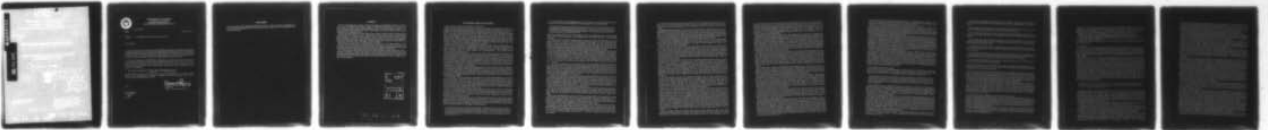


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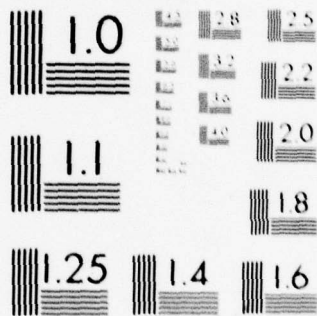
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2. During this training year, the 432d MID also produced four companion studies: *China's Approach to Africa: Revolutionary Model and Institutional Framework*, *Western and Soviet Interest in Africa: The Chinese Catalyst*, *Political Directions in Former French (West) African Colonies*, and *The Anti-Soviet Dynamic: The Basis of Present Chinese African Policy*. These studies may be obtained by requests addressed as in paragraph 4.

3. This report was prepared by SFC Henry J. Burk and SP6 Martin A. Hyman.

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### SUMMARY

The first Chinese diplomatic contacts with Africa took place at the Bandung Conference in 1955. At first, interest in the black African nations' struggle for independence paralleled Soviet foreign policies; however, after the initial Sino-Soviet political differences, China's role in Africa began to manifest itself in ways clearly distinct from the ways of the Soviets. More emphasis was placed on manpower and economic aid rather than on technical assistance.

Peking's policies and objectives in black Africa reflect the need for African support to achieve China's overall objectives of world power status, influence and eventual leadership of the Third World, and domestic expansion to compete with the industrial nations of the world. In 1964, in order to further Chinese diplomatic relations and to portray China as a true friend and supporter of African independence, Chou-En-lai announced China's eight point foreign assistance policy. Despite Chinese attempts to influence and charm the Africans in the 1960's, their policies failed.

China's largest overseas project to date has been the construction of the Tanzam Railway. It was constructed to show the nations of the Third World that China can compete with the western powers and the Soviet Union on their own terms. The Chinese respect for the dignity of manual labor was also shown during the construction, a radical departure from the attitudes conveyed in colonial Africa.

The current Chinese foreign policy towards Africa can be described as having a dual nature; that is a calculated combination of alliance and struggle, a policy aimed at practical achievement and sound relations while promoting revolutionary change to world order. Within the next decade, as competition for oil, minerals, and raw materials increases among the industrialized nations, the true strategic value of black Africa will emerge.

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## PAST CHINESE-AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT

### *1. Communist China's Role in African Affairs Until the 1970's.*

Before 1955 China traded on a small scale with Africa, principally exports of green tea to Egypt and Maghreb.<sup>1</sup> The first Chinese diplomatic contacts with Africans took place at the Bandung Conference, 18-24 April 1955. The Asian-African Conference met in Bandung, Indonesia with 29 states represented, six of which were African: Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast (later Ghana), Liberia, Libya, and Sudan. Although steps toward diplomatic relations with African countries were not mentioned, discussions of a Sino-Egyptian trade agreement with Cairo took place. Bandung became a symbol of Afro-Asia as a viable political concept. China could more plausibly and readily concern herself with African affairs if Chinese and Africans were joined by political ties. Although Bandung marked the beginning of significant Chinese initiatives in Africa, it does not appear that Africa was important to China at that time. There is no evidence that China foresaw the long-term implications with clarity.<sup>2</sup>

China was one of the many states from which Egypt sought diplomatic support during the Suez crisis. The most concrete support was a \$5,000,000 loan—China's first credit of the kind<sup>3</sup>—although China's suggestions that she send volunteers may have been symbolically more evocative. The Suez affair was more than a convenient vehicle for Chinese influence. In one interpretation, it was confirmation that anticolonialism was a powerful force.<sup>4</sup>

From 1957 until 1962, when France acceded to Front de la Liberation Nationale (FLN) demands for Algerian independence, the Algerian war was an important subject of Chinese policy. The FLN sought aid from China and aid was granted. Moreover, after the FLN success, China cited the successful FLN guerrilla struggle as an inspiration for other colonial peoples. China's ideological propensity for struggle, her belief that struggle is a great educator, intensified her attraction to the FLN cause. China perceived some dimensions of change which would follow; however, it cannot be assumed that China saw more clearly than the United States or the Soviet Union how quickly Africa would become a continent of independent states, for there is no such evidence.<sup>5</sup>

Nieh Jung-Chen, a member of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, led China's delegation to the Ghanaian independence celebration in March 1957. He was the first Central Committee member to visit sub-Sahara Africa, and his visit dramatized China's new interest in Africa and the opportunities for contact which independence created. China may also have dispatched Nieh in the belief that he could persuade Ghana to establish diplomatic relations. Despite the air of friendship, however, relations were not established until 1960.<sup>6</sup>

In the mid 1950's China gave attention to some dramatic issues—Suez and the Algerian war—and there is sufficient evidence to conclude that she was aware of a trend toward political independence in Africa; but by mid-1957 there was still no evidence of a major Chinese drive to extend her contacts of foreign policy concerns which would make Africa more important to her. The final months of 1957 and the eventful year 1958, however, were a time of internal tumult in China: she made a far-reaching reassessment of her foreign policy. Her changing requirements and growing self-assertiveness coincided with changes in Africa which opened new opportunities for Chinese action.

