

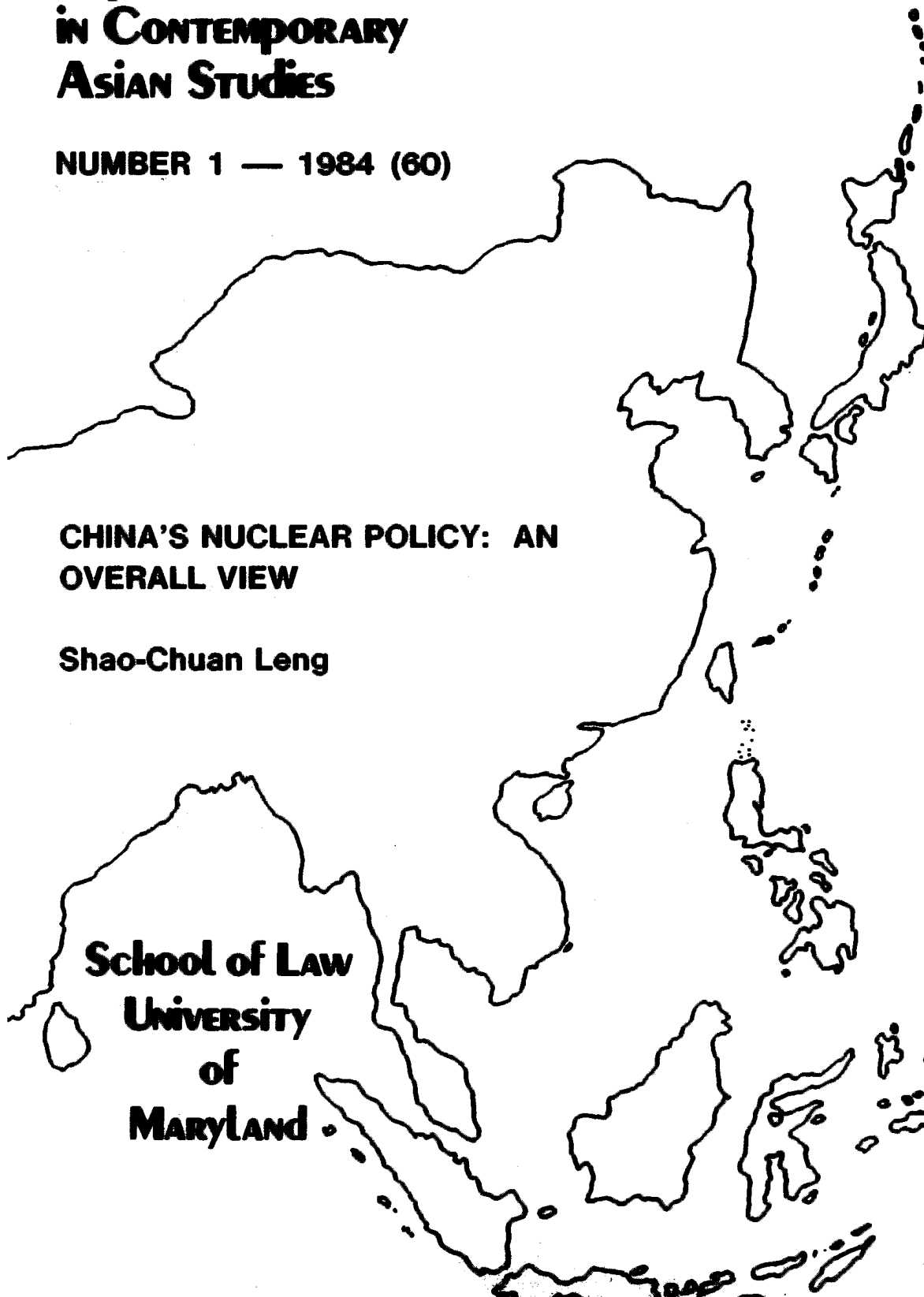
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**CHINA'S NUCLEAR POLICY: AN  
OVERALL VIEW**

**Shao-Chuan Leng**

**School of LAW  
UNIVERSITY  
of  
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## CHINA'S NUCLEAR POLICY: AN OVERALL VIEW\*

*Shao-chuan Leng\*\**

To date, the People's Republic of China still suffers from a distinct military inferiority in relation to the superpowers. Nevertheless, its modest but growing nuclear-missile capabilities do constitute an important factor in global strategic balance and arms control efforts.

This paper proposes to analyze China's nuclear policy and its international implications. It will begin with an examination of China's nuclear capability and strategic doctrine and then will follow with a discussion of the Chinese position toward arms control and disarmament (ACD), particularly Beijing's recent role in ACD negotiations.

