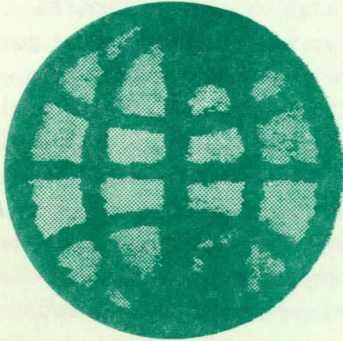


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CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY



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CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY: GOALS AND PERCEPTIONS

The key contentions of this chapter are that the main foreign policy goals of the Chinese Communist leadership are highly stable and, therefore, will probably have potent and continuing influence in action. It is our further belief that, given the present state of outside knowledge of China's foreign policy behavior, a productive way to analyze these goals is in terms of two general objectives: China's national interest, narrowly conceived, and the achievement of Marxist-Leninist international goals. We will argue below that the ideological goal of a world Communist revolution is an important determinant of Chinese foreign policy, and probably will remain so, that pursuit of this objective is not synonymous with acquisition of national power, although the two frequently overlap, and that Mao Tse-tung and his associates probably give a higher priority to these ideological goals than their Soviet counterparts do. The evidence to be presented in support of this hypothesis is suggestive rather than definitive. Nevertheless, the effort to sort out the facts behind this interpretation must be made, because it is this hypothesis that underlies much of the reasoning in subsequent chapters on why it is likely to be difficult to reach arms control agreements with Peking, particularly those few agreements that might meet the requirements of national interest goals narrowly conceived (e.g., a non-proliferation agreement [see Chapter V]).

Foreign policy goals, however, are not the only relevant or predictable determinants of China's foreign policy actions. Some of these relevant and predictable elements are found in the domestic economic and political resources of the regime. China's economic might, for example, is severely limited, and this in turn inhibits Peking's ability to exercise influence over other nations through aid and trade. Numerous other examples can be cited; they are the subject of the next two chapters.

No attempt, on the other hand, is made to go behind Chinese goals to ask what psychological and historical elements brought these particular objectives to the fore. An investigation of the nature and persistence of the notion that China is the center of the world or of any indications of paranoia or other psychological disturbances among the Chinese Politburo would be interesting, but not enough groundwork has been laid for us to go into them here.

It is not possible, however, to ignore the way in which Peking has pursued its goals. It is a second major hypothesis of this chapter that the Chinese Communist leadership pursues its objectives in a systematic and

logical way, given its perception of the world around it. However, Marxist-Leninist ideology, among other reasons, makes that perception somewhat different from that of, say, a Western social scientist.

THE NATIONAL INTEREST INTERPRETATION

The world in which China's foreign policy operates is primarily an Asian world, unlike the Soviet Union, whose major concern (for geographical reasons, as well as others) is Europe. With the exception of Djakarta and Kuala Lumpur, no Asian capital, from Tokyo to Kabul, is more than a few hundred miles outside of China's borders. Every Asian nation, including China, has had considerable experience with European colonialism. All of them (except China, Japan, and Thailand) have been European colonies for various periods of time. All except Japan are underdeveloped, predominantly rural societies. All have also begun to change. Economic growth, urbanization, and dissolution of old social patterns have been under way for several decades or more. Traditional ruling groups are in varying stages of dissolution. New leadership groups from the army, from the rising middle classes, and in some cases even from the peasants, are struggling for power and survival. Only in China, Japan, and, to a lesser extent, India are those presently in power resting on a stable base. While China did not create such trends, she has undoubtedly helped to accelerate them. The resulting situation is one with which any regime in China would have had to reckon and which any regime would have been tempted to exploit for its own ends.

Nor did the Communist regime, which attained control in China in 1949, create the world's two great superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, or the conflict of interests between them. The two opposed systems of alliances were well on their way to formation before October, 1949. Moreover, atomic and hydrogen bombs lent new meaning to this confrontation. China, as well as all other nations, regardless of geography or ideology, had to contend with this world of opposing blocs possessed of overwhelming destructive power.

The Chinese Communists were not completely free to choose the direction of their foreign policy, whatever the true underlying objectives of the leadership. The Communists came to power by a civil war in which their opponent, the Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party), was supported by the United States. Although United States support was only half-hearted during the final years of the war, it had been substantial for many years before that. Events after 1945 convinced the Communists that the United States was still wholeheartedly behind the Kuomintang, how-

ever different the facts looked from an American perspective. Therefore, the Chinese Communists had every reason to believe that, of the two great powers, the United States was the more opposed to their interests. Ideological considerations greatly reinforced this view in a number of ways and may have been the major element in Mao Tse-tung's decision to "lean to one side." The point here is that a non-Communist regime, coming to power under similar circumstances, could have reached the same decision, just as have non-Communist regimes elsewhere in the world, such as Guinea during its initial years of existence, or Indonesia.

