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8 April 1966

AN ANALYSIS OF CHINESE COMMUNIST NATIONAL POWER

By

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U. S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

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USAWC RESEARCH ELEMENT
(Research Paper)

An Analysis of Chinese Communist National Power

by

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8 April 1966

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SUMMARY

After many years of relative obscurity, China is now receiving much attention in the press and other publication media. As the United States and Russia achieved a more or less nuclear parity and a spirit of "detente" seemed present, it has become only natural to view Red China as a more probable opponent. If this is the more likely course of action, and China's conduct seems to indorse this point of view, it is incumbent upon us to be aware of China's power position in today's world.

As a member of a special research group studying Communist China, an appraisal has been made of the national power of this country. Guidelines for the study indicated it would be unclassified and that each research paper was to be used, where possible, as a chapter in a book on China. Thus, this study has been prepared with those points in mind.

Since taking control in 1949, the Chinese Communists have undertaken a program to make China into a major world power. One of the Communist's objectives was the rapid industrialization of an essentially agrarian society. For about ten years the Communist's achievements were remarkable and astounding. Then came the "Great Leap Forward" and a dramatic reversal of their previous good fortune. It is apparent that even today China has not fully recovered from her economic woes.

An analysis of the power position of Communist China included an appraisal of her land, population, economy, armed forces, and political structure and leadership. The outcome of China's campaign to become a major world power will depend ultimately on her ability to solve economic problems of great magnitude. At the root of her economic troubles are her huge population and an inadequate agricultural sector. Although China is relatively vulnerable in the economic sector, she is not collapsing and may show modest improvement in the future. However, it will be many years before she has developed her industrial potential to the point where she can seriously challenge the United States and Russia. She may be a regional power who poses an imposing threat to Asia, but she is no global power.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Once China becomes a modern industrial nation, she will have become the most powerful nation on earth."¹ These words echo the concern and the fear of many people and many nations in the world community. A potential basis for alarm exists because the professional conflict managers in Peking have developed a simple plan for China to become the most powerful nation in the world. Can they accomplish this objective? Does Communist China pose a significant threat to the rest of the world? An understanding of her potential achievements in the world arena are related directly to an appreciation of her national power. Although foreign policy is not always determined exclusively by power considerations, generally the achievement of national objectives is accomplished through the use of national power.

An analysis of the power of a nation necessarily requires inputs of information relative to population, industry, its armed forces, and many other facets of a nation's way of life. The problems involved in the availability and reliability of information, in the qualitative differences in comparisons and standards, and

¹"The Ultimate Self Interest," Time, Vol. 85, 22 Jan. 1965, p. 16. The term China throughout this paper refers to Communist China.

in the measurement of morale, leadership, and national will are endless. Policy planners, nevertheless, constantly search for objective measurements in an effort to lessen the errors of subjective judgment. Communist China presents a difficult problem for several reasons. The accuracy and validity of available information is questionable since much of it is political propaganda. "Deliberate falsification of economic data has always been an important weapon in the Communist panapoly of psychological warfare."² Even the Chinese have admitted that much of their economic data was unsatisfactory prior to 1958 and that its quality has deteriorated even more since that time.³ In recent years the Bamboo Curtain has become more impregnable, and the Chinese have not issued any official statistics on their national product or any of its components. Thus, in a power appraisal of Communist China, valid and accurate information is limited both in quality and quantity. Although one's confidence level relative to conclusions reached may be lower because of the inaccuracy and scarcity of information, some insight is considered to be better than none.

CONCEPT OF NATIONAL POWER

In the late 1940's China was a great power only through the courtesy of other nations. In 1966 she is looked upon as a major power factor in the world. Although there has been relatively

²Robert Strausz-Hupe and others, Protracted Conflict, p. 72.

³Ta-chung Liu and Kung-chia Yeh, The Economy of the Chinese Mainland, p. v.

little change in the availability of her resources, China now uses them to exert influence on other nations.⁴ The foreign policy decisions of many nations now include an estimate of their effect on their power relationship with China. Power is a prerequisite to world leadership. Since hungry, underdeveloped China has aspirations of exerting its ancient hegemony over Asia, and perhaps the world,⁵ it is essential to analyze the elements of her national power.

National power is an elusive and difficult concept to define and to quantify. The inventory of a nation's assets and capabilities does not necessarily provide a definitive answer to its national power. Power is not an absolute quantity but must be considered in relation to many other factors. Too much emphasis on one element or factor of power may result in unsupported conclusions. In order to arrive at any conclusion, however, each factor must be appraised objectively in order to synthesize all elements into an ultimate finding.

Authors do not agree on the number or the composition of the elements that constitute national power. Nevertheless, a study of these elements reveals that most of them are identical or similar. The power appraisal in this paper is based upon a composite list of those major elements which appear to be commonly recognized and

⁴A. F. K. Organski, World Politics, p. 95.

⁵Lin Pao, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," Far East Daily Report, No. 171 (4S), 3 Sep. 1965, p. 26.

accepted by most authors. Thus, our study of Chinese Communist power involves her geography, population, economy, military forces, and political organization. Although one may argue that there are many other elements to be considered, any lengthening of the above list would require an analysis of extreme brevity in order to keep this paper within reasonable limits.

A study of these fundamental elements, however, should provide an insight into the statement, "China's power potential is almost incalculable The question is not whether she becomes the most powerful nation on earth but how long will it take?"⁶

⁶Organski, op. cit., p. 446.

CHAPTER 2

CHINA'S LAND AND POPULATION

The natural foundation and starting point in a nation's power appraisal are its land and its people. These are the basic ingredients upon which the other elements of national power are based.

First, what influence does the geography of China exert on its power make-up? Some years ago geography was considered to be one of the more important determinants of national power. Today, as a power factor, geography has decreased in significance.¹ No one, however, will argue that the initial development of a nation's ultimate power is dependent upon and is limited by its geographical features. For example, its security is affected by the delineation of its boundaries; its industrial and technological potential are influenced by the availability or the lack of natural resources; and a lack of resources may be the influencing factor which causes a nation to exert its power to correct this deficiency. Neither will one debate that technology has shrunk and continues to shrink the size of the modern world. Also, the discovery and use of new materials and new minerals, such as uranium in nuclear power plants, diminishes the importance of other natural resources, such as coal and possibly petroleum, as power sources.

¹ John G. Stoessinger, The Might of Nations, p. 19.

Geography will not determine national power, but a country's size, location, climate, topography, and natural resources will delineate a parameter within which policies dependent upon national power may be prescribed. Geography, then, is an instrument of power to be analyzed in an overall power appraisal, because in the hands of a resourceful government it can be turned into a strategic advantage.

SIZE

China, the third largest country in the world, occupies an area of about 3.7 million square miles.² Only Russia and Canada have more territory. The United States is a close fourth behind China. Although mere size is no absolute measure of the value of China's resources and may complicate the problems of defense and national unity, it can also provide the base for varied natural resources, a large population, a varied climate, and the potential for greater protection from aggression. A country of Belgium's small size can never be a great power because of this limitation. China's enormous area is a permanent source of strength, and its size alone will frustrate continually attempts of military conquest by an invader. This large land mass permits the execution of Mao Tse-tung's concepts of the swapping of space for time and retreating when required.³ China does possess ample territory on which to establish a strong power base.

²George B. Cressey's Land of the 500 Million was the primary source for much of the geographical information in this chapter and will not be repeated.

³Samuel B. Griffith, II., Mao Tse-tung: On Guerrilla Warfare, pp. 46-47.

