

**A Chinese Exploration of Sino-Soviet Relations  
since the Death of Stalin, 1953-1989**

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## Abbreviations

Chinese personal names, place names, and sources are given in pinyin in the text and notes, with one exception, Manchuria. Over the years the Chinese rendered Mao's name in different ways in their English-language publications. I have standardized to Mao Zedong in this work.

The following abbreviations are used in the dissertation:

BR	Beijing Review
CC	Central Committee
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CDSP	Current Digest of Soviet Press
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
FEA	Far Eastern Affairs
HQ	Hongqi
JFJB	Jie Fang Jun Bao
NCNA	New China News Agency (Xinghua)
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic Of China
RMRB	Renmin Ribao
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SF	Swiss Francs
TASS	Telegraphic Agency of the Soviet Union
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

### ABSTRACT

The dramatic phenomenon which appeared soon after Stalin's death in March 1953 in the Communist world was the strengthening of friendship and co-operation between the two largest socialist countries--the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The most important reason was that the Soviet leaders wanted to make use of the Chinese Communist Party to maintain their leading position in the socialist camp and the world Communist movement. For the Chinese, the main reason was economic rather than political. They wanted to obtain as much aid as possible from the Soviet side, while implementing their first five-year-plan (1953-1957).

Only two and a half months after the death of Stalin, an important agreement was signed in Moscow for assistance to China in the constructions and reconstruction of 141 industrial sites. By the end of 1953, China's share of the USSR's total external trade turnover amounted to 20 per cent, while the Soviet Union's share of China's trade was 55.6 per cent.

From mid-1958 the Chinese method of building socialism began to take shape: the grouping of agricultural co-operatives into large People's Communes combining small-scale industry with agriculture, the Great Leap Forward. In the eyes of the Soviet leaders this was a great challenge not only to orthodox Marxist thinking, but also to the leading position of the CPSU.

What is more, it was in 1958 that it first became apparent that China and the Soviet Union shared different views on a number of foreign policy issues which brought the conflict to a state of high tension. First it was the bombing of Jinmen (Quemoy) and Mazu (Matsu). Then came the Sino-Indian border clash. On 9 September, in spite of a Chinese request, the Soviet Foreign Ministry issued a "neutral" statement, providing the first public indication that relations were deteriorating rapidly. Khrushchev's China policy appeared to have two elements:

- 1) To increase the scale of Soviet economic aid to China, thus reassuring it of friendship while increasing Soviet penetration of its economy.

- 2) To oust Mao Zedong and anti-Soviet elements from the Chinese leadership.

The period from 1960 to 1969 was characterised by the Sino-Soviet "cold war", beginning with polemics in ideology and expanding to economic,

political, and military confrontation.

Until the end of 1962 both sides refrained from attacking each other directly. The Chinese directed their attacks against "revisionism" in general and the Yugoslavs in particular; the Russians directed their attacks against "dogmatism" in general and the Albanians in particular. The first major ideological confrontation took place at the Third Congress of the Romanian Worker's Party in Bucharest from 20-25 June 1960. Then on 16 July the Soviet government informed the Chinese government of its decision to withdraw all Soviet technicians working in China. This unilateral decision, which aroused greater resentment in China than any other action, struck a crushing blow at China's economy at a time when the country was suffering from the failure of the Great Leap and a series of natural disasters. The Chinese government replied with charges of revisionism. But as the economic links between the two countries deteriorated, the Chinese leaders eventually published their well-known nine comments, from 15 August 1963 to 14 July 1964, strongly criticizing both Soviet internal and external policies.

Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated after Khrushchev's fall in October 1964. There were at least two events contributing to this. One was a quarrel about taking "unity of action" to aid North Vietnam, suggested by the Soviet leaders. The other was a dispute about holding an international conference of all Communist parties in 1965. Party relations were broken, although no-one at the time thought that this break could continue for the next 23 years.

1966-1969 witnessed the high-tide of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in China, and this put the PRC in full confrontation with the USSR for two decades. There is no doubt that the struggle against "Soviet revisionism" which dominated Mao's mind in his later years was one of his main motives for starting the Revolution. Liu Shaoqi whom he regarded as China's Khrushchev and the representative of the revisionist line inside the Chinese Party, had to be denounced. Smashing revisionists at home meant smashing them abroad and therefore the necessity of ending the few remaining contacts between the Russians and their last Chinese informants.

Simultaneously, the first frontier confrontations took place. The boundary question between the PRC and the USSR is but has occupied an important position in the evolution of Sino-Soviet relations. However, it

only led to fighting when relations between the two countries deteriorated for other reasons. Armed clashes occurred on 2 and 15 March 1969, on the Island in the Wusulijiang (River Ussuri) called Zhen Bao, just a few weeks before the Ninth Congress of the CCP. Mao concluded that the USSR was behaving like a young imperialist power on the offensive and found ample evidence in the behaviour of Brezhnev.

The Soviet Union's policy towards China in the 1970s seemed to want to knock together an "Asian collective security system", aimed at isolating China; to build up its armed forces in the Far East to put pressure on China and Japan in order to compete with the United States in the Pacific Ocean; to use the "Cuba of Asia", Vietnam, as its agent, to sieze the whole of Indochina and dominate Southeast Asia, edging the United States out of the continent. The USSR's invasion of Afghanistan seemed to be bent on controlling that country, but also on furthering its long-term strategic objective of expanding its power in South Asia and the Middle East.

The Chinese response was inevitably hostile, to try to: a) reduce or eliminate the threat of a "two front war" involving China with more than one major enemy; b) more generally deflect any political and military pressure against the PRC by seeking to prevent "encirclement" by the PRC's enemies; c) form the broadest possible international united front against hegemonism; d) gain stable, diversified foreign trade partners and sources of advanced technology for the PRC, thereby enabling China to modernize its economy. Under Mao's guidance the theory of the Three Worlds was put into practice. China established diplomatic relations with many capitalist countries; and in the late 1970s and early 1980s there was a limited Chinese-American alliance against the Soviet Union.

Mao's death and Deng Xiaoping's succession led to a fundamental change in China's internal economic policy and its accompanying ideology, and gradually also to a change in its attitude to the Soviet Union. With Gorbachev's succession in the Soviet Union in 1985 there were corresponding changes, making an eventual rapprochement possible. The evolution of Soviet policy toward China began on 24 March 1982 when Brezhnev made his speech in Tashkent, developed through 28 July 1986 when Gorbachev made his speech in Vladivostok, and culminated in May 1989 when Gorbachev came to Beijing to have the first Sino-Soviet summit. The process of normalization of Sino-Soviet relations was complex and full of difficulties.

China identified the three major obstacles as both a barrier to positive change and as a genuine test.

The year 1988 saw a breakthrough in eliminating the three obstacles as the Soviet Union promised to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan and reduce its forces along the Sino-Soviet frontier and in Mongolia. The Chinese Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, visited Moscow in early December 1988, accelerating the process by narrowing the differences on the remaining topic -- the Kampuchean issue -- and reaching agreement in principle to a Sino-Soviet summit.

The moment when Deng Xiaoping shook hands with Gorbachev on 16 May marked the normalization between the two largest socialist countries and the two biggest Communist parties. Deng summed up the summit in simple words -- end the past and open up the future -- but the momentous occasion was over-shadowed by mounting turmoil in Beijing. The long row was over, but events since have shown that ideological differences could recur, even if in a different form.

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"Qian Che Zhi Jian"

(The cart ahead is a mirror)

Chinese idiom

I

Introduction

When the Chinese Communists came to power in 1949, after a long bloody armed struggle with Jiang Jieshe of the Guomindang, who was supported by the U.S. Administration, and simultaneously ideological clashes with the Komintern, which was supported by the Soviet Communists, Stalin was suspicious the the People's Republic of China would become another Yugoslavia, and that Mao Zedung would become another Tito, a result the Americans sincerely hoped for at the time. Since then developments in Sino-Soviet relations have become one of the hottest topics for specialists in international relations and politics. There is an enormous literature published in the West. But due to the long-standing antagonism between China and the USSR it has been very difficult for Chinese scholars to do research on the subject. For many years Soviet studies was one of the most sensitive areas and was not one about which it was possible to speak and write freely. Therefore, as one of the first Chinese scholars doing research on this subject, I am obliged, first of all, to say something about developments of in China since 1949 when the regime was established.

### 1.1 The Nature of Soviet Studies in China

Russian and Soviet studies in China have a long history because of geographical, economic and political factors. As early as the 17th century in the Qing Dynasty, a delegation was sent by the emperor Qian Long to Russia and Siberia. Not long after, a book was written by one of the delegates, describing what he had seen in Russia and Siberia.<sup>1</sup> That was the first book written by a Chinese on Russia.

The October Revolution in 1917 brought a chance to give to Russian studies in China a first high tide. The period saw a nationwide discussion on the Russian revolution. Hundreds of books on Russian politics, foreign policy, economics and literature were translated into Chinese. Large numbers of research papers were published in various journals and newspapers. What is more, hundreds and hundreds of young people went to Russia in order to find the means which would save China from poverty and backwardness. In my article "The Russian October Revolution and the Chinese 4 May Movement", I have traced the historical background for the founding of the Chinese Communist Party and the great influence of the October Revolution on the Chinese revolution.<sup>2</sup>

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Soviet studies developed in a new direction. But, as with other social sciences, Soviet studies in China have developed in a very tortuous way since the beginning of the 1950s.

In the early 1950s, the Chinese people followed the call issued by the Party to start intensive study of the Soviet experience in building socialism. In order to meet the demand, the complete works of Lenin and Stalin were translated into Chinese and published in a very short time. Between 1949 and 1952 alone, more than 3,000 books from the Soviet Union

were translated and published, which amounted to 12 million copies. Many translations were produced having the purpose of introducing Soviet theory and practice in various fields. At the same time, great efforts were made throughout the whole nation to set up specialized schools for teaching Russian and other East European languages. But Soviet studies in China in that period, from an academic point of view, were not profound and systematic. They had three features:

1) There were no specialized institutions of Soviet studies in the country. Some research was done within executive departments of the government, mainly aimed at teaching practical know-how for the construction of the new China.

2) The main aim of Soviet studies was to introduce Soviet experience to China and spread general knowledge about the Soviet Union among the Chinese people. This approach was very elementary and one-sided. In other words, it affirmed everything done in the USSR. There were both internal and external reasons for this. Internally, many people, especially leaders of the CCP, regarded the Soviet model of socialism as an ideal one.<sup>3</sup> Externally, the capitalist world, with the USA at its head, displayed a rather hostile policy towards China.<sup>4</sup> China had no alternative but to take the Soviet Union as its instructor.

3) However, the Chinese people began to know the Soviet Union better in these circumstances. Some students were trained to be serious specialists on Soviet affairs. All that helped to lay down the basic foundations for the further development of Soviet studies in China.

The period from the mid 1960s to the late 1970s was a very complex period in the history of Soviet studies in China with its own characteristic features. . It is common knowledge that there were great changes taking

place in Sino-Soviet relations at the time. In face of the new situation, the first Institute specializing in Soviet studies was set up in Beijing in 1963. But regrettably Soviet studies, like other academic disciplines, met a serious setback during the Cultural Revolution. Three points ought to be borne in mind.

1) The basis for Soviet studies during this period in China was not academic but dogmatic. The Soviet Union was criticized in an 'unrealistic way. The reason was that China itself was then dominated by 'leftist' thinking.

2) Under these circumstances many researchers still tried to write a few good papers, which promoted Soviet studies in China. Nevertheless, these articles exposed and criticized the Soviet policies of 'hegemonism' and 'expansionism.'

3) During the period a research force was developed and maintained which was a combination of old, middle-aged and young scholars.

This was the foundation on which from 1979 there could be a rapid and intensive development of Soviet studies in China. For the past 10 years, Soviet specialists in China have been more active than ever. Their activities can be seen in the following developments:

1) More institutes for Soviet studies have been set up. Apart from existing institutions in executive departments of the government, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and some universities and provincial academies of social sciences have also founded specialized institutions. In all there are now about 100 in China with more than 2,000 scholars engaged in Soviet and East European studies. In September 1982, China's National Association for Soviet and East European Studies (CNASEES) was founded in Shanghai, and the first national conference was held at the same time. More

than 300 scholars, with more than 200 papers, attended the conference. CNASEES set up a secretariat in charge of daily activities based in the Institute in Beijing. In October 1984, 120 members of the Council of the CNASEES gathered in Chendu to discuss how to promote Soviet studies in China further.

2) Periodicals concerned with Soviet and East European affairs have increased to more than 30. Quite a few books, pamphlets, yearbooks and books translated from foreign languages have been published in recent years.

3) Great efforts have been made to improve library collections. In May 1984, on the initiative of CNASEES, 60 people from 40 libraries held a meeting in Harbin which set up a network for exchanging information and books among libraries.

4) Academic exchanges between scholars of China and of foreign countries have been increasing. In the past few years, Chinese scholars and institutions have established academic links with the United States, Britain, West Germany, Canada, Australia, Japan, the Soviet Union itself and East European countries.

5) Research projects have been broadened and the quality of research has been improved. Many new institutions have shifted from doing mainly translation to actual research activities.

But problems remain. These can be summarized as follows:

- 1) There are budget problems, especially for local institutions.
- 2) There is a shortage of young people in the field of Soviet studies.
- 3) Great efforts still have to be made to improve library facilities.
- 4) It is very difficult to have academic books published in time.

5) Certain areas, such as relations with the USSR remain sensitive, and objectivity is difficult.

## 1.2 The Chinese Attitude to Russia and the Soviet Union

Sino-Soviet relations can be looked at from two main angles: the state; and the party. As far as Sino-Russian, late Sino-Soviet relations are concerned, the great proportion by far has fallen in the imperial stage of the two countries, during the respective rules of the Qing (1644-1912) and Romanov (1613-1917) dynasties. For more than three centuries, despite quarrels and occasional border clashes, there was no full scale war between the two countries. Similarly, they have not warred against each other during more than half a century of Communist rule in Soviet Russia and of warlord, Jiang, and then Communist rule in China.

As for the parties' relations, they can be traced to the early and the mid 1920s. In the mid 1920s, Soviet policy towards China was dominated by fear of a possible British-Japanese alliance which would strangle the Chinese revolution then in progress and, worse still, threaten the security of the Soviet Union. Stalin's purpose therefore was not to foment Communist revolution in China, which he thought, in any case, had little chance of success, but to build up a strong "anti-imperialist" China which would serve as a Soviet ally against a British-Japanese axis. The vehicle chosen for Stalin's China policy was the Guomindang. To strengthen the Guomindang, Stalin, via the Comintern, ordered the Chinese Communists to merge with it and to subordinate their own social and political aspirations temporarily to those of the Kuomintang.

Then came the 1927 disaster. Jiang Jieshe (Chiang Kai-shek) annihilated the Chinese Communist Party in Shanghai on 12 April 1927, and thus dealt a

disastrous blow to Stalin's China policy and an almost fatal blow to the Chinese Communists. Stalin, as Zagoria observed, refusing to believe that the Guomindang could not be utilized as a vehicle for Soviet policy in spite of its policies toward the Chinese Communists, and increasingly bound up in his struggle against Trotsky in which he could ill afford to concede his mistakes, pursued his policy of unity with the Kuomintang. The Chinese Communists went underground. Remnants of the Party were rescued by Mao Zedong, who led them to the hills where they remained for many years until, in the mid 1930s, after bloody fighting with Jiang they made the Long March to the north to lay the foundations for a base from which to seize power.<sup>5</sup> From 1927 on, as George Kennan has suggested, Moscow had in the Chinese Communists "an ally but not a satellite."<sup>6</sup> Stalin made the same mistake again in the second half of the 1940s, after victory in the Second World War, when the Chinese Communists were fighting with Jiang for control of China. He underrated the potential for revolution; he did not believe that the Chinese Communists were a match for Jiang Jieshi's excellently equipped army of many million men, backed by the US while the Soviet Union was unable to offer its help. That was why Stalin had originally disagreed with any policy that led to war. He later admitted his mistake when he had talks with Liu Shaoqi, the head of the CC CCP delegation, in July 1949. Shi Zhe described this in his article entitled "I Accompanied Chairman Mao": "During the second talk, Stalin asked Liu Shaoqi: 'Have we been much of a hindrance to you?' Liu Shaoqi said 'no'. But Stalin observed seriously: 'We must have been, for we are not too well versed in Chinese affairs.'"<sup>7</sup>

Later when Mao Zedong came to Moscow in December 1949, he said to Stalin, "I have been beaten up and pushed around for a long time, and had no one to



complain to...". Stalin intervened by saying, "Winners are not judged or censured. that is a universal fact."<sup>9</sup>

A brief review of this early experience with Russia and the Soviet Union contributes to an understating of the later Sino-Soviet conflict in several respects. First of all, it makes plain why Mao was determined to "maintain much greater independence from Moscow."<sup>9</sup> Second, it explains why the Chinese Communists believed that the Russians were repeating from the late 1950s "the very same error they had committed in China in the late 1920s and 1930s--sacrificing local Communist parties to Soviet interests."<sup>10</sup> Third, the sorry Russian record in China had clearly made the Chinese leaders, especially Mao, much more reluctant to compromise with a partner possessing "little comprehension of the revolutionary process in underdeveloped countries."<sup>11</sup> Finally, the early experience planted a seed for ideological dispute in the coming years.

### 1.3 Alliance, Rivalry and Ideology

This paper is primarily a review of relations between the two largest socialist countries in the world, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, from the early 1950s, when Khrushchev came to power and the Soviet and the Chinese governments concluded what appeared to an amicable alliance, through the remarkable changes, up to the May 1989, when Gorbachev went to Beijing to the summit meeting with Chinese leaders and established normalization.

The reason for choosing the period from 1953-1989 is because, after Stalin's death on 5 March 1953, an old page in the history of the international communist movement was turned and replaced by a new one,

especially as regards the relations between the CPSU and the CCP.

The evolution of Sino-Soviet relations since the early 1950s can be divided into four stages. From early the 1950s to 1959 was the first stage, in which China entered an alliance with the Soviet Union to fight against interference and encirclement by the United States; the period from 1960 to 1969 can be viewed as the second stage when the Sino-Soviet "cold war" took place; the third stage was from 1970 to 1979, when China was "striking with both fists" to meet the threat from the two superpowers but taking the Soviet Union as the more dangerous enemy; from 1980 to May 1989 came the fourth stage in which the two countries took steps towards normalization of their relations.

The demise of a united international communist movement profoundly transformed the revolutionary challenges to capitalism in both the Third World and the capitalist countries themselves. What did socialist revolution mean when the conflict between the two most prominent examples of "existing socialism" loomed larger than their conflict with US imperialism? The split even had profound implications for the political economy of all the socialist countries. The radical political and economic transformations occurring today throughout the socialist world could not have been launched without polycentric communism. It is difficult to conceive of what the world would be like today if there had been no Sino-Soviet split.

How did such a complete turn of events in the socialist world come about? What had changed in the communist relationship? What impact did it have on the West? What were the roots of the conflict? Up to now, there have been at least three schools of thought on these questions. They are, roughly speaking, Chinese, Soviet and Western.

The Chinese version can be found in an article published in Renmin Ribao on 6 September 1963.<sup>12</sup> This article tried to answer the question how the differences had arisen between the leaders of the CPSU and of the CCP. "A whole series of differences of principle" first of all appeared at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 when Khrushchev denounced Stalin. Secondly, Khrushchev put forward the theory of "peaceful transition" which was incompatible with the principles of the October Revolution. He did this without any prior consultation with the fraternal parties. Thirdly, the Soviet leadership developed a line of "Soviet-US cooperation for the settlement of world problems"<sup>13</sup> and distorted Lenin's correct principle of peaceful co-existence between countries with different social systems. Fourthly, Soviet leaders "put forward unreasonable demands designed to bring China under Soviet military control"<sup>14</sup> and "levelled many virulent attacks against the domestic and foreign policies of the Chinese Communist Party."<sup>15</sup> They took economic sanctions and colluded with Indian reactionaries to put pressure on China. Fifthly, the Soviet leadership split the international communist movement by openly attacking fraternal parties. The Chinese Communist Party could not keep silent about all these errors.

As for the Soviet version, its most typical expression is in the book written by O.B. Borisov and B.T. Kolosov.<sup>16</sup> They trace the roots of the Sino-Soviet dispute to the following:

1) The personality cult of Mao enabled him to destroy the basically healthy Chinese Communist Party and put forward an extreme ethnic-based policy for China which inevitably resulted in the policy of anti-Sovietism.

2) The Mao group opposed the Soviet Union in carrying out its policy of peaceful co-existence with imperialist countries, especially with the

United States. From 1957 Mao tried to force the USSR to take a more bellicose position in dealing with international affairs, which almost resulted in nuclear confrontation with the United States during the Taiwan Straits crisis and the Sino-Indian border conflict. This was the basic reason for the Soviet Union's adopting a hostile attitude towards China.

3) The Mao group was ungrateful for Soviet aid and Soviet efforts to promote China's interests in the international arena. The result was that the CCP decided to be independent from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in building socialism.

