methods for resolving contradictions. It is therefore most important for us to understand the law of contradiction in things in a concrete way.'

In this second article, Professor Offord seeks to show that such contradictions in our own society are realities that affect the lives and destinies of ordinary people.

* * *

The previous article concluded with Mao's statement — 'With regard to the question of world war, there are but two possibilities: One is that the war will give rise to revolution and the other is that revolution will prevent war'.

We shall now try to see the relevance of revolution to people in the West and make a first attempt at determining the way forward. In this connection, though written fifty years ago, Lenin's pamphlet, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, will be found of immense value. It is impossible to summarize his thesis in a few words, but put very crudely it is as follows: (1) the older capitalism of free competition has given place to monopoly; (2) monopoly in its turn has created a financial oligarchy which is controlled by an insignificant number of persons who wield enormous power; (3) the outcome of this system has been the growth of imperialism and the division of the world into spheres of influence; (4) uneven development can lead to a re-division as the balance of forces changes.

Monopoly is one of the basic causes of our troubles, but before discussing any counter-action, let us first look at two attempts which have been made to check its growth. The first of these is the attempt of governments to introduce controls. In Britain we have the Monopolies Commission which recently prohibited the amalgamation of the two big banks, Barclays and Lloyds, and in the United States there are anti-trust laws. Thus, International Business Machines control 80% of the market for their type of product but are prohibited by law from increasing this share. Lenin noted the tendency of monopoly towards stagnation and decay, and this tendency is now generally recognised. Hence it is necessary always to allow some competition, and in this sense foreign imports or such devices as anti-trust legislation are in the interests of the monopolies themselves.

The second, and at first sight more appealing, solution is nationalisation. Under capitalism this means that a monopoly is established but it is now state owned. On this Lenin has the following to say: ' . . . a state monopoly in a capitalist society

is nothing more than a means of increasing and guaranteeing the income of millionaires in one branch of industry or another who are on the verge of bankruptcy.' We give one example of this.

In 1946 the Labour Government nationalised the coal mines. To compensate the coal owners it raised a loan in the form of 2½% Treasury Stock issued at 99½. A great deal of this stock was taken up by trade unions. Its present price is around 28, a depreciation of over 70%, not taking into account the fall in the purchasing power of money. Trade union finances were gravely affected. In the meantime ordinary shares of the leading industrial companies have appreciated between three and four times on average. No doubt many coal owners invested the compensation they received for their bankrupt mines in the shares of industrial companies, thus vastly adding to their fortunes.

To anyone who thinks that this could happen only in Britain, one has but to cite the example of the Suez Canal Company. It is common knowledge that the nationalisation of the Suez Canal by the Egyptian Government cost many Egyptian lives. It is not so well known that it proved highly profitable to the Suez Canal Company and to those of its shareholders who hung on.

Monopoly capital depends on nationalisation of production, which has led to great technical advances; but the benefits go to the shareholders. The failure of modern industry to feed the hungry peoples of the world and the enormous waste of producing armaments are glaring examples. In Britain alone there are a million families without adequate shelter. Can large-scale industry house them? It might, if it were only a question of building houses, but it is not so simple. Houses have to be built in districts where there is employment for their occupiers and this raises questions of town planning and the location of industry. On the latter, big business has the last word. On the former, Lenin has the following to say: 'Speculation in real estate lots in the suburbs of rapidly growing towns is also a particularly profitable operation for finance capital'. Our own experience confirms this.

It all adds up to a quite intolerable state of affairs, which the people of the world will not and indeed cannot endure for very long. But is it conceivable that this state of affairs will transform itself peacefully into one of socialised production which meets people's needs? It would be nice to be able to think this, but all the evidence to date is against it. Even mild attempts at nationalisation are ferociously resisted .

The only other possibility is revolution. A revolution needs not only a well organised working class, able to take control at the proper time and to show that it is able to govern to the advantage of the people, but what Lenin called a 'producer', capable of greatly accelerating the course of world history and causing crises of very great intensity. The two major revolutions of this century occurred at times of world war. However, war is not the only thing that can act as a producer. Another might be the rapid rise in world population. Of one thing we can be sure, and that is that the world is passing through a revolutionary period. As Mao has said:

'The next 50 to 100 years, beginning from now, will be a great era of radical change in the social system throughout the world, an earth-shaking era without equal in any previous historical period. Living in such an era we must be prepared to engage in great struggles which will have many features different in form from those of the past.'

