

*Areas of Challenge
for Soviet
Foreign Policy
in the 1980s*

Gerrit W. Gong, Angela E. Stent,
and Rebecca V. Strode

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Areas of Challenge
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INTRODUCTION BY
Adam B. Ulam

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China and the Soviet Union

Gerrit W. Gong

IT IS DIFFICULT TO OVERSTATE the Soviets' concern about the prospects of a hostile, Communist, and increasingly powerful China on their border, now and in the future. Indeed, as Adam Ulam suggests, the Soviet Union may well prefer bitter and hostile relations with a weak, backward China to warm and friendly relations with an industrially advanced, militarily powerful one.¹ Even though Soviet analysts say they recognize the relative backwardness and weakness of China's current military and economic position, they are still acutely aware that relations with the People's Republic of China will remain a focal point of concern for Soviet foreign policy in the 1980s.

Is the Sino-Soviet rift irreconcilable? What do current Sino-Soviet dynamics suggest about the future of the Soviet Union's China policy and of China's Soviet policy, both bilaterally and within a wider strategic context? How is Soviet policy in East Asia, including its policies toward Vietnam and Japan, likely to evolve? To answer these and related questions, this chapter considers three issues: China in the 1980s, including its mid-term objectives, longer-term goals, and the factors affecting the likelihood of their attainment; Sino-Soviet-American relations; and regional and global dynamics of Soviet policy in East Asia.

China in the 1980s

Perhaps never before in China's long history has the dividing line between domestic and foreign policies been so thin or have the linkages and mutual ramifications between them been so significant. It is said that the 1950 Sino-Soviet Treaty of Alliance and Friendship (which lapsed without fanfare on April 10, 1980) was the first treaty China ever sought of

its own accord. Inherent in Mao's dictum that China "lean to one side" was the premise that China's historical tradition of isolationism would not serve the best interests of the newly established People's Republic, at least in the short term.

Likewise, China's post-Mao leadership has sought to bolster domestic revolution and construction while reaching out to the world at large. As China's Central Committee declared, "China's revolution and national construction are not and cannot be carried on in isolation from the rest of the world. It is always necessary for us to try to win foreign aid and, in particular, to learn all that is advanced and beneficial from other countries."² Yet, in true dialectical fashion, independence and self-reliance remain the official party policy: China must maintain "our own national dignity and confidence and there must be no slavishness or submissiveness in any form in dealing with big, powerful, or rich countries."³

China's Goals and Objectives

In the coming years China must strengthen what it recognizes to be a relatively backward and weak position in the face of two major challenges. First, China's external challenge is that the USSR, its somewhat paranoid neighbor to the north, and Vietnam, the Soviet ally to the south, pose a potential threat to China's national security. Second, China's fundamental internal challenge is to modernize its society without compromising either economic construction or socialist revolution. In a sense, the objective exigencies of the first challenge will gradually diminish with the solution to the second. Also, because pursuit of a direct solution to the first challenge could only result in Sisyphean frustrations, China has pragmatically focused attention on what it terms "socialist construction" (economic construction within a socialist framework).

Although the ambitious plans of the People's Republic to modernize its agriculture, industry, science and technology, and military are now widely known in the West as the "Four Modernizations," the Chinese use the term as a shorthand expression for goals more comprehensive than those of a backward country merely struggling to catch up. All aspects of China's polity are under scrutiny. Concerned with the potential effects of industrialization on Chinese society, leaders in the PRC are trying to make their country powerful and modern without compromising its

socialist, democratic, or cultural ideals (all as defined by the Chinese Communist party within the Chinese context).

While the systematic plans to modernize China enunciated by Zhou Enlai in 1975 at the Fourth National People's Congress provide a skeletal outline for directing China's energies into the twenty-first century, the details of their actual implementation are being debated, refined, and revised each step of the way. More than just industrialization or national strengthening, China has embarked on a wide-ranging program aimed at building, in the words of General Secretary of the Chinese Communist party Hu Yaobang, "a modern and powerful socialist country, which is prosperous, highly democratic, and culturally advanced."⁴ Each word in Hu's declared goal reveals much about the PRC of the future, as projected by PRC leaders today. The fusion of several related dimensions of this goal merits discussion.

"Modern" and "powerful" are thought to derive from concomitant achievement and imply a general national strengthening rather than the isolated development of a particular kind of power, e.g., military. After an extended period of humiliating weakness, China wants it known that it has "stood up." It seeks to be simultaneously a part of the Third World and a regional power with global influence. These twin, not necessarily contradictory, aspirations derive from China's long-term assessment of international politics. The Soviets have another name for China's great power aspirations: Han nationalism and chauvinism.

General Secretary Hu Yaobang's use of the phrase "which is prosperous" reflects the prevailing attitude that China's progress in national strengthening is related to increasing the prosperity of its people. In this regard, however, China faces a fundamental dilemma: how can it promote the material incentives and prosperity necessary for rapid construction while maintaining the appropriate ideological purity and practicality necessary for continuing revolution? The "reality of the Chinese situation" will play an important role in defining the equilibrium point between these strong and sometimes countervailing tendencies.

This dependence on "the realities of the practical situation" (past and present) to determine China's future course helps explain the apparent Chinese obsession with historical analogies and correct historical interpretation. It also underscores that part of China's political influence is predicated not so much on its present military capabilities as on its cultural prestige and geopolitical position. Under such circumstances, cul-

ture and politics become inextricable. Indeed, a significant measure of cultural interpretation is indispensable to understand China's policies and politics in their proper context.

A benchmark for China's leaders is their repeated assertion that they are historical materialists: China is, and will remain, a "socialist country." At the same time, the ultimate results of the ongoing synthesis of China's "pragmatic experience" with the principles of Marxism-Leninism (a combination referred to as Mao Zedong Thought) are far from clear. On the one hand, interest in increased production has led to the family responsibility system (where above-quota profits are kept by those producing them) and to some entrepreneurial freedom of action in China's four special economic zones (where China's authorities are experimenting on a major scale, though travel to and from these special zones is still restricted for ordinary Chinese citizens). On the other hand, the length and limits of these incentive programs are still uncertain, particularly since they make those concerned with the doctrinal purity of China's socialism uneasy.⁵ On the Sino-Soviet ideological front, the Soviets remain suspicious of the uneasy doctrinal ceasefire that currently prevails, though a repetition of the Sino-Soviet polemics of the 1960s is unlikely.

The goal to become "highly democratic" derives from China's continuing need to establish a socialist political system appropriately responsive to the people. In the parlance of the Chinese Communist party, the intent to extend participation in all levels of government now includes buttressing state organs, strengthening people's congresses, and consolidating the people's democratic dictatorship by direct popular participation at the grassroots level in community and work affairs. This is not democracy as the United States or the West understands it, but democracy as the Chinese Communist party defines it. In any case, it remains to be seen how these plans are implemented in practice.

Similarly, the declared desire to be "culturally advanced" reverses the Cultural Revolution's denigration of education, science, and culture. Further, it acknowledges the prospective contributions of intellectuals to China's national cause by raising the status and expanding the role of education, science, and culture in China's drive for modernization through the 1980s. In this regard, the Chinese government will continue to seek the advice of distinguished bodies of experts, such as the National People's Congress Political Consultative Committee.

In some important ways, guaranteeing security while promoting eco-

conomic construction may be mutually exclusive for China; even with an increasing gross national product, the demands for modern weapon systems and increased agricultural output are more competitive than complementary. During future years, China will attempt to resolve this dilemma by taking a middle position between the superpowers as a means of 1) establishing a period of international peace and domestic stability sufficiently long for successful domestic construction; 2) guaranteeing its national security; and 3) facilitating (and regulating) the transfer from the West of the technology, capital, and skills needed for modernization.

The PRC recognizes that the objectives of domestic and international peace, national security against the "forces of hegemonism," and transfer of western technology and capital, are only means to the greater end of making China a modern and powerful socialist country, not an end in themselves. This distinction between means and ends offers an important key to reconciling otherwise contradictory Chinese policy decisions. For example, the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war (obviously a breach of the period of peace that China desires) demonstrated that China's national security and peace were divisible objectives, and that the emerging relationship with the United States was resilient, as well as extremely useful. Similarly, China's ongoing interest in negotiations with the Soviet Union is both a tactic to increase the stakes in political and technological support from the West and a potential means to meet security needs through limited detente or accommodation. This does not mean that changes in China's fundamental orientation are impossible, but rather that there are several paths to the same long-term goals.