### DEVELOPMENT OF A NUCLEAR DETERRENT

It is a well-known fact that the PRC under Mao Zedong made an all-out effort to acquire nuclear weapons for security and prestige reasons, despite his frequent denouncement of the atomic bomb as a mere "paper tiger." A recent press report reveals how deeply the Chinese pride was hurt by the "Soviet betrayal" in 1959 concerning the sharing of atomic secrets. According to an article in the *Jiefangjun Bao* (Liberation Army Daily), China gave its first atomic bomb the code name of "596" to remember the "shameful" June of 1959 when the "perfidious" Russians tore up a 1957 agreement to aid China in making the A-bomb and withdraw from China their specialists including experts in atomic energy.<sup>1</sup> Prompted by the Soviet

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\* This is a revision of the following two papers: one presented to the 77th Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 1981, and the other presented to the 24th Annual Meeting of the American Association for Chinese Studies, November 1982.

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1. "Where the Mushroom Clouds Rise," *Jiefangjun Bao* (Liberation Army Daily), July 28, 1981, p. 1. For information on the Soviet withdrawal, see, among others, relevant sections of Raymond L. Garthoff, ed., *Sino-Soviet Military Relations*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1966; Donald S. Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962. A Chinese account may be found in "Statement of the Spokesman of the Chinese Government," *Peking Review*, Vol. 6, No. 33 (August 16, 1963), pp. 7-15.

action, the Chinese went ahead to research and detonate their first atomic bomb successfully on October 16, 1964, all on their own effort. "Our ancient nation which has long been looked down upon by some foreigners," said a commentary of the *Liberation Army Daily*, "has finally accomplished something that our forefathers were unable to do and that some foreigners thought only they themselves could accomplish."<sup>2</sup>

China's first nuclear device on October 14, 1964 was a 20 kiloton (KT) atomic bomb. On June 17, 1967 the PRC successfully tested a 3 megaton (MT) range hydrogen bomb. Thus China showed "a first-rate research, development, and production capability" by making the transition from fission to fusion in less than three years.<sup>3</sup> A Chinese author took pride in pointing out that it took 7, 5, and 8 years respectively for the United States, England, and France to achieve the same transition.<sup>4</sup> Since 1967 more than 20 nuclear tests have been conducted by the PRC, ranging from tactical weapons to hydrogen bombs.<sup>5</sup> The latest blast, amounting to between 200 KT and 1 MT, was held on October 17, 1980.<sup>6</sup> All told, China now has stockpiles of several hundred fission and fusion weapons.

Since April 1970 the PRC has launched twelve space satellites.<sup>7</sup> It sent into orbit a cluster of three satellites by a single rocket on September 20, 1981.<sup>8</sup> China's twelfth satellite, launched on September 4, 1982, was viewed as an indication that the PRC has probably perfected both solid and liquid fuel technology for rocket engines.<sup>9</sup> According to Zhang Jun, Chinese Minister of Astronautics Industry, China is developing a new type of three-stage liquid-fuelled rocket

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2. "The Road to Heights," *Ibid.* See also David Lan, "Bomb," AFP, Hong Kong, July 28 1981, in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, China* (hereinafter cited as FBIS), July 29, 1981, pp. C1-C2.

3. Harlan C. Jencks, "The Chinese Military-Industrial Complex and Defense Modernization," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 20, No. 10 (October 1980), p. 966. For details on China's nuclear programme to 1969, see Jonathon D. Pollack, "Chinese Attitudes Toward Nuclear Weapons, 1964-1969," *China Quarterly*, No. 50 (April-June 1972), pp. 244-71.

4. Liang Yuan, *He Wuqi He He Zhanlue* (Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Strategy), Hong Kong: Jisi Tushou, 1973, p. 41.

5. For China's nuclear tests, see Appendix. Events up until the early 1970s may be found in one of many articles by Alice Langley Hsieh. See her "China's Nuclear-Missile Programme: Regional or Intercontinental," *China Quarterly*, No. 45, (January-March 1971), pp. 85-91.

6. *FBIS*, October 17, 1980, p. L1.

7. For early developments, see Hsieh, "Regional," *supra* note 5, pp. 91-94.

8. UPI, Beijing, September 22, 1981.

9. See Michael Weisskopf, "China Planning Major Satellite Launch," *Washington Post*, February 17, 1983, p. A32.

to launch a geo-stationary satellite and a big near-earth orbital satellite in the days to come.<sup>10</sup>

