

# China Policy Study Group

# BROADSHEET

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## EDITORIAL

With unusual unanimity, leading organs of the Western press are warning their readers that the U.S.S.R. is ready to launch a massive military attack on China, the sole question being one of timing.

Such a decision could be rationally explained only if the present Soviet leaders had decided that they had no hope of stopping the growth of China's moral leadership—and economic power—in the world by any other means than a devastating military blow. This, they might hope, would bring down China's leaders and put in power men ready to defer to Soviet world policies.

In a series entitled 'The Next War?' the London 'Times' Moscow correspondent writes that 'psychologically the Russians seem to be ready for war with China (as long as they think they can win)' and that in such a war they 'would feel that western Europeans should applaud and support them'.

Much similar publicity in the West is the direct result of Russian attempts to secure a sympathetic public opinion by deliberately leaking their plans, but this particular public relations campaign is two-edged. Although some Western establishment circles appear to view with remarkable equanimity a prospect they discuss in cold military terms, ordinary people may take a different view. An open threat of aggression against socialist China is being made by those who still claim to lead the socialist world. Thus Soviet leaders follow in the footsteps of the U.S.: the two powers who claim that nuclear weapons are safe in their hands are precisely those who again and again threaten to use them—against China.

If the Russian threats are more than a vain attempt to bully the Chinese into backing down, their miscalculations may be fatal to themselves. For all their reliance on mechanised forces and weapons of mass destruction, they should know by now that the Chinese mean what they say, 'We will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked we will certainly counter-attack.'

The Chinese people have emerged from the Cultural Revolution resolutely determined to maintain and strengthen a socialism in which all have an equal share and for which all are responsible. No military assault, however savage, can defeat such a people.

## CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY

A country's foreign policy—as an expression of the dialectical relationship between itself and the external world—is bound to reflect its ruling social and political values. Especially must this be so in a world of increasingly interdependent communities, where forces of global dimension are contending with each other to shape the destinies of mankind.

World imperialism headed by the United States, while losing none of its familiar brutality, constantly evolves new methods of exploitation both at home and abroad. The profit motive and the entrepreneurs' jungle law sum up its world view. As a logical corollary, imperialism seeks to perpetuate the traditional concept that the weight of nations in the councils of the international community is decided by their economic and military power. In the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries, Asia, Africa and Latin America were divided into spheres of influence. The same thing happened in Europe after World War II. Thus the 'Great Powers', including the U.S.S.R., came into possession of their allotted share by mutual agreement. Those who challenge this concept of world order are threatened with nuclear holocaust.

China's revolutionary socialism presents imperialism with its greatest challenge. A nation which only a few decades ago was among the most wretched on earth is now leaping ahead in technology and industry. It is doing so without perpetuating the social and economic inequalities that persist elsewhere, while raising the quality of life of its poorest citizens. All this makes a deep impact on the oppressed of the world. China calls on them to stand up against the mailed fist of imperialism. She is profoundly convinced that imperialism and capitalism with it contain the seeds of their own decay, and that the coming epoch will witness their final destruction. Meanwhile the struggle will continue and China will continue to aid through word and deed those who seek to escape imperialism's embrace.

Does this attitude contradict China's repeated affirmation that her diplomacy is based on the principles of peaceful coexistence laid down at Bandung in 1955? The simple answer is no. China, convinced as she is of the need and inevitability of fundamental social change, has expressly stated that such change

grows out of the local conditions of given societies and cannot be 'exported' or directed from outside. Indeed, to believe otherwise would be to underestimate the capacity of the masses to bring about revolutionary change.

While China's relations are necessarily closest with countries such as Albania and Vietnam, she also fosters friendly relations with countries of different ideology from her own. These include, for example, Tanzania, Zambia, Cambodia, Algeria and others who seek to maintain their independence of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. power blocs, and have refrained from joining any anti-China coalition.

China of course has national interests, but she interprets the concept differently from the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. The United States, for instance, defines her national interest in the widest possible way, to include exploitation, e.g. in Brazil, propping up client states such as Greece, and aggression in Vietnam. In addition, the two super-powers, following time-honoured tradition, allow each other a free hand in their respective spheres of influence (e.g. Czechoslovakia).