China's new assessment came as China was also asking the Soviet Union to share her technological advantage. It may be that Khrushchev agreed to help China design nuclear weapons, but not very speedily, and to give her a sample atomic bomb, but not right away. China probably asked for much more. Apparently Khrushchev's ploy was to promise assistance toward future development, and much of that deliverable only in the long-term future.

In late December 1957 through early January 1958 China participated in the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference. Although China had a seat on the preparatory committee and dispatched a 25 man delegation to Cairo,<sup>7</sup> whatever influence China attempted to exercise was overshadowed by Egypt and the Soviet Union. In spite of this, Chou En-lai's treatment of the conference indicated future trends in Chinese thought concerning socialist unity and support for decolonization.

The existence of this mighty socialist camp and its powerful support to national independence movements have inspired all these peoples striving to win or preserve their freedom and independence, and provides increasingly favorable conditions for them to wage successfully their heroic struggle against imperialism and colonialism . . . so long as all the peace-loving countries and peoples maintain their solidarity and persevere in the struggle, as they have up till now, they will be able to cause the international situation to continue to develop in a direction favorable to peace and compel and imperialist aggressive forces to accept peaceful coexistence.<sup>8</sup>

The new assessment of Africa's significance was succinctly stated in a Jen-min Jih-pao editorial at the close of the First Conference of Independent African States, held in Accra, 15-22 April 1958.

The awakened African people are concerned not only with African affairs but also with the destiny of the whole world. Events in Africa once again show that the anti-imperialist national independence movement is a force of peace. The African peoples have emerged in the international political arena as a new factor of peace. . . . No matter what obstructions and interference the colonialists vainly resort to, the torchlight of independence and freedom in the hands of the African peoples will illumine their broad future. The bright future of Africa knows no bounds.<sup>9</sup>

There was an objective basis for this reaction. Eight of Africa's nine independent states—all except South Africa—had committed themselves to anticolonialism and, even more concretely, to the Algerian revolution.

In the first months of 1958 the CCP declared that African peoples were a newly-imported factor in world politics. This was not yet the view—which China advanced in the 1960's—that Asia, Africa, and Latin America constitute the decisive arena of world struggle. It did identify forces just coming into play, however, which could reinforce the Soviet technology and military advantage. However, at this time it became increasingly clear that Soviet nuclear weapons would not be put at China's disposal and that China must rely on conventional strengths and build her own nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

Africa first assumed major importance on Peking's agenda with the development of the Great Leap Forward. The seed of a flaw in Chinese policy was also formed at this time. Her emphasis on the prospects for new victories had depended on the solidarity of all "peace-loving countries and peoples." With the new weapons at their disposal, the Soviets could stand down the Western power; China, with Soviet backing, could do so too. But the solidarity on which this new calculus of the balance of forces had been premised was illusory. China could not count on Soviet power to abet national liberation movements. China continued to encourage such movements with no suggestion that they should be cautious in the face of Soviet restraint.<sup>10</sup>

Peking's prompt recognition of the Government Provisoire de la Republique Algerienne (GPRA) was one of the first signs of a Chinese position concerning Africa that was distinct from the position of the USSR. On the day the new government was formed, 20 September 1958, a Chinese diplomat met with the GPRA ministers in Cairo, and Chinese recognition quickly followed. Moscow did not extend recognition at this time. China was optimistic about the turn of events in Africa in 1958, and the activities of the Algerian revolutionaries probably further encouraged her. China's commitment to the FLN was her first involvement in an anticolonial war on African soil.

A few days after the GPRA was proclaimed, Guinea attained independence by voting no on a French constitutional referendum. China promptly recognized Guinea and was, in turn, granted recognition,<sup>11</sup> but China did not hasten to endorse Sekou Toure's administration or its policies. Guinea was not cited at the time as an anticolonial model for other African states to emulate.<sup>12</sup> When China did make a gesture toward Guinea, dispatching her ambassador in Morocco on a mission to Conakry in June, she underwrote the mission with a modest grant of 5,000 tons of rice.<sup>13</sup> China's hesitation was likely motivated by the desire to wait and see how the government of Sekou Toure would develop.

When a Chinese embassy opened in Conakry in December 1959 it was the fourth Chinese mission in Africa. Morocco and China had established diplomatic relations in November 1958. China's third mission was in Khartoum, where Sino-Sudanese relations were formally established in February 1959. Thus, at the end of 1959 China had embassies in Cairo, Rabat, Khartoum, and Conakry, as well as relations with GPRA.