LOCATION

China has always considered itself to be the Middle Kingdom and the center of the Universe. Geographically, as in many other ways, it is isolated from the Western world powers. Its eastern frontier borders on the widest ocean in the world. Although this ocean constitutes a formidable barrier, China's coastline of some 3000 miles does provide an access to the outside world, and gives it a strategic advantage in the Western Pacific and Southern Asia. Much of China's land frontiers are located in extremely difficult terrain that pose almost insurmountable obstacles to communication and development of any kind. One-third of China's land frontier of 9,300 miles borders the USSR, and one-fourth borders Mongolia. The remainder of its frontier is contiguous to states that pose negligible threats to its security. Although there are conflicts with the USSR, China is relatively secure on its inland periphery. Its location places no restriction in the development of its power base.

CLIMATE

"Cold, heat, and aridity are three climatic elements that limit human occupancy and the development of political power."⁴ These factors impose limitations on the kinds of foods that can be grown, affect the vitality of the inhabitants, and influence the degree of cultural development. It is significant to note that

⁴Samuel Van Valkenburg, and Carl L. Stotz, Elements of Political Geography, p. 63.

the great powers of modern times have been located in the North Temperate Zone which has offered the advantage of a humid intermediate climate with seasonal changes and a constant variety of weather. China is located in such a zone, but is subjected to temperature extremes, and to either too much or too little moisture. Its coastline is lashed frequently by typhoons which result in flooding and destruction of its most productive land and crops. On the other hand, drought is a frequent companion of floods.⁵ China's climate, which ranges from sub-tropic summers to Siberian winters, adversely affects its power potential.

TOPOGRAPHY

Over seventy percent of China is hilly or mountainous.⁶ This rugged terrain restricts and limits the availability of land for man's use. Less than fifteen percent of all China possesses the topographic features, the climate, and the soil for any agricultural use. Of this total, twelve percent of the land is under cultivation, and this amount has remained relatively unchanged for the last two decades. Because of the rugged terrain features, little potential cultivable land remains. Although topography which is not harsh encourages commerce and trade and provides an opportunity for economic

⁵Valentin Chu, "The Famine Makers: A Report on Why China is Starving," The New Leader, 11 Jun. 1962, p. 136.

⁶Stanley Karnow, "How Communist Economics Failed in China," Fortune Magazine, Vol. 68, Jul. 1963, p. 157.

social, and political progress, this condition does not exist in China. Its topography, with its limited availability of agricultural land, poses a serious problem in the accumulation of national power.

NATURAL RESOURCES

It is believed that China possesses a sufficiently large mineral base to achieve an industrial world power status, although there are those who doubt that China is fabulously rich in mineral resources.⁷ However, coal, which it depends upon for its lion's share of fuel, is in ample supply; and its coal reserves are of high quality, are accessible, and are not difficult to exploit. Its coal reserves pose no constraint on its economic development, and can sustain a modern coal-iron industrial complex.⁸ Iron ore, China's most important mineral resource, is also abundant, but much of the ore is a low grade quality. There have been reports of a seven billion ton deposit of high grade ore in the Shansi Province and three billion more in Honan Province.⁹ Although oil and petroleum have been critically short in the past, the petroleum output from the fields recently discovered in the north appears to be one of the bright spots in the economy.¹⁰ These newly opened fields are proving

⁷Lucile Carlson, Geography and World Politics, pp. 229-230.

⁸Stanford Research Institute, The Economic Potential of Communist China, p. 114.

⁹John A. Berberet, Science, Technology, and Peking's Planning Problems, p. 17.

¹⁰"Red China: An Insistent Presence," Newsweek, 15 Mar. 1965, p. 40.

to be rich producers.¹¹ China's reserves of tin, tungsten and mercury are the largest in the world. She possesses exceptionally large reserves of other important mineral resources. It appears that the quantity, different types, and distribution of energy resources are capable of supporting a modern industrial complex.¹²

SUMMARY

China is endowed with ample territory on which to establish a strong power base. She possesses sufficient mineral resources to support an industrial society. China's location, around which half of the people on the globe live, provides the best potential market of any region of the world. On the debit side, nature has not favored China to the degree that her size would suggest. The adverse topography, with its extremely limited arable land on which to grow food for its huge population, is a significant limitation on her development as a world power. When the limited arable land is coupled with extreme climate, short growing seasons, great aridity and dust erosion, and the undependability of precipitation, one can realize the enormous problem facing China.

¹¹"What to Expect Next From Red China," Nation's Business, Vol. 53, Oct. 1965, p. 88.

¹²Standord Research Institute, op. cit., p. 118.

POPULATION

"Once China succeeds in harnessing its immense population it may in time become the most powerful nation on earth."¹³ China's estimated population of over 700 million lives in a habitable geographical area of some 550,000 square miles. If rated only on population numbers, China certainly possesses sufficient potential power. This most populous nation on earth is two and one-half times the size of the USSR and three and one-half times the size of the United States.

Population is a relatively important determinant in a nation's arsenal. It provides a country with potential power. It is impossible for nations without large populations to be powerful. Yet conversely, at the end of World War II, when all it had was its huge population, China was accorded great power status by the United Nations.¹⁴ Thus, China's vast population has an important effect on China's power, and is one of the more essential ingredients in the bowl of elements constituting national power. A comparison of nations of great and middle range power by Organski has led him to conclude that a large population is the most important single determinant of national power,¹⁵ and he predicts that China will be the most powerful

¹³Stoessinger, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁵A. F. K. Organski, World Politics, p. 197.

nation in the world. When population is combined with industrialization, other authors also view population as the most important power factor.¹⁶

There always has been and there still remains much uncertainty as to the exact number of people inhabiting China. Ten demographers will give ten different estimates of China's population, a factor which is indicative of the absence of concrete information. The first official Communist census indicated a population of 582.6 million as of 30 June 1953.¹⁷ This came as a shock to the Communists who had thought the population to be about 100 million less people. Many Western demographers have doubted the accuracy and validity of this census, but even if inaccurate, the statistics provide sufficient information to indicate the magnitude of the population problem. One of every five persons in the world today is Chinese and the Chinese population is growing at the rate of 12-15 million a year.¹⁸

Adjusting for assumed natural increases and deductions where required, the latest estimate credits mainland China with a population of 710 million in mid-1965.¹⁹ Estimates of the annual growth rate vary from 1.6 to 2.5 percent. World population annual growth is estimated to be 2.1 percent a year.²⁰ By 1980 China will have a

¹⁶Stoessinger, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁷Lawrence Krader, The Economic Status of Communist China 1965-1970, p. 1.

¹⁸"World Population Projections 1965-2000," Population Bulletin, Vol. XXI, Oct. 1965, p. 84.

¹⁹Ibid., p 98.

²⁰Ibid., p 79.

population of over 900 million. Mao currently must feed the equivalent of another Canada annually.²¹ The magnitude and growth of the population staggers human imagination and would create difficult and tremendous problems for a nation with the most optimum economic conditions. In China we see a nation that closely approaches the most unfavorable economic conditions. The problem is one of insufficient food for consumption and an inadequate industrial base to provide jobs for an ever increasing population. Although a resourceful government can use its population and its natural resources to build twin pillars of power--military preparedness and industrialization²²--to date China has been unable to take full advantage of this dictum.

Many writers insist that a large population is a prerequisite for world power, but it is also a source of weakness when there is insufficient food to feed this population.²³ This truism has been recognized by Clubb who has stated, "China's exploding population is its greatest present weakness and most stubborn problem Population increases are geometrical in progression whereas food supply even with the greatest effort goes upward only in arithmetical progression."²⁴

²¹Dick Wilson, "The Tortoise and the Hare," Far East Economic Review, Vol. XLVIII, 8 Apr. 1965, p. 79.

²²Stoessinger, op. cit., p. 24.

²³Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, p. 144.

²⁴O. Edmund Clubb, Twentieth Century China, p. 401.

