

WHY CHINA "TURNED WEST"ⁿ*

J. Peck

*So many deeds cry out to be done
And always urgently.
The world rolls on.
Time passes.
Ten thousand years are too long.*

On his recent historic trip to Peking, President **Nixon** quoted this poem of Chairman **Mao**, to **call** their two countries to "start a long march together, not in lockstep, but on different roads leading to the same goal . . ."

With a rare finesse he had underscored a major factor which had made possible the meeting of the leaders of the two great former antagonists. For Mao's poem was written in 1963 as a fervent **call** for his countrymen to "Seize the day" and struggle against Soviet Russia.

"The four seas are tempestuous as clouds and waters show their wrath," Mao described the **Sino-Soviet** dispute. "The five continents are shaken as **gales** and thunder rage. Pests should be stamped out **so** that we may become invincible."

Listening to this Presidential toast, Chou En-lai hardly needed to be reminded that the pests referred to were not Americans.

It was not always so. Fifteen years earlier, in November 1957, Mao had bluntly declared that "the socialist camp must have a leader and this leader is the Soviet Union." Today, however, it is Russia, not America, that is regarded by Peking as China's principal enemy. Undoubtedly few Chinese during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution suspected that its conclusion would find President **Nixon** landing in Peking as planes bombed Indo-China.

The significance of the Peking summit-meetings, however, would be missed if they were understood simply as an attempt by Washington to deflect U.S. opinion from the **war** in Vietnam and to plug Presidential politics or by Peking to capitalize **on short-term** gains by

* This essay first appeared in the May 1972 issue of *Ramparts* and is printed here with the kind permission of the Editors.

"selling out" the Vietnamese revolution. The Chinese have been able to begin those negotiations only because of the defeats inflicted by the Vietnamese on American imperialism, and they have not in fact given up all support for Hanoi. But Peking is now committed to what it regards as much larger objectives within the emerging "multi-polar" world order. United in their opposition to the Soviet Union, and in their quest for greater leverage against Japan, Washington and Peking are seeking a relationship to achieve mutual long-term advantages on certain fundamental questions. No alliance is involved, nor even any serious policy coordination. None is required. In an increasingly complex and fluid international situation, both sides see great advantages merely in closer contact. If the conception of a "multi-polar" world set the stage for this *détente*, however, it remains the triangle relationship of Peking-Moscow-Washington within which it makes sense.

When Mao led the Chinese Communists to victory in 1949, he obviously "leaned to one side" of the cold war ideologically. But there is every indication that even then he wanted China's foreign policy to have a significant degree of independence.

Mao owed nothing to Moscow. The Russians had backed his opponents in the 20s and 30s. They had opposed his strategy against Chiang Kai-shek after 1945.

The Chinese Communist movement under Mao, moreover, had become radically independent. It was not in close contact with Moscow or the other major communist parties. And in those long formative years, at least, Mao had come to understand political strategy in terms of united fronts and loose alliances, not blocs. Even among enemies, there could be unity to achieve specific tasks. In the communist movement, a shared general ideology was the basis for local initiative.

But an alliance with Russia was necessary in the bi-polar world of 1949. America had tried to block the revolution, just as it was already attempting to contain it militarily and politically—in Japan, Indo-China, Korea. Mao probably had little wish to be an "ideological" Tito at this time. Not only was the risk great, but general acceptance of the Soviet global view was not seen as undermining his independence.

Until the Korean war, China strongly indicated that its alliance with the Soviets did not preclude its own active international role. Peking wished to take its seat in the United Nations as one of the Big Five powers, to trade with the capitalist world, to establish diplomatic relations with any nation which observed the principle of equality. No tolerance was given to nations still trying to retain a foothold on Kuomintang Taiwan. Having just "stood up", China had no intention of compromising its principles and national rights. It would not honour

the agreements of the Kuomintang. And it would recognize the **DRV** government declared by the Vietnamese revolutionaries (forcing Moscow to do the same), despite the consequent alienation of France.

Whatever uneasiness Stalin felt about Mao, however, was terminated by the Korean war. The war ensured Chinese dependency in future dealings with the Russians. By taking Taiwan, America was to guarantee Chinese diplomatic isolation for two decades. Branded as an aggressor, the subject of an international embargo, isolated from its role as a **great** power in the United Nations, China faced unrelenting hostility from **Washington**. Such factors, combined with the sheer cost of the Korean war, the need for Soviet technology, expertise and trade, seemed to cement the alliance.