Whatever United States intentions toward the Communists' continued existence in China were, American policy was clearly directed at checking any further Communist expansion. Therefore, even setting aside Mao's ideological predilections, he had to reckon with American opposition any time he desired to extend Chinese power. This mutual hostility was crystallized by the Korean War, which began only a few months after the Communists had driven the last regular Kuomintang troops from the mainland of China. When President Truman sent American land forces into Korea and (more importantly from China's point of view) directed the Seventh Fleet to seal off Taiwan from possible invasion, American and Chinese Communist interests were conspicuously opposed. Furthermore, when United Nations troops crossed the 38th parallel and marched toward China's border on the Yalu, it is now clear in retrospect that China felt directly threatened and was willing to take risks in order to remove that threat. After more than two years of war in Korea, it was inevitable that it would take many years before either side might come to regard the other as anything but an enemy.

We do not mean to suggest that the United States could or should have behaved differently. Furthermore, to say that conflict between a revolutionary China and the United States was inevitable, even if the word Communism and the ideological predilections it implies were absent, is to overstate the case. Such a conflict was a plausible outcome, however, given a China interested in expanding or even only securing its power and a United States committed to maintaining the status quo or simply restricting the expansion of Chinese power.

If one accepts the Sino-U.S. conflict as a collision of national interest,¹ many of China's other activities in the foreign arena can also be interpreted in these terms. One could see Chinese attempts to remove

¹The Conference participants never reached a consensus as to what constituted the true motivations of Sino-U.S. conflict, but different national interests were considered a fundamental element.

the influence and power of the United States from Southeast Asia as nothing more, in Chinese eyes, than a move to secure China from hostile attack on its southern borders.

The fact that the method used to remove the American presence is exploitation of the revolutionary temper so prevalent in Southeast Asia doesn't prove that national interest is not paramount. This just happens to be the most effective tool available to the Chinese Communists. They do not have a significant nuclear arsenal at present. Their navy is only a coastal defense force. Their air force, although apparently recovering from its decline of 1961-1963, is still no match for the U.S. air force. Only their army is a substantial force, but it is probably of limited use in removing the United States from Southeast Asia; the Chinese must always fear that such action would lead to American employment of nuclear weapons or at least to a long costly war that might result in conventional bombing of China and defeat of the Chinese offensive force. It does not follow that the Chinese army is useless in this area, but its primary functions are as a deterrent to certain American actions and as a threat that "neutralist" regimes take seriously because they question the U.S. will to intervene or her ability to do so without involving them in a nuclear war (see Chapter VI). Nor is Chinese economic aid and trade likely to be a very effective tool, given the underdeveloped state of China's economy (see Chapter III). The only remaining methods likely to prove successful in removing American presence, therefore, are revolutionary propaganda and activity.

Other Chinese foreign policy acts can also be explained in terms of Chinese national interest with little or no reference to ideology. The invasion of Tibet, in Chinese eyes, was no more than the re-establishment of what were considered to be traditional Chinese rights and sovereignty over the area and as such was endorsed by the Kuomintang on Taiwan (although the Kuomintang did not endorse the use of force to attain these ends). Removal of special Russian rights in Sinkiang and Manchuria was hardly necessary if Communist solidarity were unbreakable, although one can argue that it wasn't necessary under such circumstances for the Russians to maintain these rights either. Chinese Communist acceptance of Outer Mongolia as an independent sovereign state, on the other hand, is slightly more difficult to explain in terms of Chinese national interest. One wonders, however, whether the Kuomintang, too, would not have bowed to the inevitable, particularly if Russian friendship or hostility toward China depended to some degree on the outcome.

Chinese trade and diplomatic policies are consistent with a national interest interpretation of Chinese motivations. In general, China buys

where goods are cheap and sells where they are dear. The Korean War embargo usually explains any exceptions.²In the diplomatic field China has recognized everyone who has recognized her and withdrawn recognition of the Kuomintang. Statements that she will not exchange diplomatic representatives with the United States are related only to the issue of Taiwan, not to conflict of ideologies.

None of the above policies conflict with Marxist-Leninist ideology, any more than they do with a national interest interpretation of Chinese motivations. In Marxist terms, Chinese Communist activities toward Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and even Tibet can be interpreted as removal of the last vestiges of British and American "colonialism" in the area and the first steps in an Asian Communist revolution. This lack of conflict leads many analysts to state that one cannot differentiate between ideology and national interest because there is little substantive difference.³ Even the Chinese recognition and often diplomatic support of nations whose governments are anti-Communist at home (de Gaulle's France and Nasser's Egypt) can be justified in ideological terms as an exploitation of the natural and inevitable conflicts between capitalist and imperialist powers. The difficulty is that almost anything can be justified in Marxist-Leninist terms, except a questioning of the inevitable course of history and the eventual triumph of Communism. Just because anything can be justified, however, it does not follow that Marxism-Leninism(-Maoism) is simply a terminological cloak for Chinese national interest.