4) The Chinese leadership violated the principle that should govern relations among socialist countries. They persisted in having open polemics and leaking confidential materials which were important for the party and the country. They refused to take coordinated steps to harmonize their foreign policy with the Soviet Union's.

5) The anti-Soviet attitude cultivated by the Mao group was increasingly strengthened and reached its culmination during the cultural revolution and the Sino-Soviet border clashes. The anti-Soviet policy of the CCP was to describe the USSR as a reactionary revisionist country which colluded with US imperialism opposing the revolutionary national liberation movement. By doing so the CCP tried to split the international communist movement.

From the West's point of view, the roots of the Sino-Soviet rift were the following:<sup>17</sup>

1) The CCP established an Asiatic form of Marxism--Mao Zedong thought, which troubled Mao's relations with the Soviet leadership. From 1949 the Chinese Communists persisted in claiming that Mao had discovered a model to be followed in other colonial and semi-colonial countries. The Chinese explicitly claimed that Mao's theories on revolution were independently

arrived at, while the Russians consistently endeavored to show his complete dependence on Stalin.

2) There was a great difference in the revolutionary experience of the Soviet and Chinese Communist parties. The Russian Bolsheviks came to power almost overnight without any experience in guerrilla warfare and believed that revolutionary opportunities would arise during a time of national crisis, in which the ruling classes would have become so weakened that they would topple almost of their own weight. The Chinese, by contrast, came to power after a struggle lasting more than two decades; their revolutionary experience was almost entirely based on protracted guerrilla warfare, and they believed that the way to take power was through arduous armed struggle over an extended period of time.

3) Differences in the political environment of the USSR and the PRC gave rise to further divergence of outlook. The separation of the island of Taiwan, for instance, threatened the very legitimacy of the Chinese Communist revolution and stood in the way of its final consolidation. There was no Soviet parallel to this phenomenon. As regards the relations with the United States, the Chinese feared that their Russian allies would strive to reach a bargain with the US that would sacrifice Chinese interests, because only the Russians could negotiate with the US at the time.

4) The different economic situations and policies of the two countries contributed to the origins of the conflict.

5) There were different military policies as well.

6) There were also separate revolutionary interests between the two countries.

Generally speaking this is a reasonable assessment. But one should not

ignore the special values and characteristics in the relations between countries ruled by communist parties. Their relationship is established on a basis totally different from that of the capitalist countries. They are expected to replace national interests by the demands of unanimity of ideology, and share the responsibility of proletarian internationalism -- that is, support the international communist movement, national liberation movements and the fight against imperialism. The Sino-Soviet dispute, not only in the eyes of some other socialist countries but at least theoretically in the eyes of the leaders in Beijing and Moscow, was temporary. The root of the conflict was regarded not as the conflict of national interests, but as the result of wrong policies carried out by certain leaders at the time.<sup>10</sup>

Given the priority of putting ideology first, criticism of wrong policies and of certain leaders became a critical task for Communists. This criticism in China was gradually developed into the struggle against "modern revisionism" which became the core of the theory of class struggle and resulted in fundamental changes in Sino-Soviet relations. This dissertation, therefore, puts particular emphasis on the internal and external ideological factors affecting the changing relations between China and the Soviet Union.

After the 20th Congress of the CPSU in February 1956, Mao Zedong viewed the changes in the international communist movement positively. The criticism of Stalin and the re-thinking of the Soviet model for building socialism gave him much inspiration for his own "new thinking" which can be summed up as follows:

- 1) Now that society had been transformed from an old stage to a new one, the class struggle had ended. People could use peaceful methods to

protect the productive forces instead of using the method of class struggle.

2) Criticism of Stalin had helped to destroy mysticism. Everybody could speak openly. This was real liberation. The fight now was for freedom and equality which had been regarded as the slogan only for the bourgeoisie.<sup>19</sup>

3) Let a hundred flowers bloom and let a hundred schools of thought contend. Mao also agreed with the analysis made by the 8th Congress of the CCP about the main contradiction in China, that is the contradiction between advanced productive relations and backward productive forces.

Unfortunately this "new thinking" was short-lived. The Hungarian incident and the anti-rightist movement inside China alarmed Mao. And he began to reassess the internal and external situation.

Externally, as the Sino-Soviet dispute developed, Mao began to believe that "revisionism" had appeared in the leadership of the Soviet Union. He said at a Party meeting that "...revisionism came and put pressure on us. Our attention was diverted to opposing Khrushchev. From the second half of 1958 he wanted to blockade the Chinese coastline."<sup>20</sup> In July 1959 at the Lushan conference, Mao suggested printing three foreign reports in which Khrushchev criticized the People's Commune.

In January 1960, at the working conference of the Central Committee of the CCP held in Shanghai, Mao circulated the pamphlet "How the Foreign Bourgeoisie Look at the Sino-Soviet Dispute" and said that it was necessary for China to express its viewpoint openly. In April, in the same spirit, three important articles including the one entitled "Long Live Leninism" were published throughout China.

Mao still placed hope in a change of Khrushchev's attitude before<sup>21</sup>

his conclusion about "Soviet revisionism" was firmly entrenched in October 1961 when 22nd Congress of the CPSU adopted its new programme. Things took a turn for the worse as relations between the two countries deteriorated. In September 1963 the first public comment on the open letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU, "The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves," published in Renmin Ribao said that 22nd Congress of the CPSU "marked the systematisation of the revisionism which the leadership of the CPSU has developed step by step from the 20th Congress onward."<sup>22</sup> This was obviously the conclusion that Mao drew from the 22nd Congress.

In January 1962, Mao officially but privately stated his views to an Enlarged Central Work Conference (i.e., a 7,000 person conference). He said that the "Soviet Union was the first socialist country, and the Soviet Communist Party was the Party created by Lenin. But although the Party and the state leadership have now been usurped by the revisionists, I advise our comrades to believe firmly that the broad masses, the numerous Party members and cadres of the Soviet Union are good; that they want revolution, and that the rule of the revisionists won't last long."<sup>23</sup> From then on the word "revisionism" had a special meaning in the CCP's documents and published articles. The CCP seized the initiative in safeguarding Marxism-Leninism. At that time, nobody including Mao himself was sceptical about the correctness of the task.

Internally, Mao was not at all satisfied with a situation in which he felt a potential danger similar to that of the Soviet Union. This potential danger was later regarded as the three winds: Heianfeng (the wind of blackening the situation); Danganfeng (the wind for having family contracting system in agriculture); Fananfeng (the wind of reversing



correct verdicts for rightists). The result was a distorted observation of the internal development of the class struggle, which was, to a large extent, decided by subjectivism. However, this observation had an unpredicted effect on the formulation of his theory of class struggle, especially when he connected and compared the potential danger in China with the realistic danger in the Soviet Union. Mao also suggested that right-wing opportunism in China be renamed as Chinese revisionism.<sup>24</sup>

After some deliberation, Mao at last decided that the class struggle should be waged by the whole Party and had this decided at the 10th Plenum of the 8th Central Committee of the CCP held in September 1962. This decision was later called a basic line for the Party to follow through the whole historical period from socialism to communism.

It should be pointed out that, because of his belief that "Soviet revisionists" had come to power, Mao reiterated the class struggle from the strategic point of view specifically for opposing and preventing revisionism. It was not as simple as the repetition of the anti-rightist movement in 1957. On the one hand, the theory of the class struggle in socialist society, owing to the need to oppose revisionism, became a theory for guiding the practice not only of one country, but also of the international Communist movement. On the other hand, because of the emergence of the theory, the task of opposing "modern revisionism" became ever more urgent for Mao.

The Central Committee of the CCP sent a letter to the Central Committee of the CPSU on 14 June 1963, in reply to the CPSU letter of 30 March, that started the Sino-Soviet polemics. Mao personally entitled the letter "The CCP's Proposals Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement." He established guidelines for conducting the polemics: adhere

to principle and unity, struggle firmly but keep room for manoeuvre, strike back only after the Soviet Union strikes, and oppose splits. Mao also supervised the work for rectification of the "Jiu Ping" (Nine Comments).

The polemics ended on 21 November 1964, when Hongqi published its editorial "Why Khrushchev Fell", a period of one year and five months. All the polemics can be summed up in one question: that is, what sort of general line should be taken by the international communist movement at the time. Neither side ever questioned the necessity and rationality of having this general line for the socialist countries and communist parties. On the contrary, both considered that it was fully necessary to reflect the common rules and needs of the international communist movement. Actually developments have proved that keeping a central or a general line is not beneficial but harmful to the international communist movement, since there are enormous differences among the socialist countries and communist parties.

During the polemics, Mao's theory was further developed to become a model, which made the whole Party form the habit of thinking in one fixed way, considering all the contradictions in society as a reflection of the class struggle, and class struggle inside one country as a reflection of the international class struggle.

First of all, Mao concentrated on the roots of "modern revisionism". The Moscow Declaration of 1957 had said that "the existing influence of the bourgeoisie is the internal source of revisionism, while yielding to the pressure of imperialism is the external source of revisionism." Mao said these two sentences were proposed by him.<sup>25</sup>

After the Sino-Soviet polemics began, Mao became clearer about the

source of revisionism. In a talk with a Vietnamese delegation in June 1963, he said that it was not accidental for revisionism to appear. It must have its social and economic basis. Occasional or non-systemic error could not be regarded as revisionism but only a question of understanding. There was a process to realize this. And there was also a process for the Soviet leaders to develop but Mao said that he was not sure the Soviet leaders could change.<sup>26</sup>

In September the same year, Mao added another idea. It might seem quite strange that those people who were the supporters of the revolution and scientific socialism had become revisionists and opponents of the revolution and scientific socialism. In fact, it was not strange at all. Everything in the world could be divided. This applied to theory as well. The revolutionary and scientific theory must produce, in the course of its development, its opposite theory. Now there was a division of classes in society. Ten thousand years later there would still be differences among various groups.<sup>27</sup>

While pondering the roots of "modern revisionism", Mao was thinking deeply about one major problem concerning the fate of the country and the Party, that is how to prevent the "Soviet tragedy" from repeating itself in China. When the Sino-Soviet polemics began, he repeatedly warned the Party that there was still a serious class struggle in the country. He speculated that the revolutionary order might "perish" and be replaced by a revisionist state. He became increasingly obsessed with the possibility of historical regression. New bourgeois elements are produced in a socialist society, he insisted, much more forcefully than ever before: "This class struggle is a protracted, complex, and sometimes even violent affair."<sup>28</sup> In the autumn of 1962 he raised the possibility of "the restoration of the

reactionary class" and warned that "a country like ours can still move toward its opposite."<sup>29</sup> In August 1964 he even estimated that in China "at present approximately one third of the power is in the hands of the enemy or of the enemy's sympathizers."<sup>30</sup>

Therefore, from late 1962 to 1965, Mao launched what came to be known as the "Socialist Education Movement."<sup>31</sup> The campaign was an attempt to counter "old and new bourgeois elements", to reverse socio-economic policies that Mao condemned as "revisionist" and likely to create new forms of capitalism. But he was still unable to state what method could prevent revisionism in China. It was to prove to be Mao's last attempt to implement his vision of class struggle through existing Party and state institutions.

On 14 July 1964, at the end of the Sino-Soviet polemics, the Editorial Board of Renmin Ribao and Hongqi published the ninth comment "On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World" which marked the culmination of the theory of class struggle in a socialist society. The article elaborated fifteen points in Mao's thinking on "Soviet revisionism."<sup>32</sup> The major ones were as follows:

1) In socialist society there are two kinds of social contradiction, namely, the contradiction among the people and that between ourselves and the enemy. Many people acknowledge the law of the unity of opposites but are unable to apply it in studying and handling questions of socialist society and are therefore unable to deal correctly with the issue of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

2) Socialist society covers a very long historical period. The socialist revolution on the economic front (concerning the ownership of the means of production) is insufficient by itself and cannot be consolidated.

There must also be a thorough socialist revolution on the political and ideological fronts. Here a very long period of time is needed to decide "who will win" in the struggle between socialism and capitalism. Several decades are not enough.

3) Whether in socialist revolution or in socialist construction, it is necessary to solve the question of whom to rely on, whom to win over and whom to oppose. It is necessary to conduct extensive socialist education movements repeatedly in the cities and the countryside. In these movements it is necessary to wage a sharp, tit-for-tat struggle against anti-socialist, capitalist and feudal forces.

4) Among those engaged in science, culture, arts and education, the struggle to promote proletarian ideology and destroy bourgeois ideology is a protracted and fierce class struggle. It is necessary to build up a large detachment of working-class intellectuals who serve socialism and who are both "red and expert".

5) It is necessary to maintain the system of cadre participation in collective productive labour. This is a major measure of fundamental importance for a socialist system; it helps to overcome bureaucracy and to prevent revisionism and dogmatism.

6) The system of Party committees exercising leadership must be put into effect in all departments. It is necessary for the people's armed forces in a socialist country to be under the leadership of the Party of the proletariat and under the supervision of the masses. The guns must for ever be in the hands of the Party and the people and must never be allowed to become the instruments of the careerists.

7) In order to guarantee that the Party and the country do not change

their colour, it is not only necessary to have a correct line and correct policies but to train and bring up millions of successors who will carry on the cause of proletarian revolution.

All of this was extremely important in determining whether it was possible to prevent the emergence of Khrushchvite revisionism in China. It was a matter of life and death for the Party and the country.

Thus Mao's theory of class struggle was systematized. There were three important factors in its formation: first was that he took a one-sided view of the theory of scientific socialism suggested by Marx; second was that he misunderstood the Soviet reforms of the 1950s; third was that he incorrectly observed China's internal situation. The core of his theory was the conception of "modern revisionism", a conception which went through a long process of change and maturation from late 1950s, and which was closely connected with the fate of China and the development of Sino-Soviet relations.

From 1963, when Sino-Soviet polemics started, to the eve of the cultural revolution, the theory was greatly developed and refined. Through the cultural revolution, Mao's theory was finally perfected as the theory of "Bu duan ge ming (uninterrupted revolution) under the dictatorship of the proletariat". And simultaneously comprehensive Sino-Soviet confrontation took place.

#### 1.4 A Note on Methodology

The sources employed in this work are largely published materials from both Soviet and Chinese Party journals and newspapers, and Western literature on the subject. The study of relations between communist

countries like China and the USSR is often handicapped by the inevitable constraints resulting from a lack of access to the necessary information, for instance, to the records of meetings of the political bureaus. Therefore it is difficult for academics, sometimes, to follow the real intentions of the communist leaders. Yet, this has not and should not preclude attempts to analyse them, even though reading published communist documents. Donald S. Zagoria has described how non-communist observers can make "political estimates and assumptions"<sup>35</sup> by reading such documents. As a Chinese scholar, I am quite familiar from the inside with differences between the style and the actual significance of an article published, for example, in Renmin Ribao. I think that I have two other advantages. First, in the past ten years both China and the USSR have been carrying out major economic and political reforms. In these circumstances, much information concerning their relations, which had remained hidden, has been revealed to the public. For example, for a long time nothing was written either in China or in the Soviet Union about the meetings between Mao Zedong and Stalin. But the last few years have seen publications on this subject written by witnesses in both countries.<sup>36</sup>

Secondly, I have been doing research on Soviet foreign policy for more than ten years, first in the International Department of the Central Committee of the CCP and then in the Institute of Soviet and East European Studies, of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. This has helped me to get additional insight into the evolution of Sino-Soviet relations. However, I appreciate that many of my techniques and much of my approach is very Chinese. But even this has helped me reach conclusions, sometimes explicit, sometimes only implicit, which are quite different from others who have been researching the same subject. For example, the majority of

scholars in the West as well as in the Soviet Union date the Sino-Soviet rift from the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU in 1956 when Khrushchev denounced Stalin. Oddly enough, this is also the official Chinese view. However, I believe that the real clash occurred two years later for more complicated reasons. The evidence I have that the Chinese supported the policy adopted by the 20th Congress of the CPSU comes not only from speeches made by Chinese leaders on various occasions but also from Sino-Soviet co-operation in handling the events in Poland and Hungary in late 1956, and from the strengthening of Sino-Soviet economic co-operation following the Congress.

#### Notes: Introduction

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3. See Chapter I.
4. For a detailed discussion see Gordon H. Chang, Friends and Enemies: the United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972, Stanford University Press, 1990.
5. Donald S. Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961, (Princeton University Press), 1962, p. 12.
6. George Kennan, "Stalin and China", The Atlantic, May 1961, pp. 35-42. For a detailed study of Stalin's China policy in the mid 1920s, see Conrad Brandt, Stalin's Failure in China, 1924-1927, Harvard University Press, 1958.
7. Shi Zhe, I Accompanied Chairman Mao, the author is a Chinese diplomat and journalist. He studied and worked in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s. After 1949, he was director of the Foreign Language Publishing House in Beijing. He was Mao Zedong's interpreter. The remembrance first appeared



in the journal Renwu, No.5, 1988, reprinted in the Far Eastern Affairs, No.2, 1989, p.126.

8. Ibid., p.129.

9. Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961, p.13.

10. Ibid., p.14.

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12 "The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves--Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU", Renmin Ribao, 6 September 1963.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. O.B. Borisov and B.T. Kolosov, Sino-Soviet Relations, 1945-1980, Moscow, 1980; Chinese translation, Beijing, 1982, p.545.

17. Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961, pp.15-20; also see Dennis J. Doolin, Territorial claims in the Sino-Soviet Conflict: Documents and Analysis; O. Edmund Clubb, China and Russia: The Great Game; Harold C. Hinton, The Sino-Soviet Confrontation: Implications for the Future; etc.

18. The World Socialist System and Anti-Communism, Moscow, 1972.

19. Mao Zedong, "Talk with a delegation from Yugoslavia", September 1956, Dangshihui, No.3, 1989. p.4.

20. Han Suyin, Mao Zedong--Wind in the Tower, (London, 1978), p.190.

21. See Chapter II: Cracks Began to Show.

22. The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves.

23. Mao's speech at an Enlarged Central Work Conference held in 1962, BR, No.46, 10 November 1967, p.13.

24. "Mao's speech at 10th plenum of the 8th Central Committee of the CCP", Mao Zedong xiang wan sui, Beijing, 1966.

25. Dangshihui, No.3, 1989, Taiyuan, p.7.

26. Ibid., p.8.

27. Ibid., p.9.

28. "Mao's speech at an Enlarged Central Work Conference, 1962, Mao Zedong sixiang wan sui, Beijing, 1966.

29. Mao's speech at 10th Plenum of the 8th Central Committee of the CCP, Mao Zedong sixiang wan sui, Beijing, 1966.

30. Dangshiwenhui, No.3, 1989, Taiyuan, p.10.

31. For a detailed discussion see Maurice Meisner Mao's China, pp. 288-311.

32. "On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World", BR, No.29, 1964, pp.7-24.

33. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.4, (Moscow, 1952), p.181.

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35. Zagoria, pp. 24-33.

36. For example, see N. Fedorenko, "The Stalin-Mao Summit in Moscow", the author is a Soviet diplomat and scholar, a Corresponding Member of the USSR's Academy of Science. During his career he held the posts of Counsellor at the Soviet Embassy in China, Deputy Foreign Minister, and the Soviet permanent Representative to the UN and the Security Council. The article first appeared in Pravda, 23 October 1988, then reprinted in Far Eastern Affairs, No.2, 1989.

## II.

**Post-Stalin Honeymoon (1953-1957)**

All see that the solidarity of the great Chinese and Soviet peoples, consolidated by the treaty, is durable, unbreakable, and steadfast. This solidarity will inevitably influence not only the well-being of the great powers China and the Soviet Union, but also the future of all humanity and will lead to the victory of justice and peace throughout the whole world.

Mao Zedong

On 5 March 1953, the communist world was rocked by the news that Stalin, the revered yet frightening god and commander, had died. As the news spread, people began to have the feeling that an old page in the history of the communist world was being turned and replaced by a new one. This feeling became a reality in the relations between the world's two largest communist countries, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

**2.1 Increased Solidarity after Stalin's Death**

The death of Stalin profoundly -- though not immediately -- affected Sino-Soviet relations. Beforehand, there had been a shadow, if not a heavy one, in the relationship between Moscow and Beijing caused not only by Stalin's misunderstanding of the Chinese revolution, but also by historical

political and cultural differences.<sup>2</sup> The immediate reaction of Stalin's successors to his departure was to try to improve this relationship within the first few days.