When Stalin died, Peking pushed hard for a relaxation of Moscow's control over the socialist camp. Autumn **1956** found Peking supporting Poland's attempt for greater independence and criticizing Moscow for "great nation chauvinism". Not only were the Chinese asserting an independent line, but in almost every respect they were far more flexible on bloc discipline than the Russians.

Why, then, Peking's complete reversal in late **1957**: the attacks on **Yugoslav** revisionism and Mao's strong endorsement for Soviet leadership of the socialist camp?

Khrushchev was angling for Chinese support for his proposals made to the 20th Party Congress for peaceful co-existence and mutual arms reduction with the West. From his viewpoint, the ideal development would be both **détente** with **Washington** and alliance with the Chinese. A **détente** promised significant rewards for the Soviets: stabilization of the **status** quo in Eastern Europe, the Russian prime area of concern, and the certainty that Germany would remain non-nuclear. It also meant recognition of Soviet equality with the **U.S.**—establishing a principle of two power resolution of significant global issues. In **1957** Khrushchev was wooing Chinese allegiance with public support for various Chinese positions (China's right to its own method of building socialism, support for Mao's theory of non-antagonistic contradictions) and, more important, with the agreement "on new technology for nuclear defence" concluded on **15 October 1957** under which the Chinese claimed that they were to be provided with a "sample of an atomic bomb and the technical data concerning its manufacture". Khrushchev thus made bloc unity attractive by offering to make China more of an equal partner in strategic terms than before.

Washington, however, by maintaining hard-line pressure on China while letting up on the Soviets, forced a choice between the **détente** and the alliance. As early as **1954** in the first Quemoy-Matsu offshore islands crisis, Russian support had been cool. The second time, in

1958, it was almost cold. All the time, Washington rejected **any** attempt to discuss any international issues until the Chinese pledged to accept the **status quo** on Taiwan.

To the Chinese, the Soviets were opting for a **dktente** with the U.S. at the expense of their promise to back China on the Taiwan question. For China, a **détente** which confirmed the status quo on Taiwan **would** be intolerable. Taiwan, the competing and to a large extent the recognized claimant to national sovereignty, was the essential instrument of China's diplomatic isolation, the linchpin of U.S. containment policies, and a constant affront to the strong national pride of China's revolutionary leaders. Even more, **détente** on this basis meant perpetuating China's subordination in all global strategic discussions with the West. The more Moscow sought **détente**, the less China was involved. For Moscow, Europe and the **détente** were to prove more vital than Taiwan and the alliance.

This tension was heightened when the Americans made it quite clear that a **détente** with Moscow would be jeopardized by continued Russian assistance to China's nuclear programme. In June 1959 **Khrushchev** cancelled the nuclear sharing act. A year later, as issues mounted. **Khrushchev** ended all Soviet economic assistance and all experts were abruptly withdrawn.

When Moscow signed the Test Ban Treaty in 1963 over Chinese objections, the back of the alliance was broken. **Khrushchev's** fall from power in October 1964 changed nothing. **Chou En-lai** journeyed to Moscow to negotiate with the new leaders, but the points of conflict remained intact. It was this Soviet pursuit of **détente**, not merely contentions of revolutionary theories, at the very time America was rapidly expanding its power in Asia which underlay all the great **polemic** debates of the early 1960s. Russia, whose security was seen in continued European stability and consolidation of the East European buffer zone, had less interest in encouraging wars of national liberation than China, under the growing pressure of encirclement by U.S. military bases and armed client states. And it was only natural for China to denounce a Soviet-U.S. **accommodation** which she had not been invited to join. The complete loss of trust by at least some elements of China's leadership became evident following **Khrushchev's** ouster. The greater ideological polemics subsided; the critique of compromise was replaced by the charge of collusion. It was a more blunt and accurate assessment of the triangular relationship and remains the essential foundation for the Chinese view of two "super-powers".

As the **Sino-Soviet** alliance disintegrated and American power became more ominous, Peking struggled to fashion a new foreign policy in the '60s. At least three competing policy currents can be distinguished: (1) a revised conception of Soviet "internationalism" (**Liu Shao-chi**); (2) revolutionary self-reliance (**Lin Piao**); (3) a self-sufficient "great power" independent of the existing alliance structure and blocs (**Mao and Chou**). Convenience requires simplistic identification of a policy with certain individuals, but a particular line was often supported by the entire leadership once agreed upon. Certain individuals tended to become more associated with one than the other. Whether they actually were totally committed to one current over another, however, is less important than the broad alternatives Peking dealt with in the '60s.

