

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER

AD835711

LIMITATION CHANGES

TO:

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

FROM:

Distribution: Further dissemination only as directed by HQ, Department of the Air Force, AFXDOC, Washington, DC 20330, 30 SEP 1967, or higher DoD authority.

AUTHORITY

USAF ltr 26 Feb 1974

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

United States - Communist China Political - Military Interactions

AD835711
Final Report

BSR 2174

Volume II - Supporting Papers

30 September 1967

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT: This document presents results of work sponsored by the Directorate of Doctrine, Concepts and Objectives (AFXDO), DCS/P&O, Headquarters, USAF, under Contract AF 49(638)-1776. Views or conclusions contained in this document should not be interpreted as representing the official opinion or policy of the U. S. Air Force or of other agencies of the United States Government.

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT: This document may not be further distributed by any holder without specific prior approval of Hq USAF (AFXDOC), the Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20330

Office of National Security Studies

**SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED
NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS**
The information contained in this document will not be disclosed to foreign nations or their representatives.

JUL 22 1968



**Aerospace
Systems Division**

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Marking and Handling "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" Information	
1. When to mark material "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY."	Follow the guidelines in paragraph 5b of this regulation. "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" documents released to persons outside the Department of Defense need not bear the term "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY"; however, the recipient or addressee will be informed of any specific handling instructions or restrictions required by law or regulation.
2. Who marks material "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" and releases it within the Government.	a. In the office of origin, the individual who originates, approves, or signs the material, or higher authority.
	b. In a receiving organization, competent authority in the office of primary interest in the subject matter, or higher authority.
3. When other regulations apply.	a. FOUO material requested by Congress or the GAO will be handled in accordance with AFRs 11-7 and 11-8, respectively.
	b. Requests by Government agencies for FOUO material specifically covered by another Air Force regulation, such as AFR 127-4, will be processed in accordance with that regulation.
4. How to handle requests from members of the public for material marked or considered to be "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY."	See paragraphs 8-13 of this regulation.
5. How to designate "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" material.	When the term "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" is used, the following minimum markings must be made:
	a. <i>Bound documents.</i> Type, stamp, or print in capital letters the term "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" on the bottom of the front cover.
	b. <i>Unbound documents.</i> Type, stamp, or print in capital letters the term "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" at the bottom of the top page.
6. When term is removed.	By authority of the authorizing official, higher authority, or the custodian of the documents when he has information that the document no longer requires protection under this regulation. The individual removing the term will line out the statement "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" and sign in ink his signature, date and office symbol or organizational designation. Addressees will be informed promptly when there is no longer a specific justification for protecting information.
7. Transmitting "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" material.	a. <i>Mail.</i> Use ordinary mail whenever practicable unless the sender considers the document of sufficient importance and value to use registered or certified mail.
	b. <i>Message.</i> When the term is required under item 1 of this table, it will be used in the beginning of the first line of the text. Messages originating and sent to

	addressees within the continental United States will be sent as any other UN-CLASSIFIED message. Messages originating or sent outside the continental United States will be marked by the originator "ENCRYPT FOR TRANSMISSION ONLY" in accordance with provisions of AFR 205-53.
	c. <i>Oral.</i> If the information is disclosed orally, it must be identified as subject to the provisions of this regulation.
8. Storing the material.	Documents containing "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" information, whether marked or not, will be protected so as to preclude access by unauthorized persons. Generally, filing such documents with other unclassified records will be adequate protection. Normal internal installation security that provides against entrance by unauthorized persons, will be deemed adequate "after hours" protection. Where internal security control is not exercised, the documents will be stored in key-locked rooms or receptacles. Additional protection is authorized when deemed necessary by competent authority.
9. Destroying the material.	When destruction is authorized, tear or otherwise deface documents so as to offer reasonable assurance against further access to the information.

United States - Communist China Political - Military Interactions

Final Report

BSR 2174

Volume II - Supporting Papers

30 September 1967

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT: This document presents results of work sponsored by the Directorate of Doctrine, Concepts and Objectives (AFXDO), DCS/P&O, Headquarters, USAF, under Contract AF 49(638)-1776. Views or conclusions contained in this document should not be interpreted as representing the official opinion or policy of the U. S. Air Force or of other agencies of the United States Government.

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT: This document may not be further distributed by any holder without specific prior approval of Hq USAF (AFXDOC), the Pentagon, Washington, D. C. 20330

Office of National Security Studies

**SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED
NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS**
The information contained in this document will not be disclosed to foreign nations or their representatives.



**Aerospace
Systems Division**

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX A: SINO-AMERICAN INTERACTIONS DURING THE KOREAN WAR - Franz J. Mogdis

	<u>Page</u>
The Situation at the Beginning of 1950.....	A-1
The Origins of the Korean War.....	A-4
The Response to the American Counterintervention.....	A-6
The Background of Chinese Intervention.....	A-7
The Orchestration of Chinese Intervention.....	A-11
The Checking of Chinese Momentum.....	A-14
The Armistice Negotiations.....	A-15
The Final Crisis.....	A-16
The Armistice.....	A-19
The Lessons of a Limited War.....	A-20

APPENDIX B: THE INDOCHINA CONFRONTATION, 1950-1954 - Bernard B. Fall

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter I Historical Background.....	B-1
Perennial Chinese Interests.....	B-1
The Chinese in Vietnam, 1945-1946.....	B-2
The French Indochina War.....	B-3
Chapter II The Confrontation.....	B-5
Communist China Enters the Scene.....	B-5
The United States Enters the Scene.....	B-7
The Border Offensive.....	B-9
Chinese Advisory Support.....	B-11
American Involvement Deepens.....	B-13
The Dien Bien Phu Test Case.....	B-16
Chapter III The By-Play.....	B-19
Interaction at Home.....	B-19
Allied Interaction - Britain and France.....	B-22
Settlement at Geneva.....	B-27
Chinese Objectives.....	B-29
Chapter IV Implications.....	B-33
American Implications.....	B-33
Chinese Implications.....	B-34

APPENDIX C: LAOS: 1959-1962 - Suzanne P. Ogden

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	C-1
The Geneva Conference, 1954	C-4
History of the Crisis	C-7
Events of 1959	C-7
Events of 1960	C-18
Events of 1961	C-24
Geneva Conference and Agreements - May 16, 1961 to July 23, 1962	C-31
Events of 1962	C-35
Communications During the Laotian Crisis	C-38
Conclusions	C-41

APPENDIX D: SINO-INDIAN BORDER CONFLICT: 1962 - Franz J. Mogdis

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	D-1
Chinese-Indian Relations Prior to 1959	D-4
Chinese-Indian Relations: 1959 - Spring 1962	D-8
Chinese-Indian Relations: Spring 1962 - September 1962	D-12
Chinese-Indian Relations: 20 September - 20 October	D-16
Why: Reasons for CPR Attack	D-17
Conflict: 20 October - 20 November	D-19
Why Withdrawal?	D-28
Conclusion	D-31

APPENDIX E: CONFLICT BETWEEN POLITICAL AND MILITARY
LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNIST CHINA - Suzanne P. Ogden

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	E-1
Pre-1949 to Korea	E-2
Professionalism: Aftermath of Korea	E-3
Reassertion of Party Control	E-5
Dispute Over China's Strategy In the Nuclear Age	E-8
1957 - September 1959	E-14
Policies of the "Great Leap Forward"	E-20
Failures During the Great Leap Forward	E-28
Eruption of Conflict Between Military and Political Leadership	E-30
September 1959 to Present	E-30
Summary	E-39

APPENDIX F: CHINESE COMMUNIST DOCTRINE ON USE OF FORCE -
Samuel B. Griffith, II

APPENDIX G: ON THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICA'S CHINA POLICY: A
PERSPECTIVE, A STRATEGY, AND SPECIFIC SUGGES-
TIONS - Richard H. Solomon

	<u>Page</u>
A Perspective.....	G-1
A Strategy.....	G-5
Specific Alternatives.....	G-8

APPENDIX H: COMMUNIST CHINA'S POWER POSITION AND U.S.
POLICY ALTERNATIVES IN THE SIXTIES - Alexander
Eckstein

	<u>Page</u>
Communist China's Position and Prospects.....	H-1
The Basic Developmental Pattern Since 1949	H-1
The Position of China in the Mid-60's.....	H-4
The Cultural Revolution and Its Impact on China's Power Position	H-6
Communist China's Problems and Prospects	H-14
U.S. Policy Alternatives.....	H-17
Viability of a Containment Policy in Asia.....	H-17
U.S., China and Vietnam.....	H-21
U.S. Policy Alternatives.....	H-23

APPENDIX I: ALTERNATIVE U.S. POLICIES TOWARDS COMMUNIST
CHINA - Samuel B. Griffith, II

PRECEDING PAGE BLANK--NOT FILMED

APPENDIX A

SINO-AMERICAN INTERACTIONS
DURING THE KOREAN WAR

SINO-AMERICAN INTERACTION DURING THE KOREAN WAR

by Franz Mogdis¹

The purpose of this paper is to present an interpretive, and at some points necessarily somewhat speculative, strategic history of the Korean War, with emphasis on the roles of Communist China and the United States.²

The Situation at the Beginning of 1950

At the beginning of 1950, the mainland of Northeast Asia was clearly dominated by the Soviet Union and its large Far Eastern forces. From its main base in the Soviet Far East, Soviet power and influence radiated into Sakhalin and the Kuriles (which had been taken from Japan in 1945 to give the Soviet Far East greater security from threats from the east), Manchuria (where the Soviet Union since 1945 had controlled the major railways and the ports of Dairen and Port Arthur), North Korea (a Soviet satellite since 1945 although nominally independent since 1948), but not Japan (in which the Soviet Union also exercised preponderant political influence on the newly

¹ Mr. Franz Mogdis served in the U.S. Army Security Agency and was later assigned to the National Security Agency (China, 1961-1964). During this time he attended the National Defense Language School specializing in Chinese Mandarin. While employed by the National Security Agency as an intelligence research analyst he worked on Chinese economic and military affairs. Since 1965 he has been a military/political analyst (China and Southeast Asia) for the Office of National Security Studies at Bendix Aerospace Systems Division, as well as pursuing graduate studies at the Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan. He is the author of several Bendix publications including: "Guerrilla Warfare: Its Nature, Causes and Means for Conflict Limitations"; "Chinese Revolutionary Warfare Doctrine"; "Simulation Methods," and a paper presented to the 19th Military Operations Research Symposium on "Soviet and Chinese Influence in Developing Societies."

² The author gratefully acknowledges the constructive comments made by Dr. Harold Hinton of George Washington University. However, the interpretation and conclusions of the paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of Dr. Hinton.

formed Communist Chinese state, but more because of the latter's wishes and felt needs than because of any actual Soviet domination of China. This somewhat ambiguous relationship, which never imposed true satellite status on China, was somewhat regularized by the Sino-Soviet alliance of 14 February 1950, which pledged joint military action if either party were attacked by Japan or any power allied directly or indirectly with Japan, meaning the United States.³

Communist China was in the throes of a gigantic process of reconstruction following some three decades of civil war and foreign invasion. At the beginning of 1950 the Communist regime proclaimed three major military tasks for itself for the coming year: the mopping up of remnant Nationalist guerrillas, the "liberation" of Taiwan, and the "liberation" of Tibet. As it turned out, the first and third of these were accomplished more or less on schedule, and the second might have been also if it had not been for the interposition of an American strategic shield between Taiwan and the mainland when war broke out in Korea. As already indicated, although allied with the Soviet Union and dependent on it for actual and hoped-for economic and military aid and for strategic protection, Communist China was by no means a Soviet satellite. Its leadership was full of self-confidence and revolutionary ardor and threw itself into such appropriate tasks as giving incitement and support to Communist insurgencies in Southeast Asia and actual military aid to the most accessible of these, the one in Vietnam.

North Korea was dominated by the Soviet Union through its chosen agent, Kim Il Sung, but there was a minority group of Chinese-oriented Korean Communists (the so-called Yen-an faction) among the North Korean leadership. Since 1948, the year of the formation of the Republic of Korea, the North Koreans had been trying to subvert and overthrow South Korea by every means short of the overt employment of the well armed and effective army with which they had been provided by the Soviet Union.⁴

³ See Allen Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War (New York: Macmillan, 1960) and Harold Hinton, Communist China in World Politics (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1967) pp. 205-234, for excellent analyses of Chinese involvement in the Korean War.

⁴ Glenn Paige, in Cyril Black and Thomas Thornton, eds. Communism and Revolution: The Strategic Use of Political Violence, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 220-227.

South Korea was in a sufficiently unstable condition so that it was widely believed, by high American officials among others, that these efforts would succeed in time and that it would therefore be unnecessary for North Korea to invade South Korea. President Syngman Rhee, although politically powerful and autocratic, was far from universally popular. The economy of South Korea was in a very poor condition, and the United States had seen fit to equip the Republic with nothing more impressive in the way of armed forces than a constabulary. American combat forces had been withdrawn following the proclamation of the Republic of Korea under United Nations auspices in 1948.

The United States was overwhelmingly preoccupied with Western Europe, where despite some striking recent successes (such as the formation of NATO) it still thought it saw reason to fear Soviet invasion or other forms of extreme pressure. In spite of this preoccupation, the American military budget had been substantially reduced in order to ease the strain on the civilian economy. Although there were sizeable American sea and air forces in the Far East and the western Pacific, American ground strength in the region was so small and poorly equipped as to seem almost negligible. The United States was beginning its preparations for a Japanese peace settlement with the full approval of General MacArthur, who seemed to hint in his New Year's Day message of 1950 that the tensions of the Cold War might require Japanese rearmament.⁵ As for the mainland of Asia, including South Korea, since the "loss" of China the United States was in no mood to do anything more than "let the dust settle." In effect, mainland Asia was written off to the Sino-Soviet alliance, which was regarded in Washington, seemingly with good reason but actually rather inaccurately, as being monolithic and under Soviet control. This view was given its most authoritative expression in Secretary Acheson's famous speech of 12 January 1950, in which he implicitly wrote off the non-Communist areas of the mainland of Asia and said that the responsibility for their security and survival lay with the United Nations, not the United States.⁶

⁵ The New York Times, January 1, 1950.

⁶ In fairness to Mr. Acheson, it should be pointed out that of all high American officials he was apparently the most insistent that the United States must resist the attack in South Korea, when it actually came in June. Presumably he was aware his involuntary role in precipitating the invasion and was determined to make amends.

The Origins of the Korean War

Stalin evidently read the signals just mentioned as indicating a lack of American intention of ability to act on the Asian mainland, and therefore as signifying the end of a long period of American interest in the region that seemed sufficient in 1945-46 to exert a definite modifying influence on his policy toward China. He was undoubtedly anxious to compensate himself for his recent setbacks in Europe. He may have been worried by the implications for Germany of the American initiatives toward a Japanese peace treaty, and still more so if he took seriously the possibility that the United States might rearm Japan in the process of restoring its independence. He was probably anxious to round out his Far Eastern collection of buffers, allies, and satellites by obliterating the last non-Communist area on the mainland of Northeast Asia, and to do this while he still retained his control over the vital Manchurian railways (valid only until the end of 1952 or a peace treaty with Japan, according to the Sino-Soviet alliance of 1950). He may have wanted to increase his influence on Communist China by means of asserting his own military power and interest in the Far East, to take advantage of the seemingly favorable climate created by the Communist victory in China, and to compensate for the poor success (except in Vietnam, where Stalin could play no overt role because of his concern for keeping his relations with France polite so as to encourage French reservations about the United States) of the Communist insurgencies in Southeast Asia.⁷ It was probably such considerations as these, plus no doubt his own bellicosity as he turned seventy (on 21 December 1949) and reflected on the presumably short span left to him, that drew him to agree to, and perhaps although not necessarily to initiate, a North Korean invasion of South Korea.

The North Korean interest in such an operation is not difficult to see, except that one wonders why Pyongyang gave up so easily an effort at subversion that seemed bound to succeed in the not too distant future. It may well have decided or agreed to shift from subversion to invasion at Stalin's urging, and he in turn may have reasoned that a successful insurgency was either unlikely (after the experience in Southeast Asia) or if successful would impart too much momentum to the "way of Mao Tse-tung," or the Chinese Communist model of revolutionary warfare, which was being

7

Communist inspired or supported uprisings had failed or were near failure in Burma, Philippines, Malaya and Indonesia.

loudly commended from Peking to other Asian Communists. By promoting Korean unification, a goal of obvious and overwhelming interest to themselves as well as to Stalin, by means of invasion rather than mere subversion at Stalin's probably insistence, the North Koreans undoubtedly hoped to acquire Stalin's respect and aid (especially heavy weapons, which were forthcoming in 1950) and thus to escape the status of a pure satellite.⁸

Apart from its general although not uncritical good will toward the Soviet Union and North Korea as "fraternal" Communist regimes, the Communist Chinese leadership probably saw no special reason to be overjoyed at the thought of a North Korean invasion of South Korea. Such an act would be a departure from the "way of Mao Tse-tung" and would, if successful, strengthen Stalin's influence over Northeast Asia, probably including Manchuria. Its main preoccupations were elsewhere, notably with Taiwan, and it may have sensed that these objectives might be compromised by overt military action in Northeast Asia.⁹

Nevertheless, it appears that a critical bargain was reached by Stalin and Mao Tse-tung at Moscow in December 1949-February 1950. In exchange for the Soviet alliance, a degree of Soviet economic and military aid, Soviet recognition of a distinctive Chinese role in the promotion of Communist revolutions in Asia and of Mao Tse-tung as a Communist theorist, and Soviet refusal to sit side by side (after 13 January 1950) with the Chinese Nationalists in the United Nations, Mao agreed to accept the Soviet position in Manchuria, cooperate to the limited extent that was considered necessary in the forthcoming war in Korea, orient his general domestic and foreign policies toward the Soviet Union, and allow the Soviet Union to establish some "joint companies" in Sinkiang and Manchuria.¹⁰ Various rumors to

⁸ It would seem that the Soviets were convinced of a quick and easy North Korean victory, as well as no U. S. or U. N. involvement. See Whiting, op. cit. pp. 50-72 for a discussion of these points.

⁹ For an opposite interpretation see Whiting, Ibid., p. 92-93 who contends a North Korean victory would serve Chinese Communist interests by: (1) deflating U. S. power in Asia, hence facilitating the collapse of the Chinese National government on Taiwan, and (2) preventing a resurgent Japan from gaining a foot hold on the mainland.

¹⁰ Hinton, op. cit., pp. 206-207.

the effect that Mao went much further and made his country a virtual secret Soviet satellite appear to have little or no foundation.

With agreement in principle achieved in some such fashion it remained to consider the details. The United States was not expected to intervene in Korea, but even if it did it could be prevented, so it was hoped, from making its intervention effective by the fear of a third world war (a war that might be nuclear as the Soviet Union had conducted their first nuclear test in 1949) and by the assumed Soviet threat to Western Europe. The usefulness of Japan as an American base, as well as the willingness of the Japanese government to enter into a peace treaty and possibly rearmament against the wishes of the Communist powers, could be diminished by Communist uprisings in Japan, which began in the spring of 1950 after a stern public lecture from both the Russians and the Chinese in January. Heavy Soviet equipment flowed to the North Koreans during the spring of 1950,¹¹ and at about the same time the Chinese transferred to North Korean control some 12,000 Korean troops from Manchuria who had been serving in the People's Liberation Army.¹² Some units of the PLA also began to move from the Taiwan Strait to Manchuria¹³ where the difficulties of a major amphibious operation were beginning to become clear to Peking even before the extension of American protection to Taiwan. The purpose of these movements was probably to balance the growing Soviet presence in Manchuria and to provide a form of insurance in the event, not considered likely, that anything went seriously wrong in Korea.

The Response to the American Counterintervention

The prompt American decision to reverse the previous stand and to defend South Korea came as a most unpleasant shock to all on the Communist side, but there seemed to be nothing to do except for the North Koreans to drive ahead as fast as possible in the hope of "liberating" South Korea before American involvement could be effective, and thereby of forcing the United States to accept defeat without escalation. From the Chinese point of view, by far the most disagreeable aspect of the episode was President Truman's

¹¹ North Korea: A Case Study in the Techniques of Takeover, (Washington D. C., Department of State, 1961), p. 117.

¹² United States Department of Defense, Release No. 465-54, May 15, 1954 and Roy Appleman, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu, (Washington D. C., Department of the Army, Office of the Chief Military History, 1961), p. 9

¹³ Whiting, op. cit., p. 106.

decision of 27 June 1950 to neutralize the Taiwan Strait, or in realistic terms to protect Taiwan. Peking was especially upset by the visit to Taiwan in July of General MacArthur, who meanwhile had been appointed to command United Nations forces in Korea.

The Chinese continued for a time to be more preoccupied with Taiwan than with Korea even after the North Koreans' drive was stopped at the Naktong River in mid-August; the United States began to indicate that it would try to invade North Korea and unify the country in this way; and the Soviet Union demonstrated its concern by a massive "peace campaign" and by a series of initiatives in the United Nations, which had the unwelcome (to Peking) effect of associating the Soviet Union with Nationalist China in important deliberations. Apart from propaganda in which the United States was denounced for its actions in Korea as well as in the Taiwan Strait, the main sign that Communist China was genuinely concerned over developments in Northeast Asia as well as those along the China Coast was the continued movements of Chinese military units from the latter area to Manchuria.¹⁴ In addition, a Chinese ambassador arrived in Pyongyang, for the first time, on 13 August.¹⁵

The Background of Chinese Intervention

As United Nations forces crossed the 38th parallel at the beginning of October, it appeared that the United States intended to make good on its earlier threats to unify Korea by force and, from the Communist point of view, that it was passing from a strategy of containment to one of "liberation." For this General MacArthur was responsible to a high degree; his pronouncements and military movements during this period were calculated, not always successfully, to compel his government and its allies to endorse his forward strategy. Unlike the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who would have preferred to see him halt at the neck of the Korean peninsula, MacArthur was determined to go to the Yalu, one of his main motivations being to turn North Korea over to Syngman Rhee, whom he admired.¹⁶ As he explained to

¹⁴ See Whiting, op. cit., p. 129

¹⁵ Hinton, op. cit., p. 212

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 213

President Truman at Wake Island (15 October 1950), he did not believe that Communist China, or still less the Soviet Union, would intervene, or that even if they did they could make their intervention effective in view of the supposedly enormous destructiveness of American airpower, which MacArthur had learned to respect in the Pacific. It is not clear whether MacArthur hoped to see some sort of eventual military action against Communist China even if it did not intervene in Korea.

Contrary to what he would say later, MacArthur was to fail in the military as well as the political aspects of his plan for Korean unification. Logistical factors were unfavorable to the United Nations Command in extreme northern Korea, and more important still there were powerful leaders outside Korea who were determined that MacArthur should face what he termed "an entirely new war."

Stalin was unquestionably angry and worried at the defeat of the North Korean invasion of South Korea, the failure of his diplomatic efforts to fend off a United Nations invasion of North Korea and produce some sort of compromise settlement, the impending collapse of North Korea, and the serious threat thus posed in his mind to his Far Eastern glacis and even to the Soviet Far East. In his eyes the balance of power in the Far East, his credibility as an ally in the eyes of the Chinese and that of the Sino-Soviet alliance in the eyes of the world, and the outcome of the entire Cold War must have seemed to be in danger. He is hardly likely to have consoled himself with the thought that the loss of North Korea was a reasonable price to pay for his unsuccessful attempt to seize South Korea, since in Communist eyes history is supposed to move in only one direction, theirs. Stalin was obviously unwilling, however, to intervene directly in Korea, for to do so would have produced a clash between Soviet and American forces, something that Soviet leaders have consistently avoided since 1945 as likely to lead to general war. There was only one state that had, or might be supposed to have, the ability to intervene with sufficient force to restore the situation in Korea, and that was obviously Communist China. To the extent that purely Chinese interests might not seem sufficient in Peking's eyes to produce the desired result, Stalin was prepared to promise, and did promise and deliver, greatly increased military aid and at least a degree of strategic protection under the Sino-Soviet alliance,¹⁷ particularly against any American

¹⁷ Chinese International Service Broadcast, Peking, October 18, 1950.

nuclear threat (when President Truman said publicly at the end of November that the United States might use nuclear weapons in Korea, Pravda promptly intimated that the Soviet Union might intervene).¹⁸ In addition to the threat (even though as we have seen its fulfillment would have been regarded by Stalin as a matter of last resort) of Soviet military action in the Far East as a safeguard for the Chinese, there was the perennial Soviet threat to Western Europe as a deterrent and distraction to the United States, and still more to its European allies. It is unlikely that Stalin viewed with any pleasure the obvious possibility that Chinese intervention in Korea would transform North Korea from a Soviet into a Chinese satellite; presumably he relied for the avoidance of this contingency on his leverage on the Chinese and the political skill of Kim Il Sung.¹⁹

By that time, the wishes of Kim Il Sung and his battered regime probably counted for little. Nevertheless, Kim was presumably quite willing to be rescued from the "imperialists" by Korea's traditional ally and patron, which had saved Korea from Japanese invasion three and a half centuries earlier and had tried unsuccessfully to do so again three centuries after that. Like Stalin, however, he almost certainly had no interest in Chinese control over North Korea, which would enhance the power of the Yen'an faction and might lead to his own deposition.²⁰ At the end of 1950, taking advantage of Chinese defeats, he began to eliminate members of the Yen'an faction from command positions in the North Korean armed forces, where they had been very influential; he subsequently completed the process and also began to move against unduly Soviet-oriented North Korean leaders.²¹

Of the categories of considerations that led Communist China to intervene in the Korean War, the first and probably the most important was security. The Chinese leadership was undoubtedly concerned for the security of Manchuria, its major industrial base and an area already under

¹⁸ Whiting, op. cit., p. 70

¹⁹ See Glenn D. Paige and Dong Jun Lee, "The Post-War Politics of Communist Korea", The China Quarterly, No. 14 (April-June 1963), pp. 18-19.

²⁰ Radio Pyongyang, August 16, 1950.

²¹ Paige, op. cit., p. 20

substantial Soviet influence, as well as for the hydroelectric plants on the Yalu that helped to supply the needs of Manchurian industry for power.²² Probably tending to equate the United States with nineteenth century "imperialism", the Chinese leadership no doubt recalled that in those bad old days foreign powers had entrenched themselves in regions bordering on China and had then projected their influence into China Proper, where they had carved out spheres of influence for themselves. Also perhaps equating the United States of 1950 with the Japan of 1918, the Chinese leadership may have feared that the United States, unless promptly deterred, would use its operation in Korea as the first step in an intervention designed to topple the Communist regime in China and would support the Chinese Nationalists in raids on the China coast. The Chinese possibly feared, and wanted if possible to deter, the specter of a restored and rearmed Japan; memories of 1937-45 were still fresh, and the Chinese Communists were well aware that it was not really they who had defeated the Japanese.

Second to considerations of security, probably, came Stalin's wishes, which are likely to have been communicated to Peking with his usual forcefulness. Although they may not have been decisive, or would perhaps not have been decisive in the absence of a genuine feeling in Peking that Chinese security was endangered in Korea, they could hardly be ignored by a regime that was heavily dependent on Stalin's good will, aid, support, and protection. The most the Chinese could do, and they did it in all probability, was to bargain vigorously for the greatest possible quantity of the advantages just mentioned as the price for their intervention, which they may have represented to Moscow, and did in fact represent in a public statement in 1963, as being undertaken mainly in the Soviet interest.

Thirdly, the Chinese undoubtedly hoped to gain prestige and influence through their intervention in Korea, although it is doubtful whether they would have taken what they knew to be a risky step for such reasons alone. At home, political control and mobilization could be enhanced by a major external crisis. Soviet aid and protection, as well as the modernization of the industrial economy and the armed forces, could be better achieved through such intervention. The Chinese made it clear that by their intervention they hoped to bring about the withdrawal of American protection from

²² Cf. Whiting, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-158, and Henton, *op. cit.*, p. 214. For a different view of Chinese interventions see Gen. Samuel Griffith, USMC (Ret.), *The Chinese People's Liberation Army*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), pp. 104-137.

Taiwan and their own entry into the United Nations. If they could win a clear victory over American forces in Korea, as they probably expected to be able to do as long as the Soviet Union was successful in deterring somehow American resort to nuclear weapons, Chinese prestige in Asia, including its influence on the Asian Communist Parties and the progress of their actual or hypothetical insurgencies, would be enhanced, in much the same way that the Communist Chinese leadership now regards its nuclear tests as a great "encouragement" to the "revolutionary people of the world".

Last, and probably least, was a desire to save North Korea for its own sake, or in other words as a "fraternal" Communist state rather than merely as a buffer or satellite. Mao undoubtedly realized that neither Stalin nor Kim Il Sung would welcome the substitution of Chinese for Soviet influence in North Korea. Although he made no effort to intervene in time to save Pyongyang from capture by United Nations forces and therefore knew that if Kim Il Sung regained control of it he could only do so through Chinese efforts, Mao probably had no illusions as to the degree of influence he could gain in this way; the Soviet Army had captured Belgrade from the Germans in 1945, only three years before Stalin found it necessary to break with Tito. Further indications that the salvaging of North Korea for its own sake, although certainly a consideration in the minds of the Chinese leadership, was not a compelling one can be found in the manner in which the Chinese conducted their intervention.

The Orchestration of Chinese Intervention

Late in September, as United Nations forces approached the 38th parallel, Communist China began to convey through various channels a threat to intervene, in an unspecified manner, in the Korean War if American (not South Korean) forces crossed the parallel;²³ at times, however, the warnings were somewhat more ambiguous and suggested that the threat of actual combat only applied if American forces approached too closely to the Manchurian frontier. Ratifications of the Sino-Soviet treaty of 14 February 1950 were exchanged, rather belatedly, on 30 September, or so at least Peking radio announced on 18 October.

²³ See, for example, K. M. Panikkar, In Two Chinas, (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1955), p. 110 and Whiting, op. cit., p. 108.

Certainly the primitive state of Chinese logistics, as well as the apparent lack of overwhelming Chinese concern for the fate of North Korea as such, suggested that the maximum Chinese effort should be reserved for the zone bordering directly on Manchuria. When Chinese forces, posing after discovery as "volunteers", crossed the Yalu in mid-October, their leaders had probably decided to do nothing more for the time being than establish a buffer zone south of the river and await developments. Although this approach was later rationalized as one of "luring the enemy in deep," it seems probably that Peking was prepared not to fight if the United States respected the buffer and halted its forces somewhere near the neck of the peninsula.²⁴

As it turned out, General MacArthur, who seems not to have realized the true extent of the Chinese military presence in North Korea, felt no interest in leaving China a buffer. On 24 October he announced the abolition of the last restraining line that had previously prevented American, as distinct from South Korea, forces from moving up to the Yalu.²⁵ On the following day, the "Chinese People's Volunteers" (CPV) were officially formed, and they went into action against American forces on 26 October.²⁶ About two weeks later they broke contact and pulled back into the mountains, partly no doubt to reorganize but also probably in the hope that MacArthur would heed this "serious warning" and respect the buffer, even if he did not retreat to the 38th parallel.²⁷

Needless to say, MacArthur did nothing of the kind; on the contrary, he launched his famous "home by Christmas" offensive in late November. This development confronted the Communist side with its most serious strategic decisions since the crossing of the 38th parallel by United Nations forces. No doubt these decisions had already been taken, on a contingency basis. Stalin, Mao, and Kim Il Sung were almost certainly in full agreement that if MacArthur, after the announcement of the formation of the CPV and

²⁴ Hinton, op. cit., p. 214

²⁵ Tang Tsou, America's Failure in China, 1941-1950, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 580-582; note the map (p. 581).

²⁶ Whiting, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

²⁷ Ibid. and Hinton, op. cit., p. 214.

in the knowledge that it was trying to keep his forces away from the Yalu, insisted on invading the Chinese buffer he must be repelled by whatever degree of force might prove necessary. A difference of opinion may well have arisen, however, over whether MacArthur should be pursued to or even beyond the 38th parallel if he broke contact and retreated southward. Stalin and Kim Il Sung were probably favorable to pursuit, as least as far as the 38th parallel, but the Chinese may well have felt that in such a case their immediate and minimum objectives would be achieved without such pursuit, even though they had been telling their troops that the objective was to expel the United States from Korea altogether.

If so, the Chinese soon changed their minds and conducted a pursuit down to the 38th parallel, perhaps because of Stalin's pressures and perhaps also because MacArthur began in early December to advocate expanding the war beyond Korea as the only way to save the situation in Korea itself. As he subsequently made clear, he favored reconnoitering and bombing Chinese territory, especially Manchuria, blockading China, and supporting Chinese Nationalist forces in operations against the China coast. Once the military situation stabilized itself in early 1951, these proposals seemed not only militarily unnecessary, but politically disadvantageous to his superiors and were accordingly rejected.

Nevertheless, it seems highly probable that at least the general tenor of MacArthur's proposals was known in the Communist capitals; it should be recalled that Guy Burgess and Donald MacLean were still in the British Foreign Service at that time and did not defect to the Soviet Union until early June 1951. It also seems possible that knowledge of these proposals, which was not necessarily accompanied by an appreciation of the slender chances of their adoption, may have convinced Peking that MacArthur must be pursued to the 38th parallel, that any American escalation of the war along MacArthur's lines must be pre-empted by another invasion of South Korea, in spite of the memories of 1950 and the obvious logistical difficulties that such a strategy would entail.²⁸ In short, Communist strategy now stood, although at a much higher level of violence and risk, roughly where it had stood at the end of June 1950: impending American counteraction must be pre-empted by a rapid and powerful offensive designed to "liberate" the whole of South Korea.

²⁸ See David Rees, Korea: The Limited War, (New York: St. Martin Press, 1964), p. 177, and Griffith, op. cit., pp. 138-161.

The Checking of Chinese Momentum

At the end of 1950, the CPV began to move across the 38th parallel, but its offensive was soon brought to a halt and sent into reverse by a revitalized United Nations Command under General Ridgway. Realizing that it was at a heavy logistical disadvantage, the CPV command (which may have been exercised by Lin Piao at that time but if so was soon taken over by P'eng Te-huai) began to bring up reinforcements and additional supplies for a later renewal of its offensive.²⁹ In the meantime, it pretended to ignore its military defeats and the fact that they were bringing it political disadvantages, such as condemnation by the United Nations as an aggressor on 18 February. On 17 January Peking repeated its demands for the withdrawal of all American forces from Korea and of American protection from Taiwan, insisted that it take its "rightful place" in the United Nations, specified that there could be no ceasefire until its terms had been accepted, and demanded a conference of seven powers (Communist China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, India, and Egypt) in China to discuss the Korean and Taiwanese questions.³⁰ Needless to say, Communist China's effort to pose as a victorious power in the absence of a decisive victory were convincing to almost no one outside Peking.

By the spring of 1951 nearly everyone on the United Nations side, except for General MacArthur and his supporters in the United States and the South Korean Government, was ready for an armistice on the approximate basis of the status quo ante bellum, with the main qualification that foreign troops should remain in Korea. The Soviet attitude toward the idea at that time is difficult to gauge; Moscow's main interest seemed to lie in keeping quiet so as not to inflame further the already dangerous controversy between MacArthur and his opponents. The Chinese, and probably the North Koreans, however, were not yet willing to accept an armistice that would leave American forces in South Korea, would deny Pyongyang control of that portion of the peninsula, and would in itself achieve nothing toward the fulfillment of Peking's demands with respect to Taiwan and the United Nations.

On 22 April (Lenin's birthday)³¹, and again on 16 May³², accordingly,

29. Alexander George, The Chinese Communist Army in Action, (New York: Columbus University Press, 1967), pp. 6-7.

30. The New York Times, January 23, 1951.

31. George, op. cit., p. 8.

32. Griffith, op. cit., pp. 153-164.

the CPV launched two massive offensives aimed at retaking Seoul and, if possible, driving still farther into South Korea. It has been reported that P'eng Te-huai was subsequently accused by his colleagues of having launched these offensives entirely on his own initiative,³³ but even if such a charge was actually made, and even though P'eng acted as his own political officer, the charge seems unlikely to have been true. It is unclear whether Peking intended merely to improve its bargaining position in negotiations to which it had already resigned itself, or whether it was still striving for total victory. It may well have wanted to wait and see how the offensives turned out before making a choice between these objectives; in actuality it was deprived of effective choice by a bloody defeat. This undoubtedly removed any lingering doubts that the Soviet Union may have had about the desirability of talks without victory, and after some preliminary soundings Jacob Malik publicly proposed armistice negotiations on 23 June.³⁴ Whether convinced by Soviet pressure or their own defeats, or both, Peking and Pyongyang endorsed the idea in a communication to the United Nations Command on 2 July. Although unpleasant, such a course of action seemed the best way of ensuring that the United States did not succumb to the temptation, which was probably feasible from the purely military standpoint, to pursue the Communist forces into North Korea again and inflict a clearcut defeat, even without resorting to General MacArthur's sobering recommendations.

The Armistice Negotiations

Although outwardly Peking let North Koreans play the most prominent roles in the ensuing armistice negotiations, there can be little doubt that Chinese and Soviet views were more important than North Korean. Through the talks Peking achieved, and presumably desired, an informal and partial relaxation of United Nations military pressure on the CPV. Limited military operations continued on both sides, however, both to gain increased leverage on the negotiations, with respect to the location of the ceasefire line in particular, and to improve tactics and try out new weapons. From the political standpoint, Peking was trying, if possible, not only to score propaganda gains against the United States but to achieve by political means much of what it had been unable to gain by military means, through attaching to the armistice, which it knew was greatly desired in the United States the idea of a general political conference on

³³ David Charles, "The Dismissal of Marshal P'eng Teh-huai", China Quarterly, No. 8 (October-December, 1961), p. 72.

³⁴ The Soviets had been circulating the proposal privately for at least a month prior to its public release. See Hinton, op. cit., p. 218.

Far Eastern problems.³⁵ The United States, for its part, was especially anxious for an armistice because of the state of political opinion at home and because of a desire not to seem to confirm MacArthur's charges that the only alternative to the adoption of his strategy was a long, costly, and inconclusive war. It was not generally understood how badly the CPV had been defeated.

At first, the Communist side insisted on the 38th parallel, rather than the line of actual contact at the time of the ceasefire, as the demarcation line, and on the withdrawal of all foreign troops (presumably but not necessarily including the CPV) from Korea. It soon had to yield on these points, however, but it scored a major success when on 27 November, in the hope of trading a ceasefire for a quick agreement, the United Nations Command did not want to take ground only to give it up later, the Communists gained an informal thirty-day ceasefire, which they used effectively to strengthen their defensive positions. After that, there was little chance of a major breakthrough by the United Nations forces short of major amphibious operations, the adoption of the MacArthur formula, or the use of nuclear weapons.

The Final Crisis

By the beginning of 1952, only one major issue, the disposition of prisoners of war, remained to be settled. At that time, however, the United Nations side gravely complicated this issue, for weighty humanitarian and political reasons. It insisted on voluntary rather than compulsory repatriation in the knowledge that a large, although undetermined percentage of the prisoners it was holding, did not want to go home.³⁷ For the Communist Chinese and North Koreans, this was a major political issue, and one on which Stalin undoubtedly sympathized with them, since at the end of World War II he had insisted adamantly and successfully on the return to the Soviet Union of all Soviet citizens and prisoners in the areas occupied by the Western Allies.

The Communist side immediately objected to the idea of voluntary repatriation and gave the impression that it would not sign an armistice that

³⁵ This conference was held at Geneva in the spring of 1954, but it accomplished nothing of significance except with respect to Indochina.

³⁶ The New York Times, November 28, 1951.

³⁷ Hinton, op. cit., p. 219

included such a provision. As tension rose, it tried to acquire leverage, and deterrent effect in the event that the United Nations side should contemplate escalation, by organizing large-scale and bloody riots among prisoners of the United Nations Command who remained pro-Communist, and by fabricating a propaganda campaign to convict the United States in the eyes of the world of having waged germ warfare against North Korea and Communist China. There is some evidence that the Soviet Union not only gave propaganda support to these ploys but sympathized and cooperated with them.³⁸ Such an attitude would have been in keeping with the increasingly bellicose outlook that Stalin seems to have entertained in his last years, contrary to the received interpretation that he grew more favorable to "peaceful co-existence."

In an effort to increase its pressure on the Communist side for an armistice, and probably with the coming American presidential election in mind, the United States proceeded to escalate its air war over North Korea, with the result that the Yalu dams began to be bombed on 23 June 1952. The ensuing months, coinciding with the presidential campaign in the United States, saw some complicated and probably tense negotiations between Communist China and the Soviet Union that began with the return of the Soviet ambassador to China to Moscow on 1 July (he was not replaced until Panyushkin, one of Stalin's most trusted diplomats, arrived in Peking on 9 December). During that period, high level Communist Chinese delegations were almost continuously in Moscow. To a large extent, to be sure, the negotiations related to Soviet aid and support, which was forthcoming in substantial amounts, for the Communist Chinese armed forces and economy during the upcoming First Five Year Plan (1953-57). The most urgent subjects discussed, however, related to Korea. In particular, it was agreed in mid-September, that, although control of the Manchurian railways should be turned over to China as specified in the Sino-Soviet agreements of February 1950, the Soviet Union should stay on in Dairen and Port Arthur until the Communist states had concluded a peace settlement with Japan.³⁹ It would seem that this arrangement benefited mainly the Chinese and was therefore probably reached at their initiative; the railways were of more practical importance, at any rate to the war effort in Korea, than the two ports, but

³⁸ Rees, op. cit., p. 359

³⁹ Hinton, op. cit., p. 220

the remaining Soviet presence there, which was loudly and pointedly alluded to by the Chinese as the tension increased, was probably regarded as a useful form of deterrence to possible American action against Manchuria.

In November the Indian Government, which was greatly concerned over the deadlock on the prisoner question, undertook to resolve it. After preliminary and encouraging soundings in Peking, it introduced into the United Nations General Assembly a proposal that actually favored the Communist side, since it stressed the right of prisoners to be repatriated and envisaged the retention of prisoners refusing repatriation in the custody of the United Nations Repatriation Commission (to be established under the armistice agreement) until their final disposition could be determined by the political conference that was ultimately to be convened.⁴⁰ The United States objected to these provisions, however, and the Indian Government soon reintroduced them with some seemingly minor but actually crucial alterations; the revised proposals stressed the right of a prisoner not to be repatriated against his will and provided for the release in the reasonably near future of prisoners refusing repatriation.⁴¹

The revised Indian proposal was denounced promptly, loudly, and apparently sincerely from Moscow, Pyongyang, and Peking, among whom there does not seem to have been any serious difference of opinion on this issue. In the event that the incoming Eisenhower administration did not decide to seek an early armistice, such as it had promised the voters, by modifying its stand on the prisoner issue in favor of the Communist position, the Communist side was apparently willing to risk American escalation and perhaps even to pre-empt it to a degree. Stalin, who was preparing a major domestic purge and may have been contemplating war against Yugoslavia,⁴² seems to have been ready to go rather far on behalf of the Chinese; for example, he told the Indian ambassador on 17 February 1953 that he would use force if the United States acted on its recent "unleashing" of Chiang Kai-shek.⁴³ On the Chinese side, there is persuasive evidence that Mao Tse-tung was prepared to see a resumption of heavy ground fighting in Korea rather than give up any significant number of prisoners.

⁴⁰ Text in The New York Times, November 18, 1952.

⁴¹ Text in The New York Times, December 2, 1952.

⁴² Hinton, op. cit., p. 223-224.

⁴³ K. P. S. Menon, The Flying Troika, (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 26-29.

Far from yielding, the Eisenhower administration, apparently in late February 1953, began to convey through various channels the threat that if an armistice were not signed soon, and on the basis of voluntary repatriation, it would extend the war from Korea to the mainland of China and use nuclear weapons. There is some evidence that among the Chinese reactions to this traumatic threat was a request to Stalin, and again to his successors, for a prompt transfer of nuclear weapons and probably also for strong Soviet actions and statements on China's behalf.⁴⁴ Whatever Stalin may have thought of this situation and these demands, he died at this point, and his successors were clearly in no mood to complicate their already serious problems by any threatening statements or actions over Korea.

The Armistice

On 30 March 1953, shortly after returning from Moscow, Chou En-lai proposed the resumption of talks at Panmunjom on the prisoner issue; without naming it, he virtually suggested that the revised Indian proposal serve as the basis. With this auspicious start, and with the help of further covert but fairly explicit threats from the United States whenever the negotiations did not seem to be going as they should, fairly rapid progress was made at Panmunjom, and an armistice incorporating as its major principles a ceasefire line along the line of actual contact rather than along the 38th parallel, the retention of foreign troops in Korea but without reinforcement or increased armaments, and the repatriation of prisoners subject to their consent was signed on 27 July. Strong objections on the part of Syngman Rhee, symbolized by his unilateral release of those of his North Korean prisoners who were unwilling to be repatriated, was handled by a final Chinese offensive against certain South Korean (but not American) units, mainly the Capital Division, during which the United States made it clear that it would not oppose limited pressure of this kind on Rhee and would not support him if he tried to "march north". Apart from such later developments as a series of Communist violations of some provisions of the armistice, the withdrawal of the CPV in 1958 (mainly it would seem to avoid leaving them to face tactical nuclear weapons that the United States had just introduced into South Korea in response to Communist violations) and a continuing deadlock over Korea's political future, the war was over.

⁴⁴ Chow Ching-wen, Ten Years of Storm: The True Story of the Communist in China, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 82.

The Lessons of a Limited War

The Korean War was a limited war, but by a fairly narrow margin. It witnessed the greatest employment in combat of American troops since 1945, and of Communist Chinese troops since 1949. In the early months of 1953, thanks to the complicating influence of Stalin, there was some risk of the war's ceasing to be a limited one and escalating to the level of general war.

On the American side, there has been a widespread but largely unjustified feeling that the Korean War was lost, or that American forces in Korea at most did no more than "die for a tie". (In reality, South Korea was saved, Communist China's political demands frustrated, the momentum of Communism in Asia largely checked, and the Soviet Union forced into an arms race with the United States that it could not win and that its economy could not afford.) Serious strains were imposed on the American political system, notably at the time of General MacArthur's relief and during the 1952 presidential campaign and the subsequent era of McCarthyism. There arose a widespread feeling, in military as well as civilian circles, that "never again" must the United States commit ground forces to combat on the Asian continent; it seems reasonable to believe that this feeling contributed heavily to delaying direct American intervention in the struggle in South Vietnam until it was almost too late. The feeling also arose, and remained dominant during the eight years of the Eisenhower administration, that in the future the United States must rely heavily on air and naval power (the "New Look") and on nuclear threats ("Massive Retaliation"), supplemented when necessary by local rather than American ground forces ("Let Asians fight Asians").

On the other side, there is no doubt that Communist China did gain significantly in prestige from having fought the United States, seemingly at any rate, to a standstill in Korea. It also saw and took advantage of the opportunity to strengthen its controls at home in the favorable climate created by the war. It also improved its military skills, promoted the general modernization of its forces, and at least in the short run acquired an increased flow of Soviet economic and military aid. On the other hand, it suffered several hundred thousand casualties, incurred very high economic costs,

and exposed itself to a genuine risk of direct American retaliation. It strained its relations with the Soviet Union in some ways, although Peking has preferred to keep silent on this aspect of the Sino-Soviet dispute, probably because it involves the memory of Stalin, which the Chinese wish for other reasons to keep sacred. The Chinese acquired a healthy respect for American firepower and have ever since avoided a direct confrontation with it. They have preferred to keep their, as distinct from their proxies', challenges more ambiguous and political, as in Vietnam. They have cultivated the good will of neutrals, until recently at any rate, at least partly in order to acquire a sort of political deterrence against possible American attack or retaliation, especially in view of the declining credibility of Soviet protection due to the Sino-Soviet dispute. They have begun to create a nuclear deterrent of their own, partly no doubt because of the memory of the disadvantage at which the lack of one placed them during the Korean War. Finally, one eventual outcome of the Chinese intervention in Korea, reinforced by subsequent events, has been a growing independence from both Moscow and Peking on the part of North Korea.

In short, neither the United States nor Communist China wants to repeat, there or anywhere else, their armed encounter in Korea. In the case of the United States, there is a particular lack of interest in what the Maoists (but not their opponents) allege to be the actual American objective; an invasion of China.

PRECEDING PAGE BLANK--NOT FILMED

APPENDIX B

THE INDOCHINA CONFRONTATION, 1950-1954

THE INDOCHINA CONFRONTATION, 1950-1954:
UNITED STATES-COMMUNIST CHINESE POLITICO-MILITARY INTERACTIONS

by
Bernard B. Fall *

CHAPTER I
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Perennial Chinese Interests

Relations between China and Vietnam have a history covering more than two thousand years. In fact, the Vietnamese are the only nation in Southeast Asia whose cultural and ethnic background is largely Chinese. Chinese conquerors have repeatedly incorporated all or part of what is now Vietnam into the Chinese empire, while the Vietnamese have repeatedly attempted to assert their independence or autonomy. The Chinese exercised direct control over at least a part of what is now Vietnam during 221-214 B.C., 111 B.C.- 40 A.D., 43-543 A. D., 603-938 A.D., and 1407-1427 A.D. Subsequently, the Vietnamese acknowledged Chinese suzerainty until 1885 when the French gained control.

During the French rule in Indochina, the Chinese were forced to renounce all claims to Indochina. But even under French rule, Vietnamese politics were closely linked to China and the development of modern revolutionary and nationalist movements followed parallel lines in the two countries.¹

As a result of World War II, the French position in Indochina weakened considerably and the Chinese sought to expand their influence there once again. In accordance with the Potsdam decisions, Chinese Nationalist forces occupied northern Vietnam down to the 16th Parallel. From the Chinese Nationalist point of view, this occupation had two objectives, one short-range and one long-range. Over the short range, its troops entered Vietnam and northern Laos for the purpose of disarming the Japanese. As a more long-term goal, Chinese warlords in the south sought the establishment in Hanoi, of a Vietnamese government obedient to them rather than to the French, the surrender of the special privileges which the French, along with other Western powers, possessed in China, and the establishment of a Chinese position of preeminence over the Yunnan-Haiphong lifeline. They were to be quite successful in achieving these objectives.

* This is an abridged version of a case study prepared by the late Dr. Bernard Fall, a distinguished analyst of Vietnam politics. Dr. Fall was author of numerous studies and books on Indochina, including Street Without Joy, The Two Viet-Nams, Hell in a Very Small Place, The Siege of Dien Bien Phu, and co-editor of the Viet-Nam Reader. He spent many years of research in Southeast Asia and made several extensive visits to Indochina. During one visit to North Vietnam he interviewed Ho Chi Minh and his visits to Saigon provided an intimate knowledge of Vietnamese affairs. He served as a consultant to the State Department and other government agencies and as Professor of International Relations at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

The Chinese in Vietnam, 1945-1946

The effect of the 200,000 Chinese troops in various states of discipline, who now descended on a North Vietnam which had been the object of fairly extensive aerial bombardment, was that of the proverbial Biblical locusts. The Chinese warlords imposed an arbitrarily high exchange rate between the still fairly solid Indochinese piastre and the almost worthless Chinese Nationalist currency and began to confiscate property throughout the country. In the field of politics, the Chinese Nationalists continued to back the Viet-Minh movement of Ho Chi Minh. It proclaimed the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on September 2, 1945, and the first subsequent Vietnamese governments were coalitions formed under Chinese aegis. They contained a certain number of pro-Kuomintang elements along with Vietnamese nationalist elements which were neither pro-Chinese nor pro-Viet-Minh. It is not quite clear today as to whether the Chinese government in Chungking merely considered the North Vietnamese adventure of the south Chinese warlords as a welcome diversion from their usual anti-Chungking operations; or whether--while unwilling to accept sovereignty over the traditionally "non-Chinese" areas of Indochina--it had not resolved to reassert control at least over the Tonking border and the Yunnan-Haiphong lifeline; or whether it merely considered the whole excursion into Vietnam as a temporary acquisition of bargaining counters to be traded off at the proper moment for more desirable objects.

The return of French forces to the British-controlled areas south of the Sixteenth Parallel and the increasing difficulties which the Chungking government experienced inside China, apparently led the latter to opt for the third alternative. The long-drawn negotiations began between France and China in the early days of January 1946, while at the same time, in Hanoi, other French negotiations underlined to the Ho Chi Minh government the real advantages that it could derive from a return of the French to North Vietnam under a form to be negotiated between the two parties. The French were so certain of the anti-Chinese feelings of the Hanoi regime (and all its key members then are its key members in 1966 as well) that they were sure they would eventually prevail.²

On February 28, 1946, the French Chinese Treaty was signed at Chungking. All French concessions in China were returned to Chinese sovereignty; the French-leased territory in China (a sort of French Hong Kong, which had never reached the level of prosperity of its English counterpart), Kwang Chow Wan, was returned to China forthwith; the part of the Yunnan-Haiphong Railroad which ran through Chinese territory became outright Chinese property; and in the Port of Haiphong itself, China would obtain what amounted to a sovereign enclave through which she could import and export merchandise via the Yunnan Railroad without going through French

customs inspection.³ A week later, on March 6, 1946, France in turn signed a convention with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (D. R. V. N.) in which the "French Government recognizes the republic of Vietnam as a Free State having its own government, parliament, army and finances, being a part of the Indochinese Federation and of the French Union." The Agreement also provided for a return for five years of French troops to the areas north of the Sixteenth Parallel, and consequently, for the departure of the Chinese forces from Vietnam. By late May, 1946, the last Chinese troops recrossed the border or were evacuated by ship from Haiphong--but not without having left behind to the returning French a poisoned gift: Prior to their departure, the Chinese Nationalists had sold to Ho Chi Minh and the D. R. V. N. for all the gold which could be collected in North Vietnam the vast stocks of Japanese weapons and of French colonial weapons which the Chinese troops were supposed to have secured as part of their mission under the Potsdam Agreements. In addition, the Chinese sold Ho Chi Minh a fairly sizable amount of the brand new American weapons with which they had been equipped under Lend-Lease prior to their entry into Vietnam. These weapons were to be the mainstay of the D. R. V. N.'s war-making potential until the Communist Chinese forces occupied the North Vietnamese border regions late in 1949 and early 1950.

The French Indochina War

In fact, contraband between China and the D. R. V. N. even after the departure of the Chinese troops was to provide the initial spark of the outbreak of fighting between France and the Viet-Minh.

As negotiations between France and the D. R. V. N. dragged on inconclusively throughout 1946,⁴ the French government felt that the tight customs control on Vietnamese imports was necessary to prevent a further build-up of Viet-Minh military forces through smuggled goods. A Chinese junk loaded with contraband gasoline for the Viet-Minh forces which was stopped for search by French patrol boats in the Port of Haiphong in November 1946 led to shootings in the city and a French shore bombardment by warships which killed close to six thousand Vietnamese and led to an opening of general hostilities by Ho Chi Minh on December 19, 1946.

From then onward, Chungking seems to have been preoccupied enough with its own survival so as not to show much interest in what went on in neighboring Vietnam. The victory of the Chinese Communists on the Mainland changed all that very rapidly. As soon as Chinese Communist forces

arrived along the northeastern border of Vietnam from Lao-Kay to Lang Son and Moncay, raw Viet-Minh units began to stream across the border to the Chinese training camps at Ching-hsi and Nanning. This was particularly important for the heavy-weapons and artillery units. The latter were re-equipped with American 75-mm mountain howitzers and others were given American 105-mm artillery pieces. Their effect on Indochina was to prove decisive.

In sum, then, it can be clearly asserted that Chinese interests in Vietnam have been constant over the past two thousand years. This particularly applies to what is today known as North Vietnam and, up to a point, central Vietnam (Annam). Past Chinese interests in Cochin China proper--that is, the Mekong Delta area--are less clearly established. It is also clear from the recent historical record of 1885 and 1946 that under certain specific circumstances the Vietnamese are susceptible to accepting Chinese aid when faced with what they consider overwhelming outside pressure. They may not do this gladly, to be sure. But they seem to prefer it to alien occupation.

Conversely, the Chinese have shown both in 1885 and 1946 that they are quite willing to incur the risks of conflict with technologically superior Western powers in order to protect what they consider their own essential interests in their southern border areas. In that sense, Communist Chinese activities with regard to Vietnam during the period which this study covers are perfectly consistent with previous historical Chinese interests, whether they were those of the old Chinese Empire or of the Chinese Republic of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek.

CHAPTER II

THE CONFRONTATION *

Communist China Enters the Scene

The first formal statement of the Chinese People's Republic (CPR) with regard to the situation of Vietnam was offered on November 29, 1949, by Chou En-lai in his capacity of Foreign Minister of the CPR. In it, Chou En-lai warned that the Chinese Communist forces would pursue the defeated Chinese Nationalist troops no matter where they would attempt to take refuge. He (correctly, as it turned out) stated that the "Kuomintang brigands" hope to reach Vietnam and other bordering countries in order to turn them into "bases from which to stage a comeback at an opportune moment," and warned "the government of any country which gave shelter to the Kuomintang armed forces," that it would be "held responsible for its action" and would have to bear "full responsibility for the consequences."⁵

To the French who were already deeply involved in the Indochina War, this was an ominous warning since almost 40,000 Chinese troops were in the process of streaming across the North Vietnamese border, particularly in the coastal Moncay area. The French Army took immediate measures to evacuate those Chinese troops as far away as possible from the Vietnamese border in order to forestall a possible "hot pursuit" by Red Chinese forces. Most of them were resettled more than a thousand miles to the south, on the Island of Phu Quoc in the Gulf of Siam.

Nevertheless, as early as December 14, 1949, the Foreign Minister of the D.R.V.N., Hoang Minh Giam, in turn issued a statement which dealt with alleged French assistance given the Kuomintang forces and charged that they might possibly collaborate with the French against the Viet-Minh forces. Chinese and D.R.V.N. accusations against alleged French use of Kuomintang forces were to continue for almost two years, and the mutual assistance agreement signed between the CPR and the D.R.V.N. in April 1950, when Ho Chi Minh was said to have visited Peking, specifically dealt with the problem of joint operations in the Sino-Vietnamese border area to "wipe out Kuomintang bandits."

* See Annex for a chronology of the confrontation

When, on December 27, 1949, Chinese Communist regulars hoisted the red flag at the Chinese end of the steel bridge which connected the Vietnamese border town of Moncay with China, France had, within the strategic concept under which she operated—i. e., that the whole Indochina War was nothing else but a "pacification operation"—lost the Indochina War; for it was impossible with the limited means which were available to the French at that time to defeat decisively Ho Chi Minh's forces even when they had been totally cut off from the outside world. Now, with Red China being able to provide the D. R. V. N. with massive amounts of almost new American equipment captured from the disintegrating Chinese Nationalist armies, the balance of power would tilt heavily the other way. It must also be remembered, of course, that no American aid reached the French in Indochina until June 12, 1950, and then, for almost a year, only in minute amounts. In fact, during the pre-Korean War era, the United States Government marked its strong disapproval for France's colonial war by forbidding the French to deploy in Vietnam any American equipment delivered to the French forces in France, for example, under the NATO Agreements. At one point, this rule was so strictly enforced that British "Spitfire" fighter aircraft operating in Vietnam were stripped of their American-made propellers in Europe prior to being shipped to Indochina.