Between 1958 and 1960 Chinese contacts with Africans increased rapidly. African delegations visiting China numbered 18 in 1958, 39 in 1959, but they reached 88 in 1960. This pattern suggests that the CCP was trying to strengthen its hand for the November 1960 Moscow Conference of Communist parties. Moreover, visitors from a greater number of African countries came to China each year: 8 in 1958, 13 in 1959, and 29 in 1960. China was broadening as well as intensifying her activities.<sup>14</sup>

The number of contacts with specific states and movements is closely correlated with political relations. Sino-Egyptian relations soured in 1959, and almost all delegation contact vanished. On the other hand, China's attraction to revolutionary movements in Algeria and Cameroon is demonstrated by the fact that 13 of the 39 African groups visiting China in 1959 came from those two countries. China also continued to meet Africans at Moscow-guided meetings and at Afro-Asian conferences held under various sponsorships.<sup>15</sup>

In January 1961, faced by serious economic disarray, the CCP ordered the redirection of resources. Many Chinese activities abroad were cut severely. Until this retrenchment, Chinese programs directed toward Africa had been unprecedentedly large in scale; afterwards, aid and visitor traffic were dramatically curtailed.

In September 1960, China made her first significant economic gesture in sub-Saharan Africa, a credit of 1000,000,000 (old) rubles granted to Guinea.<sup>17</sup> However, large credits extended to Ghana and to Mali in 1961, after retrenchment, included the curious proviso that they could not be drawn upon until July 1962. China's second significant aid was neither cash nor credit, but a grant of medical supplies, steel, and wheat (which may not have been grown in China). During 1961 and 1962, Chinese leadership probably felt the pressure of domestic claims and refused to divert to Africa more than minimum resources.

Two major Chinese delegations were dispatched to Africa early in 1961, but their trips had probably been arranged before retrenchment. In sharper contrast to the previous year, only three Chinese visitors entered Africa between April and December 1961. The number of African delegations to China also fell sharply: 88 in 1960; 43 in 1961; and 32 in 1962.<sup>18</sup>

Just as economic structures forced China to cease many forms of action abroad, the murder of Patrice Lumumba created new opportunities in the Congo (Leopoldville), now Zaire. There was some prospect that a radical Congolese government would be formed to wrest power from Leopoldville. Displaying characteristic caution, and unable to assume large-scale economic commitments, China lent her support to the Gizenga government in Stanleyville but refrained from making costly commitments. Although events in the Congo did not yield results pleasing to China, the example of separatist action against Leopoldville was endorsed. Peking's posture toward the Congo in 1961 was even more significant when viewed as a prelude to decisive action in 1964.

Publicly, China was committed to the legality of the Lumumba-Gizenga government. Privately, China's calculations were summed up in a single sentence, "The situation is favorable but the leadership is weak."<sup>19</sup> China soon agreed to establish diplomatic relations with Stanleyville, the rebel capitol, but she waited five months before dispatching an envoy. China's last minute action may have been an attempt to match Soviet moves, or it may have been a final effort to bolster Gizenga's sagging opposition to the central government of Adoula in Leopoldville. When the envoy arrived, the Gizenga group was already negotiating with Adoula. Peking could clearly see that a compromise might signal the end of the Stanleyville government, and, as it happened, China's worst fears were realized. The Chinese mission in Stanleyville was closed less than two months after it had opened. A calculated risk had been taken, but it had failed.

In July 1960, diplomatic relations were established with Ghana, where the Chinese embassy became an important center under Ambassador Huang Hua. Envoys already in Africa were sent on missions to states with which China sought to establish relations. A week after Mali granted recognition to China, diplomatic relations were established. Relations with Somalia were established in December 1960 and with Tanganyika late in 1961. Diplomatic times were established a week after Uganda's independence in October 1962. On September 10, 1962, a Chinese embassy was opened in Algiers. No additional Chinese embassies in Africa were opened between October 1962 and December 1963.<sup>20</sup>

The decision to encourage radical dissidents to split from Communist parties and groups deferential to Moscow, which the CCP had made by October 1963, was China's most open challenge of Soviet hegemony. During Chou En-lai's trip to Africa in December 1963, he spoke of China's African interest in ways that placed the Soviet Union in a bad light. He urged "self reliance" in discussing aid, implicitly recalling China's own failure to create a dependable aid relationship with the Soviet Union (although use of the term "self-reliance" also served to parry any expectations that China might subsidize African states as Moscow had subsidized Havana). China's terms, he stressed, fully respected the sensitivities of recipient countries.<sup>21</sup> Chou's visit impressed on Africa—and the West—that China now had a special interest in Africa. He was the most important statesman to have visited some capitals. China's interest in Africa had been mounting for a decade, but, to some casual observers, China's concern seemed sudden and therefore more attractive or anxiety-producing. China may have erred in seeking sudden and conspicuous visibility in that the greater a foreign state's visibility within Africa, the more pressures there may be to limit its influence.