Mao is well aware that population growth is a major internal danger to China's economy.²⁵ Though perhaps he knows that "China's millions are a serious source of weaknesses,"²⁶ to admit so would refute Marxist policy and indicate a voice of no confidence in Communism.

Nevertheless, the population problem was recognized early by the Communists, and they initiated a birth control program in 1955. By 1957 this program had become an intense and determined campaign with the objective of reaching every possible person. Suddenly, in the spring of 1959, the program was dropped.²⁷ In 1960 the head of Peking University was relieved because of his outspoken advocacy of birth control. The success of this short program is not known.

There have been indications that the leaders in Peking have again reversed their stand and once more are advocating forms of birth control. This may be the answer to the problem, but it has always been difficult to indoctrinate a predominantly rural population in birth control measures. Even if China is successful in converting from an agrarian to an industrial economy, with a greatly increased urban population, her checks on population growth may remain negligible.

²⁵"A Test for Tigers," Time, Vol. 85, 26 Feb. 1965, p. 28.

²⁶Samuel B. Griffith, II., "Communist China's Capacity to Make War," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, Jan. 1965, p. 220.

²⁷Robert C. Cook, "China's Demographic Crisis," Population Bulletin, Vol. XIX, Aug. 1963, p. 112.

In an industrial economy experience has shown that even though birth rates may decrease, death rates also decrease, and quite likely there will be a net yearly increase in the population growth rate.

In analyzing China's population and its trends, it is significant that its population exercises a substantial drag on its economic development. Although high populations are a potential source of great national power, they must be well fed and gainfully employed. Currently, this has not been accomplished, and the population problem is a definite weakness. "Until China is able to feed its people, at whatever population level, it has a fundamental weakness--a true Achilles heel."²⁸

²⁸Clubb, op. cit., p. 405.

CHAPTER 3

RED CHINA'S ECONOMY

As the Chinese Communists move along the road toward their objective of world communism, they view that road as one of ever increasing power accumulation. Having considered the basic ingredients in power status, land and population, let us now examine the economy of this aspiring nation. Without a viable economy, it becomes most difficult to acquire national power.

It is conceded generally that the growth of national power and national prestige cannot be attained without a modern industrial economy. Particularly in this day and age a strong industrial economy is a very vital factor in the power of nations.¹ The leading industrial nations are normally identical with the great powers in the world.² Where does the People's Republic of China fit in the world picture? What is her rate of progress toward achievement of an industrial economy? One author has stated that if she rises to her full industrial strength she will leave the United States far behind and no power on earth will be able to stop her.³ Let us look at her current economic position and see how it affects her power status.

¹John G. Stoessinger, The Might of Nations, p. 20.

²Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, p. 118.

³A. F. K. Organski, World Politics, p. 449.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is the key to the Chinese economy.⁴ Agriculture must be developed in order to achieve industrialization of China.⁵ Yet the biggest question marks in the economic development program are precisely those posed by agriculture--which will long be the foundation of the Chinese economy.⁶ The Chinese economy has been an agrarian society for centuries. Always, its national economy has been developed on the foundation of agriculture. In spite of this, the agricultural base that the Communists inherited was weak. It was backward in production techniques, possessed limited mechanization, had serious shortages of chemical fertilizers, was subject to extremes in the weather, and, as previously mentioned, was critically short of arable land. These are all factors that seriously limit the growth potential of Communist China. Some sixteen years of Communist control and direction have produced little improvement in a low calorie diet, with an economy just above starvation level for its expanding population. Although the Communist leaders are aware that economic modernization is dependent upon a rehabilitation of China's agricultural base, surprisingly, they have done relatively little to overcome this inadequacy.⁷

⁴Lyman M. Tondel, Jr., ed., The International Position of Communist China, p. 15

⁵Stanford Research Institute, The Economic Potential of Communist China, p. 387.

⁶A. Doak Barnett, The United States and Communist China, p. 130.

⁷Tondel, op. cit., p. 9.

China, whose population is about three and a half times that of the United States, has under cultivation approximately 265 million acres or some 100 million acres less than the United States.⁸ Despite an annual population increase of 12-15 million, little increase can be made in China's crop area, as the really good arable land is already under cultivation.⁹ It is astonishing to note that it takes three out of every four Chinese workers to feed the Chinese population, as opposed to one out of two in the USSR and one out of seven in the United States. "Chinese agriculture is a classic example of intensive cultivation with high yields per acre and low output per man. The result is a vast population kept at or barely above subsistence."¹⁰

Many underdeveloped areas have depended upon agriculture to foster economic growth in several ways. Agriculture has provided food at consumption levels which fostered increased productivity of the labor force; it has served as a reservoir for an expanding urban labor force; and it has furnished a source of capital needed for savings with which to purchase the capital equipment that is required for industrialization.¹¹ In China, the Peking rulers have

⁸Ibid., p. 15.

⁹O. Edmund Clubb, Twentieth Century China, p. 401.

¹⁰Walt W. Rostow, The Prospects for Communist China, p. 275.

¹¹Ibid., p. 328.

been unable to accomplish sufficiently any of these objectives. Yet they have continually demanded that agricultural production pay for imported capital goods, furnish raw materials for industrial expansion, and feed the always increasing population.¹² What have been the reasons for this failure? It is necessary to review briefly their historical record since coming to power.

When the Chinese Communists founded the People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949, they fully realized that economic strength was a prerequisite for their future plans. Their two primary tasks were to become a modern industrial power, and to gain firm party control of the country.¹³ Their first three years in power were spent in consolidating their position. In 1953 they announced their first five year plan with its goal of economic reconstruction.¹⁴ Included in its objectives were the doubling of the gross industrial output value and a 25 per cent increase in the value of the agricultural output. Subsequently, Peking declared that both targets were exceeded, but one must remember that many of their announced accomplishments are inaccurate or misleading.¹⁵

¹²"What To Expect Next From Red China," Nation's Business, Vol 53, Oct. 1965, p. 44.

¹³Charles Taylor, "China From Within," The Nation, Vol. 201, Oct. 1965, p. 181.

¹⁴Clubb, op. cit., p. 325.

¹⁵Barnett, op. cit., p. 125.

The Peking leaders held back investment in agriculture in order to invest the maximum resources into industry. This was done despite their knowing that industrialization requires savings, and an important portion of such savings had to come from agriculture.¹⁶ The Chinese even assigned lower priorities than the Russians, in a comparable growth period, to that portion of heavy industry which was producing for the agricultural sector.¹⁷ First priority was given to building heavy industry in order to achieve national power as soon as possible. Agriculture was to be squeezed to obtain the surplus needed for capital investment.¹⁸ However, the only way to obtain increased savings was through increased output.¹⁹

Impressive results were announced in 1957 at the completion of the first five-year plan. In most instances, production had exceeded the goals. Steel production increased some 325 per cent, and coal output over 200 per cent in comparison with the 1952 norms. Even if we discount much of the claims of the Chinese leaders and although agricultural production increased only 25 per cent, the Chinese had achieved rapid overall economic growth. However, the slower

¹⁶Donald S. Zagoria, "Communist China Is A Paper Dragon," New York Times Magazine, 18 Oct. 1964, p. 41.

¹⁷K. C. Yeh, Soviet and Communist Chinese Industrialization Strategies, p. 14.

¹⁸Clubb, op. cit., p. 331.

¹⁹Yeh, op. cit., p. 25.

agricultural growth and constant population increases accentuated the imbalance between the agricultural and industrial sectors.

Astounded at their own success, and pursuing rapid industrialization, the Communist leaders in 1958 scrapped their production targets for the second five-year plan, and set goals that called for unprecedented rates of growth. This plan, known as the Great Leap Forward, envisioned annual growth rates of 25 per cent or more.²⁰ The entire nation was mobilized in order to achieve dramatic increases in iron, steel and agricultural output. The plan was to meet with dramatic failure.