Especially in the mid-term, however, China has tried to relate its three objectives directly to the interests of the United States. From the PRC's perspective, the West's recognition of "parallel strategic concerns" with China (and the West's resultant interest in the PRC's playing a role as a strategic counterweight to the Soviet Union) could help China underwrite its own national security, thus preserving a period of peace and potential stability while the technology, capital, and skills necessary for domestic economic construction are secured from the West. In turn, the West will provide these resources more readily and on better terms if China is able to maintain its allure as an active and indispensable part of an anti-Soviet coalition. Most in China recognize that the capital and technology the PRC needs—particularly the types and quantities it is likely to require—will be found in the West, not the Soviet Union.

Likewise, the West perceives both converging and diverging interests with the PRC vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Entry (at whatever level) into the China market with its long-term commercial possibilities; the buttressing of China's industrial capacity (and thereby its long-term military capability); the possibilities of military cooperation, even if indirect, against a common security threat; and the perception of important people-to-people ties dating to the nineteenth century all offer possibilities for a happy convergence of Sino-American interests.

Thus, beyond modernization for its own sake, China is committed to the political, social, and economic construction necessary for establishing its place as a regional power with the cultural prestige befitting the country with the longest record of continuous civilization in the world. What concerns the Soviets is that while China's present leadership can spell out its vision of China's objectives, goals, and future development, what will actually happen in the years ahead will be affected by as yet unforeseen events. Indeed, it is difficult to assess which alternative troubles the Soviets more: the predictable scenario of incremental increases in Chinese power as China implements the Four Modernizations and strengthens its domestic polity, or the unpredictable scenario in which unforeseen influences in China's bureaucratic and factional struggles bring to power new leaders with unknown goals, priorities, or methods of policy implementation.

China's Internal Development

Even the most optimistic predictions foresee China making substantial but incomplete progress toward its national objectives by the turn of the century. Such conclusions are rooted in the myriad factors affecting China's internal development in key sectors such as domestic politics, agriculture, industry, the military, and general societal trends.

Domestic Politics. Juxtaposed in the concept of a modern and powerful socialist country are the two fundamental Chinese objectives of socialist revolution and economic construction. The interplay between these two imperatives has been a central issue in the domestic policy debate since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. If there have been differences among Chinese leaders such as the "Gang of Four," Mao, Lin Biao, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Zhou Enlai and others, they have been as much over timing and emphasis as over ultimate purpose.⁶ Still,

the achievement of both objectives at the same time has been difficult in practice.

From this perspective, the December 1978 Third Plenary session of the Eleventh Central Committee is touted by the current regime in the PRC as a critical turning point. As the Resolution on Questions of Party History released in June 1981 indicates, it was that Third Plenary which "firmly discarded the slogan 'Take class struggle as the key link,' which had become unsuitable in a socialist society, and made the strategic decision to shift the focus of work to socialist modernization."⁷ In short, China reached a watershed at the end of the Cultural Revolution. Under Deng's direction, China would take a more methodical, less chaotically revolutionary approach to "socialist modernization."

Three points suggest that China's current emphasis on construction over revolution will continue beyond the present regime. First, China's leaders are appealing to two deeply rooted popular desires: the desire (for ideological and nationalist reasons) that China "stand up" and take its rightful place as a modern and powerful socialist country, and the desire for individual and collective prosperity, as reflected in an improving standard of living. This period of domestic construction (with promises of immediate material benefits for those who earn them) must make up for the intermittent periods of economic disruption which stretch from the end of China's own civil war, through the devastation of the Korean War, the economic chaos of the "Great Leap Forward," and the social anarchy of the Cultural Revolution. China's leaders realize that there is no shortcut to internal development and that further postponement will only make the task more difficult.

Second, China's leaders are trying to build flexibility into their goals by appealing to the widest possible constituency. Calls to the intellectuals for "cultural advancement" are offset by promises to foster a "highly democratic" society in which all have a voice. "Modern and powerful" will not displace China's basic orientation as a "socialist country." However, some prosperity will also accrue directly to the people as China becomes "modern" and "powerful."

Third, there is a deliberate attempt to divorce modernization policy from specific "party lines" and from particular personalities. Pictures of Hu Yaobang do not appear around China as they did of Chairmen Mao Zedong and Hua Guofeng. Indeed, Deng's efforts to place Hu Yaobang as general secretary of the party and Zhao Ziyang as premier reflect Deng's

desire to minimize the personality conflicts or personal animosities (some of which involve important questions of political "face") which might arise should he occupy either top position. Deng also wants to give his hand-picked successors sufficient time to take control, thus reducing succession crises in the future. However, Deng's efforts to ease himself out of the public picture while still remaining an *eminence grise* have not yet been successful.⁸

The shift from emphasis on personality is a natural consequence of Chairman Mao's passing. The party now considers Mao in a positive light, as a "great proletarian revolutionary, strategist, and theorist," and in a negative light, as the one who "initiated and led" the "Cultural Revolution," which "was responsible for the most severe setback and the heaviest losses suffered by the Party, the state and the people since the founding of the People's Republic."⁹ His role as "Father of the Country" placed him in a unique position to make major policy decisions during his time, sometimes single-handedly. Mao's death makes the down-playing of a "personality cult" in questions of succession and policy both more possible and more desirable for leaders interested in long-term domestic stability.

Still, the Chinese Communist party's down-playing of Mao's role and position represents a calculated gamble in the continuing struggle for political power in China. The current campaigns aimed at party rectification and against "spiritual pollution" suggest that the post-Deng leadership transition is still very uncertain. What will happen still depends in large measure on how long Deng can hold the reins of power, and thereby on how firmly protégés such as Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, and their followers can entrench themselves.

If Deng is successful, future debate may focus more on fine-tuning the bureaucracies and procedures than on determining their essential roles and functions. If he is unsuccessful, struggles among China's top leadership to determine correct policy could hobble China's development. Much will depend on the extent to which the dominant locus of power can be shifted from individuals to institutions in coming years. Either success or failure in this regard will dramatically affect the stability of China's internal politics.

To conclude, appeals to nationalism and to the desire for improving standards of living, to providing something for everyone within the

framework of general consensus, and to avoiding identification with any particular personality or party line all argue for a modicum of continuity in China's objectives.

However, it is still important to recognize the possibilities of disruptive factors. The continuity of China's modernization plan depends on the fulfillment of two prerequisites. First is the need for general consensus on the priorities of modernization, both across the social spectrum and in depth of belief and commitment. Second is the imperative to maintain some kind of institutional *modus vivendi* both within the Chinese Communist party and between the party and the general populace in order to regulate, within an established framework, the difficult choices and problems that will accompany China's domestic modernization.

Should the bureaucracies appear too ossified, unresponsive, or self-serving, renewed groundswells of popular discontent could arise. Similarly, should the bureaucracies prove too unwieldy, inefficient, or ineffective, China's efforts to move forward could be slowed by red tape. Either course of events would undermine the credibility of the present regime and its current approach.

Agriculture. China's ability to feed its vast population is usually portrayed in Malthusian terms. Arable, food-producing territory is fixed at approximately 15.3 percent of China's 3.7 million square miles. Population, judged at the last census to be over one billion, continues to grow.

Agricultural production has historically been a limiting factor in the PRC's overall productive capacity. Today, constrained agricultural productivity remains something of a brake on the speed of PRC economic modernization. Little wonder, then, that the December 1978 Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee noted: "The whole party should concentrate its main energy and efforts on advancing agriculture as fast as possible because agriculture, the foundation of the national economy . . . remains very weak on the whole."¹⁰ The September 1982 Twelfth Party Congress likewise affirmed the priority of, "first, feed the people and, second, build the country."¹¹

Current efforts to increase agricultural productivity focus on the ongoing implementation of the "family-responsibility system." In contrast to maintaining responsibility at higher, collective levels such as the commune, the "family-responsibility system" makes households individually

responsible for producing a mutually agreed-upon quota of agricultural goods. Also in contrast to communal production, families are permitted to keep above-quota production for their own use or for sale with profit.

While the material incentive of above-quota profit sharing promises to increase overall productivity, the system also has several potentially serious drawbacks. First it encourages smaller (and therefore ultimately less efficient) farming plots. Second, it contributes to short-sighted preferences for cash crops and to ecologically unsound farming practices. Third, it exacerbates the unresolved socialist dilemma that farming families with several working sons can reward themselves with the fruits of their own labors. Fourth, by increasing the desire of many to stay on the farm, the potential for greater profit through individual hard work also increases the dissatisfaction of some serving in the military, which offers fewer such direct financial rewards.

Nor do massive imports of modern farm equipment and chemical fertilizers hold the answer to the long-standing problems of China's agricultural production. Even the promise of increased yields through mechanized equipment and fertilizers (which do not seem forthcoming in any case) must be balanced against the realities of China's need for full employment, the difficulty in shifting from labor-intensive methods of production, and the government's concern that large groups of people not migrate to already overcrowded urban areas.