One of the problems is that national interest is not always as obvious as in the cases cited above. At times one can understand these less obvious cases if one has a clear picture, if such is possible, of the urgency that the Chinese Communists attach to their desire for power and security. At other times, however, Communist ideology provides much more than simply an *ex post facto* justification of events.

MARXIST-LENINIST GOALS (SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE)

That part of Peking's foreign policy which is most difficult to fit into a national interest framework is also the most important, the Sino-Soviet dispute. To some degree, of course, the Chinese Communist posture of seeking more active support of world revolution from the Soviet Union

²This is discussed at greater length in Chapter III.

³This position was held by several conferees at Airlie House.

results from the lack of alternative means for exercising influence on the international scene. In part the dispute is undoubtedly also a product of different ideas on how Communism can best be achieved, i.e., of different perceptions of the world in which the revolution is to be achieved.⁴ If one analyzes the implications of the dispute for both China and the Soviet Union, however, neither of these explanations appears to suffice. Although the evidence presented below does not support the popular notion that the Russians have become bourgeois while the Chinese have remained inflamed revolutionaries, it does suggest that there are real shades of difference between their goals.

The Sino-Soviet dispute began out of differences in objectives and in interpretations of the significance of such events as the first Soviet Sputnik in 1957-1958.⁵ Probably the turning point came when Khrushchev, after his meeting with President Eisenhower at Camp David, flew home by way of Peking with kind words for the Americans and their intentions. From that point on the conflict became increasingly bitter and more and more open. In 1960 the Soviet Union withdrew all Russian technicians from China. The Chinese allege that earlier the Soviet Union had torn up military cooperation agreements, including one to aid China's development of an atomic bomb. In the Party press the dispute began with China attacking the Soviet Union indirectly through criticism of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union attacking China through Albania. This culminated in direct attacks by each on the other.

The existence and bitterness of the dispute is no longer in doubt. The more difficult question (and the one most relevant here) is what each side hoped to gain from taking the positions that led to the dispute. China, of course, wanted Russian support and the protection of the Russian nuclear shield to deter an American attack and provide a cover for offensive action. Anger over not receiving this support, however, does not lead logically to a decision to bring about a dispute in which the credibility of the Soviet nuclear shield is left in some doubt even for the defense of the Chinese homeland. This would hardly be the action of a China whose only concern was the fundamental security of the state. Nor does the dispute make much sense if China's only concern were domestic economic development. Soviet aid in the sense of grants (if any) and loans had been completely cut off by the end of 1957. Nevertheless,

⁴This is discussed in greater detail below.

⁵There was general agreement on this point among the Airlie House conferees.

over a thousand Soviet technicians remained in China, and their help, including the plans and complete plants which they brought along with them (all of which China paid for in full),⁴ was important to China's economic development. Perhaps in 1958 and 1959, under the euphoria of the "great leap forward," Peking felt it could get along without this help, but it is unlikely that the authorities felt this way in 1960 when the economy was nose-diving into a crisis.

The only thing which China could gain from the crisis, and to some extent did gain, was greater freedom of action to promote revolutionary movements around the world, even where such actions involved direct opposition to Soviet policies. In addition, in support of these actions, China created an image of herself around which all radical movements could rally. Whether Peking was genuinely interested in speeding up the pace of world revolution or was only taking this stance as a means of raising Chinese prestige and power in world affairs is a subject which will be considered in greater detail in connection with Chinese behavior toward specific revolutionary movements.

Russian motives in the split are somewhat easier to explain in pure nationalist terms. For example, although the Soviet Union's extreme characterization of the Chinese position on nuclear weapons is primarily a propaganda ploy, there have been so many Soviet statements to the effect that limited war is likely to escalate into all-out war that one is led to believe that this feeling is more than just a propaganda maneuver. Such sentiment, however, hardly constituted sufficient justification for promoting a split.

In order to argue that the Sino-Soviet split was little more than a conflict of national interests that were narrowly conceived, one has to assume (provided the foregoing arguments are correct) that it was the Russians and not the Chinese who pushed the split. This assumption is not borne out by the facts, since it seems that Peking's attitude has been the more provocative of the two. It is conceivable to argue that a bitter quarrel, particularly one that involves ideological issues, has a logic of its own. Once started it becomes increasingly bitter, even when a rational calculation of each party's gains and losses would cause the leaders to try to cover over differences.⁶ There undoubtedly is some of this kind of irrationality in the Sino-Soviet dialogue, but the rational elements involved appear to be more important. If that is the case, then popular

⁶This argument was presented by more than one conferee.