Fortunately, for the Chinese, 1958 was a particularly favorable year for agriculture because of excellent weather conditions and the almost total mobilization of the communes. In spite of conflicting information, agricultural production for the year was probably the highest in Chinese history. Grain production, a major indicator of agricultural efficiency, was estimated at 193 million metric tons. A comparison of grain production figures, some official and some estimated, is contained in the following table:²¹

²⁰Chou En-lai, Report on the Adjustment of Major Targets in the National Economic Plan for 1959 and Further Developing the Campaign for Increasing Production and Practicing Economy, p. 22

²¹Tondel, op. cit., pp 16-17. There are many sources for these figures, none of which exactly agree. However, the ones used are generally acceptable.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TONS (MILLIONS)</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TONS (MILLIONS)</u>
1952	154	1961	165
1957	185	1962	182
1958	193	1963	180
1959	168	1964	183
1960	150	1965	180

Although the Peking regime has not been responsible for any spectacular increases in grain production they have contributed to some spectacular failures. For example, the 1962 output was planned to be 75 per cent greater than 1957,²² whereas the 1962 output was actually less. The Chinese commonly blame their production failures on natural disasters such as floods and droughts. It may be, however, that the agricultural crisis from 1959-1961 was precipitated by two fundamental mistakes of the Communists. One was the attempted over-expansion of the nonagricultural sectors, and the other was the institutional and physical shocks suffered by the agricultural sector.²³ The Communist plan that allocated 60 per cent of capital construction expenditures to industry and only 10 per cent to agriculture certainly hastened the collapse of the agricultural sector.²⁴ Concurrently, the plan of herding the farmers into massive communes resulted in the shattering of morale and subtle resistance, which culminated in starvation level production.²⁵

²²Lawrence Krader, The Economic Status of Communist China 1965-1970, p. 18..

²³Stanford Research Institute, op. cit., p. 195.

²⁴Krader, op. cit., p. 24.

²⁵"Red China: An Insistent Pressure," Newsweek, 15 Mar 1965, p. 38.

The agricultural and industrial sectors constitute the heart of any industrial effort, and the agricultural crisis was followed by a sharp industrial decline. The Great Leap appears to have accentuated the decline. It certainly could not have prevented a major recession because of the agricultural-industrial imbalance, and the "real bottleneck in further industrial development in China was going to lie in the agricultural situation."²⁶

A declining grain production coupled with an increasing population resulted in a critical decision by the Chinese leaders. The inability of China to feed her people required the importation of grain from countries in the Western world. In 1961 she imported just under six million tons at a cost of 340 million dollars.²⁷ Between 1960 and 1964 the Chinese imported over 22 million tons of grain at a cost estimated in excess of one and a half billion dollars. This trend of importing about six million tons annually has continued through 1965, and in October of 1965 the Chinese concluded an agreement with Canada to continue to import grain for several years in the future. Although agriculture is the primary source of capital for industrial development, the Chinese leaders have had to spend sorely needed capital to purchase grain.

²⁶Malcolm Stewart, "Can Red China's Economy Sustain Her Drive for Big Power Status - & Tackle the United States - Now?" Magazine of Wall Street, Vol. 116, 12 Jun. 1965, p. 319.

²⁷Sidney Klein, "China's Industrialization: Critical Sectors," Current Scene, Vol. 1, 20 May 1962, p. 1.

The importance of the continuing purchases of grain is that China is forced to purchase from outside sources the very products which she intended to use to further her own economic development.

China is estimated to need currently 200 million tons of grain annually to feed her population.²⁸ Her estimated production and current imports indicate that she is not meeting this requirement. In December 1964, Chou En-lai reported farm output had reached the high level of previous years.²⁹ The agricultural harvest, however, was not greeted with enthusiastic fervor. Production was reported still low and grain and other food products were not abundant.³⁰ Even if grain had reached the high level of 1958, it would have been inadequate for China's population which had increased by some nine to fifteen per cent. On 1 October 1965 the mayor of Peking stated that despite several serious natural disasters, the 1965 harvest would be a considerable increase over that of 1964, and that a new "leap forward" had appeared in the national economy.³¹ On the other hand it has been reported that the 1965 grain harvest fell three million tons short of 1964's output.³² We also know that China has contracted to

²⁸Tondel, op. cit., p. 17.

²⁹Newsweek, op. cit., p. 38.

³⁰"The Year 1964," China News Analysis, No. 545, 18 Dec. 1964, p. 3.

³¹"Half Million Pekingese Mark Fete," Washington Post, 2 Oct. 1965, p. A12.

³²"Red China: The Slow Creep Forward," Time, Vol. 86, No. 27, 31 Dec. 1965, p. 19.

purchase grain for several more years. Thus, they are incapable of either meeting the current demand or else they are stockpiling for future emergencies.

Chinese leaders recognize the agricultural problems but their efforts thus far have been insufficient to cure or to alleviate them. Although their initial plans gave priority to heavy industry, the failure of the Great Leap resulted in a reversal of policy with primary emphasis placed on agricultural development.³³ In April 1960 their agricultural plan called for increasing total acreage under irrigation, increased production of natural fertilizers, the reclamation of waste land, greater mechanization, and many other methods of improvement.³⁴ Few, if any, of these cures have met with significant success.

As already pointed out, there is little land available for expansion. Current technological knowledge indicates that the limits of expansion have already been reached.³⁵ As an example of the high intensive use of the land by the Chinese, some 90 per cent of China's farm area is in crops and only one percent in pasture, whereas the United States has some 40 per cent of its farm area in pasture.³⁶ It is quite apparent that land suitable for agricultural pursuit is very limited as a result of the adverse topography and climate.

³³Yeh, op. cit., p. 43.

³⁴T. J. Hughes and D. E. T. Luard, The Economic Development of Communist China, p. 181.

³⁵Tondel, op. cit., p. 15.

³⁶Rostow, op. cit., p. 277.

The most hopeful potential for increasing output per unit of land may lie in the application of chemical fertilizers. Japan's agricultural development was due primarily to its large application of import fertilizer.³⁷ The application of chemical fertilizers in China, however, is limited by the lack of domestic capacity to produce the huge quantities required and the non-availability of necessary quantities to purchase on the foreign market, even if the Chinese possessed the required capital. The production of domestic fertilizer requires industrial equipment which primarily must be imported by China. In 1963, however, it was reported that seven large chemical fertilizer plants and six major plants for producing agricultural spare parts were being constructed.³⁸ This construction was continuing in 1964.³⁹ There is, therefore, some effort being made to increase domestic production. China is able to produce only between three and a half to four million tons of chemical fertilizer each year,⁴⁰ and can purchase another one to two million tons on the foreign exchange. She is spending 120 million dollars to buy all the available surplus world supply this year (1965).⁴¹ As a matter of comparison, the Taiwan government uses over 40 million tons annually and the Japanese over 70 million tons a year.⁴² In the past, China's

³⁷Ibid., p. 319.

³⁸"Capital Construction," China News Analysis, No. 490, 25 Oct. 1963, p. 4.

³⁹Griffith, "Communist China's Capacity to Make War," Foreign Affairs, p. 219.

⁴⁰Yuan-li Wu, "Communist China's Economy: Critical Questions," Current History, Vol. 49, Sep. 1965, p. 167.

⁴¹Taylor, op. cit., p. 181.

⁴²Yuan-li Wu, "Can Communist China Afford War," Orbis, Vol. VI, Fall 1962, p. 460.

domestically produced fertilizer has not been always usable.

The production from 1958 to 1961 was worthless because of improper preparation and improper use.⁴³ It is apparent that the great majority of the arable land is heavily underfertilized, and there is no known program of any magnitude to increase domestic production.