China has for years been ringed by a formidable array of U.S. bases and is now threatened by Soviet military power. While wishing to rid herself of all such threats, she seeks no sphere of influence. Nor, as Dean Rusk has complained, will she 'play the game' by bringing her influence to bear on Hanoi to call off the struggle. She refuses to promote a wider 'understanding' with the United States in any such way. Far from seeking to use the Vietnamese as pawns on the great power chessboard, the Chinese have continued steadfastly to give them full support. In opting for this line of action, they are aware of the risks they run, as they were in Korea two decades ago. Then, as now, China sought to avoid a military conflict, but once such a conflict had been imposed upon her she refused to withdraw from it and betray those who relied on her.

Her policy on territorial problems, as in other matters, has been marked by understanding and common sense. With her neighbours Mongolia, Burma, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nepal, she has arrived at satisfactory agreements, sometimes involving sizeable concessions of territory on her part. Only the U.S.S.R. and India have decided to seek advantage by refusing to settle their boundaries with China.

China's attitude towards nuclear weapons is clear and unequivocal. Far from advocating nuclear war, as hostile critics maintain, she is the only nuclear power to have undertaken never to use nuclear weapons first. If China refuses to sign the Test Ban Treaty it is because this treaty does nothing about banning the use of nuclear weapons but merely seeks to confirm their monopoly by the super-powers; these powers have no technical need to test such weapons in the atmosphere; and the treaty does not cover underground tests.

It should also be noted that in 1946, after Hiroshima and

Nagasaki, Mao Tse-tung deplored the use of such weapons on the Japanese people, while the leaders of all the Allied Powers, including the Soviet Union, approved their use.

Today, as a result of China's exclusion from the United Nations and other international bodies, the Western press is given to talking of her 'self-imposed isolation'. But in fact China has diplomatic relations with more countries than ever before in her history. Even more important, she is looked on, especially by emergent peoples, as a bastion of socialism and self-reliance.

## ***TWENTY YEARS—Some Aspects of Socialism in China***

China has achieved much in the 20 years since Liberation; even hostile critics testify to her great economic successes, her great strides towards the abolition of illiteracy, her attainment of a nuclear defence capability and world status. There are diverse opinions, however, on what history will show to be the greatest achievement of these 20 years.

China's material achievements, great as they are, are outweighed by her contribution to socialist theory and her realistic handling of the problems of socialist society in practice. It is not hard to spell out the particular problems faced by developing nations, socialist or not—richer nations get richer and poorer nations get poorer. In this situation the poorer nations become dependent on aid and lose control over their own economic activities.

Some, seeking to explain China's achievements solely in terms of nationalism, only obscure the fundamental issue. Some explain China's present self-reliance in terms of lack of choice. China, they argue, would like to 'join the club' but, having been excluded, attacks it bitterly. Such people do not really examine the economies of those developing nations that have joined the club. They fail to see that China has provided a different, and compelling, answer by pulling herself up by her own bootstraps.

One of the big internal problems faced by most developing nations is what is sometimes termed the 'elite-mass gap'. The western god is 'technical rationality' and this also becomes the god of the new elites. Those who possess technical knowledge come to stand in exactly the same class relationship to the masses as the old colonial and semi-colonial bureaucrats. The bait of open access to the elite (provided the aspirant achieves the correct technical qualifications) succeeds in drawing off most of those who might begin to question the growth of a new hierarchy. If, once members of the elite, they still question it, they are powerless because they have lost touch with the masses and are forced into isolation.

### **'Technical rationality' dislodged**

Seeking to achieve integration between leaders and led, China dislodged the god of technical rationality by placing political considerations above technical ones. This policy has shown that heightened mass enthusiasm for a leadership with which there is intimate contact quickly makes up any temporary loss in technical efficiency. In this way the masses are not alienated from modern technology and in fact make substantial contributions to it. Backyard furnaces may not have produced much good steel, but they did produce the rudiments of a technological orientation among the peasants. Similarly, the sending of vast numbers of intellectuals to the countryside did not raise the level of university scholarship, but it did help to raise the literacy rate and discourage elitist tendencies among educated young people.