Unlike the majority of the other communist leaders, Mao Zedong did not go to Moscow for Stalin's funeral. He probably still remembered the not wholly favourable circumstances of his first encounter with Stalin at the end of 1949 and the beginning of 1950.<sup>3</sup> At the funeral the Chinese Communist Party was represented by Zhou Enlai, Prime Minister of the State Council and Deputy Chairman of the Central Committee. It was all the more striking, therefore, that Zhou Enlai should be singled out by the protocol-conscious Soviet leaders for most favourable treatment. On 9 March, Stalin's funeral took place. Zhou Enlai was chosen from the mass of foreign delegates to stand alongside the members of the Soviet Party Presidium. In the funeral procession he walked just behind the gun-carriage bearing Stalin's coffin, shoulder to shoulder with Malenkov, Beria and Khrushchev.<sup>4</sup>

Even more significant was the appearance on 10 March in Pravda, of a photograph of Mao Zedong flanked on the one side by Stalin and on the other by Malenkov. That this picture was intended to convey an important political message was evident from a photograph taken in 1950 which did not show the three men in close company. There were two purposes behind this. First, to identify Mao and the Chinese communists with the succession to Stalin; second, to accord Mao a position in the leadership of world communism.

Another immediate sign of the Soviet leaders' anxiety to improve relations with China was their replacement of the Soviet ambassador in Beijing before the end of March 1953. Until then the Soviet mission in Beijing had been headed by Alexander Panyushkin, a senior military officer

who had much to do with putting Stalin's China policy into practice. He was replaced by V.V. Kuznetsov, a former trade union official who later became one of the Soviet Union's most capable professional diplomats.<sup>5</sup>

There were other signs of the improved status of the Chinese in the communist world. The Chinese Communist Party, which ranked third after the Polish Party at the 19th Congress of the CPSU in 1952, was raised to second place. Similarly, in all public references to the Chinese People's Republic was henceforward given priority over all the other People's Democracies.

China was more favourably treated than before, and most probably was no longer regarded as a satellite. This was unfortunately not recognized by the Americans at the time. If the Americans had in fact taken the chance to develop relations with the People's Republic of China, the whole international situation would have been much different.<sup>6</sup>

The Chinese for their part responded actively and satisfactorily to the situation. Mao Zedong himself was among the loudest in praise of the departed leader and his successors. Stalin's death quickly drew from him an article entitled "The Greatest Friendship" which hailed the late Soviet leader as "the greatest genius of the present age".<sup>7</sup> Mao was eloquent: "The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is a party trained by Lenin and Stalin and is the most advanced, the most experienced and theoretically the best equipped in the world; it was and still is for us a model; it will also remain a model for us in the future".<sup>8</sup>

Why did both sides desire closer contact? There were certainly a number of reasons. As far as the Russians were concerned it was because with the departure of Stalin his successors needed very much stronger political support from their Chinese comrades for the purpose of maintaining the leadership in the communist world. In the first place, Mao Zedong was now

senior to them in terms of years and revolutionary experience. And in many respects, the Chinese Communist Party was one of the most powerful parties with about 10 million members. Because of the Chinese revolution, China had won great influence in the communist world as well as among the national liberation movements. At the World Federation of Trade Unions meeting in Beijing in November 1949 Liu Shaoqi, Deputy Chairman of the Central Committee of the CCP, had declared: "The way which has been followed by the Chinese people... is the way which should be followed by the peoples of many colonial and semi-colonial countries in their struggle for national independence and people's democracy."<sup>9</sup>

So if the CCP continued to hold the Soviet flag highly, then there would be nothing to worry about in the communist world. And this was truly proved by later events in Poland and Hungary.

Secondly, the Soviet Union needed China's strong support for implementing its new foreign policy. The immediate reaction of Stalin's successors to his departure was to take steps to soften the impact of his policies on the world outside, and to retreat with as much dignity as possible from the tension and "cold war" with the West, mainly with the United States. They realized that it would take several years to recover from the shock of Stalin's sudden departure. It was essential, during such a period of internal weakness and uncertainty, that the Soviet Union should not be faced by a major crisis in foreign affairs. Whatever other differences there may have been within the Kremlin, there was general agreement on this. With the Korean War China had made a sudden and spectacular return to the international scene. It went on to play an important, independent role in three international conferences: the two Geneva conferences (on Korea and Indochina) in 1954, and the conference at Bandung in 1955. In the

following year, Zhou Enlai made a long trip round eleven capitals in Asia and Eastern Europe, giving proof of his country's mounting prestige in the world and of the importance of Beijing in international socialist affairs. In the event, China and the Soviet Union affirmed the similarity of their views on all main world issues. Khrushchev was able to declare on departing from Beijing on 12 October 1954: "The mutual exchange of opinions and our joint fruitful work have shown once again that there exists between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China complete mutual understanding on all questions pertaining to our further development, and on all international questions."<sup>10</sup>

Thirdly, there was a domestic reason: those who won the power struggle had to seek strong support from the CCP for the purpose of strengthening their own position inside the CPSU since, with the support of Chinese, they could say they were real communists.<sup>11</sup> It was not surprising that each set of Soviet leaders in turn praised Chinese leaders in more glowing terms and provided more economic assistance. In April 1953, Beria was arrested following the release of those charged in connection with the "doctors' plot". He was later executed on the grounds that: "This hireling of foreign imperialist forces was hatching plans to seize the leadership of the party and the country with the object of destroying our Communist Party and substituting for the policy worked out over many years a policy of capitulation which, in the final analysis, would have led to the restoration of capitalism."<sup>12</sup> People in Beijing applauded his execution.<sup>13</sup> Not long after the Soviet government decided to help in the construction of 91 additional industrial plants in China.<sup>14</sup> Again, a meeting of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow on 8 February 1955, at which the resignation of Malenkov as Prime Minister was announced, Molotov, the Foreign Minister, made a long

statement on foreign policy including the following significant passage: "The most important result of the Second World War was the formation, alongside the world capitalist camp, of a world camp of socialism and democracy headed by the Soviet Union, or it would be more accurate to say, headed by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China."<sup>15</sup> What is more, the new Prime Minister, Marshal Bulganin, made it clear in one of his first official statements that "China can count in all circumstances on the aid of the USSR."<sup>16</sup> As Khrushchev put it later, "the voice of the Chinese Communist Party was then of great significance"<sup>17</sup>.

As for the Chinese, there were even more reasons to have their "greatest friendship" with the Soviet Union. First ideologically, although the Chinese knew little about the nature of the Soviet Union other than what they had read in official Soviet textbooks, "they regarded it as "the land of socialism" and "a great and splendid socialist state."<sup>18</sup> Mao Zedong himself was remarkably uncritical in accepting the Soviet pattern of development as the appropriate model for China. In a speech to the fourth meeting of the Chinese People's Conference for Political Consultation, he said: "...learn from the Soviet Union. We must study not only the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, but also the advanced technology of the Soviet Union. In order to build our country, we must set off an upsurge for learning from the Soviet Union."<sup>19</sup>

For ideological reasons, Mao was openly pledged to a pro-Soviet policy in December 1949, just before the founding of the People's Republic. The Soviet Union offered all authentic Chinese communists the sentimental attraction of an ideological capital. AS Liu Shaoqi said in 1949: "If we attach great importance and particular appreciation to the friendship and cooperation between the Chinese and Soviet peoples, this is because the



road travelled by the Soviet people is exactly that the Chinese people must follow. The experience of the Soviet people in the construction of its country is one that deserves our attention."<sup>20</sup>

This relates to the second reason: the need to take the Soviet Union as the model for building socialism in China, especially with the adoption of the First Five Year Plan. Indeed, in those early days, there was no model of socialist development other than the Soviet, with its reliance on centralized planned and bureaucratically administered programs of economic development which subordinated the needs of the countryside to the demands of heavy industry. Besides, the Chinese Communists still lacked the experience of managing a vast country, which was also poor and disorganised. Although completely at ease when in charge of their rural bases, they knew little of the more intricate difficulties presented by the towns, which had been largely under the influence of the industrial and business bourgeoisie. A few years later, when Field Marshal Montgomery asked Mao what had concerned him the most after the establishment of the new regime, the Chairman replied that it was the extent to which both the Communist Party and he himself were lacking in experience in the face of the enormous problems ahead.<sup>21</sup>

The Soviet Union was a society which had achieved industrialization and collectivization, key goals of all the leaders of the CCP. The Soviet victory over fascism in the Second World War was to many Chinese leaders proof of the success of the Soviet experiment. A Chinese slogan of the early 1950s, "the Soviet Union today is our tomorrow", captured the spirit with which many Chinese undertook to copy Soviet methods.

The third and the most important reason, from the Chinese point of view, was to get as much economic aid from the Soviet Union as possible. The

basic job of restoring the national economy, which had been destroyed in the civil war, and of creating the various organs of national government and state administration was completed in the years 1950 to 1952.<sup>22</sup> The land reform was carried out. The country's financial crisis was resolved. The widespread banditry was wiped out by harsh, swift means. All large-scale enterprises were nationalized, while small private industries were preserved.

At the end of 1952, Zhou Enlai declared that the period of restoration was finished and that the level of the national economy was higher than it had ever been before. Hence, from 1953 they would begin to implement the First Five Year Plan for the expansion of China's national economy. The general outline of the Plan was determined at a meeting of the Party's Central Committee in the autumn of 1952. It was closely patterned on the Soviet First Five Year Plan of 1928-1932, and it was anticipated that China could achieve similar rates of growth in both industrial output and industrial employment.<sup>23</sup> However, the plan had been worked out on the assumption of increasing technical, economic and scientific aid from the Soviet Union. But before 1953 Soviet economic aid was strictly limited. In his first well-known trip to Moscow, Mao Zedong had not succeeded in persuading Stalin to provide enough aid to China. Soviet credits of US \$300 million were extended at a rate of 1 percent for repayment by the end of 1963, a sum believed to be only 10% of Mao's requirement. By agreement, the Soviet Union undertook to provide equipment for 50 construction projects over a period of nine years.<sup>24</sup> After 1953, the Chinese leaders certainly hoped that by supporting the new leaders of the Soviet Union, no matter who they were, China would be given more aid, through which they could build up their backward economy.

Fourthly, the Chinese Communists tried to gain additional status within the communist movement and acquire a high prestige among developing countries by keeping good relations with the Soviet Union. When Molotov described the PRC as the joint leader of the "socialist camp"<sup>25</sup>, Chinese leaders revealed no reluctance to step into this position, for which their size and their revolutionary record, if not their economic or military power, seemed to qualify them. The idea was certainly put into practice by the Chinese and became one of the points later causing the split between the CCP and the CPSU.

Fifthly, the Chinese leaders needed Soviet friendship to get rid of the Gao Gang-Rao Shushi anti-Party alliance.<sup>26</sup> It was well-known that Gao had a very good relationship with the Soviet leaders. He was elected Chairman of the People's Government of the Northeast which was founded at Shenyang on 27 August 1949. A month earlier, Gao had gone to Moscow to sign an important agreement on regional trade. On 15 November 1952, on the eve of implementing the First Five Plan, he was given the extremely important post of Chairman of the State Planning Commission. He was called to Beijing in 1953 but fell into disgrace less than a year later. His political downfall, and the expulsion of his followers from the Party, were determined at a December 1953 Politburo meeting and formalized by the Party's central committee in February of 1954. Gao was charged with having set up an "independent kingdom" in Manchuria, and having organized a conspiracy to seize power in the Party (that of Liu Shaoqi) and the State (that of Zhou Enlai). It was announced later that he had committed suicide.

As Chairman of the State Planning Commission, Gao could have used his influence to pay special attention to Manchuria, "his independent kingdom", on the grounds that the region was the heart of the modern Chinese

economy. In this , he would doubtless have been able to count on the support of the Soviet Union, which was ready to help with the development of the Northeast so as to benefit the economy of Siberia. If the Chinese leaders saw Soviet economic methods as both necessary and desirable, they were nevertheless not about to allow the Russians to acquire political dominance over China in the process. They had fought too long and too hard to prevent Moscow from gaining control over their Party during the revolutionary years to permit it now to reap the political fruits of their victory. And it was their bitter experiences with the Comintern during the revolutionary period that made them acutely sensitive to the danger. There was much evidence to suggest that Gao had close political ties with the Russians, who continued to exercise strong influence in Manchuria long after their military withdrawal. Direct Soviet aid and participation restored Manchuria's heavy industrial base after Soviet troops had earlier carried away much of its industry as "war booty".<sup>27</sup> The Russians controlled the Sino-Soviet joint stock companies, established in 1950, and retained their hold on the Central Manchurian Railway (and its economic subsidiaries) as well as on Dalian and Lusong (Port Arthur). Moreover, Gao was the foremost advocate of Soviet methods of industrial organization, both before and after the inauguration of the First Five Year Plan, and nowhere were these methods introduced and pursued more rigorously than in Manchuria. Several years after the event, in a private talk highly critical of Soviet influence in the Chinese Party over the decades, Mao Zedong observed: "Stalin was very fond of Gao and made him a special present of a motor car. Gao sent Stalin a congratulatory telegram every 15 August" (the date of Japan's surrender to the Soviet Union)<sup>28</sup>

Moreover Mao referred to Manchuria and Xinjiang as two former Soviet

"colonies" in the People's Republic<sup>29</sup>. To bring Manchuria under the control of Beijing meant throwing off Soviet control. It was not entirely fortuitous that the fall of Gao followed shortly after the death of Stalin and the fall of Beria. It was the apparent weakness and instability of the post-Stalin leadership that made Beijing sufficiently confident to remove Gao and move against Soviet influence in Manchuria. The move became one of the factors resulting in a temporary improvement in Sino-Soviet relations, and a more equal relationship between the two countries, symbolized by Khrushchev's late 1954 visit to Beijing and the Soviet agreement to relinquish positions in Manchuria.

Sixthly, it was American policy at the time that made China adhere firmly to the Soviet Union. The formation of the Chinese People's Republic, followed by the treaty of friendship and mutual aid between China and the Soviet Union, was greeted by ruling circles in the United States with extreme hostility. While the Soviet press described the success of the Chinese revolution as the greatest defeat for capitalism since the October Revolution, the American press said much the same thing, though in a critical sense, and a sense that was reinforced by U.S. policy.

Having recalled all its diplomats from China by the end of 1949,<sup>30</sup> the United States banned the sale of "strategic goods", including metals, chemicals, equipment for many branches of industry, motor vehicles and petroleum products. Although China officially appointed representatives to the Security Council and other United Nations organizations, the USA virtually barred them from their functions. Relations between the two countries became still more hostile with the outbreak in the summer of 1950 of the Korean War.<sup>31</sup>

The Truman Administration pursued a "hard" policy towards China. Why? The

answers were:

a) American policymakers' especially Truman and Acheson, saw the CCP as "an instrument of Moscow".<sup>32</sup> It was necessary for them to carry out a "closed door" policy<sup>33</sup> in dealing with this "puppet regime"<sup>34</sup>;

b) They regarded the CCP as the main threat to American interests in Asia. It was therefore crucial for them to roll back Chinese influence by applying maximum pressure on them;

c) They also regarded the CCP as more bellicose than the Russian variety;

d) In addition, prejudice, racial fear and mistrust played an important role in American decision-making towards China. For example, Eisenhower believed that the Chinese held "peculiar attitudes"<sup>35</sup> toward human life. In his memoirs he openly invoked the spectre of the "Yellow Peril"<sup>36</sup>.

Not surprisingly, while praising the Soviet Union, the Chinese press during this time was extremely hostile in its assessment of American policy. Under such circumstances, the Chinese leaders had no choice in public but to accept the Soviet Union as the only possible source of the considerable political, economic and military aid China must have.

For the motives mentioned above, the Soviet Union appeared eager to maintain the best possible relations, and China appeared quite happy to accept the new Soviet leadership. Thus Sino-Soviet relations entered the period of five years of honeymoon, the best in their history, though perhaps something of a honeymoon of convenience.

## 2.2 Augmentation of Sino-Soviet Collaboration 1953-1955

After the death of Stalin, Sino-Soviet co-operation was greatly strengthened in all fields. But the first and most important co-operation was economic. After three years of preparation, China launched its First

Five Year Plan at the start of 1953, though the details of the plan were finally spelt out only in 1955. This first step in the transition to a socialist economy received formal ratification in the Constitution of the PRC, adopted in 1954, which announced that the necessary conditions had now been created for planned economic construction and gradual transition to socialism. The First Five Year Plan was clearly inspired by Soviet precedents, as far as the distribution of effort and methods of construction and management were concerned. It was carried out with the financial and technical co-operation of the Soviet Union in the case of specific large projects: factories, laboratories, roads, railways, canals, and the like.

Only two and a half weeks after the death of Stalin, on 21 March 1953, an agreement was signed in Moscow by which the Soviet Union was to help the People's Republic of China in the expansion of existing and the construction of new power stations, and with it went a trade protocol for 1953 and a second protocol governing use of the 1950 Soviet credit for the same year.<sup>27</sup> Two months later, another agreement was signed for assistance in the construction and reconstruction of 141 industrial sites, comprising 50 which had come under an agreement of February 1950 and a supplementary 91 large enterprises.<sup>28</sup> By the end of 1953, the total trade turnover between the USSR and the PRC was increased by 22.5 per cent. Compared with 1952, exports of the USSR to China increased 28.8 per cent, while its import from China increased 21.9 per cent. China's share of the USSR's total external trade turnover amounted to 20 per cent, while the Soviet Union's share of China's total reached 55.6 per cent.<sup>29</sup>

Political collaboration also increased. On 29 September 1954 an important Soviet government delegation including Khrushchev, Bulganin and other

Soviet officials of high rank was welcomed with great pomp in Beijing. They were invited to attend the fifth anniversary of the founding of the PRC. This was the first official visit abroad by the new Soviet leaders. Khrushchev and his colleagues met Chairman Mao several times and they also toured the country widely. Talks between the Soviet and Chinese leaders touched on practically every aspect of relations between them. A large number of agreements was signed which resulted in:

a) Soviet restoration of Port Arthur and all its installations by 13 May 1955 without any compensation;

b) Soviet relinquishing of all shares in joint-stock companies;

c) Soviet long-term credit of 520 million rubles (then about U.S.\$130 million);

d) Soviet aid for another 15 large-scale projects, and for the Chinese army in the form of new types of weapons and the training of officers. On top of that, a joint communique was issued by China, the Soviet Union and Mongolia on the construction of a further section of railway between Ulan Bator in Outer Mongolia and Chining, to be finished by January 1956, a project dating from 1952. Communication links between China and the Soviet Union were greatly improved in consequence.<sup>40</sup> A scientific and technical agreement was also signed. According to this, the Soviet Union would hand over to China a large quantity of drawings and scientific and technical documentation.

In matters of foreign policy, China and the Soviet Union confirmed the similarity of their views on all main world issues, particularly those concerning China itself, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and China's seat at the UN.

China achieved substantial gains from the visit. Zhou Enlai spoke highly about the results of the visit at the reception given by the Soviet Embassy



on October 12. He said: "...no one can separate (us). The friendship is strengthening and developing day by day, it is irresistible and will develop generation by generation."<sup>41</sup> An important outcome of Khrushchev's visit to China was a solemn agreement to hold mutual consultations on all matters of common interest pertaining to the socialist camp in order to engage in concerted action to maintain peace. This meant that in any moves which involved China directly or indirectly, or in negotiations with the United States on world affairs, China must be consulted, as it would be affected. This was an obvious victory for Mao. On departing from Beijing, Khrushchev also spoke highly about his mission to China: "leaving Beijing, we shall continue with greater confidence our common cause directed towards the advance of our countries and the further development of the great friendship between the USSR and the People's Republic of China..."<sup>42</sup>

In 1954, 169 major industrial enterprises, workshops and sites were under construction with Soviet cooperation and machinery. According to the statistics published on 1 January 1955, there were about 800 Soviet technicians working in China.<sup>43</sup> Friendship with the Soviet Union was written into the Chinese Constitution adopted by the First National People's Congress in September 1954. The total foreign trade turnover of the two countries in 1954 increased 5.2 per cent, the Soviet Union's share of China's total volume of exports was 51.8 per cent.<sup>44</sup> There were many other exchanges in the fields of culture, science and arts promoting friendship and co-operation. It was all very satisfactory.

The promise of a further and more substantial advance in Sino-Soviet collaboration was heralded in Moscow's announcement on 17 January 1955 that it had made proposals to Poland, East Germany, Romania, Czechoslovakia and China that it would extend them scientific and technological assistance in

the utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. And yet new political factors having an important bearing on the future of economic co-operation had been introduced.

Georgi Malenkov was forced to resign the Soviet premiership on 8 March 1955 and was succeeded by Bulganin, who was quick to say in one of his first official statements that "China can count in all circumstances on the aid of the USSR".<sup>45</sup> On 1 May Moscow radio announced details of the agreement on Soviet aid in atomic research for peaceful purpose. It was stated that the agreement provided for:

a) the completion of the necessary preparatory work in 1955-1956 and the supply of experimental atomic piles and accelerators;

b) the free supply of scientific and technical information required for the installation of this apparatus, and the loan of Soviet specialists;

c) the supply of sufficient quantities of fissile material and radioactive isotopes until China was able to keep its atomic piles working without further Soviet aid;

d) the training of Chinese in nuclear physics.