At the same time, the PRC's 1982 harvest of 353 million tons of grain was its largest ever. Agricultural production continues to grow. Profitable agricultural exports are also becoming a valuable source of hard currency.

The demographic dimension of the agricultural situation is underscored by the 1982 PRC census: 1,008,175,288 people. Half of the population is 21 and under; over 10 million births still occur in the PRC every year.¹² Stringent birth control programs have already limited families to one child per couple in the cities where housing is scarce and government control is strict. In a society long founded on the extended family unit, more than mere numbers are involved in the drive for population control: there is a special poignancy as a government official anticipates the birth of her only child's only child.

However, despite rumors of forced abortions, reports of female infanticide in the countryside, and heavy financial penalties for families having more than one child, China's 1981 average annual birthrate of between 1.3 and 1.4 percent will probably continue, though some hope it will be

limited to 1.2 percent. Efforts to enforce birth control programs in the rural sector (where 70 to 80 percent of China's population reside) will continue; resistance to and resentment of, them will also continue.¹³

Nor should the political importance of the agricultural sector be underestimated. Some Western analysts argue that the "Gang of Four" were overturned in part because their policies had done little to improve the life of those in the countryside. Therefore, when the power struggle came, little rural support was forthcoming. Hence, programs which emphasize agricultural production aim not only at reducing the pressure on China's food supplies, but also at gaining the support of that large majority of the population who live in China's rural sector.

Industrial Economy. China's "Eight-character" program for improving industrial performance (so called because eight Chinese characters comprise the words for "readjustment, reform, consolidation, and improvement") stresses the maximum use of China's indigenous industrial capabilities. China argued long and hard with the United States for better terms and quotas before signing a compromise agreement on U.S. imports of Chinese textiles; access to the U.S. market for Chinese exports is important if China is to employ its indigenous industries and thereby to finance its modernization without incurring unfavorable trade or hard-currency balances. Accordingly, China's leaders are also making efforts to address the unbalanced aspects of China's economy. They are paying greater attention to light industry and, somewhat surprisingly, to consumption over accumulation (on the theory that revenues will accrue from taxes produced by consumer expenditures).

Continuing tensions and strains in the interplay between the demands of a socialist command economy and the need for decentralized individual initiative will continue to bedevil the efforts to regulate China's economy. Greater play is being given to market forces, although the debate continues as to the proper place of material incentives within a socialist economy. Strict governmental direction of individual profession and work location has gradually been loosened, but how far Beijing will permit devolution of authority to the provinces in the running of commercial enterprises remains to be seen.

Stymied by poor or non-existent infrastructure, energy development will remain a critical factor in China's modernization. China harnesses only 3 percent of what is estimated to be the world's greatest hydroelec-

tric potential, though plans for massive dams are already underway. China plans to double oil production by increasing its 1979 high of 773.8 million barrels a year to an annual 1.46 billion barrels by the turn of the century. The 575.3 million barrels of crude oil China produced in the first nine months of 1983 represented a 3.3 percent increase over the same period in 1982, according to Xinhua.¹⁴ Various oil companies have seismically surveyed substantial offshore shelf areas; it now appears that British Petroleum, Exxon, and others among the thirty-three companies that submitted bids will begin joint exploration and exploitation in the Yellow and South China seas. Of course, the persistence (or lack thereof) of the current worldwide oil glut will affect China's long-term ability, like that of other Third World oil producing countries, to subsidize development through oil revenues. Long, drawn-out negotiations, which criss-cross cultural and political lines, have also frustrated some Western companies and dampened their interest in investing in China.

China's coal industry produces approximately two-thirds of the PRC's total energy supply and remains a key to China's modernization. Yet bottlenecks in that sector seriously constrain available energy. Also, despite strict conservation measures, domestic consumption is voracious. Nevertheless, after four years of what finally seemed successful negotiations between the PRC and Occidental Petroleum for a coal-mining venture, falling coal prices (from \$52 to \$40 a ton) have delayed plans for the development of what was to have been one of the world's largest open-pit coal mines.¹⁵ Nevertheless, it appears that plans for large, joint-venture coal projects in Shensi and Shaanxi will move forward, if gradually. In addition, with Western and Hong Kong financial support, large nuclear plants are slated for construction near Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Other economic strains will continue through the 1980s. China's "iron rice bowl" (the expectation of job security independent of job performance) has not cracked, though some PRC leaders have publicly discredited it. Chinese leaders will exercise care to prevent a "revolution of rising expectations" from overtaking the production of desired consumer goods. Also, should inequities in the system become too widespread (e.g., the alleged nest-feathering by some bureaucrats or profiteering by certain businesses), then the ideological purists, or those who do badly in the marketplace, will continue to produce periodic ideological campaigns against corrupt and decadent bourgeois trends from the West.¹⁶ Similarly,

should the economic take-off necessary for modernization be slow in coming, China will be forced to adjust its programs.

At each point along the way, however, China's leaders will continue to affirm that by doing things according to the "reality of the practical situation in China," it is possible to reduce the bottlenecks which stifle other command economies and to permit people to vent constructively their frustrations at inefficiencies or inequities within the system.

Military. The normal dictum that a state's first imperative is to secure its borders and to defend its homeland is complicated in China's case by the fact that its historic borders have ebbed with Chinese weakness and expanded with Chinese strength. Questions regarding the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Indian frontiers and regarding Hong Kong and Taiwan all stem from the PRC's nonrecognition of "unequal treaties" signed by a feudal Ching dynasty during the nineteenth-century period of Chinese weakness. Establishing its proper boundaries, by whatever means appropriate, is an initial way the PRC must deal with threats to areas it considers internal, sovereign territory.

Closely related to the issue of China's properly delineating its boundaries is the classical question of power politics: how to guarantee that no hostile powers arise on one's frontiers, or that the power of hostile neighbors is minimized. In this regard, as in the martial arts where an unexpected move can cause an otherwise formidable opponent to lose confidence and balance, China has tried to adopt a stratagem of feint and thrust in an effort to parlay its relatively backward economic and military situation into a more credible deterrent. Thus, when pressed (as by India in 1962) or when it perceived limited conflict to be in its own long-term interest (as in 1969 along the Sino-Soviet border or in 1979 along the Sino-Vietnamese frontier), the PRC has been willing to engage in a kind of offensive defense that was deliberately limited in military objective but highly intensive in form. The PRC's willingness to defend and promote its interests by military force when necessary derives from its calculation that purposefully circumscribed but demonstratively forceful actions in the near term may offer important long-term political dividends.

Three points should be made about the PRC's doctrine of "people's war in modern conditions." First, it is not clear what "people's war" doctrine actually entails. It appears primarily an outline for homeland defense,

regardless of whether the People's Liberation Army (PLA) attempts to "lure an enemy deep" or to "defend at the gates." At least publicly, it offers no coherent strategy for the kinds of power projection generally associated with great power behavior.

As suggested by the contradictory formulation that the PLA should be a "regular, modern and powerful, revolutionary armed force,"¹⁷ the role of the PLA is a matter of intense current debate within the PRC. "Regular, modern and powerful" military units are defined and configured differently, trained differently, and asked to perform differently than are "revolutionary armed forces." A "revolutionary armed force" would play a different role in Chinese society than regular service forces would. In short, the role of the PLA as an instrument of military influence in Chinese society and abroad has yet to be fully defined. Until it is so defined, the exact dimensions of "people's war in modern conditions" will also remain unclear.

Second, recognizing its immediate security needs, the PRC retains the "people's war" concept, with the PLA being considered China's "new Great Wall." Some Western strategists consider the "people's war" doctrine as simply a noble rationalization for the only defense the PRC has, or can afford. However, Chinese strategists make it clear that they hold no illusions about fighting armored columns in chemically and bacteriologically contaminated environments with human wave tactics. They continue to assert that forcible attempts to hold Chinese territory for any length of time will result in unacceptable losses to whoever tries.

China's interest in modern, general-purpose forces is also probably linked to its refusal to limit Chinese forces merely to defensive warfare (as primary dependence on people's militias would suggest). Current Chinese strategies for countering Soviet armed incursions postulate the need for strong and vigorous defense, partially through offense. This suggests a counter-attack strategy, rather than simply fighting a defensive war of attrition against a technologically superior foe. The Soviet Trans-Siberian Railroad, some PRC analysts observe, is vulnerable to such an attack. (The Soviet Baikal-Amur railway—the BAM—decreases this vulnerability somewhat by providing transport and military capabilities to Soviet East Asia, where supplies are already forward-deployed in any case.) China adamantly maintains that it will not initiate a conflict but will respond quickly if one should start, with no guarantee that a cease-fire will automatically result in the *status quo antebellum*.