The production of agricultural machinery has been stated to be one of China's first industrial goals.⁴⁴ In fact, until 1962, mechanization had been a favored approach to modernization of China's agriculture, and from 1957 to 1962, tractors had increased from about 25,000 to 100,000. Now, however, the rate of increase has declined, as mechanization has limited effects on raising production in China due to its hilly terrain, its small plots, and soft muddy soil.⁴⁵ Water conservation has been mentioned as the only practical means of improving the agricultural sector.⁴⁶ Undoubtedly, yields per acre can be increased through the proper application of fertilizer, proper irrigation, mechanization, and adequate storage facilities.⁴⁷ The key to rapid increase of output, nevertheless, is chemical fertilizer, whereas water control and mechanization will help maintain production at a high level.⁴⁸

⁴³China News Analysis, No. 545, op. cit., p. 4.

⁴⁴Theodore Herman, "Trends in Chinese Agriculture," Current History, Vol. 45, Sep. 1963, p. 166.

⁴⁵Kang Chao, "Agriculture in China Today," Current History, Vol. 49, Sep. 1965, p. 172.

⁴⁶Valentin Chu, "The Famine Makers: A Report on Why China is Starving," The New Leader, 11 Jun. 1962, p. 136.

⁴⁷Stanley Karnow, "How Communist Economics Failed in China," Fortune Magazine, Vol. 68, Jul. 1963, p. 157.

⁴⁸Herman, op. cit., p. 167.

Previously, it was mentioned that in 1960 the Peking leaders abandoned their priority for industrial development, and agriculture became the foundation of the economy with priority given to agricultural development. The economic failures in the agricultural sector signaled the final collapse of the regime's attempts to raise agricultural output without a major commitment of investment resources.

For five years Red China's leaders have focused their attention on improvements in this economic area. What have they accomplished? One cannot be sure, but we do know that Peking's silence does not normally hide success. An admission of possible failure has been the continuing purchase of grain. Evidence indicates that she must rely on imported grain for at least the next two to three years.⁴⁹ Expenditure of such funds retards the purchase of industrial equipment, and naturally slows development of China's industry.

The agricultural problems confronting China are not novel to Communist regimes. Many years ago Adam Smith pointed out that the development of a state depends on an agricultural surplus--when a surplus is lacking, it must be obtained before any plans can be achieved. Improvement in agricultural efficiency is mandatory, if one is pursuing a goal of industrial development.⁵⁰

⁴⁹"Red China: The Slow Creep Forward," Time, p. 19.

⁵⁰Frank O'Brien, Crisis in World Communism: Marxism in Search of Efficiency, p. 190.

A factor in the failure of the Great Leap was Communist inability to raise agricultural productivity in order to insure adequate food supplies, and to free people for work in industry. One student of China has concluded that agricultural failures eventually will prove fatal to the Communist regime since there is no relief in sight.⁵¹ However, the current focus of their present economic policy remains in agriculture,⁵² and if they do not reverse this policy in favor of emphasis on heavy industry, it could be China's salvation.⁵³ The agricultural problem will continue until time and investment in long range programs, such as agricultural education, capital equipment, and chemical fertilization, can be implemented. Yet, any action taken that is proportionate to China's huge needs must detract from other plans and programs of the Chinese regime. It appears that China's assets are inadequate to accomplish necessary goals in agriculture without assistance from other countries.

INDUSTRY

Mao and the other Chinese leaders always have associated industrialization with military strength, and military strength with independence.⁵⁴ They realized that only through the establishment

⁵¹Chen Ting-Chung, "A Study of Food Production and Consumption on the Chinese Mainland," Chinese Communist Affairs, Vol. 2, Jun. 1965, p. 65.

⁵²P. Lin, "Trend in Communist China's Economic Policy," Free China & Asia, Vol. XII, Apr. 1965, p. 5.

⁵³O'Brien, op. cit., p. 124.

⁵⁴Rostow, op. cit., p. 363.

of an advanced industry could China become a great military and national power. Thus, from the outset of Communist rule great emphasis has been placed on the rapid industrialization of the country.

Although China was a backward agricultural country, the Japanese had established an industrial complex in Manchuria during their occupation after the Sino-Japanese war. Today this complex forms the base for much of China's modern industry.⁵⁵

After a period of rehabilitation and consolidation, the Chinese commenced their First Five-Year Plan which naturally was devoted to industrial development.⁵⁶ Its objective was to double China's industrial output.⁵⁷ This program could not have been undertaken with its ambitious goals without technological and financial help from Russia. Almost all major industrial projects were initiated with Russian technological help. The backbone of the entire program was 156 large Russian designed projects which were built with the aid of the Russians.⁵⁸ The overall record of the first plan was one of impressive achievement. For example, listed below are the average annual growth rates of selected industries:⁵⁹

⁵⁵E. Stuart Kirby, Introduction to the Economic History of China, pp. 182-183.

⁵⁶Yuan-li Wu, The Steel Industry in Communist China, p. 1.

⁵⁷Karnow, op. cit., p. 228.

⁵⁸Yeh, op. cit., p. 16.

⁵⁹Kang Chao, The Rate and Pattern of Industrial Growth in Communist China, p. 97.

<u>Industry</u>	<u>1952-1957</u>
Electricity	21.6
Coal	14.6
Petroleum	27.3
Ferrous Metal	28.7

The remarkable advances in the industrial sector were the result of several factors; first, there was no civil war to disturb the economy as there had been for over twenty years; second, a tremendous amount of aid and assistance was received from the Soviet Union who delivered whole industrial plants to China;⁶⁰ next, there was a concentrated program of investment which saw 58.2 per cent of their national product put into industry, as compared to only 7.6 per cent put into agriculture;⁶¹ and finally, the relatively small base from which they started makes large increases easier to attain than if they had begun from an already established large base.

Success with this plan encouraged the Chinese leaders to establish even more ambitious goals in their Second Five-Year Plan. Once again, their objective was to double industrial output by 1962.⁶² However, they abandoned their plan, and adopted a policy for a new industrial upsurge, the fatal Great Leap Forward, which they

⁶⁰Yeh, op. cit., p. 9.

⁶¹Karnow, op. cit., p. 228.

⁶²Yuan-li Wu, The Economy of Communist China, p. 159.

announced in 1958. The attainment of the fantastic goals in this new plan depended upon Soviet loans and technical assistance, agricultural surpluses to pay for imported capital goods, and privation and suffering by the Chinese people who were required to live on extremely meager subsistence.

Many words have been written about the utter failure of the Great Leap Forward. Suffice to say, that although initial industrial output was high and continued to expand at a slower rate in 1959, the economy went into a slump in 1960-1961. Instead of moving forward with great strides, the economy stood on the brink of ruin. The Sino-Soviet rift and subsequent withdrawal of Soviet technical assistance and industrial machinery, the failure of agricultural production, and the discontent and disillusionment of the Chinese people in the communes all contributed to the defeat of this program.

Up until 1959, the Chinese regime had been very successful in restoring the economy. Steel output had increased about tenfold, electric power some sixfold, coal fivefold, and cement fourfold.⁶³ Since 1960, however, China has been in the throes of a depression. In the winter of 1961-62, experts estimated that Chinese industry was producing at only 30 per cent of its capacity.⁶⁴ Even now only

⁶³Alexander Eckstein, "On the Economic Crisis in Communist China," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 42, Jul. 1964, p. 655.