The Chinese response was warm. Li Fuchun, China's Vice-premier and Chairman of the State Planning Commission, reporting on China's First Five Year Plan to the National People's Congress in Beijing announced that: "The Soviet Union is giving systematic, all-round assistance to our country's construction...Soviet aid plays an extremely important part in enabling us to carry on our present construction work on such a large scale, at such a fast speed, on such a high technical level and at the same time avoiding many mistakes."<sup>46</sup>

In foreign policy Moscow and Beijing co-operated very well in all fields. The new Soviet policy of relaxing tension with the West was fully supported

by the Chinese. Zhou Enlai made a forceful statement to the First National People's Congress: "Everyone can see that all our efforts are directed towards the construction of our country, to make it into an industrial, socialist, prosperous, and happy country. We work peacefully and we hope for a peaceful atmosphere and a peaceful world. This fundamental fact determines the peaceful policy of our country as regards foreign policy."<sup>47</sup>

China made an enormous effort to assist this peaceful atmosphere. As mentioned above, it played an important role at the two Geneva conferences in 1954, and at the Bandung conference in 1955, Chinese delegations were very active and skillful. For example, when the countries that advocated peace and neutrality and the countries that joined military cliques started to engage in a battle of words threatening to stalemate the conference, Zhou Enlai proposed that the Asian and African countries cast away their different ideologies, state systems and international commitments. He asked them instead to take peace and co-operation as their common basis, seeking the largest common points among themselves.<sup>48</sup> This spirit played a major role in making the Bandung conference a success. Moreover, together with India, China first proposed the "five principles" of peaceful coexistence to deal with international relations.<sup>49</sup>

All these were apparently welcomed by the Soviet leaders, despite their exclusion from Bandung. In the last two months of 1955 Khrushchev and Bulganin made a long tour of Asia including official visits to India, Burma and Afghanistan. While demonstrating Soviet military power and economic strength through various promises of trade and military aid, Khrushchev subscribed to the "five principles" as the basis of relations between states of all kinds. On the other hand, the beginnings of a reconciliation between Moscow and Belgrade in May did not produce any hostile reaction on

the part of the Chinese, who had already opened normal diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia on 10 January 1955. In June Wu Xuzhuan arrived in Belgrade to take up his post as ambassador. Along with his credentials, he presented Marshal Tito with personal gifts from Chairman Mao. In his report to the Eighth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, Liu Shaoqi said: "The Soviet Union and other socialist countries have established friendly relations with the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Our country has also established diplomatic relations and developed friendly intercourse."<sup>50</sup>

### 2.3 Did the Rift Begin with the 20th Congress of CPSU?

1956 was very important for the world Communist movement. The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (14-25 February 1956) and the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of China (15-27 September 1956) were regarded as a milestone in Sino-Soviet relations.

Almost every Western expert as well as Soviet scholars believes that the first crack in Sino-Soviet relations was produced by the 20th Congress because of its criticism of Stalin and his personality cult, and its advocacy of peaceful coexistence and different roads to socialism.<sup>51</sup> This view was further reinforced by the later declaration of the Chinese Communist Party that, "from the very beginning they had had reservations about the questions of principle dealt with by Khrushchev", "the first step on the revisionist road".<sup>52</sup> The 20th Congress of the CPSU, it said, had "both positive and negative aspects", "We have expressed our support for its positive aspects. As for its negative aspects, namely the wrong viewpoints it put forward on certain important questions of principle relating to the international communist movement, we have held different

views all along."<sup>53</sup>

Was this true or not? What was the real picture at the time? Undoubtedly, the speech denouncing Stalin that Khrushchev made to a closed session of the Congress was a great shock to all the communist leaders, including the Chinese who continued to think in Stalin's way. It posed more serious political and ideological issues for them than such personal embarrassment they may have felt because of the extravagant public praise they had bestowed on the Soviet leader for over a quarter of a century. It raised grave questions about the social and moral validity of the socialist system which the Chinese were then emulating. If socialism was a high stage of socio-historical development, and Soviet socialism its most advanced model, then how could it have produced and been presided over for so long by a leader whose crimes and brutalities Khrushchev had so vividly, if selectively, described? And it raised the more specific and immediate problem for the Chinese of the relationship between leader and Party in a presumably socialist society. The major theme of Khrushchev's speech, after all, and his explanation of the evils he recounted, was that Stalin was a usurper who had "placed himself above the Party" and beyond criticism by fostering a "cult of personality". Had not Mao also placed himself above the Party? And was not Mao also becoming the object of a similar form of hero worship?

Khrushchev devoted one whole section of his report to certain questions of principle affecting international developments at the time which, he said, defined "not only the course of current events but also further perspectives".<sup>54</sup> The questions were peaceful coexistence, the possibility of averting wars in the present epoch and the forms of transition to socialism in various countries.

His ideas ran as follows: "peaceful coexistence" had always been and would remain the general line of Soviet foreign policy; it was not a tactical move, but a fundamental principle of Soviet foreign policy; for the present world, there would be only two ways, either peaceful coexistence or the most destructive war in history" - "There is no third way".<sup>55</sup> Discussing whether a third world war was inevitable, Khrushchev had to face up to the objection that, from a Marxist point of view, wars were inevitable as long as imperialism existed. Khrushchev disposed of this, not very convincingly, by arguing that although so long as imperialism existed there would continue to be an economic basis for war. the peace-loving forces in the world had acquired such moral and material strength that they could either prevent the imperialists from launching a war or could "deliver a smashing rebuff to the aggressors and frustrate their adventurist plans."<sup>56</sup>

In fact, Khrushchev's advocacy of peaceful coexistence did not mark in any sense a new departure in Soviet policy, nor was it incompatible with views on international relations at that time. At the 19th Congress of the CPSU in October 1952, at which Stalin was present, Malenkov had said same thing. The new feature of Khrushchev's report were his rejection of the theory of the inevitability of war and his acceptance of the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism. Yet, although these theories, with his denunciation of Stalin, were later to become the subject of bitter controversy between the Soviet and Chinese Parties, they were not publicly questioned at the time by the Chinese Party. On the contrary, the Chinese appeared to approve the down-grading of Stalin, and to be firmly behind Khrushchev's new line. This will be dealt with later on.

At the 20th Congress the Chinese representative, Marshal Zhu Deh, apparently applauded de-Stalinization. He said: "The 20th Congress of the CPSU will not only further promote the cause of building communism and safeguarding world peace by the Soviet Union, but also encourage Chinese people for the struggle of building socialism and safeguarding peace for Asia as well as for the whole world."<sup>57</sup> Mao Zedong also spoke highly of the 20th Congress at the opening session of the 8th Congress of the CCP in September 1956: "The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has laid down the main correct guiding principles and...their work has a great future."<sup>58</sup> The political report to the 8th Congress took a similar line: "The 20th Congress of the CPSU held last February was an important political event of world significance. It not only drew up a Sixth Five Year Plan of gigantic proportions, decided on many important policies and principles for further development of the cause of socialism and repudiated the cult of the individual which had grave consequences inside the Party, it also advocated further promotion of peaceful coexistence and international co-operation, making an outstanding contribution to the easing of international tension."<sup>59</sup> Renmin Ribao published two important articles entitled "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" confirming China's positive attitude: "The 20th Congress of the CPSU showed great determination and courage in doing away with blind faith in Stalin, in exposing the gravity of Stalin's mistakes and in eliminating their effects..."<sup>60</sup> The unanimity of view was not surprising, but the complete absence of criticism was significant.

In 1957 the meeting of leaders of Communist Parties in power (with the exception of the Yugoslavian Party) was attended by Mao Zedong who supported the declaration that: "The historic decisions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU are of tremendous importance not only to the CPSU and to the

building of communism in the USSR; they have opened a new stage in the world Communist movement and pushed ahead its further development along Marxist-Leninist lines."<sup>51</sup> However, in March 1958 Mao showed some ambiguity in his reaction to Khrushchev's attitude. He said at a Party conference held in Chengdu: "When Stalin was criticized in 1956, we were on the one hand happy, but on the other hand apprehensive. It was completely necessary to remove the lid, to break down blind faith, to release the pressure, and to emancipate thought. But we did not agree with demolishing him at one blow."<sup>52</sup> Yet this was simply a matter of timing. Mao was happy at the downgrading of Stalin, both because the Chinese revolution had suffered from his errors of judgement, and because he himself had been obliged to bow to his dictates. Stalin, Mao complained repeatedly, tried to prevent the Chinese from carrying the revolution forward in 1945, and regarded their revolution as a "fake" and Mao as a potential Tito when it did succeed.<sup>53</sup> He complained that in China Stalin loomed symbolically larger than himself, "Buddhas are made several times life-size in order to frighten people. When heroes and warriors appear on the stage they are made to look quite unlike ordinary people. Stalin was that kind of person. The Chinese people had got so used to being slaves that they seemed to want to go on. When Chinese artists painted pictures of me together with Stalin, they always made me a little bit shorter, thus blindly knuckling under to the moral pressure exerted by the Soviet Union at that time."<sup>54</sup>

In addition, there were many events to show the solidarity of the two Parties after the 20th Congress of the CPSU. The 8th Congress of the CCP provided the opportunity, through the presence and statements of Mikoyan, for a further demonstration of Sino-Soviet solidarity, and of China's support for Khrushchev's new policy. The 8th Congress is now regarded by the Chinese as one of the most important events in their Party's history. It had three main features which were greatly influenced by the 20th Congress:



a) It concluded that China's collectivization had progressed to the point where, as Liu Shaoqi said, "the principal method of struggle" could no longer be "to lead the masses in direct action"<sup>65</sup>, as : "Now, however, the period of revolutionary storm is past, new relations of production have been set up, and the aim of our struggle is changed to one of safeguarding the successful development of the productive forces of society, (and thus) a corresponding change in the methods of struggle will consequently have to follow..."<sup>66</sup> With the collectivization of agriculture and the public ownership of the means of production basically accomplished by 1956, the CCP stressed the need to focus all energies on promoting the productive forces. This it did in a way deeply influenced by the Soviet model of development. For by maintaining that "the essence of this contradiction (in socialist society) is a contradiction between the advanced social system and the backward social productive forces"<sup>67</sup>, it turned its back on the need for a simultaneous and interrelated socialist revolution on the political and ideological fronts. Revolutionary struggle, the Chinese leaders accepted, would not unleash the productive forces, but would only undermine the stability needed for their rapid growth. Periods of acute class struggle were no longer essential to create the new cooperative organizations and attitudes favorable to economic growth. This doctrine, of course, was regarded as reactionary ten years later during the cultural revolution, when Liu Shaoqi was attacked as China's Khrushchev, the arch-revisionist of China.

b) The principle of collective leadership and the development of democracy within the Party were discussed at length. The result was that the wording of the 1945 Party constitution, "the Chinese Communist Party takes the theories of Marxism-Leninism and the combined principles derived from the practical experience of the Chinese revolution-the ideas of Mao Zedong-as the guiding principles of all its work", was deleted from the new one<sup>68</sup>. The 8th Congress further reduced

Mao's power in the Party by reestablishing the post of General Secretary, which had been abolished in 1937. Appointed to the revived office was Deng Xiaoping who came to exercise considerable control over the organizational apparatus of the Party<sup>69</sup>.

c) Concerning the international situation, the 8th Congress fully approved the Soviet leader's policy of relaxation. Friendship with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries was reaffirmed. In his political report to the Congress, Liu Shaoqi pointed out: "Under these circumstances, the world situation is tending toward a relaxation of tension, and now lasting world peace has started to become a possibility."<sup>70</sup> And Mao Zedong too, in his opening declaration, put it that: "Owing to ceaseless efforts on the part of peace-loving countries and peoples, the international situation already shows a tendency towards detente."<sup>71</sup>

Speaking of the permanence of Sino-Soviet friendship, Mao went on: "Our enemies would really like to create a split in our relations and make a breach, however small, in our friendship. But failure can dream this dream. They see our friendship in the light of their bourgeois relationship. Their speciality is to get on well today, to separate tomorrow, and inflict mutual injury. Never has there been a friendship in the world comparable with that between our two great parties."<sup>72</sup> In return Khrushchev was certainly satisfied to see that "the CPSU Central Committee's measures have met with full understanding and support from the great CCP."<sup>73</sup>

Sino-Soviet co-operation in handling the events in Poland and Hungary in 1956 was another proof of their solidarity after the 20th Congress. The first efforts at de-Stalinization in the East European socialist countries were barely mentioned in the Chinese press as if not raising any problems, though the coming to power of Gomulka in Poland met with approval. On 1 November, a few days before the crushing of the Hungarian insurrection, an official communique was issued by the Chinese government supporting the Soviet declaration of 30 October on

the principles of developing and reinforcing friendship between the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Indeed, during the events the Chinese were so closely involved with the Soviets that, afterwards, they claimed that Soviet success was the result of their advice<sup>74</sup>.

Yet Khrushchev's prestige was damaged by the events. It was China which had to step in and help the USSR to maintain unity. On 29 December 1956, a second important editorial "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" was published by Renmin Ribao, defending the Soviet Union and acknowledging its position as the centre of the international Communist Movement. Stalin had made some serious mistakes, but the socialist system must not be condemned. A joint communique stressing Sino-Soviet unity on the Hungarian affairs was published on 18 January 1957 following a visit by Zhou Enlai to Moscow, Warsaw and Budapest to play the role of the great conciliator. The communique stated: "By helping the Hungarian people to put down the counter-revolutionary rebellion, the Soviet Union has fulfilled its duty to the working people of Hungary and the other socialist states, which is completely in line with the interests of safeguarding world peace."<sup>75</sup>

Nothing was said specifically about the case of Poland. But when the Chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, Jozef Cyrankiewicz, headed a delegation to Beijing in April, he and Zhou Enlai joined in a communique asserting that the Chinese and Polish Parties "are determined to continue their best efforts to strengthen further the solidarity of the countries in the socialist camp based on the Marxist-Leninist principles of proletarian internationalism and equality among nations."<sup>76</sup> The two sides agreed to expand their cooperation in the fields of politics, economy, shipping industry and culture.

#### 2.4 Expanding Sino-Soviet Co-operation 1956-1957

In 1956-1957 Sino-Soviet co-operation continued to develop. In the two years there was an enlivening of Sino-Soviet

governmental contacts, besides Zhou Enlai's visit to Moscow in January 1957. On 14 September 1956 the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress adopted a resolution which said that the recent Supreme Soviet proposal for disarmament met the interests of both the Soviet and Chinese peoples and other nations of the world and, therefore, had its full support. In November-December 1956 a Chinese delegation headed by the Vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, visited the Soviet Union. In April-May 1957 the Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, K. E. Voroshilov, went on an official friendship visit to China. And Mao Zedong was invited to visit the Soviet Union. At a reception given by the Soviet Embassy in Beijing on 3 May, Mao declared that: "In these days, the whole world has again witnessed the massive unity and cohesion, as well as the closest and deep-rooted friendship between the peoples of China and the Soviet Union. This cohesion and friendship is not only a factor contributing to the cause of socialist and communist construction in our countries but is also an important element in the closeness of the socialist countries, a reliable guarantee of universal peace and mankind's progress. The Chinese people, just like the Soviet people, will continue to bend every effort in the name of the continued strengthening and development of the relations of cohesion, friendship and cooperation between our countries."<sup>77</sup> In September and October 1957 a delegation of the USSR Supreme Soviet was invited to take part in the celebration of the 8th anniversary of the Peoples Republic of China. And on 29 October 1957 the Soviet-Chinese Friendship Society was set up in Moscow to develop and strengthen Sino-Soviet relations.

It was November 1957 that was to be a crucial month for the future of Sino-Soviet relations and for the future of the socialist world as a whole. The fortieth anniversary of the October Revolution was celebrated with great ceremony. The outstanding event was the launching of the first satellite (Sputnik) on 4 October and the second on 3 November, a

considerable technical and military achievement. Above all, the occasion was marked by a congress of the twelve Communist and Workers' Parties then in power (with the exception of the Yugoslav from 14 to 16 November), followed by a meeting attended by a total of sixty-four Communist and Workers' Parties from 16 to 19 November.

Indicating the importance that Beijing attached to the event, Mao Zedong himself headed the Chinese delegation. Addressing the jubilee session of the USSR Supreme Soviet on 6 November, he praised the Soviet Union for its achievements over the forty years of its existence and thanked it warmly for assistance rendered to China in the task of socialist construction. He asserted that the Chinese revolution "has its own national characteristics," and that, "it is entirely necessary to take them into consideration", but in both revolution and socialist construction China had "made full use of the rich experience of the CPSU and the Soviet people." In concluding his speech, he stressed the importance of accepting the Soviet Union as leader: "We regard it as the sacred international obligation of all socialist countries to strengthen the solidarity of the socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union."<sup>79</sup>

A joint declaration was issued at the end of discussion held by the ruling Parties which reaffirmed the principle of peaceful coexistence and the possibility of achieving socialism through parliamentary means, and condemned both "revisionism" and "dogmatism". According to later Chinese statements, however, the final form of this incorporated significant amendments on which the Chinese Party had insisted. In a speech to the conference, which later aroused much controversy, Mao agreed that there was a possibility of preventing another world war, but that even if nuclear war broke out at least half the world's population would survive and "the whole world would become socialist".<sup>79</sup> He also made a figurative remark that attracted wide attention: "The East wind is prevailing over the West."<sup>80</sup> As things turned out all these

issues were to dominate the Sino-Soviet controversy in the 1960s; the seeds were already present during the 1957 conference.

The visit of Mao Zedong to Moscow in the autumn of 1957 was probably one of the summits in the history of the international communist movement. The leader of the CCP had to face and accept some hard facts. Moscow intended to remain the centre of the world revolutionary movement and, in spite of polite treatment and several formal concessions, it showed that Mao's personal influence was bound to remain limited. This was something Mao did not like. The new policy adopted by Stalin's successors of coexisting with the United States and of pursuing economic advantage was increasingly in direct opposition to emerging Chinese interests, whether in domestic or foreign policy or in ideology, given the situation the Chinese leaders were beginning to face.<sup>81</sup>

In the fields of economics and science there were signs in 1956 that Moscow was in fact prepared to expand its co-operation with China. In January of that year, the new trans-Mongolian railway line was formally opened to traffic, thus providing an additional transportation link. In April Mikoyan made another trip to Beijing, and as a result the USSR undertook to construct 55 more factories and industrial plants, supplying designer services, equipment, and technological skills, to a total value of U.S. \$625 million.<sup>82</sup> No new Soviet credit was involved: China was to pay by deliveries of goods. A second agreement provided for completion by 1960 of the Lanzhou-Aktogai railway line. In August, Beijing announced an agreement to undertake joint development of the hydraulic power potential of the Amur and Argun river basin by construction of a network of electric power plants designed to generate seventy billion kilowatt-hours to meet the power demands of Chinese and Soviet urban and industrial centers in the regions. The network would also provide power to make possible the electrification of the Irkutsk-Vladivostok section of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

Among the hydraulic-engineering projects contemplated was one for the construction of a new outlet for the Amur to facilitate the passage of deep-draft oceangoing vessels and reduce the long period when passage was impossible because the shallow mouth was frozen over.

On 25 July 1956 a Sino-Soviet protocol on additional goods deliveries was signed in Beijing under which the Soviet Union was to supply machine-tools, cranes, compressors, pumps, diesel engines, generators, motor vehicles, farm machinery, tools and other goods. China undertook to supply sulphur, mercury, caustic soda, rice, tea and woollens. Other agreements in 1956 included<sup>23</sup>,

a) the 15 June agreement for ten years cooperation between the USSR, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the PRC and the Korean People's Democratic Republic for fishing surveys and oceanological and limnological explorations in the Western Pacific.

b) the 3 July agreement between the USSR, the PRC and the Korean People's Democratic Republic on cooperation in saving human lives and rescuing ships and aircraft in distress at sea.

c) the 30 March protocol on the free handover to China of the property of the Russian church mission, buildings, real estate, a print shop, a dairy farm and such like.

d) the 5 July Sino-Soviet cultural co-operation agreement providing for exchanges in the fields of science, technology, education, literature and the arts, public health, the press and publishing, broadcasting and television, cinematography and sports. This summed up the results of fruitful exchanges over many years and laid the groundwork for extensive future developments.

The sixth session of the Sino-Soviet commission on scientific and technical co-operation held in Beijing in July 1957 was particularly important. It decided further to encourage direct contacts between related government departments, ministries, and research and design centers and

to convene scientific and technical conferences on key problems facing industry and agriculture. The Soviet Union undertook to hand over free of charge design documents, process charts and machine tools for the construction of hydroelectric power stations and building materials factories, for the manufacture of equipment for power stations and metallurgical production, for the manufacture of steel, and rubber goods, pulp and paper, dyestuffs and medicines, and seeds and other agricultural requirements. In exchange, China was to hand over to the Soviet Union free of charge process charts for manufacturing some non-ferrous metals using natural stone as refractory material, and blueprints for equipment used in manufacturing refractories and in coal-agglomeration, in grain-processing and tea-storing, and in similar activities.<sup>64</sup>

More important still, back on 15 October, as revealed by Chinese later,<sup>65</sup> an agreement was signed on new technology for defence. The Soviet Union was to supply China with the models and the technological information required for the manufacture of atomic weapons. To crown matters, an agreement was signed on 11 December 1957 between the Academies of the Soviet Union and China which provided for joint research and expeditions on key problems of science and technology. And ten days later the two governments concluded an agreement on the sensitive issue of the rules of navigation on their border and on adjoining rivers and lakes.