Third, because it depends heavily on China's vast population and territory, the doctrine of "people's war in modern conditions" has been accused of trying to make necessity a virtue. Yet, China, which has seen and fought many wars, has long been aware of what one Western strategic analyst now calls the "forgotten dimensions of strategy."¹⁸ Indeed, only since the First World War has the West been consciously forced to evaluate the logistical, operational, social, and technological aspects of "total war," that is, a war which pits all the strengths and resources of entire societies against each other.

However, a strength in Chinese strategic thinking, at least since the writings of the celebrated Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu during the fourth century B.C., has been the attention paid to the total assets of a society in defining its wartime capabilities. It is in this broader perspective that "people's war in modern conditions," built on the Four Modernizations, takes on somewhat greater credibility.¹⁹

Nevertheless, the military is among those most concerned about, and wary of, the emphasis on economic construction within China. Repeated calls for unity within the military establishment reveal continuing dissent, which seems to spring from three main sources.

First, the ideological hard-liners question the swing toward the West for doctrinal reasons. Indeed, some Western analysts argue that domestic pressure on Deng for results on the Taiwan question stems in large measure from those critical of his domestic and foreign policy orientation. (This is not to suggest that Deng is not himself concerned about the Taiwan question, which he clearly is.)

Second, earlier budget cuts (13.2 percent from 1979 figures in 1980) in military expenditures seemed to indicate a turning away from military priorities—something guaranteed to cause resentment among China's professional soldiers. Though the 1982 and 1983 PRC military budgets have held constant, the current shift in the military's status is likewise clear from the Beijing whispers that girls now want to marry technical professionals instead of PLA career soldiers because of the former's brighter future prospects.

Third, many in the PLA feel personally threatened by Deng's reform movement, since they joined the services under ideological auspices and are now vulnerable to the de-emphasis on certain Maoist policies.

Nevertheless, China's structure and tradition of government argue against the likelihood of a forceful military coup in the coming years.

Mao's dictum that the "party controls the gun" continues to hold. However, the military may attempt to reassert itself politically, despite Deng's positioning himself as the chairman of the party's military commission.

Fluctuations in China's internal politics have had little effect on China's missile and nuclear programs. Recognized by all as essential to national security, such programs continued essentially without interruption even during the Cultural Revolution. China's successful full-range test of an ICBM in May 1980, its launching of three satellites from a single carrier rocket in September 1981, and its reported tests of submarine-launched ballistic missiles all point to more sophisticated weapon systems. These developments also point to China's efforts to acquire its own, if limited, strategic triad. It is still unclear to what extent these advancing capabilities are ultimately intended for purposes of deterrence or for purposes of political influence abroad.

China remains vulnerable to a punitive or preemptive attack, particularly if carried out by highly mobile armor or tactical air force units. Under present circumstances, what militates against an arbitrary Soviet attempt to "teach China a lesson" is the risk that such confrontation would become sustained or escalate beyond conventional warfare. The utility of such a punitive venture is also questionable, either militarily or politically. Nevertheless, China will work to preclude intimidation by the conventional forces of a country seeking to keep the intensity of conflict below the nuclear threshold while capitalizing on technological superiority.

Troop clashes followed by mutual buildups of ground forces, i.e., skirmishes of the type that occurred along the Ussuri River in 1969, are possible along the Sino-Soviet border in the 1980s. Despite the tight sealing of the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Mongolian borders, both China and the Soviet Union will continue psychological operations among the minorities on the Sino-Soviet border. Low-intensity conflict, including guerrilla raids, shellings, and psychological warfare, will also continue on the Sino-Vietnamese border.

General Social Trends. China is a society in ferment. Conflicting developmental priorities raise fundamental questions for China's leaders and populace. For example, should a well-educated young person sacrifice his life to save a peasant of marginal direct value to the development of the country (a socialist ideal) or should he preserve his

precious training to build his country (a nationalist ideal)? Will the need to place scientific and technological endeavors on a firm foundation give "creative" questioning and problem solving a place within the traditional education system? Can China's leaders satisfy both the demands of the intellectuals and researchers for scientific investigation for its intrinsic value and the requirements of industry and the military to minimize competition for scarce facilities, personnel, and funds?

Three general trends bear watching. First is the uncertainty that will arise as the "Cultural Revolution" generation comes of age, after having suffered tremendous disruption and dislocation during a formative period of their lives. The insufficient training and skills of this "lost generation" may be manifest as they fill administrative and leadership positions in the Chinese bureaucracy. As illustrated by the intense popular response to the banned movie "Bitter Love," ("What good is it to love your country, if your country does not love you?") strong resentment (with as yet uncertain political ramifications) may also accompany this generation's sense of having been deprived of preparation that would have helped them perform better.

Second is the likelihood of cognitive dissonance among those who took part in the "Great Leap Forward" or Cultural Revolution. They may find it difficult to reconcile their earlier actions and ideological fervor with the ongoing reassessment of Mao. The party is aware of the fine line between criticizing Mao and criticizing itself, and, in instituting a process of de-Maoization, took a calculated gamble in stressing that it is better to correct past mistakes than to cover them over. A backlash of either pragmatism or renewed radicalism could result if the party is unable to defuse the ideological (and political) dissonance arising from the reassessment of Mao and his legacy.

A third trend is that of disillusionment, particularly among the young, with the Chinese Communist party, the public security apparatus, and with authority in general. Current law and order campaigns in China, including the public executions of convicted criminals, have more to do with order than with law; they reflect the tension between those who demand order now and those who want a socialist legal system to develop gradually. Further, this crisis of faith and authority could lead to a new emphasis on individual and family relationships, ties made even more important when families and friends were sent to different communes or factories, or otherwise forcibly separated, during the Cultural Revolution.

A subtle but profound change in Chinese society may also result from the fact that the elite are now having only one child, thereby reducing the possible interaction of larger, extended families. No one can yet fully comprehend the impact that generations of only children will have on a society in which a sense of social and familial "we" (as opposed to a sense of individual "me") has traditionally been paramount.

Another dilemma remains as well. Although the possibility of an uprising is remote, Chinese workers have been warned about the dangers of emulating the Polish situation. Discussion about making China "highly democratic" by permitting popular participation in decision making on all levels of society must not supersede the "dictatorship of the proletariat," which belongs to the party. Only the coming decades can show how many in China will stay with the system and will find satisfaction and fulfillment therein.

Social constraints may also limit the overall Western influence or foreign technology that China can absorb. While hard currency obviously circumscribes what China can afford to import, the need for gradual change is also foremost in the minds of some PRC leaders. In the military sector, for example, China can make the necessary political point by demonstrating the willingness of the United States and the West to sell it advanced weaponry. In terms of actually acquiring foreign military hardware, however, China will look extensively but purchase little. It will eschew dependence on complex weapon systems that exacerbate its weaknesses rather than using its strengths. Even in the agricultural and industrial sectors, where China could adopt modern equipment and techniques with little fear of losing its independence (psychic or actual), there is still a sense that China should avoid all appearances of neocolonialism by emphasizing that its path of development must be consistent with the Chinese situation.

Sino-Soviet-American Relations

There may be some truth in the Soviets' perception that their own "window of vulnerability" will widen as China gains strength. At present, Soviet analysts perceive China as backward and needing time before presenting an objective threat to Soviet interests, but underlying Soviet fears about China remain. Thus, pacific as they may appear, China's

declared intentions of becoming a powerful and strong socialist country that is prosperous and has high levels of culture and democracy portend serious competition for the Soviet Union in Asia. No doubt some influential Soviet planners argue that the time of Soviet advantage is now, before China's Four Modernizations progress further.

Nevertheless, China, with genuine concerns for its security along the border it shares with the Soviet Union, is sensitive to the negative ramifications that could arise should the Soviets perceive that the West is underwriting China's development, especially in the military sector. Thus, while China admonishes others not to feed chocolates to the Soviet bear, no country is more careful than China not to push the Soviet Union into a corner. The PRC's proposed coalition of "antihégemonist" countries (from which Beijing has now retreated) was intended to make Moscow stop, look cautiously in all directions, and reconsider its allegedly hegemonist ways. That the PRC was deliberately vague about naming the Soviet Union as the sole or only potential hegemonist power in East Asia was more than diplomatic courtesy; at various times, the PRC also refers to the United States as a "hegemonist power."

Indications of possible changes in Sino-Soviet relations have been evident since November 1982, when, at the funeral of Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri V. Andropov, newly named general secretary of the Soviet Communist party, met with then-PRC Foreign Minister Huang Hua, the first Chinese foreign minister and the highest ranking Chinese dignitary to visit Moscow in eighteen years.²⁰ The day after the funeral, the Chinese and Soviet foreign ministers, Huang Hua and Andrei Gromyko, met for ninety minutes, the highest level meeting since their predecessors, Zhou Enlai and Alexei Kosygin, met hurriedly at the Peking airport in 1969, in a last-minute effort to defuse tensions over border questions. Reestablishment of Sino-Soviet discussions (round three of which has been concluded) suggests six themes in the ongoing Sino-Soviet dynamic.