characterization of the split as occurring between a Russia grown conservative by virtue of its wealth and power and a China that is less conservative in its willingness to take risks to promote revolution is not completely inaccurate.⁷

Is China's willingness to take such risks in support of revolutionary activities attributable to Peking's deeper belief in Marxist-Leninist ideology? Are the Chinese, in fact, taking any real risks at all? On close analysis, much of the evidence used to support the notion that Communist China is willing to take greater risks in order to promote revolutionary activities tends to support the opposite conclusion. For example, the Sino-Indian border conflict was carried out in such a way that the risk was minimal. Only a few divisions were involved, virtually all the fighting took place in mountains that were inaccessible to India, and the action was just long enough to be decisive but not long enough for any major power to help India retaliate. Furthermore, the Chinese withdrew from those areas where their attack had generated the most publicity (in the Northeast Frontier Agency) while remaining in the region that really mattered to them, the Aksai Chin area of Ladakh.

Peking's support of revolutionary movements outside Asia has been less vigorous than the publicity engendered would imply. The Chinese Communists usually counsel caution to potential revolutionaries who come to them for advice (there are exceptions, such as the case of Brazil). They are urged to return home to build an effective organization and to wait for an opportune time. Chinese technicians sent overseas are often although not always under orders not to engage directly in any way in stirring up local political activities. Instead they are supposed to observe and establish contact and work with potentially useful individuals (particularly through the bribery of local police), with reference to future rather than present action.

However, the significance of this caution as an indicator of the pre-eminence of either nationalist or Marxist-Leninist ideological motivations in Chinese behavior is more complex than the above discussion would suggest. In fact, the caution furnishes support for the notion that China is interested in world revolution for its own sake and not simply as a means of furthering national goals that were narrowly conceived.

If China's primary aim were to seize power within Communist Parties throughout the world in order to use those Parties to advance Chinese national goals, whatever the ultimate effects on world revolution, then

⁷On the other hand, some Conference participants held that there was no essential difference between Russia and China on this score.

indiscriminate promotion of revolution might make sense. Such a policy would appeal to the radical elements which make up a large part of Communist Parties, at least those outside Western Europe. It would underline the "bourgeois betrayal" of the Soviet Union and, provided it were carried out in such a way as not to lead to a series of revolutionary disasters, might eventually bring China leadership of the world Communist movement rather than just the Asian branch.

In fact, although the Chinese Communist Party has been happy to have other Communist Parties think of it as being more radical, it has taken no action to enhance this image that would undermine long-run revolutionary progress.⁸ Stalin was quite prepared to use non-Russian Communist Parties not only for Russian but even for personal power goals, regardless of the ultimate effects on those Parties; this attitude nearly finished the Chinese Communist Party in the 1920's. To some degree, China's contrasting behavior has been dictated by the fact that Peking's control over its supporters within various Communist movements around the world is not comparable to what Stalin's was, but this is certainly not the only motive for China's unwillingness to exploit these movements for her own narrow nationalist goals. At least in part, the Peking regime's cautious promotion of world revolution tends to support the argument that China is interested in the success of these movements for their own sake (i.e., because they contribute to the sweep of world progress as envisaged by Marxist-Leninist ideology).

Two possible qualifications, however, need to be made. First, the split and rivalry for control between the two major Communist nations has left Communist Parties around the world in disarray. Even if the Chinese motive in the split was to speed up the pace of revolution, the initial effect was to weaken the movement, and the ultimate effects are yet to be determined. If, however, the Chinese are right and the Russians really have been "selling out" the revolution, then one can argue that China took the only possible course.

⁸This statement and the arguments around it are probably the most controversial in the chapter. In part this is a result of the authors' desire to make the point simply without adding a half-dozen qualifying clauses which would have enhanced the statement's accuracy but not its clarity. It is, of course, true that China has counseled caution or actively supported the government in power where prospects for revolutionary success were far from dim (Burma, Camerons), but it is not clear that this inhibited Communist progress in the world as a whole (in contrast to impeding revolution within these specific countries). But there is nothing to match Stalin's treatment of the Chinese and Turkish Communist Parties, and less obvious shades of difference can be found in many other instances.

Second, the injection of "racism" into the Sino-Soviet dispute makes one question the Marxist-Leninist "purity" of Chinese motives. Like so many other issues in the dispute, this one also derives in part from Soviet statements about what the Chinese are doing, statements made in an attempt to discredit the Chinese position. There is considerable debate as to whether or not the Chinese are racist or are using racism as a means of seizing leadership over Communist Parties and other revolutionary movements in areas where the issue is important.⁹ China's racism, if it exists, takes the form of a feeling of cultural superiority, not of inferiority. Racial hatred of the "white man," therefore, cannot be an important ingredient in Chinese motivations, if it exists at all. If Peking has been using race as a tactic to outmaneuver the Soviet Union, particularly in Africa, it is a tactic and little more.