Between December 1963 and February 1964, Zanzibar, Kenya, Burundi, Tunisia, and Congo (Brazzaville) established diplomatic relations with China. Much African comment about China during 1964 focused on the question of the Congo (Leopoldville), where a set of semi-independent guerrilla

movements seemed for a time to threaten the central government. China's views of the Congo and her actual role there are the keys to any account of the events of 1964; these, in turn, set the context for her subsequent relations with governing nationalists and hopeful revolutionaries. At a briefing session for Lui Afu-feng, the ambassador-designate, on April 8, 1964 at the Chinese mission in Usumbura, Lui was told that most of the mission's attention should be given to the Congo, where "the revolutionary situation is very good for us." The official conducting the briefing quoted Mao Tse-tung as having said, "If we can take the Congo, we can have all of Africa."<sup>22</sup>

Although China made strident statements about the guerrilla actions, persistently encouraged armed struggle, and devoted considerable emphasis to the part taken by white mercenaries in suppressing the guerrillas, every sign indicated that China wished the extent of the actual assistance remain a secret. It was stressed that "revolution cannot be exported." "We never conceal our position and we regard it as our unshrinkable and honorable internationalistic duty to support the revolutionary struggle of all oppressed nations and peoples" said a Chinese statement of 1 September; this was joined to an angry denial that China was fomenting or intervening in the Congolese warfare.<sup>23</sup> Assuming that some aid was being given to the Congolese at this time, China's posture served a two-fold purpose: it spared her hosts in Usumbura and Brazzaville embarrassment, and it gave credence to the view that the revolution was dependent of internal sources rather than on foreign provocateurs.

Formal recognition of the revolutionary forces might also have implied material commitments exceeding those China was willing to make, and China did not wish to appear unnecessarily threatening to African states. Harboring these doubts and weighing the risks of premature action, she waited to see if a guerrilla movement could successfully withstand attempts to suppress it. Two reports in July 1964 stated that China insisted the guerrillas win at least one province as a condition for additional Chinese aid.<sup>24</sup> It was the quality of guerrilla conduct that interested Peking. If these reports are accurate, they indicate that China wanted evidence that the guerrillas could accomplish a complex military and administrative task and not merely occupy territory for a time. China did not choose to link her prestige again to an ephemeral regime.<sup>25</sup>

In Portuguese Guinea, Angola, and Mozambique, armed struggle was also under way, but it was not as extensive or dramatic as the war in the Congo. China also sought influence in less spectacular ways. In Zanzibar and in the Congo (Brazzaville) she attained some leverage, but her efforts were cramped and subject to counteraction, and she never actually acquired decisive influence. Elsewhere China encouraged specific steps which were consistent with the emerging Chinese style in political life.

During the US involvement in the Vietnam War, China undertook no abrupt changes in Africa. Instead preparations were continued for the Asian-African conference at which the Vietnam War would doubtless be a topic—the chief topic, in the eyes of the Chinese. On the other hand, the momentum of Chinese activities declined. China's diplomatic network in Africa had ceased to grow, few new economic ties were being agreed upon, and guerrilla movements which China might support were not making headway. African leaders, especially those most unwilling to cooperate with China, were increasingly vociferous about Peking's interference. By early 1965 the context in which China sought to work was very different from that which favored her at the close of 1963.<sup>26</sup>

During the Congolese warfare of 1964, Peking showed that she could provide arms and training to revolutionaries in sub-Saharan Africa, a showing which cut both ways. She could perform a complex political and logistical task—but it could be directed against an existing government. China's nuclear program also altered her standing during this period. Some Africans approved, but most did not. Lack of approval seemed to stem more from the uncertainties concerning nuclear development as opposed to specific objections to China in this regard.

China continued to seek diplomatic representation in Africa. The Central African Republic recognized Peking as the sole legal government representing all the Chinese people, and broke relations with Taiwan.<sup>27</sup> This arrangement did not endure, and relations with Peking were terminated just over a year later. During the brief period of diplomatic recognition, there were encounters which demonstrated the caution which the Central African Republic exercised in its relations with the Chinese. In March 1965 President David Dacko told a visiting Chinese parliamentary delegation that it would be as impossible to transplant Central African ideology to China as it would be to apply Chinese politics in the Central African Republic.<sup>28</sup> While visiting the Central African Republic in June 1965, Deputy Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei tried to secure opposition to Soviet, Malaysian, and Congo (Leopoldville) participation in the planned second Bandung Conference, but his plea was rejected.<sup>29</sup>

Events in Dahomey fit a similar pattern. Diplomatic relations were established; then, following a change in government, the Chinese mission and representatives were established in 1964, before China's large-scale support to the Congolese antigovernment forces had been widely known.