First, on balance, the prospects of Sino-Soviet discussions serve to appease (and thereby somewhat to weaken) the domestic position of the anti-Deng hard-liners within the Chinese military while strengthening the domestic position of the Soviet moderates jockeying for position in the Soviet succession. Avenues of accommodation and discussion can placate the fears of the military establishments in both countries and hence represent a political method to address their concerns. At the same time, such political maneuvering ultimately strengthens the control of the party *ap-*

paratchik in both countries. In Mao's dictum, the "party controls the gun," and the leaders of the Communist parties in both countries are understandably eager to use the mutual relations of their countries to consolidate their domestic political positions more firmly in the immediate periods of succession and beyond.

Second, new names and new faces are always a good excuse to explore the possibilities of new relations. The death of Leonid Brezhnev on November 10, 1982 and his replacement the following day by Yuri Andropov, former head of the KGB, focused attention on leadership succession and acted as a catalyst in making previously rather rigid Sino-Soviet relations more fluid. The American interest in improving Soviet-American relations in light of the Soviet leadership change also added to the atmosphere that new possibilities existed. Indeed, the arrival of Andropov made improvement in Soviet-American relations a possibility, though the Korean airliner incident and the Soviet walk-out at the Geneva arms control talks now suggest otherwise.

Nevertheless, the assumption of the post of general secretary by Konstantin Chernenko still argues for continuity in Sino-Soviet relations. Chernenko's lackluster style and reputation as an undynamic Brezhnev *apparatchik*, combined with his already advanced age, have led Beijing not to expect any major changes in Soviet China policy. In short, the rigidity in the Sino-Soviet relationship transcends changes of leadership or disagreements on the personal level.

The death of Mikhail Suslov, previously the chief Soviet ideologue, initially suggested that the personality factor would begin to favor improved relations. Particularly in his later years, Suslov made improved Sino-Soviet relations difficult by his insistence that ideological criticism of reform in Poland apply to China and vice versa. "Suslov was absolutely unwilling to let either the Poles or the Chinese derive any increased legitimacy from reform occurring in the other's country," an American official in Moscow noted.²¹ The bitter memories of acrimonious, face-to-face debate between Suslov and Deng have had time to subside. However, the passage of time with little headway in new agreements since those events confirms that the rigidity in the Sino-Soviet relationship transcends changes of leadership or disagreements on the personal level.

Third, more normal state-to-state relations between the PRC and the USSR can increase both the opportunities for negotiation between them-

selves, and the bargaining power of each vis-à-vis the United States. While influence in the Third World may be China's strategy for the long term, a more equidistant position between the superpowers offers China advantages in the short term. To the extent that China will seek a period of peace necessary for domestic construction, it must be able to maneuver between the superpowers, changing the angle of its tilt as necessary.

Improved Sino-Soviet relations may have a salutary effect on Soviet foreign relations by enhancing the image of the Soviet Union as a power eager to find peace through negotiation. For example, an interview with Viktor G. Afanasiev, *Pravda* editor and Soviet Communist party Central Committee member, reiterating Soviet willingness to consider pulling troops back from the Sino-Soviet border was first published in Japanese sources—then pointedly confirmed by the Soviets the following day.²² This method of releasing the "news" is intended to influence Japanese opinion favorably. Similar rumors of Soviet reasonableness were aimed as much toward the March 1983 German elections (where, in retrospect, they may have had a counterproductive effect in very indirectly helping Kohl to victory) as toward showing good faith toward China.

Fourth, some very limited accommodation between the Soviet Union and China not only is in their interest (thereby increasing its probability), but also may be in the interest of the United States. To the extent that a very limited Sino-Soviet detente reduces the possibility of the United States becoming embroiled in an undesired conflict, stabilization of Sino-Soviet hostilities could further the prospects for long-term peace. The challenge for the United States is thus twofold: America must guarantee its vital interests, while not playing into the hands of either the Soviet Union or the PRC by overreacting if and when some of the tensions in Sino-Soviet relations begin to ease.

Fifth, Sino-Soviet relations can be expected to improve gradually, on diplomatic, trade, cultural exchange, and other avenues for communication that characterize normal relations between states. For example, a group of Chinese exchange students went to Moscow in the fall of 1983 after a long hiatus in that kind of interaction. Early reports also suggest that Sino-Soviet trade is slowly picking up. Still, only fully normalized Sino-Soviet party ties (as distinct from renewed limited party-to-party communications) would constitute a major policy development for both the PRC and the USSR—and cause for serious American concern. Al-

though the strident Sino-Soviet name-calling ("revisionist," etc.) and polemics have quieted, ideological differences make a near-term return to fraternal party comradeship unlikely.

Sixth, enduring areas of Sino-Soviet competition and disagreement appear to make any kind of renewed Sino-Soviet entente or alliance as remote a possibility as any formal Sino-American one. Nevertheless, the benefits that either the PRC or the Soviet Union can gain from the United States are greater than the benefits they can offer each other. Also, Sino-Soviet competition for influence in Asia and China's concern that it not be encircled by a Soviet "south-forward strategy" (characterized by Soviet thrusts through Afghanistan and around China's Pacific rim via Vietnam toward control of the Indian Ocean) argue for sustained Chinese pressure on the Soviets in both Southwest and Southeast Asia, even in the highly unlikely event that some kind of Sino-Soviet tactical accommodation emerges.

In the early 1980s, it was rumored that Beijing's strategic planners were questioning whether the relative positions of the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Third World would alter appreciably over the coming years. Beijing's approach will be to maintain a middle position between the two superpowers (expressed by some in stylized terms as leaning 70 percent toward the U.S. and 30 percent toward the USSR), while enticing cooperation from the second intermediate zone (Europe and Japan) and seeking a leadership position in the Third World.

Thus, even during the coming years, when it will most need the assistance the West can best provide, China will assiduously avoid mortgaging its future diplomatic or military leverage while accepting any offered bargains. More specifically, this suggests a China unwilling to become dependent on any single supplier or even any group of foreign arms or technology suppliers, though it may purchase antitank weapons, (e.g., improved TOW missiles) or C³I (command-control-communication-intelligence) electronics systems from the West if a favorable military credit situation develops. The exchange of military officers and the provision of U.S. technology to China announced by Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger following his September 1983 China visit fit this pattern of weapons acquisition very well.

This is not to say that Chinese policy, particularly toward the Soviet Union, will not depend to a great extent on what the United States does. On the contrary, Chinese analysts are monitoring quite closely America's

effort to build up its military strength. One can only guess what their confidential assessments are. Some Chinese analysts express private concern that the United States is maintaining a basic continuity in real military expenditures and question whether a maximum of 6 to 8 percent of GNP allocated to defense spending is adequate as a peacetime ceiling. In private conversations, some Chinese analysts put it bluntly: "If one looks at the position of the United States from 1945, the trend is quite clearly one of relative decline compared to the Soviet Union."

At the same time, China is well aware that the Soviet planners' nightmare is a quadrangular coalition of anti-Soviet forces among Western Europe, Japan, the United States, and the PRC. A new "East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" built on the resources and population of China and the technology and capital of Japan would pose a particularly grave threat to Soviet interests in East Asia. For these reasons, the PRC will continue to tread very lightly on Soviet sensibilities through this transition period, during which the PRC has little defensive capability of its own.

Although an improving Chinese agricultural, industrial, and scientific and technological infrastructure poses a long-term challenge to the Soviet Union, it is not as directly provocative as efforts at Chinese military modernization would be. As noted at the beginning of this paper, China has neither the means nor the intent to undertake the task of challenging the Soviets militarily. Theoretical Chinese cooperation with Japan in the field of defense policy could be used only tactically, if at all, since such an arrangement would be anathema to the PRC and a provocation to the Soviets.

It is true that weapon modernization and defense questions have been included as issues in domestic Chinese factional struggles; for example, Hua Guofeng tried to garner anti-Deng support through them within the PLA. Still, in terms of domestic Chinese politics, it appears very unlikely that substantial pro-Soviet sympathy or a high-level, pro-Soviet faction will develop in China. Pro-Soviet undercurrents seem more the result of anti-Deng political dissent than the result of a serious desire for rapprochement with the Soviet Union. A more accommodating line toward Moscow might emerge if it were politically expedient to repudiate China's tilt to the West or to raise the enduring issues of maintenance of the border status quo, prevention of future armed clashes, and disengagement of armed forces on both sides of the border, i.e., the items included in the April 1969 so-called Zhou-Kosygin understanding.