The extent to which China may actually be using this tactic is not at all clear. Apparently low-level delegations to Afro-Asian conferences have on occasion used racial arguments to exclude Soviet participation, but more commonly they have argued that Russia is a European rather than an African or Asian power. Furthermore, Peking has conspicuously advertised its good relations with the New Zealand and Australian Communist leadership, not to mention Albania. If the Chinese are attempting to inject racial issues, one suspects it is more to tar the Russians as being white racists than to take any anti-white stand of their own. One certainly cannot make out a case that Peking is trying to split the Communist movement along racial lines in order to speed their own attainment of supremacy over the non-white half.

Although the above arguments are not conclusive, China's behavior in the Sino-Soviet dispute and in some of the issues surrounding it is most easily explained by a genuine and substantial interest by the Chinese leadership in the fortunes of the world Communist revolution, a revolution that may not always be the surest way of promoting the security and development of the Chinese state. The conflict between Marxist-Leninist goals pursued for their own sake and narrower Chinese power and security goals is not, however, very great. In most of the areas discussed, Chinese capacities are limited, and so are the risks involved in any actions they might undertake.

⁹ There was considerable debate on this point at Airlie House, but no general consensus was reached.

MARXIST-LENINIST GOALS (SOUTHEAST ASIA)

The one area of Chinese activity where the risks to China are far from slight is Southeast Asia. It is also an area where her capacities to act are considerable. The most interesting cases for the purpose of ascertaining China's foreign policy goals are Burma, Laos, and Vietnam.

There is fairly general agreement that China desires to see Communist governments ultimately established throughout Southeast Asia. Whether the Chinese expect those governments to be their satellites in the manner of Eastern Europe under Stalin, or truly independent regimes still basically loyal to China in the manner of the suzerain relationships of traditional China, is impossible to say. There is no evidence to suggest that the Chinese have followed the Stalinist pattern in dealing with North Korea, even though the Chinese army was in Korea for several years in sufficient numbers to enforce many of the desires China might have had. North Vietnam is not as relevant because China has never been in a comparable position there.

The more interesting question concerns the pace with which Peking hopes to establish these Communist governments. From the Chinese policy toward Burma, one could find support, although not proof, for the argument that China does not really care whether Communist governments are ever set up, that all that matters is the removal of United States power.

Burma is a country where two Communist rebellions have been under way for over a decade. In addition, there are the Shan and Kachin rebellions and a built-in excuse for Chinese intervention in the form of scattered groups of former Kuomintang troops in northern Burma. Yet China has made no real effort to exploit this situation. She negotiated and signed a border agreement with Burma without acrimony, and she has made no special effort to enhance the capabilities of those Communist rebels under her control. On the other side, Burma has bent over backwards not to offend China, has at times refused all aid from the West and thrown out a number of Western organizations from Burmese territory, and has promoted socialist slogans and actual socialization of the economy. Nevertheless, Burma is also an independent, non-Communist regime which, among other things, signed the Test Ban Treaty. One could infer from this that the Chinese Communists, for the present at least, are satisfied with an essentially suzerain (i.e., compliant) relationship with non-Communist but "neutral" and pro-Chinese Southeast Asian governments.

One could draw similar conclusions from China's policy toward Sihanouk's Cambodia and Sukarno's Indonesia. These cases are less convincing, however, if only because China has few alternatives at present.

Sihanouk's popularity in Cambodia makes any effective revolutionary movement impossible. In Indonesia the army may still be too strong for the Indonesian Communist Party to challenge it openly. In any case, China's ability to control the Indonesian Communist Party is quite limited.

The case that tends to undermine this theory (assuming a degree of Chinese control over or approval of the situation) is Laos. China could hardly have asked for a weaker, more "neutralist" government with a pro-Chinese bias than that of Souvanna Phouma. True, it was a coalition government, one element of which was a right-wing, anti-Communist group, but the Communist Pathet Lao controlled over half the country anyway. The coalition government was in no position to interfere with activities important to the Communists in many other areas, including the supply, through Laotian territory, of insurgent groups in South Vietnam. Yet the Communists by their actions against the neutralist faction, including pushing them off the Plaine des Jarres by military force, accomplished the otherwise improbable result of driving Souvanna Phouma into an anti-Communist stance.

Laotian action, of course, is closely related to far more important insurgent actions in South Vietnam. A Communist takeover in Laos would greatly accelerate the collapse of the American-supported South Vietnamese regime. A strong anti-Communist regime in Laos conversely might materially hamper the Communist effort in South Vietnam, but there is little likelihood of such a regime's gaining power. The important question for this discussion is to try to determine just what kinds of risks the Chinese Communists are willing to assume in order to enhance Communist revolution on the former Indochinese peninsula.