The Ho Chi Minh government immediately took advantage of the new political situation created by the Chinese presence—and there can be no question about the fact that only this new Chinese presence was the operating factor. On January 14, the D. R. V. N. issued a statement that it was prepared to establish diplomatic relations with any government which desired to cooperate with it on the basis of equality, mutual respect for national sovereignty, and territorial integrity. On the following day, the D. R. V. N. recognized the Chinese People's Republic and expressed its willingness to establish diplomatic relations with the latter and exchange ambassadors; and on January 18, 1950, the CPR became the first foreign government to recognize the existence of the D. R. V. N. Remarkable enough, it took the Soviet Union until January 30 to follow in China's footsteps. The other Soviet bloc states followed suit over the next six weeks, with Albania closing the list on March 13. Red China immediately showed that she was willing to take on the traditional responsibilities of China toward her smaller neighbor: On the very day that China recognized the D. R. V. N., Chou En-lai delivered a violent protest note to the French Foreign Minister, in spite of the fact that France did not recognize Red China until fifteen years later, charging France with atrocities and persecutions perpetrated against Chinese citizens living in Vietnam, thus announcing the re-entry of China into

Vietnamese politics. Very little has come to light thus far about the exact nature of the Sino-D. R. V. N. Mutual Assistance Agreement (or Treaty) of April 1950: the extent of the commitments agreed on, the character and kind of Chinese aid promised the D. R. V. N. , or the overall length of the validity of the Treaty. It is clear, however, that it heralded a sizeable Chinese commitment to the military support of the D. R. V. N. in a perfect repetition of the 1885 situation—except for the fact that now Mainland China itself was totally invulnerable to French military pressure, not only because of French military weakness but above all because China now was backed by the Soviet Union, then to be ruled for another three years by Joseph Stalin. In addition, a new factor had appeared on the scene—the United States of America.

The United States Enters the Scene

Both the D. R. V. N. and the C. P. R. were fully aware of the American negative reaction to the collapse of the Chinese Nationalists on the Mainland. What with American commitments in Europe and the Middle East and the obvious inability of the Chinese Nationalists to pull themselves together, it seemed that the United States was intent upon retrenching her Far Eastern commitments to the rim areas of the China Sea. In addition, American disapproval of colonial wars in the area had been overt and constant. In the case of Indonesia the United States had taken an unequivocal anti-Dutch stand. In the case of Indochina the American stand was less clear because of the increasingly overt Communist character of the Nationalist opposition under Ho Chi Minh; but here also there seemed little chance that the United States would come militarily to the help of the French in the case of a sudden worsening of their position in Indochina and particularly in northern Vietnam. To this overall estimate of the situation which the Communist leaders must have made, the American Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, added what seemed to be another piece of conclusive evidence. Dr. Harold C. Hinton, a member of the Institute for Defense Analyses, recently stated in a book:

On January 12 [1950], in a speech carrying more weight than similar earlier statements by other prominent Americans, Secretary of State Acheson defined the United States' defensive perimeter in the Pacific as one running through Japan, the Ryukyus and the Philippines; the defense of areas to the west of this line was to be the responsibility of the United Nations. To this seemingly frail shelter he thus committed not only South Korea but

Taiwan and Vietnam, all of them areas where a militant Communist party was then trying to complete the conquest or unification of its country.⁶

Historians will have to await the opening to public scrutiny of Chinese and Russian files to learn with definite certitude whether or not the Acheson speech became the decisive factor in the events that were to follow. Dr. Hinton, in his study, speaks of a "presumed arrangement" which he feels might have been made at the initiative of the Chinese and to which Stalin might have given a "highly nervous assent," which would allow the Chinese to pursue their early victories in a three-pronged attack against South Korea in the north, Taiwan in the center and Vietnam in the south.⁷ But, and this needs to be underlined again, this is sheer speculation for the time being. It is not even certain whether the recognition of the D.R.V.N. by Peking on January 18 may well have been accelerated by the apparent writing-off of the peripheral Asian Mainland areas by Acheson. French Intelligence began to pick up early in 1950 the movements of major Viet-Minh units northeastward into China (the CPR was soon to claim that French reconnaissance aircraft were violating the Chinese airspace). Until then, the Communist Vietnamese forces had operated only at regimental level at the very most; in fact most of the time they operated at battalion level or even less. By the time the Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950, news already began filtering back to Vietnam that full-fledged 10,000-man infantry divisions with their standard artillery and heavy weapons components were coming off the "assembly lines" in Nanning and Ching-hsi. Ho Chi Minh's guerrillas were being transformed into the "Vietnamese People's Army" (VPA) which still faces America today.

On the French side, budgetary difficulties at home had witnessed a levelling off of French troop commitments to Vietnam at a point which permitted wide-ranging offensive operations. At the same time, the new Vietnamese National Army (VNA) of the non-Communist Vietnamese regime which had been created under French aegis on March 8, 1949, had barely begun to take shape and was not yet making a significant contribution to the

war effort; but, in the meantime, it drained away from the French forces an irreplaceable segment of the non-commissioned officers and junior cadres. The American attitude towards the French had changed perceptibly: From what had been a colonial war designed merely to return France to unquestioned possession of her Asian colonies, the Vietnam War now had become an indispensable holding operation on the southern flank of an Asian containment position. Just as it would have been impossible to create an effective NATO barrier in Europe if Greece and Turkey had become Communist dominated, American planners now felt that it would be impossible to create a viable anti-Communist position in the Far East stretching from British-held Singapore in the south to the American airfields in northern Japan if France pulled out. To be sure, the United States was still interested in seeing France progressively give all the appurtenances of full independence to the Indochina States. And, in fact, the United States and Great Britain reacted to the Communist recognition of the D. R. V. N. by recognizing, in turn, the French sponsored Bao-Dai regime as an independent state in February 1950. Vietnam now was a part of the great "Crusade" and American material and funds began to flow to the French in the Indochina States.

But as the American obligations in the Korean war grew geometrically, the Vietnam theater of necessity became a secondary American pre-occupation. The United States forces and the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army being rapidly built up by the United States had first call on all military commitments. Thus, the first influx of a few American transport planes and non-combat vehicles into Vietnam perhaps merely incited the Chinese to build up the V. P. A. more rapidly than they would have otherwise, but added little real combat strength to the already badly-strained French Union Forces. As often in the past and even more often in the future, half measures in Vietnam usually had exactly the opposite effect of what they were intended to achieve.

The Border Offensive

During the summer of 1950, the French Union Forces in North Vietnam held the Red River Delta quite firmly, had a thin layer of garrisons in all of the mountain areas west of the Red River and had maintained a tenuous string of border garrisons over the most accessible parts of the Sino-Vietnamese frontier, from the sea at Moncay for over 250 miles northward to Cao-Bang. Late in 1949, guerrilla ambushes had progressively made it impossible for the border garrisons to maintain overland communications with the main position in the Red River Delta. A system of intricate

airlifts kept the garrisons supplied and sometimes even connected one post with another. Already a year earlier, in May 1949, the then French Chief of Staff, General Revers, had inspected the border area and had recommended that the exposed positions, hanging, as it were, in mid-air between a hostile China and the key guerrilla areas of Vietnam, should be evacuated forthwith in case of an eventual Red Chinese occupation of all of Mainland China; and through a series of indiscretions in Paris, the D. R. V. N. 's underground radio transmitter was able to broadcast messages of the supposedly top secret report as early as August 26, 1949. One year later, however, nothing had been done, as the French troops in Indochina--displaying exactly the same kind of optimism as their American comrades-in-arms in Korea, who at that very same moment were driving the North Koreans toward the Yalu--fully expected to be capable of withstanding the forthcoming onslaught. That proved to be a fatal error.

On September 15, 1950, the first Communist units began to leave their assembly areas near the Chinese border for their attack against the main north-south communication line between the border post, Colonial Road No. 4. They were the bulk of the 308th Infantry Brigade (later transformed into a full division), the 209th Infantry of the 312th Division, 174th Infantry of the 316th Division, Independent Regiments No. 18 and 246, and, finally, Independent Battalions 410, 426 and 428, for a total of fourteen infantry and three artillery battalions. This force displayed an incredible amount of true cross-country maneuverability, excellent discipline of movement and (when its artillery came into play) an uncanny ability at using its heavy weapons. By October 17, the whole French border position, despite the last-ditch sacrifice of three parachute battalions, had been destroyed. As this writer had stated elsewhere:

Then the smoke cleared, the French had suffered their greatest colonial defeat since Montcalm had died at Quebec. They had lost 6,000 troops, 13 artillery pieces, and 125 mortars, 450 trucks, and 3 armored platoons, 940 machine-guns, 1200 sub-machineguns and more than 8,000 rifles. Their abandoned stocks alone sufficed for the equipment of a whole additional Viet-Minh division.⁸

By the end of 1950 a full forty battalions, including ten artillery battalions or heavy-weapons units, were fully armed by the Chinese, while Chinese aid for 1951 was conservatively estimated by French Intelligence

as amounting to 18,000 rifles, 1200 machineguns and automatic rifles, 150 to 200 heavy (81-mm and 12-mm) mortars as well as about 50 artillery pieces. Additionally there were reports that some Chinese troops had been sent to Indochina. Chinese aid for 1952 was finally estimated to have been twice that of 1951. According to a RAND Corporation study, Chinese supply deliveries to the Vietnamese rose to 250 tons a month by the end of 1952, averaged between 400 and 600 tons in 1953, 1,500 tons in March 1954 (when the Battle at Dien Bien Phu began) and finally reached 4,000 tons a month by June 1954.⁹ By 1953, the former 53rd Arsenal at Kun Yang, Yunnan, was reequipped to serve the specific requirements of the V. P. A. and of guerrilla groups in Laos and Burma. Renamed "Southwestern Arsenal," it was equipped with Soviet machine tools and was said to produce ten types of light automatic weapons.¹⁰

Chinese Advisory Support

In the absence, again, of hard documentary evidence in most cases, it is difficult to piece together a coherent picture of Chinese influence on V. P. A. combat operations against France. There are on the formal record only two agreements between the C. P. R. and the D. R. V. N., which were signed during the French Indochina War, and these dealt with such innocuous subjects as posts and communications and were signed respectively on February 6, 1952, and March 3, 1953.¹¹ In the military field, however, there exists some first-hand evidence of direct cooperation at all levels. An East German book published in 1952 in East Berlin and dealing with the fate of German Foreign Legionnaires captured by the V. P. A., cites the names of the Russian pilots, and the aircraft identification numbers of the planes which they flew when they evacuated German-born Foreign Legionnaires who had been transferred from V. P. A. prison camps to Chinese territory, and from Chinese territory via Russia to East Germany in 1951.¹² Such activities were further confirmed by French Army Lt. Georges Eychenie and two French sergeants who had been captured on April 2, 1951, at Binh-Lu, North Vietnam, had been transferred to prison camps in Communist China soon thereafter, and were held there until they were released to British authorities in Hong Kong on December 28, 1955. Eychenie stated that Chinese military advisors operating with the VPA wore no insignia on their uniforms and wore uniforms of a different cut from those of the Viet-Minh forces.¹³

French Intelligence sources affirmed, furthermore, that a Chinese military mission under Major-General Li Cheng-hu was attached to General

Giap's headquarters; but until the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, VPA tactics were not of the kind which required a high level of technological proficiency. In any case, even a decade later, a French Air Force colonel turned writer, and not unsympathetic to the cause of the Viet-Minh, received flat denials about the presence of Chinese advisors, let alone antiaircraft or artillery gun crews and fire direction advisors at Dien Bien Phu, where the French were surprised by the high level of proficiency of the enemy's artillery.

General Giap himself told Colonel Roy that "nobody in the People's Army ever prepared baths for the Chinese; nobody ever walked beside their horses."¹⁴

As this writer knows from personal experience in Indochina in 1953, some Viet-Minh prisoners readily admitted not only the presence of Chinese advisors, but their resentment toward them. I particularly recall the case of a VPA lieutenant colonel who had successfully destroyed a French force at Samneua in northeastern Laos early in 1953 and who later defected to the French because he had been reprimanded for some small tactical errors by his Chinese advisor in front of his own victorious troops and thus "lost face."

Finally, on May 7, 1954, an official American publication published the full text of a Chinese document captured in Indochina whose title was Handbook for Political Workers Going to Vietnam, which was said to have been prepared originally by the Political Department of the "General Headquarters of the Chinese People's Volunteers to Help Vietnam."¹⁵

That pamphlet covered such routine items as preparations for setting up camp and the use of chlorine to purify water and two rules on how to treat French and Vietnamese Nationalist prisoners:

When our volunteers capture enemy soldiers on the battlefield... they should immediately send the captives through their respective units to our General Headquarters for questioning. Afterward they should be delivered to the General Headquarters of the Vietnamese People's Army. No unit is to mistreat prisoners of war, nor imprison them within the unit for a long period. Furthermore, as for those prisoners who have been seriously wounded, they should be sent immediately on stretchers to the base hospital for treatment... Our comrade political workers must also use every

means to gain the support of the captives with propaganda utilizing them to do anti-French work (such as broadcasting, writing letters, and exposing the weak points of their troops and the violent conduct of the French forces). With regard to the capture of the members of the French Air Force, there are special rules for giving rewards. The prisoners of war from the Air Force must be treated just as well as those of the ground forces. Under no circumstances shall they be beaten or abused.¹⁶

In the absence of any further information confirming the authenticity of this document, it will have to be interpreted with a great deal of caution. But the sum total of the evidence available and the eventual development of events in Vietnam itself, clearly shows that Chinese help to the D. R. V. N. was crucial in its eventual victory over the French Forces.

American Involvement Deepens

As long as the Korean War ground on, the Indochina War was for American planners little more than a convenient diversion which had the merit of diverting at least part of Communist China's logistical, manpower, and training resources to an area which was as far removed from Korea as possible. In fact, the main diplomatic effort with regard to French actions there was to see that the French could be made to stay the course at least as long as the United States was engaged in active fighting on the north Asian flank. Under American pressure, the French broke off negotiating contacts which had been made in 1952 with the D. R. V. N. via Burma; and by an exchange of letters between the French and the American governments on September 29, 1953, France consented to extensive consultations between the two governments with regard to Indochina policy in exchange for vastly increased American aid commitments to the new French military pacification plan known by the name of the then French Commander-in-Chief, General Henri Eugene Navarre, as the "Navarre Plan."^{*}

This considerable hardening of the American and French positions was a direct consequence of the signature of the Korean cease-fire on July 27, 1953, on the basis of a compromise line around the 38th Parallel which did not entirely satisfy the more conservative elements in the United States who had hoped that the incoming Eisenhower Administration would succeed where the Truman Administration had failed.

* With the possible exception of policy pronouncements, US involvement in Indochina, for the most part, was limited to logistic support. For a more detailed indication of US involvement, see the chronological table at the end of the study.

There can be little doubt, however, that Moscow, Peking, and the D. R. V. N. 's government in the jungle interpreted the unilateral Korean cease-fire--unilateral because it was not matched by similar efforts to bring the Indochina War to the negotiating table--as an indication that the new American Administration was taking its slogan of "Peace and Prosperity" seriously and would not, so soon after a war which had been costly both in terms of American blood and American treasure, commit once more American conventional ground forces to a war on the Asian Mainland. In addition, there had emerged within the senior commanders of the U. S. Army, and notably among the generals who had commanded in Korea, a current of opinion which was best defined by the overall name given to that particular school of thought: "The Never-Again Club." That name designated those officers who felt that it would be pointless in the future to commit conventional American ground forces in what could well become endless wars with Asian troops whose manpower resources would be almost infinite. That "Never-Again" theory perfectly matched the now-emerging overall strategy of the Eisenhower Administration, which was in the process of developing its massive-retaliation strategy. Since the United States had been unwilling to use mass destruction weapons to better the position of her own national units in Korea, it was hardly likely that she would use such weapons in defense of the military position of an ally--and one whose cause was furthermore tainted with colonialism. Repeated American statements at all levels throughout 1953 must have reassured the Chinese and their Russian advisors as to the total American unwillingness to become reinvolved in another Asian war.

And like four years earlier, when the speech of Secretary of State Dean Acheson unwittingly provided a wrong clue to the Communists, a statement by President Eisenhower in all probability had the same effect. On January 4, 1954, the President called a joint meeting of his Cabinet and of key Republican Congressional leaders in order to review the draft of the President's forthcoming State of the Union message. In the draft, the President apparently intended to speak of "military assistance" to France in Indochina, whereupon a Senator inquired whether this could not be interpreted to mean American military forces as well. Apparently to make sure that the State of the Union message would not be interpreted in that sense, the President then altered the message to read "material assistance," thus deliberately excluding any hint that American military forces could be dispatched to Indochina should the situation there suddenly deteriorate.¹⁷

In Indochina itself, the American disengagement in Korea and the overall change of policy it heralded, already produced its ripple effect. This cause-and-effect relationship between Korea and Indochina was later readily acknowledged by President Eisenhower in his memoirs:

Toward the end of 1953, the effect of the termination of hostilities in Korea began to be felt in Indochina... The Chinese Communists now were able to spare greatly increased quantities of materiel in the form of guns and ammunition (largely supplied by the Soviets) for use on the Indochinese battlefield. More advisors were being sent in and the Chinese were making available to the Viet-Minh logistical experience they had gained in the Korean War.¹⁸

Aside from the small inaccuracy that the bulk of the equipment was Soviet (it was mostly American), Eisenhower's account quite accurately reflected what was likely to happen next. Not that Communist China, in view of the serious losses she had suffered in Korea right after the end of her own civil war, was extremely eager to become reinvolved in another external campaign. In fact, as shown for example in a speech by the then Vice-Premier Chen Yun, made in early March, 1954, at least one part of the Chinese leadership was at that particular moment of the opinion that China should concentrate on internal consolidation rather than on more military adventures abroad.¹⁹ Hinton, in his 1966 account covering the same period is also of the opinion (though he feels Chinese restraint was based on fear of American retaliation) that the Chinese attitude early in 1954 "argued on balance against an overt and massive Chinese intervention in the Indochina crisis such as occurred in the Korean War."²⁰

But Hinton argues that to both Russia and the C. P. R., the whole Indochina War and its eventual solution was merely a bargaining counter to obtain massive Western concessions elsewhere and that both Moscow and Peking felt that this tactic would be even more successful if it were backed up by a last-minute spectacular victory on the battlefield (p. 246). In this writer's view, Hinton's position on that particular point is entirely correct, but it somewhat contradicts his earlier assertion that the Chinese were using restraint out of fear of American retaliation. On the contrary, it can be argued, as I did earlier, that both Moscow and Peking either again misread American intentions in view of the obviously confusing semantics involved--or that the American intentions themselves were clearly confused and subject to rapid changes. That the latter seems to have been the case

became clear after the State of the Union message was released. As early as January 12, 1954, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles outlined before the Council on Foreign Relations in New York the new concept of "massive retaliation" and at the beginning of February, two hundred U.S. Air Force technicians were sent to Danang to service American-built French war planes. That step toward a Sino-American confrontation in Indochina was clearly perceived as dangerous by President Eisenhower, and as early as February 10, he declared in his press conference that he "could conceive of no greater tragedy than for the United States to become involved in an all-out war in Indochina."

This zigzagging between "soft" statements of President Eisenhower (directed at the internal American audience) and the "hard" pronouncements by his Secretary of State for external consumption was to continue to be the hallmark of American foreign policy throughout the rest of the Dulles era. As subsequent events will show, it was misunderstood even in such sophisticated foreign offices as those of London and Paris, and not only when it came to Indochina--after all, the 1956 Suez crisis arose out of a similar misreading of American intentions. One can therefore only imagine how Moscow, and particularly Peking, read--or rather, misread--American intentions with regard to Indochina in the crucial period between the Korean cease-fire and the Battle of Dien Bien Phu which began on March 13, 1954.

The Dien Bien Phu Test Case

The Battle of Dien Bien Phu is, in the present context, tactically unimportant. * Suffice it to say that General Navarre attempted to set up a "mooring point" for French raider units which would operate deeply behind the enemy lines. When that original plan was in the process of failing in late January 1954, the decision was made to hold on and defend Dien Bien Phu statically in the hope of drawing off from more vital areas a large part of the enemy's main forces and to destroy them in what was expected to be

* The interested reader will find a detailed day-to-day description of that battle in this writer's "Hell in a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu" (New York: Lippincott, 1967) including 30 maps, illustrations and aerial photographs.

a "meat-grinder" battle. The French artillery and airpower were to make up for the garrison's obvious inferiority in manpower. That aspect of the battle proved hopelessly over optimistic within a week after it began: As it turned out, the Communist artillery was dug in to the point of being almost invulnerable to French counterbattery and airstrikes; Communist coolie-borne logistics proved (just as they did in 1966-67) well-nigh unstoppable; and the freshly developed anti-aircraft artillery of the VPA destroyed 67 French aircraft and damaged another 144 in 56 days of fighting, while developing over the doomed fortress a flack umbrella whose density was then estimated by some of the American pilots who flew the Dien Bien Phu run as equal to that over Western Europe in World War II. The same story has become painfully familiar to American pilots and high level planners who expected to seal off North Vietnam from South Vietnam fairly rapidly once intensive bombardment of North Vietnam began in February 1965. On March 20, 1954, i. e., within a week after the battle had begun in earnest, the French Armed Forces High Command knew that the fortress was doomed unless significantly superior airborne firepower could be made available immediately to the Dien Bien Phu area.

With a total combat force of 112 fighters and 68 bombers in all of Indochina, and with no North Vietnamese airfield equipped to take on jet fighter squadrons which the French could have conceivably pulled out of NATO, the only possible help could come from the United States. PACAF and FEAF had plenty of B-29 heavy bombers under their control. And the U. S. Navy had deployed Carrier Division 3 in the South China Sea with the carriers USS Boxer (CVA-21), Essex (CVA-9), and the Wasp (CVA-18). In addition, the Oriskany (CVA-34) of Carrier Division 4--she was still to operate in Vietnam waters in 1966--was deployed in the South China Sea and the carrier Philippine Sea (CVA-47) was in the process of proceeding from Pearl Harbor to Yokosuka and could reinforce the Navy Task Force off Indochina within a few days. In addition, the escort carrier Rendova was undergoing light repairs in Hong Kong and could join the deployed ships on station if needed.²¹ The 450 carrier-borne fighters which thus were immediately available in the area would have been more than sufficient to beat down any possible last-minute Communist Chinese interference with the execution of the saturation bombardment raids on the Communist depot and assembly areas around Dien Bien Phu which the French were not about to request.

On March 20, 1954, General Paul Ely, the Chairman of the French Joint Chiefs, arrived in Washington and immediately engaged in high level discussions with all the seniormost American leaders, from the President on down. To the French, the Dien Bien Phu situation had become of tremendous importance as the internal French political situation was clearly not of the kind which would have supported an even larger disaster than that which had been suffered in 1950 on the Chinese border without demanding an end to the war at almost any price. Yet, the French were fully aware that the use of American airpower in Vietnam carried within itself one extremely serious possible side-effect. If the strikes were so successful as to truly harm the D. R. V. N. 's further war-making capacity, then it was not inconceivable that Red China's then totally modern (and amply Soviet-supplied and maintained) MIG-15 jet fighters would enter the fray over Indochina and literally shoot the whole French Air Force out of the skies in a matter of hours. That not only would doom Dien Bien Phu but wreak havoc on the dozens of other tightly encircled areas in Laos, North Vietnam, and central Vietnam, which almost totally relied on air resupply for their survival. That contingency had been the object of a plan called for obvious reasons "Damocles," and its corollary would then have been a massive American counterpunch against the Chinese jet airfields--a step which the United States had not taken in Korea--or a resumption of the aerial and naval phases of the early Korean War days, but with the absolute certitude that they would within a short time again exit on an escalation toward the commitment of American ground troops, as indeed it was to happen in Vietnam precisely ten years after Dien Bien Phu. It is all this which American policy makers now had to weigh as they considered the French request for massive airstrikes at Dien Bien Phu. The code name for that operation was to be "Vulture."

CHAPTER III

THE BY-PLAY

Interaction at Home

The eventual failure of "Vulture" was almost entirely one of American internal politics. Its most important chapter was played out between March 20 and April 4, 1954. As soon as the Eisenhower Administration, on the advice of the Joint Chiefs and of Secretary Dulles, felt that the rapidly deteriorating situation in Indochina warranted American intervention, the Administration began to prepare the American public for the eventuality of hostilities through a variety of public statements, while at the same time it sought full Congressional support.

Thus, on March 29, 1954, Secretary Dulles delivered a major address on Asian policy before the Overseas Press Club in New York City. In words still used in 1967 to explain the American position in South Vietnam, Dulles ticked off a great many hitherto highly secret details about Chinese Communist involvement in the Indochina War--some of which, according to the French, in fact had been so secret that their publication compromised some very important French Intelligence sources in Asian Communist areas. In the same speech, Dulles warned the Communists that their activities in Indochina would be "met by United action." This might involve serious risks. But these risks are far less than those that will face us a few years from now if we dare not be resolute today." The Dulles speech, which was presented as having had the advance approval of President Eisenhower, was given extensive publicity throughout the United States as well as throughout the world.

But the major hurdle to direct American action would have to be Congressional approval; in this, both President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles fully agreed. In effect, on April 24, 1954, the Secretary of State informed his French counterpart, Foreign Minister Georges Bidault, that "an act of war can only be effected with authorization of Congress." And it was clear from the very beginning that Congress was highly reluctant, so short after the end of the Korean War, to give approval to another American military operation in Asia.

Already the February 12 statement of Secretary Dulles, which made massive retaliation a household word, had not gone over too well with the Congress. Some of the Senators in both parties who had experience with military problems criticized the Administration for relying on a policy which they felt could not really be applied to what the critics called "Communist proxy wars."²² On February 16, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee heard Undersecretary of State Walter Bedell Smith and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Arthur W. Radford, with regard to the possible ramifications which the new massive retaliation policy might have on American commitments to Indochina. Apparently the Congressional leaders were not reassured by what they heard.

Their worries were further increased by the high-level visits which General Ely had in Washington during his stay (they included a call on the President as well as the almost unheard-of privilege for a foreign officer of sitting in on a meeting of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff. Thus, when at the end of March news reached the United States from Paris that the French in fact considered American intervention as a certainty, the Administration decided to obtain a clear Congressional mandate for the American role within Operation Vulture. On Saturday, April 3, 1954, Secretary Dulles and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other senior officials met with a bipartisan delegation of senior Congressional leaders at the Department of State for a top secret session designed to provide the Congressional leaders with the necessary information for the eventual framing of a joint resolution endorsing a Presidential decision to commit once more American force to military operations in Asia. The Administration spokesman outlined what they considered to be the ultimate consequences of a French defeat in Indochina (Secretary Dulles mentioned the possibility of the United States eventually being forced back all the way to Hawaii) and Admiral Radford admitted that, ultimately, such a spreading commitment might put the United States "in the war."

The effect on the Congressional leaders was immediately unfavorable. According to eye-witnesses, the most telling point was made by the then Minority Leader and now President Lyndon B. Johnson, who argued that, as in Korea, the American commitment to help the French in Indochina would become one supported almost entirely with American blood and treasure. The future President made it clear that he was particularly opposed to any new American military operation which would put the United States in a position where she would have to act alone in support of the

French, without the backing of either the UN or her other traditional allies. That point of view fully prevailed and the Congressional delegation left the conference after having flatly refused to submit to the Congress such a resolution until the Administration was able to present the following guarantees:

1. Any American intervention must be part of an allied coalition including free southeast Asian nations, Britain, and several of the Commonwealth nations;
2. The French must give complete independence to the Indochina States so that the United States would not be put in a position of seeming to support colonialism;
3. The French must agree to stay in the war for the duration.

Those conditions, for all practical purposes, doomed Dien Bien Phu, for it was obviously impossible to fulfill those three requirements (the first of which would have involved immensely complicated negotiations with almost a dozen nations all over the world) before the fortress fell. That this mood was not only held by a small segment of the Congressional leadership was confirmed by an extremely acrimonious debate in the Senate on April 5, which clearly showed that the Senators who were willing to intervene in the Indochina War at the risk of a new confrontation with Red China were a clear minority. To be sure, the Administration still went through the motions of attempting to marshal public support for a commitment to Indochina. On April 7, 1954, in his press conference of that day, President Eisenhower coined the famous "Domino Concept."

"If someone sets up a row of dominoes, and knocks over the first one," the President said, "it is certain that the last one will go over very quickly. It will be the beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences... The loss of Indochina would set off the loss of Burma, of Thailand, of the Malay Peninsula and Indonesia... It would turn the so-called island defenses chain of Japan, Formosa, and the Philippines," Mr. Eisenhower said, "and to the southward it would move in to threaten Australia and New Zealand..."²³

On April 16, 1954, it was the turn of Vice President Richard Nixon to tell the American Society of Newspaper Editors that "If, to avoid further Communist expansion in Asia and Indochina we must take the risk now by

putting our boys in, I think the Executive has to take the politically unpopular decision and do it."

That off-the-record speech, though specifically not cleared for attribution, was immediately "leaked" all over the country and set off such a storm of adverse editorial reaction that within four days the Secretary of State himself, invoking the authority of the President, stated that he thought it would be "unlikely" that American combat troops would be sent to Indochina. And on April 28, Vice President Nixon openly reversed himself and stated that the Administration intended "to avoid sending American troops to fight in Indochina or anywhere else 'if we can.'"

As one later commentator wrote" "Thus, the Red Chinese could read two different views by two very high officials of the Eisenhower Administration... In addition, the Red Chinese obviously had watched the Eisenhower election campaign... The [President] having campaigned on this issue, the Red Chinese did not need to be overly smart to figure it was extremely unlikely Mr. Eisenhower would get the USA into another Far Eastern war in Indochina."

"So, unfazed by the deluge of scolding statements that rained down on their heads from Ike (sic) officials, they kept pushing ahead in Indochina."²⁴

For all practical purposes, the first American-Chinese "confrontation" over Vietnam ended right then and there. To be sure, Dulles himself rationalized his own policy two years later in a directly inspired article in Life magazine of January 16, 1956 which was going to make the word "brinkmanship" a new American household word;²⁵ in which he argued that the relative success of the ensuing Geneva Conference was due to the fact that France and Britain "found themselves able to bargain from Dulles' strength." That point of view of what happened is simply unsustainable by the historical facts. But if the Chinese (then still advised and backed to the hilt by the Soviet Union) had any lingering illusions about the American attitude, that of America's allies would dispel them for good.

Allied Interaction - Britain and France

In Britain, the reins of government were in the hands of the venerable Winston Churchill, then about eighty-five years old. Stalin had died the year before and the Korean War had also ended in 1953. The new Russian

leadership under Malenkov was unsure of itself and showed clear signs of being willing to come to an understanding with the West. The aged British hero and his heir apparent and Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, saw their role (and the crowning achievement of Churchill's long career) in achieving a world-wide detente between East and West. The December 1953 Bermuda Conference between American, British, and French leaders had ended in that direction and brought about an offer to meet with the Soviet Union to discuss outstanding issues, which the Soviet Union accepted, and which led to the February, 1954, Four-Power Conference in Berlin. The Berlin Conference, attended by the Foreign Ministers or Secretaries of the United States, France, Britain, and the Soviet Union, resulted in an agreement to meet at Geneva on April 27, 1954, for a major conference to be attended by all interested powers, to solve both the temporarily settled Korean conflict and the still active Indochina War. That the Western allies would allow themselves to be entrapped into accepting an exact conference date--rather than informal but long drawn-out face-to-face bargaining as had taken place for over two years in Korea--must be laid both at the feet of the French Foreign Minister and at those of Dulles. The French, at home, as the only nation on earth to have been constantly at war since World War II broke out in 1939, were not under considerable pressure to come to terms in Indochina. And in addition, the problem of the ratification of the controversial European Defense Community Treaty loomed large on the French political horizon: It would be far easier for a French government to ram through E. D. C. in the wake of a successfully concluded Indochina cease fire than while the war was still raging--and only the Russians were in a position to lighten the French burden. But conversely, the Russian "price" for a measure of help in settling the Indochina conflict was that France would delay, or even wreck, the chances of European military integration and, hence, of West German rearmament.²⁶

On the American side, there was an almost physical revulsion against being dragged once more through the agony of years of negotiation like those which had taken place at Pan Mun Jom. And, at least in Korea, it was American negotiators who did the bargaining and who had a measure of control on what was taken and given. In the case of Indochina, such influence as America would have over the outcome would be through a series of French musical chair governments; but the final results would still commit the United States politically and engage America's prestige as well. On the side of the Communists, however, the now fixed date for the conference gave them an exact time frame by which to achieve a resounding

victory on the battlefield. That, of course, also had happened in Korea and Dulles correctly foresaw this and warned his French colleague at the Berlin Conference that the French Forces in Indochina would be well advised to prepare themselves for some pretty heavy fighting, if not altogether a general assault.²⁷ As for Great Britain, her unshakable position was that a setback in Indochina was a small price to pay for a general settlement of all outstanding issues between the Soviet bloc and the West and that nothing should be done in the meantime that would jeopardize the chances of the Geneva Conference.

Hence, when Dulles initiated early in April (i. e., after the rebuff of the Congressional leaders) a series of lightning visits to Paris and London in order to whip into shape the alliance demanded by the Congressional leaders at the initiative of Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, he was coldly rebuffed in London. In Anthony Eden's own words:

I cannot see what threat would be sufficiently potent to make China swallow so humiliating a rebuff without any face-saving concession in return. If I am right in this view, the joint warning to China would have no effect, and the coalition would then have to withdraw ignominiously or else embark on war-like action against China.

The British further argued that since the same threat had had little if any effect on Red China's intervention in Korea (and at least in Korea, joint Western action had the full endorsement of the United Nations) such precipitant unilateral action as the American Secretary of State now proposed would not in any way alter the situation in Dien Bien Phu or in the Red River Delta in time to save them from disaster but, on the other hand, might give China a good excuse to invoke its alliance with the Soviet Union and thus precipitate a world war.⁴³

Under those circumstances, it was therefore not surprising that when Dulles attempted to call a conference of would-be participants in a joint military operation in Vietnam late in April in Washington, Britain demonstratively refused to attend. This British reluctance immediately cooled the ardor of the Commonwealth members and doomed the whole project altogether. A personal letter from President Eisenhower to Churchill in which the American President, like his successor in 1967, invoked the historical failures to have halted "Hirohito, Mussolini and Hitler by not

acting in unity and in time," did not change the determination of the British leaders in refusing, in Eden's words, to "endorse a bad policy for the sake of unity." Finally, the French tried to sway London. On April 27, 1954, as Dien Bien Phu was agonizing and as the Western missions already had arrived in Geneva for the first round of the conference on Korea, the French Ambassador to London personally begged Churchill to make at least a non-committal statement which could, in American eyes at least, be construed as an approval of joint action for which neither the United States nor France would request an actual British military participation. But Churchill remained adamant in his refusal. Looking straight at the French Ambassador, the old British leader said: "I have suffered Singapore, Hong Kong, Tobruk; the French will have Dien Bien Phu."

That afternoon Churchill himself told a cheering House of Commons that the British Government was "not prepared to give any undertakings about United Kingdom military action in Indochina in advance of the results of Geneva." There would be no joint action with Britain in Vietnam--at least not at that time.

That left the French. The French, ever since the beginning of the Battle of Dien Bien Phu and their appeal for help to the United States of March 20, had been riding a veritable "roller-coaster" of conflicting policy statements and even more conflicting actions on the part of Washington. For while high administration leaders--and this was clearly reflected both in Congress and in the American press--were trying to persuade their own people that the United States was not about to engage in another war, the French were told at a variety of levels that Operation Vulture in one form or another would be undertaken and, indeed, in Southeast Asia perfectly tangible events pointed that way: Not only were the B-29 bomber wings alerted in Okinawa and at Clark Field and the aircraft carriers put on battle stations for the execution of Operation Vulture, but a high level United States Air Force mission under Lieutenant General Earle E. Partridge, Commander of FEAF, had arrived in Saigon and begun talks with the French Air Force Commander, while the Commanding General of the FEAF Bomber Command, Brigadier General Joseph D. Caldara, actually flew three reconnaissance missions over Dien Bien Phu.²⁹ High level French military contacts in Washington also echoed confidence that an American military intervention of one kind or another would be secured in time to save Dien Bien Phu. No foreign country ever really understands the relationship between the American military and the civilian parts of the

government, and this was probably even more true when the American President was a general, as in the case of Eisenhower. The net result was that the French in Vietnam completely misread the highly tentative military preliminaries in Southeast Asia as a fairly certain guarantee of eventual American military action in their behalf; while Paris, both through the French Embassy in Washington and direct contacts with the incessant stream of high level American officials going through Paris at that time, had become reluctantly convinced that the United States would not intervene after all.

Then came one more incident which must have further confused the French. In the midst of these multi-layered negotiations, on April 14, 1954, Secretary Dulles at least brought up with his French counterpart, in the presence of another high level French official, Ambassador Jean Chauvel, the question as to whether the French would wish to use two small atomic bombs to save Dien Bien Phu. There is no present information available as to whether an American official was witness also when that question was asked, but circumstantial evidence seems to point to the fact that Britain was aware that such a possibility had at least been discussed and on May 4, 1954, at a Parliamentary debate in Paris, the French Prime Minister flatly stated that in previous "military conversations with our Allies all solutions susceptible to improve a situation such as that of Dien Bien Phu had been studied;" and he added that the government had decided to reject those solutions which would have, prior to Geneva Conference, brought about "the risk of generalizing the conflict." There was little question in the mind of the listeners as to what this statement referred to. ³⁰

How much the Chinese knew of all this, and how much exactly they were influenced by what they knew, is of course not yet known. It is, however, obvious that they knew of the deployment of American aircraft carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin; they were also aware through their agents in the Philippines of the state of readiness of the B-29 Bomber Wing at Clark Field--the more so as some of the bombers were said to have been painted over with French Air Force insignia since one of the subvariants of Operation Vulture comprised B-29 strikes flown from Clark Field with mixed French-American crews or with French crews alone. They were also fully aware from their sources in London and through Russian intelligence sources both in Washington and London that Britain was adamant in its refusal of united action in Indochina and the mere perusal of the American

press and of the American Congressional Record reassured them as to the state of mind of the American public. In addition, the American President had repeatedly made it clear since February, 1954, that he would be highly reluctant to involve his country's armed forces in a new war in Asia under almost any conditions. That left only one moderating influence on Peking: the Russians. And the latter had every reason to see Geneva succeed.

Settlement at Geneva

As already had been expected, the Korean part of the Geneva Conference met with early failure and has not been broached again since. It was the Indochina part of the Conference which was to become its key issue. The Korean preliminaries, however, had had one psychological advantage for the Communist negotiators in that it gave the Viet-Minh military commanders in Indochina an additional week to finish off Dien Bien Phu precisely at the very moment when Indochina--that is, mainly Vietnam--would be on the agenda in Geneva. There is a certain amount of internal evidence from Communist Vietnamese sources that the precise coincidence of the final overrunning of the French garrison at Dien Bien Phu and the opening of the Vietnam part of the Geneva Conference on May 8, 1954, were the product of deliberate coordination.

Since the Geneva Conference was to be the first major Chinese Communist excursion into international diplomacy (the only other such excursion had been the brief appearance of a Chinese Communist delegation at the United Nations in 1950), all eyes were turned toward Chou En-lai and his delegation. Not only did the Chinese delegation behave impeccably and adhere strictly to normal diplomatic protocol, but Chou En-lai himself--who, in the 1920's, had studied in France and worked part of the time at the French Berliet diesel plant in Lyons and thus spoke French, made an excellent impression on the other delegations as well as on outside observers.³¹ Whether by habit or design Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov and the Russian delegation most of the time were far more obstreperous in their dealings with the West and far more vigorous in their condemnation of Western policies than the Chinese were. There is no point in this study to take up in detail the whole Geneva Conference. This has been done before, and extensively, by other writers and, in a different context, by this writer. What is important here is to define what differences there were between the overall Communist bloc position and the

specifically Chinese position of the Chou En-lai delegation; and what effect it had on the American delegation, and vice-versa.

All that can be said of the American delegation is that in view of its domestically hard line, it wanted to be associated as little as possible with the whole conference. Contrary to the other foreign ministers who attended throughout the whole conference, Secretary Dulles was completely absent almost from the beginning and the very able Undersecretary of State Walter Bedell Smith, severely plagued by illness, was absent most of the time. This American reluctance deprived the United States of much of the leverage that her intrinsic power would have given her otherwise, and left the overall direction of the Western position to British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. As for the French, the government of Premier Laniel had been defeated by a vote of nonconfidence in the middle of the conference and on June 18, 1954, a new French Prime Minister, Pierre Mendes-France, had come to power. Mendes-France had been a long-standing critic of the Indochina War, was far less conservative than Laniel, and was also known to be hostile to the European Defense Community (EDC). In addition to assuming his position as Prime Minister, Mendes-France also decided to take over the job as Foreign Minister, thus becoming the head of the French delegation at the Geneva Conference. Mendes-France, upon assuming his new position, immediately announced that he gave himself thirty days to achieve peace in Indochina or he would resign and ask the French Parliament to vote the government the necessary powers to send French draftees to Vietnam. (It must be understood that under French law since 1950, the government could not send draftees to fight in overseas wars except by specific legislative approval.) In order to show his determination to do so, Mendes-France ordered that three French divisions stationed in France and Germany be immediately inoculated with tropical vaccinations for possible later service in Indochina, should the conference fail. This sudden show of French determination no doubt had a certain influence on events at Geneva, as no doubt had the deployment of the American aircraft carriers in the South China Sea.

But the statements made in the meantime by high Administration officials in the United States, while again directed at an internal audience, ran at complete cross-purposes with what the West was trying to achieve at Geneva. Thus, four days after the fall of Dien Bien Phu, in what was meant to be a statement reassuring the American public that the strategic balance of power had not been lost because of that defeat, Secretary Dulles

stated over a nationwide television and radio hookup that the Indochina States were "extremely important but if events should lead to their being lost...we would not consider the whole situation hopeless..."³² That statement, to the Chinese and their Vietnamese allies, must have sounded as affirmative a write-off of Indochina as Secretary Acheson's January 1950 speech was with regard to Korea. That view was further reinforced when Dulles made yet another statement on June 8, in which he further emphasized that the United States would not intervene militarily in Indochina and in which (silently passing over the April 3 request for a Congressional resolution) he further declared that "there is no plan to ask Congress to sanction joining an Allied force."³³ In Geneva, both the British and the French were appalled at what they felt was an American stand which could not help but destroy whatever Western bargaining power there was left at Geneva. For all practical purposes, the United States had embarked with regard to the Indochina area on what one observer called a "policy of limited loss."

Chinese Objectives

But what came unexpectedly to the help of the West was a rising disparity between Russian and Chinese objectives. It would be a gross exaggeration to speak at this point of a "beginning" of the Sino-Soviet rift; but there clearly was a difference in priorities. The Russians were mainly interested in Indochina as a bargaining counter to defeat American policies in Europe. Intrinsically, given the strategic capabilities of the USSR in 1954, a Communist victory in Vietnam would, as such, change nothing in Russia's key problem--the rebuilding of German military forces in Europe which promised to be (and indeed turned out that way hardly a decade later) a major political-military factor hard on Russia's doorstep.

To Communist China, the Vietnam problem was politically as well as militarily almost as important as Korea; and perhaps more so. At that stage of Sino-Soviet relations, China knew that she could count on Russian support to defend North Korea and Manchuria, which were close to major supply lines for both countries and enjoyed an excellent communications system. None of this was true in the case of south China. While the expression "soft underbelly" is much overused, it surely would hold true in this case, particularly in case of a conflict with a heavily armed modern seaborne power as the United States. How much this American potential presence in Indochina meant to the Chinese in 1954 at Geneva is best illustrated by an account of Anthony Eden himself:

Whatever the cause, the chief Chinese opposition during the 1954 negotiations at Geneva was to any American military presence, however innocuous in itself, within any territories of the three States of Indochina. The activities of the United States, the Chinese argued, were directed against them and not in defense of the territories which the United States was professing to help.³⁴

This has to be clearly understood, if one wishes to understand the Chinese attitude in this first Indochina crisis. Eden underlines further that at the Geneva Conference, Chou En-lai in person told him one morning (after a stalemate of several weeks) that Red China would accept not only total D. R. V. N. withdrawal from Laos and Cambodia, but would also recognize the legal anti-Communist governments of those States "on condition that there were no American bases in the territories." As Eden further points out, Chou En-lai, surprisingly enough, was even willing to buy the continued presence of French military missions in those countries, in spite of the fact that the French had just fought a bloody 8-year war there and certainly were not popular with either Peking (whom the French had not recognized then and would not until 1964) or with the local anti-French resistance movements. In Eden's words,

... the military presence of the colonial power was to be preferred to that of the Americans, which had to be resisted even to the point of jeopardizing the agreements. I had no doubt then, and have none now [1966], that this attitude was once again evidence of the incurable Chinese conviction that the United States intended a day of reckoning for them in its own time.³⁵

The same theme was to recur in contacts between the Chinese and the French delegation as well. Thus, when it became apparent on July 20, 1954, the day of the signature of the cease-fire agreement, that the United States delegation would probably refuse to join in it, Chou En-lai at the very last minute threatened to refuse to accept the agreements unless the United States formally promised to abide by them.³⁶ The last-minute device of having the United States issue a separate statement promising not to upset the Geneva accords by force, was the result of this.

But already three weeks prior to the signature, the Chinese had taken it upon themselves--whether at Russian behest or not, has never been made clear--to "soften up" the Viet-Minh to accept a cease-fire which in fact granted them far less than their military successes legitimately entitled them to. By early July 1954, French holdings in North Vietnam were reduced to a tight perimeter around Hanoi and Haiphong, which surely would have cracked within weeks. In central Vietnam, French troops were holding on to a shallow beachhead from Dong Hoi, north of the Seventeenth Parallel, to somewhat south of Danang. On the central plateaus, the last remaining heavy French combat units such as Mobile Group 100, had been wiped out and with perhaps a small additional effort the whole plateau area to within 50 miles of Saigon would be in Communist hands in a matter of weeks. Only in the lowlands of south Vietnam (Cochinchina) did the French hold a solid lodgement area--in fact, far more and more securely than the US-GVN Forces in late 1966. Yet, at Geneva, Britain and France were pushing for a cease-fire line which would leave in French hands not only all of Laos and Cambodia, but all of Vietnam up to the Eighteenth Parallel, plus an enclave in the Red River Delta. The original Viet-Minh negotiating position had been the total evacuation by the French of all of North Vietnam and an evacuation of at least the bulk of Central Vietnam all the way to the Thirteenth or even Twelfth Parallel. It was left to the Chinese to bring Ho Chi Minh and his government around to a more conciliatory position.

After a long conversation between Chou En-lai and the new French Prime Minister Mendes-France at Berne, Switzerland, on June 23, 1954, Chou En-lai returned to Peking, with intermediate stops at New Delhi, Rangoon, and South China. It was presumably at Kunming, Yunnan, that on July 2-3, 1954, Chou En-lai met Ho Chi Minh. The published communique made little mention of what had been discussed between Ho and Chou En-lai except that there had been a "full exchange of views" about the Geneva Conference; but subsequent Vietnamese statements showed that there was very little happiness about the results of the talks. Indeed, one week later when the second phase of the Geneva talks resumed, the North Vietnamese suddenly yielded a surprising amount of territory for a French evacuation of the Red River Delta and made other important concessions as well: Instead of obtaining a cease-fire line on the Fourteenth Parallel, the D. R. V. N. had to accept the Seventeenth Parallel, which gave an ample safety margin to the Central Vietnamese capital of Hue and left in non-Communist hands the important transverse road No. 9 connecting Central

Vietnam with Laos; the French were given a full 300 days to evacuate the Haiphong perimeter - a time span which would not only allow them to evacuate much of their movable property from North Vietnam but would also give many Vietnamese a chance of fleeing the Communist zone; and, most importantly, instead of a six-month delay for reunification (which would have totally foreclosed the building up of a viable non-Communist Vietnamese State in the partitioned South), Hanoi now accepted a division for a two-year period.

These were immense concessions made by Ho Chi Minh because both his backers in Moscow and in Peking had achieved at Geneva what they wanted: Russia wanted the dismantling of the EDC and a progressive cleavage between France and the United States; and while the wrecking of the EDC had no long-lasting effects, the refusal of the United States to come to the help of France at the time of Dien Bien Phu provided the first major fissure between Washington and Paris and was to broaden into a seemingly unbridgeable gap both in Europe and in the Far East in the 1960's. But it was China which really achieved her own objectives to the fullest: Not only did she regain, as was the case over the 2,000 years past, a friendly buffer state on her southern frontier, but to all appearances—in view of the provisions against foreign bases in the rest of Indochina—she had cleared from her immediate proximity the threat of an American military presence. And as if to emphasize that what had been achieved at Geneva really represented in Chinese eyes a return to the status quo ante, the CPR, in an agreement with the D. R. V. N., reasserted traditional Chinese interests in the Vietnamese access routes to Yunnan by putting the Yunnan-Hanoi segment of the railroad under a joint Sino-D. R. V. N. administration.

There is little that can be said about the American role at the conference that makes pleasant reading. To many outside observers American diplomatic failures with regard to the Geneva Conference were as disastrous as (and, in their long-range effects, perhaps more so than) the French military defeat at Dien Bien Phu. Perhaps the only direct beneficial side effect of the conference was that on June 5, 1954, a member of the American delegation, Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson, met with a member of the Chinese delegation, Ambassador Wang Ping-nan, who discussed the problem of the repatriation of American prisoners held in Communist China. This was the beginning of diplomatic meetings between America and China which were to go on to this very day, over twelve years and 150 sessions, and without the slightest results.

CHAPTER IV

IMPLICATIONS

With regard to the American-Chinese interaction in the first Indochina crisis, this writer and the reader are in the relatively fortunate position that they are already witnessing the full blossoming-out of the implications written into the failures of Spring 1954.

a. American Implications. On the American side, the obvious conclusion was that a line had to be drawn somewhere and that the Seventeenth Parallel was as good a place as any to call a halt to the progression of Communism in Asia. A strongly anti-Communist South Vietnamese regime in Saigon, under President Ngo Dinh Diem, was put into place with American help and defended against French displeasure as well as internal disapproval. South Vietnam was strongly encouraged to refuse to hold the 1956 reunification elections which had been a part of the 1954 Geneva Agreements. Not only were the elections not held (which, under the circumstances, would have been understandable and could be defended), but even such minor provisions as economic relations between the two zones which, as is the case between the two divided Germanies, could somewhat have softened the wounds of division, were not implemented.

The South Vietnamese Army was modernized and expanded; American advisers took over all training roles and, with American encouragement, the French were eliminated from all involvement in South Vietnam. Thus, with the total weight of South Vietnam's survival now resting on America's shoulders, any further setback in South Vietnam would have been a direct American failure. As a result, when indigenous South Vietnamese insurgents received North Vietnamese help and the whole fragile South Vietnamese State threatened to disintegrate not only from Communist subversion but from internal chaos due to nine years of dictatorship, the United States, mindful of what happened to France a decade earlier, decided to implement "Vulture" after all. The bombing of North Vietnam began February 8, 1965. Within a few months American bombers were flying missions to within a few miles of the Communist Chinese border interdicting supply lines. And, as a decade earlier again, between forty to fifty thousand Chinese workers from railway construction battalions were inside North Vietnam reconstructing road and rail bridges knocked out by American planes. And Chinese flak would often cover them and shoot down American airplanes.

b. Chinese Implications. The Chinese must have come away from Geneva fully convinced that the Americans were the main "devils" of the Western world and that it would be impossible to do business with them in the long run. But they must have also come away with the equally clear impression that Washington was not ready (at least in 1954) to embark upon a war with the CPR. The subsequent settling of the Quemoy crisis must further have convinced them that their estimate was a correct one. In 1955, they embarked upon a fairly extensive economic aid program to North Vietnam, but in July 1956 they seriously disappointed the North Vietnamese by not making an all-out stand for the election promises contained in the 1954 Geneva Settlement. In fact, it is one of the more interesting questions of the whole Vietnam crisis as to why Communist China took this apparently serious violation of the Geneva settlements with a great deal of equanimity. It was, in fact, this equanimity which further encouraged the United States in making an all-out effort to keep non-Communist South Vietnam within the Western fold. But perhaps, like the United States in the Spring of 1954, the Soviet bloc, by mid-1956, was stricken by indecision and dissension. Khrushchev had just begun to reveal the crimes of the Stalin era and the Chinese leadership was both in the throes of its first ideological disagreements abroad and in those of an economic crisis at home.

But the Chinese leaders had not forgotten how the agreements arrived at in Geneva 1954 had later been flaunted. When they returned to the conference table over the Laos crisis in 1962, they proved a great deal more adamant than in 1954 and took no chances on written promises alone. To this day in 1967, the Chinese have virtual control over the northern Laotian province of Phong-Saly and Chinese construction engineers have built a strategic road reaching down from Yunnan into north central Laos. They also compelled the neutralist government of Laos to break with Taiwan (although a Chinese Nationalist consulate continues to function in southern Laos). But here again, Peking was acting in traditionally Chinese fashion rather than in simply Chinese Communist fashion: In 1946 also, Chinese Nationalist forces had occupied northern Laos (and, in fact, the airfield of Dien Bien Phu) and had been very hard to dislodge. To hold on to footholds in northern Laos was just another piece of traditional Chinese buffer state politics.

Since then, American operations both in Laos and in the two Vietnams merely have borne out traditional Chinese fears of foreign intervention in their border areas. It is, thus far, anyone's guess how, and when, the invisible threshold will be passed which will make China feel that she must fight once more, no matter how high the cost, to defend what she considers her national interest.

FOOTNOTES

1. A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia, New York: Vintage Books, 1961, p. 304.
2. A member of Ho Chi Minh's Cabinet who later deserted to the French tells the following story about the crucial meeting when the decision was made to allow the French to return: For several hours, the pro-Chinese and the anti-Chinese Ministers had argued forth and back about the problem. Then Ho Chi Minh suddenly rose, looked at all of them and said: "You fools! Don't you understand what it would mean if the Chinese return now? Colonialism is dead, the French will not be able to stay. But if the Chinese stay on, they will never leave. As far as I am concerned I prefer to smell French sh__ for five years, rather than eat Chinese sh__ for the rest of my whole life!" After that, his Ministers agreed to let the French return and to ask the Chinese to leave.
3. Devillers, Philippe, Histoire du Viet-Nam, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1952, p. 219.
4. Fall, Bernard, "Vietnam's Chinese Problem," Far Eastern Survey, May 1958.
5. "A Chronicle of Principal Events Relating to the Indochina Question," Supplement to the magazine World Culture, Peking, April 23, 1954.
6. Hinton, Harold C., Communist China in World Politics, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966, p. 207.
7. Ibid., p. 208.
8. Fall, Bernard, Street Without Joy (4th Revised Edition), Harrisburg: Stackpole Books, 1964, p. 33. On October 24, 1950, almost at the same time as the attack on the French occurred, Chinese troops threw back American forces from North Korea in one of the costliest American retreats in recent history.
9. Tanham, George, Communist Revolutionary Warfare in Indochina, York: Praeger, 1960, p. 69.

10. Lu Sheng, China's Voice, Hong Kong, 15 June 1953.
11. Hinton, Harold C., China's Relations with Burma and Vietnam, New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1958, p. 27.
12. Gunter Halle, Legion Etrangere, East Berlin: 1952.
13. New York Times, December 29, 1955.
14. Roy, Jules, The Battle of Dien Bien Phu, New York: Harper and Row, 1965, p. 203.
15. Far Eastern Notes, No. 8, May 7, 1954.
16. This account is based on the writer's direct research for his new book Hell in a Very Small Place (New York: Lippincott, 1967), where document is cited in full in Chapter 9.
17. Donovan, Robert J., Eisenhower - The Inside Story, New York: Harper, 1956, p. 262.
18. Eisenhower, Dwight D., Mandate for Change, New York: Signet Books: 1964, p. 409. The reader should be warned against many inaccuracies in the particular chapter quoted, indicating how much even a President depends upon second-hand information.
19. Lancaster, Donald, The Emancipation of French Indochina, London: Oxford University Press, 1960, p. 291, Fn. 1.
20. Hinton, op. cit., p. 238.
21. Interview with Office of Naval History, September 1966.
22. New York Times, February 15, 1954.
23. U.S. News and World Report, 16 April 1954.
24. Washington Post, 21 January 1956.
25. Shepley, James, "How Dulles Averted War."

26. Lancaster, op. cit., p. 290-291.
27. Le Monde, July 1, 1954.
28. Fall, The Two Vietnams, op. cit., p. 229.
29. Based on personal interview with General Caldara, April 1966.
30. Devillers, Philippe, and Lacouture, Jean, La Fin d'une guerre, Paris, Seuil, 1960, p. 112.
31. Chou in fact rented a bus and brought to Geneva his former French fellow workers from the diesel factory.
32. New York Times, May 12, 1954.
33. Ibid., June 9, 1954.
34. Eden, Anthony, Toward Peace in Indochina, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., p. 4.
35. Ibid., p. 5.
36. New York Times, July 20, 1954. Hinton, p. 253, says that China even yielded on the form of the U.S. Declaration.

ANNEX

Chronology

Date	Communist China	United States	Remarks
12 Jan. 50		Acheson defines defense perimeter: Japan, Ryukus, Philippines	*
Feb. 50		U. S. recognizes Bao Dai	*
12 June 50		U. S. aid reaches French. U. S. aid stimulated Chinese to build up VPA.	*
2 Jan 51	2 CC regiments reportedly leave. Canton to aid VM	U. S. arms deliveries mount	
thru yr.	Reports of continuing & increasing Chi. Com. aid to VM	U. S. increases aid	Not necessarily result of CC actions but possible perceived threat is present
6 Jan 52		NOTE: Except as noted below, all US activity in 1952 concerns military aid.	Gen. Juin arrives in D. C. to discuss U. S. aid if China invades
17 Jan 52	Chinese reportedly build air bases on 3 islands off Indochina		

* Denotes Fall's data.

Date	Communist China	United States	Remarks
21 Mar 52	Chi. Com. technicians involved in Indochina. No troops.		
25 Mar 52	Hanson Baldwin sees increased pressure if Korea truce is reached.		
9 Apr 52	French see drop in Chinese shipments to VM		
27 Apr 52	Le Tourneau say French will ask UN aid if Chinese intervene.	Dulles states West should threaten full retaliation if Chinese intervene.	
20 May 52	Chi. Com. supplies to VM seen falling off.		
6 Aug 52	Chinese reportedly move civilians from border areas. No sign of imminent attack.		
8 Dec 52	Peking reportedly starts propaganda drive to assert Indochina in China's sphere of influence.		
Throughout 1953		U. S. statements throughout the year indicate unwillingness to get involved in another Asian war.	*

Date	Communist China	United States	Remarks
4 Feb 53	Military buildup on Hainan		
Apr-May 53	Chinese aid reported continuing		
30 Dec 53		Dulles states US will choose own ground to retaliate if China intervenes	
End 53	China can now release material for use on battlefield in Indochina. Advisors also sent.		*French use threat of Chi. Com. intervention to extract U. S. aid.
12 Jan		Dulles enunciates doctrine of massive retaliation.	*Hinton says this made CPR direct involvement unsafe.
4 Feb 54		Eisenhower confirms presence of US Mil. mission in Indochina.	
7 Feb 54		DOD confirms French to get B-26 bombers and over 200 military technicians	
10 Feb 54		Eisenhower reiterates limited US participation to technicians.	
13 Feb 54			French fear US military forces in war would bring Chi. Com. intervention.