Soon after relations were established with the Central African Republic and Dahomey, Chinese policy in Africa suffered its first public reverse. The Mwami of Burundi, who was embroiled in a complex internal political struggle and was also aware of China's use of Burundi to contact revolutionaries in the Congo, ordered the Chinese to leave his country, and he suspended diplomatic relations. China's losses included her contacts with Rwandan exiles, who had been training in Burundi under Chinese experts in the hope that they might be able to return to Rwanda and seize power.<sup>10</sup>

China established diplomatic relations with Zambia in October 1964 and with Mauritania in July 1965. However, China delayed recognizing Mauritania for fear of antagonizing Morocco which had claim to large portions of Mauritanian territory. Traditionalist Mauritania recognized China, among other reasons, to maintain her credentials with Africa's radical states.<sup>11</sup> As in the cases of the Central African Republic and Dahomey, Mauritania ousted a mission from Taiwan to make room for the one from Peking. From 1966-1969 China was prominent in Africa in three ways: she continued economic aid programs and began some others, including the Tanzania-Zambia railway project: diplomatically, she became involved in unfriendly encounters with some African governments, while she remained friendly to others; and she continued to support selected national liberation movements.<sup>12</sup>

After the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution began in earnest in 1966, it took first place among Chinese political concerns. Much of China's normally active diplomacy was suspended. The period from 1966 to 1969, was, in most respects, one in which China's policy makers marked time in African affairs. By mid-1969 Chinese diplomats in Africa were ready to resume an assertive foreign policy after a three-year hiatus. Ambassadors were dispatched to some African capitals, although in others the charges in whose hands embassies were placed during the cultural revolution remained as chiefs of mission. In October and November 1970, China opened diplomatic relations with two African states, Equatorial Guinea and Ethiopia, bringing to 15 the number of African states with which relations were maintained (diplomatic relations with Tunisia and Ghana had been broken).<sup>13</sup>

## *II. Current PRC Foreign Policy in Africa.*

During the present decade, the People's Republic of China's (PRC) aid performance in Africa would appear to be a natural outgrowth of their present alliance and struggle.<sup>14</sup> Chou En-lai restated these objectives in the Fourth Conference of Nonaligned Countries in Algiers on 3 September 1973:

The Chinese people and the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America have forged a profound friendship in their protracted common struggle. The Chinese Government and people firmly support the Asian, African, and Latin American countries and peoples, as well as all other countries of the world who have independence and uphold justice, in their struggle to ruin and safeguard national independence and state sovereignty, develop national economy and defend their national resources and maritime rights and interests, as well as their struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, Zionism and big-power hegemonism.<sup>15</sup>

Peking's specific objectives in Black Africa represent the support for China's global "chessboard" of international affairs. The resultant policies and objectives reflect the need for African support to achieve China's overall objectives of: world power status; influence and eventual leadership of the Third World; and, domestic economic expansion to compete with the industrial nations of the world. Black Africa is most important to China in order to maintain a viable community, the "Third World majority," and to support her motives in the United Nations.<sup>16</sup>

China's interests and objectives in Africa, however, are not solely political and ideological. They extend to the economic and strategic areas as well. China's perception of the complex international situations, and the Chinese drive for a new international economic order based on redistribution and the numerical magnitude of Black Africa resources make Black Africa a rich target for penetration and influence. China has provided both moral and material support through activist movements and anti-white guerrilla organizations. China has a psychological advantage over the United States and Soviet Union by defining herself as a developing Third World nation. In the United Nations, China requires the support in Africa and the Third World in order to sustain the current thrust of redistribution of world wealth and establishment of the "new international economic order."<sup>17</sup>

In 1964 Chou En-lai toured Africa. In order to further Chinese diplomatic relations and to portray China as a true friend and supporter of African independence, Chou announced China's eight point Foreign Assistance Policy:

1. The Chinese government always bases itself on the principle of equality and mutual benefit in providing aid to other countries. It never regards such aid as a kind of unilateral alms, but as something mutual.
2. In providing aid to other countries, the Chinese government strictly respects the sovereignty of the recipient countries, and never attaches any conditions or asks for any privileges.
3. China provides economic aid in the form of interest-free or low-interest loans and extends the time limit for the repayment when necessary so as to lighten the burden of the recipient countries as far as possible.
4. In providing aid to other countries, the purpose of the Chinese government is not to make the recipient countries dependent on China but to help them embark step by step on the road of self-reliance and independent economic development.
5. The Chinese government tries its best to help the recipient countries build projects which require less investment while yielding quicker results, so that the recipient governments may increase their income and accumulate capital.
6. The Chinese government provides the best-quality equipment and material of its own manufacture at international market prices. If the equipment and material provided by the Chinese government are not up to the agreed specifications and quality, the Chinese government undertakes to replace them.
7. In giving any particular technical assistance, the Chinese government will see to it that the personnel of the recipient country fully master such techniques.
8. The experts dispatched by China to help in construction in the recipient countries will have the same standard of living as the experts of the recipient country. The Chinese experts are not allowed to make any special demands or enjoy any special amenities.