Liu Shao-chi symbolized the dedication to a revised notion of Soviet internationalism. In the great polemics against the Soviet Union in the early 1960s, the Chinese bitterly condemned the Russian attempt to dominate the socialist camp, even as they based their theoretical position on a conception of its unity. They strongly affirmed the international obligations of communist parties, and the fraternal obligations of one socialist state to another.

Since Moscow had opted for **détente**, this policy current required the creation of a new international communist movement to **separate existing** communist parties and socialist states from Moscow's influence and to encourage pro-China splinter groups where this was not possible. Though somewhat similar to the earlier Russian conception of the **Comintern**, the pro-China party movement was more decentralized. But it **emphasized** the careful cultivation of party relationships, **an** internationally shared ideology and international coordination of policy. It was an organizational approach *par excellence*.

But it did not work. Even the Japanese and Korean communist parties were openly criticizing Peking by 1965, and **Mao** himself, in his interview with **Edgar Snow** that year, expressed little optimism about the immediate prospects for innumerable tiny **pro-Peking** groups.

This reliance on an intricate system of party relationships was coupled with an emphasis on alliances with various national bourgeois governments to enhance China's security. China pushed its "united front from above" policy—an attempt to obtain regional security through alliances with "anti-imperialist" governments. This intricate attempt to cultivate close government-to-government ties seemed initially successful in **warding off American power**—in Indonesia, Burma, Cambodia. It was related to the attempt to mobilize and organize the Third World countries against both Russia and the U.S. **Ben Bella** in Algeria and **Nkrumah** in Ghana were crucial partners in

this strategy. Of course, friendly links with all these governments **required** opposition to local leftist movements. Even **though** most of these nations had conservative military forces (Pakistan, Indonesia, Burma, Cambodia), it seemed a necessary price to pay.

This shaky system of regional friendships collapsed in 1965. The coup in Indonesia which left Sukarno powerless, destroyed the Indonesian Communist Party, and slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Indonesians, was only one shattering blow to the Chinese that year.

The failure of plans for a second **Bandung** conference in Algiers and the overthrow of Ben Bella; the ouster of **Nkrumah** in Ghana; the poor showing of the Pakistani army in the war against India which allowed Moscow to make its diplomatic breakthrough at Tashkent; the Americanization of the war in Vietnam—all left China's policy in shambles.

With the escalation of the war in Vietnam, and in the face of the collapse of much of China's policy by late 1965, another policy current became more evident. For convenience sake, again, it could be personalized by a leading individual—Lin Piao.

His policy was to accept the international encirclement of China, draw a line between cooperation with either revisionism or imperialism, and provide moral (but not military) support for various revolutionary struggles.

On *People's War* was the crucial statement of this perspective. It stressed self-reliance (Vietnam must wage its own war in its own way.) And it expressed absolutely no genuine interest in creating an alternate international communist party system (even wars of national liberation need no longer be led by communist parties). Nor was confidence expressed in alliances with various anti-imperialist governments. Each nation and struggle was radically independent, united only through a shared global ideology.

China was to be a bastion of revolution—isolated, but building socialism within itself. China was part of a world revolutionary process, but not its co-ordinator or controller. Even the contradictions among the **great** world powers were of little immediate tactical importance. The only really significant division of the world was between the "cities"—the developed countries—and the "rural areas" which would surround and defeat them. The basic assumption of People's War, of course, was that the U.S. was the principal enemy. Such a view would hardly be suitable if Russia became China's **primary preoccupation**.

If Mao and Chou, who personalize a third current, rejected by 1965 any serious hope for an alternative international communist party system, they hardly had the same passive attitude to-

wards international relations as the position publicly associated with Lin.

Even before the Cultural Revolution, Mao was speaking as he had in the 1940s of a dynamic, flexible play of great power forces in which China should be intimately engaged. No bloc strategy or international party system seems crucial to his position. Unlike Lenin, Mao has never **written** a single theoretical essay analysing revolutionary struggles in other countries.

Indeed, with his highly developed sense of national sovereignty, ~~the~~ role of the nation, and the volatility of power, Mao spoke of international united fronts around certain specific issues. It was imperative for China to understand and capitalize on all the fundamental international contradictions as the basis for any policy. As Mao told a rather startled delegation of French parliamentarians in February 1965: "France itself, Germany, Italy, Great Britain—provided the latter stops being the courtier of the U.S.—Japan, and we ourselves: there you have the third world."

Such comments were remarkably out of place in the Peking of 1965. At the very time Peking was officially proclaiming that the principal contradiction in **the** world was "between the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the imperialists headed by the United States", Mao was telling Edgar Snow that he was not convinced that this was the **case** at all.