Date	Communist China	United States	Remarks
15 Feb 54	Chi.Com.accuse U. S. of openly intervening		
20 Feb 54	Gen. Navarre reports steady buildup on China southern fron- tier.		
20 Mar 54		Gen. Ely arrives in D. C. Consider Opn "Vulture"	*
29 Mar 54		Dulles relates details of Chi.Com.involve- ment in Indochina and issues warning. Report increasing role of supplies (NYT)	*Ambiguity in US position. Dulles hard line and Eisen- hower soft line.
1 Apr 54		Eisenhower bars general rule on use of US troops. Backs Dulles on united action.	
4 Apr 54	Peking says Dulles "united action" policy will lead to another Korean War		
Mar-Apr 1954		Bomber wing at Clark AFB + carriers alerted for Opn "Vulture"	

Date	Communist China	United States	Remarks
Apr 54	Chinese probably perceive reluctance of US to get involved		*
6 Apr 54		Dulles says Chinese identified at Dien Bien Phu	Partially confirmed by French on 6 Apr. Denied on 7 Apr.
8 Apr 54	Radio Peking scores Dulles charge of intervention.		
9 Apr 54	French charge increased Chi.Com. aid shown at Dien Bien Phu.		
13 Apr 54			Eden urges Dulles to defer warning proposal. Fears consequences for Geneva.
Jun-Jul 54			*China's main objective at Geneva is to eliminate US presence from Geneva.
8 Jun 54		Dulles announces US would not intervene militarily in Indochina.	*
21 Jul 54	Communist China signs Geneva Agreement.	US issues statement that it will not use force to disturb the settlement.	

APPENDIX C

LAOS: 1959-1962

CASE STUDY

LAOS: 1959-1962

by
Suzanne P. Ogden¹

I INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the interaction between the United States (US) and the Chinese People's Republic (CPR) during the 1959-62 crisis in Laos. This case study is complex and confusing for a number of reasons. In the case of the Quemoy-Matsu confrontation of 1958² and in the case of the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962³ the time limits of the crises were clearly indicated by an intense action-reaction pattern between the principal participants, with the Soviet Union (USSR) as a secondary, though important participant. The Korean War--a crisis which only halted with stalemate and long negotiations--was likewise an intense encounter between the US and the CPR, with the Soviet Union clearly influencing events. Laos, however, certainly did not occur in a compressed time span, and reactions tended to be slow and indecisive. One might say that Laos has been a continual trouble spot before and after the so-called crisis period--and one which always has had the potential of erupting into a major crisis. Despite all the agreements reached concerning Laos,⁴ no real solution has yet been found to its problem.

¹ Mr. Suzanne Ogden received her B.A. in Political Science at Cornell University, specializing in Far East and Southeast Asia area studies. She gained proficiency in reading and speaking Chinese from her studies at Yale and the University of Michigan and earned an M.A. in Far Eastern studies at the University of Michigan. Mrs. Ogden is currently working on a PhD in Political Science. Since 1966 she has been political analyst (China and Southeast Asia) for the Office of National Security Studies at the Bendix Aerospace Systems Division. She is a member of the Association for Asian Studies and the National Committee on United States-China Relations.

² Suzanne P. Ogden, Quemoy-Matsu: 1958.(U), (SECRET), Volume III of this study.

³ Franz Mogdis, Sino-Indian Border Conflict: 1962, Appendix D.

⁴ 1954 Geneva Agreement, 1957 Vientiane Agreement, 1962 Geneva Agreement.

In none of the other case studies was it necessary to give major consideration to an internal struggle for power (assuming that Korea consists of two countries, North Korea and South Korea, and that North and South Vietnam as well as Formosa and Mainland China are all independent countries). In Laos, the position of the US depended upon actions of temporary victors in the internal struggle for power and, as it turned out, upon the various orientations of the numerous US agencies operating there. The US also had to worry about internal subversion by the pro-Communist Pathet Lao forces,⁵ or their political arm, the Neo Lao Hak Xat (NLHX),⁶ again a factor not significant in the other cases.⁷

Another distinguishing factor in the Laos case is the difficulty in determining just who was directing the Laotian pro-Communist forces and the opposition to the Laotian governments that the US supported: was it the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), the CPR, the USSR, a combination of two of these, or all three? This complicates the problem, inherent to this particular case study, of delineating the action-reaction process of the United States and China. One thing is clear: the Pathet Lao were receiving directions from the Communist leaders in Hanoi, not acting independently. But whether Hanoi was acting on its own initiative, or on the basis of directives from Peking, Moscow, or both is a complex question. The Soviet Union took the leadership in the Communist bloc in negotiations, and in military support in the form of an airlift. The CPR exerted much influence over the outcome of the Geneva negotiations in 1961-62 and headed most of the propaganda efforts directed at Laos and on behalf of Laos. The DRV contributed much to the initial leadership of the ground action and subversion in

⁵ The Pathet-Lao originally were members of the left-wing of the Free Lao (Lao-Issara) nationalist movement which had sought independence from France. Upon attaining nominal independence in 1949, the non-Communist members of the Lao-Issara (including Souvanna Phouma) returned to the capital, Vientiane, to take over the government. Prince Souphanouvong with his followers finally turned up in North Vietnam and announced the formation of a Pathet-Lao organization in August 1950.

⁶ The NLHX appears as a mass political party (founded in January 1956) but is actually the recruiting organization for the hard-core Phak Khan Ngan (Workers Party)--the nucleus of a true Communist Party in Laos.

⁷ Perhaps India might be called an exception, as Peking was hoping the Indian Communists would side with their 'brothers' in the Chinese Communist Party against Nehru. But such hopes did not materialize.

Laos, since the leaders of the Pathet Lao were in the Communist Party⁸ of the DRV. Moreover, the objectives of each of these three Communist powers in Southeast Asia cannot be overlooked, particularly as their conflicts of interests influenced the position each took toward the Laotian situation. An attempt shall be made, however, to concentrate on the goals and policies of the CPR and how these influenced, and were influenced by, the goals and practices of the USA.

Nor did the US act entirely independently. Its action-reaction pattern was influenced not only by the Communists, but also by its allies in Europe; by those in SEATO, especially Thailand; and by the Laotian rightists. Additionally, US policy was neither consistent nor coordinated. It ranged from Dulles's "bastion against Communism" concept to President Kennedy's acceptance of the need for a neutral and independent Laotian government. US agencies in Laos [the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Programs Evaluation Office (PEO),⁹ and the CIA] generally acted quite independently of each other, making coordination difficult. Naturally this confused Laotian leaders.

The main issues at stake in the struggle over Laos were three: the internal politics of Laos and the position of the NLHX; the relevance of the Geneva agreements of 1954 and the role of the International Control Commission (ICC); and the military power balance in Southeast Asia, particularly the military value of SEATO.

This paper will discuss events in chronological sequence,¹⁰ beginning briefly with the 1954 Geneva Protocol on Indochina and the events from then until 1958. From 1959 to 1962, the US-CPR action-reaction pattern will be carefully recorded, with an accompanying analysis of US military and political-diplomatic policy, its motivations, objectives, and effects. The same will be done for the CPR. A contemporaneous account of the internal

⁸ While referred to in this paper as the Communist Party, the Vietnamese Communist organization is often designated as the Lao Dong Party, or the People's Workers Party.

⁹ Attached to United States Overseas Mission (USOM), the PEO consisted of U.S. military advisors in civilian clothes.

¹⁰ See Annex A for a brief chronology of events, 1959-1962.

Laotian struggle and the roles of the USSR and DRV must also be included to provide a background for viewing US-CPR interaction. Finally, the 1962 Geneva agreements, their aftermath, together with conclusions concerning the significance of the Chinese-American interaction pattern in Laos will be presented.

A. The Geneva Conference, 1954

The Geneva Conference of July 1954 addressed the establishing of a new status quo in Indochina to reflect the then-existing balance of power. The position of the Chinese Communists and the Viet Minh was that since Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos were a 'unified entity' geographically and since they had developed their 'national liberation movements' in coordination, they should be considered as a unit so far as the operation of the International Control Commission was concerned.¹¹ This point, made in 1954, was to become the basis for disagreement from 1959 on, as the entire Communist bloc insisted that the International Control Commission, established by the Geneva Conference in 1954, should not be abolished because, although civil strife had ended in Laos, it had not yet ended in Vietnam. The point was that the peace in Indochina was indivisible.

At Geneva the Communists were willing to compromise on some issues in order to preserve the new status quo in Indochina because of (a) fears of the United States becoming involved on the side of the enemy, (b) Soviet pressures on the Chinese Communists and North Vietnamese to agree, (c) North Vietnamese confidence that they would win in the Vietnamese elections, and (d) the demands of domestic economic construction in North Vietnam and Communist China. Hence, it was for the purpose of the Communist bloc's over-all strategy that the Communists signed the Geneva Accords. Although the Communists were not left the dominant power by the agreements, they were accorded a position in the government which would allow them to carry out subversion of any pro-Western Laotian government. Thus the Communists accepted the stipulation of the Geneva Agreement that the two provinces of Sam Neua and Phong Saly in northern Laos were to be a Pathet Lao-occupied area which would be integrated under the authority of the new central government. Before Geneva, the Pathet Lao activities had had the objective of establishing a 'revolutionary base area.'

11

New China News Agency (NCNA), May 15, 1954.

For this they had 'liberated' the entire province of Sam Neua, much of Xieng Khouang, and part of Luang Prabang and Phong Saly¹²--"a base which borders the free zone of the friendly country of Vietnam," where they were going to build up their armed forces and prepare offensives.¹³ Now the Communists and DRV seemed willing to compromise, reflecting perhaps a temporary shift away from the revolutionary base strategy to a strategy of subversion from within the government--or in Communist terminology, the 'united front from above.' This change in strategy for the Pathet Lao was apparently dictated by the Chinese Communists. They felt that the gains for the Communists at Geneva amounted to a 'major shift in the balance of power in Asia' in favor of the Communists:

The gains to the bloc in terms of purchasing neutralism, denying to the West areas for the future introduction of military strength, and laying the basis for implementing the strategy of the 'area of collective peace' in Southeast Asia (as Chou designated it in his official report on the Geneva conference) were estimated as very high.¹⁴

China's entire policy, as evidenced by Chou En-lai's chief objectives at the Geneva Conference, was enormously influenced by her preoccupation with the exclusion of American military bases on the Asian mainland. At Geneva China's main concern was to secure guarantees that such bases would not be permitted. It even agreed to the continuation of French troops in Indochina, provided the Americans were excluded.¹⁵ Prime Minister Eden and Premier Mendes-France apparently assured Chou En-lai that were Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia neutralized by an armistice at Geneva, these states would certainly not join any planned Southeast Asian alliance,¹⁶ i.e., SEATO. Given China's obsession with an American 'presence' in Southeast Asia and her desire not to become involved in another land war with the United States (like Korea), Peking's willingness to compromise at

¹² See Annex B for a map of Laos.

¹³ Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), May 1, 1953, CCC 1-3, broadcast by Vietnam News Agency on April 24, 1953.

¹⁴ H. B. Freedman, A.M. Halpern, Communist Strategy in Laos (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, June 1960) RM-2561, pp. 4-5.

¹⁵ Arthur J. Dommen, Conflict in Laos (New York: Praeger, 1964), p. 59.

¹⁶ New York Times, July 13, 1954.

Geneva becomes more understandable. (Communist China did not, in fact, participate actively in Laos for more than six years after the Geneva Conference.)

At the time of the Geneva conference the US did not seem to need a military position in Laos to maintain influence in the Far East and Southeast Asia. The Seventh Fleet and American bases in Okinawa and the Philippines provided a solid foundation for US military power, capable of being mobilized readily to meet any contingency.

B. Events Leading up to the 1959 Crisis

In 1955 a national election was held in Laos. It was controlled entirely by the Royal Laotian government. Due to the antagonisms among the various powerful families in office, however, an unstable, non-neutralist government resulted. Until the fall of 1957, the Communist movement and power base was therefore able to grow in the two provinces of northern Laos unmolested by the ineffective national government that was bickering in Vientiane; they were not integrated under the central government as stipulated in the 1954 Geneva agreements.

In 1955, Pathet Lao leaders, in an attempt to gain legal status for their movement, had opened negotiations with the government. These negotiations finally culminated, on November 12, 1957, in the Vientiane Agreements which provided for: (1) a procedure for integrating the Pathet Lao forces with the Royal Lao Army; (2) the transferral of the two northern provinces, held by the Pathet Lao, to the Royal Lao government on the day of the formation of the government; (3) the method for transferring local government into the hands of officials appointed by the central government, some of whom were supposed to be Pathet Lao; and (4) a coalition central government which would include the Pathet Lao. No mention was made of 'neutrality,' however.¹⁷

In May of 1958, national elections were held. The immense popularity of the Pathet Lao in Sam Neua and Phong Saly provinces became evident and brought the Royal Laotian government to an awareness of the dangers of Communist infiltration. Fourteen out of the twenty-one contested seats were won by the NLHX or its allies, the neutralist Santiphab Party. Continual pressure was put on the government to develop a neutralist position.

¹⁷ See text of Vientiane agreements in FBIS, November 15, 1957, III, pp. 1-4 and November 18, 1957, III, pp. 1-4.

Corruption was rampant in Laotian governmental circles. The non-Communist political factions were fragmented into competing units, a factor that contributed to their defeat in the elections. On July 20, 1958, with the excuse that the ICC's duties under the Geneva Agreement had been completed with the holding of national elections in May and the subsequent participation in the government by the NLHX, the Royal Laotian government dismissed the ICC from Laos. This was in order that it could begin to quash Communist influence without interference from the ICC.

On August 18, 1958, Phoui Sananikone became Premier, with a cabinet based on the "Young Turk" Comité pour la Défense des Intérêts Nationaux (CDIN), with a strong pro-Western bias. The Premier considered neutralism a 'necessary evil' --but did not believe neutrality to be necessary on an ideological plane, where he carried out an anti-Communist policy. His neutralism also condoned domestic anti-Communism. For Sananikone, neutralism meant "not to take part in any military alliance."¹⁸ The United States supported the formation of Phoui Sananikone's government, but was very negative toward Pathet Lao participation in it for fear of another "Czechoslovakia." Since the Sananikone cabinet took almost all the actions which later brought about contention with the Communists, many have hypothesized that the Laotian government, and by implication, the US, were responsible for the actions which stimulated Communist reactions.

II HISTORY OF THE CRISIS

A. Events of 1959

In January 1959 the attitude of Peking toward the developing situation in Laos was still benevolent, and her position was still that of a second rather than a principal. By the end of January, it was clear that the issues at stake for the Chinese Communists no longer involved Laos alone. Now the issues included concern for the increasing power of SEATO against communism in Asia. The New China News Agency reported:

¹⁸ FBIS, July 2, 1958, III, pp. 1-2, from a Laotian paper, L'Indépendant, June 17, 1958.

...the extreme pro-American elements in Laos have even disregarded the obligations which the Kingdom of Laos had undertaken under the Geneva agreement and publicly declared that their country is within the 'defense' area of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization and may solicit, whenever necessary, intervention by this aggressive organization. The US propaganda machine has...called vociferously that action be taken by the aggressive (SEATO)...the U.S. imperialists in particular are still engineering, as before, conflicts among the numerous countries in the Afro-Asian region, so as to create pretexts for their intervention.¹⁹

China emphasized even more strongly the allegation of direct US instigation of the Laotian government's actions. According to a statement of Foreign Minister Chen Yi on February 18, a US State Department official had indicated on February 12 that the US agreed with the Laotian government that the Geneva provisions were no longer applicable. Chen Yi said:

This shows that it was under the direction and support of the United States that the Laotian Government openly refused to continue to fulfill the duties and obligations it assumed under the Geneva agreements, and that the aim of the United States is precisely to drag the Kingdom of Laos further into the aggressive Manila bloc and turn Laos into an American military base.²⁰

A speech by Chen Yi on February 19 charged that the US government had introduced a large quantity of arms into Laos, and had sent there large numbers of United States Air Force personnel of Philippine

¹⁹ NCNA, January 21, 1959.

²⁰ Chen Yi's statement, "Refusal of the Government of the Kingdom of Laos to Continue to Implement the Geneva Agreements," as quoted by NCNA, February 18, 1959.

nationality to strengthen the US air base in Laos. Further, he alleged that the US had stepped up construction of strategic highways and of airfields for the use of US military planes. Thus, in Chinese eyes, the Laotian government had repudiated Articles 4 and 5 of the Geneva agreements, which stipulated that Laos was not to receive military aid in any form and not to join in any military alliance or establish military bases on Laotian territory for any foreign power.²¹ The US had actually done almost everything of which Peking accused it. Further, the US had, in 1955, set up a covert military mission in Laos called the Programs Evaluation Office (PEO), which was attached to USOM. PEO was headed by a US Army general who had been officially removed from the active list. The duty of the PEO was to form an army completely staffed and officered by the Lao; no American units were to be introduced so as to stay in accord with the Geneva agreements, which prohibited the introduction of foreign troops into Laos.²² Almost all US economic aid to Laos went to support the 25,000 man Royal Army and was paid in US currency. But, since there were no hard goods to absorb all this extra currency, the US had to initiate a goods import program to prevent inflation. Hundreds of Americans went to Laos under the auspices of the Agency of International Development (AID) to implement this aid program. Whatever the names the US gave its programs in Laos, then, they were ultimately meant for political-military purposes, and were seen as such by the Chinese, the Soviets, and the Vietnamese.²³

Despite increasing interest and worry about what was taking place in Laos, Peking was not ready to go beyond verbal statements. Nor was Hanoi; for though the trend in Laos was moving against Communist interest, the stakes as of February 1959 did not appear great enough to warrant a local war. The NLHX and its military arm, the Pathet Lao, which still had two armed battalions intact and a broad guerrilla network, were operating in Laos. They provided an alternative to overt armed intervention by either the CPR or DRV. Moreover, one battalion of the Pathet Lao held the eastern frontier of Phong Saly, thus providing access to supplies from the DRV and training areas across the frontier at Dien Bien Phu. The forces of the Royal Laotian Government were at least matched by those of the Pathet Lao in all areas and outnumbered in all

²¹ Chen Yi's statement, "The Geneva Agreements Must Not be Scrapped," as reported in Jen-min Jih-pao, February 19, 1959.

²² Dommen, op. cit., p. 102.

²³ As it turned out, the American aid program only increased the gap between the haves and the have-nots, with most of the aid sinking into the capital city of Vientiane. As a result, American aid only augmented grievances against the national government and the US.

previously held Communist areas.²⁴ Another factor restricting Peking's involvement was that up to this time the CPR had been involved in the Taiwan Straits crisis, in which it had only recently been forced to back down. Laos thus had been only a secondary concern during this period. From early March 1959 on, the Chinese became involved in Tibet and the Sino-Indian boundary dispute, and Southeast Asia remained of secondary importance.

Meanwhile, the DRV was engaged in 'socialist construction' and the reorganization of its army. Thus, the Vietnamese, like the Chinese, had vested interests in delaying a confrontation in Laos until they had strengthened their own country. The Communists also wished to keep the NLHX operating as a legal organization. The CPR and DRV thus hoped that external pressures (verbal threats) and a revival of civil war would suffice to bring the government to negotiations with the pro-Communists.²⁵

In March, incursions by 'remnant Chiang Kai-shek troops' operating in Phong Saly and Houi-sai provinces upset the CPR. The Chinese Communists accused them of incursions across China's border areas in Yunnan, and accused Royal Laotian authorities of supporting them. The Laotian government allegedly gave these troops "large quantities of ammunition which had been air-dropped by US-Chiang Kai-shek planes onto Laotian territory in the first half of the year." The Chinese alleged that in December 1958, Laotian authorities had made secret agreements with remnant Chiang troops, allowing them "to use Laos as base for receiving supplies airdropped for them by the US and for harrassing China's border areas." The report concluded by claiming the US was promoting border conflicts so that it would have a pretext for armed intervention by SEATO.²⁶ Nevertheless, Chinese Communist action in Laos remained confined to verbal accusations and threats of Chinese and North Vietnamese intervention in the conflict.

Up until May 1959, the stakes in Laos did not seem to warrant overt intervention by either the Chinese Communists or the Viet Minh. But all the assumptions and conditions upon which the Communists had based their noninterference were abruptly smashed by the acts of the Laotian government in that month. Until May, Peking's and Hanoi's support of the

²⁴ Freedman and Halpern, op. cit., pp. 39-40.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 40.

²⁶ "Under the Instigation of the US the Laotian Authorities Carried Out Provocations Against China in Collusion with the Remnant Chiang Kai-shek Troops," NCNA, March 13, 1959.

NLHX actually worked to the detriment of the pro-Communists by allowing the government to stress its 'foreign' origin and anti-nationalistic character. Support of the CPR and DRV for the NLHX only aggravated internal pressures on the NLHX resulting in the persecution of many of its members and the forced flight of others to the DRV. But Phoui Sananikone's attempt to integrate the two Pathet Lao battalions on May 11 proved to be the turning point. Until then, Peking and Hanoi had thought sharp warnings would suffice to delay the dismantling of the Pathet Lao and buy time for accommodation. Now the DRV and CPR comments were less benevolent, and forcefully directed at the US and SEATO. In a statement on May 18, Chen Yi revived the distinction between Laotian 'lackeys of American imperialism' and the Laotian 'people.' He condemned the government for not carrying out a policy of true neutralism, and accused the US of being behind all the actions to disband and ruin the Pathet Lao forces. He also hinted, though not strongly, at Chinese intervention when he said the CPR "could not look on with indifference" at the actions taken by the Laotian government.²⁷ In this statement the Chinese also stressed that the conflict in Laos was a "civil war" in which the ICC should intervene. Further, if the Laotian conflict were a "civil war," external interference would not be sanctioned. Hence, the Pathet Lao could infiltrate and subvert the government from within Laos without giving the US and SEATO cause to interfere in response to outside Communist interference.

Despite Chen Yi's statement, the perspective from the Communists' side in May 1959 was not one which would encourage them to interfere in Laos. China had lost to the US in its attempted blockade of Quemoy, Soviet support was being even further withdrawn from China,²⁸ and it seemed that SEATO might assert its power in Southeast Asia. China's subsequent hard line toward Laos and precipitation of a crisis with India has been interpreted as a reflection of the fact that China felt its major power status being threatened. This, however, did not necessarily mean "an over-all Chinese plan for military aggression throughout Southeast Asia."²⁹

²⁷ "Statement of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China," NCNA, May 18, 1959.

²⁸ Khrushchev, in his opening speech to the Twenty-first Congress of the CPSU (January 27, 1959), called for an atom-free zone for the Far East so as to avert (atomic) war there. This was further confirmation of China's fears that Soviet aid in China's nuclear development was coming to an end.

²⁹ Freedman and Halpern, op. cit., p. 97.

A. Doak Barnett suggests that Chinese Communist pressures on India and Laos were largely "aberrations from the 'competitive coexistence' line rather than an indication that these tactics had been deliberately abandoned."³⁰

On June 1, 1959, the NLHX presented an ultimatum to the Laotian government. The NLHX said it was willing to settle the conflict then according to the status quo ante bellum; i.e., as of June, 1958, before Souvanna Phouma resigned to permit formation of a new government. This failing, on July 1 the Pathet Lao declared a state of belligerency and stated their objective of making the Royal Government observe both the Geneva and Vientiane agreements. The terms for ending the belligerence would be the surrender of the government and its replacement by a coalition government in which the NLHX and all national minorities would participate. Together, the minorities and the NLHX would control a majority vote in the government. And the NLHX leaders being members of the Communist Party of North Vietnam (the Lao Dong Party), Laos would become the adjunct of the DRV. From an account of events between June 1 and July 1, one can see that the NLHX abandoned its policy of exhortation and moved to a policy of counteraction by force and diplomacy. It is also possible to note that the power of decision within the Pathet Lao had slipped from a group led by Prince Souphanouvong³¹ in Laos to the Communist leadership in Hanoi. Thus the policy of the NLHX increasingly reflected decisions made by the Viet Minh and their seniors in Peking.³²

Fighting broke out between the Royal Laotian government forces and the Communists in the summer and fall of 1959, along the northeastern frontier, across the border from Dien Bien Phu. On July 30, Pathet Lao attacks on both Phong Saly and Luang Prabang failed. This required a shift to protracted war tactics. Heavy support by the Viet Minh would have settled the problem immediately, except for the likely SEATO interaction that would have followed.

This burst of military action may be considered a coordinated Communist reaction by the NLHX and Pathet Lao, the DRV, and the CPR.

³⁰ A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 292.

³¹ Souphanouvong had been the leader of the Pathet Lao forces since their formation.

³² Freedman and Halpern, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

Barnett interprets the renewed outbreak of insurrection by the Pathet Lao, backed by strong moral Chinese support, as a rather desperate response by the Communists to the increasingly effective action taken by the government of Laos in early 1959 to bring the Pathet Lao under control. It is also conceivable that Peking, in the summer of 1959, was less than wholly enthusiastic about Khrushchev's scheduled trip to the US and wished to demonstrate to the world that Communist China's power and claims would have to be taken into consideration before any major Soviet-American moves could be made toward reducing tensions and stabilizing the world situation on the basis of the existing status quo.³³

This interpretation connects Chinese interference and, as will be seen, Soviet inference, in Laos with the developing Sino-Soviet dispute. However, another source has said the Laotian affair seems to have been prepared before the Chinese Communists realized Khrushchev was going to Washington.³⁴ This will be dealt with more fully later. As for the timing of the outburst of activity by the Communists in July 1959, the strategic importance of Laos for China had now become evident. The Chinese Communists (indeed, the entire Communist bloc) began to fear that Laos might become a SEATO base and thus a center for the containment of Chinese efforts in all of Southeast Asia. China realized, however, that she had to regain a position of strength before again bargaining over Indochina, since all negotiations conducted would be to her disadvantage, given the status of Communist power in Laos. The DRV's main preoccupation continued to be South Vietnam and not Laos. Yet, because of the ill-defined and poorly guarded border, it was easier for Hanoi to apply pressure on Laos. And Laos provided the vital corridor for infiltrating South Vietnam.

There are other reasons why in July 1959 the Communists chose to act from a position of force instead of from the now-abandoned tactics of undermining the government through a 'united front from above' or by subversion in the countryside. As has been stated, the basis for such tactics were destroyed when Phoui Sananikone decided to exclude the NLHX from the government and integrated one Pathet Lao battalion into the Royal Army (which later deserted). Forceful action in Southeast Asia at

³³ Barnett, op. cit., p. 293.

³⁴ The New York Times, October 7, 1959.

this time might obstruct any possibility of an East-West rapprochement at the Eisenhower-Khrushchev summit meeting. Additionally, the timing of the Pathet Lao attack was based on tactical considerations: they sought to exploit the advantages of the rainy season, which would inhibit the movement of the larger equipment of the Royal Army and interfere with the all-important air operations of the Royal Lao Air Force, equipped with US planes.³⁵

The CPR hinted at involvement in the Laotian 'civil war' in the summer of 1959. Yet, although they publicly maintained an intransigent legalistic and political position on demands for a coalition government in Laos, from all available information the Chinese Communists took no action toward direct military involvement. They made accusations against the US and demanded that it withdraw its support of the South Vietnamese government and abolish its military bases in both Laos and South Vietnam. Chinese responses to American, Thai, and South Vietnamese statements on the defense of Laos were characterized by anticipation of the worst and by accusing others "of actions that they were expected to take...thereby warning them that counter-measures awaited their contemplated moves."³⁶ In response to the Laotian government's request for UN assistance in mid-August, China said she was prepared to take action to offset any more support to the Laotian government (1) by bringing the Soviet Union into an active role in the UN debate (which succeeded); (2) by tying Laos to Geneva so that it could not appeal to the UN (unsuccessful); and (3) by threatening full-scale war if the UN took action in Laos³⁷ (not implemented).

The evolution of Peking's attitude toward Laos from hand-off-so-long-as-there-are-no-American-bases-there to a barely concealed concern for its own security was in accordance with the increasing doctrinal emphasis in Peking on support for 'national liberation movements' which was becoming manifest in the period 1957-60.³⁸ The Chinese Communists had applied the term 'civil war' to the situation in Laos in May 1959, and had increasingly supported verbally the cause of anti-colonialism, the

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 86-88.

³⁶ Freedman and Halpern, op. cit., p. 122.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 130-134.

³⁸ Dommen, op. cit., p. 135.

colonialists being the Americans. Verbal support was, moreover, backed by the threat of aid to the Pathet Lao in the form of supplies and army 'volunteers,' as in the Korean pattern. Yet, despite their verbal reactions to the unfavorable situation in Laos and despite their threats to commit Chinese 'volunteers' to the conflict, the Chinese Communists took no action which would lead toward greater involvement in Laos and a possible confrontation with the US.

Nevertheless the "bogey of a massive invasion of Laos by Chinese Communist forces" loomed in Washington³⁹ (a fear given credence by the fact that arms found on Pathet Lao prisoners were made in Communist China).⁴⁰ American officials felt that the US might have to engage in a ground campaign in Laos, regardless of the nuclear capabilities of the Seventh Fleet. Hence, Washington set up Task Force 116 on Okinawa, to be ready to move to Laos if necessary (significant as a unilateral commitment of American ground forces to Indochina without first gaining the support of SEATO).⁴¹ On August 11, the US accused the Communists of creating a dangerous situation in Laos, which it considered the prelude to a new Communist offensive in Southeast Asia.⁴² On August 26, the US pledged more aid to Laos within the limits of the Geneva accords, and again linked the CPR and the USSR to the invasion of Laos. At the same time it announced its support for any reasonable approach to achieving a peaceful solution to the problems in Laos.⁴³ On August 27, the US began to airlift emergency military supplies to the Royal Laotian government to help it increase the size of its army.⁴⁴

On August 30, the Pathet Lao, reportedly with support from North Vietnamese regulars, launched an attack from North Vietnam across the border in Sam Neua province. On September 2, the rebels opened a major offensive. Panicked, government troops fled from their posts. Reacting to this new offensive, the US Department of State on September 5 declared it would send more aid in response "to specific requests from the Laotian government for improving its defense position."⁴⁵ If the

⁴¹ Dommen, op. cit., p. 137.

⁴² New York Times, August 12, 1959.

⁴³ New York Times, August 27, 1959.

⁴⁴ New York Times, August 28, 1959.

⁴⁵ "The Situation in Laos," The United States White Paper (Washington, D. C.: Department of State, 1959), p. 23.

DRV, with Chinese and Soviet backing, continued to materially support and augment the invading forces, Washington officials added, the US would support a UN force in Laos. Further, the US sent the first of six C-47 transport planes under an aid program to the Laotian government and moved the Seventh Fleet closer to the Southeast Asian mainland.

That the United States was interested in solving the crisis without direct or major US involvement, however, is evidenced by the official US reaction. The US State Department made it clear that it wanted UN operations stressed and US involvement through SEATO avoided. The US also indicated it preferred for the Laotians to use Thai, UK and/or other non-US aircraft. The US was willing to help if required, but it did not want to serve the ends of those who were trying to make it appear that the US was attempting to promote its own interests in Laos. The US, moreover, demanded that the Laotians present hard evidence supporting their claim that the DRV was responsible for the crisis, even though the US itself was already fairly sure of the validity of their claim.

A UN investigating sub-committee authorized on September 7 arrived in Laos with full US support⁴⁶ on September 15 to determine whether or not external aggression had occurred. The Viet-Lao columns evacuated Sam Neua in record time. What caused the fighting to stop suddenly is debatable. It probably was a result of the indirect US commitment to the defense of the Laotian government, the fear that any outside Communist interference would bring in SEATO forces, and the fear that the UN investigation would find evidence supporting the Laotian government claim of external Communist involvement. Apart from the increase in military stakes which DRV or CPR operations in Laos would imply for the Communists,

...the future of the Geneva agreements, in event of such action, would be hopeless, since an entirely new set of agreements, made on the basis of uncertain future military successes, would be the eventual optimum outcome of such a course of events.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The US preferred that the UN, rather than the US or SEATO, should attend to the Laotian problem.

⁴⁷ Freedman and Halpern, op. cit., p. 118. Emphasis added.

The Chinese, then, only wished to consolidate the gains of 1953-54, as observed in the Geneva Agreements, gains which might be lost by a new large-scale struggle in Southeast Asia. Clearly, then, the Communists wished to limit the war so such an eventuality could not occur. Another reason for the sudden end to the fighting was a possible inability to continue operations strategically since the Communists had been unable either to regain old territory or to produce an "uprising of the masses," in Laos. And according to Maoist theory, when a revolutionary situation is not ripe and/or when a quick victory is not attainable, guerrillas should withdraw, which the Pathet Lao did.

Finally, a reason for the ending of the conflict may have been the international situation. Just as international pressures had influenced the outburst of Pathet Lao militant activities in the first place, they perhaps caused the rebel activity to stop. As a result of Soviet pressure,⁴⁸ according to this theory, the Chinese Communists "resigned themselves to a change of attitude and put a damper on the campaign."⁴⁹ If one considers the implications of the Sino-Soviet competition for influence and leadership in Southeast Asia, however, it is unlikely that Peking would have submitted so willingly, when rebuking the Soviet demands might benefit the Chinese side. It would seem, therefore, that the fighting had stopped for a combination of reasons: the US success (over objections of the USSR) in the UN, the resultant UN investigating subcommittee, the threat of commitment of SEATO to Laos, the US military commitments, Soviet pressure on China, and strategic difficulties in continuing the war. This halt in fighting allowed the Royal Army to conduct limited mopping-up operations.⁵⁰ The situation became stalemated and the UN subcommittee left on October 20, with no evidence that DRV military forces were fighting in Laos, though it had evidence that they had armed the Laotian rebels.

The abruptly started and stopped guerrilla activities in Laos give the impression that Pathet Lao moves were far more than a local undertaking. Very likely an outside Communist power controlled them over-all. Since the Pathet Lao and NLHX leaders were also members of

48 The Soviets applied pressure on the CPR because they felt the Laotian War, which the CPR was supporting, would threaten the success of Khrushchev's trip to the US.

49 Sisouk Na Champassak, Storm Over Laos (New York: Praeger, 1961), p. 93.

50 Freedman and Halpern, op. cit., pp. 144-145.

the Lao Dong Party of the DRV, orders were, at least indirectly, coming from Hanoi. But since Hanoi was one of the weakest and smallest of all the Asian Communist parties, and certainly subject to pressures by the Communist leaders in either Peking or Moscow, it is unlikely that Hanoi was in complete control of operations of the pro-Communists in Laos. Elements of both Soviet and Chinese doctrine appear in the Pathet Lao pattern of movement: the Soviet approach of seizing the government apparatus from within (by participation in the government); and the Chinese approach of "subversive insurgency," emphasizing winning the loyalty of the people, creating a revolutionary situation, and waging guerrilla warfare. It would seem that the 1959-60 interest of Moscow in a rapprochement with the US and its wish to calm any disturbances in Indochina would have excluded it from fomenting Communist activities in Laos, regardless of occasional verbal support for the Pathet Lao. Peking, then, was apparently the source of directives for Pathet Lao and NLHX actions in Laos, as it was for deciding when and to what degree the North Vietnamese would participate. The United States felt strongly that the conflict in Laos was a Bloc effort.⁵¹ But though the US placed the burden of the responsibility on the Soviet Union, this was apparently only a means of pressuring the Soviet Union, which wanted to improve relations with the US, to restrain China, over whom the US had no control.

To summarize the situation at the end of 1959, it would seem that the Pathet Lao had achieved its limited objectives: (1) the destruction of the moral standing of the Sananikone administration, leading to its resignation (because a relatively few guerrilla units had continually routed the government's regular troops); (2) the revelation that the Royal Lao government could not rely on automatic Western support for a 'hard' policy; and (3) the revelation of the flimsy structure of Allied solidarity, the allies having reached no consensus about strategy in Laos, and the UN subcommittee finding no evidence of the 'invasions' which the US had proclaimed.⁵²

B. Events of 1960

The situation at the beginning of 1960 was nearly chaotic. The Communists continued to be intransigent on non-negotiable issues (such as the legality of UN jurisdiction and withdrawal of US military assistance). The

51

For example, in the Laos White Paper the State Department stated that the Communists in Laos were receiving military aid and being directed from Hanoi, Peking, and Moscow, so that they could gain control of Laos.

52

Bernard Fall, "The Laos Tangle," International Journal (Spring 1961), p. 147.

United States, however, was maintaining its equally adamant position of rejecting any coalition government which would include the pro-Communists, and of continuing its division of all Laotians into two classes: pro-Communist and anti-Communist. Americans still hoped to make Laos a "bastion of the free world." Events seemed to be moving in their favor. As already indicated, the Laotian government had eliminated the NLHX from the government, and had improved relations with South Vietnam and Thailand, while rejecting offers of relations with communist countries. Nevertheless, the Pathet Lao forces still waited in the background with a definite "nuisance value."

In January, the Laotian King, Savang Vatthana, named a new cabinet to organize elections. He appointed Kou Abhay as Premier, restoring civilian authority. The elections held in April 1960 were rigged so that the NLHX lost badly.⁵³ The poll areas were patrolled by the anti-Communist Royal Lao Army, and the CIA--a firm supporter of General Phoumi Nosavan, head of the Royal Lao Army--which allegedly helped ensure the election of pro-Western sympathizers (though whether the US ambassador authorized it is questionable). As a result of the elections a new anti-Communist party was formed, backed by 60% of the new National Assembly. Tiao Somsonith, a strong anti-Communist, became premier.

In August, a totally unexpected force suddenly arose against the anti-Communist, pro-American government. Captain Kong Le, a heretofore pro-Western and obedient leader of a crack paratroop unit in Laos, became provoked by the poor treatment of his troops and the corruption in government. On August 5 he and his paratroopers occupied all the major strategic points in the capital. He assumed full military and civilian powers, ousted the anti-Communist government, and asked Prince Souvanna Phouma to head a new government. The offer was accepted on August 15, resulting in a neutralist regime. Captain Kong Le's takeover was a blow to American policy in Laos, for the Patnet Lao backed the new regime, and Kong Le himself shifted to a neutral position which favored Communist participation in the government. Kong Le also announced that he was going to end all US aid, which he felt was going into the wrong hands for the wrong

⁵³ For example, voting places were generally set up in districts where the hold of the Pathet Lao was not strong and/or where it would be hard for those who might be sympathetic to the Communists to get to the polls. (Roswell B. Wing (Chairman), et al., Case Study of US Counterinsurgency Operations in Laos (DDC: Alexandria, Va.), September 1964 (RAC-T-435). The total report is classified SECRET, though this paper refers exclusively to Section A, which is unclassified.

purposes, and that Laos now would only accept aid with 'no strings' attached. At this time the US reportedly informed General Phoumi Nosavan that the US would follow a hands-off policy with respect to any ambitions he nurtured for recapturing Vientiane.⁵⁴ Phoumi nevertheless threatened civil war, accusing Kong Le of exposing Laos to a serious Communist danger.⁵⁵ On September 6, the US announced guarded support to the new Souvanna Phouma government. It thus appeared to be rejecting General Phoumi and his policies.⁵⁶

On September 10, 1960, General Phoumi, together with Prince Boun Om, again attempted to revolt against Prince Souvanna Phouma. The next day the US informed General Phoumi that it would not support him. Hence a three-cornered civil war was the result of Kong Le's coup in August: Kong Le and Souvanna Phouma; Phoumi Nosavan and Prince Boun Om; and the pro-Communist Pathet Lao, whose allegiance to Souvanna Phouma's government was debatable.

Sam Neua city fell to the Pathet Lao on September 29, 1960. Meanwhile the Kong Le forces continued to fight Phoumi Nosavan's forces.⁵⁷ On October 1, Souvanna Phouma pledged that Communism would never be allowed to take over Laos because it would destroy Buddhism.⁵⁸ Clearly, Souvanna Phouma had been forced into the role of "balancer" of the two extremes of right and left.

On October 4, Souvanna Phouma said his government would not yet establish diplomatic relations with the CPR and DRV. Even so, on October 7 the US suspended its military and economic aid to both Phoumi Nosavan and Souvanna Phouma, pending review of the 'confused situation' prevailing in Laos.⁵⁹ In addition to not knowing just who was on whose side in Laos, the US was undoubtedly trying to sway Souvanna Phouma from establishing closer ties with the USSR. To pressure him further, the State Department on October 12 sent former Ambassador Graham Parsons to Laos to convince the Premier to break off negotiations with the Pathet Lao and to negotiate with General Phoumi. The Premier refused to agree to either

⁵⁴ New York Times, August 16, 1960.

⁵⁵ New York Times, August 18, 1960.

⁵⁶ This, however, was only a State Department policy.

⁵⁷ Interesting to note, though Kong Le claimed a victory for the government when the city of Sam Neua fell to the Pathet Lao, Souvanna Phouma seemed uncertain as to whether the government or the Pathet Lao should claim the victory. See the New York Times, September 30, 1960.

⁵⁸ New York Times, October 2, 1960.

⁵⁹ New York Times, October 8, 1960.

of these suggestions. On October 13, A.N. Abramov, the new Soviet ambassador, opportunely arrived in Laos and immediately offered Soviet airlifted aid to the neutralist government to replace cut-off US aid. The Premier immediately established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. With American aid suspended, Souvanna Phouma, grasping for support for his government, turned to the Soviet Union, "in an attempt to find some counterweight not only against General Phoumi but also against the Pathet Lao and their North Vietnamese leaders, without turning to China."⁶⁰ These developments persuaded the US to reconsider its policy. Ambassador Brown, who had considerable rapport with the Premier, told Souvanna Phouma that there was no point in bickering among the non-Communists--the rightists and neutralists--while the Pathet Lao were taking over the country. He proposed that Souvanna agree to US resumption of military aid to General Phoumi in Savannakhet,⁶¹ in return for which the US would resume its cash-grant aid to the Vientiane government. The Premier agreed--with one condition: that none of this military aid would be used against Souvanna Phouma's commander, Kong Le, but only against the Pathet Lao. Souvanna Phouma's agreement to this proposal convinced the American officials that he would never act against his country's best interests.⁶² Hence, the US renewed its aid to both Phoumi Nosavan and Souvanna Phouma.

However, General Phoumi had agreed to nothing. Never an American puppet, he continued to be as menacing as ever toward the Vientiane government. Hence, on November 16 Souvanna Phouma charged the US with illegally supporting Phoumi Nosavan, and announced plans to send good-will missions to the DRV and the CPR. On November 20, the Chinese government issued a statement "supporting the decision of the Laotian Government to establish friendly relations with China" (which included economic and cultural relations, as well as postal and telecommunications services).⁶³ Reportedly the US thereupon again advised General

⁶⁰ Stuart Simonds, "A Renewal of Crisis," in Asian Survey, Vol. IV, No. 1 (January 1964), pp. 680-684.

⁶¹ The US still felt only General Phoumi and the Royal Army could defeat the Pathet Lao forces.

⁶² Dommen, op. cit.

⁶³ Peking Review, Vol. III, No. 48, November 29, 1960, p. 9.

Phoumi against any military attempt to overthrow Souvanna Phouma. As before, the US feared that civil war among the non-Communists would lead to Communist domination, particularly now that China was becoming more actively interested in the area.

On November 23, 1960, the first shipment of Soviet aid to Souvanna Phouma arrived. Also in November, the CPR began sending military supplies to the Pathet Lao rebels.⁶⁴ In this aid, coming from three sides to the three factions in Laos, one can observe how the struggle had become internationalized, with each major power supporting the favored candidate. One can also take it as an indicator of the rivalry between the two Communist powers to gain control of events in Laos without coming into direct conflict. In December, Souvanna Phouma again asked the US to halt arms shipment to rightist forces. The USSR continued to ship gasoline to government forces in Laos; and the CPR sent military engineers to help the Pathet Lao.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, the civil war continued, while Souvanna Phouma vainly sought a cease-fire. By December 9, the neutralist government's troops had subdued left-wing military elements and civilians opposing peace talks with Phoumi Nosavan. But General Phoumi with great personal ambitions, used his military aid from the US to stage a coup d'etat in Vientiane rather than using it to fight the guerrillas in Sam Neua Province. On December 10 Souvanna and a group of his ministers fled to Cambodia as neutralist Kong Le and Phoumi's right-wing factions converged on Vientiane for a showdown. The Soviets immediately took this opportunity to gain commitments from Prince Souvanna Phouma, now thoroughly disenchanted with US policy in Laos. In exchange for Soviet airlifts to help in the resistance against Phoumi Nosavan, Souvanna Phouma agreed to an alliance between Kong Le's troops and the Pathet Lao forces. Were Phoumists (i.e., followers of General Phoumi Nosavan) to capture Vientiane, Kong Le's troops would be able to withdraw into the hinterland with the support of Soviet airlifts. There the Soviet airlift would permit Kong Le to continue fighting the rightists even though he would be cut off from US supplies. The Soviet airlift would also mean weapons and ammunition for the Pathet Lao, with whom Kong Le's neutralists agreed to join, though their allegiance to Souvanna Phouma was

⁶⁴ Communist China (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute), 1960, p. 197.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

still foremost. After further fighting, on December 11 Quinim Polsena, a pro-Communist Minister, seized control of Vientiane from the right-wing forces which had held it the previous day. The USSR flew in arms to the neutralists in Vientiane.

On December 12, the SEATO Council refused to act in Laos. It declared that since all parties involved were Laotians fighting a civil war, SEATO had no right to intervene. In spite of lack of support from SEATO, on December 14 the Phoumists succeeded in again capturing Vientiane, and the King appointed Boun Oum head of a provisional government. As was to be expected, the US supported the new anti-Communist government and renewed military aid to it.⁶⁶ Conditioning the type and amount of military aid on the tactics adopted by pro-Communists, the US not only alienated Souvanna Phouma, but also became committed to a large anti-Communist government.

With the results of the Vientiane battle clear, the CPR showed signs of alarm, issued statements which termed the Laotian situation "very grave,"⁶⁷ and blamed the civil war in Laos on US interference and armed intervention.⁶⁸ On December 21, China's Defense Minister, Lin Piao, demanded a halt to US intervention and aggression in Laos. And on December 28, the CPR for the first time expressed concern for its own security because of the situation in Laos, where rightist forces were being actively supported by US military aid.⁶⁹ Up until the capture of Vientiane by the Phoumists, the Chinese had seemed reluctant to become involved in the Laotian crisis. They had left the initiative to the Soviet Union to airlift supplies to the Kong Le and Pathet Lao troops. Now it seemed as if Peking might increase its involvement.

⁶⁶ In early December 1960 the US had deployed elements of the Seventh Fleet to the South China Sea in order to be ready for any contingency. They were to remain on alert in these waters until May 1961.

⁶⁷ Summary of World Broadcasts, Part III, No. 516, December 16, 1960.

⁶⁸ China Today, Volume V, No. 55, p. 4.

⁶⁹ Summary of World Broadcasts, Part III, No. 525, December 29, 1960.

C. Events of 1961

The battle for Vientiane, by destroying the neutralist middle group led by Souvanna Phouma, had reduced the struggle to a two-way confrontation between the rightists and the Pathet Lao/Kong Le forces. Despite putting a pro-American government in control of the capital, US policy had basically failed in its attempt at containing Communist expansion in Laos. Although there had been no invasion by Communist forces, seven years of subversion had virtually accomplished the equivalent of an invasion. American economic assistance and civic action had achieved little. And American military involvement had expanded from the semi-covert PEO's small "end-use observer" function to complete logistical support of the Royal Laotian forces and total advisory and training assistance.

In the meantime, according to official US sources, the Pathet Lao had associated itself completely with the Viet Minh, "who encadred Pathet Lao tactical units and periodically moved entire RV units (up to seven battalions) into Laos."⁷⁰ Continued Soviet aid had put Kong Le and the Pathet Lao in control of the most important military area of northern Laos, "linked by aircraft and the old Route Coloniale 7... with North Vietnam."⁷¹ Everything was moving against an improvement of the American, anti-Communist position.

By January 1961, the Eastern half of Laos was already firmly in Pathet Lao hands, and the US was concentrating on just keeping the Mekong Valley out of their control, not only to keep Laos from total Communist domination, but also to ease pressure on the Thai government.⁷² The problem was that though the US did not want to lose Laos to the Communists, it did not want to intervene directly. By now the only alternative to US direct intervention or delicate tactical retreat seemed to be support of a coalition government, hoping this would neither involve US troops nor result in the loss of Laos to the Communists.

⁷⁰ Wing, et al., op. cit., pp. A29-30.

⁷¹ Dommen, op. cit., pp. 178-179.

⁷² Ibid., p. 184.

Nevertheless, to all outward appearances, the US continued to support unconditionally the Rightist government. When Prince Boun Oum reported that the Pathet-Lao, allegedly aided by the Communist Chinese and the Viet Minh, had on January 1 captured the strategic air-strip on the Plaine des Jarres and Phong Saly, the US immediately responded by increasing the 'readiness' and 'airlift capability' of American Pacific forces. The US also charged the USSR and the DRV with extensive participation in military operations in Laos--though surprisingly enough, left the CPR out of this accusation.⁷³ Despite the public knowledge of Soviet airdrops, neither American nor other Western military experts found even 'circumstantial' evidence of other outside Communist intervention.

On January 7, 1961, President Eisenhower issued a White Paper on Laos, which showed a sharp change in the direction of US policy. The most important part of the Paper indicated that the US was joining with other free countries to support the independence of Laos "through whatever measures seem most promising." These measures formed the basis on which the US could and would support a Vientiane coalition government including the Pathet Lao, "in the spirit of the Geneva agreement" of 1954.⁷⁴ Despite this conciliatory tone, the US a few days later sent six light but fully armed aircraft to the Phoumists. The planes were to be used to strafe and bomb rebel forces. They were not to be used against Soviet Ilyushin-14's (which were unarmed). The result was a minor escalation in the conflict in order to aid the Rightist government, contrary to the policy the US indicated they were going to pursue in Laos in the White Paper.

The Communist Chinese, through Chou En-lai, of course reacted to this, charging the US with worsening the Laotian crisis.⁷⁵ Souvanna Phouma, still in exile, likewise blamed the US; he termed the Laotian policy of the US a series of 'tragic mistakes,' and accused the US of having plotted with Phoumi Nosavan to overthrow his regime.⁷⁶

⁷³ New York Times, January 2, 1961.

⁷⁴ White Paper on Laos (Washington, D.C.: GPO), January 7, 1961.

⁷⁵ Chou En-lai, in a letter to Norodom Sihanouk, NCNA, January 16, 1961.

⁷⁶ New York Times, January 20, 1961.

On January 20, 1961, John F. Kennedy became President. There followed a distinct change in American policy in Laos. In a news conference soon after taking office, Kennedy stated that the US would like to see Laos peaceful, independent, and 'uncommitted.'⁷⁷

At a Peking rally on February 2 Chinese Communist Foreign Minister Chen Yi offered aid to the 'lawful Souvanna Phouma government' (in exile) and reiterated Chinese support for an international conference on Laos and for the reconvening of the ICC. On February 15, the CPR argued that the ICC had been created to uphold the 1954 Geneva agreements and hence lacked the authority to deal with the present situation in Laos. These views were precisely contrary to the Chinese argument ever since 1954, which contended that the ICC should be reconvened because the peace in Indochina (i.e., Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos) had not yet been achieved. On the following day, in a letter to Norodom Sihanouk, Chou En-lai stated that the CPR did not oppose reactivation of the ICC if that move was preceded by an international conference. The US, on the other hand, demanded that the ICC must show proof of a cease-fire before an international conference could be held. The obvious reason for Peking's reluctance for the ICC to inspect a cease-fire at this time was pro-Communist preparations for a major offensive against the government, to be launched in March.

On March 11, the Pathet Lao launched this offensive in which they totally routed the government forces. The American response to the Laotian Army's failure was to send it even more military aid and technicians. While doing this, Kennedy again declared his support for Laotian independence and neutrality, and clarified the US commitment to a non-Communist Laos.

Kennedy was aware of the Royal Lao Army's weakness and was searching for alternatives to continued support of it. One alternative, however extreme, was commitment of American troops to Laos. But the American supply line would be long and vulnerable, the Communists' short and defensible. Hence seventeen steps toward progressive commitment of American troops were reportedly reviewed, the four major points being that (1) a marine helicopter repair base would be set up in northeast Thailand at Udorn; (2) Task Force 116 on Okinawa, consisting of about 20,000 men,

⁷⁷ The New York Times, January 26, 1961, 10:7.

was to be put on alert; (3) if Task Force 116 subsequently was put into action, it would take all strategic points in Laos; (4) if this were done, then a large area of Laos would need US troops to garrison it.⁷⁸

On March 23, President Kennedy made an important statement of US policy. He alerted the public to the growing seriousness of the Laotian situation and warned that "no one should doubt our resolution" to preserve an independent and neutral Laos. He hinted at the likelihood of American involvement, saying the US with SEATO would weight the "necessary response" were Communist-backed forces to continue their advances. He declared "present armed attacks by externally supported Communists" must cease, and stressed SEATO's obligation to protect Laos even though Laos was not a SEATO member. Finally, he reiterated US support of an international conference after the ICC had reported on a cease-fire.⁷⁹ Not only was Kennedy attempting to enlist public support for his Laotian policy, but he was, one might conclude, notifying Khrushchev of an honorable way out of Laos, to which the Russians were committing resources which they would have preferred to use elsewhere. His policy rested on American support for a joint appeal to both sides in Laos for a cease-fire, a reactivation of the ICC, and an international conference. The British had made such a proposal; the Soviet co-chairman of the Geneva Conference had not yet agreed to it. Meanwhile, there was no denial of reported movements of the US Seventh Fleet units into better defensive positions in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin, and American technicians were flown into Thailand to help service helicopters being used in Laos.

One observer of this firmer stand in American military policy noted that this did not create a "crisis of tension" in the American electorate or in world opinion. Military preparations were advanced quietly and unobtrusively; ships were put to sea and troops alerted. The Soviet Union was informed of these moves in order to show the firm commitment of the US

⁷⁸ Dommen, op. cit., pp. 188-189.

⁷⁹ See Public Papers of the President, 1961 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 214.

and in the hope of persuading Khrushchev to use his influence to stop Viet Minh and Chinese Communist aid to the Pathet Lao.⁸⁰

In a conference a few days later with Kennedy, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko expressed hope for a peaceful solution to the troubles in Laos and backed the proposal for a neutral Laos. Pravda even hinted that the Russian government would agree to a cease-fire before the conference. The US put even more pressure on the Soviets by privately warning them that 'appropriate action' might well include military intervention.⁸¹

On April 1, 1961, Chen Yi clarified the position of the CPR opposing any cease-fire in Laos, whether proposed by the United States or the Soviet Union. He advised the North Vietnamese not to sacrifice their gains in Laos by complying with a cease-fire. He alleged that the US seemed to be more interested in "adding fuel to the fire" by getting ready to "expand the civil war in Laos," than in promoting a cease-fire, since US newspapers had reported that "scores of US warships, several hundred aircraft, and thousands of troops have completed redeployment and entered into a state of war readiness."⁸²

The Soviet Union on April 4, in a special broadcast in only the Vietnamese language, said the Soviet Union did not demand a cease-fire in Laos as a precondition for an international conference. Nevertheless, it went on to say that a cease-fire would help create a favorable atmosphere for the Communists at an international conference. This was another indication of the covert competition between the Chinese and Russians for influence in Southeast Asia, in this case for the allegiance of the North Vietnamese and of the Pathet Lao.

⁸⁰ Dommen, op. cit., p. 191. On March 25, however, Prince Souvanna Phouma declared that aside from USSR aid, which he had requested to support the neutralist Kong Le forces, there had been no Communist intervention. One is tempted to believe his statement as he was once again leaning Westward and was becoming fearful of the Pathet Lao gaining more territory and control. Consequently, he would have no cause to attempt to hide Communist moves in Laos.

⁸¹ New York Times, March 30, 1961, 1:8. Kennedy had referred to "appropriate action" in his speech for the "necessary response" to Communist-backed aggression.

⁸² Jen-min Jih-pao, April 1, 1961. This Chinese statement lends validity to the belief that the Viet Minh were extensively involved in Laos.

The Chinese Communists laid down unacceptable preconditions for a cease-fire. Their demands hindered the Soviet Union in joining the British in an appeal to the rival Laotian factions for a cease-fire. The Chinese had apparently been neither convinced nor frightened by US actions and verbal threats. They still maintained that, were SEATO to intervene, Chinese Communist troops would march into Laos as they had in Korea.⁸³ This statement was, however, China's only hint at committing its own troops to Laos.⁸⁴

Ever since the initial proposal for an international conference, the USSR had seemed vague on the timing of the cease-fire and on the verification of the cease-fire by the ICC. It appears somewhat dubious as to what the Soviet motives were. Perhaps the CPR and the USSR had agreed to disagree publicly, as at this time the Pathet Lao had been having striking successes against the Phoumists, and the Communist bloc was probably not anxious to have the ICC investigating the military situation. On the other hand, the Soviets may have felt unable to commit the Chinese Communists to a cease-fire before the Geneva Conference began. Finally, the attitudes of the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao were equally tenuous. Whatever the case, on April 18, 1961, the USSR agreed to the British suggestion for a 14-power international conference at Geneva; a compromise had been reached. The international conference had been agreed to before a cease-fire prevailed in Laos; but it would not convene until after a cease-fire had become effective.⁸⁵

The next day, with the impending Geneva Conference now a possibility and the likely chance that it might call for an end to all US

⁸³ NCNA, April 2, 1961.

⁸⁴ And even this statement was very vague and conditional, as was a similar one made on April 4, which said if SEATO sent troops [which was most unlikely since France would block any such move] and if Souvanna Phouma requested the CPR to intervene [which he would be very unlikely to do] the CPR "would not remain idle." See NCNA, April 4, 1961.

⁸⁵ This agreement to the British proposal was very possibly linked to the Cuban situation since the Khrushchev statement to Kennedy concerning the problems of Cuba appeared on the same day he agreed to an international conference. The cold war strategy of the USSR at that time was viewed as giving priority to Cuba (and Germany) over Laos.

military assistance to the Royal Laotian Army, Washington decided to enlarge its program to improve the Royal Laotian forces so as to leave Laos with an effective internal security and defense force. Alternatively, if the Geneva talks failed, the Royal Army would better be able to cope with "renewed military operations on an even larger scale."⁸⁶ Hence the US, on April 19, began an acceleration of US military assistance, changing the civilian status of PEO military advisers to that of a uniformed MAAG which could operate more openly. The reaction of both the DRV and the CPR was immediate. The DRV asked the USSR and Great Britain to halt the US plan to send military advisers to the front. The CPR agreed to the British and Soviet proposals to reactivate the ICC, the cease-fire, and the international conference, resulting, for the first time, in Communist bloc unity on the Laotian situation.⁸⁷

At the same time, Peking recognized Souvanna Phouma as the head of the Laotian government, though he was not then in control. The US and Great Britain had so far only recognized Souvanna Phouma as the 'leader of purported neutralist elements.' Now they were forced to reconsider the future status of Souvanna Phouma. One thing upon which they agreed was that any future Laotian government must include members of the incumbent pro-Western government of Prince Boun Oum.