China is a developing nation, but above all she is a socialist one. Her contributions to socialist theory are outstanding. The paradox of the newly emerging nations is that in order to keep alive they gradually let themselves fall more and more under foreign economic control, and in order to govern themselves

they create status differences which take on class implications.

Socialist countries face a different paradox. To carry out revolution a Party is necessary, yet after power is seized there is a danger of the Party assuming an elitist role and developing the characteristics of a new class. In Marxist terms, the Party comes to stand in a relation to the means of production different from that of the proletariat, of which it is the vanguard. In his Report to the Ninth Party Congress, Lin Piao quotes Lenin: 'the new bourgeoisie (is) arising from among our Soviet government employees'.

### **Solving the paradoxes**

It was relatively simple for the Chinese to solve the paradox of development, but the solution of the paradox of socialism involves years of experiment, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the latest attempt to solve this paradox. There must always be problems in creating a full democracy with centralised leadership. But in China the theory of continuing revolution, of the existence of class struggle under socialism, and of the possible development of antagonistic contradictions among the people, has provided a useful theoretical framework with which to create a situation where the Party leads but does not rule, where the mass line, which gives initiative to the masses in crucial decision-making, is something more than an empty formula. This is Mao's proletarian line. China is today the one country that has had the wisdom to face the problem and, in solving it, to be ready if necessary to rebuild the Party completely.

The Cultural Revolution may have been 'unpleasant', but so far there are only two alternatives: the Soviet one, where the Party leaders have created a new elite, and the Yugoslav one, where private enterprise is permitted and the Party has lost all sense of direction. One might argue that the steady growth of private enterprise is not a bad thing, but is it socialism? One might argue that rigid Party control has made possible rapid economic growth, but is this socialism? In the West, democracy is equated with the parliamentary system, which masks an old and experienced bourgeois dictatorship. In the Soviet Union, 'socialism' masks the dictatorship of a new ruling class. In China the goal of socialism means the open dictatorship of the proletariat. The means to attain that goal have not, unlike the above examples, irrevocably perverted the end.

W. BRUGGER

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# The Communist Party in the Factory

by a recent visitor to China

In the long period of transition from socialism to communism, the character of the Communist Party and its relationship with the people is crucial.

Lenin in 1919 referred to the difficulties involved in the setting up of revolutionary state organisations which 'for some years . . . will sometimes cover up all kinds of rogues who call themselves communists' (*The Deception of the People by the Slogans of Equality and Freedom*).

Even before the Long March, Mao Tse-tung was concerned with the problem of relations between Party and people (e.g. speech in Juichin, Kiangsi, January 1934). Out of the experience of the Yen-an period Mao developed these ideas into the formulation in 1943 of the 'mass line'. This concept has since been the characteristic method of work of the Chinese Communist Party and a major reason for its successes.

The mass line was not a policy that could be left to take care of itself. In 1948 Mao had to remind his comrades that it was 'still not being thoroughly carried out in the work of some comrades; they still rely solely on a handful of people working in solitude'.

Mao's understanding of the continuation of the class struggle after the seizure of power and the reflection of this conflict within the Party offers a key to recognition of true revolutionaries within the Communist Party.

The Chinese Party, in its first comment on the Soviet 20th Congress, warned that some people, 'because the Party and the state have achieved successes in work and won the great trust of the masses, may take advantage of this trust to abuse their authority . . . (On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, April 1956).

What happened in Hungary in October 1956 highlighted the dangers that arise when a communist party loses touch with the people. They showed 'that Hungary had not yet made a serious enough effort to build up the dictatorship of the proletariat' (*More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, December 1956).

It was the deeper theoretical analysis of these events in Mao's '*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*' that guided the Rectification Movement of 1957 and nine years later the Cultural Revolution.

## Party and People

Less than a month after the speech on which this article was based, Mao returned to the subject of relations between the Party and the people, making a number of trenchant comments: 'Marxism is scientific truth; it fears no criticism and cannot be defeated by criticism. The same holds true for the Communist Party and the People's Government'. (*Speech at CPC National Conference on Propaganda Work* 12 March 1957).

In the rectification that ensued the Party and Party cadres were 'opened wide' to criticism from the people at all levels. The masses were encouraged to expose examples of subjectivism, bureaucracy and sectarianism — and they did so.