In terms of its strategic missiles deployed, China possesses about 50 medium-range ballistic missiles, MRBM's (CSS-1), with a range of 1,100 km, 65-85 intermediate-range ballistic missiles, IRBM's (CSS-2), with a range of 2,700 to 5,600 km, 4 multi-stage intercontinental ballistic missiles, ICBM's (CSS-3), with a limited range of 6,000-7,000 km, and 4 full-range ICBM's (CSS-4), with a range of 13,000 km.<sup>11</sup> The successful test of a full-range ICBM in May 1980 demonstrated the impressive progress of the Chinese nuclear-missile program and the potential of Chinese missiles to reach any site in the Soviet Union as well as the West Coast of the United States.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, China has some 90 TU-16 medium strategic bombers with a radius of action up to 3,000 km. It also test-fired in October 1982 its first submarine-launched missile from a nuclear-powered submarine, making the PRC only the fifth country to have successfully developed an SLBM.<sup>13</sup>

On balance, the Chinese nuclear force has been improving steadily but its value as a viable deterrent is still arguable. Although widely dispersed, China's missiles currently operational are mainly liquid-fuelled, thus vulnerable to a Soviet first strike. In order to reduce the vulnerability of its nuclear deterrent, Beijing can be expected to continue an effort to develop a mobile land-based, seaborne or airborne strategic force.

### CHINA'S CHANGING STRATEGIC DOCTRINE

The official doctrine that has shaped the PRC's military strategy and tactics in the last three decades is Mao's doctrine of "people's

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10. Zhu Ling, "Space Age Technology Enters New Phase," *China Daily*, July 17, 1983, p. 1.

11. *The Military Balance, 1981-1982*, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981, pp. 72-73; also *The Military Balance, 1982-1983*, pp. 79-80.

12. AP, Beijing, May 18, 1980; "Pentagon Sees Chinese Missile as a Threat to Soviet," *New York Times*, May 22, 1980, p. A6; Leo Y.Y. Liu, "The Modernization of the Chinese Military," *Current History*, Vol. 79, No. 458 (September 1980), p. 38; Dinah Lee, "Newcomer in the ICBM Club," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 108, No. 25 (June 13, 1980), pp. 41-42. Early events are to be found among others in Hsieh, "Regional," *supra* note 5, pp. 91, 94-97.

13. *New York Times*, October 17, 1982, p. 15; XINHUA, Beijing, October 16, 1982. A recent review of naval modernization in China can be found in Richard Breeze, "The Wild Blue Yonder," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 116, No. 24 (June 11, 1982), pp. 21-26.

war."<sup>14</sup> With a special emphasis on political indoctrination and mobilization of the masses, it seeks to compensate for China's inferiority in weaponry by maximum use of manpower and revolutionary tactics. As a defense plan against a technologically superior enemy, it advocates a protracted war waged by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) with support of some 100 million militia forces to overwhelm the invader.

Thus far, Beijing has not made public any well-defined nuclear strategy but appears to have adopted the concept of minimum deterrence.<sup>15</sup> To counteract the Soviet threat and pressure in recent years,

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14. Some previous studies on the subject are: Stuart R. Schram, "The Military Deviation of Mao Tse-tung," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1964), pp. 49-56; Samuel B. Griffith, "The Glorious Military Thought of Comrade Mao Tse-tung," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 42 (July 1964), pp. 669-74; Benjamin Schwartz, "On the 'Originality' of Mao Tse-tung," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Oct. 1955), pp. 67-76; Raymond L. Garthoff, "Unconventional Warfare in Communist Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (July 1962), pp. 566-575; Benjamin Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952, pp. 189-204; Stuart R. Schram, "The Military Principles of Mao Tse-tung," in his *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969, pp. 265-293; William W. Whitson, *The Chinese High Command*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973, pp. 458-497; William W. Whitson, ed., *The Military and Political Power in China in the 1970's*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972, pp. 269-386; Jaques Guillermex, "The Soldier," in Dick Wilson, ed., *Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 117-143; Scott A. Boorman, *The Protracted Game: A Wei-ch'i Interpretation of Maoist Revolutionary Strategy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1969, pp. 52-153; Harold Hinton, "Political Aspects of Military Power and Policy in Communist China," in Harry L. Coles, ed., *Total War and Cold War*, Columbus: Ohio University Press, 1959, pp. 266-292; Howard L. Boorman and Scott A. Boorman, "Chinese Communist Insurgent Warfare, 1935-49," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (June 1966), pp. 171-195; Edward L. Katzenbach, Jr. and Gene Z. Hanrahan, "The Revolutionary Strategy of Mao Tse-tung," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 70, No. 3 (Sep. 1955), pp. 321-340. Relevant sections of the following works may also be consulted: Dick Wilson, *The People's Emperor*, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1980; Samuel B. Griffith, *The Chinese People's Liberation Army*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1969; Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, London: Oxford University Press, 1965; Stuart Schram, *Mao Tse-tung*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967; F.F. Liu, *A Military History of Modern China 1924-49*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956; Ying-mao Kau, *The People's Liberation Army and China's Nation Building*, White Plains, N.Y.: International Arts and Science Press, 1973; Thomas W. Robinson, "Chinese Military Modernization in the 1980's," *China Quarterly*, No. 90 (June 1982), pp. 231-52; King C. Chen, *China's War Against Vietnam, 1979: A Military Analysis*, Baltimore, MD: University of Maryland School of Law [Occasional Papers/Reprints Series in Contemporary Asian Studies, No. 5, 1983 (58)]. Mao's words on the subject are to be found in *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967).