At last, on May 3, a cease-fire was officially proclaimed by the Pathet Lao. The Pathet Lao had already taken over all of the upcountry, leaving only the Mekong Valley in government hands. However, they had not even attempted to take the Mekong area; had they done so, the US might well have intervened. As it was, the announcement of a cease-fire caused an immediate transition in Western policy from military to political means--the latter to be implemented at the Geneva Conference. The US deemed it possible to transform this cease-fire into an acceptable political settlement because Soviet military aid to the Pathet Lao had changed that force into a quasi-regular armed force.⁸⁸ As such it was dependent on Soviet supply instead of local provisions and, consequently, more susceptible to Soviet pressures.

⁸⁶ Wing, op. cit., pp. A30-31.

⁸⁷ Summary of World Broadcasts, Part III, April 28, 1961, p. 625.

⁸⁸ This dependence was temporary, however, and the North Vietnamese immediately set about ending this dependence of the Pathet Lao on modern military aid. See Dommen, op. cit., pp. 200-201.

This was the situation when the Geneva conference began on May 16, 1961. It dragged on for over a year until various pressures forced it to close on July 23, 1962, with the signing of the second Geneva Agreement. Most of the events which occurred during the conference will be covered in the next section on "The Geneva Conference and Agreements."

Almost immediately after the conference opened, it became obvious no consensus was going to be reached, since almost every party attending held an intransigent view of the solution to Laos' problems. Hence the Conference adjourned to permit a summit meeting on June 6-7 between Kennedy and Khrushchev in Vienna. At that meeting a limited accord was reached on Laos. Khrushchev reaffirmed his support for a neutral and independent Laos, and, as we shall see, Kennedy highly valued this support, believing it would be the basis for maintaining peace and neutrality in Laos. Then the Geneva discussions resumed.

III GENEVA CONFERENCE AND AGREEMENTS - MAY 16, 1961 TO JULY 23, 1962

The Geneva Agreements of July 1962 froze the Laos status quo temporarily, helping to avoid a complete defeat of US foreign policy. For, by the time the Agreements were signed, the Pathet Lao had control of a large part of the country. This was, in fact, one of the reasons the US had agreed to the Conference. US policy at the Geneva Conference was probably influenced by the fact that at the Vienna meeting on June 3-4 Khrushchev had apparently convinced Kennedy that the Soviet Union would adhere to an agreement for a neutral and independent Laos. In exchange, the US would give full support to Souvanna Phouma's political program, while it continued to attempt to retain Phoumi Nosavan's good will.

Yet it was never very clear how much control the Soviets exercised over the Pathet Lao or the Chinese. The attempt to neutralize Laos by an international agreement was a calculated risk, because Laos could stay neutral only if neither of the extreme factions within the country attained dominant power and only if all of the great powers refrained from putting troops into Laos.⁸⁹ It was a hazardous step for the Soviet Union since, as co-chairman of the Geneva Conference (along with Great Britain), she was responsible for the implementation of the agreements; and hazardous for the United States because a withdrawal of its advisors from Laos left it

⁸⁹ Dommen, op. cit., p. 287.

open to infiltration by its Communist neighbors, North Vietnam and China. Even if the Soviets had the power to pressure the Pathet Lao, it was unlikely that they would do so until they could be sure that Washington was going to pressure the right-wing Laotian groups to comply with the demands of a coalition government.

It was clear by the spring of 1961 that earlier US policies would have to be abandoned at Geneva. Even the basis for convening the conference had been a negation of most of the former anti-Souvanna and pro-Phoumi positions the US had held. Prior to this the US had repeatedly opposed the reactivation of the ICC, the calling of another international conference on Laos, a Souvanna Phouma coalition government that would include any pro-Communist groups, the withdrawal of American military advisors, and, finally, the exclusion of Laos from SEATO's protective 'umbrella.'⁹⁰ All these major points of contention were conceded before the Geneva Conference began.

The Geneva Agreements declared Laos neutral and called for a coalition government (including four Pathet Lao ministers) headed by Prince Souvanna Phouma, with the Rightists represented by Prince Boun Oum, and the Pathet Lao by Prince Souphanouvong. The agreements forbade foreign military intervention and specifically removed the "protective umbrella" of SEATO from Laos. They also called for the withdrawal of Soviet, North Vietnamese, and American military missions. However, the Geneva agreements did not require the US to end all American assistance. They only prohibited the maintenance of military bases in Laos (of which the US had none anyway) and the presence of foreign military personnel, which the US had to evacuate by the 6th of October. However, seven years of aid and advice to the Royal Lao forces by US military personnel were over.

The largest problem for the Conference to settle was the relationship of the ICC to the Laotian government. It was finally decided that the ICC, by majority decision (2 out of 3) would be able to investigate violations of the Geneva Declaration, but unanimous concurrence was required for all its recommendations and decisions. The Communists were successful in

⁹⁰ Wing, et. al., op. cit., p. A37.

⁹¹ Ibid.

requiring unanimity within the Laotian coalition government in order to initiate an ICC investigation.

The pro-Communist Pathet Lao not only gained a veto over all government actions; it also gained, as a part of the Agreements, a sanctuary in Phong Saly and Sam Neua provinces--next to its sanctuary in North Vietnam. A large contributing factor to the success of the Communists at Geneva was the ineffectiveness of the cease-fire during the period of negotiations. Communist forces made some of their greatest advances during this period, and the flow of supplies from the Soviet Union and the DRV continued.

Within the Conference, progress was difficult because of the obstructionist strategy of Communist representatives and the lack of unanimity of the non-Communists. Prince Boun Oum and General Phoumi Nosavan were intransigent in their views on a coalition government, refusing, among other things, to give up the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior to Souvanna Phouma. There was also the continual inability of the Laotian political factions "to agree on such critical matters as who would represent Laos at the Conference and, toward the end, the formation of a government that could sign final agreements."⁹² Hence, long delays ensued. While the pro-Communists continued to gain power in the countryside, the three Princes negotiated on such questions as "whether, where and when they would meet to discuss the various actions required on Laos" without which decisions the Conference could not proceed.⁹³

During the Conference the Chinese Communist proved intransigent on several major points, especially on an early demand by Chen Yi that SEATO should be abolished. In the end, however, the Chinese did concede most of the major points of contention which the US had not already conceded. The most likely cause for the Chinese acquiescence on several major decisions on Laos was their feeling that nothing mattered so much as to have an international agreement assuring that American Military Missions would not be allowed in Laos.

⁹² Ibid., p. A35.

⁹³ Ibid.

It seems that though the Communists had the military advantage in Laos at the time of Geneva, they really preferred a coalition government to total military victory (or to bargaining at Geneva for total control of the government). China's security could be better secured by a neutral buffer state than by a Communist one that might invite US/SEATO intervention. Assuredly, if the CPR had not dared risk a confrontation with the US over Taiwan, of primary importance to China, it would have been unlikely they would have risked war over the much less important country of Laos.

Another interpretation of why the Chinese Communists and North Vietnamese did not want to commit themselves overtly in Laos (and hence had to concede in negotiations what they could not support militarily) was the attempt by the Pathet Lao to persuade the Laotians that they were "local patriots seeking to eliminate injustices and that it is the United States that is the enemy of the people." Were the Chinese or Viet Minh to launch an attack, it would undoubtedly damage this image, "and defeat at the hands of the Americans would cost them the support of many Asians who are not so much pro-Communists as they are opportunists trying to be on the winning side."⁹⁴

There is another possible reason why the Chinese Communists did not prefer military takeover to a coalition government which included the pro-Communists. A military victory achieved with Soviet and Viet Minh assistance--and without Chinese Communist assistance--would not be desirable to China. Were the Soviets and Viet Minh, separately or together, to gain control over Laos, Soviet leadership would gain ascendancy over the Chinese leadership in Southeast Asia. In the case of the North Vietnamese, a conquest of Laos would mean Ho Chi-minh would be in a position of less dependence on the CPR. Hence, the Chinese Communists may have been quite sincere when they declared their support for a neutral Laos under Souvanna Phouma. But they wanted that neutrality uncontrolled; i.e., vulnerable to subversion and infiltration by themselves.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ New York Times, May 20, 1962, IV, 3:1.

⁹⁵ Brian Crozier,, "Peking and the Laotian Crisis: An Interim Appraisal," in China Quarterly, #7, September 1961, p. 136. The Chinese and Russians both wanted the only international guarantee on Laos to be a declaration that [the neutrality of] that nation would be respected "without any attempt to set up international machinery to supervise such matters as the distribution of economic assistance to Laos," p. 133.

The one Communist power which certainly wanted to get out of its commitments to Laos was the Soviet Union. At the time of the Geneva Conference, Khrushchev seemed to have at least two other foreign policy objectives which weighed more heavily than Laos: an understanding on Germany with the Western powers and a subsequent detente in the USSR's relations with the US that would permit the Russians to divert more capital resources to the lagging sectors of the Soviet economy. Continued involvement in Laos would frustrate the attainment of these objectives.

IV. EVENTS OF 1962

By the beginning of 1962, it was becoming increasingly evident that one of the primary goals of Chinese public statements concerning the situation in Laos had been to present these developments to Hanoi as proof "of the correctness of the militant line in advancing Communist control over the revolutionary movements in the underdeveloped countries." This was an attempt to gain the allegiance of the Viet Minh for the Communist Chinese (in their competition with the Soviets for leadership of the Asian Communist parties). For the Chinese Communists, Geneva was a propaganda forum in which to denounce their enemies and acclaim their own virtues. Assuredly, up to 1962, a reading of the Chinese press could in no way be interpreted to indicate that Laos was a vital issue to China in any sense, especially when compared to such crucial problems as the "Great Leap Forward" and Taiwan.

In 1962, however, Peking withdrew some of its major demands, allowing the Conference to progress to other points that needed to be settled. This may be interpreted as the awakening of the CPR to the importance of Laos to China. It consequently took a greater interest in affecting the outcome in Laos by contributing positively to the negotiations. As mentioned earlier in the section on the Geneva Conference, for various reasons Peking suddenly saw the benefits of a neutralist government in Laos as contrasted to an entirely Communist one, particularly as this would better fulfill its objective of getting the US and SEATO out of that area.

Along with this greater interest in the decisions made at Geneva came greater participation by the Chinese in Laotian affairs, most likely so as to be able to negotiate from strength. On January 13, the NCNA reported that Souvanna Phouma had signed an accord with the CPR to build a road from Yunnan province in China to Phong Saly and to set up air routes into Laos. At the same time a military pact was signed between the Chinese

and Pathet Lao, providing for the supply of arms and ammunition to the latter and the dispatch of Chinese Communist military advisors to Laos when necessary.⁹⁶ Soon the Chinese were sending supplies via the new road to the Pathet Lao in Phong Saly. According to one author,

... it was these supplies which enabled the Communist forces to capture Nam Tha (May 7, 1962) and launch their offensive to the southwest toward the Thai border shortly before the cease-fire was signed on 24 June 1962.⁹⁷

To the US, this increasing amiability between Souvanna Phouma and the Chinese Communists was highly undesirable; for while the Chinese and Pathet Lao were progressing rapidly in gaining further holds in Laos, the negotiations among the leaders of the three Laotian factions were stymied by the refusal of Prince Boun Oum and General Phoumi Nosavan to cooperate in a coalition government. The US attempted to force an accommodation by withholding the \$4 million monthly aid payments to the Royal Laotian Army pending the formation of a unified government. Beginning in February, these payments were suspended until the Phoumists, having been thoroughly routed at the battle of Nam Tha,⁹⁸ finally agreed to a coalition government on June 11, 1962.

In the meantime, the Royal Laotian government had reported 10,000 North Vietnamese troops present in Laos in February, and on March 3, the Chinese Communists were found to have set up a powerful Lao-language radio station in the rebel-held territory of Phong Saly. In March and April the Chinese Communists allegedly began even greater participation. But the sources of such reported involvement were not noted for their accuracy.

⁹⁶ Colonel Edwin F. Black, "Laos: A Case Study of Communist Strategy," Military Review (December 1964), pp. 49-59.

⁹⁷ Communist China, 1962, (Union Research: Hongkong), Vol. II, p. 146.

⁹⁸ There are two interpretations of why the battle of Nam Tha took place. One is that Phoumi committed his troops to Nam Tha in a last ditch effort to thwart a settlement at Geneva. Alarmed by this development, as well as the announcement in mid-May that US troops were to be sent to Thailand, the CPR began supplying the Pathet Lao in Nam Tha. The Phoumi regime, on the other hand, claimed that Communist Chinese troops were in Nam Tha and that he therefore committed his troops there.

On April 26, the Vientiane radio alleged that a Chinese battalion marching toward Nam Tha had been involved in numerous clashes with Phoumi's troops. Additionally, this Chinese battalion was said to be equipped with heavy mortars.⁹⁹ US military advisors serving with the Royal Laotian forces concurrently reported that "supplies and reinforcements for the Pathet Lao had been crossing the border from bases in China."¹⁰⁰ American intelligence agencies, after analyzing all the reports from the Laotian-Chinese border area, were convinced that the Chinese had now established control in a zone extending 100 miles into the Laotian provinces of Nam Tha and Phong Saly.¹⁰¹

Belief that the Chinese Communists were invading Laos may account for the panicky flight of the Royal Laotian troops from a vastly inferior Pathet Lao force at Nam Tha.¹⁰² Massive Chinese Communist intervention was unproven, but it was still very likely that they had made supply bases in China available to the Pathet Lao.

The importance which the Chinese now attached to events in Laos is further substantiated by the very high-ranking people whom the Chinese appointed to posts in the newly established consulate-general in Phong Saly.¹⁰³ Regardless of whether the Chinese were actually intervening militarily and politically in Laos, developments showed "that the Chinese Communists [were] preparing for all eventualities." A road-building program, to which the Chinese had acquired rights, assuredly would be developed if direct ground force intervention, such as occurred in Korea, ever was deemed necessary. The Chinese also undertook an enormous military build-up in the province of Yunnan. And setting up a consulate-general had established a Chinese 'presence' in Laos so that further economic and cultural, not to mention political, programs could easily be initiated.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Summary of World Broadcasts, III, Far East, No. 930, April 28, 1962.

¹⁰⁰ New York Times, May 13, 1962.

¹⁰¹ Crozier, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Note also that in April, 1962, the CPR for the first time assumed formal obligations towards Laos, in response to requests made by Souvanna Phouma on his trip to Peking. See Crozier, p. 119.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 122.

Reacting to these events, the US decided to try to compel the creation of a coalition government by making the Communists believe any further moves would be met by extensive American military power. To implement this decision, on May 12 Kennedy ordered US navy, air and ground forces, including 1800 Marines, to move towards the Indochina peninsula. On May 18, the first contingent of US marines arrived in Thailand, bringing the total there to 5000-6000 US troops.¹⁰⁵ Additionally, a Seventh Fleet task force had been sent to the area.¹⁰⁶

On June 11, subsequent to US pressures on both the Rightists and Leftists, the three factions in Laos finally reached accord on the formation of a coalition government. The Laotian government's neutrality statement was duly submitted to the Geneva conference and approved by the major Western and Communist nations. The Soviet airlift and the American MAAG were withdrawn from Laos by October 1962. Yet even before the year was up, the Pathet Lao had returned to subversive activities, especially in their drive to have neutralist troops defect; North Vietnamese troops were reported as remaining in Laos in defiance of the Geneva agreements; and Chinese Communist road workers and technicians were still present in Northern Laos.

V COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE LAOTIAN CRISIS

Contrary to popular opinion concerning the worth of Communist pronouncements, particularly those from the CPR, it is the belief of at least one author that the Communists intend seriously to communicate with the opposition via these public statements and not use them for propaganda alone.¹⁰⁷ Unfortunately, Vientiane considered them mere rhetoric. The Communists blundered by not making it clear to Vientiane what they would consider the 'point of no return' in terms of how far the Laotian government

¹⁰⁵ This, however, was a move made at the request of the Thai government. The US responded in order to assure the Thai of the US commitment not to let Communism take over in Laos, so that the Thai would have no fear for their own security.

¹⁰⁶ New York Times, May 17, 1962.

¹⁰⁷ Freedman and Halpern, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

could move toward SEATO; how much the government could align with the US position; the amount of military aid which would be considered non-provocative; and how much loss of status of its protege, the NLHX, and its military arm, the Pathet Lao, Hanoi would accept before replying with punitive action.¹⁰⁸

It would seem fairly certain that even if the Laotian government had been aware it was risking open conflict with the Pathet Lao, the North Vietnamese, and possibly even the Soviets and Chinese, Communist behavior until mid-May 1959 did not seem sufficiently belligerent to deter the government from carrying out its contemplated actions to eliminate Communist influence from Laos. Communist reactions to the Laotian government's repressive actions were limited to verbal condemnations and warnings. They seemed less a prelude to a full-scale invasion by the Chinese than an attempt to force the Laotian government to negotiate. As a result, the Laotian government felt free to continue its chosen course.¹⁰⁹

The US also failed in communicating intentions to the Royal Laotian government, a failure due largely to the fact that neither the Laotians nor our own allies knew who really spoke for the US--the CIA, the military, the Ambassador, or AID officials. The Laotian government apparently expected US military support and seemed to assume that it would reach vast proportions when crises which the government precipitated occurred. Consequently, the Laotian government failed to consolidate its internal position and power by socio-economic reforms; instead it focused on repression of the opposition. This policy inevitably led to the CPR and DRV, remarkably subdued until 1959, reacting openly.¹¹⁰ Once again, by not effectively indicating commitments--and lack of commitments--to the Laotian government, the Communists and the US caused it to act in a way which, had it known the real state of affairs on both sides, would have been irrational and risky, but which, under the vague circumstances, seemed a good opportunity to gain more power.

The tensions over Laos between the US and the CPR stemmed more from mutual misinterpretations and mutual suspicions than from logical responses to actions of the other side and deliberate calculations. One such misinterpretation might have been China's apparent belief that the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 51.

¹¹⁰ Fall, op. cit., pp. 143-144.

US planned to establish a base in Laos, and her consequent decision to encourage the North Vietnamese to create disturbances to frustrate such intentions. And from what was said previously, one can imagine that misinterpretation also led both the US and the CPR into generally poor evaluations of what was actually going on.¹¹¹

It would thus seem that a successful settlement of the problems in Laos will depend largely on the ability of the US to communicate to the CPR and the DRV that it does not intend to establish a military base there, but that it has definite long-range commitments and will reply with military force to any future Communist encroachments there.¹¹²

A real problem of communications exists between the US and the Chinese People's Republic, the result of ineffective channels of communications and a misreading of each other's statements. Except for infrequent ambassadorial talks in Warsaw, the need to communicate directly with the CPR is disregarded. Instead the US concentrates on those problem areas around the CPR in which the Chinese have played a role (Laos, Taiwan, Vietnam, Korea, India). The advantages of more positive means of communication with the CPR instead of indirectly in periods of crisis and tension seem obvious. The difficulties to be surmounted in solving this communication problem are, of course, numerous. It would seem most beneficial to communicate both military and political intentions more forcefully and make commitments more credible so that there may be no mistake in interpreting intentions. It should be noted, however, that until October 1962,

¹¹¹ For example, the continual accusations by the Boun Oum government that the CPR and DRV were invading Laos.

¹¹² Eric Pace, "Laos: Continuing Crisis," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 1, (October 1964), p. 74.

when the Soviet Union stopped its airdrops (and the US removed its troops from Laos) in accordance with the Geneva 1962 agreement, almost all the communications from the US--appeals, threats, warnings, proposals--were directed to the USSR, and not to the CPR. This was not only because there were channels of communication established between the USA and the USSR but also because until then almost all the known military involvement was Soviet, not Chinese.

VI CONCLUSIONS

The Laotian war was an unconventional war of subversion, with the US, North Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union supporting various factions in the country. It was a limited conflict because of the limited objectives set by each of the major powers which became indirectly involved. However, had the US not changed its position from support of an anti-Communist government to support of a neutral government, it is quite possible the war would have escalated. As it was, both sides ultimately limited their goals to the establishment of a buffer state. For the Communists this precluded the spread of pro-American military dictatorship to Laos. For the West it lessened the danger of Communism spreading to Thailand and South Vietnam. In other words, each party sought to eliminate its opponents' influence, even at the cost of restricting its own influence severely.

It was the US-supported right-wing, anti-Communist government which deposed the neutralist regime called for in the Geneva 1954 accords, and initiated the actions that brought the Communists into the conflict. Were it not for the actions of the Phoui Sananikone government in 1958-1959, there is reason to believe that outside Communist powers would never have entered the fray, since they already had what they wanted in the Geneva accords. The Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic had enough troubles elsewhere and were not anxious to become involved in Laos. However, the Laotian government threatened to negate the advantages the Communists had gained in the Geneva accords by refusing to allow the pro-Communists to participate in a coalition government and by suppressing the NLHX and Pathet Lao. Hence, the Communists were forced to turn from a policy of internal influence in the government to subversion and attack of the government forces. The US policy of polarizing all Laotians as Communists or anti-Communists had thus made Laos the object of an international power contest.

After the Soviet Union established its airlift and the North Vietnamese provided increased ground support, the US began to modify its extreme position,

which had become untenable because of the effectiveness of outside Communist support. With the signing of the 1962 Geneva accords, the Communists felt certain they would be able to achieve their limited objectives in Laos: (1) Communist representatives could maintain leverage within a coalition government; (2) Pathet Lao forces with their 'revolutionary base' had an even stronger hold than before the US interfered, now controlling two-thirds of Laos as opposed to the less than one-third they were believed to control in 1954; and (3) the US was forced out of Laos and SEATO's intervention was thwarted. (And, unlike in 1954, the US was now a signatory to the treaty which guaranteed neutralism.) With these three objectives secured, the Communists had won their more general goal of continuity of the status quo established in the Geneva 1954 accords, which had put the Communists in a good position to subvert the government in Laos, thereby giving them a gateway to all of Southeast Asia.

When later the Communists lost this internal leverage on the government, the Communists again left the government and turned to open assault on the government. But the Soviet Union had obtained its limited objectives and was anxious not to intervene again in the Laos tangle, now that it felt it had proven the Chinese incorrect in their accusation that the Soviets did not support 'wars of national liberation';¹¹³ they had Cuba and Germany to worry about, and they still sought a detente with the US. Yet, though the USSR probably preferred to see the structure of the Geneva Agreements preserved so as to keep China in check, at least verbally they could not appear to be less the champion of the Pathet Lao and Viet Minh than were the Chinese. The North Vietnamese had also achieved their limited objectives: that neither the US nor SEATO should dominate Laos; and that the Communists should control the areas where the North Vietnamese crossed from Laos to South Vietnam. The Viet Minh had only been willing to fight hard enough to keep their transit base secure--no more and no less.

¹¹³ It is nevertheless confounding that the Soviets never said anything about the back seat the Chinese Communists took in the support of the Laotian pro-Communists. Another interpretation of Soviet involvement finds it a natural application of Soviet theory. The Soviets could be expected to give cautious support to any cause which would serve to erode US power anywhere in the world as long as it contained low risks.

The Chinese Communists had always considered Laos a secondary matter, and had maneuvered the Russians into providing at least as much material support as they did. This rather surprising indifference probably reflected China's realization of its limited capability and fear of direct US intervention. Since 1962, however, the CPR, together with the DRV, have taken the major roles of direct material and moral assistance to the Pathet Lao.¹¹⁴

American involvement in support of the right-wing elements may have contributed to a polarization of forces and resulted in the attainment of much more strength and solidarity (political and military) for the Pathet Lao after 1958. It may also have forced the Pathet Lao into greater dependence on the North Vietnamese to hold their position in Laos. And US actions were answered by Soviet aid, which strengthened the Pathet Lao. At best, the outcome of the US policy in Laos was to place "a nearly unsupportable burden on US efforts to defend Thailand and South Vietnam. At worst, the 'neutralist' arrangement in Laos could provide the Communists with a springboard for the piecemeal conquest of mainland Southeast Asia."¹¹⁵ But the US hoped that the Geneva Agreement would at least guarantee that Communism could not advance any further in Laos. The settlement also allowed the US to get out of what it feared might become war with the Chinese Communists or the USSR.

It may be concluded that the partial failure of US policy in Laos lay in the structure of that policy:

- (1) The US did not exploit the force of nationalism in Laos, which the Viet Minh did.
- (2) Washington maintained rigidity in its policy-making approach. The US did not take any opportunity to communicate with Ho Chi Minh through diplomatic channels or to restrain him.¹¹⁶
- (3) The American economic aid program was ill-suited for and ineffective in such a backward country. In the long run it exacerbated already-existing disparities and local antagonisms, such as existed between the capital and the countryside.

¹¹⁴ This corresponds with China's recovery from the economic chaos caused by the failure of the Great Leap. This reemergence is also reflected in the CPR's renewed activity in Africa and the Sino-Indian border area.

¹¹⁵ Frank N. Trager, "Laos and the Defense of Southeast Asia," in Orbis, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Fall 1963), p. 550.

¹¹⁶ Dommen, op. cit., p. 269.

- (4) In a strategic sense, the US was too concerned by the 'bogey' of Chinese and North Vietnamese military offensives, resulting in a poor programming of US aid to Laos. As one American scholar has noted:

Our network of military pacts, and even our assistance programs, obviously did not fully solve the problems of guaranteeing stability and security in these areas. In fact, except for a brief period during China's limited attack on India at the end of 1962, it seemed clear that the main danger now was not, as had been believed in the early 1950's, that masses of Chinese military forces would cross into their neighbors' territory; rather, it was that indigenous revolutionary forces backed by indirect Chinese support might seize power in internal struggles.¹¹⁷

As a result, US strategic striking power and nuclear capabilities were likewise limited in their effectiveness and relevance to the Laotian situation.

- (5) The problems of the US 'Country Team' in Laos and the lack of coordination and cooperation among the various agencies which composed it caused innumerable errors and poor decisions in Laos.
- (6) Finally, the US failed "to translate the threat of military power into a valid check" on the North Vietnamese leaders. Consequently, the Vietnamese felt free to continue to act in Laos as they pleased, making sure that such action did not cross the line of "overt aggression."¹¹⁸

Since the signing of the 1962 Geneva agreements, the US policy-makers have been attempting to minimize the effects of these mistakes in US policy structure, while the North Vietnamese and Chinese Communists have been trying to maximize them.¹¹⁹ There has been a total victory for no one in Laos.

¹¹⁷ Robert Blum, The United States and China in World Affairs, edited by A. Doak Barnett (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), pp. 160-161, emphasis added.

¹¹⁸ Dommen, op. cit., p. 280.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

ANNEX A

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS, 1959-1962

Date	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laotian Govt.
January 1959				
January 14				Premier Sananikone declared need for ICC ended permanently. Premier reorganized Laotian cabinet to exclude both NLHX and neutralists; obtained mandate to rule for one year without reference to National Assembly.
January 20	Warned Lao Government against further actions vs. DRV and pro-Communists; demanded complete neutralization in accord with Geneva agreements			
February 11				Premier rejected any possibility of a compromise on heretofore stated policies.
February 18	Chen Yi said State Department official on February 12 agreed with Government of Laos that Geneva provisions no longer applicable and that US now free to establish a military mission in Laos.			
February 19	Chen Yi said US Government has introduced large amount of arms into Laos.			
March 12	Incursions across CPR borders by Chiang K'ai-shek troops reported; accused US-Chiang planes of air-dropping these troops, ammunition; said US promoting border conflict so will have pretext for bringing in armed intervention of SEATO.			
May 11				Sananikone tried to enforce Vientiane Agreement of 1957 to integrate Pathet Lao forces into Royal Lao Army.

Date 1959	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam(DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laotian Govt.
May 16				Laotian Government announced events of May 11.
May 18	Comments less benevolent; directed at US and SEATO; accused US of being behind all actions to ruin PL forces; hinted (though not strongly), at Chinese intervention because of Laotian Government's actions.			
June 1			NLHX presented ultimatum to govern- ment to settle conflict according to <u>status quo ante</u> (failed).	
July 1			Pathet Lao declared state of belli- gerence and state their war ob- jectives.	
July 30	Strong moral backing for Pathet Lao attacks, but no evidence of material aid.		PL attacked Phong Saly and Luang Prabang--abortive. Shifted to protracted war tactics.	
August		US set up Task Force 116 on Okinawa to be ready to move to Laos if necessary.		
August 11		US accused Communists of creating a dangerous situation in Laos.		
August 26		Pledged more aid to Laos within limits of Geneva; again linked CPR and USSR to invasion of Laos.		
August 27		Began to airlift emergency mili- tary supplies to Laotian Govt. to help it increase size of army.		
August 31			PL with support of N. Vietnamese (reportedly) launched offensive in Sam Neua.	

Date	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laotian Government
1959-60				
September 2				
September 5		Sent first of six C-47 transport planes to Lao government; 7th Fleet moved closer to Laos.	PL opened major offensive; government troops fled.	
September 15		UN subcommittee arrived in Laos -- to determine if it is case of external aggression.		
October 20		UN subcommittee left stalemate; no evidence of DRV military forces fighting in Laos.	Fighting stopped immediately.	
January 1960				King Savang Vatthana named new cabinet to organize elections; appointed Kou Abhay as Premier, cabinet to organize elections.
April				Rigged so that NLHX lost badly; Tiao Somsonith became Premier; organized anti-Communist govt.
August 5				Captain Kong Le coup in Vientiane; ousted anti-Communist government.
August 15		US reevaluated policy toward Laos; reportedly told P. Nosavan that US would not support his personal ambitions for recapturing Vientiane.		S. Phouma new head of government; results in neutral regime.
September 6		Guarded support for new S. Phouma government.		
September 10				
September 11	Officially informed Phouma Nosavan that US would not support him vs. S. Phouma.			P. Nosavan and B. Oum attempted revolt against S. Phouma.

Date 1960	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam(DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laoian Government
September 13		US 7th Fleet alerted and carrier based force dispatched of a marine landing team to patrol South China Sea.		
September 20			P.L.reported they suspended unilateral activity in N. Laos.	
September 29			Sam Neua City fell to P. L.	Kong Le forces continued to fight General Phouma's forces.
October 1				S. Phouma said Communism would never be allowed to take over Laos.
October 7		Suspended military aid and economic funds both to General Phoumi and S. Phouma, pending review of "confused situation" in Laos.		
October 12		Parsons tried to convince S. Phouma to break off negotia- tions of P. L. and to negotiate with General Phoumi.		S. Phouma refused to agree to Parson's conditions (of abandoning neutrality).
October 13			New Soviet Ambassador Abramov to Laos offered Soviet aid to neutral- ist government to replace cut-off US aid.	S. Phouma accepted Russian offer.
?		Ambassador Brown convinced S. Phouma to let US resume aid both to his government and General Phoumi. US said its aid to General would not be used vs. Lao government.		S. Phouma accepted US offer providing General Phoumi would not use aid vs. Lao government.
November 16				General Phoumi group threatening Lao government; S. Phouma charged US with illegally supporting Gen. Phoumi; S. Phouma announced good will missions to DRV and CPR

Date	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laotian Government
November 28	Chinese government issued statement supporting Lao government's decision to establish friendly relations with China.			
November 23			First shipment of Soviet aid to Lao govt. arrived (gas).	
November ?	Began sending military supplies to PL rebels.			
December 9				Neutralist govt. troops subdued left-wing military elements and civilians opposing peace talks with P. Nosavan.
December 10			Soviets took opportunity arising from rightist coup to gain commitments from Premier S. Phouma; agreed to alliance between Kong Le's troops (reut) and PL forces in exchange for Soviet airlift to aid neutralists.	
December 14	CPR showed signs of alarm at Rightist takeover in Vientiane.	US immediately supported new anti-Communist government and renews military aid to it.	USSR supported (by Soviet airlift) the retreat of Kong Le forces.	Phoumi Nosavan captured Vientiane from Kong Le forces; latter fled
December 21	Lin Piao demanded halt to US agreement for intervention in Laos.			
December 28	CPR for first time expressed concern for own security because of situation in Laos.			
1961 January 1				Boun Oum reported PLA aided by CC and DRV have captured strategic airstrip on Plaine des Jarres and Phong Saly Province.

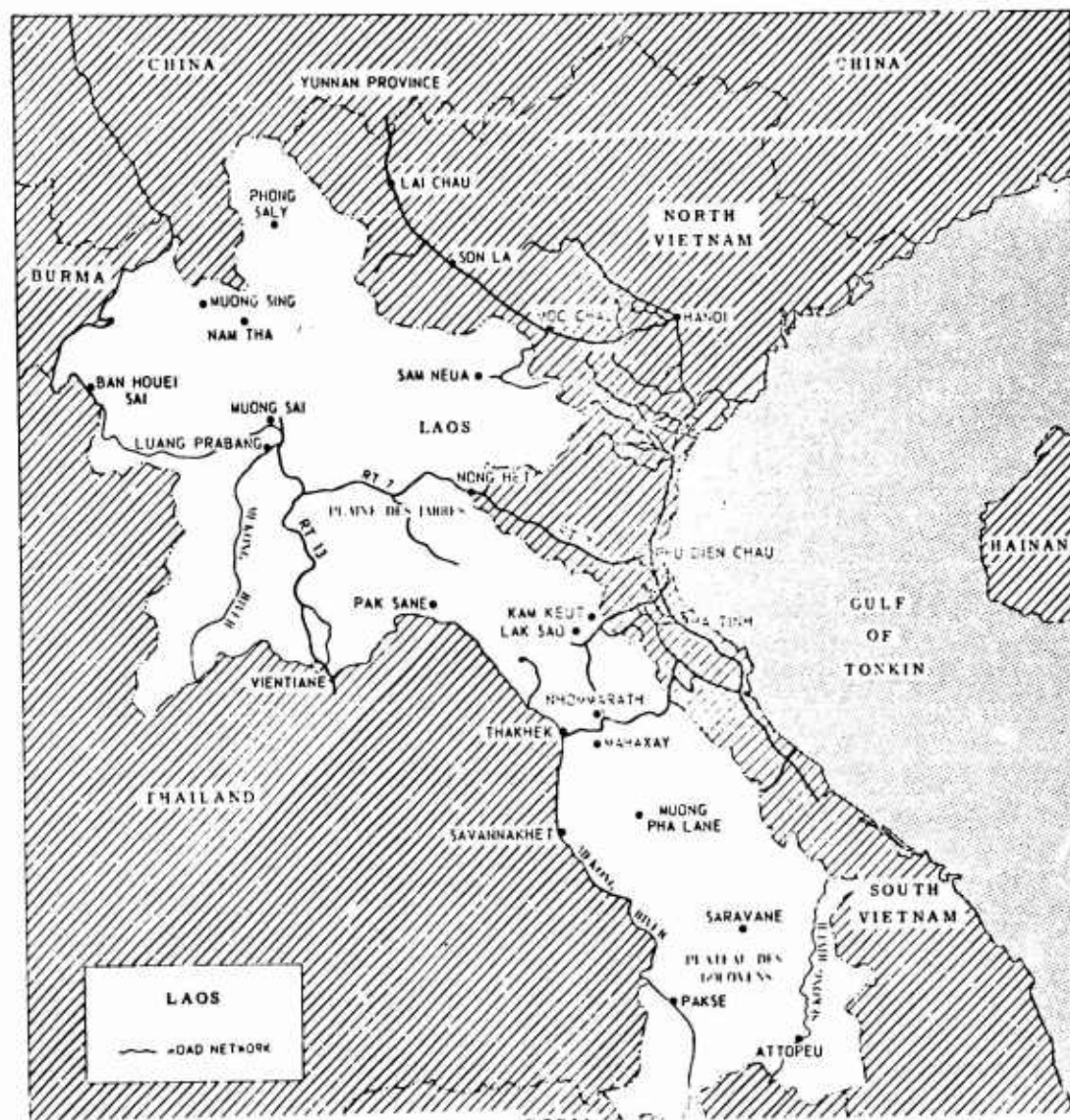
Date 1961	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laotian Government
December 15, 1960 to January 2, 1961			Soviet aircraft flew total of 184 missions into Laos to protect and aid Kong Le's forces.	
January 7		US increased 'readiness' and airlift capability of US Pacific forces. Charged USSR and DRV with expensive participation in military operations in Laos.		
January 10		Eisenhower issued White Paper on Laos.		
January 15	Chou En-lai responded to this escalation-charged US worsening crisis.	Send six AT-6 Harvard trainer aircraft to Phoumists.		
January 20		Kennedy became President.		
January 26		JFK said would like to see Laos independent and 'uncommitted'		
February 2	Chan Yi offered aid to "lawful S. Phouma government" (in exile); repeated CC support for international conference on Laos and recovering of ICC.			
February 15	Said ICC lacked authority to deal with present situation in Laos.			
February 16	Said does not oppose reactivation of ICC if that move is preceded by international conference.			
March 11		Sent more military aid and technicians to Laos government to help fight Communists; but JFK declared support for keeping Laos independent and neutral though said would face all risks rather than let Laos fall to Communist domination; took preparatory steps.	PL launched major offensive--broke through government defenses--routed government forces.	

<u>Date</u> 1961	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laotian Government
March 22		Aircraft carrier Midway left from Hong Kong.		
March 23		JFK made policy statement on Laos--major change in US policy; says international conference could only convene after ICC reports on cease-fire; sent more military aid to Lao govt; 7th Fleet moved closer to Laos; 300 American technicians flown to Thailand to service helicopters.		
March 29		US warned USSR that appropriate action would likely be taken as the "necessary response" to Communist-backed aggression.		
April 1	Chen Yi concerned over US military build-up in SEA and over USSR seeming acquiescence to a cease-fire; said CPR opposed any cease-fire in Laos. Whether proposed by US or SU advised DRV not to sacrifice gains in Laos by complying with a cease-fire.			
April 2	Warned that if SEATO intervened in Laos, CC troops would march into Laos.			
April 4			SU special broadcast in Vietnamese only; stated SU did not demand cease-fire as precondition of international conference, but that it would help to create favorable atmosphere for Communists at conference.	

<u>Date</u> 1961-1962	Chinese Peoples Republic (CPR)	US	Soviet Union: Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV); Pathet Lao (PL)	Royal Laotian Government
April 18, 1961				
April 19		Begin escalation of US military assistance to Laos; changed civilian status of PEO advisers to a uniformed MAAG status.	USSR agreed to British suggestion for 14-power international conference.	
April 21			DRV asked USSR and GB to halt US plan to send military advisers to the front.	
April 25	Agreed to British and Soviet proposals for reactivation of ICC, cease-fire, and international conference--Communist bloc unity for first time on Laos; recognized S. Phouma as head of Lao government.			Civil War continued.
May 3			PL officially proclaimed cease-fire; now control all but Mekong Valley.	
May 16				
June 6-7			Geneva Conference began, based on report of cease fire. Vienna Conference between Kennedy and Khrushchev; Geneva Conference recommended.	
July 23, 1962				

GENEVA AGREEMENTS SIGNED.

ANNEX B



Map of Laos

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Ambekar, G. V., and Divekar, V. D., (ed.) Documents on China's Relations with South and Southeast Asia, 1949-1962 (Allied Publishers: Bombay), 1964.
2. Barnett, A. Doak, Communist China and Asia (Random House: New York), 1960.
3. Barnett, Robert W., Quemoy: The Use and Consequence of Nuclear Deterrence (Center for International Studies, Harvard: Cambridge), 1960.
4. Black, Colonel Edwin F., "Laos: A Case Study of Communist Strategy," in Military Review (December 1964), pp. 49-59.
5. Blum, Robert, The United States and China in World Affairs, edited by A. Doak Barnett (McGraw-Hill; New York), 1966.
6. Champassak, Silouk Na, Storm Over Laos (Praeger: New York), 1961.
7. Communist China (Union Research Institute: Hong Kong), 1960, 1961, 1962.
8. Communist Trends and Propaganda.
9. Concerning the Situation in Laos (Foreign Languages Press: Peiping), 1959.
10. Crozier, Brian, "Peking and the Laotian Crisis: A Further Appraisal," in China Quarterly, No. 11 (September 1962), pp. 116-123.
11. Crozier, Brian, "Peking and the Laotian Crisis: An Interim Appraisal," in China Quarterly, #7 (September 1961), pp. 128-137.
12. Doonan, Arthur J., Conflict in Laos (Praeger: New York), 1964.
13. Dudman, Richard, "Military Policy in Vietnam," in Current History (February 1966), pp. 91-97 ff.

14. Fall, Bernard B., "The Laos Tangle," in International Journal, Spring 1961.
15. Fall, Bernard B., "Reappraisal in Laos," in Current History, Vol. 42, January 1962, pp. 3-14 ff.
16. Fifield, Russel H., Southeast Asia in US Policy (Praeger: New York), 1963.
17. Freedman, H.B., Halpern, A.M., Communist Strategy in Laos (RAND, #RM-2561) (Santa Monica, June 1960).
18. Hinton, Harold, "The Indochina Crisis, II," in Communist China in World Politics, (H. Griffin: Boston), 1966.
19. Hsieh, Alice Langley, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era (Prentice Hall: New Jersey), 1962.
20. "Laos: Sources of Tension," in International Affairs (Moscow), June 1963, pp. 77-78.
21. Lawson, Murray G., Communist Propaganda Around the World: Activities in 1961, (USIA: Washington, D.C.), 1962.
22. McDonnell, Philip, "Roads to the Rice Bowl," in Military Review, 1963, pp. 7-15.
23. Neuchterstein, Donald E., Thailand: The Struggle for Southeast Asia (Cornell: Ithaca), 1965.
24. Pace, Eric, "Laos: Continuing Crisis," in Foreign Affairs, October 1964, Vol. 43, #1, pp. 64-74.
25. Simmonds, Stuart, "Breakdown in Laos," in The World Today, Vol. 20, No. 7, July 1964, pp. 285-292.
26. Simmonds, Stuart, "A Renewal of Crisis," in Asian Survey, Vol. IV, No. 1 (January 1964), pp. 680-684.
27. "The Situation in Laos," The United States, White Paper (The Department of State: Washington, D.C.), 1959.

29. Trager, Frank N., "Laos and the Defense of Southeast Asia," in Orbis, Vol. 7, No. 3, Fall 1963, pp. 550-582.
30. Vinson, J. Chal, "The United States and China," in Current History, (November 1962), Vol. 43, pp. 290-294.
31. Wing, Roswell, B., (chairman, et al.), Case Study of US Counter-insurgency Operations in Laos (U) (Defense Documentation Center: Alexandria, Virginia), September 1964 (RAC-T-435), SECRET, though Section A of this report, the only part referred to, is unclassified.

PERIODICALS

Foreign Broadcast Information Service

New China News Agency (Peking)

New York Times

Peking Review

Public Papers of the President 1961 (Washington: Government Printing Office), 1962.

Summary of World Broadcasts

Survey of China Mainland Press (Hong Kong)

Washington Post

APPENDIX D

SINO - INDIAN BORDER CONFLICT: 1962

SINO-INDIAN BORDER CONFLICT - 1962

by

Franz J. Mogdis¹

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this paper is to provide an account and an analysis of the extent to which the United States and Communist China (CPR) interacted during the Sino-Indian border conflict of 1962.² This, however, cannot be accomplished without having some knowledge of the events and conditions which led up to and existed at the onset of hostilities. It is also imperative for an understanding of US-CPR interaction that we

¹ Mr. Franz Mogdis served in the US Army Security Agency and was later assigned to the National Security Agency (China 1961 to 1965). During this time he attended the National Defense Language School (specializing in Chinese Mandarin). While employed by the National Security Agency as an intelligence research analyst he worked on Chinese economic and military affairs. Since 1965 he has been a military/political analyst (China and Southeast Asia) for the Office of National Security Studies at the Bendix Aerospace Systems Division. He is currently working toward a Master degree in Far Eastern Studies and Political Science at the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan. He is the author of several Bendix publications including: "Guerrilla Warfare: Its Nature, Causes and Means for Conflict Limitations"; "Chinese Revolutionary Warfare Doctrine"; and "Simulation Methods". He presented a paper to the 19th Military Operations Research Symposium on "Soviet and Chinese Influence in Developing Societies." He is a member of the Association for Asian Studies and the National Committee on United States-China Relations.

² The contribution to this paper by Brigadier General Samuel Griffith, II, U. S. Marine Corps (retired) is hereby acknowledged. However, the interpretations and conclusions of the paper are those of the author of record and do not necessarily represent the views of General Griffith.

include and analyze, at least in a cursory manner, the involvement of other states (i. e. , Soviet Union) in the conflict. Finally, one should also consider the importance and effect of the existing world situation on the conflict.³ Therefore, all of the above points will be included in the discussion and analysis of interactions during the crisis and their relevance will be assessed.

Another factor which contributes to the content and tone of the paper and thus is worthy of comment is the author's basic assumption that the Sino-Indian conflict was fought primarily for political and not military objectives (a second major purpose of this paper is to present evidence supporting this contention).⁴ Based on this assumption, a listing of the Chinese Communist objectives in entering the conflict is presented here. Each of these points is discussed in somewhat greater detail in the paragraphs which follow immediately:

1. The CPR hoped to discredit Indian prestige.
2. The CPR hoped to elicit a clear statement of support from the Soviet Union.
3. The CPR wanted to capitalize on a war mood which existed on the Mainland.
4. The CPR wanted to protect the Ladakh roads.

³ Certainly an influencing factor during the Sino-Indian conflict was the Cuban missile crisis which was occurring concurrently on the other side of the world.

⁴ For an oppsite view, namely that the conflict was primarily caused by Indian military incursions into the border areas which the Chinese felt threatened their strategic positions especially in the Aksai-Chin road area and which therefore forced the CPR to react militarily, see Harold Hinton, Communist China and World Politics, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1966), pp. 273-307.

The primary reason for the Chinese attack on India was to demonstrate to Asia and the world that China was the only power to reckon with in Asia and, correspondingly, to demolish or weaken India's influence, prestige and economy.

A second major objective was to force the Soviet Union to make a choice between India and China--a choice which the CPR hoped would be in their favor.⁵ Another motive for Chinese action as it concerned the Soviets may well have been an attempt to discredit (1) the Soviet doctrinal position which claimed orthodoxy for their doctrine of peaceful coexistence and detente with the West, and (2) Soviet acceptance of nonalignment as a desirable course of action for some countries. This position was certainly diametrically opposed to the Chinese position, and it was becoming evident in early 1962 that this was the fulcrum on which the entire ideological debate between the Soviets and Chinese was based.

A third reason for the Chinese willingness to become involved in the conflict was to capitalize on the war mood which had been generated on the Mainland. This had been increasing in intensity since early 1962 and by the time of the massive Chinese attack of 20 October, 1962, it had reached a fever pitch.⁶

Finally, the Chinese desired to solidify control over the border areas, especially the Aksai Chin roads. There is no doubt that one of the outcomes of the conflict was just this--control of the area and the roads. To argue, however, that the Chinese were willing to risk a major confrontation with the United States just to achieve this objective assumes no political awareness on the part of the Chinese, and this did not seem to be the case.

⁵ This was one of the objectives the CPR also had in the Quemoy-Matsu crisis of 1958.

⁶ For a discussion of the war mood which gripped China in the spring of 1962 see John Lewis, "Communist China's Invasion of the Indian Frontier: The Framework of Motivation," Current Scene, Vol. II, No. 7, (January 2, 1963), pp. 3-5.

CHINESE-INDIAN RELATIONS PRIOR TO 1959

From the very beginning of Chinese Communist power on the Mainland close ties developed between the Indians and the Chinese. India, for example, was the second nation in the world to recognize the CPR (Burma being the first). These ties, at least to all external appearances, became even closer down through the 1950's. For example, major Chinese leaders were frequent visitors to India,⁷ while conversely Indian leaders were often noted visiting the CPR.⁸ The Indians, also, were strong supporters of Chinese Communist admission to the United Nations--indeed, perhaps the most vocal outside of the Communist block itself.

Further, on 29 April 1954, an "Agreement Between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China on Trade and Intercourse Between the Tibet Region of China and India" was signed with the CPR. It was in this agreement that Panch Sheela, the widely publicized "Five Principles," was first enunciated--mutual respect for each others territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.⁹

The glorious principles of Panch Sheela, however, held fast for less than three months. On 17 July 1954, Peking denounced the presence of Indian troops in Barahoti in the Uttar Pradesh State of India. This was the first in a long series of protests of border violations that were to be exchanged between India and China.¹⁰ India replied on 27 August that the area concerned was inside India, not Tibet, and protested against an alleged Chinese attempt at occupation.

⁷ Chou En-lai, for example, visited India twice during 1954 and 1955.

⁸ Prime Minister Nehru, for example, visited China in late 1954.

⁹ Notes, Memoranda and Letters Exchanged and Agreements Signed Between the Governments of India and China, White Paper No. 1 (New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 1955), p. 98

¹⁰ For an excellent analysis of the types, numbers and intensity of border violations between India and China, see Connie Greaser, "Quantitative Analysis of the Sino-Indian Border Conflict, 1954-1962," Unpublished Master Thesis, University of Southern California, June 1966.

During his October 1954 visit to Peking, Prime Minister Nehru also brought up the subject of the maps printed by the Chinese Communists which showed 50,000 square miles of Indian territory, or at least Indian-claimed territory, as Chinese. Nehru's concern, however, was brushed off by the Chinese as being ridiculous and Chou En-lai said the maps had little significance, claiming they were merely reproductions of old Kuomintang maps.¹¹

During the period 1954 to 1957 little overt comment was made on the border problem as both countries presented a front of united action and agreement. This is evidenced, for example, by the two countries' mutual support of each others position at the Bandung Conference in 1955.

This situation, however, began to change with publication, on 14 March, 1957, of a report that the Chinese were in the process of building a highway between Hsinchiang (Sinkiang) and Hsitsang (Tibet) and that it would be completed during the year. The report, however, did not mention that the highway would cross Indian-claimed territory. But with the publication of a map of the area in July 1958,¹² the Indians found this indeed to be the case and lodged a strong protest with the Chinese on 21 August, 1958¹³ (See Annexes I and II). Not only did the map show that the Chinese had built a road across Indian-claimed territory, but it also showed large sections of India and Bhutan, as well as parts of the Kashmir area disputed by India and Pakistan as part of China.

In an answering note on 3 November, 1958, the Chinese Communists again reiterated their claim that "maps currently published in China" are based on those "printed before liberation." The Chinese went on to make the future very vague by saying that:

¹¹ Hsinhua (New China News Agency), 14 March, 1957.

¹² China Pictorial, Peking, No. 95, July 1958.

¹³ White Paper No. 1, p. 46.

... the reason why the boundary in Chinese maps is drawn according to old maps is that the Chinese Government has not yet undertaken a survey of China's boundary, nor consulted with the countries concerned, and that it will not make changes in the boundary on its own... The Chinese Government believes that with the elapse of time, and after consultations with the various neighboring countries and a survey of the border regions, a new way of drawing the boundary of China will be decided in accordance with the results of the consultations and the survey.¹⁴

Commenting on this in a personal letter to Premier Chou En-lai on 14 December, 1958, Prime Minister Nehru wrote:

I was puzzled by this reply... I could understand four years ago that the Chinese Government, being busy with major problems of national reconstruction could not find time to revise old maps. But you will appreciate that nine years after the Chinese People's Republic came into power, the continued issue of these incorrect maps is embarrassing to us as to others.¹⁵

During the time the exchange of letters and notes between Nehru and Chou En-lai was taking place, the beginning of new border incidents between the two countries also occurred. Upon discovering that a road had been built across the Aksai Chin area the Indians began to send patrols into the area. In September 1958 one of these patrols in the area of the highway was arrested by the Chinese and was detained and treated poorly for nearly five weeks, marking the first capture of personnel in the conflict.¹⁶ October 1958 brought the first reports of Chinese aircraft violating Indian airspace in the border area.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁶ Guy Searls, "Communist China's Border Policy: Dragon Throne Imperialism?," Current Scene, Vol. II, No. 12, 15 April, 1963, p. 8

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

In addition to the boundary problem, another factor which contributed to the deterioration of Chinese-Indian relations during this period was the Indian reception of and relations with, the Dalai Lama. In 1957 the Dalai Lama fled to India for the first time, but as a result of Indian persuasion he returned to Tibet. The Indians guaranteed him that they would intervene with the Chinese Communists on his behalf and that of the Tibetan people. They continued by saying that they would attempt to modify the CPR programs for Tibet. In early 1959, however, problems again arose which concerned the Dalai Lama. These problems were precipitated by the Chinese Communist demand that he go to Peking to be officially proclaimed religious leader of the Tibetans. It was feared by both the Dalai Lama and his followers that this was a trap to get him to Peking where he would quickly be interred as a political prisoner. To protest the Chinese demands a large crowd gathered outside the Dalai Lama's residency in Lhasa in late March 1959. The result was that Chinese troops opened fire on the demonstrators, killing and wounding thousands in the resulting riots.¹⁸ A major complaint of the Chinese during this period was that the rebels were fleeing to India where they were being armed and trained and then returned to Tibet to fight the Chinese. As a result of this action the Dalai Lama along with his personal guard decided to flee for safety to India where they arrived on 31 March, 1959.

On this day Nehru declared in Parliament that India's sympathies lay with the Tibetan people. He also, "... refuted the Chinese Communist allegation that Kalimpong in India was the 'command center of the Tibetan revolt.' He continued by emphatically refuting Peking's right to tell the Indian Parliament what it should or should not discuss--Peking had obliquely made this suggestion."¹⁹

On 3 April, 1959, Prime Minister Nehru again went before Parliament where he announced that the Dalai Lama had crossed into Indian territory on 31 March (with a party of 80 persons) and that he was being granted

¹⁸ Since early August 1958, a full-scale revolt against Communist rule had been in progress in Tibet. Reports indicated that as many as 75,000 Tibetans and Chinese were killed in this revolt between August 1958 and April 1959.

¹⁹ Christian Science Monitor, 31 March, 1959

political asylum. He went on to deny Peking's charges that the Dalai Lama had arrived in India "under duress."

This event, more than any other, shattered the facade of Sino-Indian friendship that had been carefully maintained since 1954 and moved Chinese-Indian relations into a new and more violent period.

CHINESE-INDIAN RELATIONS: 1959-SPRING 1962

As noted in the previous section, Sino-Indian relations had begun to cool considerably in early 1959 as a result of (1) Indian intransigence over the Chinese occupation of the Aksai Chin area and (2) Indian support for the Dalai Lama. Another factor which intensified and accelerated the split was a letter of 23 January 1959 from Chou En-lai to Prime Minister Nehru which claimed for China about 50,000 square miles of Indian territory. Chou explained that he had not pressed the issue earlier because conditions had not been "ripe" for its settlement. The intensity of the widening split between the two nations was clearly indicated when on 20 October 1959, Chinese troops opened fire on an Indian patrol in Southern Ladakh, killing 9--these were the first casualties of the conflict.²⁰ Border incidents, clashes, and air violations were to continue throughout 1960 and 1961 (see Table 1).

²⁰ Searls, op. cit., p. 9.

	Committed by India	Committed by China
1959	24	22
1960	20	101
1961	95	9

Table 1

Incidents, Violations and Clashes by Country²¹

Not only did China and India begin to clash over the Tibetan and border problems, but also their general political and economic goals began to conflict. Both China and India were interested in becoming the leader of the non-aligned bloc and, as a result, competition began to develop between the two powers, especially in Southeast Asia and Africa. Not only was there political competition between the two powers, that is a contest over who would be the most influential in directing the course that the non-aligned nations would take, but there also was economic competition to determine whose economic model was more valuable and had greater utility for use in these same non-aligned nations. In other words,

²¹ The figures on incidents, violations and clashes are a total of all such cases as reported in the Indian White Papers. These papers are a collection of all messages, notes and memorandums, exchanged between India and China on the border problem. Although a question may be raised as to their accuracy, the numbers of incidents do seem to accurately reflect the change in intensity of the conflict. This author would not argue that the same criteria for reporting a violation was used by both sides. There seems little doubt that the Chinese reported many more small and obscure incidents than did the Indians. However the purpose of these figures is not to compare Chinese and Indian intrusion activity but only to show the quantum jump in the overall number of border incidents and thus the increase in intensity of the conflict itself.

would it be China's model of total economic planning under complete state control or India's model of a mixed, free-enterprise economy within a framework of a parliamentary democracy.

Another divisive factor in the relationship of the two countries was China's perception that India was becoming more and more pro-Western. This irritation with India was a result of what China considered India's pro-Western stand on such issues as the Laotian crisis, 1959-1962, the Indian support of the United Nations forces in the Congo, Nehru's behavior at the neutral summit conference at Belgrade in the summer of 1961, and Nehru's visit with Japanese Premier Ikada. It was further intensified by what China considered India's closer ties with the United States. This view was seemingly confirmed by Nehru's visit to the United States in November of 1961 to see President Kennedy. To Peking, India's closer ties with the United States were further evidence of her defection to the imperialist camp. During this period not only did China feel that India was defecting to the Western camp, but Peking was also highly disturbed by the increasing Soviet rapprochement with the US specifically and the West in general. This is evident in the statements made by the Chinese concerning the intensifying split between the two major communist powers. That the Chinese feared a movement in this direction by the Soviets as early as 1958 is attested to by her attempt to elicit a statement, more specifically a guarantee of support, during the Quemoy-Matsu Crisis of 1958.

China's movement away from India is evident when one looks at the change in tone of Chinese propaganda directed at her. During the period 1959 to 1962 the Chinese attempted to foster an anti-Indian sentiment among Asian and African countries by exploiting vulnerabilities in India's neutralist policies. This was especially true following Indian Prime Minister Nehru's return from the September 1961 "Neutral Summit Conference," in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. Peking's campaign against Nehru was based on charges that he was soft on colonialism; his plea for peace at Belgrade and expression of regret at the Soviet resumption of nuclear testing; his subsequent visit to the United States and acceptance of American economic aid; and finally his increasingly firm attitude towards Chinese claims and incursions upon India's northern borders. Allegations that Indian policy was influenced by "imperialists and reactionary" elements was the mainstay of Communist Chinese propaganda, which portrayed this as the only obstacle to a frontier settlement.

Also contributing to increasing Indian distrust of the Chinese were numerous reports, not necessarily valid, that the Chinese were interested in forming an alliance of Himalayan States which was to include the Indian area of Nagaland.²² For example, Prime Minister Dorje of Bhutan during a trip to England in 1962, stated that his government had been approached with a Chinese Communist proposal for a "confederation of Himalayan States," to include Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, the Northeast Frontier Agency and Nagaland.²³

All these factors contributed to the rapidly widening breach between the Chinese and the Indians. Starting in the spring of 1962 the tension between the two countries was to intensify rapidly and to move from the primarily verbal attacks of the 1959-1961 period to more and more overt military actions. (See Table 2 and Figure 1).

	Committed by India	Committed by China
Jan-Mar 1962	66	5
April-June 1962	196	14
July-Sept 1962	355	52

Table 2

Incidents, Violations and Clashes by Country²⁴

²² Nagaland has been an area of considerable unrest, including guerrilla activity--support of which had been attributed at least in part to the Chinese Communists.

²³ George Patterson, "Recent Chinese Policies in Tibet and Towards the Himalayan Border States" China Quarterly, No. 12, October-December 1962, p. 199.