Two issues are involved. The first is the degree to which China really can control the Vietnamese situation (and hence the Laotian situation). The second consists of what constitutes the risks they perceive. As to the first, it is clear that operational command in both Laos and South Vietnam comes not from China but from North Vietnam. All foreign troops in Pathet Lao areas, with minor exceptions, are North Vietnamese. All indications are that the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam receives its basic policy direction from North Vietnam, although in day-to-day operations the Front apparently acts with a high degree of independence, as any successful guerrilla organization must. Peking's position, therefore, is primarily one of either encouraging or discouraging the North Vietnamese from taking any particular action.

Initially the Chinese position consisted of not discouraging the North Vietnamese, but by the summer of 1964 this had evolved to the point where China publicly and explicitly stated that she would come to the

aid of North Vietnam in case of attack. Although this does not constitute proof of all-out support of North Vietnamese actions, it and other Chinese statements would seem to point in that direction. The Soviet Union, in contrast, apparently has attempted to restrain the North Vietnamese, particularly in Laos.

Although Peking probably does not foresee that its support of North Vietnam could jeopardize the existence of the Communist regime in China, there is reason to believe that it does anticipate significant risks. It certainly sees air attacks on South China by the United States as a distinct possibility, particularly now that targets in North Vietnam have been bombed. Some kind of involvement by Taiwan is also a possibility. In the first half of 1964, South Vietnam sent no fewer than four high-level military missions to Taipei, and the Chinese claim that Secretary of State Dean Rusk's visit to Chiang Kai-shek in April, 1964, was to plan for a North Vietnam operation. Whether or not there is any truth in these beliefs, Peking apparently thinks there is sufficient risk to justify generating public attitudes in and out of China which might deter the use of Chinese Nationalist forces. In attempting to appraise Chinese perception of the risks involved, it is useful to recount that since the Korean War Peking has always tended to overrate what, to the United States, are incredible kinds of contingencies, such as the re-invasion of mainland China with Kuomintang troops. It seems fairly clear, therefore, that Communist China has been willing to accept rather considerable risks in choosing to support North Vietnam.¹⁰

The proponent of the national interest and power view of Chinese foreign policy can point out that China took these actions in order to solidify her position among the North Vietnamese leadership vis-à-vis that of the Soviet Union. Certainly Peking had to offer something in return for the Viet Minh decision, apparently taken at their Central Committee meeting in December, 1963, to give down-the-line support to the Chinese position in the Sino-Soviet dispute, including refusal to sign the Test Ban Treaty. On the other hand, the Russian position was such that Peking could have simply not discouraged Hanoi. Instead, as pointed out above, the Chinese took a number of actions, including several statements of support in case of attack, which one can only interpret as active encouragement of the North Vietnamese.

One can also, with much truth, interpret Chinese actions as a vigorous

¹⁰There was far from unanimous agreement on this point at the Conference. A minority contended that there were no real risks to China, while others contended that the risks were readily controllable.

attempt to push the United States out of Southeast Asia. If this were the only motive, however, one might expect a more concerted effort to get the United States to accept a de Gaulle type of neutralization solution. Instead, the Communist position appears to be one of pressure for all-out victory within a few years, with neutralization only a device to pave the way for that victory. If the Chinese were sincerely interested in a viable neutralist regime, one would expect a somewhat different behavior in regard to Laos. One would also expect some interest in renewed negotiations on a meaningful basis. By all appearances, no such interest has been indicated by either China or North Vietnam.

CHINA'S PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD

China's perception of the world in which she is attempting to achieve her foreign policy goals is a subject as vast as analysis of the goals themselves. Certain Chinese Communist perceptions, however, are particularly important in reinforcing Peking's interest in revolutionary movements and her aggressive behavior in general.

First of all, a good case can be made that Peking and Moscow do genuinely differ over which tactics are likely to work best. Chinese Communist experience with the Kuomintang alliances (unlike Bolshevik experience in the Kerensky government of 1917) was not a happy one or one calculated to produce undue confidence about the usefulness of future alliances between Communist Parties and powerful bourgeois military groups. Nor is it likely that Peking gives much credence to the argument that the world will turn to Communism if only Russian per capita gross national product surpasses that of the United States. They have repeatedly stated that no Communist government ever has or ever is likely to come to power except by use of force. There is no reason to believe they are insincere in this contention, particularly since history has tended to support it.

In the areas where they lack direct or extensive personal experience, the Chinese Communist leaders tend to fall back on Marxist-Leninist ideology. This, on the whole, has served them rather poorly in the sense that it often appears to have led them toward incorrect policy conclusions.