It is difficult to know whether the alleged Soviet perception that significant pro-Soviet sympathy still exists within the ranks of China's intelligentsia is more a result of wishful thinking or self-deception. While tens of thousands of China's scientists and technicians studied in Moscow and developed some appreciation of Soviet methods and approaches to military, economic, and agricultural matters, the freeze in Sino-Soviet relations and Moscow's abrupt withdrawal of the technicians and blueprints it had sent to help China modernize in the 1950s ruined the careers of many of these Chinese specialists. Thus, from the perspective of many in the PRC, familiarity has bred distrust. As various officials throughout China have remarked, "I know the Soviets. They once tried to re-educate me."

At least some Soviet analysts, however, hold little illusion about pro-Soviet sympathy in China. Researchers at the Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada in Moscow appeared puzzled by references to a pro-Soviet faction within China, whether in the Soviet-trained scientific community, the military, or the Politburo. "We read so often in American journals about the existence of a pro-Soviet faction in the PLA," one Institute specialist on China joked, "Do you have addresses of people that we might contact?"²³

Regional and Global Dynamics

It is customary, and currently correct, to measure the general trend of Soviet policy in East Asia in terms of Sino-Soviet-American strategic competition. However, there are certain peculiarities about the current great power alignment that suggest the possibility of a favorable correlation of forces for the Soviet Union in East Asia at the present time.

The United States, the Soviet Union's only global competitor, is pressing its traditional friends and allies in the area to share the costs of defense. The need to constitute the Indian Ocean task force from the Seventh and Mediterranean Fleets suggests that the military forces of the United States are insufficient to defend its worldwide interests. Further, the ongoing emphasis on European defense seems to illustrate that European interests take priority over Asian ones in the minds of most American planners. Doubts, most of them private, about the willingness and

ability of the United States to honor its commitments in Asia, particularly in the post-Vietnam period, remain, thereby undercutting U.S. credibility and effectiveness.

The ongoing U.S. cajoling of its allies, especially Japan, to share the defense burden in Asia underscores the changing balance of power in the region, at least in terms of outright presence. A major impetus to Soviet interest in Southeast Asia in particular had been the trend of American withdrawal, characterized by such pronouncements as the Nixon Guam doctrine. Currently offsetting the trend of U.S. withdrawal is the Reagan administration's quiet support for traditional allies and friends in the Pacific rim. Whether these efforts will be sufficient to reverse what some Asian and Soviet analysts perceive as a long-term trend remains to be seen. Still, by all indicators, President Reagan's official visits to Japan and Korea in November 1983 successfully underscored U.S. commitment to a region of vital interest to the U.S.

It is not only the opportunity for influence created by the decline in American presence which prompts Soviet attention in Southeast Asia. The power vacuum created in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam left Vietnam, China, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries to jockey for position. In some ways, despite strong anticommunist orientations, the ASEAN countries were willing to tolerate a limited (some would say a very limited) Soviet presence in the region to counter the influence of China, the traditional dominant power in the region. The ASEAN countries may also hope that the Soviet Union will be able to exercise some restraint on its Vietnamese ally.

In contrast to the decline of U.S. military presence in Asia is the rise of Soviet military strength in both Northeast and Southeast Asia. Of particular significance are the expansion of the Soviet Pacific fleet to over 500 combat ships, the hastened construction of military installations on the Japanese northern islands, and the access gained to naval and air facilities at Camranh Bay and Da Nang. These naval and air facilities endow the Soviets with 2,000 miles of forward deployment and an increased naval presence in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin. Indeed, the Soviet proclivity to engage in "gunboat" diplomacy has already been manifest by the positioning of the aircraft carrier *Minsk* within a hundred miles of the Thai naval base at Sattahip as the Thai prime minister returned from China in September 1980.

From a Soviet ideological perspective, certain evidence corroborates the notion that the forces of history are marching forward in Southeast Asia according to Marxist theory. The turning points can even be framed in dramatic terms. The British withdrawal from the region can be dated from the advances of indigenous Japanese "liberation" forces, which resulted in the fall of Singapore in the early part of the Second World War. The French watershed was the defeat at Dien Bien Phu and the signing of the Geneva Convention in 1954. The setback for American presence and prestige in the region came with the fall of Saigon in April 1975. Vietnam, with its communist government, good relations with Moscow, and poor ones with Beijing, lends ideological credence to the international claims of the Soviet Union of the ongoing march of anti-Beijing communist regimes. In this sense, Southeast Asia is one region where Moscow can fit the facts to Soviet-styled Marxist theory.

Though the Soviet Union has become directly involved in Southeast Asia only recently, the Russian/Soviet tradition and its territorial holdings have firmly established the notion of the Soviet Union as both a European and an Asian power. It may now be the case, as some argue, that the general sense of stalemate in Europe and the need to rebuild unity among the Warsaw Pact countries in the aftermath of Poland may make possible opportunities in Asia all the more attractive.

It is doubtful that a detailed Soviet masterplan or grand design exists with regard to Southeast Asia and beyond. It is much more likely, particularly in the near term, that the Soviet Union will take advantage of opportunities it can discern or create. In this perspective, Soviet policy in Southeast Asia revolves around the perception that the region is at the present time more a means to Soviet advantage than a particular end in itself. The characteristic disjunction between the senses of Russian insecurity and Russian pride in strength is particularly evident in the Soviet methods of dealing with the Pacific rim countries from Japan to Vietnam. Of course, the Soviet outlook for the region may evolve with lengthened involvement and deepened commitment to the area. At the present time, however, the Soviet Union has four objectives in Southeast Asia.

First, the most immediate Soviet interest in Southeast Asia, and in Vietnam in particular, is containment of the People's Republic of China. The possible use of Vietnam as both a political and a military counterweight to China is one of the primary attractions for Soviet planners

there. Of particular interest are the naval facilities, which offer the Soviet Union opportunity to outflank China's navy (dramatically inferior to the Soviets') and thereby also to put any potential battle in an arena where technological advantage (in contrast to manpower advantage) would be especially decisive.

Second, besides containing China, the Soviets are generally interested in strengthening their position in Asia, as well as their overall strategic position. In their most optimistic scenarios, Moscow's foreign policy planners foresee the gradual pacification of Afghanistan. Soviet presence there can then act as a wedge: the point of the thrust is directed toward the Persian Gulf, but pressure against the southern flank of NATO on the one hand and against China on the other also increases.

One example of how this pressure might work already exists. Soviet authorities evidently made clear to Pakistan (one of China's traditional allies) that appropriate cooperation might help forestall "spontaneous uprisings" among the thousands of refugees who had streamed across the border into Pakistan in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Islamabad still fears "that the Afghan refugee population in Pakistan, now numbering almost 3 million, will gradually multiply if the fighting in Afghanistan escalates."²¹

Of course, Soviet use of certain Vietnamese air and port facilities also increases the potential threat to the sealanes, for example, the Malacca straits, on which the Western industrial democracies so heavily depend. This Soviet finger on a "choke-point" of such importance to the free flow of resources, trade, and communication improves the Soviet position in the region and thereby is of great Soviet interest. To the extent that a Soviet presence in Southeast Asia facilitates naval presence and power projection in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf areas, it serves to enhance Soviet influence and interests there.

Third, there is intrinsic Soviet interest in the individual countries of Southeast Asia as well as in the region as a whole. The region is rich in natural and human resources, full of dynamism and potential. At a minimum, Soviet planners would like to deny the United States, Japan, and Western Europe access to resources, markets, and traditional political and strategic strongholds. Over the long term, Soviet planners also hope to capitalize on the enduring natural fears certain other Asian countries have of China (and of a remilitarized Japan), and thereby woo them into

an independent or neutral, if not overtly pro-Soviet, posture. In addition, the pro-communist groups of insurgents said to operate in three of the five ASEAN countries offer further possibilities for Soviet influence.

Particularly in Vietnam, Soviet opportunities have not come easily or inexpensively. Vietnam exercised a certain degree of leverage in negotiating the twenty-five year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in Moscow on November 3, 1978. Soviet access to facilities at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang was not merely repayment for help against the United States. Continuing Soviet assistance has been substantial. Soviet aid in 1977 reportedly amounted to \$500 million, with an additional \$400 million coming from the East European countries. Since the middle of 1978, Soviet assistance has amounted to perhaps as much as \$1.5 billion, with Soviet aid to Vietnam costing \$4 to \$5 million dollars a day.²⁵ As much as 30 percent of Vietnam's rice consumption may depend on Soviet imports. Still, Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea despite reported Soviet efforts at restraint demonstrates that Vietnam is not a Soviet puppet.