Altogether, in 1956-1957, a large group of Soviet scientists and experts were sent to work in China. In 1956 alone, 1,800 Chinese scholars and researchers went to the Soviet Union for study. In practice, the Soviet Union and some of the East European countries were China's major source of industrial and agricultural modernization.

## 2.5 An Evaluation of the Period: A Positive Picture with Negative Features

Solidarity and co-operation was the main feature of Sino-



Soviet relations in the period 1953-1957. This development met the vital interests of the peoples of both the Soviet Union and China. The relationship was based on the principles of equal rights, on close collaboration and mutual aid and on a common striving for the preservation of peace and for the building of socialism. The leaders of the two countries were enthusiastic in seeking support from each other. On China's part, the appeal "learn from the Soviet Union" was by no means an empty slogan. The importance of Soviet experience was admitted by all the Chinese leaders, including Mao Zedong. In his speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" at an enlarged session of the Supreme State Council on 27 February 1957, Mao declared: "It is perfectly true that we should learn from the good experiences of all countries, socialist or capitalist, but the main thing is still to learn from the Soviet Union."<sup>66</sup> On 6 November 1957, at a public meeting in Beijing on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution, Liu Shaoqi declared on behalf of the CCP: "The Soviet Union has accumulated rich experience in revolution and construction, Until today no socialist country has yet gained such relatively comprehensive experience as is possessed by the Soviet Union. This experience is a precious asset, a contribution of the Soviet people to the treasure-store of all mankind. Not to cherish this asset is impermissible; it would be against the interests of our people, the cause of socialist revolution and socialist construction."<sup>67</sup>

For their part the Soviet leaders were very happy to have Chinese support for their new policies. Solidarity and co-operation with China gave them the most favourable position in the struggle for maintaining their leading role in the world communist movement and in the socialist countries, and for carrying out their new foreign policy of relaxation with the West, mainly with the United States.

Secondly, economic co-operation played a very important part in the Sino-Soviet relationship. It was mutually beneficial.

The Soviet Union gave "systematic, all-round assistance"<sup>62</sup> to China's construction, mainly in the field of heavy industry. At the same time, cooperation with China facilitated the solution of some economic problems in the Soviet Union which imported from China valuable raw materials and other goods required for economic development.

However, there were already several disturbing features concerning the Sino-Soviet economic co-operation:

a) Repayment of credits and payments for equipment from the Soviet Union were through the channels of trade - Chinese agricultural products and rare minerals. In this equation there was an inequality: the Soviet Union already qualified as an industrial nation; China, while proudly demanding to be treated as a political equal, was in an inferior stage of economic development, and felt it.

b) The conditions surrounding prices, transport costs and varying exchange rates were not well enough known to enable people to reach identical and definite conclusions as to the financial value of Soviet aid. Figures quoted by both sides are useful because they throw some light on the subject, but they do not provide a complete answer. Li Hsien-nien, then Minister of Finance, said in July 1957 that Soviet aid (long-term credits, industrial equipment and military supplies) totalled 5,294 million yuan (\$2,100 million), 2,174 million yuan of which (about \$820 million) had already been used before 1953.<sup>63</sup> Khrushchev, addressing the 20th Congress of the CPSU in February 1956, gave the value of the Soviet contribution as 5,600 million rubles, to which should be added a further 2,500 million rubles for the 55 projects dating from 7 April 1956 if the comparison is to be exact. This gives a total figure of 8,100 million rubles, equivalent to \$2,025 million at the rate of 4 rubles to the dollar. The Soviet periodical Communist (No. 12, August 1968) stated that socialist countries supplied China with equipment worth 2,500 million rubles and contributed to the carrying out of 350 large projects. Military aid does not seem to be included in this calculation.

One way and another, differing estimates were to raise doubts about the real value of economic co-operation.

c) Geographically, the Northeast of China had been a heavy exporter of goods to the Soviet Union since 1949, and it was to be assumed that much of the new economic construction would be in that critical region. Therefore it played the most important part in the Sino-Soviet economic cooperation, leaving the rest of China wondering about its advantages.

Accordingly, even in those years, minor Sino-Soviet differences were already in evidence. The Soviet leaders were clearly dissatisfied with some of the independent actions and decisions China took in its relations with Asian countries and which had not been agreed with Moscow. On the other hand, they did not see any need to consult the Chinese over major acts of their own foreign policy which broke the 1954 Beijing agreement, for example, their relaxation with the West and rapprochement with Yugoslavia. Moreover, the Soviet leaders were continuously critical of the Chinese policy of the Three Red Banners. Yet they themselves indulged in adventurist campaigns, attempting, for example, to catch up and overtake the United States in the per capita production of meat, milk and butter.

Differences became a little more pronounced after the 20th Congress. On the whole, the Chinese approved the downgrading of Stalin, but at the same time they implied that it was a "grave error" to think that Stalin had been wrong in everything. They expressed their tentative criticism in two articles in Renmin Ribao already mentioned. Mao himself expressed more serious criticism in his private talks with Chinese Party leaders<sup>73</sup>: "There are two kinds of cult of the individual. One is correct, such as that of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and the correct side of Stalin. These we ought to revere and continue to revere for ever..."<sup>74</sup> In particular, Mao did not fully agree with demolishing Stalin at one blow, not only because of the implication for the evaluation of other leaders (himself included), but because he feared that

the attack on the abuses of Stalinism might open the door to a repudiation of those aspects of the Soviet past which he regarded as worthy of respect and emulation. However, he still entertained hopes of Khrushchev: "Perhaps Khrushchev had been too hasty, abrupt...but he might still undertake his own self-criticism."<sup>91</sup> The Italian Party chief, Palmiro Togliatti, had the impression that Mao defended the 20th Congress because his practice towards a comrade was not to talk behind his back.<sup>92</sup>

From the economic point of view, the Chinese became aware of an increasing number of drawbacks in their co-operation. The cost of Soviet aid began to prove too high in relation to the rate of capital accumulation and to available exports. The practice of concentrating heavy industry in large combines or huge factories, like those at Loyang (tractors) or Changchun (trucks), seemed out of scale; medium-sized enterprises were more suited to administrative and technical conditions in China. Some Soviet material was also too modern for poorly qualified Chinese personnel. These conclusions made the Chinese begin to reduce their imports as far as possible, taking their economic destiny into their own hands. This inevitably affected ideological and political relations as well. Meantime, on the Soviet side the co-operation deprived them of industrial products that they themselves needed, and apart from a few rare minerals all they received in exchange were agricultural products of secondary importance.

So by the end of 1957 there was a somewhat complicated picture in Sino-Soviet relations. There were many more positive elements but still a few negative ones. Change might go in either direction, depending on the fluctuations in the political factors in the coming years.

## Notes: Chapter II

1. Izvestiya 18 Feb. 1950

2. It is generally known that Stalin had suggested solutions to the problems in the Chinese revolution, solutions which reflected his mistaken ideas. Differences between Stalin and the CCP started as early as the beginning of 1930s, when Wang Ming and his followers who had been trained in Moscow, the "left" dogmatists supported by the Communist International (essentially it was Stalin), attacked and inhibited Mao and others who insisted on the Chinese way of revolution. When Liu Shaoqi travelled to Moscow in July 1949 to discuss the founding of the People's Republic of China, Stalin took the unprecedented step of criticizing himself for past interference in CCP internal affairs, which had led to devastating setbacks in the revolution. "We had been in the way of a hindrance to you", Stalin admitted, during one of the five meetings he had with Liu, "and for this I feel compunction". also see Wu Xiuquan, Zai waijiaobu baniande jingli, (Beijing 1983), pp.5-10; Shi Zhe, "I Accompanied Chairman Mao", Far Eastern Affairs (Moscow), 1989, No.2, pp.125-133; F Petrov, "Introduction" to the book Sino-Soviet Relations, Chinese translation, (Beijing, 1982), p.577.

3. On December 16, 1949, Mao Zedong left Beijing for Moscow for his first foreign visit. It took him the whole two months to conclude the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance on February 14, 1950 with Stalin. Mao said later in 1958 that Stalin did not want to sign the treaty. also see Mao Zedong sixiang wansui, (Beijing, 1969); Stuart Schram, Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed, (Penguin, 1974), pp.145-151; David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev, (London, 1964), pp.10-17.

4. Floyd, , p.18.

5. O. Edmund Clubb, China and Russia--the Great Game, (Columbia University Press, 1971), p.399; Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev, pp.18-19; Kuznetsov later became the First Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR.

6. It was almost impossible to improve Sino-American relations before early 1970s. The reason is that all the American leaders, from Truman, through Eisenhower and Kennedy to Johnson, Pushed a "hard" and "closed door" policy towards China. See Gordon H. Chang Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972, (Stanford University Press, 1990), pp.78-170.

7. Pravda March 10, 1953, Moscow.

8. Ibid.

9. Xinhua yuebao, VOL. 1, No. 2, 1949, Beijing, pp. 440-441.
10. Renmin ribao, October 13, 1954.
11. CCP was regarded as more bellicose and more closed to the national liberation movements. For a detailed discussion see Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972.
12. Survey of International Affairs (RIIA), Documents 1953, pp. 19-20.
13. Renmin Ribao, December 27, 1953.
14. Li Fuchun, China's Vice-Premier and Chairman of State Planning Commission, speech on the First Five Year Plan to the National People's Congress in Beijing on July 5 and 6, 1955, Renmin Ribao.
15. Pravda, Feb. 8, 1955.
16. David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev, p. 221.
17. "The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves--Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee", Renmin ribao, Sept. 6, 1963.
18. Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Vol. 4 (Beijing, 1964), p. 423.
19. People's China, No. 4, 1953, p. 7.
20. Xinhua yuebao, Vol. 1, 1949.
21. The interview with Field Marshal Montgomery in the Sunday Times (magazine section), Oct. 15, 1961, London.
22. Jacques Guillermaz, The Chinese Communist Party in Power--1949-1976, pp. 15-17.
23. Ibid., pp. 78-84; also see Maurice Meisner, Mao's China--A History of the People's Republic, (London, 1977), pp. 117-125.
24. Meisner, pp. 64-140.
25. Pravda, Feb. 8, 1955.
26. Gao Gang, born about 1902 at Henshan, near the Great Wall in northern Shensi, was one of the few leaders who did not belong to the groups formed in the Central China bases. He joined the CCP in 1926 and became the the head of the Northwestern Bureau of the Party in the mid 1930s. He became the Chairman of the People's Government of the Northeast in 1948 and one of the six vice-chairman of the Central

Government in 1949. Since 1943 he had been a member of the Political Bureau of the CCP; at the time of his disgrace, he ranked ninth. Jao Shushih, born 1901, joined the CCP in 1925 and then lived abroad for about 10 years, apparently in the United States, where he was in charge of the New York newspaper China Salvation Times. On his return to China during the Second World War, Jao served in the New Fourth Army fighting against the Japanese. In 1949 he became the Chairman of the Administrative Committee of East China. In 1953 Jao took on the heavy responsibilities of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CCP.

27. Wu Xiuquan, Zai waijiaobu baniande jinli, (Beijing, 1983).

28. Mao Zedong "Talks at the Chengdu Conference" (March 10, 1958), Mao Zedong sixiang wansui; Talks and Letters, 1956-71, Mao Zedong, Ed. Stuart Schram, p. 100-101.

29. Ibid, pp. 145-151.

30. Detailed discussion see Gordon H. Chang, pp. 33-35.

31. Ibid., pp. 76-80.

32. Ibid.; p. 78.

33. Ibid., p. 87.

34. Ibid., p. 83.

35. Ibid., p. 170.

36. Ibid., p. 170.

37. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Beijing, pp. 51-76.

38. Soviet Leninist Policy Towards China, (Moscow, 1968), p. 166.

39. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov.

40. Renmin ribao, Oct. 13, 1954.

41. Ibid..

42. Ibid..

43. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, p. 56.

44. Ibid., p. 57.

45. See note 15.

46. Li Fuchun, speech on the First Five Year Plan to the National People's Congress in Beijing on July 5 and 6, 1955, Renmin ribao.

47. Renmin Ribao Sept. 24, 1954.

48. Ni Liyu, "On Zhou Enlai's Diplomatic Theory", Beijing Review, April 3-9, 1989.

49. Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence were first issued in December 1953 while China and India were conducting negotiations on the Tibet issue. They include: Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence.

50. Documents of the Eighth Congress of the CCP, (Beijing, 1956).

51. It would be too long to list all of them here. I just name few of them: O Edmund Clubb, China and Russia--the Great Game, 1971, USA; Donald S. Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961, 1962; David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev, London, 1964; O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Sino-Soviet Relations, 1945-1980, Moscow, 1980.

52. Renmin ribao, Feb. 27, 1963.

53. "Lun Sidalin wenti", (On the Question of Stalin), Renmin ribao, Sept. 13, 1963.

54. Khrushchev's Reports on the 20th Congress of the CPSU, (Beijing, 1956).

55. China and the Soviet Union, 1949-84, Gen. ed. Alan J. Day, London, 1985.

56. Ibid..

57. The 20th Congress of the CPSU, Vol. 1, (Moscow, 1956), p. 228.

58. Documents of the Eighth Congress of the CCP, Beijing, 1956.

59. Ibid..

60. Renmin ribao, Dec. 29, 1956.

61. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Beijing, p. 71.

62. Mao Zedong sixiang wansui; also see Stuart Scharm, Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed, (Penguin, 1974), p. 101.

63. Ibid, pp. 103, 191.



64. Ibid., p. 99.

65. Liu Shaoqi, The Political Report of the Central Committee of the CCP to the Eighth Congress of the CCP, Documents VOL. 1, (Beijing, 1956).

66. Ibid..

67. Documents of the Eighth Congress of the CCP.

68. A Documentary History of Chinese Communism, Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz, and John K. Fairbank, (Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 422; also see Documents of the Eighth Congress of the CCP.

69. Deng was criticized as No. 2, following Liu Shaoqi, capitalist roader in China during the Cultural Revolution from 1966-1972. Mao complained that Deng as General Secretary did not want to make any major consultations with him; Mao Zedong, Talk at the Report Meeting, Oct. 24, 1966, Beijing.

70. Liu Shaoqi, The Political Report of the Central Committee of the CCP to the Eighth Congress of the CCP, Documents VOL. 1.

71. Documents of the Eighth Congress of the CCP, Beijing.

72. Ibid..

73. Ibid..

74. Renmin ribao, September 6, 1963, Beijing

75. Izvestiya, Jan. 19, 1957, Moscow.

76. Renmin ribao, April 12, 1957.

77. Izvestiya, May 4, 1957.

78. Izvestiya, Nov. 7, 1957.

79. Mao Zhuxi lun shijie geming, Beijing, 1969; see also Khrushchev, Last Testament, Chinese translation, pp. 255-263.

80. Mao Zhuxi Lun Shijie Geming, See also Han Suyin, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, London, 1978.

81. Detailed discussion see Gordon H. Chang, Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972, (Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 81-116.

82. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Beijing, p. 77.

83. Ibid., pp. 78-79.

84. Ibid., p. 79.
85. Nine Comments on the Open Letter of the CPSU, (Beijing, 1964).
86. "Supplement to People's China", No. 13, July 1, 1957, Beijing.
87. Friendship, No. 8, 1957, Beijing.
88. Li Fuchun, speech on the First Five Year Plan to the National People's Congress in Beijing on July 5 and 6, 1955, Renmin ribao.
89. Jacques Guillermaz, The Chinese Communist Party in Power, 1949-1976, pp. 82-83.
90. Mao Zedong sixiang wansui; also see Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed.
91. Han Suyin, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, p. 141.
92. Ibid..

## III

## The Cracks Begin to Show (1958-1959)

The truth is that the international differences among the fraternal parties were first brought into open...in September 1959—on September 9...to be exact.<sup>1</sup>

Renmin Ribao

The years 1958 and 1959 were critical in the history of Sino-Soviet relations, packed with events, starting with an apparent reapproachment between Moscow and Beijing but ending with relations so strained that a reconciliation between Mao Zedong and Khrushchev had become practically impossible. It was the events of these two years that determined the whole future course of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

### 3.1 Mao's Challenge to the Soviet Model

Before 1958 China's economic and other policies appeared basically similar to those of the Soviet Union. After 1958 China embarked on a series of initiatives radically different from those of the Soviet Union both in style and content. Why the sudden change?

Toward the end of the First Five-year Plan the Chinese leaders found that agriculture could not subsidise the growth of industry (which included refunding debts to the Soviet Union) and that industry would have to

finance its own growth.<sup>2</sup> In this situation, they saw two possible solutions. The first, from which agriculture stood to gain, was an agonizing reappraisal of the Second Five-year Plan, which had been drawn up on the basis of Soviet aid and advice. This solution was contrary to the firmly established idea that a close and direct link existed between socialism and heavy industry and departed from the tested model, which in 1957 was still accepted by all the Chinese leaders in every field of development. Yet this model was very difficult to put into practice since Chinese agriculture was of a traditional and intensive type.

The second solution--the one that was chosen--was to rely on a general heightening of the ideological awareness and working capacities of the masses in all sectors of the national economy. At the beginning of 1958, just such a mobilization of the whole population of gave birth to the mystique of the Great Leap Forward, which was to force China almost overnight out of its backward state and launch it into an era of rapid and regular development following the example of other modern states. In the towns, industry provided the framework for the mobilization; in the countryside, the framework was soon found in the unexpected formula of the People's Communes, since the co-operatives were considered too narrow in scope and too agricultural in vocation to be able to absorb a large labour surplus.<sup>3</sup> In doing this, Mao and his colleagues stayed close to the Chinese tradition and departed from the Soviet model; while still remaining Marxists, they took the line that nothing could be done that was not based on man himself. Theoretically, too, there was a growing dissatisfaction which focused on three main aspects of the Soviet model. Mao in particular raised the question whether it could meet China's long-term national economic needs and he began to challenge it in terms of

theories of primitive socialist accumulation at the expense of the peasantry, and of productive forces and dictatorship of the proletariat, and of his conception of the Communist Party of China.

From early 1958 onwards, Mao wrote a series of articles and comments criticising the Soviet model, including "Reading Notes on the Soviet Textbook of Political Economy", "Concerning Economic Problems of Socialism in the Soviet Union", and "Critique of Stalin's Economic Problems of Socialism in the Soviet Union."<sup>4</sup> These can be read from three perspectives:

- a) as a crucial initial summing up of what the Soviet model was and what it implied for China;
- b) as a strong defence of the Great Leap Forward from the perspective of buduan geming (uninterrupted revolution); and
- c) as a path-breaking examination of the principles of Soviet political economy and of several key aspects of the Russian revolutionary experience.

With the founding of the People's Republic, the Chinese saw the Soviet Union as the only model for socialist construction. Mao wrote in one of his comments: "In the early stages of liberation, we had no experience of managing the economy of the entire nation. So in the period of the First Five-year Plan we could do no more than copy the Soviet Union's methods, although we never felt altogether satisfied with them."<sup>5</sup> So, China's First Five-year Plan was notable for its exclusive reliance on heavy industry; highly centralized, bureaucratic methods of planning; and little space for light industry and the production of consumer goods. The peasantry was considered largely as a source of savings. Powerful, centralized economic ministries were established in Beijing.<sup>6</sup> But opposition to this rapid "Sovietization" was not far below the surface even in the early years. Many

Party leaders voiced some of the criticisms which Mao later raised. Even in the early 1950s, Mao began to warn of the dangers the Soviets would pose to the revolutionary transformation of the countryside, but not until April, 1958, in his speech "On the Ten Major Relationships", did he directly challenge it.<sup>9</sup> He sharply criticized the Soviet "lopsided stress on heavy industry to the neglect of agriculture and light industry."<sup>9</sup>

Thus Mao for the first time clearly rejected the idea of development through a privileged sector (heavy industry first and only later other sectors) and through distinct phases (material progress, first and only later social relations and ideology). He showed his disappointment in the Soviet way of managing agriculture: "In forty years, the Soviet Union has been able to produce only such a little of food and other stuff. If in eighteen years, we can equal what they have done in the past forty years, it will naturally be all right, and we should do precisely that."<sup>10</sup> Mao also criticized the Soviet theory of productive forces. He argued that at the heart of this theory was a profound fear and distrust of the masses and of mass struggle. On the other hand, he showed himself even more concerned at Soviet meddling in Chinese affairs. He complained that Soviet influence was so strong in China that he could not have eggs or chicken soup for three years because an article appeared in the Soviet Union which said that one should not eat them.<sup>11</sup> He made a wholesale attack on China's Soviet-style First Five-year Plan: "Our statistical work was practically a copy of Soviet work; in the educational field copying was also pretty bad...the same applied to public health work, the Chinese listened all the same and respectfully obeyed. In short, the Soviet Union was tops."<sup>12</sup>

Mao summed up the reasons for this slavish imitation as the following:

- a) The Chinese could not manage the planning, construction and assembly

of heavy industrial plants. They had to make use of Soviet experience and Soviet experts to break down the bourgeois habits of their existing experts;

b) The Chinese lacked comprehension of the whole economic situation, and understood still less the economic differences between the Soviet Union and China, so all they could do was to follow blindly;

c) The Chinese still had a blind faith in the Soviet Union and this brought spiritual burdens to the leaders and the people.

d) The Chinese had forgotten the lessons of historical experience, and did not understand either the comparative method, or the establishment of opposites.<sup>13</sup> However, with the "Ten Major Relationships", as Mao later said, "we made a start in proposing our own line of construction".<sup>14</sup>

In practice, between April and August 1958, the movement for the grouping of agricultural co-operatives into large People's Communes combining small-scale industry with agriculture swept triumphantly across China.<sup>15</sup> The Central Committee formally rubber-stamped the movement in August, and at the same time approved the Great Leap Forward for rapid industrialization.<sup>16</sup> The Chinese leaders' new economic policy was certainly not received with approval by the Communist Party in the USSR, where the press and radio were extremely reticent in their references to it.<sup>17</sup> What China was doing, in the view of the Soviet leaders, was challenging not only orthodox thinking on building socialism, but also the leading position of the CPSU in the socialist camp and the world communist movement.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, if the Chinese then failed, it would increase the economic burdens the Soviet Union would be called upon to bear. The Soviet leaders were truly aware of the challenge and soon started to attack it. The Washington Post reported on 17 December 1958 that, at a meeting with Senator Hubert

Humphrey, Khrushchev had described the Commune system as "reactionary" and inappropriate.<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, Mao's challenge had a cruel and tragic irony. The break with the Stalinist pattern of socio-economic development was not accompanied by a break with Stalinist methods in political and intellectual life. China thereafter was to follow a new path to socialism but not one that was to lead to the goals of political democracy and freedom that Mao seemingly promised in the mid 1950s.