Sino-Japanese relations in 1958 appear to provide one of the better examples of how the Chinese view of the outside world is distorted by ideology. The Kishi cabinet, then in power, was considered by Peking to be highly conservative and pro-Kuomintang and thus unlikely to take any steps to restore formal relations with China or otherwise act favorably

toward Chinese interests. The Chinese hoped somehow to bring pressure on the Kishi government and perhaps topple it, or at least alter its policy toward China. In 1958 they thought they had the means. Both Japan and the United States were undergoing economic recessions, and the time was thought ripe to exacerbate class differences, already sharply antagonistic. By cutting off trade between China and Japan, the Chinese believed that many capitalists, thus deprived of an opportunity for gain, would join with the "progressive" forces (the Japanese Socialist and Communist Parties and the intellectuals) and that a united front of all forces opposing the government would be formed. That front would be sufficient to topple the government immediately or to greatly weaken the Liberal-Democratic Party in the general elections that summer.

By all appearances, however, the Chinese miscalculated their ability to bring down the Japanese government in this way, in large part because of ideological influences. Marx has very little to say about the precise nature of the Socialist or Communist state, and so any good Communist can be quite flexible without conflicting with basic Marxist dogma. But *Das Kapital* analyzes at great length the evolution of capitalism, the nature of the class conflicts therein, and the economic crises which will gradually help bring those conflicts to a head. Japan is, of course, just such an evolving capitalist state.

The Chinese Communists image of the United States and the Western world is probably more distorted than their image of Japan, but less obviously so because Peking is under few illusions as to how much it can influence the internal politics of the West. When the Chinese Communists do not reveal by their actions how much of a particular situation they understand, it is not always easy to isolate what they really believe from the propaganda image that they hope to convey. Nevertheless, one is left with the impression that China's image of the Western society, if not taken straight from Dickens, is at any rate derived from nineteenth-century clichés. Such a picture appears to have led Peking to underestimate the domestic strength and staying power of the United States government.

FUTURE CHANGES IN GOALS AND PERCEPTIONS

The main interest of this study, however, is not in what China's foreign policy goals and perceptions of the world around her are today but in what they are likely to be in the years ahead. Can we expect an evolution in attitudes similar to that which has already occurred in the

Soviet Union, changes different in nature, or no changes at all? Although everything that can be said on the subject is highly speculative, there are reasons for maintaining that China's basic foreign policy goals and to a lesser degree her perceptions of the world are likely to change rather slowly, perhaps even more slowly than in the Soviet Union.

That some change will occur is inevitable. The top level of Chinese leadership today is old and could be gone within a decade. Even if Mao and his senior colleagues are unlikely to change their ways, their successors may be different.¹¹ But what direction will change take? We can suggest some answers to this question, if only rather vague ones, by looking at the past experiences of the new generation of leaders and at what their future experiences are likely to be. To what degree were they involved in the revolution before 1949? What jobs have they held since 1949? What social classes they came from, their formal educational background, and other childhood experiences are undoubtedly also relevant but of little use for prediction, since our present knowledge of how these elements influence the behavior of national leaders is limited.

The new generation of leaders will not be so much younger than the present generation that it will have had only modest or no experience with the Chinese Communist revolution. Perhaps few will have experienced the Long March, but most will have fought with the Communists throughout the 1940's and perhaps the late 1930's as well. The revolution will have been the meaningful event during some of the most formative years of their lives.

What jobs the probable leaders of the 1970's will have held since 1949 is not as obvious because it is not clear just who they will be. Conceivably they could come from either the bureaucracy or the Party organizations (in either case they would be Communist Party members of long standing). If they come from the bureaucracy, it is possible that years of having to produce machinery, run an army, or whatever will have tempered their view of the role of ideology and politics in decision making. If Soviet experience and an understanding of the nature of Communist Party organization are any guide, however, it is more apt to be those active in the Party organization itself who come to power.

No matter who comes to power, however, one can make out a case that the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideological content in Chinese foreign policy goals and perceptions is likely to diminish. The argument is based on the premise that any dogma that relies on a distorted picture of the world of

¹¹This is held by the authors to be most probably the case.

a past century is bound to fail rather consistently and thus undergo modification to bring it into line with experience. The problem is, however, that foreign events are never easy to interpret, and failure is a relative term subject to a variety of explanations: for example, the Chinese can chalk up whatever failures they suffer to their present, if temporary, weakness vis-à-vis the forces of capitalism.

Domestic failures are not so easily explained away. Many past failures, particularly the communes and the "great leap forward," were quite clearly the result of incorrect or misapplied ideological precepts. Failures have not led the regime to revise its attitude toward the relevance of Communist dogma in any significant way, but continual failures (which are likely to occur whenever ideology is applied with a high degree of literalism) will probably change this, just as they have in the Soviet Union.¹² It does not automatically follow that a domestic failure based in ideology will have any effect on its role in foreign affairs. However, Marxist ideology is a consistent framework within which all phenomena are to be judged. If the leaders in Peking become accustomed to thinking in different terms in dealing with domestic problems, this change must affect their thinking in other areas.