²⁴ See footnote 21

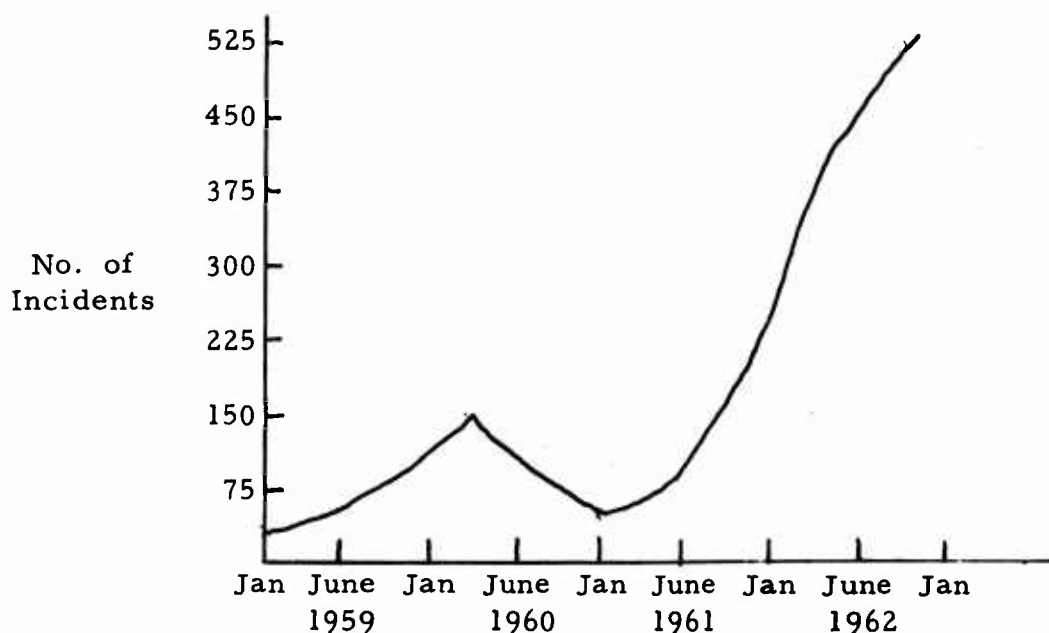


Figure 1

Increase in Military Intensity of Conflict²⁵

Spring 1962-September 1962

That the Chinese were planning a military move against India long in advance of the October attack can be seen by their preparations in the spring and early summer of 1962. Not only did they begin to prepare their forces militarily for the forthcoming confrontation, but they also began to prepare their people psychologically for the attack.

By May 1962 Peking was actively attempting to intensify a war mood which was gripping the country. The Chinese devoted extensive coverage to the Taiwan Straits build-up in May and the supposed Nationalist invasion which was to follow. This same theme (i. e., that the West planned to invade the Mainland) was prevalent in the Chinese Communist reporting of

²⁵ See footnote 21

General Maxwell Taylor's visit to East Asia, in their reporting of a Chinese Nationalist U-2 shot down over China, and in their reporting of the Sino-Indian boundary question. Increasingly the CPR included India in their propaganda attacks, as Peking became as vitriolic in these attacks on India as it had been in the past in its attacks on the US and her allies. The attacks now concerned not only Chinese claims of border violations and Chinese claims of Indian support for dissidents in Tibet, but also Prime Minister Nehru and his "sell-out" to the West. The government of India (and Nehru in particular) replaced Taiwan and Chiang Kai-shek as the chief villain. (See Figures 2 and 3). In September it had reached the point where Peking was to say that "there is a limit to China's patience and self-restraint. The Chinese people cannot allow their land to be wantonly encroached upon by India. . . China is not to be bullied."²⁶

Concurrent with the psychological preparation of the Chinese people for the forthcoming conflict, Peking also began systematically to prepare military stockpiles and invasion routes, redeploy troops, and increase patrols along the Sino-Indian border. Reports indicated large amounts of supplies were trucked in from Szechuan and Hsinchiang and stored at strategically located depots along the border. At the same time these reports also included statements concerning a general redeployment of infantry and security regiments in Tibet to the border areas.²⁷ Moreover, in the spring and early summer there was extensive construction and repair work done on the roads leading to the border area--this construction being much greater than had normally been noted in the past springs. Finally the number of Chinese patrols was greatly increased, especially in the Ladakh area where new outposts deeper in the disputed territory were established.²⁸

²⁶ Peking Review, 12 September, 1962, p. 3.

²⁷ Joseph Stauffer, "Sino-Indian Border Dispute," Naval War College Review, Vol. XIX, No. 9 (May 1967), p. 96 and Time, Vol. LXXX, No. 22, 30 November 1962, pp. 23-28.

²⁸ Indian White Paper VI, p. 41.

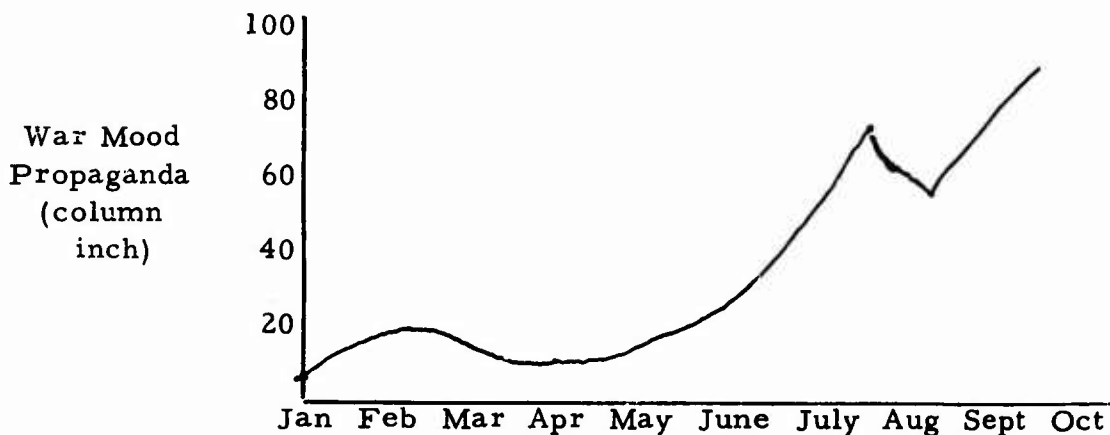


Figure 2

Increase in War Mood Propaganda²⁹

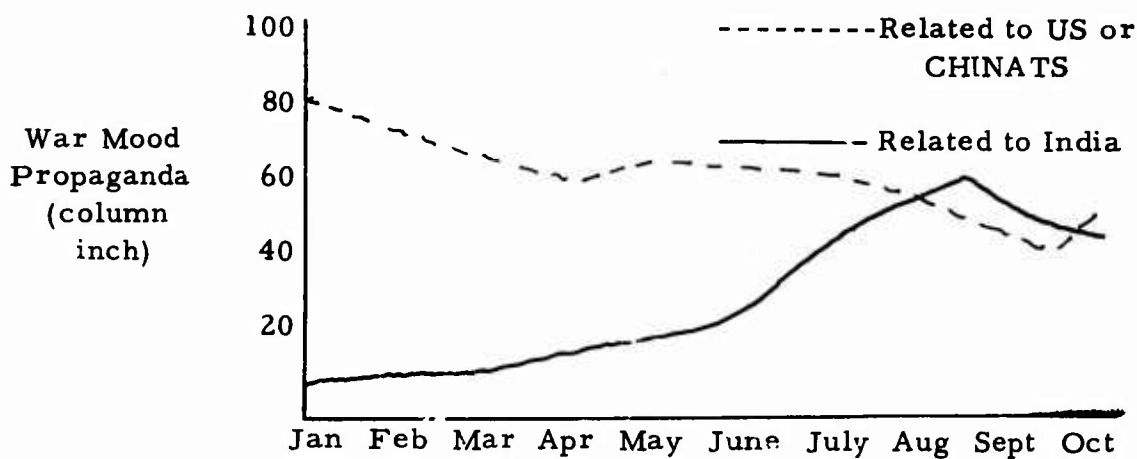


Figure 3

Direction of War Propaganda²⁹

²⁹ An analysis was made of page 1 of Jen-min Jih-pao for the period January 1962 through September 1962. Any article dealing with potential conflict or threat of conflict was coded as war mood propaganda. The measurement was in column inch.

Increased tensions developed as a result of the new Chinese incursions into territory India claimed as her own. Early in April 1962 India apparently decided to employ military means to force the Chinese out of their forward positions in the Ladakh area. Indian patrols established outposts behind the Chinese positions to cut them off and force their withdrawal. This increased tensions on both the Aksai Chin plateau area and in the lake region south of Aksai Chin. Each side tried to outmaneuver the other. However, units involved were small, both sides generally acted with restraint when opportunities to use armed force arose, and little actual fighting took place. The most important incidents occurred in the Galwan and Chip Chap river valleys of the Aksai Chin area and along the banks of the Spanggur and Pangong Lakes³⁰ (see Annex II).

About 10 July an Indian forward position in the Galwan Valley, attempting to cut the Chinese communication route, was encircled by approximately 400-500 Chinese Communist troops.³¹ It held its ground until late September when an Indian relief column reached the Galwan Valley to reopen the ground supply lines. Meanwhile an exchange of fire in the Chip Chap River area on 21 July wounded two Indians and evoked from the Chinese a complaint that their troops had been ambushed by Indian forces.³² The Indians denied the charges. According to public statements made by Prime Minister Nehru, three instances of firing occurred in the Pangong Lake region during the period 21-29 July. The extent of the new Chinese actions in the border area is evidenced in Defense Minister Krishna Menon's statement of August 29 which stated that the Chinese Communists had established thirty new posts in the Ladakh area during the preceding four months.³³

Chinese Communist troops began to concentrate as early as August along the extreme Western portion of the McMahon line north of the principal Indian base of Towang. Between September 8-10, perhaps as many as 1000 Chinese troops crossed the McMahon line at a number of points eastward from the Tibet-Bhutan-NEFA trijunction. The PLA positions soon

³⁰ Indian White Paper VI, pp. 75-78 and 83-84.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 85-90.

³² New York Times, July 23, p. 3, col. 8.

³³ New York Times, September 4, p. 8, col. 5.

threatened an Indian outpost manned by a small unit of the Assam Rifles, although at 10,000 feet this outpost was being supplied by air, as were others along the line.³⁴ However, the monsoon weather which continued until 1 October hampered Indian logistical operations. Moreover, superior Chinese communications and transport systems north of the McMahon Line permitted Peking to exploit its strategic advantage for aggressive probing of the area.

This then was the situation before the first major clashes occurred; the Chinese had reinforced their border forces and tactical positions and were now able and ready, if they wanted, to launch a major offensive against the Indians.

20 September - 20 October

The first serious clashes between Chinese and Indian units apparently began 20 September and continued intermittently not far from the tri-junction, each side charging the other with having begun the fighting. On 8 October, Peking stated that Indian troops had set up additional military posts in the Spanggur and Pangong Lake areas and had harassed Chinese frontier guards. The CPR also complained that Indian aircraft were supplying outposts and reconnoitering Chinese positions, while Indian motorboats were patrolling the water of the lakes. Moreover a new motor road opened from Srinagar to the airfield at Chushul, increasing Indian mobility in this area. (See Annex III for a brief chronology of major events)

Until 20 October, however, Chinese Communist frontier units had given some ground and Indian forces had achieved their limited goals; but the entire character of the fighting changed when a coordinated, massive attack by the Chinese began on 20 October across the McMahon line and in the Ladakh area around the lakes.

The Chinese charged that they were merely repulsing an Indian attack, while New Delhi more accurately claimed that the "large-scale" fighting was begun by the Chinese.³⁵

³⁴ G. S. Bhargava, The Battle of NEFA: The Undeclared War, (Bombay: Allied Publishers Private Lmt'd, 1964), pp. 85-91.

³⁵ K. S. Thimayya, "Chinese Aggression and After," International Studies, Vol. V, Nos. 1-2 (July-October 1963), pp. 50-52.

WHY?

The questions which immediately arise are why did the Chinese decide to attack India and why at this precise time? There are several theories put forth to answer the former, ranging from the attack being a purely defensive move to its being primarily a political move to achieve political objectives. The reasons for and the timing of the attack, as well as the termination of the conflict by the Chinese, are--in this author's opinion--due primarily to achieve political objectives rather than military goals. Indeed, a strong argument can be made that the Chinese decided to launch their attack at this time because both the US and Soviet Union were involved in a major crisis in another part of the world--that is, the Cuban missile crisis.

Although one theory holds that the Chinese attacked only for military objectives (that is, to protect the road across the Aksai Chin plateau), and then only because of Indian intrusions, this seems unlikely when one looks at the facts. First, the Chinese had not reacted quickly to a situation but had been involved in a military build-up in the area since at least early spring of 1962. Secondly, this build-up was not only in the supposedly threatened Ladakh area but also was along the McMahon Line in the East. Third, the attack, when launched by the Chinese, was well-coordinated. This required extensive pre-planning and again was along the entire border rather than just in the Ladakh area; and fourth and finally, it seems doubtful under any condition that China would have taken the risk of becoming involved in a conflict which might mean a direct confrontation with the US if her only objective was the security of the Aksai Chin road. If this indeed were her only objective, there would seem to have been no need for the massiveness of the original attack. However, if her reasons for attacking were primarily political (humiliate India, destroy her prestige in the Afro-Asian block, etc.) then both the massiveness of the attack and the timing are reasonable.

The Cuban missile crisis presented Peking with a golden opportunity. From a Chinese viewpoint, it would seem obvious that she would want to minimize the possibility of a quick US response. What better way to ensure this than to strike during US involvement in a major crisis with the Soviets? It is probable therefore that the Chinese decided to launch the attack when

they did because the US seemed diverted elsewhere.³⁶ If we parallel US involvement in the Cuban crisis to Chinese moves in the Sino-Indian conflict, a close correlation is discovered--as the Cuban crisis decreases in intensity (and thus the US diversion) so does the intensity of Chinese involvement in the Sino-Indian conflict. (This point will be discussed in more detail later.)

³⁶ This is not necessarily to say that the Chinese knew about the Soviet missiles in Cuba nor anticipated the resulting crisis between the US and Moscow, but only to say that they took advantage of the situation which arose. It seems certain in any case that if the attack had not occurred in the fall of 1962, it would have occurred in the spring of 1963 for the Chinese had reason to doubt US concern over the border area even without a US-Soviet confrontation. Four months earlier (July 12, 1962) for example, Secretary of State Rusk, during a news conference, had implicitly depreciated the potential gravity of a Sino-Indian "border war." In response to a question, the Secretary stated that the Chinese were conducting maneuvers along the border that India felt were threats to her security. He continued: "We of course sympathize with the Indian view that the integrity of its frontiers be assured, but these episodes, or the small deployments, are in very difficult country, remote country, at great altitudes. It is a little hard to have exact information there---." State Department Bulletin. July 30, 1962, p. 177. This statement did not convey a signal to Peking to desist from her encroachments, nor did it suggest that the US would respond to any Indian request for aid. It is certainly possible that as a result of this type of statement from a high US government official the Chinese misread US interests and intentions in the area just as they had done previously in Korea.

20 October - 20 November

In order to place American reaction to the Sino-Indian border war in proper perspective it is necessary to recall that, as indicated above, from 14 October 1962 through early November official Washington was concerned with a matter of incalculably greater import: the Cuban missile crisis. During this period the attention of the President and senior members of the administration was fixed on the Cuban situation, and their energies were exclusively devoted to seeking a solution to that major confrontation between the US and the Soviets.

During this period, Washington's interest in the Sino-Indian situation was necessarily marginal, and there was no indication what position the US government would take should threatened hostilities develop.

Early on 20 October the Chinese launched their heavy attacks against Indian positions in Ladakh and in the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA). The following day, the State Department issued a statement supporting the Indians and offering "assistance" if requested. The official US position was made clear by Adlai Stevenson in an address on 22 October to the General Assembly of the United Nations. In this address Mr. Stevenson accused China of a blatant aggression against India and observed that "its regime is a dictatorship, its ideology is power, its aim--professed with pride and arrogance--is conquest."³⁷ As of this date it is interesting to note that the Soviets still had made no comment on the fighting.

On 24 October the Chinese government proposed that each side withdraw 12 miles from "the line of actual control" pending "peaceful negotiations." Peking could only have expected the Indian Prime Minister to reject this suggestion, which he promptly and unequivocally did. He countered with an offer to negotiate after Chinese troops withdrew to positions held prior to 8 September, when the Chinese began their movement into NEFA. Nehru's suggestion was rejected by Peking.

³⁷ General Assembly session of 22 October relating to a Soviet resolution to seat Communist China and expel Nationalist China. Dept. of State Bulletin, 19 Nov. 1962, p. 787.

By October 26 the Chinese Communists had taken Towang in the NEFA and were advancing in both the east and the west. The Indian government declared a state of emergency and sent appeals to the US, Great Britain, Canada and France for military arms and equipment. The same day the Chinese again called for a ceasefire 20 km (12.5 miles) from the battle lines as they existed at that time. The Soviets at this time made their first pronouncement on the crisis, which was a statement of support for the Chinese proposal.

On 27 October, Prime Minister Nehru announced in New Delhi that arrangements had been made "with foreign countries" to supply arms and equipment to Indian armed forces, and two days later (29 October), as the danger of a US-Soviet nuclear confrontation over Cuba began to subside, Nehru urgently requested from the United States military assistance to be used against the Chinese.

On 27 October, Jen-min Jih-pao published an analysis of Chinese Communist-Indian relations which may have come closer than any other statement the Chinese made to explaining their real reasons for entering the conflict. In part the article accused Nehru of attempting to establish an Indian (not Chinese) sphere of influence in Asia. It went on to accuse India of seeking to control the economy of countries around India and demanding their absolute obedience.³⁸ Both of these policies, if successful, threatened to lessen greatly Chinese influence in Asia and this the Chinese were not willing to let happen--perhaps not willing to let happen to the extent they were willing to take the risks involved in a limited war with India.

On October 29, after Nehru's request for arms, A. M. Rosenthal (New York Times) reported from New Delhi: "He (Nehru) received an immediate pléde (from the US) that weapons would be rushed to India." On the same day, the first shipment of arms and equipment from Britain arrived at the New Delhi airport, and both Canada and West Germany promised immediate aid.

On the following day (30 October) the British Prime Minister characterized the Chinese assault on India as "brutal and ruthless." As to India's request for aid: "What they ask us to do to help them, we will do."³⁹

³⁸ Jen-min Jih-pao, Peking, 27 October 1962.

³⁹ New York Times, 31 October 1962.

On 1 November, with the Cuban missile crisis moving into the background, President Kennedy found occasion to comment on the Sino-Indian situation. In a letter to Mr. Codacci-Pisanelli, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Council (then meeting in Brasilia), the President deplored "this further instance of armed aggression by Communist China" and expressed the hope that she "could be persuaded to abandon" her "flagrant violation" of India's territorial integrity.⁴⁰ This restrained warning produced no discernible reaction in Peking.

The President's statement was given material emphasis by an official announcement that the first shipment of US arms, ammunition and equipment was being airlifted to Calcutta, where it would arrive on 3 November. However, the prevailing mood in Washington was to depreciate the possibility of a major war in the Himalayas. The key question of Chinese capability could not be answered with any assurance. Nor did Washington have a realistic assessment of the Indian Army's ability to resist even limited aggression.

On 5 November a Pravda editorial called on both sides to accept a "cease fire" preliminary to negotiation. This editorial was significant because of what it did not say, rather than for what it did. Whereas Prime Minister Khrushchev had previously enjoined the Indian government to accept Chou En-lai's proposals of 26 October, these proposals were not mentioned in Pravda on 5 November. The Soviets were thus apparently warily "backing off" from their position of limited support to China. Curiously, only a few days before this editorial appeared, Khrushchev had written Nehru urging him to accept the Chinese pre-conditions for "cease fire" set forth in Peking's statement of 24 October. On 4 November the New York Times correspondent had cabled from New Delhi that "lingering Indian hopes that the Soviet Union would drop its support of Communist China and take India's side virtually died today." On the following day the Pravda editorial resurrected them.

⁴⁰ Department of State Bulletin, 19 November 1962, pp. 783-784.

This slight but perceptible shift in the Soviet position prompted the New York Times to observe editorially on Tuesday, 6 November, that "the international cross-currents of the undeclared Sino-Indian war add up to a strange, complicated and uncertain picture."

By this time, C-135 transports of the US Air Force were arriving at Dum Dum Airport in Calcutta with infantry arms and equipment and U.S. Ambassador to India John Kenneth Galbraith publicly assured the Indian people that India would neither have to join any military alliance nor drop her policy of non-alignment as the price of such aid.⁴¹

Two days later Washington announced that the United States, Britain and Canada were drafting "a broad new joint program" for arms aid to India. Simultaneously, the Department of State released a bulletin that as of that day \$5,000,000 worth of small arms (rifles, automatic rifles, light machine guns, mortars), ammunition, and communications equipment had been delivered or was en route to India. This phase of the air lift was scheduled to be completed on 12 November.

The concatenation of developments was not overlooked in Peking, where Jen-min Jih-pao, in an editorial entitled "Please Stop to Think Again, Mr. Nehru" accused "Indian reactionaries" of "using the Sino-Indian border conflicts provoked by themselves to whip up an anti-China campaign and artificially create an atmosphere of war." The editorial alleged that the Indian government had received "large quantities of weapons from the United States, Britain and West Germany," and that "The Indian war maniacs, counting on the backing of US imperialism, seem to believe that they could gain much from the Sino-Indian armed clashes."⁴²

On the same day, Prime Minister Nehru (who had some days previously assumed Krishna Menon's Defense portfolio) addressed the Lok

⁴¹ First increments of aid by both the US and the UK were shipped with the understanding that credit was granted without any strings attached, and that financial arrangements would be negotiated later.

⁴² NCNA (in English.) Peking, 8 November 1962.

Sabha. Inter alia, the Prime Minister called on the House to approve a resolution that "gratefully acknowledges the sympathy and the moral and material support received from a large number of friendly countries in this grim hour of our struggle against aggression and invasion."⁴³ Two days later, Nehru told a Committee of Parliament that the Soviet Union had reaffirmed an earlier promise to sell MIG-21 aircraft to India.

That the Indian government and people were morally prepared to face the prospect of a long and costly war, that the nation was united in its determination to eject the Chinese from Indian territory, and that it was assured of ever-increasing amounts of military and economic aid from the United States, Britain, Canada, France, West Germany, and Australia of course disturbed Peking. But the great psychological jolt had been delivered by her erstwhile "fraternal" ally, the U. S. S. R., who had promised high performance aircraft to India, but nothing to China.

The obvious defection of the Soviet Union was not, however, mentioned in a lengthy Jen-min Jih-pao editorial of 11 November: "India Sheds the Cloak of Non-Alignment." This accused Nehru of "keeping up and expanding the Sino-Indian border conflict." Behind him, and encouraging him, were the imperialists:

It may be noted, too, that in the past two weeks the Nehru government no longer feigned reluctance, but has come out openly, with hat in hand, to beg for aid from the United States, Britain, West Germany and France. US planes are now rushing load after load of arms to India. In the week ending November 7, a total of five million dollars worth of US military aid supplies was airlifted to India. Of all the most recent happenings mentioned above, Nehru's receiving US military aid is most significant.⁴⁴

⁴³ Lok Sabha Debates. Third Series. Vol. IV, No. 1, Thursday, 8 November 1962. (Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi).

⁴⁴ Jen-min Jih-pao, Peking, 11 November, 1962.

The editorial went on to say that US aid was "the very factor which is decisive to the foreign policy of the Nehru government," and, "It is no accident that in the past few years US aid has increased exactly in proportion to the extent to which the Nehru government has served imperialism and opposed China."

The editorial concluded with an appeal to "all African and Asian friendly countries which cherish Sino-Indian amity, Afro-Asian solidarity and peace in Asia" to "join in our efforts to bring the Indian Government back to the conference table."⁴⁵ Was the pressure beginning to tell?

On the following day (12 November) Nehru announced at a press conference that he had asked the US to provide and operate transport aircraft within India, presumably on a lease basis. He had also asked Washington to ship arms producing equipment. Obviously, the Prime Minister would not have made this information public unless he had been previously assured that his requests would be approved and the assistance forthcoming.

Naturally, the Chinese were continuously re-appraising the situation, and it is probable that factors other than "imperialist" statements of support, and programs for supplying material aid, entered into their calculations. One of these was, very probably, the stand taken by responsible leaders of the Indian Communist Party, who in public statements and during debates in the Lok Sabha convincingly affirmed their loyalty to Nehru and their support of his war policy. If the Chinese had naively anticipated that Mukerjee, Chakravarty and other Indian Communist Party leaders would throw their support to Peking, they were quickly disenchanted.⁴⁶ India was not being riven internally, but united.

On 16 November the Chinese launched coordinated drives into NEFA, and at the same time mounted an attack on Chushul in Ladakh. The Indians were able to contain the attack against Chushul, but in NEFA,

⁴⁵ NCNA (in English) Peking, 11 November 1962.

⁴⁶ See, for example, statement of H. N. Mukerjee and Madame Renee Chakravarty in the Lok Sabha on November 8 and 10, respectively. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. IX, Nos. 1 and 3, (Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi).

particularly on the Towang-SeLa-Bombdi La-Tezpur line, the invaders drove into Indian territory, destroying as a fighting force the 4th Indian division in the process, and taking almost 4000 prisoners, as well as the strategic town of Walong. In the operations in eastern NEFA they were less successful, but their advance posed a serious threat to the Digboi oil fields and the Assam tea estates.

These renewed assaults were covered by a propaganda smokescreen: On 17 November, a letter from Chou En-lai to the Chiefs of State of African and Asian countries was made public. This letter was described by Jen-min Jih-pao as an "appeal" by the Chinese Premier in which "he expressed the sincere hope" that the addressees "would uphold justice and use their lofty influence in the interests of a peaceful settlement by China and India of their boundary question on a fair and reasonable basis."⁴⁷ One of the purposes of this note, as of other Chinese notes, editorials, and statements, was to shift the onus of guilt from themselves to the Indians. In this way they were almost entirely unsuccessful. Only three nations--Albania, North Korea, and North Vietnam openly supported and encouraged the Chinese. Many states on whom Peking had counted for support were non-committal.

In the meantime, President Kennedy had indicated his concern with the deteriorating situation by dispatching a senatorial "fact finding team" headed by Senator Mike Mansfield to New Delhi. The senators arrived in New Delhi on 18 November and were cordially received by Prime Minister Nehru. On the same day, India again appealed urgently to the US and Great Britain for increased military aid.

On the following day, Chinese Premier Chou En-lai warned that US aid to India would "enlarge the area of conflict" and called on Asian and African governments "to unite" in condemnation of foreign intervention.⁴⁸ Almost simultaneously the Indian Prime Minister again appealed urgently to President Kennedy for more arms.

⁴⁷ NCNA (in English) Peking, 20 November 1962.

⁴⁸ The New York Times, 20 November 1962.

At his news conference on 20 November, President Kennedy announced that a high-level mission, headed by Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs W. Averell Harriman would fly to Delhi "to assess India's needs in her struggle against China."⁴⁹

In the North East Frontier Agency, Chinese Troops continued to advance and had reached positions from which they could strike easily into the valley of the Brahmaputra. It was impossible for Indian positions in the Western sector of NEFA to be reconstituted with troops readily available.

With the situation in the NEFA approaching a catastrophe, Jen-min Jih-pao on 20 November urged the Indian Government to "Come Back to the Conference Table." Although the editorial stated that "fierce fighting" was continuing, it protested that this state of affairs was "the last thing" the Chinese government and people wanted to see, and continued:

We are particularly disturbed by the fact that US imperialism is taking advantage of the situation to take a hand. It is doing its utmost to encourage and back up the Indian authorities in launching further military adventures, aiming to kindle a war of Asians against Asians.⁵⁰

The general tenor of this editorial was conciliatory, and expressed Chinese determination to settle the border issue "by peaceful means" as "unshakable." The editorial stated categorically that it was possible, not only "to put an immediate end to the Sino-Indian border clashes, "but also" entirely possible to obtain a fair and reasonable solution to the entire border issue through negotiations."⁵¹ The statement was remarkable in its complete absence of bellicosity and invective and its expression of Premier Chou En-lai's willingness to travel to New Delhi to talk peace.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 31 November 1962.

⁵⁰ Jen-min Jih-pao, Peking, 20 November 1962.

⁵¹ NCNA (in English) Peking, 22 November 1962.

This effusion apparently had little effect in Indian government circles, for on the day it was released Prime Minister Nehru requested 80 Canberra tactical bombers from the United Kingdom.

On 22 November a most unexpected announcement occurred. Jen-min Jih-pao published in full a Chinese government statement of 21 November announcing a unilateral "cease fire." The Jen-min Jih-pao editorial began:

Beginning today, November 22, 1962, the Chinese frontier guards have ceased fire on Chinese initiative along the entire Sino-Indian border. In 9 days, on December 1, they will withdraw, again on Chinese initiative, to positions 20 kilometers behind the line of actual control which existed between India and China on November 7, 1959...⁵²

In practical terms, this unilateral cease fire and the withdrawal to be executed by the Chinese meant that they gave up all their territorial gains in NEFA, but, were retaining their strategic position in Ladakh which gave them control of the disputed Aksai Chin road. Whatever the real reasons for Peking's withdrawal, the way in which it was accomplished gave not only the impression of utter disdain for the Indian forces but also left the feeling that whenever they desired they could again reoccupy the area and destroy their adversary.

The United States reaction to this unilateral action was one of surprise and puzzlement. As the New York Times expressed it, the decision to halt the border war was "startling and puzzling in the extreme," and speculated that the Russians were "somehow" able "to bring pressure to bear." "The temptation at the moment is not to look the gift horse in the mouth; but once all of us recover from this surprise we will have to discover the real reason."⁵³

⁵² NCNA (in English) Peking, 22 November 1962.

⁵³ The New York Times, November 21, 1962.

Why Withdrawal?

Just as we ask the question, why did the Chinese enter the conflict, we must also ask and try to answer the question: why did Peking unilaterally disengage from the conflict at this time?

It is possible to support the hypothesis that the Chinese disengaged from the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1958 because of mounting evidence that the Americans were determined to prevent a Communist take-over of the Nationalist-garrisoned off-shore islands of Quemoy and Matsu. There, a distinct interaction pattern emerged.⁵⁴

In the Sino-Indian border war of 1962, the pattern is not so readily discernable. Nor is the Sino-Indian confrontation as readily reducible to a simple "power and influence equation."⁵⁵

Let us examine several hypotheses for the Chinese withdrawal, and comment on their plausibility:

1. The Chinese withdrew from the North East Frontier Agency because they could not possibly have supported the force committed during the winter months, and at the same time have maintained their position controlling the strategic Aksai Chin area.

Argument: Plausible. Terrain and weather conditions would inhibit effective support along the Se Le-Bombdi La Tezpur axis. Nor could the Chinese force operating on this axis (estimated as the equivalent of 3 brigades, or of the order of 15,000) live off the country. Logistic constraints might thus have dictated a phased withdrawal north toward winter quarters and logistic bases.

2. The Chinese withdrew because they conceived their major political objectives to have been attained and any further advance could

⁵⁴ See for example, Charles McClelland, The Communist Chinese Performance in Crisis and Non-Crisis: Quantitative Studies of the Taiwan Straits Confrontation, 1950-1964, (Los Angeles; Univ. of Southern California, 1965).

⁵⁵ For a quantitative analysis of the Sino-Indian Conflict see Paul Smoker, "A Time Series Analysis of Sino-Indian Relations," paper presented to the Second International Peace Research Association Conference, Tällberg, Sweden, June 17-19, 1967.

jeopardize not only the political but even the military and strategic gains achieved so far. These political objectives were most probably:

- a. To destroy the Nehru government, or, failing to achieve that, to embarrass and humiliate Nehru, and discredit his "non-alignment" policy.
- b. To encourage separatism and thus create deep internal division in India.
- c. To demonstrate their ability to enforce border territorial claims.
- d. In the process, to show Asian and other nations that India was a weak reed.
- e. To damage the Indian economy. There is no doubt that the Chinese saw in India a potential challenger to what they conceive to be their "rightful position" (i. e., one of dominance) in Asia. If the Indians were forced to divert scarce resources from the productive sectors to defense, her economic progress would be stalled.
- f. To chastise the Indians for their stand taken during the Tibetan revolt of 1959, and for according asylum to the Dalai Lama.

Argument: Again plausible; although all objectives were not realized, some were. The Chinese did embarrass and humiliate Nehru but not to the extent they had hoped. Rather, he became the focus of Indian patriotic sentiment. Nor did the attack exacerbate divisive tendencies in India. On the contrary, it united the nation. In this process, the pro-Peking wing of the Indian Communist party was destroyed.

The Chinese did demonstrate the ability to enforce territorial claims on India; proved to their satisfaction that in terms of military power (in a specific context favorable to themselves) she was "a weak reed," and did some--though by no means irreparable--damage to the Indian economy.

3. The Chinese withdrew because of Soviet pressure: a Soviet threat to cut off delivery of petroleum products (aviation gas, jet fuel) was cited at the time by some observers.

Argument: Possible, but highly improbable. Given the existing climate of Sino-Soviet relations, it is doubtful that the Chinese would have been responsive to pressure from the Kremlin, especially following Soviet failure to support the Chinese position.

4. The Chinese withdrew because they sensed an almost complete lack of international moral support.

Argument: This argument has some merit, but would not have been decisive.

5. The Chinese withdrew from NEFA because, in exchange for implicit recognition of the McMahon Line, they would be able to retain and consolidate strategic positions in the Aksai Chin.

Argument: Plausible. The Chinese conceived the Aksai Chin position, covering the Sinkiang-Tibet road, vital to the security of both these areas.

6. The Chinese withdrew because it became apparent to them that the United States primarily, and the U. K. , Canada, Australia, West Germany and France secondly were committed to full diplomatic, moral and material support of India.

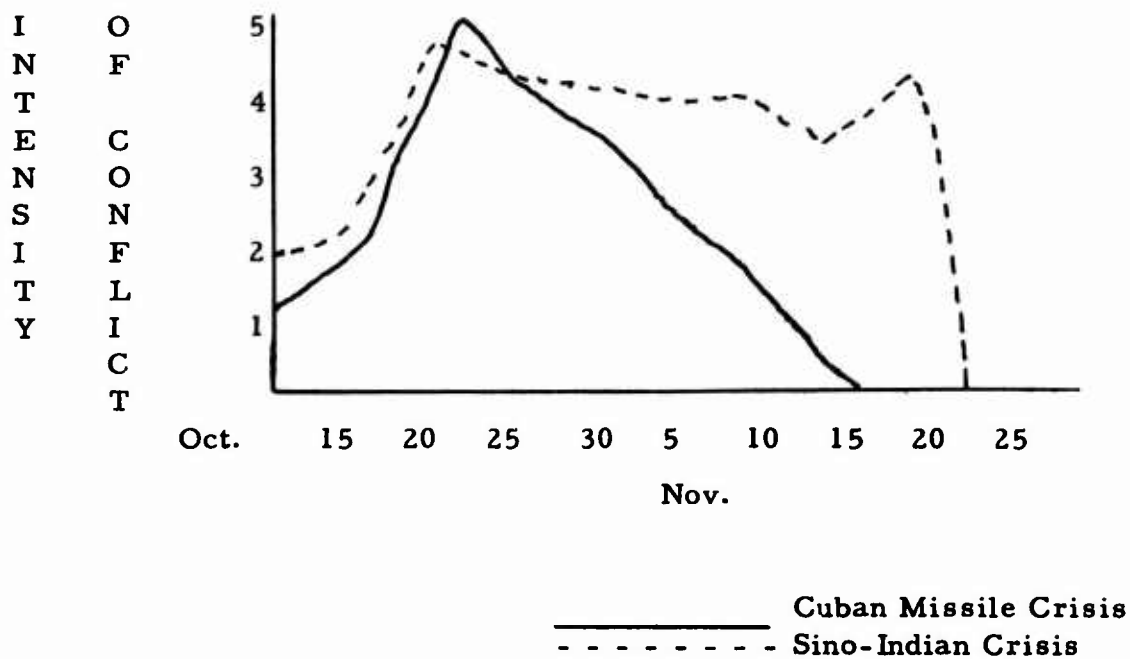
Argument: This was not necessarily the only factor in the Chinese decision but obviously it was a very important one. The Chinese were seriously disturbed by evident American determination to render advisory and material support to India on an increasing scale. Certainly, the prospect of deep and lasting American involvement in the Sino-Indian dispute was not advantageous to Peking.

The last and final hypothesis as indicated earlier seems to us to be the most plausible and the overriding factor in the Chinese decision to withdraw.

CONCLUSION

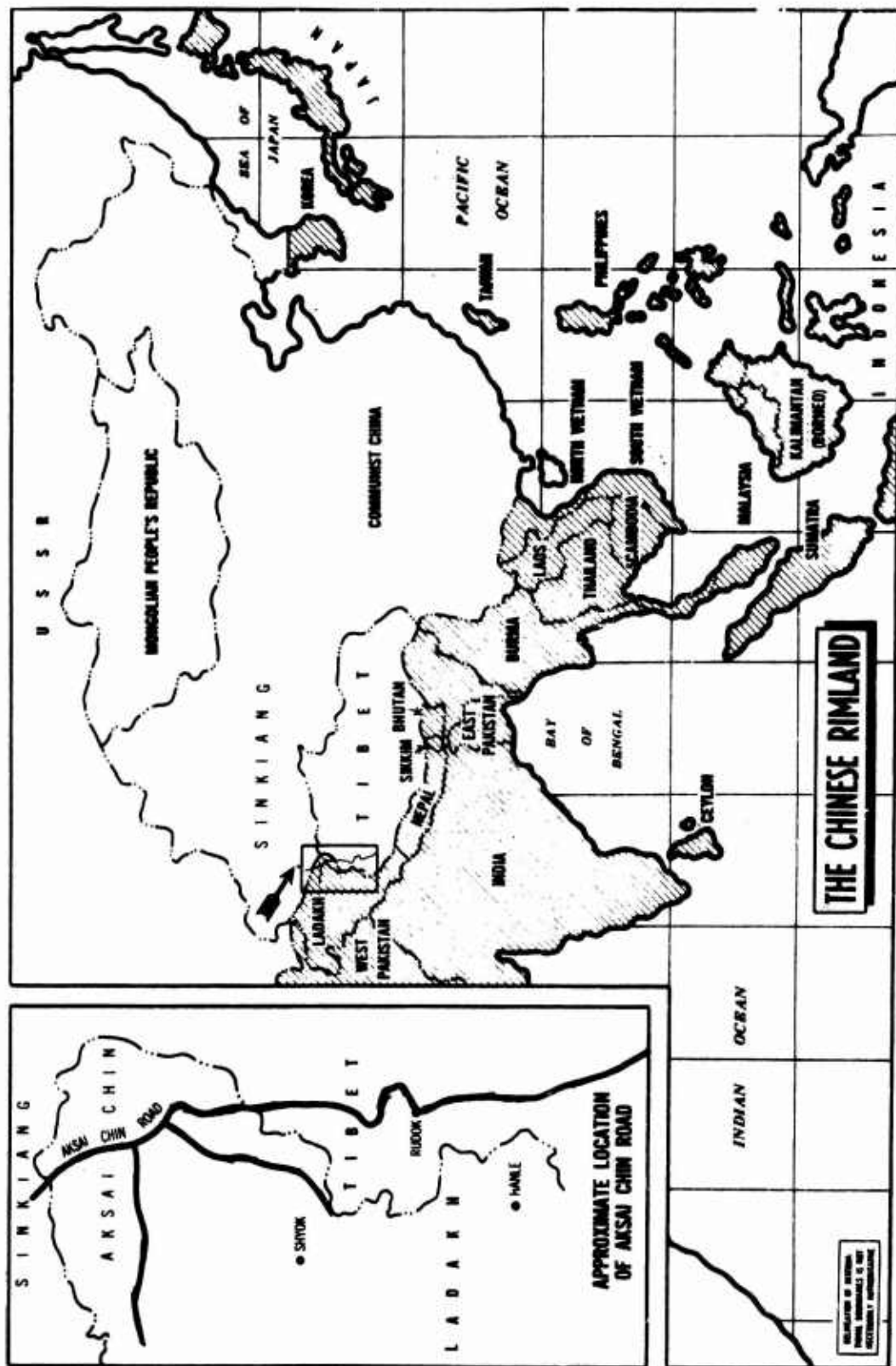
The major conclusions reached in this study are twofold. (1) The Chinese were perceptive and reacted to US actions in the Sino-Indian conflict. As long as the US was occupied elsewhere and as long as her commitment was limited, the Chinese escalated the conflict. However, when the US was able to pay full attention to the crisis and indicated a willingness to aid India with whatever assistance she needed to stop the Chinese, Peking immediately reacted by unilaterally withdrawing her forces. (See Figure 4.) This, as did McClelland's Quemoy-Matsu study,⁵⁶ would seem to indicate that the Chinese, at least in the past, have retreated when it became obvious that the US commitment was such that it might escalate the conflict into a direct US-CPR confrontation. This seems to be a possible consequence that the Chinese Communists have been careful to avoid. (2) The Chinese, as in the Quemoy-Matsu crisis, probably became involved in the crisis to achieve political rather than military objectives. That is, the Chinese attack was a shrewd use of limited military force for political purposes, in which she was highly sensitive to, and reactive to, the international political environment. This conclusion would seem to support those who argue that the Chinese are or at least were in 1962 more concerned with external questions--reliability of CPSU, China's stature in the underdeveloped world, etc.--than with domestic ones--i. e., security of a marginal region such as Tibet.

⁵⁶McClelland, Taiwan Straits, op cit, pp. 5-9.



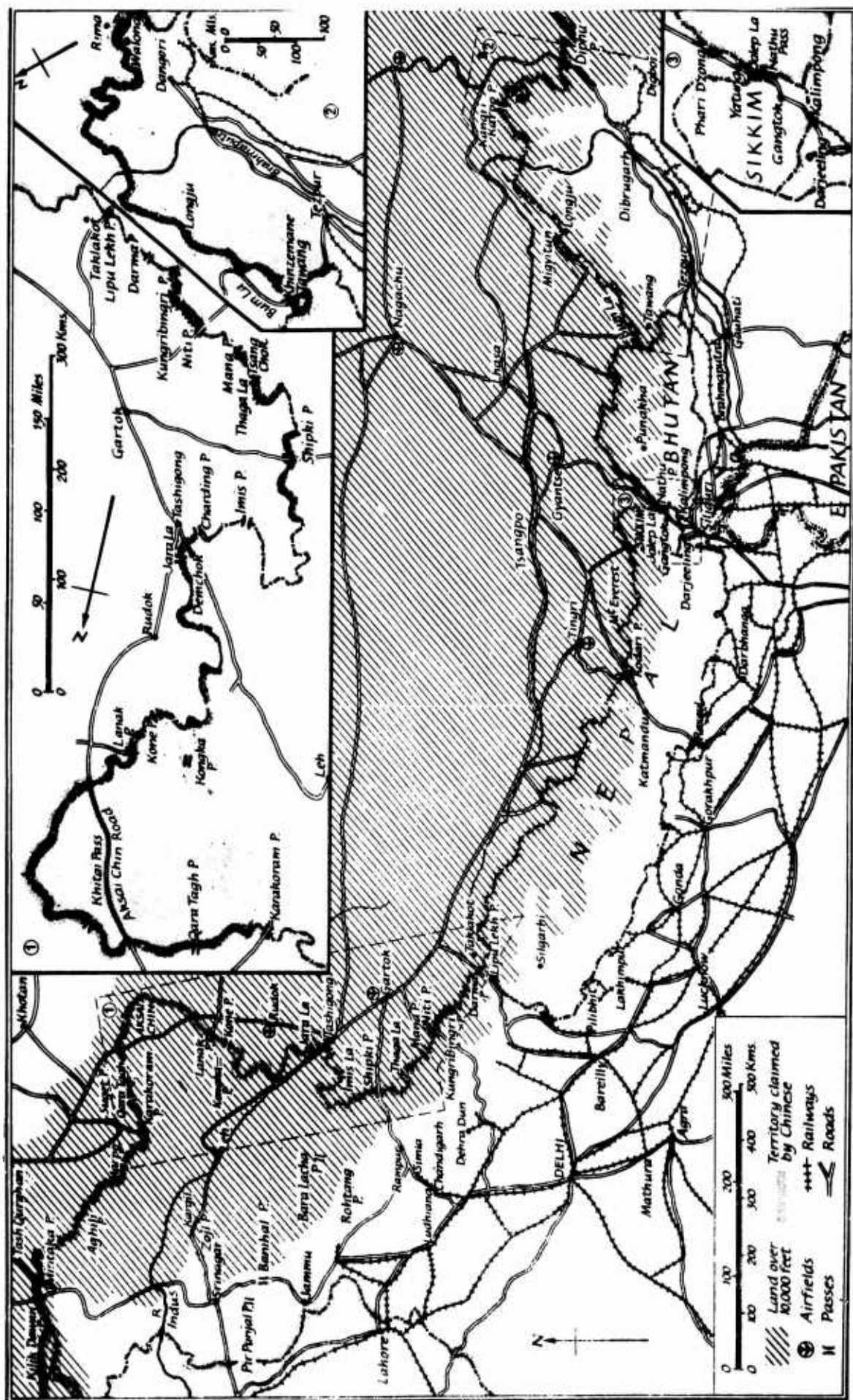
Conflict Intensity⁵⁷
 Figure 4

⁵⁷ The plots on the scale are based on a qualitative assessment of the intensity of the combined verbal statements and military actions of the US and CPR at 5-day intervals as derived from an analysis of New China News Agency releases, The New York Times and a Bendix prepared chronology of the conflict.



ANNEX I

From Military Review, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Vol. XLVII, No. 1, January 1967.



MAP OF THE INDO- CHINESE BORDER AREA

ANNEX II

From D. Som Dutt, The Defence of India's Northern Borders (London: The Institute for Strategic Studies), Adelphi Papers No. 25, January 1966, pp. 6-7.

ANNEX III

Chronology of Major Events: Sino-Indian War

Date	US	CPR	India	Soviet Union
Oct. 15	Obtains first hand evidence of offensive missiles in Cuba.			
Oct. 16-20	Crisis over Cuba intensifies.			
Oct. 20		Launches major offensive		
Oct. 21	Offers assistance "if requested?"			
Oct. 22	Accuses CPR of aggression against India. Pres. Kennedy announces quarantine and Cuban crisis intensifies.			Still no comment on crisis by Soviets.
Oct. 24		Propose ceasefire.	Rejects ceasefire.	

Date	US	CPR	India	Soviet Union
Oct. 26		Take Tawang	Declares state of emergency and sends appeals to US, G. B. , etc. for military arms and equipment.	Supports verbally CPR call for a ceasefire.
Oct. 28				Khrushchev announces dismantling and with- drawal of missiles.
Oct. 29	US pledges to assist India.		Request US assistance.	
Nov. 1	Pres. Kennedy makes first major comment on crisis.			
Nov. 8	All known missile sites in Cuba dis- mantled.			
Nov. 16		Launch 2nd major offen- sive.	Appeals <u>urgently</u> to US for military aid.	
Nov. 18	Lifts Cuban quarantine - crisis over for all practical purposes.			

Date	US	CPR	India	Soviet Union
Nov. 18	Agrees to send <u>all</u> equipment needed, even troops if necessary			
Nov. 20		Announces unilateral withdrawal.		

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Appadorai, A. (ed.), Chinese Aggression in India, (special edition of International Studies) London, 1963.
- "Chinese Premier Writes to Heads of Afro-Asian States on Border Issue," Current Background, American Consulate General, Hong Kong, No. 699, Nov. 23, 1962.
- Chopra, Maharaj, "The Himalayan Border War: An Indian Military View," Military Review, XLIII, No. 5, May 1963.
- Dutt, Vidya Prakash, China and the World: An Analysis of Communist China's Foreign Policy, (New York: Praeger, 1966).
- _____, "India and China: Betrayal, Humiliation, Reappraisal," A. M. Halpern (ed.), Policies Toward China: View From Six Continents, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966).
- Fisher, Margaret, Leo Rose and Robert Huttenback, Himalayan Battleground (New York: Praeger, 1963).
- Greaser, Connie, "Quantitative Analysis of the Sino-Indian Border Conflict, 1954-1962." Unpublished master thesis, University of Southern California, June 1966.
- Hinton, Harold, Communist China in World Politics (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1966).
- "India-China Border Conflict," The Control of Local Conflict, a study for the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA/WEC-98 III-1), prepared by Lincoln Bloomfield, et al., Center for International Studies MIT, 1967.
- Lamb, Alastair, The China-India Border: The Origin of the Disputed Boundaries, (London: Oxford Press, 1964).
- Lewis, John W., "Communist China's Invasion of the Indian Frontier: The Framework of Motivation," Current Scene, Hong Kong, II, No. 7, January 2, 1963.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY (CONT.)

McClelland, Charles, The Communist Chinese Performance in Crisis and Non-Crisis: Quantitative Studies of the Taiwan Straits Confrontation (Los Angeles: University of Southern California, 1965)

"More on Nehru's Philosophy in the Light of the Sino-Indian Boundary Question, " Current Background, Hong Kong, American Consulate General, No. 696, November 2, 1962.

"Notes, Statements and Articles on the Sino-Indian Boundary Question: August 12, 1961 - August 7, 1962, " Current Background, Hong Kong, American Consulate General, No. 689, September 19, 1962.

Patterson, George, "The Himalayan Frontier, " Survival, Vol. V, No. 5, September - October 1963.

_____, _____ (New York: Praeger, 1964).

Pringsheim, Klauf, "China, India and the Himalayan Border (1961-1963), " Asian Survey, Vol. III, No. 10, October 1963, pp. 474-495.

Report of the Officials of the Government of India and the Peoples Republic of China on the Boundary Question, (New Delhi Ministry of External Affairs, 1961).

Rose, Leo, "Conflict in the Himalayas, " Military Review, Vol. XLIII, No. 2, February 1963, pp. 3-16.

Searls, Guy, "Communist China's Border Policy: Dragon Throne Imperialism, " Current Scene, Hong Kong, Vol. II, No. 12, April 15, 1963.

Sino-Indian Boundary Question (Enlarged Edition), (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1962).

Smoker, Paul, "A Time Series Analysis of Sino-Indian Relations, " paper presented to Second International Peace Research Association Conference, Tällberg, Sweden, June 17-19, 1967.

Steiner, H. Arthur, "Chinese Policy in the Sino-Indian Border Dispute, " Current Scene, Hong Kong, Vol. I, No. 17, November 7, 1961.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY (CONT.)

Survey of China Mainland Press, Hong Kong, American Consulate General, related translations issued almost daily during the period May 1, 1962 and December 31, 1962.

Trivedi, V. C., "The Defense of India," in Alastair Buchan (ed.), China and the Peace of Asia, (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 125-141.

White Paper: Notes, Memoranda and Letters Exchanged and Agreements Signed Between the Governments of India and China, (New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs), reports concerning the Sino-Indian conflict are numbered I through IX.

APPENDIX E

CONFLICT BETWEEN POLITICAL AND MILITARY
LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNIST CHINA

CONFLICT BETWEEN POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNIST CHINA

by Suzanne Ogden¹

INTRODUCTION

This paper analyzes not only the conflict between the leadership elements of the Communist Party (CCP) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) but also the conflict between Party and professional elements within the PLA itself.² The focal point of the conflict is the Party's view of the role of the PLA as well as the Party's status as it stands in opposition to the Army's view of its own role. This basic conflict pattern is used as the overview from which external policy of the Chinese People's Republic (CPR) is surveyed for the years 1949 to 1967. An analysis of the relationship between the relative position and power of the Party and Army and Peking's foreign military and political policies is made for this period.

It is well to note at the outset that, though this paper focuses on conflict between Army and Party and between professional and political elements within the Army, to the outside world and indeed to the Chinese peasant himself, harmony and Party supremacy seemed to prevail until

¹ Mrs. Suzanne Ogden received her B.A. in Political Science at Cornell University, specializing in Far East and Southeast Asia area studies. She gained proficiency in reading and speaking Chinese from her studies at Yale and the University of Michigan and earned an M.A. in Far Eastern studies at the University of Michigan. Mrs. Ogden is currently working on a Ph. D. in Political Science. Since 1966 she has been a political analyst (China and Southeast Asia) for the Office of National Security Studies at the Bendix Aerospace Systems Division. She is a member of the Association for Asian Studies and the National Committee on United States-China Relations.

² The contribution to this paper by Professor John W. Lewis (Cornell), who reviewed and commented on this paper, is hereby acknowledged. However, the interpretations and conclusions of the paper are those of the author of record and do not necessarily represent the views of Professor Lewis.

the 'Cultural Revolution' began in 1966. The dissent over professionalism³ has been, if not "strictly an intra-party affair"⁴ at least largely so. Only part of the officer corps has been involved in the conflict with the Party and even these "professional officers" did not oppose the Party on all issues.⁵ Both sides, for example, conceded the need for being both "red" and "expert"; the difference lies in emphasis. The Party elite wants the Army to be both modern and "revolutionary" in quality, but with emphasis on revolutionary. The professional army elements believe military men should supervise the Army, with military considerations taking precedence in any decision. Further, they maintain, "modernization is not something that can simply be tacked onto the 'guerrilla' army: the substance of that army must change too."⁶ This dissension between the "red" and "expert" elements has been the basic issue between the Party and Army in China. From it has developed the dispute over nuclear strategy; political control of the Army; modernization of the organization and weaponry of the Army; relations with the Soviet Union; militancy abroad; and diversion of the Army to non-military tasks such as irrigation projects and land reclamation.

PRE-1949 TO KOREA

During China's civil war, the political and military leadership of the Communist forces was identical. The Army had both a very simple staff system and a very simple structure. Consequently, there was no need for professional specialization of officers. The irregular and revolutionary character of the Communist army, together with the intimate relationship between soldier and peasant (soldiers were usually peasants) blurred the distinction between ranks, and between soldiers and civilians. Political and military doctrine had merged, as had political and military leadership.⁷

³ Professionalism, or expertise, without acknowledgement of "politics in command" has been attacked not only in the Army but in every sphere of Chinese life: in the economic sphere, artists' circles, etc. One might conclude that the PLA was a victim of general Party policies rather than specific policies aimed solely at the PLA.

⁴ Ellis Joffe, Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949-1964, Harvard: (East Asian Research Center, 1965), p. 48.

⁵ Ibid., p. xi.

⁶ Chieh-fang chün-pao (Liberation Army News), August 17, 1958, appearing in Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS), No. 6471 (1959), p. 1.

⁷ Davis B. Bobrow, "The Political and Economic Role of the Military in the Chinese Communist Movement, 1927-1959," unpublished Ph. D. thesis, M. I. T., 1962, pp. 196-198 and 201-202.

Rarely was there a Party leader who had not in some way been involved in military affairs during the war. And military leaders tended to be, first and foremost, members of the Communist Party.

When the Chinese Communists gained victory in 1949, their army consisted of five million men, most of whom were irregulars (guerrillas), organized in a decentralized command structure, using obsolete equipment of mixed origin and kind. The need for a professional army corps and for modern weaponry to replace the existing structure became apparent as the Korean War progressed. The experiences gained in the war in terms of weaponry and modern warfare as well as the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1950 provided strong support for those demanding modernization of the Army following the cessation of hostilities.

Hence, the Korean War marked a turning point in the CCP's recognition of the needs of the PLA. Indeed, it marked not only the beginning of a major reorientation and reorganization of the Chinese Army but also a major rethinking of foreign policy objectives. By the end of the war, a US policy of containment with isolation had been clearly outlined. US military power, previously held in great respect but considered remote, was something with which the Chinese now felt they had to reckon. If China were to break the barriers this 'sphere of influence' policy established, it would need greater military power to back its demands or threats. Moreover, it needed greater military power to support its objectives even in those areas where US presence was limited as was manifestly evidenced by the defeat of Communist-inspired insurrection in Burma, Indonesia and the Philippines.⁸

PROFESSIONALISM: AFTERMATH OF KOREA

By the end of the Korean War the Chinese Communist military establishment had become complex enough to need a large number of officers with a wide range of specialties. In order to fill these positions, new officers

⁸ John W. Lewis, Communist China: Crisis and Change (New York: Foreign Policy Association, Headline Series No. 179, October 1966), p. 27.

who lacked the dual background of political and military leadership were recruited. Moreover, a large number of the revolutionary fighters and hard-core Communist cadres who did possess the desired dual background and who had survived the Korean War were either moved upwards in the ranks of the armed forces or demobilized. Thus, just when politically well-indoctrinated junior cadres were needed to staff and operate the newly re-organized armed forces, the number of cadres available with the "correct" background greatly decreased.⁹ This resulted in shambles being made of the political work of companies⁹ as well as a rapid increase in military professionalism. The rise of military professionalism may, therefore, be regarded as a direct result of the modernization of the Army.

Even those Party leaders with the old "guerrilla mentality", however, realized the necessity for modernizing, and made numerous efforts to implement requisite measures. The conflict was not, therefore, a simple "we-they" dichotomy between men of different backgrounds and different generations. The Party did not at any time deny the need for a modernized army with a professional officer corps. In fact, the Party issued rules and regulations for modernization of the staff system, training of professional soldiers, and the technical modernization of weaponry. "Regulations on the Service of Officers," promulgated February 1955, for example, for the first time classified officers according to their field of specialization, provided for advancement on the basis of professional competence, insignia for officers and cash payments which varied greatly according to rank. This was followed by the Military Service Law (July 1955) which introduced universal conscription and fixing of terms of service for officers (August 1955). Additionally, a number of military academies were established to train a professional officer corps. In short, the need for modernization was agreed upon. The central issue was the nature of the relationship of a modernized PLA with the Government and Party.

⁹ Alexander George, The Chinese Communist Army in Action: The Korean War and Its Aftermath, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 211.

It was inevitable that a number of professionally-oriented officers¹⁰ would emerge from this sort of training and from the responsibilities of managing and operating a fairly complex military establishment, and that a certain élan and professional esprit de corps would develop out of regulations which conferred certain privileges and honors on officers. Though not all, most who became professional officers were those who had joined the officer corps after 1949 and had become "professionalized" as the Army was being modernized. They were the lower-ranking officers; the veteran guerrilla officers of Mao's Long March usually remaining as the higher-ranking officers. What has been a conflict between the professional and political elites may today be seen also as a conflict between generations. The veteran guerrilla fighters of the civil war are obsessed with instilling their revolutionary fervor and dogma in the new generation. Those who have come to positions of power since 1949, however, have generally been more interested in China's advancement in the modern world than in carrying on the older generation's revolutionary spirit. The consequent professionalization of the military thus became a threat to the old-line political leadership. The threat became so great that, with increasing intensity from 1956 to 1959, the Party carried out campaigns to curb the power of the officers, to take privileges away from the Army, and to reassert absolute Party control.