Despite Chinese attempts to influence and charm the Africans in the 1960's, their policies failed. China's liberal endorsement of subversive tactics and support of the local Communist revolutionary parties caused grave concern among newly independent Black African leaders.<sup>39</sup> During the same period, China was being subjected to the rigors of the Cultural Revolution and internal chaos. Chinese diplomatic ties with Black Africa dwindled as diplomats were recalled and not replaced. African leaders looked even more skeptically toward the Chinese self-flagellation and questioned their true abilities and intentions.<sup>40</sup>

China's failure in Africa can be attributed almost entirely to her ideologically oriented foreign policy of the period. Despite these setbacks, China maintained a foothold in Black Africa and subsequently negotiated for the Tanzam Railway program. Since China's recovery from the Cultural Revolution in the 1970's, the Chinese have again set forth to develop close ties with strategic African nations. Through projecting a policy of increased presence in Africa, China has been extremely selective in establishing friendships and support programs. Peking's diplomatic efforts have been concentrated on developing in-depth relations with only a few states.<sup>40</sup>

### *III. China's Policy in Africa as Demonstrated Through the Tanzam Railroad.*

These in-depth relations have taken on a form of partial alliance with the representative countries. An example of this alliance structured relationship is that which exists with China and Tanzania-Zambia through the Tanzam Railway. In a speech delivered at a mass rally in Dar es Salaam during the course of a 1965 visit to Tanzania, Premier Chou En-lai spoke of the long history of intercourse between China and Tanzania.<sup>41</sup> While there are some who deny the existence of pro-Communist Sino-African association,<sup>42</sup> it is generally acknowledged that it did exist.<sup>43,44</sup>

In 1965 Tanzanian President Nyerere stated, "We are merely resuming a connection which had been broken off."<sup>45</sup> The contemporary relationship was resumed after an interruption by Western colonialism in Africa and Western imperialism in China,<sup>46</sup> an important factor which serves to inspire both countries' acceptance of their shared political history.

However, it is safe to assume that there needed to be more significant factors underlying a project of the magnitude of the Tanzam Railroad. When viewed along with a growing involvement in Zaire, China's African objective can be brought into focus: to create a chain of influence in countries from Tanzania on the Indian Ocean across the continent to Pointe-Noire on the Congo Republic's Atlantic Coast.

Although others may exist, the following benefits of such a chain of influence come to mind:

1. The physical isolation of Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa from the north of Africa.
2. The mineral wealth of central Africa and the American-developed industrial capacity of Zaire are magnets for PRC economic exploitation.
3. At least partial control of the Cape route as a vital oil tanker route provides an additional incentive to PRC African interest.

#### *IV. The Railroad.*

The concept of a railroad linking the mineral rich South and Central Africa with the ports of Africa's east coast is not a new one. Cecil Rhodes had a plan at the start of the century to connect southern Africa with the Mediterranean by the way of his "Cape to Cairo" link. His dream was not realized at the time because communications links were concentrated in the west following mineral discoveries. After Rhodes' death, the British South Africa company lost much of its impetus and the railroad plans unceremoniously halted in 1906.<sup>47</sup>

During the next 60 years, until the ultimate undertaking by PRC, the image of the railroad was reborn many times only to die again.<sup>48</sup> Following the determination of various surveys that construction of the railroad was feasible neither from a financial or economic viewpoint, efforts to interest the world bank, governments of several western countries and private consortia had failed.<sup>49</sup> Because of their displeasure with the outcome of the previous surveys, Tanzania and Zambia initiated an additional survey. The report of this investigation concluded that the project was economically justifiable, and financially and technically feasible. Following Chou En-lai's visit to Tanzania in June 1975, during which the railroad was discussed, a Chinese survey was undertaken. This too was optimistic. Upon completion of these two surveys, in 1967, the PRC offered to undertake the project and provide the finances. This offer was not immediately accepted because Tanzania and Zambia were waiting for Western reaction and counter offers. When no Western offers were forthcoming, an agreement was signed on 5 September 1967 in Peking.<sup>51</sup> Although other offers may have been welcomed, the only firm offer came from the PRC. However, in certain respects Tanzania seemed more inclined to accept aid from China than the West. Tanzania's Nyerere once expressed the following:

If you take me to see General Motors, I will marvel. But it is irrelevant to what we can do in Tanzania. The assembly plants in North America are irrelevant. The time will come but it hasn't yet. . . . China is different. China is a backward country trying to pull itself up. So three steps in some places two in others, one in others. You can see the steps, and you say, 'Boy! We should do that.' . . . Their stage of development is relevant to us.<sup>52</sup>

Although ostensibly for economic reasons, Western decisions not to finance the railroad may have hidden the basic political reason. Many Africans felt that the West saw no need for Zambia to disengage from Southern Africa.<sup>53</sup> The divisiveness such a railway would bring between Zambia and the rest of Southern Africa was deemed undesirable in Britain's eyes and, coupled with the serious state of the British economy, accounted for the lack of British interest.<sup>54</sup> The Tanzania-Zambia rail line is in many ways the key to Zambian independence, and for them explains many of the reasons why the Western world did not support this economically feasible proposition.<sup>55</sup>

On purely economic terms, many contend that it furthered US interests to push for a road between the two countries to provide an outlet for trucks and for air freighting as an outlet for aircraft.<sup>56</sup>

The sharing of common goals, interests and objectives by two countries is the basis for an alliance. Once this alliance has been formed, it does not necessarily mean that all interests must be shared, that both parties must benefit equally from the alliance, or that roles be similar and contribution equal. In fact, as in any symbiosis, each country is likely to have different goals and provide different contributions.