### 3.2 Khrushchev's Two-Pronged China Policy

From the beginning of 1958, Khrushchev's China policy appeared to develop two main objectives:

a) to increase the scale of Soviet economic aid to China, thus reassuring it of Soviet friendship and support and increasing Soviet penetration of its economy and society;

b) to counter-attack Mao's challenge by trying to oust him and other anti-Soviet elements from the Chinese leadership. 1958 was dominated by the first objective, and 1959 saw the second. Khrushchev made a desperate and expensive effort in those years to bring China under Moscow's control. But he failed because, like Stalin, he did not know China and made some strategic mistakes.

In 1958 and 1959 Sino-Soviet co-operation in the fields of economy, science, technology and culture was still developed. On 18 January 1958 the governments of the USSR and the PRC signed an agreement in Moscow on major research in science and technology. The agreement provided for joint research during 1958-1962 on 122 key scientific and technological problems, as well as for an extension of direct contacts between Soviet and Chinese



institutions.<sup>20</sup> Simultaneously, parallel agreements were signed between the Ministries of Higher Education and the Academies of Agriculture of the USSR and the PRC.<sup>21</sup>

In April 1958, the two countries signed a treaty on trade and navigation, by which they undertook to conduct trade exchanges in a spirit of friendly co-operation and mutual assistance, and on a basis of equality and mutual benefit.<sup>22</sup> This had a supplement on the legal status of the USSR trade delegation in the PRC and the PRC trade delegation in the USSR, which were to perform the following functions:

- a) to facilitate the development of trade and economic relations between the two states;
- b) to represent their respective states in foreign economic affairs;
- c) to regulate on behalf of their respective states trade exchanges with other states;
- d) to conduct trade operation between the USSR and the PRC.<sup>23</sup>

In many ways this was quite a remarkable document which might have been the fore-runner of some kind of economic union.

From 31 July to 3 August Khrushchev made an unexpected visit to Beijing and had talks with Mao Zedong. A communique issued after the talks said that relations between the governments and the Communist Parties of China and the Soviet Union were "being developed successfully and becoming more firmly established" and that they were in complete agreement about future policy.<sup>24</sup> On 8 August an agreement followed on Soviet technical aid to China in the building and expansion of 47 industrial enterprises and power stations.<sup>25</sup> And at the end of 1958, trade negotiations were held in Moscow as a result of which the trade turnover originally envisaged in the protocol for 1958 was exceeded by over 600 million rubles.<sup>26</sup> The talks on

goods turnover in 1959 were also to culminate in success.

At the end of January 1959, Zhou Enlai visited Moscow for the 21st Congress of the CPSU. As so often, such a visit was followed on 7 February 1959 by a new agreement on Soviet assistance in building 78 big projects in steel, chemicals, coal, oil, engineering, electrical engineering, radio engineering, building materials and energy.<sup>27</sup> The total value was to be over 5,000 million rubles and China was to repay with supplies of goods.<sup>28</sup> It was pointed out in announcing the signing of the agreement that the two governments regarded it as a new and important contribution to the further extension of their mutually advantageous relations.<sup>29</sup> And five months later a successful consular agreement was signed, which helped strengthen and develop formal relations.<sup>30</sup>

But even at this time Khrushchev began to implement the other side of his China policy, trying to bring it under his control by making use of Soviet economic and military aid. In this respect he made at least two serious mistakes: one was to propose setting up a joint fleet, an idea that reminded the Chinese of their bitter encounters with foreigners in the past; the other was to try to oust Mao from the leadership by surreptitiously supporting those people inside the CCP who were against his policy.

Khrushchev seemed, from the Soviet point of view, to have some advantages. After the Korean War, Peng Dehuai, Chinese Minister of Defence and a veteran Long Marcher, began the sovietization of the PLA. There was a debate in Chinese military circles about partnership with the Soviet Union. In Peng's view, China's domestic socio-economic policies were intimately related to its military policies and to its relations with the Soviet Union. China's military security required a rational plan of modern

economic development to support professional modernisation as well as the sophisticated weapons and nuclear shield provided by the Soviet Union. When Khrushchev visited Beijing at the end of July 1958, he was accompanied by Defense Minister Malinovski, who was known to the Chinese from his period as commander of the Soviet forces in Manchuria in 1945-1946. Marshal Peng Dehuai participated in discussions as the counterpart of Malinovski. Obviously, the meetings dealt with matters of major political and military significance.<sup>31</sup> It was at a highly important strategy meeting that the Soviet side proposed a joint Sino-Soviet naval command for the West Pacific and a joint long-wave radio station in the North-East of China. Since the Soviet Union simultaneously refused to shoulder military undertakings for China, Moscow's proposal looked as if it was meant to exert a degree of control and guidance over China's strategy and defence. There was no possibility of Beijing accepting. It was reported that Mao was so angry that he shouted at the Soviet Ambassador, considering the proposal a sort of indignity.<sup>32</sup> The Chinese later charged that: "In 1958 the leadership of the CPSU put forward unreasonable demands designed to bring China under military control. These unreasonable demands were rightly and firmly rejected by the Chinese Government."<sup>33</sup> And by 1962 Mao was even more blunt: "From the second half of 1958, he (Khrushchev) has attempted to close China's seacoast, to launch a joint fleet to dominate the coastal area, and to blockade us. Khrushchev came to China because of this."<sup>34</sup> Inevitably the naval proposal became a major contribution to the development of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

Despite what had happened at the 21st Conference of the CPSU from 27 January to 5 February 1959, Khrushchev affirmed that there were no divergences with China, the two were in total agreement, and that the only

trouble was that some people, meaning Mao, were dogmatists. The keynote of the 21st Congress was the transition to communism in the USSR, the impossibility of a return to capitalism and the dying out of the class struggle - which was totally contrary to Mao's theory. In short Khrushchev counter-challenged Mao on two counts. This was another major mistake made by Khrushchev. He made a faulty judgement about the development of China's internal situation and to the stability of Mao's position inside the CCP.

In January 1959 Mao's announced his resignation from the Chairmanship of the People's Republic (though not from the Chairmanship of the Party or of the Military Affairs Committee), stunning many people in China. Abroad this was interpreted as a "demotion". It seemed as if Mao's stiff-necked opposition to Khrushchev had led to his replacement by someone more pliable and better liked by the Soviet leadership, Liu Shaoqi. The facts were different. On Mao's return from the Moscow meeting back in November 1957, he ordained many conferences which not only debated the Leap policy but also discussed problems arising from an emerging dispute with the USSR, and the possible results if it worsened. Mao blamed some of what he regarded as the swift degeneration of the Soviet Party upon the fact that Stalin had not prepared a successor. And from then on, he began increasingly to realize that the Moscow encounter was only a beginning; there would be a prolonged and very serious ideological debate on at the international level. It was a struggle "which may last one thousand years."<sup>35</sup> What he then considered was a retreat from his position in charge of day-to-day work to take much more time to think about strategic and ideological issues for the Party.<sup>36</sup> It was this that made Khrushchev believe that Mao was being demoted. But in any case, he shortly began to

engage in activities encouraging to the opposition to Mao within the CCP itself.

The initial attack on Mao's policy came from Peng Dehuai at the 8th Plenum of the 8th Central Committee held in July 1959 in Lushan, the cool and beautiful mountain resort. Peng had left China in April that year, during the session of the National People's Congress, to attend a meeting of Ministers of the Warsaw Pact. For several weeks he toured the USSR and East European countries in order to learn advanced modern techniques. But before his departure, the Politburo had received another note from Khrushchev demanding united action and joint defense: Soviet use of Chinese military and naval facilities in return for nuclear knowledge; joint nuclear bases in China under Soviet advisers; and linked economies. The latter was a fifteen-year plan which Soviet experts had drawn up as long ago as 1955-56 for Chinese industrial takeoff by 1967.<sup>37</sup>

While the Politburo studied what amounted to an ultimatum Peng left Beijing to look at the other side of the fence.<sup>38</sup>

He was more impressed than ever with Soviet weaponry. While visiting the USSR, he also heard the Leap and the Communes deplored as "petty bourgeois adventurism". Perhaps with encouragement from Soviet leaders, he decided to speak up. In Tirana he met Khrushchev and showed him the text of his criticisms of the Leap, the Communes, and other of Mao's policies. What Khrushchev said exactly is unknown, but he must have promised support. On 13 June Peng was back in Beijing. And on 20 June, having received a negative answer to his ultimatum of April, Khrushchev abruptly cancelled the agreement for sharing nuclear technology. The Politburo, of which Peng was a member, sat throughout late June. Mao's opposition took heart. The USSR had cancelled the agreement. Did not this prove Mao utterly wrong?

In July, Peng toured China, investigating and collecting data against the Communes and the Leap. On 14 July he circulated his "letter of opinion". On the 17th Mao received a copy. On the 18th Khrushchev attacked the Communes and the Leap as "petty bourgeois...fanatic...adventurism", the same terms as in Peng's letter. On 1 August, Army Day, articles appeared in the Soviet press lauding Peng. Khrushchev's overt attempt to topple Mao was not fully revealed until 1963.<sup>39</sup> But the debate in China occupied almost the whole of the three weeks allotted to the August Plenum. Finally, a resolution passed on 17 August 1959 by the 8th Plenum took an extremely harsh line toward Peng and his supporters, saying that the "activities of the anti-Party clique headed by Peng Dehuai prior to and during the Lushan meeting were intentional, prepared, planned and organized."<sup>40</sup> Peng and all his supporters were dismissed from their posts.<sup>41</sup> Marshal Lin Biao replaced Peng Dehuai as Minister of Defence.<sup>42</sup>

It is not known when Mao learned of Peng's consultation with Khrushchev in Tirana. But he mentioned the matter indirectly on 11 September the same year at an enlarged session of the Military Affairs Committee: "It is absolutely impermissible to go behind the back of our motherland and to collude with a foreign country."<sup>43</sup> It is also still impossible to determine how much Soviet inspiration was behind Peng's action. But Khrushchev was reported at the Bucharest meeting in June 1960 to have protested at Peng's dismissal.<sup>44</sup>

On a cold September day Mao swam in the Miyun reservoir in Beijing, a creation of the Great Leap Forward. He was bracing himself for Khrushchev's visit to Beijing for the celebration of New China's tenth anniversary. Khrushchev was coming to China straight after his Camp David talks with

President Eisenhower. He and his colleagues never came empty-handed; but less and less of what they brought was welcome.

### 3.3 Differences in Foreign Affairs - and Personalities

It was in 1958 that it first became apparent that China and the Soviet Union shared different views on a number of foreign policy issues which brought the conflict to a state of high tension.

It was not until the beginning of 1958 that Khrushchev firmly established his position in the Soviet Union. With his defeat of the so-called anti-Party group in mid-1957, his removal of Marshal Zhukov at the end of the year, and his assumption of the Premiership in addition to the First Secretaryship of the Party in February 1958, he was at last in a good position to put his ideas on foreign policy into practice and not worry to be directly confronted with the Chinese. Therefore there was nothing strange in the fact that fundamental international differences between China and the USSR first became apparent in the summer of 1958. Following the Iraqi revolution of 14 July a crisis over Lebanon took place, which led to a voluminous exchange of letters between Khrushchev and Western statesmen. Finally on 28 July they agreed to hold a summit meeting at the UN Security Council, which would be attended by America, Britain, France, the USSR and India. It was this that obviously injured Mao's pride, that India, instead of China, would attend the summit. "Nothing can be saved by yielding to evil, and coddling wrong only helps the devil", Renmin Ribao wrote sourly on 20 July.

From 31 July to 3 August, Khrushchev, clearly concerned, visited Beijing for talks with the Chinese leaders.<sup>45</sup> The communique issued at their conclusion referred to the "complete identity of views" between the

two countries and called for an urgent conference of heads of government and the immediate withdrawal of American and British troops from Lebanon and Jordan. It also added in passing that the two Communist Parties would "wage an uncompromising struggle against revisionism-the principal danger in the communist movement"<sup>46</sup> which had found its clearest manifestation in the programme of the Yugoslav League of Communists. After returning to Moscow Khrushchev sent a note to Eisenhower on 5 August, withdrawing his support for the proposed summit meeting on the grounds that the Security Council was dominated by the USA and its allies, and demanding the admission of the PRC to the UN. It was the general opinion that his sudden change of attitude was directly connected with his visit to Beijing. But if he reversed gears on this issue, he nevertheless made his other big mistake by suggesting the creation of a joint fleet.

On the Taiwan problem, Khrushchev seems to have done little better by expostulating over the dangers of imminent nuclear war. In Mao's view the United States, despite its missile bases ringing China, would not start a nuclear war because China had no intention of aggression anywhere. Equally the U.S. was not allowing Jiang control of nuclear weapons in Taiwan. But it was on this occasion that Khrushchev first hinted that China should accept an accommodation with the United States over Taiwan, promising not to use force to liberate the island.<sup>47</sup> But this again was contrary to China's principle of sovereignty.

On 23 August China began shelling Jinmen (Quemoy) and Mazu (Matsu). The first shelling, in September 1954, had not provoked massive American retaliation.<sup>48</sup> On this occasion, the initiative was an independent action taken by China, asserting a different viewpoint and forcing the Soviet Union to take its part. Indeed, Khrushchev complained that the Chinese



were trying to command Soviet foreign policy.<sup>49</sup> However, on 7 September, 14 days after the bombing of Jinmen and one day after the long-suspended American-Chinese talks had resumed, Khrushchev sent a message to Eisenhower that an attack against China would be "an attack against the USSR". On the 19th he repeated that if an aggressor should use nuclear bombs on China, the Soviet Union would use its to defend China. But by then it was clear there would be no confrontation so these efforts by Khrushchev to appear as if he was defending China against U.S. imperialism were considered by Mao to be simply a propaganda ploy. The whole incident pointed to a complete lack of co-ordination between China and the USSR in foreign affairs and to an apparent lack of clear military commitments.

At the 21st Congress of the CPSU early in 1959, no open signs of international differences between the USSR and the PRC appeared. In his report to the Congress Khrushchev suggested the creation of a nuclear free zone in the Far East and Pacific, but Zhou Enlai, the Chinese representative, totally ignored it. Nevertheless the year 1959 saw the development of two trends in Soviet foreign policy both of which gave rise to increasing apprehension and resentment in Beijing; the first was the policy of direct approach to the United States with the aim of promoting detente, and the second was the effort to cultivate close relations with India, with which China had come into conflict. As it happened, the year 1959 also saw the beginning of a most difficult time for the New China. The whole world appeared to be against it and predicted its failure. It was beset at home with climatic and agricultural disasters, besides the mistake of the Great Leap Forward. It got involved in seemingly major confrontations with both the United States and the Soviet Union. And the border conflict with India in the second half of the year brought the

differences between the USSR and the PRC over foreign policy to a head.

The good relations established between India and China between 1951 and 1956 deteriorated in 1957. India's need for massive aid from both the U.S. and the USSR dictated a policy of hostility to China. The confrontation was mainly over the Tibet problem. Technically, Tibet is internationally recognized as a region of China. Nehru recognized it as such in 1954. But in 1958 the Indians and Chinese began exchanging notes, at first polite, but gradually colder, on the parachuting of weapons and money by the CIA to the Khamba rebels in Tibet.<sup>50</sup> This led to fierce denunciation of the Indian Government by Beijing and a serious cooling-off in Sino-Indian relations. The fact that the Dalai Lama settled at Tezpur, in Indian territory, brought India back into Tibetan affairs, or as Beijing saw it, into Chinese internal affairs. Chinese suspicion strengthened when the Dalai Lama appealed to the United Nations.

The first open clash between Indian and Chinese border patrols occurred on 26 August 1959. On 6 September the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs approached its Soviet counterpart, pointing out that the USSR should not "fall into the trap prepared by Nehru", who was utilizing the Soviet Union to pressure China. On 9 September the Soviet Foreign Ministry prepared a statement on the border clash. The Chinese Foreign Ministry asked that it should not be published, because Premier Zhou was writing to Nehru requesting negotiations. Moscow ignored the Chinese request and published its statement that very night. This pointed out that the Soviet Union "maintains friendly relations with the Chinese People's Republic and the Republic of India", that the Chinese and Soviet peoples were "linked by unbreakable bonds of fraternal friendship based on the great principles of socialist internationalism", and that "friendly co-operation between the

USSR and India is developing successfully in keeping with the ideas of peaceful coexistence".<sup>51</sup> It expressed confidence that China and India would settle their misunderstandings arising out of the "deplorable" frontier incidents, and declared that "attempts to exploit these incidents...for the purpose of fanning the cold war...should be resolutely condemned".<sup>52</sup> China later declared that this "tendentious" statement provided the first public indication to the world that relations were tense.<sup>53</sup>

Did the Soviets really play a neutral part in the Sino-Indian border dispute? The answer is no. While cancelling agreements with China, the USSR increased aid its to India, so that by 1960 India had received three times the amount loaned to China.<sup>54</sup> Soviet interest in India from 1955 on, generous economic aid,<sup>55</sup> military aid, the policy of favouring New Delhi, and the clumsiness of Khrushchev's suggestion, made during the Lebanon crisis, that India should take the place of China at the summit conference inevitably excited Chinese irritation. China's reproaches were not groundless when it accused the Soviet Union of dropping all Marxist-Leninist criteria in its analysis of the Sino-Indian question and of completely abandoning proletarian internationalism.<sup>56</sup>

The Soviet repudiation on 20 June 1959 of the secret agreement of 1957 on the supply of aid to China to manufacture nuclear weapons particularly enraged the Chinese since they regarded it as "a gift for the Soviet leader to take to Eisenhower when visiting the USA in September".<sup>57</sup> But on 15 September Khrushchev had his Camp David summit with Eisenhower. However, the reasons for the Soviet attitude over India were many. There was the fear that negotiations over the disputed Sino-Indian border might lead to a demand for negotiations over the Sino-Soviet border. Secondly, Soviet long-term strategy focused on the Indian Ocean. The deliberate

choice of India as its major Asian territory for economic expansion dictated the betrayal of a "fraternal" country. There was also a coincidence: as the border clash with India escalated into bloodshed in August, an unpublicised border clash took place on the Sino-Soviet frontier in Xinjiang.<sup>58</sup>

Khrushchev and Gromyko (the Soviet Foreign Minister) arrived in Beijing on 30 September, the eve of the tenth anniversary of the Peoples' Republic. Mao Zedong met them at the airport. Khrushchev later said he was not as enthusiastic as he had been on his first visit to China in 1954. He was very well aware that the Sino-Soviet honeymoon was over and that face-to-face confrontation could appear.<sup>59</sup> His speech at the formal anniversary reception insulted his hosts. He extolled the Camp David spirit and exalted the "free exchanges" he had had with the U.S. President, whom he saw as a man who understood well the necessity for diminishing tension. He attacked the Chinese as attempting to test the stability of the capitalist system by force and as "craving for war like a cock for a fight".<sup>60</sup> He tried to soothe their impatience over Taiwan by reminding them of the precedent of the Far Eastern Republic at the end of World War I.<sup>61</sup> The Chinese refused to be associated with his statements, and various foreign witnesses reported on the extremely cold relations between him and Mao, which persisted until the first secretary of the CPSU departed.