⁶⁴Joseph Alsop, "On China's Descending Spiral," The China Quarterly, Jul-Sep. 1962, p. 23.

two-thirds of its industrial capacity may be in productive use.⁶⁵ Today we are uncertain about the relative improvement, if any, in China's industrial development since the Great Leap Forward. There are definite signs of industrial expansion, both in new plants and in the renovation of old plants.⁶⁶ Although the total value of industrial output in 1964 was reported to be 15 per cent over that of 1963 and higher than in 1957, no production figures are cited.⁶⁷ The steel output, however, is estimated to be only 8-10 million tons a year (versus about 40 million tons for Japan) while steel capacity is estimated to be approximately 15 million tons annually.⁶⁸ In 1965 it is estimated that industrial output has shown a modest gain and is some three to six per cent above that of 1964, but once again no production figures are cited.⁶⁹ As one surveys the scene, however, it is interesting to note that China's small industrial base and her huge population, when coupled with her leader's neglect of agriculture and the fixation upon industry, were almost fatal to her scheme of industrialization.

There is no doubt that the continual importing of grain severely limits the purchases abroad of capital equipment, which in turn precludes the renewal of any large industrial growth program. Faced with this negative aspect, in all likelihood China is probably

⁶⁵Dick Wilson, "The Tortoise and the Hare," Far East Economic Review, Vol. XLVIII, 8 Apr. 1965, p. 80.

⁶⁶Taylor, op. cit., p. 18.

⁶⁷Lin, op. cit., p. 4.

⁶⁸Nation's Business, op. cit., p. 44.

⁶⁹"Red China: The Slow Creep Forward," Time, p. 19.

modernizing industry instead of expanding.⁷⁰ Rationally, she must develop a firm foundation in agriculture before attempting further expansion.

Despite her setbacks, China developed her industrial power at a remarkable rate. Her overall average annual rate of growth of industrial production from 1951 to 1959 has been computed to be 21.7 per cent, an astounding increase.⁷¹ Still, this does not indicate that China is a modern industrial state by any means, but only that her progress from a backward agrarian economy was initially astonishing. However, it will be "a long time before the tiger, paper or real, develops much technological muscle."⁷²

There are numerous other factors which have not been discussed that directly influence China's economy. China's internal transportation system and its foreign trade are but two other factors that will materially add to or detract from a sound and healthy economy. What has been emphasized is the critical importance of the agricultural sector to China's overall economic growth. Until such time as the Chinese regime can increase agricultural productivity and effectively control the rate of population increase, overall industrial growth will be slow. This does not deny that the Chinese can accelerate growth in any particular segment of their economy, such as their

⁷⁰Steward, op. cit., p. 341.

⁷¹Kang Chao, "Indices of Industrial Output in Communist China," The Review of Economics and Statistics, Vol. 45, Aug. 1963, p. 292.

⁷²Stanford Research Institute, op. cit., p. v.

nuclear program, if they wish to expend their resources at the expense of other parts of their economy.

The most vulnerable part of China continues to be its economy. Its basic problem in its drive for major power status is its economy development. Significant of the severe crisis it has been struggling through are the announcements made during 1965 that the output of grain in 1964 reached the levels that had been obtained in 1957 - with the omission that the population has probably grown another 80-100 million people. With a fast growing population existing precariously on low productivity agriculture, there is an extremely difficult problem in amassing sufficient capital for large industrialization. China's break with Russia eliminated the primary outside source of capital.

There are indications that Peking more fully understands the nature of her problems. Agriculture remains her number one priority in development. Her leaders have publicly announced that former mistakes will not be repeated and that pragmatic policies are being adopted. They have indicated that it will even take them from 20 to 50 years to become a major industrial power. Still one wonders whether the rate of growth of the economy will be rapid enough so that the forces of industry can defeat the Malthusian forces.

CHAPTER 4

CHINA'S MILITARY POWER

The portrayal of a Red Dragon devouring its enemies has received increasing attention in current literature. Do China's military forces pose a real threat to its neighbors and the rest of the world? As already mentioned, China's apparent motivation for industrialization is to increase her military potential.¹ The President of the United States has given her credit for helping the forces of violence in almost every continent.² But do her armed forces constitute a power source permitting the execution of meaningful foreign policies?

A basic philosophy of the Chinese Communists is the supremacy of the Communist Party over the armed forces. The Communist leaders regard the military forces not only as an instrument of military power, but also as a major political indoctrination school.³ With this type of philosophy, we note the People's Liberation Army (P.L.A.), the collective armed forces of China, to be first, loyal to the Chinese Communist Party, and second, loyal to the nation.⁴ Inasmuch as the Army is the Party's source of power, the Party has glorified the P.L.A.

¹Frank O'Brien, Crisis in World Communism: Marxism in Search of Efficiency, p. 125.

²"Pattern for Peace in Southeast Asia," For Commanders, Vol. 4, May 1965, p. 1.

³Robert B. Rigg, "Red China's Military Posture," Army, Vol. 15, Oct. 1964, p. 51.

⁴Ralph L. Powell, "Communist China's Military Potential," Current History, Vol. 47, Sep. 1964, p. 136.

The role of the military, which was despised in the past, is now regarded as exemplary and honorable.⁵ Thus, China now possesses one of the largest standing armies in the world.

Mao advocates that men and politics, rather than weapons and economic power, are the determining factors in war.⁶ He has retained therefore his traditional reliance on masses of military manpower.⁷ This may be a self serving philosophy as a result of China's limited technological and industrial prowess; it is certainly debatable because technological advances tend to influence the use of machines and gadgetry more and more in warfare, notwithstanding wars of national liberation. Nevertheless, China possesses the largest land army in Asia, with a strength approximating 2.5 million men, which is backed up by a huge militia force.

The Army is well equipped with modern standardized infantry weapons up to and including mortars and light artillery, which China can produce. However, her electronics, communications and radar are at the level of the Western armed forces in 1941.⁸ Also, there are major shortages in heavy and self propelled artillery, in trucks and other military vehicles, and in tanks. Still, the Chinese Army is better equipped than the forces we encountered in Korea. With Soviet aid it was undergoing a modernization program until 1960.

⁵Chang-tu Hu, China, Its People, Its Society, Its Culture, p. 7.

⁶Ralph L. Powell, "Great Powers and Atomic Bombs are 'Paper Tigers'," The China Quarterly, No. 23, Jul-Sep 1965, p. 55.

⁷Rigg, op. cit., p. 52.

⁸Samuel B. Griffith II., "Communist China's Capacity to Make War," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, Jan. 1965, p. 223.

The Sino-Soviet split and the cessation of Soviet aid has severely handicapped further attempts at modernization since that time.

China's foot soldier is a good fighter, well disciplined, and well trained in conventional and guerrilla warfare. He is amply armed with Chinese made automatic weapons and supported by Chinese mortars, rocket launchers, recoilless rifles, and artillery whose performance ranks with the best in the world.⁹

China's estimated 2000 plane air force consists primarily of obsolete MIG 15 and 17 aircraft plus a few MIG 19s and 21s. Its bomber fleet consists of approximately 150 IL 28 twin jet light bombers and a few obsolete TU 4 propeller driven bombers, all of Russian manufacture.¹⁰ Many of these planes are inoperable because of a lack of parts.¹¹ In addition to this deficiency, training is seriously hampered because of a critical shortage of jet fuel. In 1963 Chinese jet pilots could only average 8-10 hours flying per month, which is less than half the minimum the United States considers necessary to maintain all weather proficiency.¹² At present, the combat capability of the Air Force is low, and a lack of aircraft manufacturing capacity indicates little chance for improvement.

⁹"Red China: An Insistent Presence," Newsweek, 15 Mar. 1965, p. 38.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Lloyd Norman, "No More Koreas," Army, Vol. 15, May 1965, p. 26.

¹²Griffith, op. cit., p. 225.