Fourth, besides the direct promulgation of Soviet influence and interests in Southeast Asia there is the possibility of a more subtle dimension to Soviet policy in the region. In accordance with the global interests of the Soviet Union, planners in Moscow may see the alliance with Vietnam as a new opportunity to manage the affairs of the region through proxies. Keeping these proxies beholden to and dependent upon Moscow without unduly dissipating limited Soviet resources will remain a challenge of the first order.

Specifically, Moscow must be quite certain that Vietnam not determine foreign policy for the Soviet Union. For example, Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea presented Moscow with something of a *fait accompli*, despite Soviet concerns that destabilization of the area might trigger an undesired American or Chinese response. Although there is always an element of mutual dependence inherent in an alliance, Moscow may be striving for sufficient control to influence both the stability and the instability of Southeast Asia. For this reason, the Soviet Union will continue to court ASEAN, Vietnam, and China, playing each off against the others with an eye to maintaining sufficient stability that the United States is not given cause or excuse to reenter the region in a major way. Regional instability per se presents no intrinsic advantage to Soviet planners; Moscow can be expected to act in its best interest by not pursuing instability for its own sake.

In any case, the Soviet-Vietnamese relationship is clearly a marriage of convenience; to say that there is no love lost is to underscore the obvious. It is unlikely that this situation will improve with time; in fact, familiarity may deepen the mutual suspicions that exist. Perhaps it is significant that dinner toasts between leaders of the two countries mention that while the countries are distant, their thinking is the same. In this case, geographical separation and a shared hostility to a common neighbor are more compelling than shared thinking, which can change notoriously rapidly.

Isolated after the cessation of hostilities with the United States and especially after the invasion of Kampuchea, Vietnam had little alternative to Moscow in its bid for help in rebuilding its war-torn economy and social infrastructure. The Soviet Union, desirous of a beachhead of influence in Southeast Asia and anxious for a counterweight to China, wanted access to Vietnam's ports and airfields. Equally importantly, the Soviet Union desired an agreement that could present China with the possibility of a two-front confrontation, while providing access to bases from which to project Soviet power into the Indian Ocean and beyond to the Persian Gulf.

Vietnam's isolation continues. The ASEAN countries view Vietnam's ambitions in the region with hostile suspicion, though they also remain concerned that the PRC may try to use the 18 million ethnic Chinese living in Southeast Asia as a pro-PRC, ethnic "fifth column." The United States remains cool to Vietnamese initiatives to open diplomatic ties, efforts that seem motivated as much by Vietnam's policy goal of long-term independence as by a desire to increase the bidding for Soviet assistance. It remains a very remote and distant possibility that the United States may find itself supporting an ASEAN-Vietnam coalition as a counterweight to a China-Soviet Union combination, in the extremely unlikely event that some kind of Sino-Soviet entente should develop again. However, in the foreseeable future, both Vietnam and the Soviet Union must realize the weakness of Vietnam's "America card."

Certainly the Soviets are aware that Vietnam did not wage a war of liberation only to station Soviet soldiers and sailors on its territory. It is unclear at present how much the West's denigration of Soviet awareness regarding Vietnamese pride derives from Western sour grapes ("the Soviets are more heavy-handed than the Americans ever were, and with much less money at their disposal"). In any case, the Soviets press to maximize their gains in Vietnam after extensive (and ongoing) costs. The

more Moscow invests in Vietnam, the greater the need may be to show commensurate rewards.

Sino-Vietnamese Relations

For months preceding the seventeen-day border incursion into Vietnam in February 1979, China had warned that it was preparing to "teach Vietnam a lesson." Apparently the decision to invade Vietnam arose from general unanimity among the ruling circles of the Chinese Politburo. But what were the "lessons" learned and taught in the aftermath of the Sino-Vietnamese confrontation?

There were military lessons, particularly for China. Revision appears necessary in command and control sectors of the People's Liberation Army, as well as in aspects of the PLA's general doctrines and training. All analysts agree that both China and Vietnam took heavy losses during the 1979 clash and that China's military performance was inconclusive, regardless of whether Soviet satellite reconnaissance aid to the Vietnamese or Vietnamese guerrilla tactics was the reason for Vietnam's success.

However, in the short term, China claims to have slowed Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea. In the longer term, the PRC calculated that it would gain important foreign policy credibility by its willingness to defend its interests by military force. This lesson had import for and impact on Vietnam, the ASEAN countries, and the Soviet Union. Vietnam had no guarantee that China would limit its military aspirations; the Vietnamese leadership must have worried that China would not stop short of any military victories it could win.

With Vice Chairman Deng visiting Washington just before China attacked Vietnam, the PRC also demonstrated its ability to draw on the political strength of its relationship with the United States. China, where military strategist and philosopher Sun Tzu investigated the means and ends of war long before Clausewitz did so in the West, tried very carefully to distinguish between a limited but symbolic engagement and an uncontrolled venture that would fritter away precious scarce military hardware and possibly alienate its new-found American friend.²⁶ The resilience of the Sino-American tie may not have surprised either the Soviets or the Vietnamese, but neither could they have missed its importance. Nor was it missed by the ASEAN countries or Japan.

Soviet-Japanese Relations

The firm victory and ongoing popularity of Yasuhiro Nakasone as Japan's prime minister and his concern for close ties with the United States as a "base of Japanese foreign policy" suggest that changes in Soviet-Japanese relations are unlikely to come from the top. The causes for the dogged inflexibility of Soviet policy toward Japan remain a mystery (if a welcome one for most Western observers), though Soviet occupation of the Kuriles, the northern islands claimed by Japan, is now normally cited as a major stumbling block between more normal Soviet-Japanese relations. In light of Nakasone's efforts to increase Japan's defense spending and his talk of helping the U.S. Seventh Fleet close off narrow passages in the Sea of Japan, Soviet concern and rhetoric about a rearmed and potentially remilitarized Japan have grown ever more strident.²⁷

The military presence of Japan, the Soviet Union's historic competitor in Asia, is at present, however, conspicuously absent. Although Japan maintains a strong economic presence in Southeast Asia, the bitter legacy of Japanese domination during the Second World War (as symbolized by the memories of Japan's "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere") has left questions about overt Japanese regional leadership. Nor could Japan hope to oppose directly the Soviet military buildup in the region without raising the even more problematic question of a possible resurgence of Japanese militarism (with its domestic and constitutional ramifications as well).

Despite—or perhaps because of—the signing of the Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty, some in Japan remain uneasy about the shift away from Japan's earlier omnidirectional orientation. Limited sectors of Japan's diplomatic and business community want to explore and exploit Siberia's natural resources; the Soviet market has its own appeal in Japan, though without the allure of the Chinese market. However, the Soviet destruction of a Korean civilian 747 jetliner could only sober those in Japan interested in expanding ties with the Soviet Union. Also, Hu Yaobang's November 1983 state visit to Japan successfully demonstrated the PRC's interest in mutually beneficial Sino-Japanese relations.

In contrast to the strong approach the Soviet Union is taking on Japanese defense issues, the Soviets may attempt to use changing Sino-Soviet relations to their advantage in East Asia in three ways. First, to the extent that a diminution of Sino-Soviet tensions permits the Soviets to freeze or

reduce (even symbolically) their military forces in East Asia, they may try to incorporate those reductions into the "peace offensive" aimed at those who favor neutralism in Japan. Second, although the downplaying of Japanese atrocities in the Second World War in Japanese textbooks did not spark Soviet outrage as it did throughout Asia, the Soviet Union and China are likely willing to work in conjunction to prevent Japan from ever becoming, for whatever reason, a military power again. Third, the Soviet Union may try to use its improving relations with China as an East Asian precedent for improving relations with Japan.

PRC-Taiwan-Soviet Relations

From the PRC's perspective, unification with Taiwan is necessary both to complete the Chinese revolution and to safeguard China's national security. The PRC recognizes Taiwan's strategic value and would find it impossible to differentiate a perceived compromise of territorial integrity from one of national security. Also, Taiwan's industrial and economic infrastructure and its technical and managerial skills could provide both a useful conduit to the rest of the world and a needed impetus for economic development.

Beijing's desire for unification with Taiwan and security against the Soviet threat appear to be mutually exclusive if pursued solely by military means. Inasmuch as China will probably remain unable to mobilize on two major fronts in the near future, maintaining military security on the 10-Soviet border and mounting a large-scale naval blockade or amphibious attack on Taiwan could not be conducted simultaneously. Even in the unlikely case that the United States were to abandon military assistance to Taiwan, it is doubtful that the PRC would attempt a direct, forcible solution to the Taiwan question.