REASSERTION OF PARTY CONTROL

"Professionalism" resulted in an alienation of soldiers from officers. Most of the new officers had not gone through the ranks. Many came from bourgeois backgrounds and were contemptuous of peasant recruits. Additionally, the new officers tended to reject individual initiative and advice from rank and file soldiers, stressing instead the need for compliance with orders from Army headquarters and strict discipline

¹⁰ Professional officers are defined here as those who saw the need for, and gave priority to the development of military-technical expertise over political matters and who desired to modernize the Army in accord with new nuclear-age strategic demands. (They were still, of course, also politically oriented. It is a question of degree, therefore, when one contrasts professional military with political elites.)

as is needed in a modern and technically complex army. Hence, the professional elements within the PLA were accused of "bureaucratism" and "centralism" and of letting regularization sacrifice "democracy" and the "mass line." ¹¹ The reassertion of strict Party control over the PLA emanated from the Party's rejection of the priority given by the professional officers to modernization of the Army. The professional Army elite was herein repudiating the priority the Party gave to the ideological consciousness of men, which was attained through political control and indoctrination. This conflict can be summarized in the Party slogan "man over weapons" (which is closely associated with the slogan "politics in command").

The reasons for the Party emphasis on man's superiority, revolutionary fervor, political consciousness and self-sacrificing spirit are obvious. Aside from being a manifestation of the old guerrilla leaders' desire to keep ideology prominent, this was a defensive mentality, designed to rationalize to the masses what the Party leaders were well aware of: China's technological inferiority. In addition, the Communists' past experience of defeating the Chinese Nationalists in a civil war against overwhelming odds (in terms of superior equipment) made the old-line leaders sincerely feel political superiority was the key to victory and that revolutionary fervor was a "spiritual A-bomb." ¹²

¹¹ Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., pp. 72-77. The Kung Tso T'ung hsun (KTTH) or "Work Correspondence" of 1961, however, says that though there is abuse of authority and coercion instead of persuasion, these faults are only applicable to a small minority of officers. There is no reason to doubt the validity of these Bulletins, as they were not intended for public consumption. The KTTH covers the period from January 1, 1961 to August 26, 1961. According to the General Political Department of the PLA, the KTTH is "an irregular secret publication produced by the Party for officers at the regimental level or above, who belong to the Party." The KTTH contains rather frank speeches from top military leaders, Military Affairs Committee reports, and reports from other parts of the Army. See John W. Lewis, "China's Secret Military Papers: 'Continuities' and 'Revelations,'" China Quarterly, No. 18 (April/June 1964), p. 67.

¹² Publicly Chinese Communist leaders still maintain that the superiority of men will not be changed by time and progress, though the KTTH, 1961, show that privately China's military leaders are vitally concerned with nuclear weapons, problems of modernization and technology, etc. They also show, however, that this concern was not so great as to bring into question the ultimate importance of men over weapons. In the final analysis men are still considered to be more important than weapons.

The Party's response to the increasing modernization in the PLA was development of a political system of control in the PLA which paralleled the Army's command structure from the General Staff down to the company level. Political officers were placed on an equal footing with the commander of each unit, and were made responsible for the political affairs of the unit as well as the political reliability of the commander. These political commissars, together with the Party committees at each level, gained veto powers over any decision (military or political) the military commander might make. In case of a dispute between the officer and commissar, the matter was referred to the Party committee. But since the political commissars were the secretaries of the Party committees, and since the committees were composed mostly of political activists,¹³ that the committees would favor the political viewpoint was a foregone conclusion.

The Communist Party committees at all levels in the army are built upon the basis of democratic centralism... Except in emergencies when the leaders of an armed unit can make decisions at their own discretion within their competence, all important matters... should be discussed in a democratic way at Party committee meetings...¹⁴

Thus even in an emergency the military commanders were still held responsible for their actions. Such a system of Party control and of many hours spent in political indoctrination and political work has led to marked inefficiency and serious strains between the military and Party leaders. Professional officers opposed this system of Party committees which impeded their control and independence of action in a time of modern warfare that by its very nature requires quick tactical decisions. Political control in the PLA is even today one of the greatest causes of conflict between the PLA and the CCP.¹⁵

¹³ Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., p. 128.

¹⁴ P'eng Teh-huai, speech at Eighth National Congress, (Peking: New China News Agency, 1956), p. 33.

¹⁵ Other methods of Party control over the PLA are: (1) Party secret police; (2) security forces, and agents of Ministry of Public Security; (3) liaison men--"selected from among reliable enlisted men who are Communist Party members" to report the real situation within the company. Ralph L. Powell, Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China (State Dept. publication: Washington, D. C., October 1963), p. 9.

DISPUTE OVER CHINA'S STRATEGY IN THE NUCLEAR AGE

A product of the Party-military conflict was a dispute over what China's strategy in the nuclear age should be as well as how to meet external (and internal) challenges which involve the PLA. From 1954 to the present there have been three distinct stages in the development of Chinese strategy (all of which are in part an outgrowth of China's experience in the Korean War):

- (1) From 1954 to mid-1957, when the US had greater nuclear power than the Soviet Union;
- (2) From fall 1957, when the Chinese concluded the Soviet Union had gained nuclear superiority, to the replacement of Minister of Defense P'eng Teh-huai by Lin Piao in September 1959;
- (3) From September 1959 to the present.

The fall of 1954 seems to be when the Chinese first gave serious consideration to the implications of nuclear warfare. This was the period when the Russians and Chinese were deliberating the risks of a Taiwan campaign and was, according to Alice Langley Hsieh, "The latest possible date when the implications of new Soviet thinking on nuclear warfare began to be appreciated by the Chinese. . . ." ¹⁶ In 1954, the still vivid memories of US conventional military power and Chinese concern over the potential employment of United States air power were undoubtedly major contributing factors to the Party's concessions to the professional elements in moving toward further modernization of the PLA. ¹⁷ With the increasing Soviet capability the future appeared more optimistic to Peking:

Unlike the Malenkov policy of pure deterrence, Khrushchev's insistence on a war-fighting posture implied that the Soviet Union would seek to develop some kind of military superiority over the United States, thus opening the way for a more aggressive bloc military posture. ¹⁸

¹⁶ Alice Langley Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 23.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 24. The stimulus of the Korean war for modernization has already been noted.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 25..

China's awakening to the vulnerability of the Mainland to nuclear attack was probably a contributing factor in her decision to withdraw from the Taiwan Strait in 1955, to turn to the Bandung Conference (April 1955) and to call for negotiations with the US.¹⁹

Whether observed from the generally professional viewpoint of the General Staff, or from the more amateurish political standpoint of the Ministry of National Defense, from 1954 to mid-1957 there was a recognition of China's increasing military dependence on the Soviet Union. During this period, China was very cautious in foreign policy. China had neither nuclear weapons nor the scientific and technological base (nor the skilled human resources) to become a nuclear power. Both schools of strategic thought within China were basically defensive in mentality as a consequence. Conflict, however, arose over the means for solving the recognized weaknesses of China's military establishment, the threat of nuclear war and speculation on the likelihood of war.

The General Staff, headed by Su Yu, though it realized the importance of a Soviet deterrent for China's protection, questioned the extent of the Soviet Union's political commitment to China.²⁰ Moreover, the General Staff was greatly concerned about the implications of surprise attack, though it did not concede that a nuclear blow would necessarily be decisive. It consequently favored implementing interim defense measures, particularly "the development of well-trained and well-equipped forces-in-being, a strong air force, and an air defense system even if this involved the purchase of nuclear equipment from abroad."²¹ Hopefully, these measures would reduce China's vulnerability to a first strike. Mao's protracted warfare strategy, in which space could be traded for time would nevertheless continue to be necessary since China's air defense systems would take time to develop to a level of capability which could protect it against US air attacks. Well-equipped and well-trained forces-in-being were, therefore, still vital to China's successful struggle against invading occupation forces. Poorly equipped and poorly trained masses in reserve could hardly be expected to defend China, and a long term improvement of China's military posture was felt to be inadequate to meet what were considered the immediate demands imposed by nuclear war.²² The General Staff's stand did not diminish the importance of Soviet aid to China's military posture. If anything, it increased its

¹⁹ Alice Langley Hsieh, "Red China and Nuclear War," Military Review, February 1961, p. 88.

²⁰ Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy, op cit., pp. 72-73.

²¹ Ibid., p. 73

²² Ibid., p. 67.

importance. Soviet advice, equipment, and training were prerequisites to the rapid increase in China's military strength which was felt to be necessary to combat the immediate threat. General Yeh Chien ying in a speech delivered before the second session of the First National People's Congress (July 27, 1955) said:

The equipment of our army today is much improved compared with the past. But we must realize that the present stage of industrial development in our country is still inadequate for the production of large quantities of the modern equipment for our army. This situation naturally is not in keeping with the needs of modern national defense. To improve this backward situation, we cannot but accelerate the development of our industry, particularly heavy industry. Pending the full establishment of our industry, within certain limits it is necessary for us to resort to the expedient measure of placing orders with foreign countries.²³

Soviet advice and the change in Soviet doctrine in 1954-55 not only gave the professional officers' group a further reason for modernizing the PLA, but also caused it to question the ability of the Party leadership to decide issues of military doctrine and organization. During this period, Russian strategic doctrine began to emphasize the central role of nuclear weapons and to accord top priority to military factors in determining the outcome of a war. The Chinese Communist party leaders viewed acceptance of this position as tantamount to rejecting the military thought of Mao Tse-tung, who maintained that political factors must take precedence over military factors to attain victory. The changes in Soviet theory announced in the 20th and 21st Congresses of the CPSU (1956 and 1959) were even more important and far reaching in their implications. Khrushchev's declarations that war was no longer inevitable raised the question for the Chinese as to whether the absence of wars would not slow down revolutionary progress.²⁴ This question arose because previous Soviet doctrine, based

²³ Yeh Chien-ying's speech as translated in Current Background, No. 347, August 23, 1955, pp. 29-30. Emphasis added.

²⁴ Donald S. Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict 1956-61 Princeton, (Princeton University Press: 1962), p. 229, quoting The Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, (Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House: 1960), p. 606.

on the writings of Lenin and Stalin, had declared that imperialist wars were the "locomotives" of revolution. Communist parties were to use wars to augment mass discontent, and to convert imperialist wars into civil wars in which revolutionary opportunities were offered. The point was not that revolutions could not take place without war, but rather that (inevitable) imperialist wars hastened the fall of imperialism. Khrushchev maintained that "although world wars are unthinkable without revolutions, revolutions are fully possible without wars." Concurrently the Soviet military organization was becoming more hierarchic, bureaucratic and formal, especially under the leadership of Defense Minister Zhukov in 1955-57.²⁵ The Soviets had begun to emphasize "unity of command," in contrast to the Chinese system of "collective leadership."²⁶

Most professional Chinese officers were enthusiastic about modeling the PLA after the modernized Soviet army, and were quite willing to accept Soviet policy guidelines as long as the Soviets were willing to aid the Chinese in developing their own modern army. This is an important caveat to keep in mind when the pro-Soviet attitude of the PLA is discussed. That is, many military men were "pro-Soviet" only insofar as they realized the value of continued Soviet aid and only for this reason did they support pro-Soviet policies. Others who are termed "pro-Soviet", however, were more purely so; i.e., they saw the value of the Soviet models in the military and economic spheres; and/or they agreed with the Soviet policy of "moderation" in foreign policy.

The CCP, however, strongly cautioned the military against indiscriminate copying of Soviet practices--most particularly where these practices were a direct refutation of Maoist thought (as in declaring that Communism could advance without war of any kind).²⁷

²⁵ Zhukov was purged in 1957, however, resulting in a strengthening of party control over the Soviet Army.

²⁶ Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., p. 42.

²⁷ The issue, says Joffe, was not whether or not to learn from the Soviet Union, but how much to learn. The CCP would not tolerate the adoption of Soviet practices which disregarded Maoist military thinking. See Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., p. 107. One of the main determining factors seems to have been, however, that a complete copying of Soviet practices would have required resources the Chinese could ill afford. The officers' ideas, therefore, seem to have been considered more impossible than incorrect.

The Ministry of National Defense headed by P'eng Teh-huai contrary to the General Staff's position backed the political leaders' decision,²⁸ that China's national defense should basically be based on self-reliance, to be attained by advancing China's own industrial and technological capabilities rather than by promoting interim defense measures. The Chinese could reduce defense expenditures by decreasing the number of soldiers in the standing army and by placing greater dependence on trained reserves which could be mobilized after a surprise attack. In the view of the political elite, the Soviet Union would support China in case of a surprise attack taking pressure off China's own military establishment. The possibility of nuclear attack and its implications were not even considered publicly by the Ministry of Defense, "except in the context of Soviet deterrent capabilities,"²⁹ behind which China was seemingly considered immune from attack. P'eng Teh-huai seemed to believe, moreover, that war which would involve China was unlikely because "the Soviet Union and China would not provoke it by their own behavior, and they would be able to control the level of tension in relations with the United States in any crisis in the near future."³⁰ This belief supported P'eng's and the Party's view that China could afford to concentrate resources on economic development but did not support the Party view in foreign policy, that China should play an activist role in abetting revolutions. Both P'eng and the Party agreed that interim defense measures would not only divert resources from China's economic and technological development, but also would mean fewer resources for expanding China's defensive capabilities. Additionally, in view of the low level of economic development, the measures advocated by the General Staff seemed totally unrealistic. Industrialization was the prerequisite for a modern army.

28 That Peng's positions reflected decisions made in the upper echelons of the CCP is substantiated by developments from 1955 to 1959, (i. e., the reiteration of Peng's views by Party leaders, and the de-emphasis on issues the General Staff considered important). See Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy, op. cit., pp. 49, 52, 53.

29 Ibid., p. 45.

30 Ibid., p. 47.

The implication of developing China's own technological and economic base, therefore, was a short-term dependence on the Soviet Union for aid. In the long run, independent development meant that China could develop an independent military strategy, impossible as long as the Soviets, unwilling to be drawn into a general war, not of their own choice, could control China's external policies.

China's deterrent against, and/or response to, various contingencies of modern warfare such as the introduction of tactical atomic weapons into a limited war... the gradual expansion of a limited conventional war into a more general nuclear war, or all-out surprise attack depended not on her own capabilities but on those of the USSR.³¹

Hence, any action that the CPR might wish to take which would involve US interests and might evoke an American response, could not necessarily expect support from the Soviet Union, which from 1954 to 1957 was in a state of decided strategic inferiority to the US. Aside from border incidents and indirect participation in civil wars, China was left with little initiative.³² The militant policies which China's political leaders and members of the Ministry of Defense espoused were shackled by dependence on the Soviet Union at least until China could enlarge the economic and technological basis for her own military establishment. Meanwhile, Soviet aid continued, though on an insufficient scale for China's pursuit of an independent foreign policy or for development of her own nuclear weapons. This limited support by the Soviets was quite understandably viewed with suspicion by China's leaders.

A final look at the 1954-1957 period reveals a trend, beginning in late 1956, for personnel from the Ministry of Defense gradually to assume positions of authority in departments under the auspices of the General

³¹ Ibid., p. 74.

³² Although strategic inferiority continued after 1957, the psychological effect of SPUTNIK and the successful launching of an ICBM made it seem as if Soviet strength had increased relative to US strength.

Staff. This began with the replacement in late 1956 of Lo Jung-huan, the head of both the General Political and General Personnel Departments, by T'an Cheng (who was also a Vice-Minister of National Defense) in the former, and Hsiao Hua in the latter.³³ Leaders who put "politics in command" were, therefore, taking over the leadership of the PLA.³⁴ (See Figure 1 for a diagram of the PLA Command structure). This is the beginning of a remodeling of PLA leadership, a process which intensified during the anti-rightist campaign following the Hundred Flowers campaign in 1957. In effect, the officer corps had so expanded its privileges that it had become a political burden to the Party; for its privileges, concomitant with an inflated sense of self-esteem, had brought on increased feelings of professional independence and technical expertise. The officers were consequently losing their subservience to political directors.³⁵

1957- SEPTEMBER 1959

Russia's launching of the first Sputnik and the successful firing of an ICBM in August 1957, ushered in a new stage in China's strategy in the nuclear age. Mao Tse-tung announced "the East wind prevails over the West wind" and indeed to the Chinese this seemed to be true. They felt that the balance of forces had shifted to favor the Communists and that the Soviet Union now possessed a nuclear deterrent capable of defending the Chinese mainland against US attack. Moreover, given the reality of this shield, of which the P'eng group had a high estimate,³⁶ it was felt that the Soviet Union would allow China more freedom to maneuver. For

³³ Ibid., pp. 56-57.

³⁴ It is important to note that T'an Cheng realized, as did the "professional officers," that "without modern technical equipment and without combined operations of various arms with high technical level, the courage of men alone cannot achieve victory in war." (From his speech to the Eighth National Congress on September 25, 1956, NCNA, Peking, September 26, 1956). He was not thinking of interim defense measures, however, but of what long-term economic and technological developments could do for China's national defense. His speech, moreover, emphasized that man, and therefore political factors, remained the decisive determinants in any war. (Ibid.)

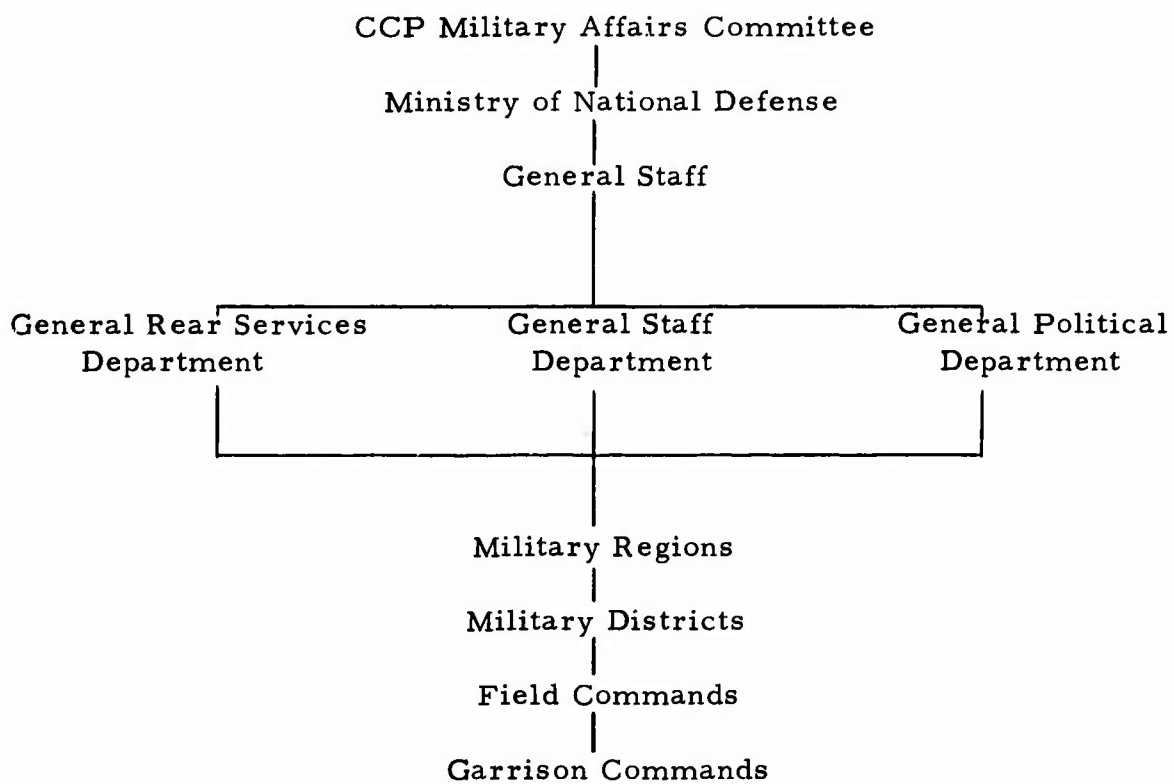
³⁵ Bobrow, op. cit., pp. 308-309.

³⁶ Appreciation of the Soviet nuclear shield was not, of course, limited to P'eng and his associates. As was stated earlier the General Staff, as well as all the leaders of the Central Committee, appreciated its significance.

Figure 1

37

PLA Command Structure
(As of Early 1960's)



³⁷ Taken from Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., p. 29.

the politically oriented elite, this signified a chance to safely carry out a more militant policy abroad,³⁸ That this was their conception of the balance of world military power was revealed in November 1957 at the "40th Anniversary of the October Revolution" meeting held in Moscow. The Chinese, in a reversal of their cautious, defensive foreign strategy which had prevailed since 1954, called for "maximum political and military pressure on the West all over the globe, but particularly in Asia, in underdeveloped areas, and wherever the Bloc had 'just grievances,' as in Taiwan."³⁹ In effect, Mao advocated a policy of Bloc "brinkmanship" under the cover of the Soviet nuclear shield.⁴⁰ The Chinese, moreover, emphatically stressed "the advanced experience of the Soviet Army," identifying this "advanced experience" closely with the Soviets' possession of advanced weapons. It went on to indicate it expected Soviet experience and assistance would save much time and effort in the modernization of the PLA. Similar views on the usefulness of the Soviet model were advanced by such military notables as Marshal Ho Lung, Minister of Defense P'eng Teh-huai, and Hsiao Hua, head of the General Political Department.⁴¹

³⁸ Note also the contributing factor of the "One Hundred Flowers" debacle, which culminated in more extreme views within the CCP at this time.

³⁹ Zagoria, op. cit., p. 150.

⁴⁰ Less than a year later simultaneously, the Chinese Communist Party leaders shifted "from a cautious economic policy based on the Soviet model to a frenzied one based on the maximum exploitation of human labor powers." (Ibid., p. 150). A factor which helped in shifting towards a more militant policy was the reduction of power of the Army "professional" elements and of the power of "the Party Right", (i. e., those elements which had been drawn out and then purged in the 1956-57 "Hundred Flowers" Campaign, and who had favored a less militant foreign policy). Concurrent with this reduction of powers of the "Right" was a corresponding increase in the power of the "Party Left", consisting mainly of the politically-oriented veteran guerrilla leaders.

⁴¹ See, for example, P'eng Teh-huai, "Learn from the Heroic Soviet Army", NCNA, Peking, November 4, 1957, in Survey of China Mainland Press (SCMP), No. 1649, Nov. 12, 1957.

Yet another significant event occurred during November 1957 which was to lead to a change in Chinese strategic policy. On November 6, P'eng Teh-huai and other high-ranking military men departed for Moscow. What transgressed there remains unknown. It is inferred from the discussion between Marshal P'eng and Marshal Malinovsky at a dinner on November 27, 1957, that the Chinese leaders had asked about the possibility of the Soviets letting China acquire some sort of nuclear capability and had been refused. Together with his insistence that the strength of an enemy was not dependent solely on modern weapons, Malinovsky avoided "any reference to concrete military assistance in terms of equipment."⁴² Later developments showed even more clearly the Soviets' concern with the "Nth country" problem. They even went so far as to suggest to the Chinese leaders that an alternative to China's acquiring nuclear weapons to achieve its political and military goals would be an Asian atom-free zone.

The Chinese had themselves already made such a proposal at the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference at Cairo. But the motivations of the CPR and the Soviet Union for wanting an Asian atom-free zone clearly differed. China's main objective was to obtain a ban on the manufacture, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons, though, of course Peking, as well as the Soviet Union, was interested in such a zone to prevent the United States from stationing nuclear weapons in Asia and to obstruct the Japanese from developing their own nuclear weapons. The Soviets' primary concern, on the other hand, was to halt the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries--the Nth country problem. The significance of the Soviet views on non-proliferation were not lost on the Chinese who very quickly concluded that the primary objective of the Soviets' hints about an Asian atom-free zone was to prevent China from going nuclear.

By January 1958 the Chinese Communist leaders had clearly rejected the idea of an Asian atom-free zone on Russian terms (no testing of nuclear weapons) and had concluded that the reason for the Soviet's suggesting it was Moscow's increasing reluctance to give China aid to develop her own nuclear capacity. Khrushchev, concurrent with his

⁴² Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy, op. cit., p. 103, quoting Malinovsky's and P'eng's speeches, taken from Home Service, Moscow, Nov. 28, 1957.

attempt to ease international tensions by proposing a summit conference with Eisenhower, had on October 15, 1957, signed a secret nuclear assistance agreement with the CPR in an attempt to gain their support for such a venture.⁴³ The CPR, however, regarded this as a very general agreement which provided only limited assistance. Additionally, the Soviets refused to give China nuclear warheads unless the Soviet Union retained control over them. With hopes for a Soviet-supplied independent nuclear force already fading⁴⁴ P'eng made a complete reversal of his viewpoint of November 1957, which stressed learning from "the advanced experience of the Soviet army":

We must, on the basis of our national industrialization, systematically arm our army with new technical equipment. In the light of our industrial capacity, we can do so only gradually.⁴⁵

With the shift of focus away from the Soviet model to an independent Chinese model founded on her own industrial base, an indication of the conflict between the professional and Party elements in the PLA again came to the front. Said P'eng,

Some comrades had only a partial understanding of modernization but had failed to appreciate that the modernization of our army must be established on the basis of our national industrialization, thus tending to expect too much of our modernization of the army too soon.⁴⁶

⁴³ The agreement did not, however, provide for the giving of any nuclear weapons to the Chinese.

⁴⁴ Joffe, 'Conflict in the Chinese Army,' op. cit., p. 132.

⁴⁵ P'eng Teh-huai, speech delivered on January 22, 1958, as translated in JPRS, No. 1023, September 1959, p. 9.

⁴⁶ From P'eng Teh-huai's speech as reported in Chieh-fang Chun-pao, (The Liberation Army Daily), March 30, 1958.

Now that the limited extent of Soviet aid to be expected had been indicated, the more politically oriented military elements and the Party leadership itself openly turned to rapidly expanding China's economic base in an attempt to produce its own nuclear weapons. Even though this was in reality only a continuation of past policies (except for an even greater stress on political studies)⁴⁷ the CCP now openly stated the methods which were to be used to modernize the Army. This implicitly (if not explicitly) rejected the professional and pro-Soviet viewpoint.

At this point Mao was caught in a dilemma. The decision to opt for rapid economic growth meant diversion of funds from the military budget to economic construction as well as the need to keep large segments of the military occupied with economic tasks. The latter point had in the past produced conflict within the professional group of the PLA⁴⁸ and it was found this would again occur, particularly since such a policy required further political control of the PLA, and the curbing of the "one-sidedly military" views of the dissident professional elements. In order to guard against this possibility Mao initiated a rectification campaign to eliminate bureaucratism and subjectivism, and to solve the "contradictions" between officers and men and soldiers and civilians. Military academies and technical branches of the PLA became the primary targets of the Party's drive against professionalism.

Yet, at the same time (early 1958), Mao needed an army capable of winning local wars. This was necessary to maintain as credible Peking's revolutionary strategy as well as to enable the CPR to maintain international tensions at a high level. Belligerence on China's part was expected to make a détente between the US and the USSR extremely difficult to effect or perhaps even to bring these two countries into direct conflict.⁴⁹

47 "Political officers were installed in combat vehicles, and they carried out political work in the heat of battle maneuvers. Consequently, discipline and morale were said to have been strengthened." Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., p. 72.

48 Ralph Powell states that two months per year per soldier were spent on non-military projects.

49 This was before the Chinese had a chance to test how the Soviet Union would react during conflicts which involved both the US and the USSR. Quemoy, 1958, and the Sino-Indian Conflict, 1962, provided this opportunity.

The two strategies which the Chinese could use to achieve these objectives were (1) to involve the US with China in military action, and (2) to "internationalize local conflicts through the use of Chinese 'volunteers' to evoke Western troop commitments."⁵⁰ The expectation inherent in both these strategies was that the Soviet Union would be compelled to support materially Chinese initiatives or at least provide a nuclear shield. Consequently, the Communists would gain victory, either by nuclear blackmail or successful conventional actions.⁵¹ China realized that her relative military weakness made her dependent on the Soviet's deterrent posture, despite China's refutation of Soviet doctrine and policies and the developing tensions between Peking and Moscow. Since a policy dependent on Soviet deterrence would not require immediate major armament, moreover, Mao had an excellent argument for muzzling the military opposition which "one-sidedly stressed the part of atomic weapons and modern military techniques."⁵² This is not to deny that by this time a significant part of the budget was being allocated to nuclear weapons development, but only to say that the emphasis in China's allocation of resources was decidedly on strengthening the economy. Further, to engage China in an all-out modern weapons arms race before the economy was strong enough would be counterproductive and could impair China's economic development permanently. For the time being, the armed forces could be diverted to non-military (economic) duties and the Party could remain supreme.

POLICIES OF THE "GREAT LEAP FORWARD"

The emphasis on self-reliance, as noted earlier, was reinforced by the knowledge of limited Soviet nuclear aid and by the Soviets' attempted détente with the West.⁵³ Self-reliance ultimately led to an increase in the

⁵⁰ Bobrow, op. cit., p. 614.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² "Resolute Carrying Out of Party's Military Line," Chieh-fang Chun-pao, August 1, 1958, SCMP, No. 1881, p. 2.

⁵³ The Soviet Union unilaterally ceased testing nuclear weapons on March 31, 1958, and dispatched a note to the US and China on April 4, which stated that only three countries possessed nuclear weapons and that unless a test ban was established immediately, it would be too late to stop other nations from acquiring nuclear weapons. Though the USSR did not state what other countries and though assuredly it was concerned about Western Germany first and foremost, it seems evident that China took the Soviets' reference to "other nations" personally.

pace of collectivization in accord with the general line of socialist construction and not to increase in defense expenditures.⁵⁴ The outcome of this attempt to an independent policy was "the Great Leap Forward" and the establishing of communes, a step taken at the second session of the Party's Eighth National Congress in May 1958. Essentially five major policy statements were formulated at this conference. Their aim being to tide China over the period prior to its own production of nuclear weapons:

- (1) a denunciation of "dogmatic" dependence on the Soviet Union, together with an exaltation of China's own national military heritage;
- (2) a concomitant subduing of pro-Soviet professional elements in the armed forces;
- (3) a reassertion of the "man-over-weapons" and the "US is a paper tiger" themes;
- (4) a revival of Mao's concept of "people's war," to be assisted by the militia;

⁵⁴ This attempt to collectivize more rapidly and on a model different from the one recommended by the Soviets was an effort by the Chinese Communists to gain recognition for having the Asian model for Communism.

- (5) an increase in political indoctrination and Party control to combat the inevitable dissension within the military arising from the commune program.⁵⁵

One could conclude from these policy statements that problems within the Sino-Soviet relationship, and not inherent difficulties in the Army-Party relationship, were providing the catalyst which caused an open split to develop between the PLA's professional officers and the Party leadership over the modernization of the military in China. (However, these two relationships are not necessarily separable.) The policies were aimed at: ending China's dependence on the Soviet Union; preparing for a transitional policy prior to China's own nuclear production; and for guaranteeing China's security in case of nuclear attack by developing a decentralized cellular system of defense--the commune system.

⁵⁵ Harold P. Ford, "Modern Weapons and the Sino-Soviet Estrangement," China Quarterly, No. 18, (April-June 1964), pp. 162-163. Involvement in the commune movement itself, the primary domestic mission of the PLA, was one means of controlling and undermining the professional officers' outlook, especially in the "officers to the ranks" campaign. This was an attempt to "educate through labor," to give the officer the peasant viewpoint; to increase his "love of labor"; and to improve relations between the officer and rank-and-file soldiers. Not that the involvement of the military in economic tasks was a new concept especially designed to curb professional elements. A statement made in 1950, telling the armed forces to "consolidate internally the people's democratic dictatorship, preserve social order, and (carry out) all kinds of construction works," [NCNA, Peking, June 25, 1950, in Current Background, 208, p. 27] is indicative of the role the army had been expected to fulfill since the days of guerrilla fighting in the countryside. The objective was, of course, to control the military and its powers--a recognition by the Party of its dependence on army support. As Mao once said, "political power grows out of the barrel of the gun;" hence, "our principle is that the Party commands the gun, and the gun will never be allowed to command the Party."

Equally important, these steps were, in many respects, a direct criticism of Khrushchev's tactics of peaceful coexistence. The Chinese argued "for a more aggressive Communist bloc foreign policy and less regard for the risks of war."⁵⁶ In effect, the politically oriented Chinese leadership contended that Khrushchev's détente tactics toward the West would dampen the revolutionary spirit of the people throughout the world. A fear of nuclear war was no excuse "for diluting the revolutionary struggle and giving primacy to negotiations."⁵⁷ An equally important consideration in their rejection of the Soviet approach was that the Soviet Union had the resources to work to achieve its objectives abroad in a period of détente; the Chinese Communists did not. As Zagoria has noted, in dealing with national liberation movements, colonial wars such as Algeria

are the principal means by which Peking can extend its influence. It cannot compete with the Russian aid program or with the extensive Russian technical assistance to underdeveloped areas. If Peking is to extend its influence in the colonial areas, it can do so only by encouraging civil wars and guerrilla fighting in which the local insurgents will be forced, as the Algerian rebels were, to come to China for aid and advice. The Russians, on the other hand, can exercise their influence by other less risky means.⁵⁸

Moreover, Mao felt the balance of power now favored Communist initiatives on the international front. The US would most likely submit to nuclear blackmail by the Soviet Union although Washington might be prompted to entertain limited non-nuclear conflicts. A Mainland journal commented: "local war" could occur more often, have greater possibility, and become more necessary.⁵⁹ This was the offensive strategy in Chinese

⁵⁶ Ibid, pp. 166-167. .

⁵⁷ Zagoria, op. cit., p. 244.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 276.

⁵⁹ This aspect of Mao's revolutionary doctrine is presented in the KTTH. Though there is some change in emphasis by 1961, the KTTH largely reinforces previously published statements of doctrine. Hence, this seems to be official policy.

Communist military doctrine, to be used before China could successfully employ nuclear weapons.⁶⁰

The May 1958 policies provided for defense in practice as well as in theory. The political leadership of both the PLA and CCP felt a militarization of life in the commune format would strengthen China's defense. The communes were to be organized along military lines with a militia unit in each.⁶¹ Since the communes were to be independent economic and military entities--units in a decentralized cellular system--they could become the basis for support of the needs of the military front during war. If occupation forces invaded China, each commune could fight as an independent unit. The effect of this decentralization of economic and military power was to make China far more "invulnerable" to nuclear attack (in the sense of total destruction).⁶² The Chinese leaders felt invasion would be necessary to conquer China; that in the process of invasion, space and human resources would be traded for time; and the Chinese, fighting a "peoples' war," would be victorious.

This proclaimed "invulnerability" served other purposes of the militant Party line: by diminishing China's dependence on the Soviet nuclear umbrella, the commune system would allow the Chinese more maneuverability vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Most importantly, it would serve to undermine the position of the "professional officers" who preferred a "soft line" in foreign relations (so as to avoid nuclear destruction by the US), while strengthening Mao's arguments for a 'hard' line.⁶³ The Party line

⁶⁰ As quoted in Donald S. Zagoria, "Sino-Soviet Friction in Underdeveloped Areas," Problems of Communism, X, No. 2 (March-April 1961), p. 7.

⁶¹ The militarization of the communes meant inter alia, an organization of all activities and authority along military lines (with a parallel Party structure, of course). Communes were organized in units called regiments, battalions, companies, platoons, and squads. The authority structure was characterized by a chief-of-staff, "deputy commanders," and "commanders." See, e.g., JMJP September 5, 1958 and SCMP, No. 1860, September 24, 1958, p. 20.

⁶² Bobrow, op. cit., p. 617.

⁶³ Ibid.

continued to be that expressed by P'eng Teh-huai in a speech on July 16, 1956: the consequences of a surprise attack would not be final. Rather, since China could only be conquered if it was occupied, the outcome of any future war would depend on post-attack mobilization of manpower and resources (reassertion of the old Maoist concept of a broken-back war of attrition.) With an effective militarized commune system, China would win this war.

It seems likely that in the summer of 1958 those who were being accused of "erroneous tendencies," "who one-sidedly stressed the part of atomic weapons and modern military techniques and neglected the role of the people," "stood for mechanical application of foreign experience" and neglected "studying strategy and tactics suited to the peculiarities of our country"⁶⁴ were members of the General Staff. Under the influence of the new Soviet doctrine, General Staff personnel had called for defense measures (1) incompatible with Party control of the PLA, and (2) incompatible with the priority given to economic development over national defense.⁶⁵ Possibly also, Su Yu and his associates in the General Staff hoped that an arrangement for obtaining nuclear weapons could be worked out with the Soviet Union, thereby rejecting the Party's transitional strategy.⁶⁶ The fact that Su Yu was replaced as Chief of Staff, on October 12, 1958, during the cease-fire over Quemoy by Huang K'o-cheng, suggests that his position as leader of the professional element and "Party right" had been contrary to the Party's policy of fermenting hostilities over Quemoy--or that the PLA's poor performance in the Quemoy venture was being blamed on Su Yu.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Chieh-fang Chun pao, August 1, 1958 (editorial) in SCMP, No. 1881, p.2.

⁶⁵ Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy, op. cit., p. 117.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Hsieh gives two other possible explanations for Su's dismissal in October 1958: "(1) Chinese failure in the Quemoy attempt may have been not so much the cause for Su's dismissal as a convenient opportunity for it; (2) Su, if he had indeed been opposed to action in the Taiwan Strait, may have been dismissed because he had been proven right and his opponents on this issue now resented his presence more than ever ."
Ibid.

This replacement was undoubtedly meant to strengthen Party control of the military, as was the entire 1957-58 anti-rightist campaign; for whereas Su Yu had been concerned solely with military activities, Huang K'o-cheng had been a member of the Party's Central Committee Secretariat and the Vice Minister of National Defense. Additionally, the General Staff was now made subordinate to the Ministry of Defense.

Throughout 1958 and 1959 there developed then a definite split between the professional military and the Party: (1) over the assignment of regular forces to numerous non-military duties in the economy and mass persuasion policies of the Party; (2) over the dominance of Party authority and political indoctrination in decision-making and training in the PLA; and (3) over what the Party considered the "non-essential" nature of expensive military equipment. Moreover, the Party leaders' further alienation of the Soviet leaders exacerbated the already existing antagonisms between the Party and the military professionals. Almost the entire modern Chinese military establishment had been constructed with Soviet equipment (even though it was not the latest nor best nor free), and the PLA had been advised and trained by Russian military experts. With Soviet help the Chinese infantry had begun to change into "a complex, well-planned conventional army with numerous specialized arms and support and service units backed by a network of military industries." ⁶⁸ That Chinese Communist officers acquainted with Soviet practice and doctrine should find this more appealing and more applicable than the politically-dominated strategic doctrine of Mao was inevitable.

It was equally inevitable when one realizes that China's ability to rapidly modernize the PLA depended on continued Soviet aid. The military officers were convinced that the Soviets would not commit their atomic and missile power to Chinese militant objectives. Nevertheless, the CCP persisted in advocating policies geared to maintaining international tension, particularly that of an aggressive posture toward the West. The Soviet response to these policies resulted in a further deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations which reached their lowest point thus far on June 20, 1959, when the Soviet Union terminated its nuclear sharing agreement with China.

⁶⁸ Joffe, "Conflict in the Chinese Army," op. cit., p. 120.

Though the CCP and CPSU still claimed to be bound by a common ideal and cause, and by strong military and economic considerations, the differences on military stance and economic policy were beginning to erode what was, at best, an appearance of unity between the Soviet Union and the CPR--at worst a shaky alliance characterized by intense competition within itself. While the Soviets urged avoidance of war, a détente with the US and a spreading of socialism by force of example, the CCP called for a militant foreign policy and a heightening of international tensions which entailed the export of revolution. While the Soviets urged the Chinese Communists to accept the Soviet collective as the model of Communist agricultural organization, the CCP advanced its own much more radical model. And whereas the Soviets wished to exclude China from the nuclear club and espoused an Asian atom-free zone, both the Chinese Communist Party and the military elites ignored and, in the end, publicly rejected such concepts in favor of an independent Chinese Communist policy. But in order to be independent, it was evident that China's policy would have to rely on its own indigenous nuclear capability.⁶⁹ Perhaps the Party further justified its quest for nuclear armaments as a consolation to the professional officers' demand for modern weapons.

By mid-1959, a split was also developing between the Army rank and file and Party. The PLA soldiers were usually of peasant origin and had relatives in the communization program. They were well aware, therefore, of the failures in the commune program, and took the side of those suffering from it, against the Party and the commune program. "Socialist education" in the PLA, which had begun as early as 1957,⁷⁰ had not succeeded in improving PLA morale among the private soldiers or even among the lower-ranked officers, since their morale was affected by their families suffering from the communes and not by their own condition.

⁶⁹ Undoubtedly the CPR's frustrating experience with the Soviet Union during the Taiwan Straits Crisis added to her desire for her own nuclear capability.

⁷⁰ "Socialist education" was an attempt to convince the soldiers that collectivization and the purchase of grain by the state were excellent policies. See, e.g., JMJP, 3 December 1957, p. 4.

Consequently, there was great uncertainty as to whether, in case of a revolt against the Party leaders, the lower-ranked officers and soldiers would side with the Party or with their peasant relatives to regain their land.

FAILURES DURING THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD

By mid-1959 the Party had failed in two ventures: (1) the "militarization of life" in the communes, which was supposed to result in increased efficiency and demonstrate China's ability to survive nuclear attack; and (2) the Quemoy test, which had been launched with the intension, in part, of proving "that Soviet missile capability would compensate for China's combat weaknesses relative to the United States."⁷¹ The third failure of the Party came with the "all people in arms" campaign. This was supposed to demonstrate that the Chinese Communist regime "could create an alternative coercive instrument to the PLA" which would "make invasion suicidal and nuclear attack ineffective."⁷² This campaign of turning the peasant masses into soldiers, to put a "nation in arms," was launched several months after the model communes (May 1959) were formed. It supposedly enrolled almost the entire population in militia units. The core-militia (that small part of the militia trained in using weapons, as opposed to the regular militia--in reality merely a huge labor corps) was to function as a trained standing reserve force for the PLA; i. e., reinforcements in limited foreign wars. "If the militia tactic was successful, Mao could counter PLA professionals who contended that guerrilla era reliance on ill-trained and scattered units was outdated."⁷³ But the non-coercive productive capabilities and ideological education of the militia in the "spirit of collectivism" were stressed more than its fighting capacity. The "man-over-weapons" theme was again applicable. In a people's war, political indoctrination and revolutionary fervor were sine qua non in Chinese Communist doctrine. A universal militia with these attributes would defeat any enemy. And again Mao's military thinking concerning war took precedence:

⁷¹ Bobrow, op. cit., p. 698.

⁷² Ibid., p. 626, 698.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 616.

(1) Rejection of the concept of a quick, decisive war, based on purely military considerations, in favor of a view of war as the totality of political, economic, psychological, and military factors. (2) Emphasis on the concepts of strategic withdrawal, avoidance of decisive battles, and even temporary abandonment of territory in the early stages of the war, in the interest of eventual victory. (3) Belief in initiation of the strategic offensive only when the balance of total strength was in the Communists' favor and their victory certain. (4) Subordination of the strictly military viewpoint of the professional soldier to the political-military objectives of the revolution, of the army to the party, of weapons to man, and of short-term success to long-term victory.⁷⁴

Beginning in 1958, local party secretaries directed the expansion of the militia program, though the PLA had to divert its own personnel and scarce equipment to training the militia. Just as in the Army command structure itself, then, the Army was responsible for all training and decisions, but lacked the authority to carry out its responsibilities.

Yet with the economic situation becoming increasingly acute, with food shortages and peasant discontent abounding, having "all people in arms" was a rather frightening aspect for the Party to behold. The Party, consequently, abandoned the expansion of the militia movement in April 1959 and asserted political controls even more forcefully. But the professional elements of the PLA, because of the blatant failures of the Party in implementing its policy, now questioned the wisdom of the Party leaders more than ever. Mao's ability to force non-military duties on the PLA and further strengthen political control was, therefore, thwarted by the professional military which now attempted to pressure the Party into promoting a more professional army with better weapons and less Party control.

⁷⁴ Hsieh, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

ERUPTION OF CONFLICT BETWEEN MILITARY AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

The conflict between the political and military leaders erupted first during a meeting May 27, 1959 to July 22, 1959 of more than 1000 highly-ranked men, called by the Military Affairs Committee of the Party's Central Committee. Apparently problems of professionalism and disagreements on military leadership were the main topics of conversation. According to articles published concerning the conference, it seems clear that the professional army officers were being criticized for their acceptance of revised Soviet doctrine (peaceful coexistence, non-inevitability of war, the stance to be taken vis-à-vis the West, the possibility of peaceful methods of gaining power in non-Communist countries). This mistake led them to two further major errors: (1) the questioning of political leadership and controls in the PLA, as indicated in their attitude toward the implications of nuclear warfare; and (2) the challenging of the Party's transitional strategic concept and of China's long-term goals (not only military, but economic and political objectives), by adherence to a one-sidedly military point of view.⁷⁵

SEPTEMBER 1959 TO PRESENT

The height of the Party program to curb professional army officers came with the dismissal of the Defense Minister P'eng Teh-huai, one month after the end of the Lushan Plenum of the Central Committee on August 16, 1959. Whether his views expressed at the Plenum were actually meant to be anti-Party (and/or against Party control of the army) is debatable and not relevant here.⁷⁶ The point is that reportedly he tried to halt the Soviet Union's abrogation of its defense agreements with the CPR by communicating with Khrushchev without the authorization of the CCP to do so. Not only did he convey his satisfaction with the Party's economic and political policies to the Soviet premier, but at Lushan he also reportedly attacked the communes, together with its doctrinal implications, and the "Great Leap Forward" in general. He did not, however, explicitly attack the Party's military policy). It seems clear that the cause motivating P'eng's secret talks with

⁷⁵ See, for example, Chieh-fang Chun-pao (July 1, 1958), appearing in SCMP, No. 1881, p. 4.

⁷⁶ Again as with Su Yu, we have very little concrete knowledge concerning P'eng's dismissal except from those documents emerging from the Lushan Plenum and the few references to him in the KTTH.

Khrushchev and his attack on CCP policies was his desire to keep Soviet military aid coming to China. His views on nuclear strategy also apparently favored the professional officers' views. Consequently, the most plausible explanation of P'eng's dismissal seems to be that he was unwilling to halt China's dependence on the Soviet Union. Hence, those favoring an independent control policy for the CPR seemed to win the debate in 1959.

On September 17, 1959, the Party dismissed Marshall P'eng and Chief of the General Staff, Huang-K'o-cheng (who had replaced Su Yu less than a year before), condemning them as "anti-Party," Rightist elements.⁷⁷ With the appointment of Lin Piao as Minister of Defense and Lo Jui-ching (former Chief of Security and Policy) as Chief of the General Staff, the Party attempted to reassert its absolute domination over the PLA, to assure loyalty to Mao's strategic thought, to augment professional competence of the PLA, and to improve Army morale.

Lin Piao had the distinct advantage of an outstanding military record and strong Party background coupled with an absence from the political scene from late in 1950 to May 1958. Unlike P'eng Teh-huai, therefore, Lin Piao was free of any prior public commitment either to the Party view of subordination of China's immediate military postures to other objectives or to the one-sidedly military view. The appointment of Lin Piao seems to have been for one major reason: to bring a reconciliation between the hostile political and military elements in China's leadership. In other words, he

77

The KTTH reveal that they were actually dismissed for military professionalism and were made scapegoats for everything the Party considered wrong with the PLA. These papers also reveal that the political control organization in the PLA before P'eng's dismissal, which was supposed to have operated effectively, was largely an ineffectual and unoperative paper organization. Whatever the reason, whether because the higher echelons in the PLA had neglected to evoke the actual operation of Party organizations throughout the Army, or because the heavy loss of Party membership which began with universal conscription (Military Service Law of 1954) had never been replenished, by 1959, the Party clearly lacked a strong presence in the Army. See Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., p. 138.

was to be a consolation to the PLA, whereby Party leadership of the Army would be insisted on, but it was to be "party leadership over a strong army."⁷⁸ Further, international developments, China's resistance to being placed in a nuclear weapon-free zone, which did not include the US and the USSR, together with China's desire to wage an aggressive foreign policy--all favored the position of the professional Army officers in modernizing the military.

In addition to the motive of wanting to make some sort of concession to the "one-sidedly military" officers, then, the Party had its own reasons for devoting precious resources to nuclear weapon development. In the final analysis, however, technology was to serve politics. As is revealed in the "Secret Military Papers," Lin Piao attempted to carry out a far-reaching modernization of the PLA without compromising Party policies such as PLA participation in economic construction of a large reserve militia. (Both these programs, however, were cut in scope).⁷⁹ Above all, man and his political consciousness were still considered to be the dominant factors in modern warfare. For, as long as China could not effectively deliver nuclear weapons, the Party leaders had to stress the "man-over-weapons" theme. This served the purpose not only of maintaining morale and confidence, but also of reinforcing the concept of Party leadership of the PLA. It likewise justified the Party's emphasis on ground operations training [close combat]. "In the case of long-distance warfare, the enemy is stronger than we. However, in the case of close combat, especially face-to-face combat, we are in a superior position."⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Hsieh, "Red China and Nuclear War," op. cit., p. 95.

⁷⁹ In light of the peasant dissatisfaction and upheaval after the Great Leap's failure (during which time the "Secret Military Papers" (KTTH) we now possess were written), it was very reasonable that the CCP would wish to disarm all unreliable militia men. And since the militia was frequently responsible for crime against the people and was at that time serving no useful purpose, it was reduced in size. See discussion of militia in KTTH, pp. 117-118, 138-139.

⁸⁰ Marshall Yeh Chien-ying (Military Affairs Committee) in KTTH, No. 10, February 20, 1961, pp. 249-255.

Even as late as 1961, as the KTTH show, while professing full awareness of the influence of modern technology and especially of the impact nuclear weapons and guided missiles could have on any war, particularly in light of the vulnerability of China's military targets and though they stressed the need for greater development in military technology industrial centers, and the development of atomic weapons, the Chinese Communists still professed adherence to the man-over-weapons theme. "To destroy the enemy, capture his positions, and achieve final victory, it is still necessary to rely on ground forces and conventional weapons and this relies upon men."⁸¹ Marshall Yeh felt, as did most of the other politically-oriented leaders, that China could only be conquered after occupation and close combat. He also believed that China's attainment of nuclear power would not necessitate a rejection of Mao's military thought.⁸² These views, however, should only be considered in light of the knowledge that at the time the KTTH were written: (1) Soviet aid had been terminated and (2) China was suffering from the economic losses of the Great Leap.

Finally, the inactivity which had developed in the political control system of the PLA under P'eng and Huang was corrected by Lin Piao in a rectification campaign and an increase in the number of party members in the PLA--both of which occurred primarily at the company level.⁸³

With the drastic deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations, largely due to the Soviets' disregard for Chinese views (especially on the test ban treaty in 1963) but even more because of previous Soviet actions in the Cuban and Sino-Indian Crises of October in 1962, the Chinese apparently awakened to the need for a policy independent of the bloc policy directed by the Soviet Union. Soviet theory, strategy and tactics, as explicitly expounded during the Warsaw Pact Conference in February 1960, were totally rejected by the Chinese Communists in April 1960: they rejected peaceful coexistence, advocating a narrower definition of coexistence in which "hot" wars could not be avoided entirely; they rejected the "non-inevitability of war," contending that as long as imperialism existed, so

81 Ibid.

82 KTTH, pp. 134, 136, 187, 535.

83 "Directive of the MAC and the General Political Department Regarding Key Points of Political Work in the Army for 1961," in KTTH, No. 1, Jan. 1, 1961, pp. 4 and 5.

would local and colonial wars; and they rejected the possibility of peaceful transition to socialism in the non-Communist world.⁸⁴ Khrushchev was, in short, accused of revisionism of Leninist principles in his call for a more gradualist socialist development, and a flexible foreign policy (condemned as "opportunism"). The Chinese leadership contended instead that were the Soviet Union more aggressive, especially in Latin America, Africa and Asia, the West would have to capitulate sooner.⁸⁵ The Chinese thus rejected the Soviet argument that the existence of nuclear weapons demanded a more moderate approach to the West.

Ironically, the Sino-Soviet rift, which had for some time caused tensions between the CPR's military and political leadership, now caused them to draw together. Lin Paio likewise deserves credit for this new-found harmony, due to his ability to keep the demands of politics and professionalism balanced. Such is indicated in the apparent absence of serious strain between the Party leadership and the professional officers until recently. Assuredly, though the Party conceded nothing in principle since P'eng's dismissal (as shown in its numerous regulations), it moved in various respects towards the demands of the professional officers. The Party has given nuclear weapons development high priority as evidenced by the rapid development of the Chinese nuclear capability. The first test (October 1964) being a small nuclear detonation followed rapidly by tests in May 1965, May, October and December 1966, and culminating in a test of thermonuclear weapons in June 1967. Major efforts have been made to develop the conventional capabilities of the armed forces; renewed emphasis has been placed on military training;⁸⁶ non-military activities are not to interfere with this training (cut to 1/3 the amount in 1958) and

⁸⁴ Zagoria, op. cit., pp. 299-300.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 300.

⁸⁶ The KTTH reveal the anxiety of China's leaders over the enormous decline in the combat readiness of the PLA as of 1960-61. For further reference, see the KTTH and Ralph L. Powell, Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China, op. cit.

the militia has been revived, but only on a limited scale, along many of the lines proposed by professional officers.⁸⁷ Two reasons for this acquiescence to professional views are discernible: (1) Lin Liao had the confidence of both the Party leadership and the PLA professional officers (and therefore could reconcile their conflicts more easily than P'eng); (2) since the collapse of the Leap, the political leadership has realized that the "mass line" cannot alone bring miracles and that specialization is requisite to getting "experts." Denunciation of Army professional officers begun in 1958, had almost completely halted by late 1960, though indoctrination campaigns aimed at the Army had, if anything, stepped up.⁸⁸

To summarize the relations between the PLA and the CCP since Lin Piao's takeover in September 1959: Though the KTTH reveal that the struggle with modern revisionism in the international Communist movement was linked to the struggle against revisionism in the PLA,⁸⁹ as of the end of 1964 there had been no outward signs of tension between the Party and Army. An absence of public criticism of the military as well as an unusual amount of praise, and China's thrust into the nuclear age characterize the period in which Lin Piao has been Defense Minister. In February 1964 the Party launched the "Learn from the PLA Campaign,"⁹⁰

87 Joffe, Party and Army, op. cit., p. 144. Lin Piao, in April 1960, brought the militia under the control and supervision of provincial and local military zone headquarters. Hence, the militia reverted to its original secondary role. Now it was expected only to guard strategic points, keep law and order, and assist security forces. In effect, the militia no longer provided an alternative to PLA control because of its corruption and inefficiency. The theoretical importance of the militia, however, was never denied, (i. e., the militia was upheld on the basis of "people's war."). For further elaboration, see John Gittings, "China's Militia," China Quarterly, No. 18 (April/June 1964), pp. 100-116.

88 Joffe, "Conflict in the Chinese Army," op. cit., p. 137.

89 "Resolution on Strengthening Political and Ideological Work in the Army," KTTH, No. 3, Jan. 7, 1961, p. 69.

90 For an amplification of this, see Gittings, op. cit., pp. 153-159, and Ralph L. Powell, "Commissars in the Economy: 'Learn from the PLA' Movement in China," Asian Survey, V. No. 3, pp. 125-138. The "Learn from the PLA" campaign was replaced by the "Depend on the Poor and Lower Middle Class Peasants" campaign by fall 1964.

making the PLA the model for political work to be followed by organizations throughout China. This campaign has been in large part responsible for the revival of the controversial policy of "Politics in Command"--"the slogan that underlay much of the fanaticism, emotionalism, and failure of the Great Leap."⁹¹ That the Party seems pleased with the PLA and Lin Piao in particular has been quite obvious, as in the frequent linking of his name with Mao's name and the attribution to him, as to no other leader, of the distinction of "creatively" applying Mao's ideas.⁹² The Party, however, played a large role in this remolding of the PLA (see, for example, the "Four Sets of Regulations on Political Work in Company-Level Units of the PLA," 1961⁹³ and Political Work Regulations of 1963), though essentially none of these principles for Party leadership over the Army have changed since December 1929 (the Kutien Conference). Party branches were reorganized throughout the PLA, and "rotten" elements eliminated. New Party members were recruited from within the PLA. From all indications the Party and Army by 1964 were united in sustaining revolutionary ideology. Of greatest importance, they had a common goal which made them work well together: the survival of the Chinese Communist regime.⁹⁴ It should be noted, however, that in May 1965, military ranks were abolished and promotion was based solely on considerations of political virtue, bringing the PLA in terms of organization almost all the way back to the revolutionary-egalitarian organization of guerrilla times.

⁹¹ Powell, "Commissars in the Economy," op. cit. p. 129.

⁹² Ellis Joffe, "China in 'Mid-1966: 'Cultural Revolution' or 'Struggle for Power?', China Quarterly, No. 27 (July-September 1966) p. 130.

⁹³ "Regulation on the Administration of Educational Work in the Companies of the Chinese PLA" (July 1961); "Regulation on the Work of the Political Guide in the Company," (October 1961); and "Regulation on the Work of the Revolutionary Soldiers' Committee in the Company" (November 1961).

⁹⁴ Lewis, "China's Secret Military Papers", op. cit., p. 70.

Despite concessions, the sources of potential conflict and tension continue, if for no other reason than that the inherent conflict between "red" and "expert", and between the necessary flux of revolution and the requisite stable conditions for modernization continued. Previously muted tensions rose to the surface in mid-1965 (the same time that the "Culture Revolution" had its start). Joffe interprets these rumblings to be due to the Party's overstepping "the perimeters acceptable to some professional officers" in its zeal to put "politics in command." ⁹⁵

Precisely what Army-Party relations are in China at the moment is difficult to estimate. The limited availability of reliable news from China during its present spasm, the "Cultural Revolution" (November 1965 to the present) can only serve as an indicator of what might be happening in China. Various articles have reported the defiance of Mao's orders by regional military commanders (who are in three cases simultaneously regional party chiefs). Defiance is often interpreted as not merely resistance or anti-Maoism but also a bid for power. ⁹⁶ (Examples are Wang En-mao in Sinkiang; Chang Kuo-hua in Tibet; and Ulanfu in Inner Mongolia.) Additionally, the extraordinary reluctance of Mao to call on the PLA to support the Party line in the "Cultural Revolution" suggests a fear on the part of the central leadership to test the loyalty of the Army. The Party's reluctance (i. e., the reluctance of the pro-Mao elements in the CCP since the Party has not been at all united during this time) has been well justified. PLA units have not always chosen to support the pro-Maoist "red guards" as instructed once the Party finally turned to them for aid. One recent order (January 23, 1967) calls for the entire Chinese army "to intervene actively on behalf of the Maoist rebel groups 'even though they may be just a minority temporarily.' " ⁹⁷ Reports indicate also that after helping Maoist "mass"

⁹⁵ Joffe, "China in Mid-1966," op. cit., pp. 129-130.

⁹⁶ Alexander Eckstein in his paper "Communist China's Power Position and US Policy Alternatives in the Sixties," (Appendix G of this volume) concludes that this power struggle "is not a struggle between several potential successors, each of whom is trying to dislodge Mao and trying to displace him before he is ready to go. Thus, this is not really a struggle initiated by top leaders wishing to inherit Mao's mantle. On the contrary, it seems to be a struggle for succession which was initiated by Mao himself. At some point, probably around 1964 ... Mao must have concluded that Liu Shao-ch'i was not a successor in Mao's image Therefore beginning in 1965, he set out to very systematically undermine the power position of Liu and displace him by Lin Piao."