15. Harry Gelber, *Nuclear Weapons and Chinese Policy*, Adelphi Papers, no. 99, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1973, p. 19; Lawrence Freedman,

the Chinese have pursued the policy of continuing the development of a nuclear deterrent on the one hand, and emphasizing the defensive strategy of "people's war" on the other. They may expect that the announced determination to fight protracted defensive war, along with China's prudent external posture and pledge not to use the bomb first, will minimize the danger of a preventive attack. In fact, Beijing's establishment of an American connection and its current efforts to form an international united front against "hegemonism" are also part of its overall strategy to improve national security and to gain time for further nuclear development.<sup>16</sup>

In the context of China's drive toward modernization, there seems to be a consensus among the Chinese elite on the need to modernize China's armed forces. Nevertheless, a debate is continuing about the pace, nature, and means of this modernization. Illustrative is the fact that despite the recent reorganization of leadership structure the plan to restore military ranks is yet to be implemented. Still, the move is under way in the PRC to upgrade its national defense.<sup>17</sup>

While continuing to pay lip service to the concept of "people's war," Chinese leaders now call for the modernization of strategy and weapons to meet the changing nature of warfare. "In the present stage in which science and technology is developing by leaps and bounds," Defense Minister Xu Xiangqian wrote in 1978, "we shall be the subject to attack if we do not master all the weapons as well as the struggle tactics and methods which the enemy already possesses or may possess."<sup>18</sup> In an article written in 1981, the late Deputy

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*The West and Modernization of China*, Chatham House Papers no. 1, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1979, p. 8.

16. For a discussion of current Chinese efforts, see Jonathan D. Pollack, "Chinese Global Strategy and Soviet Power," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (January-February 1981), pp. 54-69.

17. Recent works on military modernization in China include among others: Kau, *supra* note 14; Robinson, *supra* note 14; Angus M. Fraser, "Military Modernization in China," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 28, No. 5 (Sep.-Dec. 1979), pp. 34-49; David L. Shambaugh, "China's Quest for Military Modernization," *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 6, No. 5 (May-June 1979), pp. 295-309; Paul H.B. Godwin, "China's Defense Dilemma: The Modernization Crisis of 1976 and 1977," *Contemporary China*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Fall 1978), pp. 63-85; Francis J. Romance, "Modernization of China's Armed Forces," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (March 1980), pp. 298-310; Edward N. Luttwak, "Problems of Military Modernization for Mainland China," *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 7 (July 1978), pp. 53-65, also appeared in *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (May 1979), pp. 3-16.

18. Xu Xiangqian, "Heighten Vigilance and Prepare for War," *Hongqi* (Red Flag), No. 8 (1978), p. 48.

Chief of Staff of the PLA Yang Yong described Mao Zedong's military thought as still the guideline for army building and warfare today. It must be studied, however, with a scientific attitude of "seeking truth from facts" and "with the realities of our army and the demands of modern warfare in mind." Only by scientifically drawing upon both Chinese and foreign experiences and by continuously seeking progress and improvement, he said, can the Chinese army be sure of success in its modernization and in any future war against aggression.<sup>19</sup>

In a commentary dated January 15, 1983, the *Liberation Army Daily* described the strategic policy of the PLA as one of "active defense." Since military campaigns against Vietnam, the commentary said, the PLA has "streamlined its training procedures, focusing on organization of different services to fight in coordination under modern conditions." It also "has paid particular attention to foreign armies and modern wars, examined the requirement of actual combat, and outlined tactics to defeat an army with superior equipment."<sup>20</sup>

The PLA's move in the direction of modernization and of revising its strategy and tactics was underscored by recent military exercises. In 1981 a large-scale coordinated combat exercise took place in North China (near Zhangjiakou), involving ground and air forces.<sup>21</sup> In 1982 a joint PLA maneuver was conducted in Ningxia, involving the assumed use of tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>22</sup>

As a part of the overall picture, the Chinese appear to be starting the reassessment of their strategic thinking in the nuclear field. Beijing's successful test of a full-range ICBM in May 1980, for instance, has been viewed by some observers as a sign that the Chinese strategy is moving from a minimum deterrence against one superpower to a more balanced two-pronged deterrence policy.<sup>23</sup> To be

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19. Yang Yong, "Uphold the Scientific Attitude of Seeking Truth From Facts—Writing for the Commemoration of the 54th PLA Founding Anniversary," *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily), August 1, 1981, p. 2.