Although the Chinese navy is the largest in Asia, it is woefully weak.¹³ Primary emphasis seems to be on submarines. In 1960 it was reported that China had 24 submarines.¹⁴ In 1965 it was also reported she had 24 Soviet subs,¹⁵ although another source reported 28.¹⁶ In any event the increase in her submarine fleet was negligible. In addition to her submarines, the navy consists of 24 submarine chasers, 38 minesweepers, and 61 motor gunboats. The Chinese Navy has relatively little offensive capability, and a less than adequate capability as a coastal defense force.

With this limited coverage of China's military hardware, let us now consider her military potential. At any point in time, a nation's military power consists of the armed forces in being and its war potential.¹⁷ The Western point of view commonly characterizes China's gigantic military machine as obsolete. This is because we consider modernization as an essential ingredient to strength. This may not be necessarily true of the Chinese, who view loyalty as the most vital ingredient in their armed forces. There is no doubt that, from our viewpoint, obsolescence is prevalent in the air force and the navy, which are equipped with complex and technologically advanced items of equipment that came from the USSR.

¹³Frank B. Case, "Red China's Seapower," Military Review, Vol. XLV, Dec. 1965, p. 3.

¹⁴Edgar O'Ballance, "The Armed Might of Red China," Military Review, Vol. 40, Nov. 1960, p. 42.

¹⁵Norman, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁶Case, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁷Klaus Knorr, The War Potential of Nations, p. 19.

The stoppage of Soviet aid and China's current inability to produce replacements is resulting in the steady, slow attrition of the capability of these two arms.

However, this lack of aid has had little effect on the Army whose equipment comes primarily from China's own resources, and thus its combat power is not materially affected. The army is the real military power of China. In its brief war with India in 1962, it clearly demonstrated its professionalism in planning, engineering, and execution.¹⁸

Despite two nuclear explosions in October 1964 and May 1965, China is a long way from being a nuclear power. Mr. McNamara has stated that she might be able to deploy medium range nuclear missiles by 1968, and intercontinental missiles by 1975. This will not greatly increase her comparative military power with the United States or the USSR, but does provide her with an important psychological warfare weapon, and does constitute an increased war potential.

As the Chinese Communist acquire the capability of manufacturing modern aircraft and other complicated armaments, China's military posture will improve gradually. Although to a great extent military power depends on the size of the economy, a militant and adventurous

¹⁸Rigg, op. cit., p. 54.

nation may disregard this correlation. The weakest and most vulnerable factor in Communist China is her economy. This has not prevented her from developing nuclear devices nor from exploiting wars of national liberation. Although her economy is not capable of matching that of the United States or other advanced powers now or in the near future, she does possess the capability of maintaining a substantial modern military machine. This armed force has the capability of creating a destabilizing political influence through the use of its lightly armed conventional forces in a massive invasion along China's borders.¹⁹ It has been stated that:

In sum it has the will and the manpower, but it lacks the equipment which can be had only by mastery of an advanced technology and a developed industry. China remains a second-rate military power. This may suffice in Asia; it is not enough to enable it to wage war in the world arena.²⁰

¹⁹Stanford Research Institute, The Economic Potential of Communist China, p. v.

²⁰Lyman M. Tondel, Jr., ed., The International Position of Communist China, p. 15.

CHAPTER 5

POLITICAL POWER

The catalyzing agent for all elements of national power is political strength--the country's political structure and the quality of its diplomacy. This political strength gives direction and force to all the other elements that constitute national power. In fact, diplomacy has been likened to the brains of national power.¹ We know from experience that a nation which fails to use its strength exerts little influence in international affairs. One only needs to look at US diplomacy between the two World Wars to note the negligible use made of relative US strength. In a discussion of elements which make up national power, in the final analysis, a nation's real capability depends upon the use which its government makes of the physical factors of geography, population, and natural wealth.

There is no doubt that Mao and other Chinese leaders are well aware of the importance of politics. Their entire philosophy reflects the supremacy of politics over everything else in life. No one doubts the extent of their political power in China today--of all the elements of national power this has to be their strongest. In terms of political accomplishment, they can be considered a great nation now.²

¹Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, p. 139.

²O. Edmund Clubb, Twentieth Century China, p. 312.

One of the most disturbing developments of modern times has been the change in the role of China from a weak nation, with almost no role in world affairs, into one that now exerts tremendous influence in international affairs. Significantly, this can be attributed to the political direction and force of the Chinese Communist Party. How have the Communists been able to accomplish what preceding regimes had been unable to accomplish for two thousand years?

Without going into detail concerning the Communist revolution in China, it is well to remember that the conclusion of World War II signified a general collapse of the economy and national morale in China. Continuing problems of inflation, food shortages, acute personal insecurity, and the loss of confidence in Chinese Nationalist leadership paved the way for a Chinese Communist assumption of governmental power.³ Of course, their Army, which is so emblematic of the inseparability of political and military power in the Chinese Communist regime, led the vanguard of communism to victory. Coupled with the Chinese people's lack of support of the Nationalist government, the government simply collapsed and power was transferred to the Communists. Thus, a political vacuum had existed and the Communists were quick to seize advantage. Their continual concern and interest in the political element of war had proven decisive in their struggle with the Nationalists.

³A. Doak Barnett, Communist China in Perspective, p. 20.

Now they have created a nation state where there was none. The present Communist political structure is the strongest in Chinese history. China traditionally has been subject to centralized and authoritarian political power, but the present regime is the first genuinely totalitarian regime in Chinese history. It has obtained a measure of internal cohesiveness and viability never before experienced.

Today in China we see a regimented nation of over 700 million people--a nation in which there is complete political control over the masses. How has this been possible? Barnett has stated that a phenomena of our time has been the Communist's relative and rapid ease in gaining control of the huge Chinese population politically, socially, and psychologically.⁴ However, the Chinese people have never demonstrated any intense desire for individual freedom. Rather, they have been a regimented people who have been taught that happiness is conforming to an ethic dictated by the state. Traditional Chinese society had possessed an excellent system for control of the human mind, and had developed political despotism to a fine art. The Communist regime has simply taken over where the older governments left off, and added more stringent controls.

The Communists' enforcement of their political rule was a gradual process. The first task was to win the people's confidence

⁴Barnett, The United States and Communist China, p. 106.

and to eradicate active resistance. Since the military establishment is the key to the authority of the Communist Party, one of the party's earliest moves was to spread its military forces down to the most humble hamlet. This is indicative that the strength of their internal position rests upon the military control of the country, and again demonstrates the inseparability of political and military power.⁵ Although this concept is nothing new, a radical innovation has been the extension of political control to virtually every individual in the country. The Communist state and party structure is well organized to inflict its will upon the lowest peasant. The people have been shown that the Communist ideology with its accompanying practices is the only allowable way of life.

Thus, the Chinese Communist Party, although comprising less than two percent of the total population of China, maintains absolute control over the masses. They have highly effective means of psychological indoctrination. Brainwashing, youth movements, political rallies, terror, and other forms of indoctrination have been successful in eliminating dissident elements.

The entire political element of the national power of China is reflected in the personality of Mao Tse-tung. He and his immediate

⁵Ibid., p. 109.

colleagues have directed the remarkable political achievements of the Chinese Communists. Although there has been evidence of dissension within the party at times, it has shown remarkable cohesiveness during periods of severe strain.⁶ Under the party's guidance was instituted a complete change in the social, political, and economic status of every Chinese. There have been some remarkable economic advances, as well as some significant failures. Increases have occurred in her national power structure, but not to the extent that the Communists would have you believe. It is China's diplomacy that tends to influence the policy of other countries. Thus, what makes her military power so formidable is not so much her military power in-being, but the apparent political and psychological willingness to use war and the threat of war as a constant element of foreign policy.⁷

The Chinese have always felt that they were superior to other races. They believed there was no equality between Chinese and non-Chinese. There is nothing to indicate that this belief is not shared by the Chinese Communists. Thus it may be inferred that, "Diplomacy was designed not for co-existence, but in order to achieve supremacy."⁸ If so, this partially accounts for certain foreign

⁶Stanley Karnow, "How Communist Economics Failed in China," Fortune Magazine, Vol. 68, Jul. 1963, p. 236.