Yet in 1965, China *was* isolated. Peking could not easily manoeuvre among the great powers. Opposed by both Moscow and Washington, denied its seat in the United Nations, China's relations were limited to a handful of small nations—and Gaullist France. And it was Mao, not Liu or Lin, who met the various French delegations.

None the less, over the issue of Vietnam, Lin's position became the official one. It was a useful complement to Mao's decision to launch the Cultural Revolution. For it stressed both the theme of self-reliance for revolutionary movements and China's independence.

In the debate over Vietnam, Mao clearly rejected any conception of "joint action" with the Russians to aid Vietnam. One Korea had been enough. China, not Russia, he feared, would again bear the brunt of any offensive the U.S. launched beyond Vietnam. And Mao hardly trusted the Russians.

Far more important, perhaps, is the fact that the Cultural Revolution could not have been undertaken if the People's Liberation Army, ideologically trained and led by Lin **Piao**, had been fully preoccupied with Vietnam. With the army engaged, no thorough attack on the Chinese Communist **Party** would have been conceivable. Without the army as an organizational backstop, the struggle against the "capitalist **roaders**" would have been aborted.

What both Lin and Mao agreed upon was crucial. The domestic revolution would be salvaged through the Cultural Revolution at the expense of what many Party officials felt were China's international fraternal obligations to Vietnam. Many Party officials purged in the early days of the Cultural Revolution were believed to have favoured "joint action" and patching up relations with the Russians. Many of them were the very architects of China's much-proclaimed "internationalism" in the early 1960's—the Party bureaucrats who promoted and guided the creation of an alternate international communist party system. Not for the first time were the "internationalists" to be purged in a revolution as it turned to the priorities of "socialism in one country". Only this time, many of the internationalists were also the organization men opposed to a revival of the domestic revolution.

The Cultural Revolution constituted a full-scale attack on individuals whose mentality made them respect the Soviet economic model and pattern of development. But it was not a period in which a new foreign policy was initiated. Mao had apparently concluded that Vietnam had set into play a series of forces that would take several years to work themselves out. China thus had a breathing space for its own domestic transformation.

During the Cultural Revolution, foreign policy (its excesses are currently blamed entirely on "ultra-leftists") was intensely ideological. The notion of international class civil war, the oppressed versus the oppressors (to the virtual exclusion of concern for the divisions and struggles among nations) were dominant themes.

Each "revolutionary struggle" was to be viewed as radically independent, linked only through a "common" ideology. The unremitting emphasis on Mao Tse-tung's thought almost seemed to replace any concern for organizational links with small communist parties.

* * *

In 1969 with Lin Piao's report to the 9th Party Congress, cultural revolution "diplomacy" was brought to an end and the outline for China's more "normal" diplomacy set forth,

Yet Lin's speech was an unusual document. For the first time in the history of the Chinese Communist movement, no principal contradiction or main enemy was identified. Now there were two—U.S. Imperialism **and** Soviet Revisionism. "Let us unite and form the broadest possible united front and overthrow our *common* enemies!" China, Lin concluded, "has drawn a clear line between herself on the one hand and U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism on 'the other.'" It is only to China's honour that they **are** always trying to isolate her.

Whereas Mao had long sought to rally all force—domestic and foreign—against the principal enemy, Lin refused to compromise with either the Russians or the Americans. Where Mao, contrary to the wishes of large segments of the Chinese Communist Party, had always opted for a united front against the greater threat and compromise with the lesser one (the united front with Chiang, the cooperation with rich peasants and landlords during the war of resistance against Japan), Lin pictured China heroically holding off all external enemies with equal vigour. China would stand firm, independent, and alone, a bastion of uncompromising resistance to all imperialist and revisionist forces.

Lin continued to stress the struggles of the oppressed as opposed to great power diplomacy. And through the summer of 1971, certain key themes were closely connected: the reaffirmation of the principles of the great polemics with the Soviet Union; the emphasis on the Third World ("Asia, Africa, and Latin America are the main regions of the storm of world revolution in the present era"); continued public support for innumerable insurgent movements even in neutral nations (Burma); a reaffirmation as late as May 1971 of "the revolutionary path of encircling cities from the countryside and seizing political power through armed struggle".

There need be **no** compromises with U.S. imperialism for **Lin**. If the U.S. had been weakened in Vietnam, it should be pushed, and pushed hard. When his associate, Chief of **Staff** Huang Yung-sheng (now purged along with Lin), stated in August 1971 the non-negotiable demand for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops not only from Taiwan but from the whole of Asia, Chou En-lai countered that such withdrawal required an extended diplomatic effort.