Leading organisations and cadres were criticised for divorcing themselves from the people. Some responsible comrades, busy with routine, had too little contact with the masses and did not clearly understand their problems. Others were alienated from the people by their own assumption of privileges arising out of their positions. Some had been conceited and arrogant. Others had become stale and apathetic, losing their revolutionary zeal.

The difficult years of 1959-1961 showed that the exposure to mass criticism in 1957 had not gone far enough. In particular, it had been largely rectification from above and had not reached

up to the higher echelons of the Party. Such a rectification came only with the Cultural Revolution, when the whole population was called on to take part in criticism. A further stage in this revolution from below was the process of 'struggle-criticism-transformation'. In summing up experience in the factories, Mao noted the following successive steps: establishing a three-in-one revolutionary committee; carrying out mass criticism and repudiation; purifying the class ranks; consolidating the Party organisation; and simplifying the administrative structure, changing irrational rules and regulations, and sending office workers to the workshops.

These stages did not always follow in the same sequence; sometimes they were simultaneous. By mid-1968 or later, depending on the pace of development of the Cultural Revolution in any particular factory, the linked questions of purifying the ranks and building the Party came to the fore, in response to Mao's call 'get rid of the stale and take in the fresh'.

The methods developed during the Cultural Revolution are part and parcel of factory life. Throughout China, study of the basic theoretical questions and the main political objectives formulated by Mao is accompanied by the arguing out of pros and cons, by the expression of individual or group opinions through *dazibao*, and by continuous dialogue between the 'leading core' and the masses. This is how the Party's concept of democratic centralism is implemented, the masses, Party members and likely members all being part of a single process.

## Old methods contrasted

Workers contrast these methods with those of Liu Shao-chi. Before the Cultural Revolution, they say, when Party members made mistakes he would close the door on them. Politically advanced workers were often kept out of the Party if it was felt that they would not conform to the 'iron discipline' and 'docile obedience' he enjoined in '*How to Be a Good Communist*'.

The movement for Party building begins at workshop level. The key question both for old Party members and potential new ones is the attitude to class struggle, not in the abstract but as manifested in the Cultural Revolution, and continuing. Self-criticism and evaluation of past work is a vital part of this discussion among workmates.

The workers on the shop floor will test the member's or potential member's views on Liu Shao-chi's line. This includes both his concept of a 'good Party member' (one who does his routine work and attends to production, but ignores politics, who 'says Hello to the workers but never thinks of self-criticism') and his 'six theories' (that class struggle is dying out; that the masses are backward; join the Party and become an official; peace within the Party; combine private and public interest; and docile obedience).

The object of these discussions among the workers at grass roots is to select for membership in the Party 'the advanced elements of the proletariat'. Through them, names are put forward of those considered worthy of Party membership. Party leaders consider the workers' suggestions, which are sent back to the factory floor with their own proposals. These discussions usually continue over many months and may go 'up and down' several times in accordance with the mass line before consensus is reached. In this way only those who have the full confidence of their workmates and have proved themselves during the Cultural Revolution will find their way into the Party. Those who have lost their revolutionary élan, or mere 'yes men' and sycophants, are unlikely to pass the test.

All this takes time. There is no pressurising the workers into making snap decisions. Every issue is thoroughly argued out and every worker has a chance to air his views.

In the factories, 'criticism and struggle' has proved to be comparatively easy, whereas 'transformation' is a complex process of trial and error. Thus, in many factories, Party Committees at workshop level have already been established while the selection of factory Party Committees is still being discussed. The discussions will continue until a group of comrades whom the mass of the factory accept as their leaders clearly emerges. The final election of workshop and factory Party committees rests with the Party members in the factory.

The factory Party Committee when elected is the leading political organ. In accordance with the Constitution adopted by the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969, the revolutionary committee, as one of the organs of state power of the dictatorship of the proletariat 'must accept the leadership of the Party'. But, as we have seen, both the selection of Party members and the election of the leading Party groups at workshop and factory level are decided only after thoroughgoing and exhaustive exchange of views with the mass of the workers.

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The China Policy Study Group celebrates  
**the Centenary of Lenin's birth**  
with a showing of the historic film

## **LENIN IN OCTOBER**

Thursday, 19th March, 7.15 p.m.