⁷Bernard B. Fall, "Red China's Aims in South Asia," Current History, Vol. 43, Sep. 1962, p. 136.

⁸Lyman M. Tondel, Jr., ed., The International Position of Communist China, p. 2.

policy blunders that have resulted in the loss of Chinese influence in Indonesia and in several of the African nations. It may also be a clue to their defiance of Russia as the leader of the Communist world. Until 1965, China's greatest breakthrough appeared to be in the diplomatic field. Even with the diplomatic setbacks it received in 1965, China came the closest that it ever has to winning admission to the United Nations.

Although there is a strong belief that the political structure of China is one of its strongest points in the make-up of its power potential, it may be a mistaken one. Its structure may be limited by the dogmatic world outlook of a senile and isolated leadership who fail to appreciate the real world problems. Although we are not discussing the merits of communism versus democracy, the very nature of communism, with its centralized control in the hands of a few, magnifies mistakes by making them nationwide. This was exemplified in the Great Leap Forward. Thus, although the political structure has been able to exert a unifying effect on a disorganized China, it is doubtful that the capability for central planning has been acquired by many who will need it.

Nevertheless, the Chinese Communists gained control of China by perfecting the most potent political and military machine in Chinese history, and by placing themselves in the power vacuum left by the apathy of the people and the disintegration of a Nationalist

government. Although there have been recent reports of a rift between the party and the army over tactical and strategic doctrine,⁹ the Communists have demonstrated an incredible capacity to survive both political and natural catastrophes. Their political apparatus itself has never suffered a significant upheaval of dissent. Of all the elements of national power, the Chinese main strength drives from the political unity, discipline, and direction imposed upon the nation by its Communist government. The Peking regime must be considered not only as viable and unshakable, but as one which enjoys a relatively strong domestic political position despite problems within the country.¹⁰

⁹"Red China Hints Party-Army Rift," The New York Times, 27 January 1966, p. 1.

¹⁰A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia: Challenge to American Policy, p. 35.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In order to have any leverage affecting international affairs, a nation requires power sources at its disposal. Otherwise, its policies become meaningless, and its objectives can be only hopeful aspirations. As was pointed out in the preceding chapters, the power position of a nation includes its land, its population, its economic strength, its armed forces, and its political structure and leadership.

Napoleon is reported to have said, "Let China sleep; when she awakens, the world will be sorry."¹ China has begun to emerge from its long nap and is directing its national effort toward the development of Communist China as a major world power. As she proceeds along this path, many of the nations in the world would have preferred she remain asleep. Still, in the foreseeable future, China cannot hope to match the economic and military might of the United States or Russia. Peking's famous propaganda phrase of a "paper tiger" is certainly more applicable to Red China than to the United States. China may be a regional power who poses an increasing threat to Asia, but she is no global power.

¹John G. Stoessinger, The Might of Nations, p. 114.

The outcome of China's long range campaign to become the major world power will depend ultimately on her ability to solve economic problems of great magnitude. A failure to solve these problems will result in a corresponding failure of China to achieve its objectives.

At the root of China's economic troubles lie the agricultural sector and the huge Chinese population. The ability to control and to manipulate successfully the population growth and agricultural production, in very large measure, will determine the success or failure of the economic policies of the Peking regime.

Economic troubles are not new to China. For centuries she has suffered from frequent famines, abysmal poverty, and population pressures on poor and limited land. What is new has been their magnification in the eyes of the world as the Communists apply pressure toward the development of China as a major world power.

At the outset the Communists are handicapped by the small amount of arable land. When this problem of limited land is combined with floods, droughts, dust storms, and typhoons that occur annually, the purely physical environmental factors for successful agricultural production appear to be missing completely. And agriculture, the cornerstone of the economy, is of critical importance to China's development. Agriculture is not only needed to feed the ever increasing population, but its surpluses also can be used for export

to obtain foreign exchange. In turn, foreign exchange can be used to purchase capital goods in order to build up the industrial sector. Unless China discovers important mineral or petroleum resources that can be exploited cheaply and made available for export, she must rely generally on agriculture for the initial impetus in becoming a major industrial power. So far, China's agricultural production has failed miserably. Peking continues to rely on foreign grain to feed its people, and its 1965 grain harvest fell 3 million tons short of 1964's output.²

One might surmise that the Chinese should devote more attention to their population problem. After all, overpopulation is usually understood to mean too many people for too little land, and therefore too little food. This seems to describe China's plight accurately. Thus, limitation of population growth seems to be a logical policy, but, in the absence of other changes, such limitations would not improve the situation. A Chinese farmer considers human hands to be his main capital, and hence has little economic incentive to reduce the size of his family. Production increases, both per capita and per acre, require machinery, fertilizer, and modern science. Without machinery, fertilizer, and scientific methods, a reduction in population would only lead to a reduction in agricultural production.

²"Red China: The Slow Creep Forward," Time, Vol. 86, 31 Dec. 1965, p. 19.

Besides, the Communist leaders are faced with the problem that birth control measures are opposed to their ideology. Also, they neither produce nor have the means to obtain sufficient fertilizer, even if it were available on the world market, and currently, they do not have the capability to teach the masses about modern farming methods. With a Communist society which eliminates individual free enterprise, with its accompanying incentives, agricultural growth in China may never be very productive. In any event, the leaders are trapped in a dilemma from which it will be very difficult to find a solution and emerge.

The industrial picture is not much brighter, because of its dependence on the agricultural sector and the lack of foreign assistance. There is no doubt that the Sino-Soviet rift and the withdrawal of Soviet aid and assistance greatly retarded China's industrial development and overall economic growth. Industry currently has taken a back seat to agricultural development in the Peking ruler's scheme of economic planning. Chinese leaders are even admitting that it will take 20 to 50 years to become a major industrial power.

A small industrial capability is incapable of producing a modern military machine. Thus, China does not stack up as a major military power. However, in the immediate future she can field efficient ground armies that will be highly effective in Asia. Despite the development and explosion of two nuclear devices, China has a long way to go before becoming a nuclear power.

There are some who will argue that in the political realm, Communist China's position is unenviable. On the other hand, I feel that politics is her strongest asset. Her leaders may be old, but the political structure that has been organized and imposed upon the Chinese society will survive for many years to come.

Although China is relatively vulnerable in the economic sector, she is not collapsing. Progress will continue to be modest, but because of her sheer size and development of additional nuclear weapons, China will continue to exert a major influence on international affairs. The United States must not discount her threats. Japan, with a 10 to 1 obvious inferiority in economic war potential, began a war with the United States.³

China is now promoting wars of national liberation. Indeed, this kind of warfare, which she has the capability to support, may provide a clue to an interesting question. Although it has not been addressed in this thesis, perhaps the traditional terms of reference with which we normally measure power are not applicable to China's power position. Their outlook and ideas on national power, despite their objective of industrialization, may be so different from those of industrial powers, that what we consider to be a weakness may be an illusion. After all, why expend your own limited resources for full development of your country, if your national plan envisions

³Klaus Knorr, The War Potential of Nations, p. 58.

the surrounding of the industrial nations of the world politically, economically, psychologically and militarily, and their eventual collapse. If the wars of liberation are the only kinds of wars which prudent nations will fight, and if China believes she can win, she has no need to build her industrial might to be comparable with the United States and with the USSR. In any event, it poses an interesting hypothesis that a national power analysis of China may be based on false premises and have little validity.


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