Lin apparently would accept encirclement rather than seek international compromise. Mao and Chou chose to promote an international system that would allow China to break the hostile ring. That meant for Mao and Chou a bold attempt to achieve greater security by establishing a global balance of power. No longer was the attempt to create friendship among small Asian countries sufficient, not with the rapid expansion of Soviet military power and, to a lesser extent, Japanese economic might. Only the U.S. could provide a counterweight, and Washington held the key to Taiwan and international recognition.

Mao probably had this possibility in mind even as the Cultural Revolution reached its climax. In **opposition** to the prevailing **public** view, Mao noted that the U.S. was not primarily an Asian power—its interests were more European oriented.

As the Cultural Revolution ended, the Chinese linked their description of the "severest economic crisis in 40 years" in the Western

world, and the growth of Japanese and European capitalism, to the declining significance of America's presence on the Asian mainland for U.S. global strategy.



Though little noticed at the time in America, the election of Richard Nixon in 1968 brought a signal from Peking. The Chinese government that November offered to re-open talks with the U.S. and work towards a treaty of peaceful co-existence. Both in November and when the Chinese took the unusual step of reprinting Nixon's inaugural address in their major theoretical journal, the Chinese stressed that America's forward thrust into Asia had been blunted, that Nixon's election symbolized the decision to emphasize "priority areas, namely Europe and other areas"—not including Asia.

While the two policy currents concurred on the decline in U.S. strength, negotiations with the U.S. were quite a different matter. Mao's clear preference was given in his own remarkable style. On October 1, 1970 he was photographed on Tien An Men with Edgar Snow—and the picture was featured on the front page of the *People's Daily* as Mao's official birthday portrait in December. This was totally unprecedented. The implication was clear.

Escalation of the war in Indo-China precluded any serious effort to negotiate. Initial feelers were destroyed by the American invasion of Cambodia. But the invasion of Laos, viewed as a decisive defeat for the Americans, set the stage for China's current diplomatic effort. Ping Pong diplomacy, as Kuo Mo-jo explained at a French embassy reception in Peking in April, was the first step in a "great diplomatic offensive". It also apparently set the stage for the purge of Lin.

In August and September of 1971, articles signalling a purge appeared in the Chinese press criticizing those "leftists" who maintained that "all enemies are the same". How could one identify the principal enemy with such a position? In a typically indirect manner, one article made the point through an analysis of Mao's 1940 essay "on Policy". The "Communist Party opposes all imperialism but we distinguished between Japanese imperialism, which was committing aggression against China and the imperialist powers which were not doing so, and we also made distinctions between the various imperialist countries which adopted different policies under different circumstances and at different times".

Nothing was more crucial, it concluded, than to form a "united front" against the main enemy. Was not the U.S. in 1940 an enemy

of Japan and therefore, though still imperialist, also a **part** of the united front?

The Chinese do not yet state in their theoretical publications that Russia is the main enemy. But for the first time, U.S. imperialism is not so identified. And while U.S. imperialism (one of the "super-powers") is viewed as the common enemy of China and all oppressed people, Chinese officials are quite openly telling visiting journalists that Russia is nearer geographically and a more imminent threat (*La Monde*, 6-7 February 1972). Popular criticisms of the Soviet Union are widespread, specific, and scathing. And the continued building of bomb shelters in China is not for American planes.

Mao reportedly declared at the **9th** Party Congress that Russia was the main enemy. "They think," said Prince Sihanouk referring to Chinese leaders, "that Russia is China's biggest problem."

From almost every angle of Chinese policy, the Russian **preoccupation** is evident. In the light of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Peking even patched up its long standing feud with Yugoslavia and invited its foreign minister to Peking. There he was applauded for "waging resolute struggle against the interference, subversion and threat of aggression by the superpowers". Peking simply does not much care what type of governments rule in Eastern Europe—if they struggle for independence from Moscow.

The Chinese denounced the agreement on Berlin for "selling out the sovereignty of the German Democratic Republic". And as Chou told a French delegation in January, an East-West *détente* in Europe will allow "the Soviet troops to come on to the northern frontier of China. This disturbs us. Are not the million men already present on our northern frontier sufficient?"

The Chinese do not point to this Russian threat to **explain** the decision to invite **Nixon**. They prefer a blander reference to Mao's essay *On The Chungking Negotiations*. "They might work, they might lead to nothing. We have always been willing to negotiate, and we have nothing to lose if they fail"—such was the essence of the public position. Of course, China has not always been willing to negotiate with Washington. It even opposed Hanoi's doing so for several years. But today the Chinese could respond so favourably to **Nixon** and Kissinger's new concept of "multi-polarity" because it **allowed** China for the first time to become an independent, internationally active diplomatic power. China would enter the U.N., gain invaluable concessions **on Taiwan**, and become a full participant in the global strategic triangle.