20. XINHUA, Beijing, January 15, 1983.

21. *New York Times*, September 27, 1981, p. 8; FBIS, September 28, 1981, pp. K1-K3.

22. *New York Times*, July 14, 1982, p. 3.

23. See Gerald Segal, "China's Strategic Posture and the Great Power Triangle," *Pacific Affairs* (Winter 1980-81), pp. 682-697. In this regard, see also "China's Strategic Position," *Beijing Review*, Vol. 24, No. 10 (March 9, 1981), p. 3; Cheah Cheng Hye, "Bridging the Strategic Gap," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 108, No. 18 (April 25, 1980), pp. 30, 32; "Gambling on a Quick Missile Deterrent," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 109, No. 40 (September 26, 1980), pp. 55-56; Michael Weisskopf, "China's



sure, the shift may not be so dramatic or imminent, for the Chinese have continued to picture the ICBM test as an important contribution to the cause of "international struggle against hegemonism."<sup>24</sup> However, the development of Chinese ICBM force will undoubtedly enable Beijing to adopt a more flexible and independent strategic posture relative to Washington's policy. In this regard, there is a striking similarity between Chinese and French positions. Comparable to France in nuclear capability, the PRC is showing increasing interest in the complexities of nuclear strategy in general and the French decision to manufacture the neutron bomb and the role of tactical nuclear weapons in particular.<sup>25</sup> Commenting on the French situation, the *Beijing Review* says:

France has spent some 53,600 million U.S. dollars since 1960 to develop nuclear arms. Still, compared to the nuclear arsenals of the superpowers, France's is rather insignificant and it is this that has led French military experts to redesign their national defense to current realities. Here the research and manufacture of the neutron bomb figures prominently.<sup>26</sup>

The implications of Chinese current interest in tactical nuclear weapons, the simulated use of which was reported in the 1982 Ningxia military exercise, suggest that notwithstanding its "no-first-use" pledge, the PRC may conceivably contemplate the compelled use of tactical nuclear weapons against superior invading forces in the name of self-defense.

### CHINESE POLICY TOWARD ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

The PRC's perception of security interest and the international balance of force has conditioned its stand on ACD issues. For years the Chinese have consistently advocated total nuclear disarmament and opposed the Superpowers' efforts to limited arms control.<sup>27</sup> The

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Defense Chief Calls for Emphasis on Nuclear Weapons," *Washington Post*, March 4, 1983, p. A17; Michael Weisskopf, "China Stresses Defensive Aim of Nuclear Force," *Washington Post*, July 28, 1983, p. A5.

24. "Warmly Hail the Successful Launching of Carrier Rockets," *Jiefangjun Bao*, May 22, 1980, p. 1.

25. "Nuclear Weapons and Defense Policy," *The China Quarterly*, No. 84 (December 1980), pp. 829-830.

26. "The French Neutron Bomb," *Beijing Review*, Vol. 23, No. 33 (August 18, 1980), p. 8.

27. Shao-chuan Leng, "Arms Control and Disarmament in Chinese Global Policy,"

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, for example, have been denounced by Beijing as a "sham." According to Chinese spokesmen, the SALT agreements have actually permitted a fierce nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union and particularly enabled the latter to speed up the development of new and even more sophisticated strategic weapons.<sup>28</sup>

China has been and remains opposed to the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT), the proposed comprehensive test ban treaty, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Time and again, the Chinese have argued that these treaties are deceptive traps designed by the superpowers to disarm non-nuclear powers and that neither China nor other "peace-loving" countries should accept their restrictions.<sup>29</sup> Chinese development of nuclear weapons has been justified as necessary for self-defense and the elimination of the U.S.-Soviet nuclear duopoly and blackmail. In every announcement of Chinese nuclear testing since 1964, the PRC has repeated the pledge that "it will never at any time or under any circumstances be the first to use nuclear weapons" and has challenged the other nuclear powers, especially the superpowers, to do the same.<sup>30</sup>

The PRC has also refused to join the other superpower-supported agreements such as the Outer Space Treaty, the Sea-Bed Treaties, the Convention Banning Biological Warfare, and the Convention on Environmental Warfare, even though it has no quarrel with the basic ideas of these treaties and has often found its negative stand contrary to the wishes of the majority in the UN General Assembly.<sup>31</sup> By the same token, Beijing has objected to the convening of a world disarmament conference repeatedly proposed by the Soviet Union unless certain conditions are met. First, the prerequisites for the conference are a no-first-use pledge by all nuclear countries, particularly by the United States and the Soviet Union, and the withdrawal by the superpowers of all their armed forces, including their nuclear missile forces, from abroad. Second, the aim of the

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in *China in the Global Community*, James C. Hsiung and Samuel S. Kim, eds., New York: Praeger, 1980, pp. 165-172.