Holborn Library, Theobalds Road, London, W.C.1.

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## **Nanking Bridge**

We were on our way from Shanghai to Nanking by air. Pointing to the great stretch of the Taihu Lake below, the air hostess explained that this was the locality of the story of the famous Peking opera 'Shachiapang', which now plays all over China. The story centres on the exploits of the New Fourth Army, which spearheaded struggle in these areas during the 1937-45 War of Resistance against Japanese invasion and occupation. The hostess sang part of the opera for us.

In Nanking, though it was mid-November, autumn leaves were still in their glory. The plane trees have grown so that they form a golden archway over the streets in many places. The trees of Nanking, always beautiful, are even more so now that the newer plantings have come to maturity.

This year, however, the thing most people come to Nanking to see is the new bridge over the Yangtze, the bridge that foreign engineers in the old days said was an impossibility. When it was being planned in the Great Leap Forward of 1958, Russian experts in China volunteered the opinion that it was bound to fail. When we went to see it, a whole school of children were exercising with their spears near the bridge-head, bringing a touch of old revolutionary China to the scene. Inside the glistening marble hall, we got into a modern lift, made in Tientsin, and shot up to a floor on which was an exhibition room with a model of the whole bridge; a girl demonstrator described the struggle that had gone into its construction.

In the past the Yangtze, a great highway linking China's mountainous western interior with the eastern seaboard, was an equally great barrier to communication between north and south. It was bridged for the first time in 1957, at Wuhan, a splendid and symbolic achievement. A second bridge was built a

few years later at Chungking, on the upper reaches. But the need for one at Nanking, where Peking-Shanghai trains had to cross the river by rail ferry, remained.

The magnitude of the task was daunting. With its approaches, the bridge would have to be four times as long as that at Wuhan; although more than 200 miles from the open sea, the river at Nanking is affected by tides and open to the onslaughts of typhoons; it is both wide and deep, with the solid bedrock covered by a thick layer of mud and broken rock.

Not surprisingly, many people argued that China was not yet equipped to solve the formidable problems involved. But workers retorted, 'What can be done in foreign countries, we can do here in China. And what cannot, we can do here also!' Work on the bridge, a two-level rail and road structure, was started in 1960. Excavation of the river bed, working by means of coffer-dams, took the major part of the construction period. The actual laying of the foundations involved a series of experiments; the achievements of the deep divers were outstanding throughout, and included many acts of heroism. Special rolled steel for the girders was made at Anshan, and the extra large pre-stressed concrete beams were fabricated on the spot. The whole structure has been coated with a new kind of long-lasting plastic paint made in Tientsin.

By the use of such original and creative methods, problems were solved one by one. By the final stages, 1966-68, the Cultural Revolution was in full swing, and the workers' spirit and determination were raised to a new high level. Work that had taken nine and a half months to do in the early stages was now done in four weeks.

When construction was completed in 1968, the rail crossing was made in two minutes instead of the two hours taken by the train ferry. Most of the population of Nanking came onto the highway bridge overhead, to see what had been done. Many of them had worked in volunteer labour brigades on earth-moving for the headworks. Realising what this triumph would mean for the economy of the region and the struggle for a better livelihood for all working folk, they felt that here was indeed a victory for Mao Tse-tung's Thought and for the Cultural Revolution.

The main part of the bridge is 1,574 metres long. With approaches, the railway bridge totals 6,700 metres, and the highway 4,500. At each entrance to the main crossing are massive groups of statuary, designed by folk artists of Wusih, a city between Nanking and Shanghai. Soon, with the construction site buildings cleared away, the area below the bridge will be made into public gardens.

The success of this daring concept has greatly encouraged the Chinese people, who now feel more confident than ever that the policy of self-reliance, so forcefully enunciated by Mao Tse-tung, is the right one. The bridge stands as a monument to worker cooperation and as an expression of revolutionary defiance against the imperialisms that surround the China of today. At night, when all lights are on, illuminating the great arches, and the huge red flags, each fifteen tons of sheet metal, are ablaze, it is a fine spectacle, truly a splendid sight for the once downtrodden and despised.

REWI ALLEY

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