"No country," Kissinger argued in late 1968, "can act wisely **simultaneously** in every part of the globe at every moment in time. A

more pluralistic world—especially in relationship with friends—is profoundly in our long-term interest. *Political multipolarity*, while difficult to get used to, is the precondition for a new period of creativity." To Nixon and Kissinger, "multipolarity" marks the end of an era of American conventional military globalism and vast overseas military forces. The U.S. may not dominate the world as it used to, but Kissinger sees the U.S. as the juggler around whom the global balancing act takes place. The Chinese, on the other hand, stress the economic multipolarity in the capitalist world which they believe is working against Washington. Japanese economic growth and the Common Market are viewed as increasingly independent of U.S. control.

Just how far are the United States and the People's Republic prepared to go? Both countries want leverage on Japan. But Washington hardly wants relations with China to mark (in the warning of the Japanese Ambassador to the United States) "the beginning of a process of unravelling our mutual security in the Far East". Rather, the U.S. is using a wide range of political and economic pressures—restrictions on the Okinawa reversion agreement, pressure for an open door to the Japanese economy, pressure to buy more arms from U.S. defence manufacturers—to make Japan a military Asian partner and a global economic junior fellow. And China provides the U.S. with extra leverage and options.

China has already obtained one of its major objectives from the new policy—a new Japanese statement on Taiwan. With the U.S. willing to compromise on Taiwan, China was hardly enthusiastic about Japan's rapidly increasing economic and even military commitment to the island.

Almost immediately after the communiqué was released in Shanghai, Premier Sato laid the ground for a possible reversal of Japanese official policy. Taiwan's status was no longer viewed as "undecided"—long Japan's official position. Given its entrance into the U.N. as the one China (which Japan opposed), Sato declared: "We can say that Taiwan is part of the People's Republic of China. It is a natural assertion that the Chinese mainland and Taiwan are inseparable. and it is not a question a third country argues." Sato even suggested that the treaty commitments to the Nationalist Government, since they were "based" on its position as *the* government of China, were not valid.

A breakthrough on Taiwan, however, leaves the long-term problem of Japan. "Economic expansionism is bound to bring military expansion," Chou told James Reston. That economic expansion he predicted is also the most likely factor which will lead to an ultimate breakdown of the Japanese-American military relationship. Chou expressed little

confidence in the Japanese left. Far more reliance was placed on **the** U.S. providing some balance in the next decade.

Though trade remains a lever **wer** both Tokyo and Washington, it remains only marginally significant at present. If Japan continues to make **concessions** on Taiwan, China may well begin a major diplomatic move (especially with Sato's retirement) to forestall Moscow-Tokyo ties from becoming too strong. Peking is well aware of the plans of such leading industrialists as Shigeo Nagano, head of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, who suggests: "The 1970s can be said to be an era of Japanese-Soviet economic cooperation with the development of Siberia as its core."

More than simple strategic reasons, however, may ultimately be involved in China's new relationship with the United States. If **André** Malraux's comments about extensive U.S. aid to China seem an unlikely prospect in the short **term**, they should not be ruled out indefinitely as impossible. Throughout the 1960s the Chinese vehemently denounced the very idea of aid from capitalist nations, but during a previous period of "negotiations" (**Bandung** 1950s), they had spoken differently. Chou En-lai told the First National People's Congress in 1956: "We have no objection to economic aid by Western countries to **ewnomically underdeveloped** countries. . . . If the Western countries would also enter the economic co-operation with other countries in conformity with the principles which we abide by, it will have a very beneficial influence not only on the economic development of all the countries concerned, but also on the improvement of the international situation."

Long one of the century's most imaginative, iconoclastic and unpredictable thinkers, Mao may try for yet another striking attempt to break the hold of China's immense underdevelopment. China could certainly use capital. And Mao may not choose to fall farther and farther behind the advanced **capitalist** world. Industrialization in China has begun; educational and organizational potential for a rapid, relatively humane advance now exists. Twenty years of Mao's leadership and the Cultural Revolution, for all their immense problems, have accomplished this. Probably, only Mao could make the decision for external capital—as only he could make the decision to invite **Nixon**. Such a decision may completely upset innumerable conceptions of self-reliance. But it is not completely incompatible with long-standing Chinese insistence that what is important in aid is the control over **its** use. And on that, there will be no **compromise**.