An analysis of the alliance surrounding the Tanzam Railway tends to confirm these views. When measuring the interaction of economic and security terms it appears evident that at least in terms of tangible benefits Tanzania and Zambia have had more to gain. Both have been able to advance their policies of nonalignment, national independence, and have gained considerable economic independence and development. China's political benefits from the alliance, measured in terms of enhanced

revolutionary credibility and international legitimacy have been significant. It cannot be overlooked that the Chinese may have selected the cooperative role with Tanzania as a means to exploit Nyerere's strong nationalistic principles and philosophy. The Chinese emphasis on recurring long-term assistance programs practically ensures PRC presence in Tanzania (and to a lesser extent Zambia) and enhances Chinese friendship and political clout with neighboring African countries. China may seek to exploit her recently gained position of importance in East Africa to serve her long-range political and military objectives.

It is impossible to quantify the substantial prestige that China has gained from this project; however, the impact will be considerable. Her prestige was greatly magnified by being two years ahead of the scheduled completion—a date that many Western observers saw as unrealistic. However, one of the most significant points is that the PRC effectively brought to fruition an almost century-long dream.

Both Tanzania and Zambia expect the railroad to have long-term economic benefits, and in general to contribute to their development. Rwanda sees the elusive goal of African unity being served by the railroad. At the border crossing ceremonies in August 1973 it was stressed that the Tanzam Railway was a freedom railway with the duty to strengthen African unity and independence. The railway would make African unity practical by establishing channels of communications between nations.<sup>57</sup>

The Tanzam will give easy access to the large, but so far undeveloped, iron-ore and coal deposits in Tanzania. The Muchuma coal field barge reserves of high grade coal and large deposits of iron ore in the Njombe area in the south could supplement the produce from the mines developed in the southern province of Zambia and end reliance on the Wankie coal fields in Rhodesia.<sup>58</sup> The development of mining in Tanzania would be an important addition to the economy which is at present almost entirely agricultural.

The railway line will help develop agriculture also by making it easier to take crops from the fertile Kilombero Valley and the Rufiji Basin area to market. More importantly the line traverses a route that has not been exploited insofar as farming is concerned. The problem of inequitable population distribution plagues both Tanzania and Zambia. Potentially the Tanzam railway will stimulate development in the underdeveloped southern regions of Tanzania. Agricultural experts in Tanzania are particularly optimistic about the development of the part of the Kilombero River escarpment which has not been accessible by existing transport facilities. Tea cultivation, as well as other tropical crops, is envisioned in this area.<sup>59</sup>

Urbanization and modernization, improved communications, electricity and other social services are expected to follow the railroad. Both the construction and the operation phase of the project have produced new markets. Construction boom should result in local peasants producing more and prepare them for an expanding volume of production when the railway opens up new markets on a regular basis.

However, in addition to direct benefits the railway provides a multiplier effect. The movement of goods through the port of Dar es Salaam will necessarily lead to considerable expansion of already congested dock facilities. Thus the railway will create more jobs in Tanzania.

One of the most significant achievements of the PRC-supported railroad has been employment, which the construction has afforded local Africans. It is not surprising that in an area with high unemployment that the Chinese labor-intensive methods might be preferred to Western capital-intensive methods. Further, the PRC did not merely build a railway. Along with it they trained operators and managers, and built support facilities along the way.

In Zambia, the line will allow the exportation of the copper and manganese deposits in the Mkushi area, although these deposits cannot economically justify such a mammoth railway project because they are within easy reach of the existing Zambian lines. Unfortunately, no real farming revolution is likely in the part of Zambia crossed by the railway since rainfall is minimal and the soil is badly eroded. Exceptions would be the few areas in the north around Isoka which are suitable for cattle farming. Also the peasant farmers and the fishermen of Zambia's great lakes near the rail route are likely to find new markets.

On the whole, the effects of the Tanzam Railway are seen by most to be positive, however several problems have already arisen. Because of the diversion of resources from some developed projects and the reduction of imports from Zambia's traditional southern sources, the cost of living has risen considerably. Further tribalism has heightened. The line runs through the area inhabited by the majority tribe and this is seen by the other tribes as a deliberate move. In addition high employment enjoyed by the construction of the rail line is offset by the high rates of unemployment created by a ban on recruitment for South African mines. Unfortunately the same minority tribe is affected by both parts of the problem.

It remains to be seen to what extent Tanzania and Zambia will be affected by the boom-bust syndrome of large scale construction. Areas faced with dramatic change are often most prone to such problems. If

enough new markets and trade are not created then many sectors of the economy which "tooled up" will be forced to accept some lesser role. However, it is recognized that such a problem is more typical of construction in developed countries where along with a given project come roads and schools and other facilities and services which the community may not be capable of supporting following the post-construction decline in activity.