28. "SALT Agreement," *Beijing Review*, Vol. 22, No. 22 (June 1, 1979), pp. 22-23; Si Mada, "Waltz in Vienna," *Renmin Ribao*, June 24, 1979, p. 6.

29. "China at the United Nations," *Peking Review*, Vol. 14, No. 51 (December 17, 1971), pp. 19-20; Susan Warren, *China's Voice in the United Nations*, New York: World Winds Press, 1975, pp. 75-88.

30. For the Chinese government's statement announcing the first nuclear detonation on October 16, 1964, see *Break the Nuclear Monopoly, Eliminate Nuclear Weapons* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 1-5.

31. Leng, *supra* note 27, pp. 169, 179.

conference should be the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons.<sup>32</sup> According to the report of a UN Ad Hoc Committee in 1982, China and France continued to hold the view that the convening of any world disarmament conference "would serve no practical purpose in the present international political climate."<sup>33</sup>

Despite China's opposition to the superpower-sponsored arms control measures, it has been positive in approaching some other ACD matters. The PRC has signed the treaty of Tlateloco to honor the Latin American nuclear-free zone. It is on record in favor of the establishment of nuclear-free zones or peace zones in Asia, the Pacific, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Central Europe, and Africa.<sup>34</sup> In spite of their public opposition to the NPT, the Chinese have tacitly followed a nonproliferation policy. There is no evidence that China has aided any country in nuclear development.<sup>35</sup> Recent reports about China's "nuclear trade" with South Africa and Pakistan's "planned nuclear tests on Chinese territory" have been strongly denied by Beijing and Islamabad respectively.<sup>36</sup> All things considered, the PRC's interests cannot conceivably be served by nuclear proliferation, especially if Taiwan and South Korea acquire nuclear weapons.

In an apparent attempt to woo Third World countries, Beijing has shown in recent years more flexibility in its ACD posture. This was evidenced by the Chinese participation in the Tenth Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament in 1978 at the initiative of the nonaligned countries. The Special Session revitalized as the deliberative body on ACD issues the Disarmament Commission to be composed of all UN members. It also replaced the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) with an enlarged Committee on Disarmament (CD) as the new negotiating body for global disarmament, composed of all five nuclear states and 35 non-nuclear states.<sup>37</sup>

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32. *Speech by Chiao Kuan-hua at the Plenary Meeting of the 28th Session of the UN General Assembly*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1973, p. 24; "Speech by Huang Hua, Chairman of Chinese Delegation," *Peking Review*, Vol. 20, No. 41 (October 7, 1977), p. 39; "Varying Degrees of Support for World Disarmament Conference Reported," *UN Monthly Chronicle*, October 1978, p. 31.

33. "Disarmament Efforts Continue," *UN Chronicle*, October 1982, p. 78.

34. Leng, *supra* note 27, pp. 170-174.

35. *SIPRI Yearbook-1981* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1981), p. 302.

36. FBIS, July 29, 1981, p. C1; and FBIS, December 10, 1980, p. F4.

37. Samuel S. Kim, "Chinese Global Policy: An Assessment," in Hsiung and Kim, *supra* note 27, pp. 235-236.

To the UN Disarmament Commission, the Chinese delegation put forward in May 1979 a "comprehensive programme of disarmament." One novel feature of the Chinese plan was the call for superpowers to begin immediately reducing and destroying their nuclear armaments by stages:

When substantial progress has been made in the destruction of their nuclear weapons, thus closing the huge gap between their nuclear arsenals and those of the other nuclear states to the satisfaction of the majority of states, the other nuclear states shall then join them in negotiation for the total destruction of nuclear weapons.

Departing from China's past policy, the present plan also attached equal importance to the reduction of conventional armaments and asked the Soviet Union and the United States to be the first to greatly reduce their conventional arsenals. Again only "when substantial progress has been made in this regard, the other militarily significant states shall join them in reducing conventional armaments according to reasonable ratios."

A number of other points presented in the Chinese programme were obviously designed to appeal to the Third World. The following may be cited as examples. The actual process of disarmament "should benefit the economic and social development of states." No denuclearization agreement should deprive non-nuclear states of "their right to use nuclear energy and develop their nuclear industries for peaceful purposes." The organization and procedures of the disarmament machinery "should be free from superpower manipulation and control and should fully reflect the demands and wishes of all states in the world." The role of the United Nations in disarmament was given a special endorsement by the Chinese plan:

The UN General Assembly shall be kept informed of progress in all bilateral and multilateral disarmament negotiations. All parties to disarmament negotiations should earnestly consider and respect the recommendations and calls made by the General Assembly.