Despite periodic rumors of a possible Soviet-Taiwan entente, the possibilities for such remain extremely limited.²⁸ The general scenario is as follows: Taiwan, desperate for survival, becomes susceptible to increasing Soviet overtures and agrees to exchange access to Taiwan's excellent harbors at Keelung, Taichung, or Kaohsiung for Soviet military support against potential foreign aggression. Soviet-Taiwan ties could also materialize in other ways: on the military side, in the form of arms sales, joint military coordination, or training and advisory functions; on the nonmilitary side, in the form of nonmilitary visits, both official and unofficial,

personnel exchanges, trade or aid programs, or cultural exchanges. (The formula for Soviet-Taiwan relations would not be in terms of Soviet military support against aggression from "third countries" unless Taiwan were taking the unprecedented step of declaring independence.)

Despite the appearance of the Taiwan flag in several Soviet publications from 1965–1967, reference by the Soviet news agency TASS to Taiwan as a country in 1970, the publicity surrounding the 1978 visit to Taiwan of Soviet journalist (and alleged KGB operative) Victor Louis, and the alleged advantages of a Soviet-Taiwan connection, the Taiwan Soviet card is hardly credible for several reasons. However desperate the circumstances, it is highly unlikely that a leader in Taiwan could argue for forming a Churchillian pact with the devil, even in the name of self-preservation. Taiwan would lose its ideological *raison d'être* if it aligned itself with the Soviet Union. A Soviet-Taiwan alignment would provoke strong PRC and U.S. responses and galvanize mutual U.S.-PRC resolve. As discomforting as a PRC envelopment of an unwilling Taiwan would be to Japan, Korea, and the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a Soviet presence in Taiwan would be even less welcome.

In any case, the Soviet Union has emphasized a hands-off position toward Taiwan. In his March 1982 speech at Tashkent, Brezhnev stated, "We have never supported and we do not now support in any form the so-called concept of two Chinas and have fully recognized and continue to support the PRC's sovereignty over Taiwan island."²⁹ (Note that Brezhnev referred to Taiwan only as an island.) Brezhnev's comments on Taiwan were broadcast in Mandarin by Moscow Radio Peace and Progress to the PRC on the same day. The Soviet position serves to minimize friction with the PRC over Taiwan, while maximizing the attention paid to alleged deficiencies in U.S. policy toward Taiwan. Moscow's post-Brezhnev leadership has given no evidence of wanting to change this line of policy.

Perhaps most significantly, Taiwan itself recognizes that any relationship with the very large and militarily powerful Soviet Union could lead only to uncomfortably inequitable and unbalanced relations. The lessons Chiang Kai-Shek learned during his stay in the Soviet Union, and about which he wrote extensively, are fundamental warnings against any relationship which entangles Taiwan with the Soviet Union.

In any case, despite leadership changes on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and in the Soviet Union, ongoing psycho-political warfare, and

strong rhetorical objections, the long-term trend seems to be a continuation of the present *de facto* division between the PRC and Taiwan. Only radical and unilateral changes in PRC or Taiwan defense capabilities and policies, or in U.S.-PRC-Taiwan relations, would alter this trend. In the foreseeable future, the Soviet Union does not appear to be a direct factor in either of these two equations.

Conclusion: The Longer Term

Just as Sino-American relations will undergo changes during the 1980s, so the potential for China's enhanced regional strength and position may increase its options vis-à-vis the Soviet Union.

In the coming years, the Soviet Union and the PRC will seek a *modus vivendi* to stabilize and regulate their differences. This does not necessarily mean a reversal of the Sino-Soviet split, which appears to be permanent, for all the reasons it occurred in the first place. In this regard, two points are important. First is that the Sino-Soviet dispute is not a single controversy, but a series of disputes which range over a spectrum of concerns including ideology and party relations, national security and territorial interests, historical and cultural factors, and personalities of the two countries' leaderships. To the extent that the Sino-Soviet dispute is multifaceted, it is not amenable to any single "quick fix."

Even more fundamental is a second point. Preoccupation with the Sino-Soviet schism often leads to the assumption that, given the appropriate conditions, history could be turned backward and the Soviet Union and the PRC could begin again with the supposedly fraternal relations they claimed in the early 1950s. In fact, as this chapter suggests at its outset, the PRC's early and deliberate foreign policy of "leaning to one side"—to the point of seeking the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Soviet Union—was itself a historically exceptional event.

Past relations demonstrated to both the Soviets and the Chinese that they had less in common than they supposed, and that ongoing developments were eroding even the common concern they shared about the United States. It is important for the West to realize that, beginning at least as early as the 1956 Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, the history of Sino-Soviet relations indicates that the "monolithic communism" the West feared in the 1950s has been a

shattered myth for nearly thirty years. Limited Sino-Soviet accommodation, tacit or explicit, is still possible. However, if it occurs, it will be motivated more by realpolitik than by ideology.

A final point important to the United States is that in the 1980s, changes in Sino-Soviet-American relations arising from China's emerging independence of strength and position will occur only gradually. By the turn of the century and toward the middle of the twenty-first century, however, the overall power relationship between the Soviet Union and the PRC, and thereby the triangular and pentagonal relationships involving the United States, Japan, and Western Europe, will likely change significantly. Indeed, if strengthened Third World countries (individually, if not collectively) come to represent a fundamental change for the international system—as China suspects they will—the prospects for Sino-Soviet competition will increase accordingly, as will the possibilities for altered configurations of international power.

NOTES

1. Adam B. Ulam, "The World Outside," in *After Brezhnev: Sources of Soviet Conduct in the 1980s*, ed. Robert F. Byrnes (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), p. 393.

2. "On Questions of Party History," adopted by the Sixth Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP on June 27, 1981, text in *Beijing Review*, July 13, 1981, p. 34.

3. Ibid.

4. Hu Yaobang, speech celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Communist party of China, July 1, 1981, text in *Beijing Review*, July 13, 1981, p. 24.

5. See, for example, David Zweig, "Opposition to Change in Rural China: The System of Responsibility in People's Communes," *Asian Survey* 23 (July 1983): 879-900.

6. Author's private conversation with Sir John Addis, former H.B.M. Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, February 1979.

7. "On Questions of Party History," p. 26.

8. Even the periodic public attention paid to Deng, e.g., the current campaign to read the *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, does not contradict his general effort to remain an *eminence grise* or to facilitate the next leadership transition.

9. "On Questions of Party History," pp. 20 and 29.

10. Communiqué of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP (adopted December 22, 1978). See *Peking Review*, December 29, 1978, pp. 6-10. Cited in James A. Kilpatrick, "Agricultural Development Prospects," *Contemporary China*, Fall 1979, pp. 59-60.

11. Hu Yaobang, "Create a New Situation in All Fields of Socialist Moderniza-

tion—Report to the Twelfth National Congress of the Communist Party of China," *U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) China Report*, September 8, 1982, p. K 8.

12. *China's Population Policies and Population Data: Review and Update*, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Prepared for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., 1981, p. 1.

13. See, for example, "Abortion and Birth Control in Canton, China," *New York Times*, November 19, 1981.

14. "China's Oil Production Rose 3.3 Percent in Nine Months," *Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly*, October 10, 1983, p. 6.

15. See *Asian Wall Street Journal*, August 15, 1983, p. 6.

16. The concerns in this area are manifold. See, for example, "China Again Tries to End Secret Deals, Bribery Found at Every Level of Society," *Wall Street Journal*, September 4, 1981; "China to Relieve Unemployment, Gives Private Sector More Leeway," *New York Times*, November 24, 1981.

17. Hu Yaobang, "Create a New Situation," p. K 17.

18. Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 57 (Summer 1979): 975-986.

19. See, for example, Thomas W. Robinson, "Chinese Military Modernization in the 1980s," *China Quarterly* (June 1982), pp. 231-233.

20. "Chinese, Soviet Officials Hold Highest-Level Talks Since 1969," *Washington Post*, November 17, 1982.

21. Author's private conversation with high American official in Moscow, July 1983.

22. "U.S. Frets as Soviet Plays Its Own China Card," *New York Times*, November 18, 1982.

23. Author's interview at the Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada, Moscow, July 1983.

24. Selig S. Harrison, "A Breakthrough in Afghanistan?" *Foreign Policy*, 51 (Summer 1983): 5.

25. "Vietnam: Paying the Price at Home," *Newsweek*, May 23, 1983, p. 36; see also *Asian Survey* 23 (September 1983): 1052-61.

26. When Deng Xiaoping visited Washington, he explained this point to a not unsympathetic President Carter. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), pp. 409-10.

27. *Izvestiia*, September 26, 1983, p. 5, and *Izvestiia*, September 27, 1983, p. 4. See also "From Moscow, Some Rude Language for Japan," Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, *Washington Post*, August 31, 1983.

28. See John W. Garver, "Taiwan's Russian Option: Image and Reality," *Survey* (July 1978), and "Taiwan's Options," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* (May/June 1979).

29. *USSR Report*, National Affairs, *FBIS*, March 25, 1982, p. R 7.

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