Three days were spent in discussion behind closed doors. Khrushchev took up the Sino-Indian border clash, blaming China's aggressiveness, and refused to shake hands with Marshal Cheng Yi, the Chinese Foreign Minister, saying he disliked militarists. He emphasized the terrors of nuclear war and boasted that only the USSR could stop the U.S from making such a war upon China. For their part, the Chinese reminded Khrushchev that

the subjects to be discussed had significance for the future of the world, so that nothing must be done lightly. Zhou Enlai tried to explain the Chinese stand on the Sino-Indian border, but Khrushchev brushed the maps aside and said, "You can't make history all over again".<sup>62</sup>

As if to add insult to injury Khrushchev recalled the phrase that "When the masters quarrel, the servants shake in their shoes". This he did when he referred to "the two greatest states in the world, on whom depended war and peace".<sup>63</sup> The differences were so great between the two sides that there was no joint communique when Khrushchev left Beijing on 4 October. Later, in 1963, the Chinese, criticized the Soviet leader's attitude: "After the Camp David talks the heads of certain comrades were turned and they became more and more intemperate in their public attacks on the foreign and domestic policies of the Chinese Communist Party...They also attacked the Chinese Communist Party for its general line of socialist construction, its Great Leap Forward and its People's Communes, and they spread the slander that the Chinese Party was carrying out an 'adventurist' policy in its direction of the state."<sup>64</sup>

The American writer Anna Louise Strong saw Mao Zedong that winter.<sup>65</sup> In their talk, Mao suggested that the Soviet Union might now change colour, become "revisionist", and take the road to capitalism: "Russia will now try to strangle us, to choke us. But China will not knuckle down. It concerns our children and the children of the world's for a thousand years, whether to be slaves or free."<sup>66</sup>

Mao went on to declare that detente between the U.S. and the USSR would also entail rivalry and conflict: "they both collude and contend; never would either trust the other or sleep in peace. At each moment, everywhere, there would be confrontation...Meanwhile, neither of the two great powers

would engage in war with China, because this would mean giving a big advantage to the other. China was 'tough meat'. Of course, it was possible that both of them, together with India and Japan, would attack China. But this would mean a great deal of preparation. The Chinese people would defend themselves, and in the end there would be revolution in India and Japan, in America and Russia. The time is not far off when the Third World will rise, and the peoples of the world will throw off their chains".<sup>67</sup>

The meeting in October 1959 was the last to take place between Mao and Khrushchev. Both the PRC and the USSR were highly centralized states in which policy was to a considerable extent a reflection of the personal views of the leader. Of course, national interests and ideological factors played the more important part in the Sino-Soviet conflict. But the personal factor, the conflict between Mao Zedong and Nikita Khrushchev, must not be neglected. Mao is regarded as a poet of distinction, as a political philosopher and as a strategist full of romanticism. Khrushchev is thought of as more practical, tactical, and straight. Either way, they did not harmonise. Their personalities were important especially given the different stages of development of the two countries. Relatively speaking, the USSR was an advanced country with strong industrial and military forces. But China was still a poor and weak developing country. Moreover, the two men were burdened by the combination of their separate national interests with the principles of Marxism. There were factors enough contributing to a steady deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations. The clash of personalities simply ensured that the deterioration would be far-reaching and lasting.

## Notes: Chapter III

1. Renmin ribao 27 February 1963.
2. Maurice Meisnez, Mao's China--A History of the People's Republic, (London, 1979), Chapters 13-14.
3. Ibid..
4. Mao Zedong, "A Critique of Soviet Economics", These are the chapters in a book entitled Mao Zedong sixiang wansui, Beijing, 1969.
5. Ibid., p. 122.
6. Mao's China--A History of the People's Republic, pp. 64-84.
7. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Sino-Soviet Relations, 1945-1980, Moscow, 1980; Chinese translation, Beijing, 1982, pp. 103-108.
8. Mao Zedong, "On the Ten Major Relationships", Beijing Review, No. 1, January 1, 1977.
9. Ibid.
10. Mao Zedong, "Talks at the Chengdu Conference", Mao Zedong sixiang wansui, (Beijing, 1969), English translation, Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed 1956-1971", ed. S. Schram, (NY, 1974), p. 105.
11. Ibid., p. 98.
12. Ibid..
13. Ibid., p. 98-101.
14. Ibid., p. 101.
15. Mao's China, p. 233; according to Chinese official statistics, at the end of December 1958, a total of 26,578 communes existed, containing 123,250,000 peasant families, giving an average of 4,637 families per commune, see Ten Great Years, Foreign Language Press, Beijing, 1959.
16. Ibid., p. 229.
17. David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev, (London, 1964), pp. 63-64.
18. Khrushchev, Last Testament, Chinese translation, (Beijing, 1988) pp. 277-278.
19. Mao's China, p. 254.
20. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Moscow, 1977.
21. Izvestiya, 19 January 1958.

22. Beijing Review, No. 9, 29 April 1958.
23. Bulletin of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, No. 17, 1958, p. 668.
24. Renmin ribao, 4 August 1958.
25. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Beijing, p. 120.
26. Ibid., p. 123; also see Pravda, 27 February 1959.
27. Pravda, 8 February 1959.
28. Ibid..
29. Ibid..
30. Renmin Ribao, 24 June 1959.
31. Peng Dehuai, My Own Account, Beijing, 1979; Khrushchev, Last Testament, Chinese translation, (Beijing, 1988) p. 263.
32. Renmin Ribao, "The Origin and Development of the Differences between the leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves", 6 September 1963.
33. The English version in Chinese Law and Government, International Arts and Sciences Press, Journal of translation, No. 4, 1969, New York.
34. Khrushchev, Last Testament, p. 282.
35. Attributed to Mao, and repeated in many interviews, private talks, etc.
36. Mao's China, pp. 227-257.
37. Han Suyin, Wind in the Tower. Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution. 1949-1976, (London, 1976), p. 186.
38. Zhang Wentien was one of the original Chinese "Twenty-eight and half Bolsheviks" said to be trained in Moscow to take over the CCP in the early 1930s. Although it was said that he was together with Wang Ming against Mao in the early 1930s, he came to Mao's side later during the Long March, and became vice-minister of Foreign Affairs and a member of the Central Committee of the CCP after 1949.
39. See note 32.
40. "Resolution of the Eighth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP at Lushan", 17 August 1959, Published in August 1967, Beijing.
41. Peng's good name was restored after 1977 and his criticism of Mao's policy is regarded correct by the CCP.
42. Lin came to power in the name of against Soviet dogmatists at first and Soviet revisionists later. On 13 September 1971, it was said he died in a plane crash in the Republic of Mongolia, on the way to the Soviet Union



after he failed in a bitter power struggle with Mao.

43. Han Suyin,; Mao Zedong, "Speech at the Enlarged Session of the Military Affairs Committee and the External Affairs Conference", 11 Sept. 1959, Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed, pp. 151-152.

44. Floyd, p.67.

45. Khrushchev, Last Testament, pp.263-267.

46. Renmin Ribao, 4 August 1958.

47. According to Chinese source, Khrushchev then made suggestion to the Chinese that they should follow what the Russians did after the October Revolution in dealing with the Far Eastern Republic to solve Taiwan problem. He said that there was more than one way to solve every complicated question...for example, after the October Revolution there was established in the Soviet Far East the Far Eastern Republic, and Lenin recognized it at the time; this was a temporary concession...later it was united with Russia. Also see Han Suyin Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, p.199.

48. Detailed discussion see Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972, pp.81-116.

49. Khrushchev, Last Testament, pp.267-269.

50. Far Eastern Economic Review, Hong Kong, 5 September 1975, PP.30-34.

51. Pravda, 9 September 1959; O.Edmund Clubb, China and Russia, 1971, p.435.

52. Ibid..

53. "The Truth on the Alliance of the Leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with India against China", Renmin Ribao, 2 April 1963.

54. Han Suyin, Wind in the Tower, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, 1949-1976.

55. Jacques Gillermaz, The Chinese Communist Party in Power 1949-1976, p.265; also see "The truth on the Alliance of the Leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with India against China", Renmin Ribao, 2 April 1963.

56. Ibid.

57. It was broadcast by Beijing Radio, 15 August 1963.

58. Han Suyin, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution 1949-1976, (London, 1976), p.198.

59. Last Testament, pp.269-270.

60. Renmin Ribao, 27 February 1963.

61. See note 47.

62. Ibid..

63. Renmin ribao, 1 October 1959.

64. Renmin ribao, 27 February 1963.

65. On Hainan Island, during a brief holiday in China.

66. Miss Strong for years kept the memory of this unrecorded talk for a book she was writing, but her death at 86 (in 1970) prevented its publication. Also see Chairman Mao On World Revolution, (Beijing, 1969), Han Suyin, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, pp.199-200.

67. Ibid..

## IV.

**The Sino-Soviet Cold War (1960-1964)**

**Russia has lost an Albania, China has gained an Albania.'**

**Khrushchev**

The year 1960 was the turning-point in the development of Sino-Soviet relations. From this year the Sino-Soviet cold war started with polemics in the field of ideology, and then expanded into the field of economic and political relations. But until the end of 1962 both sides refrained from attacking each other directly. The Chinese aimed their attacks at "revisionism" in general and the Yugoslavs in particular; the Russians directed their polemics against "dogmatism" in general and the Albanians in particular.

**4.1 The Major Issues in Dispute**

From 1960 Mao Zedong became increasingly concerned about the struggle against "revisionism", partly because of deteriorating Sino-Soviet relations, partly because of what was happening inside China. With the failure of the Great Leap Forward internally and the restoration of "capitalism" in the Soviet Union externally, he began to speculate that the revolutionary order might perish and be replaced by a non-revolutionary one. New bourgeois elements were produced in a socialist society, he insisted much more than ever before, classes remained, the class struggle

persists, and "this class struggle is a protracted, complex, sometimes even violent affair"<sup>2</sup>

In the autumn of 1962 Mao raised the possibility of the restoration of the reactionary classes and warned that "a country like ours can still move toward its opposite"<sup>3</sup>, stressing particularly the necessity and inevitability of class struggle to combat the growing danger of "revisionism". He must have had the Soviet leaders in mind when he said this. But how was Khrushchev to be prevented from going ahead with his new policy? How was China to be safeguarded against Soviet influence? The Soviet Union was far too strong and self-confident, with its booming industrial production and military strength, to be turned aside by any normal methods of persuasion or diplomatic pressure. As Hudson observed, there was only one way for China to exert a compelling influence on Khrushchev, and that was by attacking him at his most vulnerable point--his standing as the supreme representative of the Marxist-Leninist cause. He was the leader of a Party that based its claim to permanent and exclusive rule over the Soviet Union and to the loyalties of Communists throughout the world on an ideology of which it had been the first successful practical exponent. If it could now be shown that the First Secretary of the CPSU was betraying the principles for which not only Stalin but also Lenin had stood, that he had in fact fallen into heresy, then the very basis of his power would be undermined and he would have at the very least to compromise with the purists of Beijing in order to save himself from anathema.<sup>4</sup>

When the Sino-Soviet conflict came into the open, the Chinese charged that "between the 20th and 22nd Congresses, the leaders of the CPSU developed an all-round system of revisionism. They put forward a

revisionist line which contravened the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, a line which consisted of 'peaceful competition', 'peaceful transition', 'peaceful coexistence', 'a state of the whole people' and 'a party of the entire people'.<sup>5</sup> The first three "P" phrases were regarded as the general line of Soviet foreign policy; and the last two were connected with Soviet domestic policy.

Over the years Chinese criticism was mainly concentrated on the following issues:

1) The Chinese rejected Khrushchev's view that war was no longer inevitable under imperialism, and held that his foreign policy involved not only rejection of the class struggle but also peace at any price.

2) They rejected his view that nuclear war would prove equally disastrous to all concerned, and put forward Mao's view that a third world war would result in further victories for communism.

3) The Chinese rejected the viewpoint that the policy of peaceful coexistence of the socialist countries should be the general line for all Communist Parties and for the international communist movement and could not be substituted by the people's revolution.

4) They adopted a sceptical attitude towards the viewpoint that peaceful coexistence could be made the general line of foreign policy for socialist countries.

5) They blamed the CPSU for violating the accepted standards of relations between fraternal parties, charging the Soviet leaders with pursuing a policy of great-power chauvinism and attempting to force fraternal countries which were backward economically to abandon industrialization and become their sources of raw materials and markets for surplus products.

6) The Chinese blamed the leaders of the CPSU for violating the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance, making a unilateral decision to withdraw 1,390 Soviet experts working in China, to tear up 343 contracts and supplementary contracts on the employment of experts, to cancel 257 projects of scientific and technical cooperation and to support anti-Party elements in the CCP.

7) They criticised the leaders of the CPSU for colluding with the United States and not wholeheartedly assisting national movements in colonial and developing countries.

8) They criticised them for abolishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, altering the proletarian character of the CPSU and opening the flood-gates for capitalist forces in the Soviet Union.

9) The Chinese rejected the Soviet view that in developing countries Communists should ally themselves with the national bourgeoisie in the struggle for national independence, which would prepare the way for the transition to socialism.

10) They adopted a sceptical attitude towards Khrushchev's view that in certain circumstances it was possible for Communist Parties to attain power by parliamentary means without revolution.

11) They accused the Soviet leaders of seeking to impose their will on the world Communist movement and on international democratic organizations, and of trying to create splits in them.

12) They opposed the Soviet repudiation of the personality cult surrounding Stalin.

Overall the Chinese accused the Soviet leaders of counterposing their revisionism to Marxism-Leninism, their great-power chauvinism and national egoism to proletarian internationalism and their sectarianism and splittism

to the international unity of the proletariat.<sup>6</sup> It was a long list and a serious challenge.

For their part, Soviet leaders were critical on the following points during the 'cold war' period:

1) They blamed the CCP for trying to isolate the USSR from the socialist camp and making use of the political and economic strength of the socialist camp to meet their own national interests.

2) They criticized the leaders of the CCP for separating national liberation movements from the USSR and other socialist countries.

3) The CPSU held that China's nationalist foreign policy seriously harmed the international Communist movement.

4) It also criticized the leaders of the CCP for undermining the policy of peaceful coexistence, sharpening international tension and accelerating a decisive military confrontation with imperialism.

5) The Soviet leaders blamed the Chinese for replacing Marxism-Leninism with Mao Zedong Thought and trying to build an independent centre for world revolution.

6) They criticized the Chinese for violating the principles of Marxism-Leninism, advocating ethnic tendencies in foreign policy and trying to provoke a war between the USSR and the USA.

7) They also criticized the Chinese for their policy on the Cuban crisis and for trying to provoke large-scale international conflicts.

8) They condemned China's position on the Sino-Indian border dispute, saying it had damaged the prestige of the socialist countries.

9) They criticized China for damaging Sino-Soviet relations and developing friendship with Japan.

10) The CPSU attacked the Chinese communes as an attempt to by-pass

certain historical stages and criticized the Great Leap Forward as adventurism.

Overall, the Soviet leaders accused the Chinese of counterposing their dogmatism to Marxism-Leninism, their ethnic and adventurist policy to proletarian internationalism, and their anti-Sovietism and splittism to the international unity of the proleteriat.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4.2 Open Conflict

In February 1960, the conference of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact was held in Moscow; Kang Sheng, the Chinese observer, made a violent criticism of the leaders of the United States, their feigned pacificism, their dream of a preaceful evolution for the socialist countries, and their repeated sabotage of disarmament. He stated that China would not be bound by any international agreement reached without its formal participation and signature. In the context, his statement appeared directed at the United States. But it naturally had an equal relevance to Soviet policy.

Almost at the same time, Khrushchev made his second tour of South and South-East Asia.<sup>8</sup> He glorified the Soviet Union on every possible occasion and made most extravagant professions of undying friendship for the peoples of India and Indonesia, but he did nothing to honour China or to present the Chinese case either in Delhi or Jakarta. The insult was symbolised by the fact that Khrushchev was in India on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty. Chinese anger at this performance expressed itself in an almost complete news boycott; the tour was not mentioned in the Chinese press for a week and thereafter was treated as a matter of no importance. The impression



produced by the Khrushchev tour was probably the last straw in causing Mao to lose patience with him and embark on a systematic campaign against him.

The first chance came on 16 April 1960. The Chinese Party journal Hong qi published a long article entitled "Long Live Leninism" commemorating Lenin's ninetieth anniversary, and forcefully stating the Chinese view on many of the issues in dispute. It leaned upon the Moscow Declaration of 1957 to condemn the modern revisionism that would contend that Marxism-Leninism was outmoded. It rejected the view that a nuclear war would destroy civilization, and declared that "on the ruins of destroyed imperialism the victorious peoples will create with tremendous speed a civilization a thousand times higher than the capitalist system, and will build a bright future".<sup>9</sup> It stated its belief that "until the imperialist system and the exploiting classes come to an end, wars of one kind or another will always appear".<sup>10</sup> Quoting Lenin in support of the view that the transition to socialism was impossible without revolutionary violence, the article advocated that all revolutionary movements should be supported "resolutely and without the least reservation".

The Soviet reply to the Chinese challenge was soon given by Otto V. Kuusinen, member of the Soviet Party Presidium, in editing a new comprehensive work "Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism". The book presented in detail the new Soviet line that "the official doctrine of Soviet foreign policy is the Leninist principle of the peaceful coexistence of states regardless of the differences in their social and political systems".<sup>11</sup> A number of pointed references to the controversy also appeared in the Soviet press in 1960 in articles commemorating the 40th anniversary of the publication of Lenin's "Left-Wing Communism". The Soviet journal Kommunist declared on 23 June that "the tendency of some political leaders to see

the policy of peaceful coexistence and the struggle for disarmament as a retreat from Marxist-Leninist positions...and the desire to show distrust for the decisions of the 20th and 21st Party Congresses regarding the policy of averting a new war in present circumstances cannot be described otherwise than as being mistaken, dogmatic and left-sectarian".

The Chinese press in turn replied vigorously to these criticisms. The Renmin Ribao asserted on 25 June that "so long as the monopoly capitalist clique continues its rule in the USA and American imperialism exists, the threat of war will not be eliminated and world peace will not be guaranteed". It also denounced the "revisionists" who, "frightened out of their wits by the imperialist blackmail of nuclear war, have exaggerated the consequences of such a war and have begged imperialism for peace at any cost".

Khrushchev's argument in favour of peaceful coexistence received a rude and unexpected setback when, on 1 May, an American U-2 spy-plane penetrated the Soviet Union and was shot down 1,200 miles inside Soviet territory. The Chinese took the chance to teach him a lesson. "We have always supported talks, but never have we nourished the slightest illusion as to the possibility of achieving a lasting peace through negotiations alone",<sup>12</sup> was how Deng Xiaoping put it.

The disagreement at the Third Congress of the Rumanian Worker's Party in Bucharest from 20 to 25 June was much more serious. Khrushchev, who was determined to pursue his policy of coexistence, launched a "surprise attack", backed by a long letter denouncing in insulting terms the CCP's bellicosity, leftism, nationalism, and Trotsky-like methods of action with regard to the CPSU.<sup>13</sup> Peng Zhen, the head of the Chinese delegation, a member of the Party's Politburo and Secretariat, replied with a protest

against the abusive use to which the CPSU put its credit when imposing its will on the other Parties and disagreed with several opinions expressed by Khrushchev; but he signed the communique at the end of the meeting.<sup>14</sup> The Central Committee of the Soviet Party, meeting on 13-16 July 1960, adopted a resolution approving the Soviet delegation's line at the Bucharest Conference, and condemning dogmatic and left-wing sectarian deviation.

The Chinese Party then replied in detail to the Soviet letter of 21 June in a letter of 10 September 1960 stating that the conflict of views went back to the 20th Congress of the CPSU of 1956, when the Soviet Party had ignored Stalin's "positive role" and had put forward a false theory of "peaceful transition" without previously consulting the other Communist Parties.<sup>15</sup>

However, with the confrontation at Bucharest, the Soviet leaders decided to make a major counter-offensive which, as the Chinese later put it, brought the ideological quarrel into the realm of state relations. This informed the Chinese government on 16 July 1960, of their decision to withdraw the following month all Soviet technicians working in China. This unilateral decision, which aroused greater resentment in China than any other action struck a crushing blow at China's economy at a time when the country was suffering from a series of natural disasters described by Beijing Radio as "without parallel in the past century", including drought, typhoons, floods, and plagues of insects. The withdrawal involved 1390 specialists, scattered among 250 enterprises. A roughly equivalent number of Chinese students and trainees in the Soviet Union also returned home. All the agreements for scientific and technical cooperation (343 contracts and 257 projects) were suspended. Two newspapers, one published in China by the Russians, the other in the USSR by the Chinese, were suppressed.<sup>16</sup>

Whatever the intention, the effect was electric. The Soviet measures were very conspicuous as well as damaging and insulting; and they made the mass of Chinese people more united than ever around the CCP, a result totally unexpected by the Soviet leaders.