Nevertheless, modifications of ideology will not necessarily occur in China at a pace comparable to that of the Soviet Union. Except during the period of war Communism, ideology has perhaps never played as large a role in Soviet decision making as it has in China during the past few years. Furthermore, the shock of World War II and the desperate need for survival caused the Soviet leadership to abandon ideological appeals in favor of the far surer effects of Russian nationalism. Once doctrinal punctilio was abandoned there was no easy road back. Finally, Stalinist terror was the major fact of life for all Russians regardless of rank. In fact, the higher one got, the greater was the probability of being affected. De-Stalinization was, in part at least, an attempt by the new leaders to change this way of doing things, for their own benefit. Once so important a cog in the system was removed, it would have been difficult to prevent new ideas from entering elsewhere, even if the will to do so had been there.

Neither the Russian experience in World War II nor with Stalinist terror

¹²During a small group meeting at the Airlie House Conference, a substantial majority of the group felt that ideology was bound to be greatly modified if not rejected in part under bombardment from reality, but at least one participant felt that the group was greatly underestimating the staying power of Communist ideology. See Chapter III for further discussion of this point.

applies to China. The Chinese Communists' period of desperate struggle for survival in the 1920's and 1930's was one in which the role of ideology was solidified. Circumstances may be different today, but the prospects of anything comparable to the German invasion of Russia are not great. Nor is the Chinese Communist system of control much like that in the Soviet Union, particularly as it affects the higher levels of leadership (see Chapter II).

Although Peking's goals and perceptions in foreign policy will be subject to only some of the same pressures present in the Soviet Union, there may be other events that will have an even greater impact on China. One major determinant of future Chinese actions in the area of insurgency, for example, will be how much success this measure meets with over the next few years. The same can be said about the role of force in general in Chinese foreign policy and about virtually every other tactic used by Peking. Ultimate goals, however, are much less subject to change than tactics to achieve those goals. Even the tactics themselves, the important ones anyway, are likely to change only slowly. A failure in Vietnam, for example, is not likely to lead Peking to abandon insurgency.

On the other hand, the Chinese Communists have shown a measure of flexibility in their use of tactics in the past, and there is no reason to expect any less flexibility in the future. "Peaceful coexistence" with non-Communist countries (not including the United States) was a tactic used extensively by Peking long before it became so popular in the Soviet Union. That China severely limited the use of this tactic, which was then generally referred to as the "spirit of Bandung," from 1958 on does not mean that they will never return to it. Nor does their present belligerent stance preclude any number of other future changes in tactics. Nevertheless, certain well-tested tactics, particularly insurgency, are likely to remain key weapons in Peking's arsenal for a long time to come.

Another way in which outside events might influence Communist China's goals and tactics is by forcing the regime to choose between narrow national interests and Communist revolutionary interests. To date, as pointed out above, such conflicts have been few in number, and it is doubtful that the regime is fully and consciously aware of the possibility of such conflict. An example of such a set of alternatives would be a choice between supporting a pro-Chinese (non-Communist) government or a Communist revolution whose leaders are likely to act independently. Such alternatives have already appeared, and if they become more frequent and the choice more clear-cut, the effects could be profound.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ARMS CONTROL

If the above analysis is generally correct, then the implications for possible arms control agreements involving China are considerable. China is not today interested in anything that would appear to be a *détente* with the West, nor is her attitude in regard to this likely to change much for some time. Any benefits to Chinese national security arising from an arms control arrangement would have to be weighed against the effects such an agreement would have on China's image as a leader of the "anti-imperialist" forces and on her actual capabilities as such a leader. In contrast, these kinds of considerations have apparently played little part in Soviet calculations. In fact Khrushchev was probably much more interested in the *détente* aspects of the limited Test Ban Treaty than he was in its security element.

China's foreign policy goals and her perception of the world around her, therefore, do not dispose Peking favorably toward arms control arrangements. These goals and perceptions are not the only ingredients in her calculations. Other major components are discussed in subsequent chapters. Furthermore, these goals and perceptions can and will change. The changes that will occur, however, are likely to be slow and determined by factors, in part at least, beyond the influence of American policy. United States actions may be able to change China's perceptions regarding the use of insurgency, and they may force Peking to make uncomfortable choices between pursuit of revolutionary and narrow national power goals. Soviet policies are likely to have a comparable or even greater impact on Chinese perceptions. American actions that affect Soviet behavior, in fact, may ultimately have more effect on China than United States efforts aimed directly at China. Most, although not all, of the actions that come to mind, however, seem to be beyond the purview of arms control and disarmament, but this is a conclusion that cannot be supported without further evidence presented in subsequent chapters. The one major exception to this would appear to be Soviet-American arms control agreements designed consciously or otherwise to inhibit Peking (see Chapter XIII).