In the interview with Edgar Snow (**now** being circulated among lower level Chinese cadres) in which he invited **Nixon**, Mao indicated how far he was preparing to go. Snow summarized the Chairman (his summaries are semi-official) as stating: "China should learn from the

way America developed If the Soviet Union wouldn't do (to point the way), then he would place his hopes on the American people. The United States alone had a population of more than 200 million. Industrial production was already higher than in any other country and education was universal." Not since 1944 and 1945 had Mao spoken so favourably of America's internal vitality, its decentralization, its wealth and educational advantages. Far more than is yet public may underlie Mao's objectives in the American-Chinese relationship.

The Chinese view the world as more politically decentralized than before. "Countries want independence, nations want liberation, and the people want revolution." Thus the traditional concept of spheres of influence will find ever greater resistance. And with more centres of power, national Clites will have more manoeuvrability. A highly fluid international system is the likely consequence—not fixed alliances among small and medium-sized countries so much as united fronts on specific issues. For this policy the United Nations provides an excellent vehicle.

This is hardly a "united front from below" policy. Nor is it a prescription for world revolution. It is the framework for great power diplomacy. Support for revolution will have precious little place except in anti-colonialist struggles such as in Angola and Rhodesia and in a few areas with a major foreign military presence.

The '70s are to be an era of negotiations. "Affairs in the world require consultation", wrote Mao in his 1972 New Year's Editorial. "International affairs *must* be settled by all concerned through consultation." Such a categorical statement, unparalleled in Mao's other writings, symbolizes the radical shift and the clear direction in China's policy.

It heralds a new, more conservative international role. Various developments in the last year together suggest a rather clear preview of it. In Ceylon, Pakistan, and the Sudan, for example, the Chinese publicly and strongly backed the armed suppression of Left dissidents by incumbent régimes. In the latter two cases, the Soviet Union was on the other side.

In Pakistan, China supported—morally and with economic and military assistance—the ruthless slaughter of the civil population. Opposition to blatant Indian intervention was paralleled by crass distortion of the conditions which gave rise to the civil war and the genocidal strategy of the West Pakistani military Clite. For years prior to Bangla Desh, moreover, China discouraged Leftist opposition to the government.

Basic security interests rather than avowed abstractions about territorial integrity can explain China's policy. Facing a massive Soviet

build-up along one border, having already fought India once along another, fearful of interference by both countries in its outlying provinces (Sinkiang Tibet), well aware of India's longstanding desire to dismember Pakistan, the Chinese supported the Pakistani government as one of the few regional counters to an Indian threat. As long as Pakistan remained a viable political entity, neither independent Indian activity nor combined Soviet-Indian policy would pose as serious a danger to China.

Peking also endorsed the ruthless suppression of the insurgency in Ceylon. Chou personally wrote to Mrs. Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister, a letter applauding her actions in "overcoming the chaotic situation created by a handful of persons who style themselves 'Guevarists'." What mattered to Peking was less who rules Ceylon than who was kept out. The Bandaranaike government had strongly maintained its neutrality before the uprising. When that commitment wavered—as Russian and other international "assistance" arrived and negotiations for a Russian base and a possible defence pact were rumoured—Peking supported both the domestic repression and international neutrality. Peking's anti-imperialist stance, however, meant opposition to an insurgent revolutionary movement.

China also supported General Nimeiry of Sudan as he suppressed the Moscow-leaning Communist Party. Nimeiry, leader of the Sudanese Arab majority, who had continued the policy of massacring Sudanese blacks, reached aid agreements with Peking, and various Sudanese officials have travelled the route to China.

China, today, is simply not very concerned about revolutionary leaders. Peking's diplomats are more interested in attending Iran's 2,500th anniversary celebration. Or having Mao welcome such staunch defenders of "national independence" as Burma's General Ne Win (a "fascist" during the Cultural Revolution) or Ethiopia's dictator, Emperor Haile Selassie.

Chinese opposition to Moscow-leaning communist parties will undoubtedly continue. But if an established Party manifests independence from Moscow, it will be wooed even at the expense of the Maoist faithful. In practice, this is indicative of Peking's decision to turn its back on all the little Maoist parties and groups scattered around the world. In China's new foreign policy, these sprigs and splinters—nurtured in the early '60s and inspired by the Cultural Revolution—have no place. They are now "ultra-leftists."



China's decisions in regard to the Indo-China war are undoubtedly the most disturbing immediate expression of its new international

policy. The tension between Hanoi and Peking that came out over the Nixon visit suggests what differences must now exist between the two governments. Their divergent interpretations of the Nixon Doctrine only confirm it.