Finally, the Chinese plan included the total prohibition and destruction of all chemical and biological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and a reiteration of Beijing's previous proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones, the withdrawal of all foreign troops, the dismantling of foreign military bases, and the undertaking by all nuclear powers, particularly the Soviet Union and the United States, not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against

non-nuclear states.<sup>38</sup>

In June 1982 Huang Hua, China's Foreign Minister and Chairman of the Chinese Delegation, expounded the PRC position on the disarmament issue in a speech before the Second Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament. He blamed the superpowers for the lack of any real progress in disarmament since 1978, pointing out that they "are not all sincere about disarmament and have instead stepped up arms expansion." He then reiterated several points China had made before, i.e., the superpowers must reduce their arms first, conventional and nuclear disarmament should be carried out simultaneously, all states should participate in disarmament negotiations on an equal footing, etc.<sup>39</sup>

Four measures were outlined in the disarmament proposal Huang and his delegation presented to the UN General Assembly. First, all nuclear states should reach an agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons. Pending this, they should undertake unconditionally not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries or nuclear-free zones and not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other. Second, the Soviet Union and the United States should stop testing, improving, or manufacturing nuclear weapons and *reduce by 50 percent* all types of their nuclear weapons and means of delivery. *Thereafter, China would join all other nuclear states* in undertaking to stop the development and production of nuclear weapons and to reduce their respective nuclear arsenals according to agreed levels and procedures. Third, to move towards conventional disarmament at the same time, all countries should undertake not to use conventional forces for armed intervention or aggression and must withdraw troops from foreign soil immediately. The superpowers again should take the lead in *substantially* reducing their conventional forces. Only after this would China and other major powers join in conventional disarmament. Fourth, chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction should be prohibited.<sup>40</sup>

In spite of repeating many of China's old themes, the 1982 proposal nonetheless contained something new. For the first time the PRC committed itself to engage in actual nuclear arms control arrangements after a 50 percent nuclear arms reduction by the Soviet Union and the United States. China also proposed an international

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38. Text of the Chinese proposed plan in *Beijing Review*, Vol. 22, No. 22 (June 1, 1979), pp. 17-18.

39. Text of Huang's speech *China and the World* (Beijing: Beijing Review, 1982). Vol. 2, pp. 5-78.

40. For the text, see *Beijing Review*, Vol. 25, No. 28 (July 12, 1982), p. 11.

verification group be established to monitor the implementation of disarmament measures and to report to the UN General Assembly.<sup>41</sup>

There have been other manifestations in recent years of Beijing's increasingly active role in ACD matters. Early in 1980 the PRC participated for the first time, as a regular member, in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. Chinese delegates there have continued to expound China's well-known stand on a number of ACD issues and to blame the superpowers, especially the Soviet Union, for intensifying international tensions and creating obstacles for disarmament negotiations.<sup>42</sup> Since 1980 the PRC has also joined the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space. As said in its national paper, "China is ready to play an active role in this international organization, and, together with other countries, will strive to make a continuing contribution to the exploration and peaceful use of outer space."<sup>43</sup> In both the Committee on Disarmament and the Legal Sub-committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space, Chinese representatives have stressed the need for adopting measures to prevent the militarization of outer space, including elaborating international law on the issue.<sup>44</sup>

Even more significantly, the PRC lately is making a noticeable shift from its strong objection to any inspection of Chinese nuclear facilities by foreign powers or international groups like the International Atomic Energy Agency. According to both Chinese and American sources, good progress has been made between Beijing and Washington over a cooperation agreement in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.<sup>45</sup> Under such an agreement inspection would be required by American law to ensure that nuclear material and high technology exported to China from the U.S. is used solely for civilian purposes. Furthermore, the PRC is currently in the process of entering negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency to discuss China's entry into this UN affiliated body whose purpose is to develop peaceful use of the atom and to prevent its diversion into military channels. Along with this, Beijing is also reportedly prepared to take other steps to comply with international norms in

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41. *Ibid.*

42. UN Doc. CD/PV. 105 (February 12, 1981), pp. 17-20; XINHUA, Geneva, August 4, 1981.

43. UN Doc. A/CONF. 101/AB/13 (June 16, 1981), p. 3.

44. *The China Quarterly*, No. 90 (June 1982), p. 358.