CYRIL OFFORD

ON FINAL VICTORY

In his *Report* to the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, Lin Piao quoted Mao Tse-tung's statement that 'the final victory of a socialist country not only requires the efforts of the proletariat and the broad masses of the people at home, but also involves the victory of world revolution and the abolition of the system of exploitation of man by man on the whole globe, upon which all mankind will be emancipated. Therefore, it is wrong to speak lightly of the final victory of the revolution in our country; it runs counter to Leninism and does not conform to facts.'

The statement, from which this extract is taken, was made in October 1968 as the Cultural Revolution was reaching its climax with the widespread formation of the Revolutionary Committees. In it Mao not only acclaimed the victory of the Cultural Revolution but struck a note of warning, reminding his people of the world-wide class struggle from which socialist countries are not immune.

Attack on Leninism?

In the Soviet paper *Izvestia* this statement of Mao's (cut and somewhat misquoted) was cited as proof that China is applying 'precisely the thesis with which Trotskyism attempted to attack Leninism in our country, tried to turn the party away from the solution of the tasks of economic and social construction and tried to push our country on to the road of adventures and provocations.'

China's victory in the consolidation of socialism is there for all to see, in economic and social construction, in the ideological struggles of the Cultural Revolution. A single country can make steady progress in the building of socialism even when others are trying to impede it, and China has done so, but no country, whether socialist or otherwise, exists hermetically sealed off from the rest of the world. Mao, like Lenin before him, saw that the overthrown class would continue to struggle for a very long time. Their attack could take many forms: internal, through the regeneration of reactionary ideas and habits; external, through the infiltration of capitalist ideology or by actual physical attack, either by capitalist or by former socialist countries.

Essential link

Lenin always fought for an understanding of the inseparable connection between proletarian revolution in a single country and the struggle for the emancipation of the whole of mankind. At the time of the October Revolution and in the early 1920's, his attention was necessarily concentrated on the threat and reality of foreign intervention. He was also deeply concerned with the need to recognise the right to 'self-determination' of the still dependent nations, and with the vital importance of a revolutionary Communist International to link the struggles of revolutionaries everywhere. The October Revolution was an internal Russian affair but was at the same time inseparable from the revolutionary struggle all over the world:

'Great are the military victories of the Soviet Republic of workers and peasants over the landlords and capitalists... and their accomplices — France, Great Britain, America and Japan. But still greater is our victory over the minds and hearts of the workers, the toilers, the masses who are oppressed by capital, the victory of Communist ideas and of the Communist organisations all over the world. The proletarian revolution, the overthrow of the yoke of capitalism is advancing and will be achieved in all countries of the world.' (*Speech at Second Congress of the Communist International, August-September 1920*).

Lenin was applying in the context of the October Revolution the principles explained by Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology* where the universal character of modern industrial-commercial society was described. They maintained that the proletariat in all countries can become free as individuals only after they have overthrown the ruling class which owns and controls the world-wide complex.

Lenin had in 1917 denounced the revisionists of the Second International as 'social chauvinists' for betraying the cause of the workers and supporting their respective governments in the 1914-1918 war. 'The essential thing,' he said, 'is not to "proclaim" internationalism, but to be an internationalist in deeds, even when times are most trying.' (*Tasks of the Proletariat in our Revolution, April 1917*). The same words could now be applied to Vietnam and the Middle East, and to Indonesia, where the assassins of the people actually receive Soviet military aid.

Internationalism

In China, during the anti-Japanese war Mao insisted that the proletariat and other working people must achieve their own liberation, but 'the victory of China and the defeat of the invading imperialists will help the people of other countries. Thus in wars of national liberation patriotism is applied internationalism' (*The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War, 1938*). Through the years he has made clear that 'in the fight for complete liberation the oppressed people rely first of all on their own struggle... The people who have triumphed in their own revolution should help those still struggling for liberation. This is our internationalist duty' (*Talk with African Friends, 1963*). China's proletarian internationalism has not only been proclaimed, but has been implemented consistently by the support and material assistance she has given to many underdeveloped and semi-colonial countries. The Chinese regard every victory of the revolutionary struggle anywhere as a victory for all working people.

Marx has shown how the vital interests of the working people of the world are becoming more and more inextricably interwoven as big industry envelops the world. Lenin sought to build through the Communist International an organisation which would bring together toilers in all countries since 'the joint revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the landlords and the bourgeoisie... alone guarantees victory over capitalism' (*The National and Colonial Question, 1920*). Mao again made clear that only when complete emancipation has been won will final victory be assured for world revolution, including of course the Chinese Revolution. Only then will the overthrown class no longer threaten or be able to undermine socialism in any country, either from inside or from outside.

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