⁹⁷ New York Times, March 4, 1967, p. 6, col. 6.

organizations in suppressing "counterrevolutionaries," the PLA has sometimes turned to quash the unruly pro-Maoists.

But to say this is PLA opposition to Party commands would be unjust since the Party commands themselves have become much more moderate in their demands (under the influence and direction of Premier Chou-En-lai, and with the knowledge of the damage the Cultural Revolution is wreaking). The overwhelming number of reports maintain that the Army has been loyal to the Maoist leadership. Clearly, however, there has been a fragmentation of the Army along provincial lines—a fragmentation which has come to the fore during and been exacerbated by the Cultural Revolution.⁹⁸ Many of the Army officers seem to have the more moderate "rightist" view (or have committed "rightist" deviations). Indications of the validity of this statement rest in the fact that the officers' ranks have been attacked in the recent stages of the "Cultural Revolution." Among those in the PLA attacked have been: Wang En-mao, Chang Kuo-hua, Ulanfu, Lo Jui-ching (Chief of Staff), Ho Lung (Vice Chairman and Vice Premier of National Defense Council); Hsiao Hua (PLA Political Chief); General Liu Chih-chien (Deputy Director of PLA Political Department); Yang Yung (Commander of Peking Military District and Deputy Chief of the General Staff); Yuan Tsu-chin (Deputy Director of the Army's political department); military commanders based near the border of Tibet; the military commanders in the entire South-western region (including Huang Hsin-ting, Commander of the Cheng tu Military District).⁹⁹

98 Another quite noticeable division within the leadership is the outgrowth of China's involvement in Vietnam. Eckstein breaks the leadership down into three parts: (1) the "hawks," led by the now purged Chief of Staff Lo Jui-ching. His position apparently favored (a) a more aggressive Chinese posture in Vietnam, (b) reconciliation with Soviet Union, for unity of action in Vietnam and for Soviet military aid to the Chinese. (2) The "doves," whose exact leadership is unknown. Their views were (a) a low and passive posture in Vietnam (b) coupled with reconciliation with the Soviet Union. "Reconciliation" would be for the purpose of modernizing China's economy, not priority of action in Vietnam. (3) The "dawks," led by Mao and his allies. This involved (a) an aggressive verbal posture in Vietnam but a very cautious military posture; (b) opposition to any sort of reconciliation with the Soviet Union. See Eckstein, op. cit. Further dissension among the CPR's leadership has undoubtedly occurred as a result of other setbacks in China's foreign policy.

99 The New York Times, February 17, 1967, p. 3, is col. 6.

SUMMARY

It does not seem possible to conclude in any neat precise manner that when the politically-oriented elite held power, more militant policies were executed and when the professional military officers had predominant power, more moderate foreign policies were pursued. This may seem to be true at first glance: up through 1954, the military and political leadership were identical. Further, it was the veteran guerrilla leaders who ran the party, the PLA, and the government. The second generation, or post-1949 crop of professional officers, was only in a developmental stage. Yet one might note that from the inception of the Chinese Communist regime to 1954 the CPR had become involved in two conflicts: Korea and the Taiwan Straits. Intervention in Korea, however, was not something the Chinese Communist leadership had planned from the outset, or seemingly had any intention of getting involved in until her own security seemed endangered. Even attacks on the Offshore Islands (Tachens) in 1954 cannot be said to have constituted a firm case of unprovoked aggression. The Chinese participation (by sending military arms and advisors) in the Indochina War which ended in 1954 seems to have been solely for the purpose of eliminating the American presence there--not for taking aggressive steps to seize Vietnam.

The Korean War served as a catalyst for modernization, and hence, for professionalism. It was not until 1955 that regulations were passed to create a professional officers corps with all the accouterments of a modern army. From 1955 to 1957, then, the professional officer corps blossomed, and from all indications held most of the power in the PLA. Many veteran guerrilla leaders retired from active commands and retained solely Party leadership. This was in part an extension of the Kao Kang purge of 1954, which attempted to curb the power of those regional leaders who held total military and political control. Since, from 1955 through 1957 (i.e., until the Party began to curb the professional elements and reassert political control of the PLA), there was no involvement of Chinese Communist forces in conflicts abroad, one might conclude that this was a direct result of the conservative influence of the Army professional officers. This is a rather simplistic conclusion and hardly gives a viable explanation for the relative calm of this period. Lack of

involvement might better be attributed to: (1) the recognition of the balance of military force favoring the West against a combined Sino-Soviet force; (2) the fact that there were no areas at that time "ripe for revolution" which could be intervened in at the cost China was then able or willing to pay; and (3) the flux in decision and disputes within the Communist bloc following the end of the Stalin era. This last reason seems the most plausible for explaining China's non-interference in the summer of 1956 in Vietnam consequent to the failure (due to US actions) of the election promises contained in the 1954 Geneva agreements to materialize (especially since the Communists would surely have been the victors). However, fear of provoking US involvement there is an equally likely reason for China's restraint at this time. Assuredly, the professional military officers did direct the attention of the Chinese Communist leadership to the need for improving the capabilities of the PLA before involving it in perilous situations. And possibly this is, indeed, the explanation for China's putting off its militant foreign policy for three years.

Why an aggressive foreign policy was initiated with the Quemoy crisis of 1958 is possibly another moot point, not at all attributable to the assumption of power by "leftist" politically-oriented pro-Party-line elements (their rise to dominance indicated earlier in this paper). Yet it is certainly their policy which has held sway over this period. The Taiwan Straits crisis is a prime example of the Party policy being carried out against the will of the military which: (1) did not consider China adequately prepared for a confrontation with the US and (2) did not wish to alienate the Soviet Union. What they feared most occurred: Chinese forces, essentially left to fight for themselves by the Soviet Union, were unable to attain victory over Quemoy. And the Soviets, irritated by China's pursuit of an independent, militant foreign policy (and a radical domestic one) not only did not come to China's defense until too late, but also ended its nuclear sharing agreements with the CPR. After June, 1959, the Soviet Union unilaterally ended its agreement with the CPR (of October 1957) to provide new technology for national defense. Also in 1959, the Russians severely decreased their aircraft deliveries. By 1960 almost all Soviet aid had been ended and their technicians and military advisers withdrawn.

Far better than attributing a militant or pacifist policy to the dominance of Party or PLA leadership, then, would be to attribute it to the realistic and flexible policy which, in every case, has been observed

by whoever was then directing China's policy. Though challenging the Nationalists' control over Quemoy was perhaps not too wise in view of the subsequently emergent Soviet position (hindsight), China's flexibility and realism allowed her to emerge from the conflict unscathed, even if somewhat humiliated. But since the taking of Taiwan remains a primary objective of the CPR, it is wise to assume that the CPR will again attempt to gain that objective. The CPR seems to be waiting now until she has a viable nuclear threat, based on a nuclear delivery capability, in order to challenge the Chinese Nationalists successfully. Presently, though they continue to harass the Offshore Islands, the Chinese Communists never take any steps which might provoke a US military reaction. Though the 1958 confrontation does not fit into the Chinese general "use of force" doctrine, all of the other conflicts analyzed and the manner in which they have been carried out do fit. China's involvement in external military affairs has been characterized by only two types of war since Korea: (1) small scale conventional wars on China's borders (e.g., Sino-Indian conflict), and (2) sub-limited wars by proxy, in support of "national liberation" movements (e.g., Vietnam, Laos, Angola). These conflicts, moreover, generally have been characterized by small risks of Western military response, and limited weaponry in terms of costs and intensity (so that internal economic development would not be detained). In those conflicts in which the US has become involved, Communist China has always displayed a willingness to compromise--a form of "tactical retreat," by which the Chinese hope to put off a showdown with the US, "buying time" until China attains her own nuclear power¹⁰⁰ and establishes a strong conventional military establishment. Avoiding the "strengths" of the enemy and caution would help bring local victory and yet not provoke the US before China could cope with American forces. Hence, the Chinese attempt to keep all issues with the US outstanding

until the time should be ripe for a package settlement advantageous to China.... In this connection it must be remembered that, although China verbally appears

¹⁰⁰ The purpose in having her own nuclear weapons is, of course, to be able to act independently of the Soviet Union vis á vis the US, though this is not meant to say that this writer thinks China will actually use her nuclear weapons. Rather, it seems more likely that China will use the psychological advantage accruing from their possession over her Asian neighbors to obtain her goals.

to threaten East and Southeast Asia and even the Indian Ocean area, this bluster is largely a function of China's almost total lack of conventional offensive capacity; it is the Soviet Union that has the strength to do harm, if it had the will, and one of the objects of China's "Cultural Revolution" may be to ensure that by the time it has the strength, it will also have the will to pursue world revolution to the end." ¹⁰¹

Since the US, even when it had a monopoly of nuclear power, did not choose to expand local wars into general or nuclear wars (e.g., Korea, Vietnam) the CPR is not totally afraid of participating in local conflicts, though she attempts to reduce the dangers of provoking US military reaction by limiting the duration of the conflict through application of the principle of truce. By this tactic, the US will, according to Peking's experience, lose concern over the conflict. ¹⁰² (See, for example, China's application of a unilateral cease-fire with India, immediately after winning a decisive [though limited] victory over the Indians.) Likewise for the purpose of limiting the dimensions of conflict, the Chinese Communists also employ the techniques of weapons limitation. Another technique the Chinese use is target selectivity. [As an example of the latter, concurrently with putting pressure on India, China conciliated Pakistan. ¹⁰³] Another principle by which China abides in military strategy is not being so flagrant in the use of her power in another country that its government will turn to the US for help. ¹⁰⁴ Limiting victory and using 'restraint are thus inherent elements of the Maoist military strategy.

This type of military strategy justifies the Party's control of, and policies towards, the PLA. Since the main target is to develop China as a strong nuclear power, one capable of offering a real challenge to the US

101 W.A.C. Adie, "China and the Vietnam War," MIZAN, VIII, No. 6 (November-December 1966), p. 235.

102 Bobrow, "Peking's Military Calculus," op. cit., p. 293.

103 Ibid., p. 295. This, however, may have been for the purpose of putting even more pressure on India from another border.

104 Ibid.

with nuclear weapons, and since her military capability cannot go far beyond the limits of her economic development, available resources are generally pumped into the economy rather than the PLA. Hence, the PLA has been limited in size and in modern weaponry and much importance continues to be given to the people's militia. According to Bobrow, the size of the PLA has remained constant, despite fluctuations in the size of the US military establishment. This is in accord with Peking's intent to avoid those types of wars which demand massive commitment of China's troops.¹⁰⁵ (It also shows that the CPR does not respond action for action to American military increases--she is having a hard enough time just trying to catch up on an elementary level.) Chinese military doctrine has, however, been modified to take into consideration the prominent place nuclear weapons have assumed. Finally, China's "use of force" doctrine justifies strong political control and command of the Army. The parallel political command structure, the political commissar, and the intensive indoctrination program in the Army--all are mechanisms which

must be used to reduce the possibility of escalating by overzealous field commanders. Since the Party center and not the military knows best the latter cannot evaluate the real value of local victory.¹⁰⁶

In the end, then, the Chinese Communists, as always, return to their basic assumptions: the primacy of politics and of political objectives, with the military serving as the instrument for the implementation of these goals. And Maoist strategic military and political doctrine serves as the necessary rationalization for the lack of means the Chinese possess to obtain their professed revolutionary ends. More than that, this doctrine has had to balance an awareness of China's weaknesses with a belief in the ultimate victory of China over antagonists and a maintenance of prudence and caution while keeping China's revolutionary spirit aflame.

¹⁰⁵ Bobrow, "Peking's Military Calculus," op. cit., p. 298.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 298, citing Fu Chung, "The Great Victory of Mao Tse-tung's Dialectics," in JMJP (October 6-7, 1960), in JPRS, No. 4282 (1960), p. 3.

APPENDIX F

CHINESE COMMUNIST DOCTRINE ON USE OF FORCE

CHINESE COMMUNIST DOCTRINE ON THE USE OF FORCE

by Samuel B. Griffith, II*

War is a matter of vital importance to the state, for it is the province of life or death, the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied.

Sun Tzu. The Art of War
(c. 350 B. C.)

War is the highest form of struggle, existing ever since the emergence of private property and social classes, for settling contradictions between classes, between nations, between states, or between political groups at given stages of their development. Without understanding the circumstances of war, its characteristics, and its relations to other things, we cannot know the laws of war, cannot know how to direct it, and cannot win victory.

Mao Tse-tung. Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War (1936)

* Brigadier General Samuel B. Griffith, II, U.S.M.C. (ret.) served with the American Embassy in Peking as a language officer prior to World War II; during the war and after he was an officer in the Marine Corps in the Pacific and in China. His articles on Chinese military and political affairs have appeared in Foreign Affairs and numerous military publications. He is the translator and editor of Mao Tse-tung's On Guerrilla War and the author of The Battle for Guadalcanal and The Chinese People's Liberation Army. The latter, a recent publication, is a valuable and unique contribution to the field. General Griffith is a member of the Council of Foreign Relations, the Institute for Strategic Studies in London, and is currently engaged in research at the Hoover Institute of Peace and War, Stanford University.

I

While it would be indignantly denied in Peking, Chinese Communist doctrine relating to the use of force may perhaps most accurately be described as an amalgam to which Marxism-Leninism, as "creatively enriched" by Party Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Chinese tradition, and western thought have all made traceable contributions. Lenin's dialectical postulate that two fundamentally conflicting "world outlooks" exist, provides the basis for Mao's "glorious military thought", described in Peking as "the invincible weapon which guarantees victory".

These antagonistic outlooks derive from the mutually exclusive ideologies and attitudes which in varying degree animate the policies and actions of the opposed "socialist" (Communist Chinese) and "imperialist" (United States) "camps". In all important aspects - intellectual, political, social and economic - these societies manifest what Mao describes as "qualitative" contradictions. These contradictions are deemed by Maoist dogma to be so sharp, so profound, that they are irreconcilable.

Doctrine asserts that these antagonistic contradictions can only be resolved by the final suppression of the reactionary exploitive class society and its replacement by a dictatorship of the proletariat. But, as this consummation cannot be attained by legal means and since the reactionary groups will not willingly abdicate, it follows that they can be overthrown and institutionally liquidated only by a conclusive, violent struggle. In effect, Lenin's thesis on the inevitability of war between the opposed systems - a thesis to which Mao subscribes - derives from these premises.

In his essay "On Contradiction", Mao wrote:

The contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is solved by the method of socialist revolution;
---the contradiction between colonies and imperialism
is solved by the method of national revolutionary war.

And the Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party has repeatedly made it clear that there can be no long-term peaceful accommodation between the "camps" of "socialism" and "imperialism"; that they are fated to engage in continuing militant struggle. Unlike "the timid mice" cowering in the Kremlin, Chairman Mao professes not to fear this struggle, for Marxist-Leninist theory assures him of ultimate victory.

Mao conceives revolutionary struggle to be tidal. That is, the process is one of cyclical ebb and flow. During ebbs, it may be desirable to achieve accommodation with the "imperialists" and "reactionaries" - in other words, to co-exist. But this is a temporary tactic which buys that valuable commodity: time. Time permits the revolutionary ("progressive") forces to readjust, to consolidate. Ebbs are marked by an obvious decrease in militancy. This expedient attitude is reflected in Lenin's succinct phrase: "two steps forward, one step back", and in Mao's descriptive definition of defense as merely a phase of the offensive.

These periods of consolidation, withdrawal and retreat are, however, transient phenomena in the revolutionary process, for "the laws of historical development" have determined the "inevitable doom" of the "reactionary, decaying and declining classes". This will be produced as the result of a final cataclysm, a war which according to Mao will end all wars. Then mankind will enter into a permanent state of peace.

In Chinese eyes, one of Premier Khrushchev's most flagrant ideological lapses was his statement that wars between the antagonistic camps could no longer be considered "fatalistically inevitable". An even more egregious example of Khrushchev's "revision" of the "incontrovertible truths" of Marxism-Leninism was his stated belief that a nuclear holocaust could well destroy both capitalism and socialism. That is to say, Khrushchev blatantly refuted the dogma which holds that the innate superiority of a socially organized state, under the correct leadership of the Communist Party, and the unique mystique characteristic of the armed forces of such a state, guarantee it immunity from a military defeat by a "capitalist imperialist" state.¹

¹ Further, according to the Chinese, it was Khrushchev's unfounded fear of nuclear war which prompted him - and prompts his "revisionist" successors - to "collude" with United States "imperialism" to encircle and isolate the People's Republic of China, the last bastion of "true" Marxism-Leninism.

Previously, in the Cuban missile crisis, the Premier had indulged in "adventurism" (when he emplaced missiles there) and "capitulationism" (when he withdrew them). By the only "true" Marxists-Leninists, i. e., those in Peking, both actions were deemed grievous deviations.

During his second visit to Moscow in the fall of 1957, Mao declared that while hundreds of millions might perish in a nuclear war, from its ashes there would inevitably arise "newer and finer civilizations" which would introduce the Communist millenium. Naturally this did not go over too well with the Chairman's Soviet hosts, who were quite aware that 100 million or even more of these consigned by Mao to the nuclear graveyard would be Russians. This statement, together with others to the effect that atom bombs are "paper tigers", convinced a number of people in the West that the Chinese Communists were irresponsible, and dedicated to the use of military violence. The habitual virulence and bellicosity of Peking's propaganda on the subject of "Wars of National Liberation" serves only to confirm this impression.

Unfortunately, perhaps, the more temperate statements of some official spokesmen do not receive in the West - particularly in the United States - the attention they merit. One such statement was contained in an article, "Strategically Pitting One Against Ten, Tactically Pitting Ten Against One", by Li Tso-peng, a long-time close associate of Lin Piao, which appeared in Peking Review (issues April 9 and 16, 1965). In this essay, Li pointed out that it was necessary to avoid confrontation with the forces of imperialism and reaction, for before their ordained demise they "may still be powerful for a certain period, and will still devour people. From this point of view, they are living, iron, and real tigers". By implication, China was relatively weak, and must "prepare". Li warned that it was necessary to take "full account" of the enemy's strength, and prudently advised avoiding battle unless victory was assured: "We are opposed to counting on a lucky chance; we are opposed to taking the enemy lightly and advancing in a reckless way; we strive to make certain that we will win every engagement we fight, otherwise we avoid battle ---. The revolutionary people," he wrote, "must be prudent."

In fact, there is no concrete evidence that the Chinese, except in desperation, would employ military force irrationally or rashly. They will use other means than violence to achieve their goals, if they conceive that these means will be effective. In Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory, "war" and "peace" are not contradictory but organically related states. Struggle is ceaseless and "peace", as defined by Mao, "is war without bloodshed". Still, the aggressive use of organized violence is but one means - albeit the most dangerous one - of carrying on militant struggle.

Because war is seen as an integral component of the comprehensive spectrum of "total strategy", combat, and the instruments of combat, i. e., the armed forces, must be subordinated to politics. "Politics," say the Chinese Communists, "is the life-line; the heart and the soul." "War," said Lenin, is only a tool of politics." Politics demand a rational use of force, that is, force (and all other means, as well) must be adjusted, controlled, integrated and directed to serve the political end in view. In other words, Chinese Communist doctrine - and traditional doctrine as well - prescribes the discriminating and calculated use of force.²

Another factor which tends to inhibit imprudent use of force is the emphasis placed by doctrine (both Maoist and traditional) on rational calculation of risks and concrete, objective analysis of all circumstances and conditions which may affect the relation (or balance) of forces. Only if these careful estimates indicate that the balance is decisively favorable are the Chinese likely to resort to armed force.³ Thus, although conceivable, it must be considered most unlikely that Chinese Communist leadership would take the type of desperate gamble the Japanese militarists took in December, 1941.

However, it should be pointed out that several aspects of Chinese Communist doctrine relating to the use of force exert an opposite influence. In the first place, the ideology is messianic. The Chinese Communists have a "civilizing" mission, as did the emperors who for two millenia before them ruled China. A principal function of these dynasts was to confer the benefits of a superior culture on the unenlightened peoples who lived in "darkened regions". The "imperialists" and their "lackeys" are the barbarians of the mid-twentieth century. If the modern barbarians will not transform themselves, it is Peking's manifest obligation to assist in effecting the transformation, if necessary by means

² Massive nuclear retaliation at times and places of one's own choosing, which was in essence the Dulles doctrine, did not meet the requirements of rational and selective use of force, and was quickly jettisoned by President Kennedy in favor of "flexible response".

³ This statement precludes the aberrant or irrational use of force, which history suggests is more likely to occur in a Nazi, Fascist or military dictatorial setting than in a Marxist-Leninist society.

of a "just" war.⁴ In other words, the Chinese are unlikely to be deterred from the use of force by "bourgeois" moral considerations. In this context it is germane to recall that Peking described the October-November, 1962 border war against India as "a righteous self-defense counter-attack".

The unique mystique presumed by Communists (both Soviet Russian and Chinese) to animate their armed forces could conceivably affect Chinese judgment in a decision to use armed force. For example, Li Tso-peng wrote (in the essay previously cited) that the "broad masses of commanders and fighters" in the PLA "are highly class-conscious and clearly aware that they are fighting for the interests of the people". But, "The enemy's army is an anti-popular army. The great majority of their soldiers are coerced or cheated into joining. Their fundamental interests are diametrically opposed to those of the reactionary ruling classes. Deep contradictions exist between officers and men and between superiors and subordinates." Thus, "the morale of the troops is not high---they lack a vigorous fighting will". As a result of these "inherent weaknesses", Li alleges that the armed forces of the "imperialists" and "reactionaries" are rent with faction, discord and suspicion.

As according to Li there is neither unity within the imperialist armies, nor unity of these armies with the people, they cannot hope successfully to challenge "socialist" armies which are the exclusive custodians of "the spiritual atomic bomb". To be sure, this thesis is by no means original with Li Tse-peng, or with Mao. It was first enunciated by Lenin, and has been endowed with the authority of holy writ.

These statements provide perfect examples of the dangers inherent in a mechanically doctrinaire assessment of a vitally important factor which demands rigorous objective appreciation.

⁴ Any war waged by Communists (Chinese or other) is by definition "just". Mao wrote in Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War (1936): "There are only two kinds of war in history, just and unjust. We support just wars and oppose unjust wars. All counter-revolutionary wars are unjust, all revolutionary wars are just. We will put an end to man's warring era with our hands---."

Naturally, a great many factors other than those discussed above would affect a decision to conduct combat operations beyond China's borders. These factors, which would be assessed by the leadership in the "balance of forces" analysis, would include relative appreciations of:

1. Strength and combat efficiency of the armed forces (morale, equipment, command, logistics);
2. Efficacy of strategic theory and tactical doctrine;
3. Ability and will of the political leaderships;
4. Morale and state of organization of the populations;
5. States of science and technology;
6. Ability of the economies to sustain combat operations;
7. State of alliances;
8. Assessment of the environment in which combat operations are planned.

While it is not necessary to discuss all these factors in detail, it is evident that several of them, as we have suggested, will be assessed in a context (Leninist-Maoist) which at least inhibits objective evaluation. On the other hand, such concrete factors as equipment status, logistics, economies and environment will receive careful attention. But obviously the tendency to evaluate several possibly decisive factors (specifically, morale of the "imperialist" antagonist's armed forces and population, and relative efficacy of his strategic theory and tactical doctrines) within rigid parameters prescribed by ideology might easily conduce to gross miscalculations.

There is no doubt that the Chinese entered the Korean War convinced that morale of the U. N. forces would crack precisely as had that of the Nationalists. By June 1951, this illusion had been shattered, at least as far as their "Volunteers" were concerned. Similarly, because Mao's strategic concepts had been effective in the final "Civil War", Peking conceived that they would be equally effective in Korea. This did not

prove to be the case. In the end, "imperialist" strategy, tactics and techniques proved to be superior.

These facts may have been recognized by the Chinese leadership and its collective thinking altered accordingly. While there have been no public admissions of "revisionism" in these respects, the Chinese drive to achieve nuclear capability indicates that the leadership accepts, if only reluctantly, the validity of the official Soviet formulation to the effect that if a modern state does not have nuclear weapons at its disposal, "then, no matter what method of conducting war is advanced by state policy, it could hardly achieve a victory in a war with an opponent who did possess such weapons".⁵

Thus, the Korean experience and the advent of nuclear weapons may have forced the leadership to less doctrinally oriented assessments of relative combat power in the context of a possible clash between their "socialist" state and either "imperialists" or "modern revisionists".

Finally, despite a predilection to assess certain qualities in doctrinal rather than pragmatic terms, it appears on the whole that the Chinese, despite what they say, would not permit ideology exclusively to affect a decision to use force. Evident relative material disparities are now (and for some time will remain) so great that it is most unlikely that Peking would permit herself to get involved in a direct confrontation which would lead almost inevitably to an "open end" conflict situation, with either the U. S. or the U. S. S. R.

II

During their long history, the Chinese have produced a great number of works on the art of war. As early as the twelfth century A.D., the most respected of these, The Seven Martial Classics, were accorded canonical status. Interestingly enough, war was seen by many of the ancient writers as an inescapable aspect of political life. And the historical experiences of both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party, as well as the precepts of Marxism-Leninism, teaches the CCP to regard the use of both conventional and "revolutionary" force as a normal rather than an abnormal political procedure. That is, wars of this type are to be anticipated, and a wise and prudent leadership will make timely and adequate preparation to conduct them.

⁵

Sokolovskii, V. D. (Marshal of the Soviet Union), Ed., Soviet Military Strategy, New York; Frederick Praeger.

Again, this does not mean the Chinese would incautiously precipitate hostilities. Even a cursory examination of Sun Tzu's Art of War, a classic Mao and others frequently quote, is quite revealing. For instance, violence is to be used only if other means fail. "To take a state intact," said Sun Tzu, "is better than to destroy it." Mao Tse-tung agrees. Implicit here is what Liddell Hart describes as "the indirect approach".

One important feature of the CCP's conventional "force doctrine" is that in application it must permit flexibility. That is, while main forces operate in a general direction, subsidiary forces contain, harass, disrupt, entice and mislead the enemy. Deception, simulation and dissimulation play important parts in the constant effort to seal the enemy's ears and screen his eyes. The effect desired is to produce in the mind of the enemy a state of confusion and irresolution that will cause him to draw false conclusions, make hasty and incorrect decisions, and take impetuous action. The Communists hope thus to set the stage for "quick decision" battles of annihilation.

Maoist strategy in the "Third Revolutionary War" was devised to create such situations and to disintegrate and liquidate Kuomintang forces in "quick-decision" battles. In a series of related operations against the Nationalists in Manchuria and Central China this strategy was applied with imagination, coherence, rapidity, and overwhelming success.

Communist action was purposefully designed to keep the situation in a dynamic state in which they were able to retain freedom of action and so maintain the initiative. Chiang K'ai-shek's inflexible "fortress" strategy contributed directly to Communist ability to conduct mobile war and swiftly to concentrate very superior forces in tactical situations to destroy inferior Nationalist groupings.

Essentially, the strategy was offensive. As the Communists rarely conceived ground qua ground to be of decisive importance, they did not struggle to hold it. On the contrary, when faced with superior forces, they usually withdrew. These withdrawals, in effect, were "luring" maneuvers.

A feature of Communist military operations against the Nationalists was the degree to which control of the field armies was de-centralized. This is made apparent in Mao's "Concepts of Operations" for three major

campaigns of 1948 - 1949.⁶ Commanders were given full scope to create tactical patterns consistent with existing situations. The contrast with direction of German operations in Russia may be noted.

But, obviously, in a war in which there is a possibility that nuclear weapons will be used, control would be highly centralized. Thus it is likely that immediate control of Chinese nuclear striking forces will rest, not in the Ministry of Defense, but in either the Party's Military Affairs Commission, or (more likely) in the Standing Committee of the Politburo. While command centralization at the higher levels cannot prevent miscalculation, it can at least reduce such possibility.

It is probable that Chinese bellicosity will moderate when they attain (say, in a decade) a nuclear arsenal they consider sufficiently versatile to pose as credible intercontinental threat to the United States. (Whether the United States would consider such an arsenal to pose a "credible" threat is another matter, as each side will be using different "threat" arithmetic. This in itself is rather disturbing to contemplate.)

Of course, the question of whether a nuclear war could be described as a rational political act will plague the Chinese, as it has theorists in the USSR.⁷ So far, the Chinese have not publicly faced up to the strategic paradox set by weaponry in the modern age, and particularly to the problem posed by the qualitative disparity between the projected U.S. nuclear arsenal and the arsenal China may hope to have within a decade.

One further question deserves attention, viz., that of "staged" or progressive development of nuclear doctrine by the Chinese. In the first place, it would appear that the Chinese are forced by circumstances to a "counter-value" (city-destroying) strategy. This follows from the fact that they will

⁶ Mao Tse-tung, "The Concept of Operations for the Tiashsi - Shenyang Campaign," "The Concept of Operations for the Huai-Hai Campaign," "The Concept of Operations for the Peiping-Tientsin Campaign," Selected Military Writing, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1963.

⁷ "In our opinion, from the military technology point of view, war as an instrument of policy is outliving itself." Major General N. Talenskii, quoted by U.S. Editor's note in Sokolovskii, op. cit., p. 110.

only gradually acquire a nuclear arsenal of the size and versatility that would enable them to adopt a selective targeting strategy. In fact, for a variety of reasons (primarily technological and financial) they may not consider a selective targeting strategy - "counter force" - as even desirable. It is too early to discuss this question, which has most likely not as yet been settled in the higher councils of the CCP.

Chinese doctrine, although offensively oriented, does not neglect the defensive aspect of either strategy or tactics.⁸ For some years, they have been emphasizing their readiness to meet an "imperialist" invasion of the mainland, which they apparently conceive as the final phase of a war in which the United States would previously have employed nuclear weapons. They realistically anticipate that a very considerable proportion of their developing industrial base would have been destroyed, and that, in search of victory, the "imperialists" would have to occupy the country. Thus, they conceive some sort of a "broken-back" war - in essence, a reprise of the "Anti-Japanese Resistance War", in which the invader held "points" and "lines" and they the countryside. They would count heavily on the People's Militia and Red Defense Guards "to drown" the invading armies in a "people's war". It does not seem to have occurred to the Chinese leadership that both the "imperialists" and "revisionists" are well aware of the dangers of getting bogged down in a large-scale Asian war of this type, and have not the slightest intention of accommodating themselves to this "preferred" Chinese strategy.

III

There would seem to be no reason to anticipate any significant changes in Chinese Communist doctrine respecting the use of force. When force is applied, it will be generally under the conditions already specified, i. e., in a rational way consistent with the political objectives sought.⁹ The political objective will at all times be paramount.

⁸ Developments in Korea permitted the Chinese "People's Volunteers" to assume a static defense and to elaborate defensive positions of which highly organized and integrated cave-tunnel complexes were a distinctive feature. The Chinese Communists were particularly proficient in creating these complexes, as are their assiduous students, the Vietcong.

⁹ The "righteous self-defense counter-attack" mounted against India in October-November, 1962 is illustrative.

This objective will be defined by higher Party organs, not by the military, and will be the controlling factor in dictating the nature and scope of operations.¹⁰ In this respect, Chinese doctrine is similar to that of the USSR.

An important "indirect approach" aspect of CCP force doctrine is provided by Lin Piao's now well-known thesis on "wars of national liberation", or "people's revolutionary wars". This thesis has recently been exhaustively analyzed by various western scholars and its major premises are familiar. In a sense, Lin's strategy may be described as one of frustration. That is, the Chinese effort to generate and promote revolutionary class violence in the Afro-Asian-Latin American countries derives in some degree at least from their impotence otherwise to influence the "relation of forces". One should anticipate that this strategy will for some time continue to receive attention, if only verbally.

The cascades of propaganda devoted to proving the efficacy of "wars of national liberation" do not necessarily establish the fact that Peking really places much reliance in this particular aspect of the continuing struggle between the two opposed "camps". But it is the only strategy now available. It is cheap, promises considerable gains at low cost, and avoids the dangers of a direct challenge to U. S. power.

One must assume that China will use force - as others do - when and where she conceives her national security to be threatened. Massive U. S. intervention on the ground in North Vietnam might well trigger a conventional response from the People's Republic.

Finally, there is at present little if any reason to believe that the PRC will for some time be amenable to arms control proposals, conventional or nuclear. The Chinese will maintain numerically strong conventional forces for the indefinite future, as they strive to attain a respectable inventory of nuclear weapons. One may, however, expect Peking to keep up a constant propaganda barrage advocating "the thorough and complete destruction" of nuclear weapons systems. A less bellicose leadership may emerge from the present political chaos in China. But one should not anticipate that such a leadership will necessarily be more amenable to arrangements governing testing of nuclear weapons, or to control their proliferation.

¹⁰ This statement excludes the possibility of a "Napoleonic" development in the CPR.

ANNEX I

"Wars of National Liberation" or "People's Wars"

Wars on the grand scale and
peace in its true sense may be
buried side by side.

General André Beaufre

Although "indirect strategy" is as old as history, it has found a modern Marxist-Leninist formulation in the Maoist concept of "People's Wars". Such wars, Mao has written, are "progressive", "Marxist", and "just", and will receive China's unequivocal support. The most comprehensive thesis on this subject is Lin Piao's "Long Live The Victory of The People's War", which must be considered an authoritative statement of Chinese policy. (Official text in Peking NCNA International Service, September 2, 1965)

Given the present sad state of Sino-American relations, it is prudent to presume that any "War of National Liberation", or "People's War", which can be given (or which acquires) a strong nationalist, "anti-imperialist", and anti-U.S. orientation, will be supported by the People's Republic of China. While this support may largely be limited to strident vocal encouragement, material and technical aid will be given as circumstances permit, and discretion dictates.

The Chinese have always favored an indirect form of strategy. Even Confucius, when asked by a disciple about generalship, replied that although he knew nothing of such matters, he would prefer a general who could "succeed by strategy" rather than one who would "rush a river". and Mao has said that he has no use for impetuous generals, who would "butt their heads against stone walls". We have the proverb: "The long way 'round is the short way home," a modern re-statement of Sun Tzu's succinct observation that the indirect way is often shorter than the direct.

The foremost modern proponent of the "indirect approach" in strategy is Captain Sir Basil Liddell Hart. In the Preface to his Strategy: The Indirect Approach, Sir Basil wrote (p. 15):

We have moved into a new era of strategy that is very different from what was assumed by the advocates of air-atomic power - the revolutionaries of the past era. The strategy now being developed by our opponents is inspired by the dual idea of evading and ham-stringing superior air [nuclear] power.

And, it might be added, of neutralizing technical and numerical superiority.

The official Chinese attitude to "Wars of National Liberation" has been repeatedly expressed, but nowhere more clearly than in an official statement released in Peking on September 1, 1963. This polemic constituted an all-out attack on Soviet "revisionist" foreign policy as manifested both in Moscow's adherence to the tripartite nuclear test-ban treaty, and in her expressed apprehension that, as "national liberation movements" conduced to aggravate world tensions, they could lead to thermonuclear war.

The Chinese took the position at that time - and it is still their position - that "Wars of National Liberation" do not lead to "world war". On the contrary, they asserted that "such struggles and victories have constantly weakened and effectively restrained imperialism, and thus have reduced the danger of the imperialists launching a world war and [have] safeguarded peace". It is, says Peking, the manifest duty of all "lovers of peace" to "give full support to the national liberation movement and the revolutionary struggles of the peoples of all countries".

We should not anticipate any fundamental change in this Chinese strategy. Indeed, it is now (and will remain for a decade at least) the principal method by which the Chinese can hope to exert any real influence on the relation of forces. The plain fact is that the Chinese will be unable, during the foreseeable future, to exert significant economic or diplomatic leverage on the world scene. In peripheral areas (as Vietnam) they will provide support to nationalist movements and National Liberation "Fronts", as they are now doing in Thailand.

ANNEX II

Some Notes on Soviet and Chinese Military Doctrine

Possibly the essential difference between Chinese and Soviet military doctrine is that the former professes to accord almost exclusive importance to man, whereas the latter openly acknowledges the profound qualitative impact of modern technology and weapons on strategic theory and on the conduct of war.

The Chinese (publicly at least) depreciate the important factor of relative material strengths as these would affect war-making capacities. In a sense, the Chinese approach to military theory, as it places primary importance on morale ("the spiritual atom bomb", as Liu Shao-ch'i described this quality), is almost mystical. Interestingly enough, an article by a Soviet analyst, I. I. Yermashev, described Chinese theory as "obsolete" and "metaphysical".¹¹

No one will deny that such factors as morale of the armed forces and the people, and the unity of the army and the people, are immensely important in war, and particularly in a long war. But to presume, as the Chinese do, that these qualities are the exclusive property of Communist societies is of course absurd.

It is difficult to say to what extent this concept is simply ritual recitation of a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist formula. But, as I pointed out in the basic paper, this blind theological conviction does not conduce to rational, objective analysis and assessment of relative strengths, and could possibly engender serious miscalculation.

Yermashev also observed that Chinese theory "faces the past", and not only that, but specifically "the Chinese past". Thus, Mao Tse-tung's theory of "protracted war", which is a basic concept in the Chairman's "invincible military thought", is one exclusively derived from Chinese Communist experience in the Anti-Japanese War.

¹¹ Voennaya Mysl (Military Thought) No. 10 of October 1963, (Translation in Sino-Soviet Military Relations, Ed. Raymond L. Garthoff.) (New York: Praeger, 1966).

As I hope I have shown in my forthcoming The Chinese People's Liberation Army (April 1967; McGraw-Hill, N. Y.), this aspect of Mao's thought derives from his false doctrinal postulate that the Chinese Communists played a decisive role in the defeat of Japan in World War II. This, of course, is not true, and is a clear distortion of historical fact. Obviously, American "imperialists" could not be given major credit for accomplishing the defeat of Imperial Japan.

In sum, current Soviet doctrine assesses the material factors that would operate in a war much more realistically than do the Chinese. With the demise of Mao Tse-tung, and the gradual passing of his influence, one should expect a reorientation from required adherence to ideological postulates that inhibit objectivity to a freer intellectual atmosphere in which speculation, if not freely encouraged, is at least tolerated.

2

I doubt very much that the Chinese needed any advice from their USSR instructors on the subject of tactical doctrine. The Chinese Communists have a sound combat doctrine; what their officers learned from the Soviet advisors and experts who came to China and what they absorbed at schools in the USSR during the period of "fraternal" cooperation would, I believe, relate essentially to techniques.

In other words, the Soviets were no doubt able to give the Chinese some good advice on such matters as administrative planning (including all aspects of logistics), communications, armored combat, anti-aircraft defense, control of air operations, artillery techniques, the employment of the infantry-tank-artillery team, etc. This is the type of information the Chinese needed.

Mao's tactical thought, as embodied in his Military Writings, On Guerrilla Warfare, and the more recently published Basic Tactics (Stuart R. Schram, Praeger, N. Y.) is quite sophisticated, and in my own opinion, more subtle than our own, and (I would suspect) than that of the Soviets. Consequently, while the Chinese no doubt listened politely to the dissertations of their Soviet instructors on such subjects as strategy, operations and battle tactics, I should not imagine that they paid great attention.

ANNEX III

Chinese Doctrine and Reality

For a full century before the Chinese Communists gained the "Mandate of Heaven", China was in turmoil. During these decades, the basic problem which confronted nine of ten Chinese was a simple one: to survive. The struggle for survival was by no means confined to the poor and medium peasant, as a study of Chinese history from Boxer days to the present will indicate. The intellectuals, too, had to fight corrupt and reactionary Imperial, War Lord, and Nationalist governments. This particular struggle is still going on, and thousands of intellectuals have recently been institutionally liquidated.

This sort of existence produces a pragmatic man, one who from day to day is face to face with reality, usually unpleasant. I believe that their entire recent history has thus conditioned the Chinese on the whole to make realistic assessments of situations. In fact, I would maintain that pragmatism is a marked national characteristic.

This quality is enhanced by an intelligence higher than average. Throughout the ages the Chinese have esteemed learning, and we have countless examples of their ingenuity, originality, and, of course, of the perspicacity and acumen of the Chinese business man.

The Chinese people are now going through a period in which they are coerced into outward conformance with a rigid theology. This ideology, expressed in The Glorious Thought of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, restricts intellectual freedom in all fields. No intellectual initiatives can be taken so long as this situation exists.

I believe this to be particularly true in the field of military theory. Mao conceives himself to be the author of an original and significant strategic and operational doctrine, and is simply not going to allow any "heretical" changes to be made in it. As I have stated, after the demise of Mao we may anticipate discreet, but gradual progressive attempts to jettison the more inflexible formulae which distinguish his infallible corpus.

The Chinese did show a marked sense of realism in both the Quemoy-Matsu crisis and the Indian Border War. Their perceptions of the changing situations were sound and their reactions prompt.

I believe I have suggested, however, the remote but existing possibility of development from the present aberration of a "Napoleonic"-type reaction by the Mao clique. This would mean at least intensification of revolutionary activities in peripheral areas. Laos and Thailand might possibly be the targets for these.

But (I repeat) on Mao's passing we will see, I am sure, a change to a more temperate climate. China has far too much to do at home to indulge in adventures abroad. Many Party leaders recognize this. The aberration of "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" has done a great deal of damage, damage it will take several years at least to cure. But certainly the Chinese Communist Party must get the nation back on the tracks. Should the Party prove to be unable to do this, we will see another agony of transition in China.

APPENDIX G

ON THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICA'S CHINA POLICY:
A PERSPECTIVE, A STRATEGY, AND SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

ON THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICA'S
CHINA POLICY:
A Perspective, A Strategy, and Specific Suggestions

by
Richard H. Solomon*

I A PERSPECTIVE

World War II wrought great changes in the balance of world forces. The United States attained a position of unprecedented economic and military power, both in absolute terms and also relative to the power of European states who had been the prime movers in world politics for more than a century. This shift in the world power balance thrust into American hands unwanted responsibilities that are the unavoidable companion of power; responsibilities in part related to maintaining peace in the underdeveloped world, where new nation-states have been (often violently) contending for power in the manner of the imperialist European nations who spawned their growth.

Exceptional difficulties have proven to be the rule in US dealings in the underdeveloped world, largely because of the great differences in levels of national, social, and economic development. Unlike successful American efforts to rely on skilled and politically conscious populations in Europe--by way of the Marshall Plan--in the maintenance of regional peace and our domestic security, dealings with nations and regional security in Asia have had to be adjusted to fragile political, economic, and social structures that are the core of being "underdeveloped." Self-reliance and the effective use of American aid have not been within the realm of possibility for many new states; and America has had to assume more far-reaching responsibilities here than her experiences in Europe had led her to expect.

Some paradoxical political situations have confronted a United States by tradition reluctant to involve herself in foreign "entangling alliances," and by instinct taught to value self-reliance and eschew involvement in the internal politics of other countries. Not only have some underdeveloped states (and their leaders) found it easier to rely on American aid than to deal directly with their own problems themselves, but as well certain states

* Dr. Richard H. Solomon is an Assistant Professor of Political Science in the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan. He received research grants from the Center for International Studies at M.I.T. from the Social Science Research Council, and a Foreign Area Fellowship grant that he held between 1963 and 1966. His articles have appeared in the China Quarterly, the Yale Review and the Asian Survey. His forthcoming book, The Chinese Revolution and the Politics of Dependency, is based on the two years he spent interviewing Chinese refugees in Hong Kong. He has worked in close collaboration with Professors Lucien Pye and David McClellan in research on the behavioral patterns of Chinese leadership.

with more malevolent intentions have seen it as rational policy to provoke conflicts which force greater American involvement in the maintenance of peace and stability in the developing regions.

Such is the paradox confronting American dealings with China. A Communist elite feels it risks little and has a great deal to gain, through the purposeful, controlled, and limited use of violence. If no resistance is met, lost territory can be recovered or strategic passes on ill-defined borders acquired. If resistance is met, an enemy--"U.S. Imperialism"--is created who can be used as a foil to strengthen domestic unity and serve as an excuse for more draconian social and economic policies. The American presence can, as well, be turned into the image of a "neocolonialist" to be used to gain political influence in nationalistic border societies; and proxy conflicts, waged according to the Maoist strategy, can be fomented which divert the American "enemy" into costly peripheral wars.

The great problem confronting US foreign policy in Asia is how to respond to the above paradox. If we make no response at all, conflicts unchecked by a fragile international law and diplomacy could lead to the creation of a unitary regional power bloc in which violence would be the arbiter of state relations, and the legitimate economic and social interests of other states would be excluded. But if a response is given, the Communists can seek to use the US presence as the image of a new foreign threat by which to capture the leadership of violent nationalist movements in Asia, and seek to bog down American power in local guerrilla wars, and political conflicts throughout the region.

One way to resolve this paradox would be to eliminate by violence one source of the troublemaking--the Chinese Communist leadership. For a variety of reasons both practical and moral such a course of action is neither readily feasible nor in the interests of America's long-term international aims of seeking to strengthen international law and diplomacy as the basic tools for the peaceful resolution of interstate disputes.

A second strategy for dealing with the Communists' "we win if you don't intervene; we win if you do" view of the use of violence is to, in effect, walk a middle ground between the two extremes of no intervention at all in Asia or taking on the entire responsibility of defense and aid. It is the thesis of this paper that the United States must on the one hand maintain a presence of power in Asia, yet on the other restrict and mask its impact so that other developing states in the region work to strengthen themselves and assume responsibility for their own defense, and so that issues which might be used by the Communists to give credence to the image of "US imperialism" are reduced to a minimum.

A further assumption underlying this analysis is that the United States, for the foreseeable future, must maintain a military defense establishment second to none. The matters raised in the following discussion deal with alternative strategies for using that defense establishment; possible new ways of deploying our forces, committing economic resources, and utilizing political influence to attain the end of orderly, non-violent and self-reliant

social change in Asia, and to prevent either overt aggression or covert subversion by Communist Asian regimes.

America's current foreign policy in Asia, and her attitudes toward China, remain largely the legacy of the Korean War period. Within the last decade, however, a variety of political, economic, and military changes have occurred in Asia which suggest that certain alterations in American policies in the Far East are both possible and desirable. The following five points seem to encompass the major developments in Asia which must be taken into account in the evolution of American policy:*

1. The political viability of the Peking regime. Despite, and indeed in part affirmed by, the recent political turmoil in Communist China, a new political order has weathered the test of time and various political trials in China. Both the "Great Leap Forward" and the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" underline the fact that despite great social tension and dislocations--largely initiated and directed by the Communist Chinese leadership--the Chinese people have neither the organization nor the inclination to "throw off the Communists." Leadership and perhaps even institutional changes will undoubtedly occur on the mainland (indeed, they appear to be in the process of change at this moment), but such changes are largely beyond the influence of American control. Neither are these changes of sufficient concern to American security to warrant direct intervention on our part.

2. The altered significance of Taiwan. Another way of phrasing the above point is that the Nationalist Government on Taiwan, because of developments both on the mainland and in Taiwan during the past eighteen years, no longer can be considered a realistic alternative as a mainland government. Without elaborating all the reasons why this is so, it is important to underline the fact that the present Nationalist leaders maintain the avowed objective of "recovering the mainland," and with our support maintain a potentially offensive military establishment, a large proportion of which is garrisoned just off the mainland.

* Given limitations of time and length imposed on this analysis, two crucial contemporary problems--the conduct of the war in Vietnam and a strategy for responding to China's development of nuclear weapons--will not be considered. They are, however, critical issues to be considered in any fully developed analysis of US-China relations. A discussion of the "UN" question is not included for similar reasons.

Juxtaposed against Taiwan's military capabilities and avowed political objectives is her increasingly notable economic success. This has created new opportunities for the island to expand her economic ties and political influence among non-Communist Asian countries, and provides a new framework within which America's relations with the mainland regime might develop.

3. The Sino-Soviet Dispute. The dispute between the Russian and Chinese Communists has a considerable personalized quality to it, but also embodies profound differences in policy related to conflicting national interests and differing stages of social and economic development. Concerning China's international objectives, the presence of the United States in Asia has somewhat unexpectedly tended to widen the Sino-Soviet breach by exposing sharp differences in national interests regarding the recovery of "lost" Chinese territories and the exclusion of American influence. While the Vietnam war has tended to mute these differences, due to the Russian desire to maintain her stature within the world communist movement, differences in willingness to take risks in the face of United States power continue to be obvious. Sino-Soviet differences in international objectives will continue to provide the United States with opportunities for "widening the breach" between the two powers, and these will be commented on below.

The Sino-Soviet dispute also has major ramifications concerning Chinese domestic politics as well as international relations. Much of Mao's fear of Russian influence within China seems directly related to the concern that Russian "revisionist" policies, if applied within China, would weaken the vitality of the Chinese party cadres, leading to the creation of a new exploiting bureaucratic state apparatus such as existed in traditional China.¹ As well, Mao's attacks on the Soviet policies of "peaceful co-existence," and "peaceful transition," and his apparent "madness" in stressing the need for emotional mass struggles seems related, not to fear of external attack, but rather to the concern that a routinized and uncombative life on the mainland will lead to a dying of his social revolution. This particular fear of Mao's, and the recent measures associated with the "cultural

¹ This point has been fully revealed in the polemical article "On Khrushchev's Phony Communism and Its Lessons for the World," published by the editorial departments of People's Daily and Red Flag in July 1964.

revolution" that he initiated to combat it, seem to provide some opportunities for American policy initiatives that might have a significant impact within China.

4. The import of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." The current mainland turmoils represent the Maoist leadership group, based on the organizational power of at least part of the Red Army, setting itself against the Party machinery itself. Mao has faced up to his enemies within China, to what he feels to be the most significant threat to his revolution: the unwillingness of Party leaders and cadres to adopt radical revolutionary policies which might speed up the process of China's domestic development.

The meaning of the cultural revolution for American policy is above all that the Chinese revolution has turned in upon itself, at least for the time being. In addition, the turmoil within what was till only recently considered a most stable and well-integrated political leadership group and organization, has further degraded the appeal of China as a "model" for much of the underdeveloped world. The "Cultural Revolution" continues a process of image-tarnishing begun during the crisis following the "Great Leap Forward." With China's leaders now at war among themselves, the United States is in a position to deal with certain unfinished problems without appearing to be responding to Chinese Communist threats or pressure.

5. The growing economic vitality and political maturation in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand. A final point which holds great promise for the evolution of American Asian policy is the vitality of a variety of states, formerly occupied or presently allied to and aided by the United States, on China's periphery. These states both provide a basis for contrast with the Communist states, and also, as a result of their economic and political vitality, possess increased capability for taking over some of the burdens of leadership in Asia.

II A STRATEGY

The policy direction which is suggested by the above five conditions might be termed a strategy of "aloofness." It is a posture that recognizes that attempts to be "friends" with a society like China which is still at war with itself, or to establish "closer diplomatic relations" and open up more numerous channels of communication, are almost certain to be viewed by China's leaders as highly subversive of domestic political stability and

international stature--as they would expose China's weaknesses to the outer world and raise old fears about "imperialist" penetration. As France, the Soviet Union, and now Great Britain have all recently learned to considerable diplomatic embarrassment, attempts to maintain ties with a society in such turmoil and so distrustful of others' motives can be more of a liability than an asset.

An aloofness posture also seeks to recognize that the United States "enemy" can be used as a symbol to both unify and mobilize the Chinese people; can be used as an excuse for more draconian political and social measures within China by the Party leadership.² In addition, as the two offshore island crises and the current turmoil in Hong Kong indicate, direct points of contact between China and Western powers are in many ways hostages to Chinese Communist policy objectives. They are exposed nerves that can be manipulated by the Party leadership to increase the reality of the "enemy" through contrived crises.

In essence, the problem of American foreign policy in Asia is to maintain sufficient presence to convince China that she cannot cheaply attain security on her borders at the expense of the political integrity of peripheral states, or expand her influence through techniques of political and military subversion, while, on the other hand, convincing her that our presence in Asia does not mean the kind of threat to her security and economic interests that she tends to assume given the past century and a half of dealings with other foreign states.

Another way of phrasing the strategic problem is that out of their experience of combatting the Japanese, the current Chinese Communist leadership has developed a set of expectations about how an "imperialist" power will behave, and they feel confident that Mao's political and military tactics have proven effective in dealing with "imperialist aggression." Lin Piao's article of September 1965, "Long Live the Victory of People's War!" is the most systematic statement of the Maoist domestic political-military strategy generalized to the international level. What the United States must do, in part, is behave in such a way that the leadership's expectations about "imperialism" are continually called into question; and this requires that, to the extent possible, we not respond to Chinese "defensive aggressiveness" in a manner that merely confirms their expectations about the

² This point has been developed in some detail in the author's paper, "America's Revolutionary Alliance with Communist China," (unpublished manuscript, May 1967).

implacable hostility and intrusiveness of "US imperialism." This requires that we: (a) reduce to a minimum the number of actions that, because of their ambiguity, can be interpreted as aggressive and intrusive; (b) reduce to a minimum those issues between ourselves and other Asian countries which can be manipulated by the Communist Chinese; and (c) that we continue to confront Communist China with actions on our part which tend to call into question their assumptions about the implacable hostility of the United States toward China.

Given the particular world view and policy objectives of the present Maoist leadership, especially as it is revealed in the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," an aloofness policy has the virtue both of denying to them the sense of threat which they now feel is necessary for internal political mobilization and unity, and as well as creating strains within the leadership, between those who feel that Mao's extreme policies are inappropriate to the world as they see it now, and the more militant leaders who assume that the world continues to be as it used to be.

In more specific terms, the United States should seek in its Asian foreign policy to: internationalize its presence as much as possible, through multi-national organizations for economic development, defense, and social programs, so as to avoid creating either the image or the reality of the United States assuming direct responsibility for much of what occurs in Asian political life, and to thrust as much responsibility as possible on the Asian nations themselves, and to encourage the Asian states, as much as possible, through advice and aid, to deal with the social and economic programs which make them vulnerable to Communist-inspired subversion. The strength of the United States creates, in certain situations, the highly destructive attitude of dependency on the part of the regimes recipient of our aid; the expectation that the United States can take care of their problems for them and assume major responsibilities for their defense. This attitude can quickly sap the political vitality of a political leadership (as occurred in China during World War II), and as well tends to perpetuate the image of "US imperialism" interfering in the domestic affairs of Asian states.

With regard to China proper, for the present we should avoid pressing for intrusive contacts, such as exchanges of journalists, scholars, or formal diplomatic representatives, which would on the one hand be viewed by the Communists as threatening penetration of their society, and as well

giving them a hostage to be manipulated when domestic circumstances warranted. On the other hand, however, we should attempt to constantly present the Peking regime with offers of cooperation or assistance (such as recent offers to exchange seeds or provide medical supplies where epidemic conditions existed) which will force the leadership to re-evaluate United States intentions, and if nothing else continue to force the Communists to say "no" -- both to the United States, but more importantly the rest of the world and their own people.

To summarize, a strategy of aloofness is based on the assumption that the present regime on the mainland (and "regime" taken in the broadest sense of that word) will maintain its political control; and that even if a disintegration of control should give the Nationalist forces on Taiwan an opening for involvement in a mainland military conflict, it would not be in United States interests to be dragged into a direct, violent confrontation. In addition, the "Cultural Revolution" has shown that the Maoist regime is so preoccupied with its domestic problems that foreign adventures are neither of high priority nor capable of being backed up with significant levels of resources. Hence the United States' objectives should be primarily: (a) to strengthen peripheral states to deal with their own problems individually, or in regional bi- or multi-lateral combinations; (b) to reduce to a minimum those manifestations of our continued presence in Asia which could be manipulated by the Communists as issues in "United Front" or "National Liberation" struggles; and (c) to use a variety of positive means to break down the reality of the Chinese leadership's image of "US imperialism," to create a dissonance between their expectations and our behavior which will cause them to re-evaluate their policies, and give strength to the domestic political position of those Chinese leaders with more moderate and rational policy orientations.

III SPECIFIC ALTERNATIVES

The above-outlined perspective and strategy may provide a framework within which American policy toward China may evolve; but strategy itself is usually developed within the context of a very specific set of political issues and objectives. Much of the ability to translate a general policy orientation into action is dependent upon the specific issues which at any one time are the embodiment of a nation's foreign policy. A set of objectives without a concomitant group of issues that can be used to give them life presents scant prospect for the realization of general policy goals; and it should be observed that the US possesses all too few positive

issues in relations with China that could be used to her advantage. In this section a number of specific elements in current US-China policy are examined with the objective of trying to realize through them the above-suggested "aloofness" strategy.

1. With respect to China proper: by definition, an "aloofness" strategy towards China tends to preclude a great deal of stress on developing contacts with the mainland, but certain types of "one-shot deals" of brief duration or limited-involvement contacts in certain areas can work toward United States objectives of strengthening rational and technical elites and forcing a radical political leadership to constantly re-evaluate its premises about "US imperialism." Two specific moves which might be made at minimal cost to the United States are (a) a willingness to share certain types of scientific data with the mainland, and (b) to end the trade embargo on non-strategic goods. The latter issue has been well analyzed and argued by Professor Alexander Eckstein in his book, Communist China's Economic Growth and Foreign Policy, and I will not comment on it further here. With regard to the matter of scientific data exchange, however, I would suggest to the extent that we can make available data on agricultural production techniques, industrial management procedures, or medical and birth control research, we are likely to see scientific groups strengthened through their ability to advocate rational and successful policies to China's political leadership. Data sharing is, in addition, something that is not likely to be viewed by the Chinese leadership as highly intrusive and threatening (as for example the desire to send in Western newsmen would probably be), and need not require a stress on "reciprocity." As interest and activity were generated through unilaterally acquired data, a desire for more intensive relations would be created, thus laying the conditions for scientific exchanges of a more reciprocal nature.

2. Action of China's periphery: With the general objective of, on the one hand, forcing the Communist Chinese leaders to re-evaluate their assumptions about "US imperialism" and its objectives in Asia, the United States should work to downplay its role as a unilateral actor in Asia, and to increase the self-reliant capabilities of peripheral states for both economic growth and self defense against subversion. This is perhaps the most effective way to counter Lin Piao's strategy of bogging down the US in a variety of "peoples wars" and dispersing US forces for piecemeal destruction. The development of regional defense and economic arrangements, such as the recently formed ASPAC, should be encouraged. While American military presence is desirable and probably will remain necessary for some

time, the more the United States can develop highly mobile forces, or train and equip regional armies for their own self-defense, the fewer American bases will exist in Asia to be utilized by the Communists as targets for political agitation or eventual "nuclear blackmail."

With respect to Taiwan, we should do everything to encourage the integration of the Taiwanese economy with that of Japan, Korea, the Philippines, etc. This will have two major effects of great benefit to American objectives in Asia: first, it will broaden the base of international support for Taiwan's independent status by giving other nations a vested interest in her survival, thus diluting the degree to which the United States appears to be "withholding" from China a piece of her territory. Secondly, and in many ways just as important, economic development on the island will tend to bring to influence in the Nationalist regime a new elite oriented not to the mainland but rather to the rest of Asia and focused on economic as opposed to military activities. This change, coupled with the eventual generational shift in leadership within the Kuomintang, provides the general framework in which the "recover the mainland" objective--so potentially threatening to the United States' objective of avoiding being dragged into a war with the mainland--can be altered.