45. XINHUA, Washington, July 14, 1983; Don Oberdorfer, "Arms Sale of \$250 Million Set for Taiwan," *The Washington Post*, July 16, 1983, p. A15.

the nuclear area.<sup>46</sup>

While continuing to abstain from voting on UN resolutions for stopping nuclear tests,<sup>47</sup> the PRC has been showing an increasing interest in the worldwide anti-nuclear, peace movement. Speaking before the UN General Assembly in 1982, Huang Hua said,

In recent years the people of Europe, Japan, the United States and elsewhere have launched a mass movement against the nuclear arms race of the two superpowers and for preventing nuclear war. We fully understand and sympathize with their concern for peace and for the prevention of war.<sup>48</sup>

Acknowledging the presence of divergent and complex forces behind the peace and anti-nuclear movement, a *Hongqi* (Red Flag) author nevertheless contended in a 1983 article that "on the whole, the mass movement reflects the people's just desire for peace and resentment against war, with their main efforts directed at the United States and the Soviet Union who are responsible for intensifying the arms race."<sup>49</sup>

### CONCLUSION

As noted in the preceding pages, China's nuclear policy regarding both weapon development and arms control has consistently aimed at the improvement of its unfavorable position in the existing military balance. Its current strategic imperative remains to be the deterrence of the Soviet Union through individual and joint international efforts.

To some observers, Beijing's disarmament plan makes good sense in the context of its nuclear position.<sup>50</sup> To others, certain Chinese ACD propositions appear self-righteous and contradictory. Cited as an example for criticism is Beijing's contention that Chinese nuclear weapons work toward peace, while those of the superpowers, particularly the Soviet Union, work toward war.<sup>51</sup>

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46. Michael Weisskopf, "China Stresses Defensive in Nuclear Buildup," *Ibid.*, July 28, 1983, p. A5; Oberdorfer, *supra* note 45.

47. See, for example, *SIPRI Yearbook 1981*, pp. 394-395; *SIPRI Yearbook 1982*, p. 465.

48. *China and the World*, Vol. 2, p. 7.

49. Si Chu, "International Struggle Over Disarmament and China's Stand," *Hongqi*, No. 4 (1983), p. 38.

50. Amos Yoder, "Chinese Policies Toward Limiting Nuclear Weapons," *The Stanley Foundation Occasional Paper*, No. 22 (March 1980), p. 25.

51. Kim, *supra* note 37, p. 230.

Be that as it may, the present trend indicates that the Chinese are showing a greater interest in ACD matters while continuing the drive for a credible nuclear deterrent. Given its growing strategic capability and increasing interactions with the Third World countries, before too long the PRC may conceivably ease or abandon its opposition to the superpower-sponsored but UN-supported arms control measures and become actively as well as seriously engaged in major international ACD negotiations. After all, confronted with economic and technological constraints, the Chinese should know that their long-term interest lies not in a costly and dangerous arms race but in staged and realistic denuclearization leading to an eventual sharp reduction if not elimination of nuclear weapons by all powers. Much, however, still depends upon the superpowers to lead the way in showing bold statesmanship in the global politics of disarmaments.



APPENDIX  
CHINA'S NUCLEAR TESTS

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Yield</u>	<u>Delivery System</u>	<u>Test Site</u>	<u>Warhead</u>
1.	10/16/64	20KT	Ground (tower)	Lop Nor	Fission device
2.	5/14/65	40KT	Air (TU-4)	Lop Nor	Fission
3.	5/09/66	300KT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Fission
4.	10/27/66	30KT	Missile (SS-4 IRBM)	Shwangchentze to Lop Nor	Fission
5.	12/28/66	500KT	Ground (tower)	Lop Nor	Fission
6.	6/17/67	3MT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Thermonuclear warhead
7.	12/24/67	25KT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	N.A.
8.	12/27/68	3MT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Thermonuclear warhead
9.	9/22/69	25KT	Underground	Lop Nor	Fission device
10.	9/29/69	3MT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Thermonuclear warhead
11.	10/14/70	3MT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Thermonuclear warhead
12.	11/18/71	20KT	Ground (tower)	Lop Nor	Tactical warhead
13.	1/07/72	Under 20KT	Ground (tower)	Lop Nor	Tactical warhead
14.	3/18/72	200KT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Atomic warhead
15.	6/27/73	2MT+	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Thermonuclear warhead
16.	6/17/74	500MT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Tactical weapon
17.	10/27/75	200KT	Underground	Lop Nor	Fission
18.	1/23/76	200KT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	N.A.
19.	9/26/76	200KT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Tactical weapon
20.	10/17/76	200KT	Underground	Lop Nor	Tactical weapon
21.	11/17/76	4MT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Thermonuclear warhead
22.	9/17/77	20KT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Fission
23.	3/15/78	20KT	Ground (tower)	Lop Nor	Fission
24.	10/14/78	50KT	Underground	Lop Nor	Fission
25.	12/14/78	20KT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Tactical weapon
26.	10/16/80	1MT	Air (TU-16)	Lop Nor	Thermonuclear warhead

Sources: Ray Bonds (ed.), *The Chinese War Machine* (New York: Crescent, 1979), p. 174;  
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