Both China and the DRV agree on the nature of **Vietnamization**—using Asians to fight Asians, backed up by the constant terrorization of the population through **airpower** and the use of military and economic aid to ensure numerous collaborators. Both agree the U.S. has been weakened internationally by the struggle in Indo-China.

Hanoi however, stresses the other half of the Nixon Doctrine, which Peking would prefer to leave unmentioned. The Nixon Doctrine is "also aimed at achieving a compromise between the big powers in an attempt to impose on smaller countries their arrangements". (*Nhan Dan*, July 19, 1971.)

China would prefer also not to get too specific about some of the immediate implications of Nixon's trip to Peking. Hanoi, for its part, described Nixon's predicament as the Pentagon Papers controversy developed. He either had to radically change his policy "or seek the same objectives with more sophisticated ways and means". Nixon chose the latter which meant, in practice, an attempt to "administer large doses of nationalism and chauvinism in an attempt to split the socialist camp". Multi-polarity strives for a "three-legged" international situation—or even better, from Nixon's point of view, a "two versus one" position. All this is but a "ploy to dam up the revolutionary impetus in the world". (*Nhan Dan*.) And even more bluntly: "The situation of the Nixon clique was in fact desperate . . . The whole U.S. and the whole world were shouting aloud: stop the war of aggression in Vietnam and bring all U.S. troops home. In such a fix, Nixon moved heaven and earth for a way out. *But he has gone to the wrong place.*"

Differences between Hanoi and Peking on tactics, perception and interests appear in a variety of contexts. As the Chinese condemned the insurgency in **Bangla Desh**, the Consul General of the DRV reportedly extended his government's support to the "**Bangla** People in their struggle for freedom against the occupation forces of West Pakistan". As China condemned Indian aggression, Hanoi and New Delhi exchanged full diplomatic recognition. As Hanoi applauded India as "an independent, sovereign country, a great Asian power" with a strong anti-colonialist tradition, Peking was declaring that Russian penetration was turning India into a protectorate. While the Chinese supported General Nimeiry's attack on the Sudanese Communist Party, the Vietnamese maintained that "it is beyond any doubt that the persecution and massacres of the communists and other patriots greatly harm the anti-imperialist struggle of the Sudanese."

Differences even extend to such events as the Angela Davis case. The Vietnamese express strong support. The Chinese remain silent. Peking does not intend to support causes backed by Russian-oriented Communist parties.

In short, the Chinese no longer accept, as Hanoi politburo member Truong Chinh put it, that "the spearhead of the world revolution should be directed at U.S. imperialism, and nowhere else", and that to support the Indo-Chinese people "has become the key question in the world people's struggle against aggressive U.S. imperialism".

If China decided to continue its domestic revolution after 1965 at the expense of its internationalism, and if its current policy aims to obtain national unity and full international acceptance as a great power, the Chinese revolution still remains an enormous challenge to the world.

China's basis of self-confidence has grown. Peking knows that in the past twenty years it has made much greater progress than have other Third World countries. The rigidity of the Soviet model, that made bureaucratization the price of development and the squeezing of the peasantry the cost of industrialization, has been rejected. The paramount importance of the "human factor" in any development policy is strongly affirmed. And despite vast problems, China continues trying to mix cadres with the masses, to involve students and intellectuals in production and the problems of a largely rural, terribly poor society, and to prevent the emergence of a new class isolated from the Chinese people. In its remarkable experimental society, China remains an inspiration and a hope if not a model, for many in the Third World.

That image will surely be tarnished by China's new foreign policy, which all but writes off the Left in innumerable countries and all but marks the end of any meaningful commitment to an internationalist ideology.

Yet the Chinese might well argue that they must first face problems of building socialism among their own people, that concessions and compromises are an essential part of the contradictory path of their revolution, and that they are still terribly poor in the face of a wealthy and powerful capitalist system. Within the advanced world, the Chinese now suggest, the revolution must come. Until it does, China will continue with its own national goals. None of its troops are overseas. Its aid programmes are generous and non-exploitative. What more can it do if not concentrate on the advancement of a quarter of mankind?

Those disappointed with such an answer might question whether the Left in the advanced capitalist world should be looking for solutions among imperialism's victims alone. Part of the tragedy of

revolutions in the **20th** century has been the intensely nationalistic character they have felt compelled to acquire in order to survive. That will change only when the pressures on them from the capitalist environment are relieved, when radical changes within the capitalist world draw back their overbearing weight.