The greatest indication of differences in objectives between the United States and the Nationalist leadership has been the presence of Nationalist troops on the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu. Not only does the presence of these troops call into question our profession of wanting to see the civil war solved by peaceful means, but as well, as was demonstrated so clearly in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis, their presence has placed in the hands of the Chinese Communists a pressure point which they can squeeze at their own discretion to raise tensions in the Far East. American military estimates, without exception, are that the islands are a strategic liability, militarily indefensible and a point of potential engagement between Nationalist and Chinese forces that could involve us in a new phase of open civil war.

Looked at from another point of view, however, the islands are one of the few "cards" in the United States' hand that could be played to real value in desensitizing our military presence on China's periphery without in any significant way degrading our defense capabilities. A withdrawal from these islands at the appropriate time could provide for the Chinese Communists just the type of shock to their expectations about our behavior

that would force them to re-evaluate their estimates of United States intentions in Asia, and might strengthen the position within China of more moderate political leaders. I should stress, the timing is extremely important in such a move, and it is obvious that such an action could create problems for our relations with the Nationalists. Within the context of the anticipated change in leadership on Taiwan, however, and given our objective of seeing the Chinese civil war resolved peacefully, the United States should work to create conditions which could enable Nationalists, in the proper historical context, to withdraw their forces from the offshore islands. At present Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek proclaims the policy of "seventy per cent political, thirty per cent military" as his strategy for "retaking the mainland." Withdrawal from the offshore islands is not likely to be a policy acceptable to Chiang or the present leadership; but we must look forward to the day, not too far distant, when the confluence of the factors of a new leadership on Taiwan and the island's increasingly dynamic economy could provide the conditions for a shift to a Nationalist policy of proclaimed intention to resolve the civil war by fully political means.

Short of encouraging the removal of the Nationalist garrisons on Quemoy and Matsu, the United States should reconsider its attitude toward Nationalist guerrilla raids along the mainland coast. The cessation of such nuisance attacks could be an effective "signal" of US and Nationalist intentions to seek a fully political resolution of the civil war. And depending on Communist Chinese activity along her border areas, they could be reinstituted if active Communist external aggressiveness forced a reconsideration of an "aloofness" posture.

As this paper is being written, the status of Hong Kong appears to be increasingly precarious. Should the colony be lost or its economic vitality weakened as a result of Communist pressure, Taiwan would have a unique opportunity to capture the role of Hong Kong as a free port, given her low cost labor market and areas of interest to tourists. Developments have already been made in this direction, as in the free manufacturing zone established at the island's southern port of Kaohsiung. The United States would do well to make available, through international banking arrangements, if possible, enough capital to enable the Nationalists to fully develop a free port area.

While withdrawal from the offshore islands and a reduction in Taiwan's offensive military capabilities would undoubtedly present a trauma of

identity to even the successor Nationalist leadership, (and indeed might create for Chiang Kai-shek's successor great political difficulties due to differing objectives among the island's political and military leadership), the economic possibilities of the island, coupled with various forms of United States military, political, and economic support, should provide a set of bargaining tools with the Nationalist leadership to make the transition politically acceptable.

From one point of view the real question in relations between Communist China and the United States in Asia is who can make use of the force of nationalism more effectively: the Communists through the "United Front" technique, or the United States through multi- and bi-lateral agreements with established governments. Asians are understandably overly sensitive about the objectives of European nations in their part of the world, and even the United States' record of withdrawal from the Philippines and post-war Japan, and encouragement of domestic political self-reliance in Taiwan and Korea does not erase these doubts. The United States, unfortunately, has few opportunities for demonstrating its intention to encourage full political independence in the Far East as soon as political and military conditions permit. One area where limited moves, of limited cost, could be made to demonstrate precisely this point is in the Okinawan island group. Without jeopardizing the security of our military facilities on the major island, the United States should relinquish as much control to Japan as is possible to reduce a sore point of nationalist agitation, creating a contrast with Russian behavior in the Kurile Islands north of Japan, and again taking action which would call into question China's assumptions about "US imperialism."

3. Soviet-American relations

The polemics of the Sino-Soviet dispute have revealed how sensitive the Chinese Communists, or at least the present Maoist leadership, are to any cooperative moves between the Soviet Union and the United States. While many specific moves not already under way do not appear obvious at the moment, the United States should remain sensitive to the degree to which further expansion of areas of cooperation between the United States and Russia will both further raise Chinese doubts about Russian intentions toward her, and will increasingly orient the Soviet Union toward the positive economic and political payoffs possible in dealings with the West. As Russia's national interests can increasingly find positive realization on

her western borders, her inclination to divert resources and attention to Asia will concomitantly decrease, thus making increasingly unlikely the reestablishment of a Sino-Soviet alliance at some future date.

What are Communist Chinese intentions toward the states on her periphery? A reading of ideological documents, of course, would suggest that the fomenting of revolution and expansion of direct Chinese influence would be a primary objective. Communist China's actual behavior, however, suggests that in the world of real political forces the Chinese leadership has developed a set of lower level priorities in her foreign dealings which would seem to include as important alternatives the exclusion of United States and Russian influence from areas near her borders. In areas of instability, such as now exist on the Indo-China peninsula, the United States should realize that Chinese objectives may remain at the level of exclusion of foreign influence; and we should seek to use such private forums as the Warsaw talks to explore with the Chinese Communists the possibility of de facto neutralization of border areas. While continuing to recognize that negotiated arrangements with the Communists are often of considerably less durable quality than arrangements backed by force of arms, the exploration and testing of such tacit or confidential arrangements which for a variety of reasons may be mutually advantageous to both sides would add a useful dimension to American dealings with China.

APPENDIX H

**COMMUNIST CHINA'S POWER POSITION AND
U.S. POLICY ALTERNATIVES IN THE SIXTIES**

COMMUNIST CHINA'S POWER POSITION AND U. S. POLICY ALTERNATIVES IN THE SIXTIES

by
Alexander Eckstein

In this paper I am going to sketch out first the basic pattern of development in Communist China since 1949, including a brief analysis of China's position in 1965 and an appraisal of the cultural revolution and its impact. This will then provide the basis for an outline of policy alternatives open to the United States in its relations with Communist China at the present time and in the near-term future.

I COMMUNIST CHINA'S POSITION AND PROSPECTS

A. The Basic Developmental Pattern Since 1949

The whole Chinese Communist system was characterized by a strong forward thrust, momentum and movement during the first ten years of its existence; i. e., 1949-1959. This forward momentum was in part made possible by certain once-for-all factors. The fact of Chinese Communist victory and the successful conquest of the Chinese mainland in and of itself provided the basis for a powerful psychological, moral, and ideological thrust forward. The Chinese people, profoundly disillusioned with the failures of the Nationalist regime, were prepared to give the new regime the benefit of doubt. Moreover, many of the measures taken by the Chinese Communist regime enjoyed a rather wide popular base. Among such measures may be cited land reform, which of course transferred land to large numbers of peasants, even though it inflicted suffering upon a limited number of landlords. Another measure with a profound psychological impact was the successful reversal of inflation and hyperinflation and the restoration of monetary and fiscal stability. These served as a symbol of great governmental strength in the eyes of the Chinese people who have traditionally associated inflation with governmental weakness and decline. Furthermore,

* One of the foremost analysts of the economy of contemporary China, Dr. Alexander Eckstein is a Professor of Economics and Director of the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan. He has also been a consultant to the Department of State since 1962. He received research grants for studies of economic fluctuations in centrally planned economies from the National Science Foundation and from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1960-62, and a research grant for the study of Mainland China's industrialization since 1911 from the Social Science Research Council, 1963-64. His articles have appeared in Foreign Affairs, The China Quarterly, American Economic Review, Survey (London), World Politics, Economic Development and Cultural Change and Review of Economics and Statistics. He is the author of The National Income of Communist China and Communist China's Economic Development and Foreign Trade. Dr. Eckstein is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and is on the board of directors of the National Committee on United States-China Relations.

the ability of the new regime to relatively quickly impose a system of law and order and to unify the country quite effectively, perhaps for the first time in a hundred years, was another symbol of the new regime's strength and served as another source of respect and sanction that it enjoyed at this early stage in the eyes of the Chinese people.

Even if the Chinese Communist regime had not undertaken any further measures than these, they in and of themselves would have been sufficient to tap a considerable pool of heretofore under-utilized resources in the Chinese economy and in Chinese society. The period of dynastic decline, gradual dissolution of central power following the Opium War of 1840-1842, then succeeded by warlordism during the Republican era, and subsequent wars and civil war, diverted tremendous energies and resources in fighting internal wars and in waging World War II. Moreover, the lack of a central power, or at best a weak central power, contributed to serious corruption, inefficiency and weak administration, all of which resulted in a great deal of waste on the one hand and poor utilization of resources on the other. Therefore, the restoration of law and order and the imposition of unity almost immediately made available certain resources for economic development and for improving government administration that were not at the disposal of the preceding regimes. Naturally, these underutilized resources which were tapped in this way could only be tapped once; once a stage of more efficient and fuller utilization was reached, this source of development was exhausted and new sources of growth had to be sought.

Institutional transformation of the whole economy provided another major source of development. Collectivization of agriculture and nationalization of industry enabled the new regime to capture the land rents in agriculture, and profits in industry and trade and utilize these for the implementation of governmental programs in the economy, in the field of defense, in the military, in the field of political organization, in strengthening governmental administration and so on. Thus institutional transformation in the various sectors of the economy; i.e., in agriculture, industry, trade, and banking, transport, etc., gave the new regime access to the resources which it could control and mobilize for its own purposes. This again in many respects was a once-for-all gain--in the sense that institutional transformation permitted the society under governmental control to make a discrete leap from relatively low rates of capital formation to comparatively higher rates of investment. However, once these high rates were attained, further increases in these could not be achieved very easily because the system was bumping up against some real savings capacity ceilings in the society. Putting this another way, given relatively rapid population growth, which in and of itself was accelerated by improved public health measures instituted by the new regime, each year a part of the increased output had to be set aside for increased consumption and thus the ability of the system to raise the rate of saving beyond a certain point was necessarily limited. Another once-for-all factor was Soviet aid in the early fifties. This aid greatly eased Communist China's investment burden at the time when China most needed it, that is, in the early stages of development and the early stages of governmental consolidation.

The strong forward thrust generated in part by these non-repetitive elements in turn produced its own costs and dilemmas. These largely grew out of two sets of considerations: on the one hand a preponderant emphasis on industrial development, most particularly the development of heavy industry, to the neglect of agriculture, and an overoptimism on the part of the policymakers and planners as to what the capacities of the system were to support rapid forward movement. The overwhelming concentration on industrial development contributed to very serious disproportionalities and raw material supply bottlenecks in the economic system. These became increasingly pronounced in 1956 and 1957. They took a number of forms, such as tightening of food supply in the cities and the inability of the procurement system to keep pace with the growth in the urban population, increasing difficulties in supplying adequately the raw material needs of consumer goods industries, most particularly the cotton textile industry, and inability of the agricultural sector, kept on a short investment ration, to generate a rate of agricultural growth sufficient to yield significant increases in per capita food supply. As a result, by 1956-57 it became increasingly evident that the lag in agriculture was beginning to retard industrial development itself.

These problems and dilemmas forced the regime to reconsider its strategy of development and to evolve a series of new programs designed to cope with these. The character of the programs which crystallized in the Great Leap Forward was really a product of the forward thrust and momentum referred to above, in the sense that the very successes attained by the regime in the economic field emboldened the leadership and created a sense of overoptimism which played a significant role in formulating overambitious targets and creating unrealistic expectations beginning in late 1957 and early 1958. To put it another way, the Great Leap Forward was on the one hand the product of the unresolved problems facing the Chinese economy at the end of the first Five Year Plan, and on the other hand of overoptimism bred by the very successes achieved during the Recovery period and the Plan periods. In a sense the very forward thrust tempted and invited the leadership to move forward further and at greater speed until it really reached the capacity limits of the total science system. As long as the system moved forward and as long as it did not break down or produce a crisis, all the signals pointed to success. Given the information and communication systems available to the leadership, short of such a crisis and breakdown, there was always the possibility present that not everything had as yet been done that could be done to exploit and tap underutilized resources in the system.

As we all know, the rapid acceleration of all programs, the raising of targets, and the mass mobilization of the population at large did yield some short-term gains during the Great Leap Forward. Agricultural production in 1958 did indeed reach record levels primarily due to a very favorable harvest occasioned by unusually good weather. This, combined with the tremendous outpouring of effort in 1958 and 1959 did indeed lead to a significant rise in industrial production and trade, expansion in transport, and all other services. However, as is also well-known by now, these gains were achieved at tremendous economic and social cost. Communization and mass mobilization accompanying the Great Leap resulted in far-reaching disruption and decline in agricultural production, which then produced a profound agricultural and food crisis. This in turn then spilled over into the rest of the economy so that by the latter part of 1960 China entered the throes of a deep depression, industrial decline, and open unemployment.

The crisis was beginning to be reversed after the 1962 harvest which marked the beginnings of recovery. By 1964 it would seem that 1957 levels of agricultural production were restored. Even though industrial production was still operating well below capacity, it was gradually recovering as well, and the more favorable trends in agricultural output spilled over into the rest of the economy, thus enabling the economy as a whole to move forward once more. However, the forward movement since 1962 has been much more sluggish than was the case in the 1950's, so much so that probably even as of 1966, China's total national output barely exceeded the former peak level of 1958.

B. The Position of China in the Mid-60's

Measuring and assessing a country's economic, political and military power potential is at best a most complex task, since we are dealing here with a multidimensional phenomenon. In terms of population, China is of course by far the largest national entity in the world. Regardless of which estimate one works with, Chinese mainland population is at least three times that of the Soviet Union, more than three times that of the United States, and about 50 per cent more than that of India. In terms of total industrial product, she probably ranks below that, that is, around tenth or eleventh. Her world rank in minerals output is somewhere around fifth, in part depending upon which particular commodity one uses as a yardstick. Thus, in terms of coal output, China ranks very much higher, second or third, while in terms of iron and steel, she is closer to about seventh or eighth.

All of these indicators illustrate the fact that China is a large economy with a large total production. On the other hand, in terms of per capita product, China ranks among the poorest countries in the world. Moreover, about half of her national product is generated by agriculture and closely related occupations, while 70-80 per cent of her labor force is tied down in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, only a limited portion of the total economy is commercialized and monetized. Therefore, a sizeable share of the goods and services produced in China are "frozen" within the household and cannot readily be mobilized or reallocated to alternative uses. Pari passu resources are "tied" to specific patterns of use which cannot easily be shifted into the military sector.

Although in terms of the foregoing indicators (except total population size) China is outranked by all the large industrial countries, her economy seems vast indeed in relation to other underdeveloped areas, that is, all of Asia (except Japan), Africa and Latin America. The implications of size are further underlined by the apparent fact that pre-World War II Japan was capable of engaging in a major world conflict and sustaining it more or less successfully for almost four years with a total industrial product which probably was smaller than Communist China's is today. Admittedly Japan was even then much more advanced technologically and much more highly industrialized than China is now. Furthermore, pre-war Japan had a much smaller population to care for than China does, so it could allocate a much larger share of its total industrial product to expanding the military and closely related sectors. Therefore, one certainly could not conclude from this comparison that what Japan was capable of doing then, China could do now. Nevertheless, the comparison does suggest that if China continues on her industrialization path, it may not be too long before her war-making power may match that of Japan in the 1930's.

One of the most critical questions is whether population size should be treated as a source of weakness or strength. If one compares Communist China with her immediate continental neighbors who are roughly at the same stage of development as she is, there is no doubt that population size represents an element of strength and power. If one compares Communist China with the United States and Russia, population size might represent an element of strength in the context of conventional warfare waged on the Asian continent. Within certain limits, sheer manpower might serve as a substitute for firepower. In a nuclear confrontation, however, it might have no effect at all, except in a macabre sense that a vast population has a somewhat better chance of leaving behind survivors.

Viewed in the above light, the economy--as underdeveloped as it is--is capable of providing Communist China with a military potential which can, and indeed has, significantly altered the power balance on the Asian continent despite the fact that it may not permit the Chinese to challenge the Soviet Union and the United States.

Finally, in considering this question of power potential, one cannot omit certain political inputs. Posture, foreign policy behavior, and foreign policy attitudes, in and of themselves, necessarily constitute an important input in power. This can perhaps be most clearly illustrated in the case of Gaullist France. In terms of its size, its mobilization capacity and its disposal over industrial and military hardware, France is quite a small country indeed. Yet through sheer posturing, shrewd diplomacy, nuisance value, and judicious use of threats, France has succeeded in projecting the image of a great power and has been capable in recent years of making her influence felt at many crucial turning points in international affairs. In some respects, the position of China is not too dissimilar. By assuming an extremely militant diplomatic, verbal and propaganda posture, China has succeeded in inculcating fear in many of her neighbors and in projecting on the world scene an image of power and power potential which may not be fully commensurate with the economic, industrial and military realities of mainland China. At the same time, this very posture has in many respects served to mislead many to assume that China in fact is more militant than she really has been. There has been a tendency on the part of many to confuse Chinese posturing with Chinese actions; while the posturing has been militant, the actions have been very cautious. Perhaps one could go so far as to suggest that the caution in respect to military and foreign policy actions has been born out of a very realistic recognition on the part of the Chinese leadership of its limited capacities and its weakness vis-à-vis the United States. At the same time, the posturing is designed in part to make up for this weakness and to substitute for it, thus enabling her to still make certain political gains in spite of the self-realization of military weakness.

C. The Cultural Revolution and Its Impact on China's Power Position

The cultural revolution basically represents a closely intertwined struggle over policies and over the succession. The policy disputes themselves are not really new, but can be traced to earlier periods. The new ingredient in the cultural revolution, however, is its particular virulence

and the forms of struggle. This new quality is almost certainly a function of the struggle itself and gives it an enduring quality which these struggles did not have before.

The basic issues at dispute can perhaps best be categorized under six headings:

- (1) The struggle for the permanence of the revolution;
- (2) The problem of professionalism;
- (3) Economic policies;
- (4) Foreign policy, including Vietnam and other issues;
- (5) Sino-Soviet relations;
- (6) The struggle for the succession and the power struggle resulting therefrom..

In effect the last two are intertwined with every one of the first four.

(1) For several years now, Mao's concern for the permanence of the revolution has been increasingly evident. He has been clearly pre-occupied, if not obsessed, with the problem of how do you maintain the dynamics, the elan, the zeal and the commitment of the revolution? How do you assure that the system continues to move forward? How do you make sure that you can keep the population, the polity and the state in a more or less permanent state of mobilization, control and ideological commitment? Most particularly, how do you do this with the successor generation which has not experienced the revolution, which has not experienced the Great March, and which has not experienced Yenan? This concern for the permanence of the revolution was further underlined in Mao's eyes by the trend towards "revisionism" in the Soviet Union and the increasing routinization and bureaucratization of the Chinese Communist Party itself. Against this background Mao began to sense more and more the need for struggle, the need to recreate the revolutionary experience by promoting struggle if need be from above.

(2) Another overriding issue in the recent turmoil in China has been the problem of professionalism, perhaps best dramatized by the slogan "red versus expert." This is an issue which cuts across all of the institutions in the social, political and economic realm. It is perhaps most pronounced and most concrete in the economic and military fields. In broadest terms the dispute revolves around an assessment of the relative importance of ideological as compared to technical inputs in the process of

modernization. Another way of dramatizing the dispute is to focus on the problem of "men over weapons" or "men over machines." This is really not so much a matter of Mao not understanding the importance of technical expertise and technical inputs. There is very little doubt that Mao is fully aware of the fact that in the long run in order to achieve economic development, modernization and a strong defense posture, human skills, complex weapons systems and complex machines are essential. However, he seems to feel that given the scarcity of human resource skills and the scarcity of modern machinery and modern weapons in China at the present time, the modernization process requires broad social mobilization, a breakdown of traditionalism, a breakdown of traditional resistance to innovation, and the creation of a spirit of innovation. However, in order to achieve this, "expertness" is not enough; on the contrary, "redness" is absolutely essential. As a matter of fact, "expertness" without "redness" will achieve relatively little because it will get bogged down in the face of the tremendous resistance inherent in the tradition-bound system. On the other hand, "redness," almost by definition, means the acceptance of innovation, an innovative drive, and a recognition of the need to introduce new techniques, to acquire new skills, and to introduce new weapons and machines. In effect then, "redness" becomes a prerequisite for "expertness" and "expertness" alone without "redness" is viewed as insufficient to overcome the potent barriers to social, economic and political modernization.

The military counterpart of this approach is the emphasis on people's wars and guerrilla capabilities as compared to an emphasis on a modern army and modern weaponry. Of course the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive and certainly Chinese Communist military policy even at the present time is committed to modernization of the army and its equipment with modern weapons. Nevertheless, Mao almost certainly believes that China's comparative advantage in the military field lies in waging a people's war with a large guerrilla army. At the same time, he is acutely conscious of the comparative advantage which his enemy number one, the United States, enjoys in the field of modern weaponry. At present and in the foreseeable future, he cannot possibly hope to compete on equal terms with the super-powers in the field of modern weaponry. However, he can hope to compete on extremely favorable terms in a guerrilla war. Of course, these attitudes of Mao's are profoundly conditioned by his own experience during the prolonged period of civil war in China. There is almost no doubt that Mao and the top leadership group as a whole has been profoundly conditioned and moulded by its own people's war experience in the period between the 1920's and 1949. Mao and many of his colleagues

still look at problems in military terms within the context of a civil war. They even look at economic development as a series of obstacles to be conquered and a series of resistance points to be overcome. Thus ultimately the issue of professionalism is but a manifestation of the fact that the kind of skills, attributes and capabilities which Mao and his colleagues acquired in waging the civil war and in engineering a successful revolution may not at all be appropriate to managing a living social, political and economic system. In these terms the cultural revolution can be viewed as a desperate attempt by Mao and his colleagues to apply the kind of inputs to managing the system that they have learned and successfully applied to engineering the revolution. In this attempt they do not seem to be sufficiently aware of the fact that an entirely different range of skills and attributes are required to pursue the former as compared to the latter.

(3) A third range of differences revolves around economic policy. One could say that ultimately the dispute in this field boils down to differences concerning the basic character and nature of man. Put differently, to what extent does man behave like an Economic Man? How far can man be remoulded into ideal Communist Man? A Communist Man would internalize the basic values and goals of the system. He would be committed to self-abnegation, to subordination of his personal interests, to the larger good of the party and the society. He would also subordinate his material strivings, check his consumption, be wedded to frugality, work hard and invest all efforts for the advancement of the party, country, and society. In effect Mao seems to be convinced that if the masses are properly led by the cadres, if the cadres are properly imbued with Communist values, and are fully committed to them, and at the same time, if the party is well organized, then the people at large can be made to behave more like Communist Man. Viewed from another perspective, what this means concretely is that Mao and his colleagues are convinced that normative and ideological appeals can be substituted for remunerative appeals or material incentives in motivating human actors to move in the directions desired and sought by the regime.

Below these more fundamental and overarching issues lie certain specific differences on concrete economic policies. Among these perhaps the most important revolve around the role to be allocated to the private agricultural sector; that is, how much scope should be allowed to the private plots in the agricultural collectives? How much scope should be allowed to free rural markets? If these are allowed to flourish, will this lead to the development of "capitalist tendencies in the countryside"?

Even admitting that these more liberal policies might lead to agricultural improvement, would they not in fact endanger the very basis of the party's rural control system? There undoubtedly must also be far reaching policy differences concerning the patterns of resource allocation in other areas. Should the rate of saving and investment be stepped up? Should the screw be generally tightened once more or should the comparatively liberal economic policies of 1962-1965 be continued over the next few years? What should be the shape and character of the Third Five Year plan?

(4) While most indications would tend to suggest that the policy struggles of the last year or so have been primarily a product of internal issues, one cannot deny that foreign policy problems also played a role, although probably a secondary one. Leaving the problem of Sino-Soviet relations aside for a moment, undoubtedly the most important foreign policy issue is that of Vietnam. On Vietnam there is some indication of policy differences among the Chinese Communist leadership over the past two years. It would seem that they, too, have their "hawks," their "doves," and the cross between these two, i.e., their "dawks."

It would seem that the chief protagonist of the hawks was the now purged Chief of Staff Lo Jui-ch'ing. Apparently he advocated a more aggressive Chinese posture in Vietnam, unity of action with the Soviet Union, reconciliation with the Soviet Union both for unity of action in Vietnam and in order to obtain more military deliveries from them for reequipping and modernizing the Chinese army. Thus, in a sense Lo's differences with Mao revolved around the interrelated issues of Vietnam, modernization of the army and professionalism in the army. It is less clear as to what particular individuals assumed the leadership positions among the doves, but there is no doubt that such a position was being espoused. The essence of this view was a low and passive posture in Vietnam coupled with reconciliation with the Soviet Union, but not for unity of action in Vietnam, or for modernizing the army, but for modernizing the economy. Reconciliation with the Soviet Union and low posture in Vietnam would make it possible to step up the imports of capital goods from the Soviet Union, to possibly obtain Soviet aid once more and thus to accelerate the economic modernization and industrialization process. Along the same line of speculation it would seem that Mao and his allies took an intermediate position which could be characterized as one of "dawks." It was an intermediate position in several senses. On the one hand, this position involved a very aggressive propaganda and verbal posture vis-à-vis Vietnam, but a very cautious military posture. At the same time it opposed any sort of reconciliation with the Soviet Union, be it for unity of action in Vietnam, be it for modernization of the army, or be it for modernization of the economy.

In addition to Vietnam, clearly there must have been other foreign policy differences under the impact of Communist China's setbacks in Indonesia, at the second Bandung Conference in Algeria, and in other parts of Africa.

(5) As indicated in an earlier part of this paper the Sino-Soviet dispute is intertwined with every one of the preceding issues. Thus Mao's concern about the permanence of the revolution and the loss of revolutionary dynamism cannot be understood unless one perceives Soviet developments as seen from Peking. To Mao developments in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death represent a horrible example of "revisionist" tendencies to be avoided by China at all costs. It is an example of what can happen to a communist society and a communist system if the leadership is not vigilant, if it permits routinization and bureaucratization of the party, and if it permits erosion of Communist values and erosion of ideological commitment. Thus one of the functions of the Sino-Soviet dispute as seen from a Chinese Communist point of view is to buttress the internal struggle against "revisionism" on the mainland.

The link between the Sino-Soviet dispute and the issues of professionalism and economic policy are less direct but are nevertheless present. It would be fair to say that those groups within the leadership and within the bureaucracy that are technocratically and pragmatically oriented tend to place greater stress on "expertness" versus "redness"; similarly, they place greater emphasis on material incentives as compared to the role of ideological exhortation in economic affairs. These same groups necessarily are the advocates of some reconciliation with the Soviet Union, since such reconciliation would make it easier to pursue a course of "expertness" and a course of economic modernization. This would be the case because reconciliation with the Soviet Union would reopen avenues for acquisition of technical assistance, for greater imports of capital goods from the Soviet Union, and possibly even for Soviet economic aid, all of which would facilitate or reinforce the weight of policies based on upgrading the importance of "expertness" and of material incentives. Finally the link between Sino-Soviet relations and other foreign policy issues has already been alluded to. It is most clearcut in the case of Vietnam, but of course it was also very much present in the case of the second Bandung Conference which in large part proved abortive precisely because of the Sino-Soviet dispute and China's attempt to exclude the Soviet Union from it and the Soviets insistence that they be represented.

(6) The final issue to be examined is that of the struggle for succession. It is relatively clear by now that this is not a power struggle in the ordinary sense of the word; that is, this is not a struggle between several potential successors, each of whom is trying to dislodge Mao and trying to displace him before he is ready to go. Thus this is not really a struggle initiated by top leaders wishing to inherit Mao's mantle. On the contrary, it seems to be a struggle for the succession which was initiated by Mao himself. At some point, probably around 1964, possibly even earlier, Mao must have concluded that Liu Shao-ch'i was not a successor in Mao's own image. Mao must have, at some point, begun to feel that if Liu succeeds him, then the permanence of the revolution and all of his other ideals might be seriously jeopardized. Therefore, beginning in 1965 he set out to very systematically undermine the power position of Liu and displace him with Lin Piao. In this sense, the whole cultural revolution could be viewed as a struggle for the succession. But of course it is a struggle for the succession so that the successor will continue to implement and carry out the kind of policies which Mao considers necessary and appropriate at China's present stage of development.

Assuming that this is a more or less valid analysis of the cultural revolution, what may be expected to be its outcome? Theoretically, five different outcomes would be possible:

- (1) A clear-cut victory by Mao;
- (2) A clear-cut victory by Liu and his allies;
- (3) A compromise or stalemate between the two groups, largely engineered by Chou En-lai;
- (4) A gradual loosening of central power with a rising importance of provincial government and far-reaching tendencies towards decentralization;
- (5) Some form of Bonapartism linked to some form of military dictatorship.

Actually, the fifth possibility might be compatible with the third or the fourth.

As of the present time, i.e., mid-1967, it would seem as if Mao was gaining the upper hand but amidst a considerable stalemate; that is, Mao thus far does not seem to have gained a clear-cut victory, but has had to compromise. What seems emerging is a mixture of the first and third possibility outlined above. However, even if Mao should gain the upper hand

for the moment, it is difficult to conceive how he can win out in the long run. It is almost certain that even if he wins the battle, he will lose the war. This is bound to be the case for several reasons. First and perhaps most obvious is Mao's age and the fact that he is bound to disappear from the scene in the not-too-distant future. But more fundamentally than that, it is most improbable that his successor could carry out his policies. First of all, there is no way in which Mao can transfer his charisma to Lin Piao or anybody else. Second, it is most unlikely that the successor, whoever he may be, could develop on his own the kind of charismatic qualities and the kind of charismatic image which Mao enjoys in the eyes of the Chinese masses, and in the eyes of the party cadres. Third, and perhaps most important, is the fact that the policies Mao advocates are really dysfunctional from the standpoint of mainland China's needs and requirements for economic, political and social modernization. It is most improbable that Maoist policies can indeed attain economic development objectives over the long run. They are most unlikely to yield rapid and sustained economic growth. This would suggest that the objective requirements of China's situation at the present stage of development may be expected to push Mao's successors in the direction of policies which will necessarily differ from those presently pursued by Mao.

Before leaving the subject of the cultural revolution, it is important to ask what has been the effect of the recent turmoil and power struggle in China, on Communist China's overall power position in the world and in Asia most particularly. There can be very little doubt that the impact of the cultural revolution in this respect has been negative. China's power position seems to be considerably weakened. On the one hand, her uncompromising posture internally and her relations with the Soviet Union have cost her the support of several Communist parties, notably the Japanese Party. At the same time it has alienated most of the overseas Chinese population, and has generally created a very negative impression in the underdeveloped and so-called neutral world. More importantly, however, the cultural revolution has prevented China from crystallizing any new initiatives, either in the field of foreign or domestic policy. Furthermore, it has removed a very important element of deterrence in the Vietnamese war. Up to a year ago, before the cultural revolution broke into the open, it was a widespread U.S. policy assumption that China is likely to intervene militarily in the Vietnamese conflict under any one of the following contingencies: (a) if we invaded North Vietnam, (b) if we bombed targets in China, (c) less certainly, but probably, if we bombed Hanoi and Haiphong or objectives close to the Chinese border, and (d) if the North Vietnamese regime was in

danger of imminent collapse. Clearly, events have shown the bombing of Hanoi, Haiphong and other objectives in the north have not led to Chinese intervention. It is also quite clear that China's ability and willingness to intervene has been reduced. However, whether they have been reduced as much as it is frequently believed by U.S. military and policy planners at the present time is far from clear.

To put this differently, one might say that up to a year ago it seemed relatively clear as to what the circumstances would be under which the Chinese are likely to intervene. This is much less clear now. This very lack of clarity greatly increases the danger and the risk of U.S. miscalculation of China's intentions. It would certainly be dangerous to presuppose that the U.S. can continue to escalate the conflict in Vietnam to any point they desire and perhaps even go to the point of bombing targets in South China without provoking a Chinese reaction. But since the precise threshold of probable Chinese reaction is much less clear today than it was a year ago, this very fact poses considerable dangers in escalation, dangers of spreading the conflict, and of getting caught in something that was not anticipated and that was not a deliberate policy choice.

D. Communist China's Problems and Prospects

At this point it may be both useful and necessary to tie together the different strands of our analysis before going on to a consideration of U.S. policy alternatives. In examining the basic problems facing Communist China, it may be helpful to distinguish between immediate problems, near-term problems, and long run problems.

Proceeding on this basis, Communist China's most immediate problem is the course of the cultural revolution and its outcome. As was indicated above, the immediate prospect is probably for some type of a Maoist victory but one that is going to be far from clear-cut. It is unlikely to be a sufficiently clear-cut victory to really permit him to fully consolidate his power and to completely reintegrate the Chinese Communist state to the point that it could rapidly move forward once more. The second immediate problem is an economic one, namely, whether economic growth for the next few years, and most particularly agricultural growth, can keep well ahead of the rate of increase in population. Developments in the economic realm are also affected by the disturbances of the cultural revolution. One senses a drift in economic policies and a general lack of direction. Nevertheless, barring unusually adverse weather, prospects are that over

the next few years, China will continue her slow and gradual process of recovery from the crisis and will probably exceed 1958-59 peak capacity levels in industry and continue to increase agricultural output slowly year by year. However, to maintain agricultural output at an average rate of annual growth of about three per cent a year, thus maintaining a safety margin over a two per cent rate of population growth, will not be an easy task.

Over the near term the critical issue is bound to be that of succession. This is a most complex and multidimensional problem. One aspect of the problem is that no successor, whoever he may be, can hope to enjoy a charismatic position anywhere commensurate with that held by Mao. This necessarily means that the cohesiveness which characterized Chinese Communist leadership up to about two years ago, i.e., before the cultural revolution, may be gone forever. This does not mean that the open and sharp divisions and clashes of the present are likely to continue indefinitely. However, even after the successor consolidates his position, there is likely to be much more factionalism and a continuing policy and power struggle, although subdued and primarily behind the scenes.

Several important consequences flow from this. First, in the transition period before the successor fully consolidates his power, the confusion and lack of direction which has characterized China for the past year is likely to be present during that period as well. That means that there will be a time when China will be weak and vulnerable and when she will have difficulty crystallizing a sense of direction. A second consequence of a longer term character will be that the new leadership will not have the same solidity and strength that characterized the Chinese Communist leadership up to the mid-1960's. As a result, it will have to develop a new style of government and a somewhat different political structure.

Both over the near term and even more in the longer run, China faces some very difficult problems, both in the economic and the political realm. In the economic realm the crucial problem is the population-resource balance. Will China be capable of developing a viable program of economic development which can be sustained over a long period of time and which will be sufficiently rapid to keep the country well ahead of population growth? The Chinese population, just by its sheer size, the degree of its illiteracy, and its economic backwardness, poses problems on a scale which no other society in the world faces except India. The most critical problem, of course, is that of agricultural development. Unless the Chinese Communist

planners and policy makers can evolve a program of agricultural development, the whole industrialization program itself is bound to be retarded and arrested. On the other hand, agricultural development does not depend only upon technical inputs, but upon adequate farmer incentives, material incentives, and forms of farm organization which are congenial to the farm population. It remains to be seen whether a collectivized and highly centralized agriculture operating within the context of a command economy under conditions of backwardness can successfully cope with the most complex problems of agricultural innovation and progress. Should the Chinese Communist leadership of the post-Mao era prove pragmatic and flexible enough, there is no inherent reason why this problem could not be resolved. If these agricultural problems should be resolved, China's economic growth prospects ought to be reasonably good. More specifically, if a sufficient share of capital investment resources and other inputs, most particularly chemical fertilizer, is channeled into agriculture, and if an appropriate incentive structure is developed for the farm sector, Communist China ought to be in a position to sustain an annual average rate of growth of about four to five per cent a year, roughly corresponding to the long term historical average for Japan.

A second group of long range problems facing China is of course in the political realm. Broadly speaking, the critical question confronting Communist China's policy makers is whether a society of such a vast size, in effect a society of unprecedented size, can hope to accomplish simultaneously the task of (a) national integration, (b) constructing a modern nation-state, (c) engineering a social revolution, and (d) managing at the same time a highly centralized political system. It may very well turn out that given China's present stage of development on the one hand, and its vast population and territorial size on the other, much more decentralized methods of government must evolve in China.

A closely related long term problem facing the Chinese Communist leadership is that of the role of ideology. How long after the victory of the revolution can ideological momentum and ideological commitment be maintained? Is it not inevitable that ideology will become gradually eroded? It is almost bound to play an increasingly instrumental role rather than continue to be a guiding force to the same degree that it has been in the past.

A third group of long run problems confronting Communist China lie in the field of foreign policy. What is to be the long run strategic

concepts underlying Chinese Communist foreign policy? Can they afford to pursue a policy of unalterable hostility vis-a-vis both the United States and the Soviet Union at the same time? Can they continue to remain isolated from the rest of the world? Would they try to make up for U.S. and Soviet hostility by seeking increasingly closer ties with Japan, using this then as a basis for a wide-ranging alliance of Asian states, either pro-communist or neutralist? Of all of the long range issues, those lying in this realm of foreign policy are perhaps the most difficult to forecast at the present time.

II U.S. POLICY ALTERNATIVES

It would be fair to say that until about a year or two ago, the dominant posture of U.S. policy vis-a-vis Communist China was one of containment, combined with isolation. It is a policy that was crystallized during the Korean War and has remained frozen until recently. The symbols of this policy are denial of China's seat in the United Nations, a total U.S. embargo on trade and other economic transactions with China, a U.S. travel ban to China until recently, and a ban or restrictions on a whole host of other contacts and communication between China and the United States. At the same time the containment aspects of U.S. policy are backed up and symbolized by the maintenance of U.S. bases in the western Pacific, U.S. military aid to the Chinese Nationalist troops in Taiwan, U.S. military presence in Thailand and in several other countries, patrolling by the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan straits, U.S. active intervention in Vietnam, and a number of additional moves and measures.

A. Viability of a Containment Policy in Asia

What I would like to do in this section is to first examine the basic rationale of our containment policy vis-a-vis China and then appraise its viability before posing certain policy alternatives. As we all know, the policy of containment was evolved in the European context and was first applied there. It may be useful to trace its basic rationale in that context in order to assess the degree to which the assumptions on which it was based in Europe are or are not applicable in Asia. The containment policy was evolved in the late '40's at a time when the United States was in the process of unilateral disarmament following World War II, without this disarmament being matched with commensurate moves by the Soviet Union.

This was a time when the Soviet Union was militarily and politically expanding into Eastern Europe, not only through subversion and proxy,

but by actually stationing troops in East European countries and constantly threatening militarily its neighbors to the west. This aggressive military posture by the Soviet Union was accompanied by a militant political posture in the form of active subversion in Western Europe, particularly in France and Italy, where strong Communist parties flourished under the impact of war devastation, war-engendered demoralization, and economic prostration.

Against this background the basic concept of the containment policy was to, on the one hand, interpose the U.S. military presence between Russian troops and Western Europe, and on the other, to make clear to the Russians that any military advance beyond a certain line would encounter a U.S. response. Coupled with this was a far-reaching program of economic reconstruction in the form of the Marshall Plan designed to restore the economic, political and social viability of Western Europe. It was assumed that this two-pronged line of attack on Europe's postwar problems would in time permit a gradual reduction in tensions between the United States and its NATO allies on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. It was hoped and assumed that in time the inability of the Soviet Union to move further into Europe, both militarily and politically, would gradually bring home the lesson to the Soviet leadership that a different range of policies, less aggressive and less militant, might pay off better in the long run, at least in terms of Soviet national self-interest.

At the same time, it was assumed that under the impact of rapid industrialization and urbanization, Soviet society itself was gradually changing and that certain social transformations were likely to take place in the Soviet Union that would in time alleviate some of the most extreme features of the Soviet system and would create pressures within Soviet society for a more gradualistic and less aggressive foreign policy.

The containment policy as applied to Europe did indeed prove to be singularly successful. Not only did developments in the Soviet Union travel more or less in the directions hoped, but the recovery and development objectives in Western Europe were realized as well. A most essential ingredient of successful economic recovery and development in postwar Europe has been the fact that in the case of Western Europe, we were dealing with mature and stable states with long histories as national entities, with a far-reaching degree of social, economic and political integration. These states and societies were temporarily disrupted by war and its aftermath. Therefore a quick injection of large-scale aid provided over a period of time could in fact accelerate the process of social, political and economic reintegration.

To what extent are these assumptions applicable to Asia? They certainly were applicable to Japan and, in fact, Japan's postwar history bears much resemblance to that of Western Europe. However, there the analogy probably stops. If one looks at continental Asia, one sees a picture which is as radically different from that of postwar Europe as one can possibly find. Leaving Japan aside, as of 1945 or 1950 there were only two states in Asia with a long history of national identity and independence, that is, China and Thailand, and even there one has to indicate that this was qualified independence, since there were many forms of incursion on the sovereignty of both of these states, and certainly of China, ever since the mid-nineteenth century. As for the other countries including India, Pakistan and Southeast Asian states, they were all newly emerging nation-states, without a strong tradition of national identity and national integration. Moreover, precisely because these states were emerging from the colonial era, they were at an early stage of virulent nationalism and anti-colonialism. All of this meant that many of the governments in these countries were unstable and that the evolution of political stability would necessarily have to be a gradual and long-term process, a situation very different from that which prevailed in postwar Europe. This obviously was not a case where temporary measures of a relatively short-term character could reestablish political, economic and social integration. Rather it was a situation where such integration had to be newly created and this of course could only be done over a long period of time.

This whole task of political stabilization and national integration was of course greatly complicated by the emergence of Communist China after 1949. However, even here there are very significant differences as compared to Europe. Unlike Europe, the Communist regime in China did not expand militarily beyond its boundaries. In the case of the Korean War, the Chinese clearly intervened as a measure of self defense. One could cite possibly Tibet as an exception; that is, if one considered Tibet as territory outside of China, which would indeed be a fairly far-fetched construction. One might also cite the Sino-Indian border dispute. However, even there the Chinese, after attacking and defeating the Indian army, withdrew, keeping only certain limited areas in the Himalayan borderlands which were vital for the supply of Tibet.

To sum up, there are very far-reaching differences in the Chinese situation vis-à-vis Asia as compared to the Russian situation vis-à-vis postwar Europe. China did not send and keep troops for any

prolonged period beyond its own boundaries in order to back Communist regimes. On the other hand, the non-Communist governments on China's periphery were not only temporarily weak but structurally very vulnerable and not easily stabilized even with large injections of foreign aid and even with prolonged support from abroad. Furthermore, given China's stage of development a containment policy could not bring about for quite a long time the kind of economic and social transformations witnessed in the Soviet Union.

B. U.S. Policy Implications

What implications flow then from this analysis? Perhaps the implications can best be spelled out by outlining certain principles which seem to me ought to guide U.S. policy in Asia which necessarily then automatically becomes U.S. policy, vis-à-vis China.

1. The principal anchors of our policy in Asia should be Japan and India. In the case of Japan, our interest is at the maximum to keep Japan as an ally and strengthen it as an economic and political buffer and counterpoint against China. At the minimum, it ought to be our objective to keep Japan a neutral, friendly to the United States. The case of India is much more complicated because of the country's much greater backwardness and its internal political, economic, and social instability. Whatever leverage the United States has should be used to promote stability in India, and here the principal instrument that is available to us is economic aid. It is imperative that the U.S. continue and enlarge its economic aid program to India so as to assure its gradual development under democratic auspices. It is also our interest to prevent the breakup of the Indian Union. This again can be greatly facilitated by large injections of economic aid.

2. Beyond this, we ought to pursue a policy of qualified containment without isolation vis-à-vis China. What would qualified containment without isolation mean in this particular context? First, we should choose carefully where we draw the containment line. It should be drawn at the point which is most easily defensible politically, economically, socially, and militarily, and at the point therefore that is most favorable to us. Beyond the Indian subcontinent and perhaps Thailand this line ought to be drawn around, rather than within, continental Southeast Asia; that is, the major line of defense against the spread of China ought to be within island Asia; i.e., Japan, Taiwan, Phillipines, Indonesia and Malaysia. In every one of these cases except Indonesia, we are dealing with countries

that are reasonably stable with quite favorable economic and political prospects. Indonesia is of course a special case and there the prospects are quite grim indeed. However, China's capability to conquer Indonesia militarily is extremely limited. At the same time, with careful diplomacy and judicious injections of foreign aid there are some prospects that, slowly and gradually, an economic and political recovery may be made in Indonesia on terms favorable to the United States.

3. This suggests that we should not commit ourselves to an all-out defense of continental Southeast Asia where the economic, social, political, and military prospects from our point of view are quite dim. This does not necessarily mean that we should withdraw from Vietnam immediately, to which I will refer further below.

In continental Southeast Asia we may need to rely on certain long-run forces to prevent the spread of Communist Chinese influence. That is, even if temporarily certain parts of continental Southeast Asia should become Communist, this does not necessarily mean that they will become Chinese satellites. The experience of East European countries in recent years suggests that nationalism is a much stronger force than Communism. This principle is almost certainly likely to prevail in the case of Asia as well. Therefore, a Communist takeover in particular countries does not necessarily mean a Chinese takeover. Needless to say, the U.S. should by no means actively encourage a Communist takeover. The question merely is how far should we go, and can we go, in committing our own military manpower and resources to stem a tide in areas where we have very little to work with, where preconditions for democratic development are minimal, and where the prospects for political stability are very unfavorable.

C. U.S., China and Vietnam

What about Vietnam? It would be fair to say that if the U.S. had to decide whether to make a large scale military commitment to Vietnam in the foreknowledge of what was involved and what is going to happen, it is more improbable that such a decision would in fact have been made years ago when we first got involved in that country. There is no doubt that the increasing degree of our involvement has not been a result of deliberate design, but a piecemeal and gradually increasing commitment which has finally mushroomed into a very major and significant U.S. venture.

It is clearly idle now to attempt to recreate the past and one has to proceed from the present. In considering the present, we must be conscious that in Chinese Communist eyes as well as in fact all of our other involvements or relationships with China are completely overshadowed by the conflict in Vietnam. With increasing escalation of the level of conflict, most particularly with the spread of bombing in North Vietnam, we are daily raising the risk of spreading the conflict beyond the boundaries of Vietnam itself and involving China. What is likely to be the Chinese response if we invade North Vietnam, or mine Haiphong harbor, or bomb airfields in South China, or bomb certain railroad junctions in South China? It is difficult to believe that the Chinese Communists will sit idly by, even as weak as they are, if we do all of these things combined. Of these various possibilities, the one most likely to provoke Chinese intervention is the bombing of objectives in China itself.

Moreover, any moves designed to establish some form of communication between the United States and China, either via a relaxation of the trade embargo or through Chinese admission to the U.N. or some other moves, can have very little prospect of success or of a favorable response, or of any effect as long as there is the prospect of U.S. military intervention in the immediate vicinity of China.

Thus Vietnam, and particularly the qualitative change in the character of the war there, has produced two extremely important but paradoxical results in the last few months. First, at a time when the U.S. has been moving in the direction of relaxing its policy of isolating China, this very relaxation has been undercut by the escalation of the war in Vietnam. Second, through our increasing escalation, we have gradually permitted the Chinese to drive a wedge between ourselves and the Soviet Union. For some time in the past, it was thought that Vietnam may force China and Russia further apart. This in fact has happened to some extent. However, there is now an increasing danger of not only China and Russia being separated further and further from each other, but that the whole coexistence policy and the Soviet-U.S. détente might become a victim of the Vietnamese conflict. Unwillingly the Soviets are being drawn increasingly into the Vietnamese conflict. As we escalate, they consider themselves forced to raise their contribution. And so it becomes a spiral with no immediate end in sight. The result of this is that even though the U.S. in recent years has been pursuing a very astute policy of peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union, of seeking a détente, of in effect sowing suspicion between the Soviet Union and China, and gradually developing at least a tacit understanding with the Soviet Union,

at least in part directed against China, this policy is in danger of being subverted and reversed, not by design but by default. In effect, through Vietnam we are letting the Chinese drive a wedge between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

D. U.S. Policy Alternatives

Assuming that our policy now should be one of containing but not isolating China, what steps would need to be taken to implement such a policy given the present situation in Vietnam and in Asia?

First of all, it is imperative that the Vietnamese conflict remain localized, and that the policy of containment does not erupt into a policy of military conflict and military confrontation with China. It seems to me that this necessarily means that the level of conflict in Vietnam must be reduced. We must do whatever is necessary to restore economic, political, and social stability in South Vietnam even if this means a massive U.S. military presence for many years to come. Hopefully a prolonged U.S. presence will provide the preconditions for the gradual emergence of a politically stable regime which can then, in collaboration with the U.S., and utilizing large scale U.S. aid, embark upon the job of economic and social reconstruction. At the same time we should pursue all avenues of negotiations and settlement which would permit us to withdraw militarily from Vietnam on terms which provide reasonable prospects for political stability there. Such a policy would then permit us to once again renew initiatives in our relations with Communist China.

In effect, our policy vis-a-vis China ought to be a two-pronged one. On the one hand, we should continue to make it perfectly clear to China that we intend maintaining our presence in the Western Pacific and that we are prepared to guarantee the independence and national integrity of countries on the periphery of China. At the same time, however, we should actively seek to bring China into the world community and into the world international system. As long as we continue to treat China as an outlaw, she necessarily will behave like an outlaw. Again in terms of concrete steps, this should involve the admission of China into the United Nations on the basis of some form of solution which would commit the seating of both mainland China and Taiwan. Second, we should work towards opening of trade relations between the United States and China, which of course means lifting the trade embargo. Third, we must continuously seek openings for restoring travel between China and the United States, for contacts with

the Chinese at international conferences, contacts with journalists, etc. However, this should not only be confined or even be primarily based on U.S. efforts. Even more promising than this would be U.S. encouragement of moves by other countries in the direction of increasing contacts, trade relations, exchange of persons, programs, etc. In a very important sense it is essential to wean China, to teach her to live in the international community, to persuade her to conduct the game of international policies, international relations, and international diplomacy the way it is played and the way it can be conducted in the mid-twentieth century.

In pursuing this policy we must be constantly aware of the fact that international relations is a game played on the basis of action and reaction and vice versa. Only too frequently are U.S. policies and U.S. policy moves adopted without sufficient account being taken of how our moves might affect Chinese moves. The U.S. - Chinese relationship must be viewed as an interacting one in which we mutually condition our foreign policy conduct. If we are to bring about a reduction in tensions between the United States and China, it is very important that we assess Chinese reactions and that we try to understand the world as seen from Peking. This will enable us to tailor our moves more carefully and to design them in a way that is likely to bring about maximum effect. Correspondingly, we can hardly expect the Chinese to respond to apparent moves of relaxation by us which are at the same time accompanied by even more significant moves of closer U.S. military presence on Chinese borders, coupled with a very serious threat of U.S. incursions into China.

APPENDIX I

ALTERNATIVE U.S. POLICIES WITH RESPECT
TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

ALTERNATIVE U.S. POLICIES WITH RESPECT TO THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

By

Samuel B. Griffith*

Before examining the question of what policies the United States might adopt in order to (1) lessen the military threat increasingly posed by Communist China, and (2) hopefully reach some mutually acceptable accommodation with her, it might be well to attempt to assess Chinese policy goals as these appear to be conceived in Peking.

Official spokesmen for the People's Republic of China have repeatedly asserted that China intends "to regain her rightful place in the world" and to have her voice heard and respected in world councils. Presumably, Peking conceives this "rightful place" to be that of a Great Power, i. e., a peer of the United States and the Soviet Union.

These aspirations are not entirely motivated - as many Americans seem to believe - by the messianic ideology to which the Chinese leadership subscribes (i. e., the belief that Maoist ideology is the salvation for the world's people). This is an important, but by no means exclusive

* Brigadier General Samuel B. Griffith, II, U.S.M.C. (ret.) served with the American Embassy in Peking as a language officer prior to World War II; during the war and after he was an officer in the Marine Corps in the Pacific and in China. His articles on Chinese military and political affairs have appeared in Foreign Affairs and numerous military publications. He is the translator and editor of Mao Tse-tung's On Guerrilla War and the author of The Battle for Guadalcanal and The Chinese People's Liberation Army. The latter, a recent publication, is a valuable and unique contribution to the field. General Griffith is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Institute for Strategic Studies in London, and is currently engaged in research at the Hoover Institute of Peace and War, Stanford University.

factor. The Chinese traditional "world view" (i. e., China is the center of world culture) is perhaps equally influential, and as much as Mao may wish to deny or destroy the past, he is, as any other Chinese leader will also be, to some degree a prisoner of his cultural heritage.

Thus, I believe it may be said that any strong central government in Peking, oriented to the world environment as it exists in the latter half of the twentieth century, would aspire as Peking does today to Great Power status. And when one takes into account the tremendous panorama of Chinese history and her unique cultural achievements over a space of twenty-five centuries, one must admit that this aspiration is legitimate. What concerns the world, and particularly China's immediate Asian neighbors, is the method by which the present government hopes to achieve this status.

However, in this connection, it may be observed that Chinese Communist policy is not uniformly militant. And events of the past two years have proved that it is by no means uniformly successful. At the present time, China seems to be wholly engaged in the convulsion described as "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." For the past year, her energies have been directed inward rather than outward. But as some measure of internal order and stability is restored - and this will probably transpire in the not too distant future - we will witness more activity on the international scene.

The nature of the leadership that emerges from the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" will, of course, influence the conduct of Peking's foreign policy, but not necessarily its essential nature. That is, we may expect a somewhat less militant and uncompromising method in Peking's foreign policy operations should a non-Maoist oriented group ultimately emerge at the top. The prospects for this seem slight. Still, Mao cannot be around too much longer, and with his demise changes will be made, even if gradually.

The possibility that a more pragmatic, less overtly intransigent and bellicose leadership may emerge in China must be anticipated by U.S. policy advisors and executors. Such a development (however remote) might afford opportunities for constructive advances to Peking. Such opportunities may arise suddenly and unexpectedly, and we should be in a position to make the most of them.

To return now to the question of Chinese policy goals as these may be conceived in Peking. To state these goals may be considered presumptuous, but the statement of them is by no means entirely speculative, as most have been enunciated by Communist Party spokesmen. They are as follows:

1. To insure the security and the territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China.
2. To maintain and strengthen the internal power position of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).
3. Under the guidance of the CCP, to build a "socialist" state and ultimately create a communist society in China.
4. To develop a modern, expanding and versatile economy.
5. To secure a decisive voice in affairs of the international community, i. e., "to regain for China her rightful place in the world."
6. To strengthen the prestige and influence of the CCP vis-a-vis other national communist parties.
7. To expand China's influence by various means, including promotion of the Maoist revolutionary model, i. e., "wars of national liberation," in susceptible areas.
8. To progressively erode American influence, which she deems inimical to her national interest, and Soviet influence, which in ideological terms she considers "revisionist" and heretical.
9. Ultimately, to liquidate capitalist "imperialism" and to replace it with a universal communist society.

The CCP is well aware that some of these aims are ambitious, and admits that they can be achieved only in some indefinite future. But in the meantime, the attainment of subsidiary goals will contribute directly to their ultimate realization.

For example, the CCP conceives that development of a credible nuclear capability will help secure for the PRC a decisive voice in international affairs; will contribute to the expansion of China's influence, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and, at the same time, will inhibit U. S. involvement in Asian affairs, which Peking says are to be "settled by Asians."

The reincorporation of Taiwan, or some sort of Peking-Taipei accommodation (a possibility not to be discounted after the passing of Mao and his arch-enemy, the Generalissimo) would contribute to the PRC's security by removal of American power from an area of strategic importance. It would remove from the scene a challenging alternative to Peking. It would enhance the prestige of the PRC and of the ruling party. The reincorporation of Taiwan is seen as a "preferred goal," but it is one the PRC probably realizes is not attainable for many years.

Of the goals named, the first five are "legitimate." That is, they may be attained without Chinese interference in the internal affairs of other societies. Goals 7 and 8 are at least in part "legitimate" in the sense that to a degree they are analagous to the goals of other nation states. That is to say, other nations also seek to expand their influence by diplomatic, economic and psychological means, while at the same time they seek to erode the influence of states they deem potentially challenging or hostile. The last policy goal is one defined by dogma, and for practical purposes may be considered unattainable in a foreseeable future.

In terms of international relationships, what we and other nations object to is not China's ideology per se, but certain of her policies which involve her in the internal affairs of other states, and the methods by which she attempts to pursue these policies.

In considering possible U.S. policies toward China, it must be accepted that nothing of any consequence can be accomplished until the war in Vietnam can be ended, and a new (and one may hope a less hostile) leadership emerges in Peking. Prospects for a termination of hostilities in Vietnam in the next year, or even two or three years, are remote, a point on which General Westmoreland, Ho Chi Minh, and the Chinese Communists are in perfect agreement.

However, if nothing can be done directly (save through Warsaw), some indirect measures are possible. For instance, it seems sensible to encourage a Sino-Indian accommodation, through New Delhi. This would serve several useful purposes. First, such an accommodation might possibly prevent the Indians from "going nuclear." This would clearly be to Peking's advantage. Second, it would provide another channel of communication for us. Third, it would neutralize potential danger spots in the Himalaya: Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. Fourth, and paradoxically,

it might tend to dampen Indian-Pakistani hostility. Finally, it would permit India, and China too, to devote some of the scarce money and resources going into arms to more productive uses.

The United States should also encourage regional economic and trade agreements in Southeast Asia, to include, if possible, the Philippines, Indochina, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia-New Zealand. Pacts of friendship and non-aggression are diplomatic possibilities. It should be made perfectly clear to Peking that she is invited to participate in any and all such arrangements. Naturally, she would view any such plans with distrust if she suspected the hand of the U. S. in them. Such arrangements would therefore have to be generated and promoted locally.

The United States should not continue to oppose Peking's entry into the United Nations. Peking justifiably considers our continued successful effort to isolate her from this organ of the world community an indication of our hostility. Peking probably would not enter the U.N. even if elected. Nevertheless, she should be given the option. If she then chose to isolate herself, the onus would be on her, not on us, as it is now.

Peking should be led to understand that she can play a key role in Asia as long as she ceases attempting to interfere in her neighbor's affairs and leaves them in peace.

Peking will continue to see the U.S. as a threat to her security as long as American power is blatantly deployed on her doorsteps. One would hope that eventually we would be able, first to reduce our military presence on the continent of Asia, and ultimately, to withdraw it. A preliminary step - and one we will eventually be forced to take - would be withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the home islands of Japan. This would ease a growing U.S. - Japanese tension and tend to improve Sino-Japanese relations, which should be one of our diplomatic objectives.

We should do far more than we are now doing to promote economic and social progress in Southeast Asia. Without such progress there is no possibility of regional political stability. This stability is as much in Peking's interest as it is in ours.

We should continue to press Peking, through Warsaw and all other channels, for exchange of journalists, writers, professors, students, etc. We should even offer to underwrite the entire program.

After the demise of Mao and Chiang, the question of Taiwan may be resolved. This is essentially a problem for Taipei and Peking, and at the appropriate time, we should make it clear that we understand this, and will accept arrangements made, providing such arrangements are arrived at by non-forceful means.

Finally, China must somehow, and at some time - and the sooner the better - be brought into the world community. This cannot be done unless the United States takes positive steps to help bring it about. To treat China as a pariah is no cure.