The new line should do a good deal to further East African cooperation, since an efficient, direct low-cost link with Tanzania will make Zambia's longstanding dream of association with the East African Community (Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda) more practical. In the past, Zambia, with its developed area in the southern part of the country and its trade routes also leading south, had few economic ties with Tanzania, which had developed in the north near the borders with Kenya and Uganda.

The Tanzam Railroad is the largest overseas project of all time for the PRC. The basic loan is for \$400 million with Zambia and Tanzania each responsible for repaying 50 percent. The most startling fact is that the loan is interest free repayable over a 30 year period beginning in 1983. The loan is to be paid off in freely convertible currency but 52 percent must be paid back by importing goods from China. Since the PRC loan consists largely of Chinese deliveries of commodities, Tanzania and Zambia find themselves faced with some problems because the importation of Chinese goods means that often cheaper or qualitatively superior imports from other African countries must be passed over. Further development of domestic industry is hampered by these large scale imports of often simple, easy to produce, mass consumer goods. The other side of the coin is that there are certain types of hardware, bicycles, enamelware, glassware and crockery available more cheaply than from the west. In addition, exports of material such as Zambian copper will figure into the repayment.

The magnitude of the loan cannot be overemphasized. The Chinese commitment to build the Tanzam Railroad involved an investment greater than all of the PRC's aid to Africa since 1960. The PRC grant for the Tanzam Railway was the largest single offer of Communist economic assistance ever made. It exceeded even the \$325 million provided by the Soviet Union for the Aswan High Dam in Egypt.<sup>61</sup>

The railway, as it represents the PRC's largest grant of economic aid to date, is a prestige project of great symbolic importance to the Chinese. It is intended to show the nations of the Third World that China can compete with the Western powers and the Soviet Union on their own terms. The very generous terms of the loan can be contrasted with the Soviet Union, whose credits are usually for 12 years at 2.5 percent interest, and with Western credits, which currently average 30 years at an interest rate of 3.0 percent.<sup>62</sup>

Further, the PRC has made an overwhelming impression in the manner in which the task was undertaken. The Chinese respect for the dignity of manual labor is radically different from those attitudes conveyed in colonial Africa. The qualities of the Chinese working on the railroad are in contrast to what is considered the habits of Westerners in Africa or, for that matter, anywhere. The Chinese were seen to leave behind fruit trees, gardens, and viaducts as opposed to the trail of illegitimate children frequently associated with Westerners. Whether by nature or by design the habits of the Chinese made a favorable impression on Africa. Recalling the eight principles, according to which Chinese aid would be granted, espoused by Chou En-lai during his 1964 African tour, only one seems to be violated. With the exception of the fifth principle, relating to aid yielding quick returns, China has used the principles established more than ten years ago as a consistent framework in its relations with Tanzania and Zambia.

#### *V. Effect of the PRC Policies on Future US Initiatives in Black Africa.*

The current Chinese foreign policy towards Africa can be described as having a dual nature, that is: a calculated combination of alliance and struggle, a policy aimed at practical achievement and sound relations while promoting revolutionary change to world order.<sup>63</sup> Chin Yi-wu states that "internationalism" has become the guiding principle of China's foreign policy:

Proletarian internationalism is the guiding principle of China's foreign policy and also her foreign aid. In providing economic and technical aid to other countries, China abides by the eight principles made known by Chou En-lai . . . The just struggle of the peoples of all countries support each other. The struggle against imperialism, old and new colonialism and hegemony, has linked them together.<sup>64</sup>

Within the next decade, as competition for oil, minerals, and raw materials increases among the industrial nations, the true strategic value of Black Africa will emerge. The United States needs, or will eventually need, African resources, while Africa needs US technical and heavy industrial assistance. The Chinese will be forced to continue providing only light industrial, agricultural and construction materials.

China's ability to export heavy industrial equipment remains some distance in the future. The current Chinese emphasis upon domestic industrial and economic expansion will tax their resources and production base in the near term.<sup>65</sup>

The United States and China seem to have parallel interests in restricting the spread of Soviet influence and accession of military bases in Africa. The ocean trade routes present in these areas have strategic value to the United States and the West as well as to the Chinese. China's rapidly expanding merchant marine must have the freedom of the seas in order to support her economic growth plan. The very economic existence of the United States, Europe, and Japan depend upon these same sea routes.<sup>66</sup>

If China's economic growth and expansion continues at the current momentum, within the next decade or two China undoubtedly will be active competition for the African trade market as well as the African mineral resources.<sup>67</sup>

China's ultimate success or failure in Black Africa rests in her own hands. In the field of international relations the Chinese have matured significantly since their first excursion into Africa. Internal political unrest and maneuvering within the leadership which has persisted since the death of Premier Chou En-lai and Mao Tse-tung could again prove detrimental to the Chinese image. Nevertheless, China's persistent interest in Black Africa is evidenced by her purposeful return amid the ideological shambles of the first adventure. In viewing their international "chessboard," the Chinese most certainly see Africa as the most likely arena to reach their long-term diplomatic goal of being recognized as a super-power and the mecca of the world Communist movement.<sup>68</sup>

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