The withdrawal of experts certainly inflicted serious damage on Chinese industry, especially the larger complexes. The Wuhan steel plant stopped functioning, Ashan was 80 percent paralyzed. Mikhail Klochko, a Soviet chemist (and Stalin Prize winner) who was a member of two Soviet scientific missions to China, has provided a vivid summary of the immediate economic impact of the Soviet attempt to punish the Chinese for their insubordination: "The abruptness of the withdrawal meant that construction stopped at the sites of scores of new plants and factories while work at many functioning ones was thrown into confusion. Spare parts were no longer available for plants built according to Russian design, and mines and electric power stations developed with Russian help were closed down. Development of new undertakings was abandoned because the Russians simultaneously cancelled contracts for the delivery of plans and equipment. A planned power and irrigation project for the Yellow River, which frequently overflows its banks, was one of those which had to be abandoned."<sup>17</sup>

The main reason put forward for the decision was that the experts working in China had been ill-treated.<sup>18</sup> Yet the move surprised and shocked the Russian specialists as much as it did to the Chinese. In the words of Klochko, "As one of those who was suddenly and surprisingly ordered home in 1960, I can testify that all of the anger at the move was not limited to the Chinese. Without exception my fellow scientists and the other Soviet specialists whom I knew in China were extremely upset at being recalled

before the end of their contracts. Like myself, others must have had difficulty hiding their amazement when told by Soviet representatives in Beijing that dissatisfaction with our living and working conditions was an important reason for our recall. In fact few of us had ever lived better in our lives than we did in China. Our Chinese hosts were even more mystified; again and again they asked why we were leaving and whether anything could be done to prevent our going. The suddenness with which events developed indicated that the decision was irreversible. The first telegrams giving us the news arrived in mid-July 1960. By late August the hundreds of scientists, engineers, and technicians who had been scattered throughout China had departed with their families. At the beginning of September not a single Soviet citizen remained in China, apart from diplomats and a few trade officials." 19

The alleged mistreatment of Soviet specialists was clearly not by itself enough to have brought the Soviet decision. The real reason was quite different, revealed by a journalist's question. Writing "On Lenin's Teaching on the Victory of Socialism and the Present Day" in Pravda Vostoka of 23 August, S. Titarenko asked, "Can one imagine socialism being successfully built in present-day circumstances even in such a mighty country as, say, China if that country is in an isolated position and not supported by the cooperation and mutual assistance of all the other socialist countries?" He then proceeded to answer his own question: "that country would be subjected simultaneously to economic blockade and military blows, and even if it were able to withstand the enemy onslaught, it would experience the most formidable internal difficulties." This expressed the real hope of the Soviet leaders. The Chinese would retreat because they could not survive in a hostile relationship both with the United States and with

the Soviet Union simultaneously and thus isolated from the two major world power centres.

But Khrushchev was really wrong this time. Mao had committed an enormous blunder in launching the Great Leap in 1958 and had come into bitter conflict with some of his old comrades in 1959. The quarrel with Khrushchev was patently Mao's quarrel. He doubtless felt that he could not, upon the departure of the Soviet specialists, promptly admit a major error in the field of foreign affairs to top his blunder at home. He had no other ways to go but continuing to fight, mainly for himself. But Khrushchev's particular decision had given him an excellent opportunity to get people more united around him in support of his own policy. His call for self-reliance found a deep echo among the Chinese people.<sup>20</sup>

A conference of Eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties was held in Moscow from 11 to 23 November 1960. At the preparatory gatherings the Chinese submitted a draft with five proposals which asked for strict adherence to the Declaration and Manifesto of the 1957 meeting; respect for the equality among all Communist Parties and all socialist countries; settlement of all disputes through comradely and unhurried discussion on all important questions of common concern; a clear demarcation between imperialism, the enemy, and socialist countries; and adequate and full preparation for "a programme of united struggle against imperialism".<sup>21</sup> The Chinese delegation was prestigious: Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zheng, Kang Sheng and many others. By contrast, the original draft proposals submitted by the Soviet side banned "factionalism", reiterated the "peaceful transition" theory, and made majority decisions binding upon all parties.

The Chinese position was stated on 14 November by Deng Xiaoping, who

accused the "modern revisionists" of violating the 1957 Declaration and of capitulating to imperialism. He insisted that the minority could not be bound by majority decisions because the minority was sometimes right and what applied inside a party could not apply between fully equal and independent parties. Deng Xiaoping cited Lenin, who had been in the minority in his great battle against revisionism in the Second International, yet had been correct. Voluminous articles in the Chinese press explained what the debate was about. Their principal target was the concept of peaceful transition to socialism.<sup>22</sup>

After weeks of wrangling and hours of speeches, a document emerged from the Conference containing clauses which Mao still considered too much of a compromise. "We made it plain at the time to the leaders of the CPSU that this would be the last occasion we accommodated ourselves to such a formulation from the 20th Congress; we would never do so again".<sup>23</sup>

The final statement, therefore, referred both to armed struggle and to the peaceful parliamentary road to socialism, but did not make a commitment to the latter binding upon Communist Parties, as Khrushchev had sought. The sovereignty of each socialist country was reasserted, and the socialist camp was defined as comprising "social, economic and political cooperation between sovereign states".<sup>24</sup> The CPSU was referred to as only the vanguard, not the leader of the world movement. So in the first major battle of the open conflict, it was the Chinese who won. The Moscow Conference was an obvious victory for Mao, although he still thought the Chinese had made compromises. In Moscow in January 1961 Khrushchev appeared very conciliatory in a speech at the Supreme Soviet: "We must not talk about who won or who lost at this Eighty-one Parties Conference".<sup>25</sup>

On reflection, there were at least three significant features of the 1960

Conference. The first was that the Russians and the Chinese had failed, after long and exhaustive discussions, to compose their differences on ideological questions; the second was that the Russians had to make concessions to the Chinese on the question of "fractionalism" and "revisionism" although they had no doubt about getting a voting majority; the third was that, for the first time in thirty years, the leaders of world Communism were faced with real political issues upon which they had to take a position. It was a development welcome to the Chinese, but less welcome to the Russians.

#### 4.3 Albania and Yugoslavia as Pawns

After the Moscow Conference, neither the Russians nor the Chinese lost much time in making it clear that they were unchanged in their basic views. The continued difference in their positions was largely expressed by their contrasting attitudes towards Albania and Yugoslavia.

From the beginning of 1961 co-operation between China and Albania was substantially strengthened. On 2 February they signed a treaty of commerce and navigation, an agreement for a Chinese loan to Albania and four other documents.<sup>26</sup> The press communique on the Albanian delegation's visit to Beijing emphasized the two governments' complete agreement on ideological questions. Both parties would "oppose modern revisionism represented by the Tito clique in Yugoslavia".<sup>27</sup>

On 23 April, following talks between government economic delegations China and Albania signed three further documents, which included: a protocol on the complete range of equipment and technical assistance to be provided by China; an agreement on the living conditions for specialists, technicians and trainees staying in each other's country; and a second



protocol on the use of the Chinese loan from February 1961. Notes on the supply of grains and other foodstuffs by China were also exchanged.<sup>28</sup> The Chinese Government would grant Albania credits totalling 112.5 million rubles (\$123 million) spread over four years. Later in the year China purchased 60,000 tons of wheat from Canada, at a cost of some \$3 million, and had it shipped to Albania.<sup>29</sup>

Relations between the USSR and Albania, on the other hand, deteriorated in 1961, and eight Soviet submarines which had been stationed at a base off the Albanian coast were withdrawn in May. In the summer, Albania was deprived of aid, experts and machinery as China had been. The really big clash occurred in October at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU. Khrushchev attacked the Albanians by name. The USSR, he said, would not give in to Albanian dogmatists nor to anyone else on questions of principle. Since it had not been invited, the Albanian Party did not take part in the Congress. So its naming, a deliberate provocation, was a very serious matter.

The Chinese response was firm. On 19 October Zhou Enlai, while asserting Albania's continuing membership of the socialist camp, made it clear that "a dispute or difference arising between fraternal parties should be resolved patiently...in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. Any public, one-sided censure of any fraternal party does not help unity".<sup>30</sup> He then left the platform without shaking hands with Khrushchev. The next morning he went to Moscow's Red Square to lay wreaths on the tombs of Stalin and Lenin, and the following day he left for Beijing where he and was received at the airport by Mao Zedong in person as a gesture of approval for the stand he had taken.

Within a fortnight the body of Stalin was removed from Red Square, an act which was intended primarily as a reply by the Soviet leaders to Zhou

Enlai's wreath-laying, and was a guarantee that such "Stalinist" gestures would not be possible in Moscow in future.

The rift with the Albanian Party was also completed. On 20 October it issued a statement replying to Khrushchev's charges and for the first time criticising him by name. And at the end of November the Soviet government informed the Albanian that it would withdraw its ambassador from Tirana and required the Albanian ambassador to leave Moscow. This showed Khrushchev not only used attacks on Albanian Communists to demonstrate how far he was prepared to go in defence of his policies, but also tried to sever governmental relations as well.

The Soviet treatment of Albanian was in fact of great significance for relations within the Communist world, for by severing Party and state relations with Albania, Khrushchev arrogated to himself the right to decide unilaterally which country was and which was not socialist. By refusing to have the Albanians attend the 22nd Congress in Moscow, by keeping them out of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon, and by cutting off all diplomatic and commercial relations, Khrushchev had in fact imposed his will on the socialist camp. Thus, in practice, the criterion of whether a country was socialist or not was how it conducted its relations with Moscow.

While excluding the Albanian Communists for their lack of subordination, Khrushchev tried hard to draw the Yugoslavs back into the socialist camp for the very simple reason that they were better disposed towards Moscow. The first sign of Moscow's intention to improve relations with Yugoslavia came at the end of March 1961 when the Soviet and Yugoslav Governments signed a five-year trade agreement. The Russians undertook to supply considerable quantities of equipment and raw materials for Yugoslav

industry, in exchange for the products of Yugoslav factories. In July the same year, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Koca Popovic, visited Moscow and had talks with Khrushchev, Mikoyan and Gromyko. A communique was issued saying that the views of the two governments were similar or coincided on major international questions. Although Gromyko did not visit Belgrade until April 1962, it was quite clear that early in 1961 a decision had been taken to restore relations with Yugoslavia whatever the Moscow statement of 1960 said or the Chinese might think. Though the Soviet leaders had many reasons for wanting better relations with Yugoslavia, it was clear that their main motive was deliberately to provoke the Chinese. It was Khrushchev's way of trying to force the Chinese to yield. He used the same ploy over India. The Chinese reaction was almost automatic - an intensification of anti-Yugoslav propaganda in China. On 28 September 1962, the Central Committee of the CCP issued a statement violently attacking "the Tito clique", which, it declared, had "become still more despicable in betraying the cause of Communism and meeting the needs of imperialism".<sup>31</sup>

#### 4.4 Intensification of the Polemics and the Dispute

Five events in the year 1962 -- the re-establishment of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia; the curtailment of relations between it and Albania; the Cuban crisis; the Sino-Indian war and the Sino-Soviet border conflict -- led to a intensification of polemics between the two rivals.

It was in the autumn that major crises occurred in the foreign affairs of both China and the Soviet Union. On the one hand, China had a further border conflict with India; and, on the other, the Soviet Union had a

dangerous confrontation with the United States over Cuba.

The Indian Prime Minister, Nehru, continued to refuse border negotiations except on his own terms, and he also continued to lay claim to large tracts of territory which had not previously been included in maps of India.<sup>32</sup> In August the Indian Defence Minister, Krishna Menon, announced that the Russians had concluded an agreement for the manufacture of MIG fighters in India, a fact which was carefully recorded in the Beijing press on 17-18 August. This must have seemed to the Chinese an almost perfect issue through which to expose Khrushchev's "revisionism" in practice. For he was giving, not only substantial economic aid, but military aid as well to a country which did not pretend to be Communist or even an ally of the Communist countries, and which, moreover, was in a state of suspended conflict with its neighbour China. Whose side was Khrushchev on?

On 8 October 1962, the Soviet ambassador in Beijing was told by the Chinese Foreign Ministry that India was about to launch a massive attack on the frontier. Soviet helicopters and planes were being used for transporting military supplies to the border. On 10 October there were patrol clashes occurred; on 12 October Nehru instructed the Indian Eastern Command to "drive out" the Chinese; on 14 October Renmin Ribao published a formal appeal: "Mr. Nehru, it is time to withdraw from the brink of the precipice";<sup>33</sup> on 20 and 24 October the Chinese made proposals for the peaceful disengagement of troops, a cease-fire and negotiations. India ignored the call and on 20 October launched a massive advance. By 16 November the Chinese counter-attack had pushed the Indian troops back and penetrated into Indian territory. The world clamoured "aggression". On 21 November the Chinese unilaterally ordered a cease-fire and withdrew their troops to twenty kilometers behind the line of actual control as it existed

on 7 November 1959. They then announced the freeing of captured personnel and the return of all equipment without compensation.<sup>34</sup> An appeal for the resumption of negotiations was made by Zhou Enlai.

On 25 November Pravda seemed to turn tail when it wrote that the attack had been from the Indian side and that the proposals from the Chinese Government were "constructive". On 12 December Khrushchev followed suit at the Supreme Soviet: "These areas...have very little population...it is possible to believe that India wants war".<sup>35</sup>

Border clashes between the USSR and the PRC also took place in the summer of 1962 in Xinjiang. "In April and May 1962," according to the Chinese version, "the leaders of the CPSU used their organs and personnel in Xinjiang, China, to carry out large-scale subversive activities in the Illi region and enticed and coerced several tens of thousands of Chinese citizens into going to the Soviet Union".<sup>36</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter the incident represented a heightening of tension.

Almost at same time, the Cuban missile crisis brought the USSR and the United States to the verge of nuclear war. With the apparent expansion of American worldwide power, Khrushchev designed the Cuba manoeuvre to increase his prestige and make the USSR an equal and the sole valid partner of the USA in a dual hegemony over the globe. On 22 October President Kennedy stated that he had unmistakable evidence of the installation in Cuba of Soviet missile sites capable of delivering nuclear warheads to large areas of the USA and Central America. The decision to blockade Cuba, to inspect all Soviet ships on the high seas, and to prepare for war was announced soon afterward. At the end of a tense week, the crisis was resolved by the Soviet removal of its missiles from Cuba. Moscow claimed that the USSR had obtained assurances from Kennedy that neither the

United States nor other Western countries would invade Cuba.<sup>37</sup> Khrushchev said in his report to the Supreme Soviet on 12 December that the Soviet Union had achieved what it had set out to do. And in passing he criticized the Albanian leaders, meaning the Chinese, for trying to bring on a clash between the Soviet Union and the United States.<sup>38</sup>

But the Chinese saw the matter very differently. They blamed the Soviet leaders for having placed missiles in Cuba in the first instance, condemning the action as foolish adventurism. They then condemned Soviet capitulation to the threat of American military action: "In contrast to the imperialists, socialist countries have no need to use nuclear weapons for blackmail or gambling and must not to do so...The Soviet leaders never weary of asserting that there was a thermonuclear war crises in the Caribbean Sea...But before the Soviet Union sent rockets into Cuba, there did not exist a crises either of the US using nuclear weapons nor of a nuclear war breaking out".<sup>39</sup>

After the Cuban affair Mao Zedong was indignant; he realized that Khrushchev's course was set. The Albanians warned that true Marxists could not coexist with revisionists in the same Party. It was at this time that the decision was taken by Mao to expose Khrushchev and revisionism both abroad and at home. Mao made a widespread call for the overthrow of Khrushchev's leadership. As he said at a Party conference in 1962: "The Soviet Union was the first socialist country, and the Soviet Communist Party was the Party created by Lenin. Although the Party and the state leadership of the Soviet Union have now being usurped by the revisionists, I advise our comrades to believe firmly that the broad masses, the numerous Party members and cadres of the Soviet Union are good; that they want

revolution, and that the rule of the revisionists will not last long."<sup>40</sup>

The stage was thus set for a new battle in the political war between Beijing and Moscow. From November 1962 to January 1963 the Bulgarian, Hungarian, Czechoslovakian, Italian, and East German Parties held their respective congresses, and both Soviet and Chinese delegations attended all of them. There were fierce debates about Albania and about the Soviet-Yugoslav reconciliation.<sup>41</sup> Tito paid a formal visit to Moscow in December and was warmly received. The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia had drawn closer together; the Soviet Union and China were moving farther apart. This led, between 15 December 1962 and 8 March 1963, to a first series of seven explicit articles appeared in Renmin Ribao: "Proletarians of All Countries Unite Against the Common Enemy" (15 December 1962); "The Difference Between Comrade Togliatti and Us" (31 December 1962); "Leninism and Modern Revisionism" (5 January 1963); "Let Us Unite Under the Banner of the Moscow Declaration and Statement" (27 January 1963); "Where the Differences Come From: A Reply to Maurice Thorez" (27 February 1963); "More on the Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us" (4 March 1963); "Comments on the Statement of the Communist Party of the United States" (8 March 1963). A little later two articles appeared that were particularly concerned with the attitude of the socialist camp to the Indian question: "A Mirror for Revisionists" (9 March 1963) and "The Truth about How the Leaders of the CPSU Have Allied Themselves with India Against China" (2 November 1963). All these articles defined Beijing's fundamental position on many questions, and made clear how deep the Sino-Soviet dispute had become - as well as making it deeper.

Oddly enough - or not so oddly in view of his difficulties at home after Cuba - Khrushchev called almost politely, in February 1963, for a

cessation of polemics. China appeared to agree. Mao received the Soviet ambassador, Chervonenko, on 23 February, and was given a letter from the CPSU (dated 21 February) proposing a meeting between representatives of the two parties.<sup>42</sup> The CCP accepted on 9 March.<sup>43</sup> On 30 March the CPSU suggested that the meeting be held in mid-May. Beijing proposed mid-June. On 14 June, the Chinese launched a most important document, "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement", which was intended as a reply to the opinions stated in Khrushchev's letter dated 30 March. It is a full statement of the Chinese case. It did not mention Khrushchev by name, but it criticized indirectly his positions on numerous points of doctrine or practical questions.<sup>44</sup> On 18 June 1963, the Central Committee of the CPSU in a plenary session announced that the Chinese letter would not be published in the Soviet Union "at the present time" as it was "unwarranted...groundless and slanderous".<sup>45</sup> Three Chinese embassy officials and some students were expelled for distributing copies of it, an incident which ensured that the Sino-Soviet meeting would take place in an unfavourable atmosphere. In any case the exchange of letters had already prejudiced a reasonable conclusion.

Nevertheless, the meeting began on 5 July. Deng Xiaoping headed the Chinese delegation. The Soviet Party was represented by Mikhail Suslov, Yury Andropov, Boris Ponomaryov, Leonid Ilyichev, and the Soviet ambassador in Beijing, Stepan Chervonenko. With this level of representation, it was a great opportunity. But on 20 July the talks were adjourned - a failure. The Chinese delegation returned home almost immediately. The basic reason for the failure was clearly the irreducible gap between the real positions of the two Parties, with their different interpretations of doctrinal formulae common to the Declaration of 1957 and the Statement of 1960.



Another reason was the prospect of the treaty shortly to be signed (25 July) by Britain, America and the Soviet Union on the partial suspension of nuclear tests, which Beijing tried in vain to oppose. It would have been extremely humiliating for the Chinese to be in Moscow at the same time as the Western parties to the agreement. Their resentment and their point of view were fully expressed in the statement on 31 July.<sup>46</sup>

Before the CCP delegation left Moscow, on 14 July, the Soviet reply to its letter of 14 June was issued in the form of an open letter, accusing the Chinese leaders of being prepared to sacrifice hundreds of millions of lives, of belittling Soviet aid, wishing for world war, and thinking that "wearing rope sandals and eating watery soup...is communism".<sup>47</sup> On 19 July a spokesman for the Chinese Central Committee said ironically that both the 14 June and 14 July letters would be broadcast in many languages. The Soviet letter was "a remarkable piece of work". To quote a Chinese poem: "A remarkable work should be enjoyed together, and dubiety scrutinized in company". It was "superlative material for learning by negative example".<sup>48</sup> The full text of the Soviet letter was published in Renmin Ribao on 20 July, together with an editorial note which declared that "the methods used in the letter are the distortion of facts and the reversal of right and wrong--methods which Marxists-Leninists can in no circumstances tolerate". For its part, Pravda in September denounced the "neo-Trotskyist" Chinese leadership and called for a conference to "rebuff the schismatics", saying that fifty-two parties, in great indignation at the Chinese attacks, had asked for this move.<sup>49</sup> The intended meeting of reconciliation had in fact increased the mutual hostility.

Mao kept up a great flood of comments on the ideological positions of Khrushchev. According to his own statements, he had three purposes: one was

the genuine one of "talking revisionism to death"; another was to force all communists in the world to question themselves and clarify their own minds; and the third was to teach the Chinese people and the "revisionists" at home. From 15 August 1963 to 14 July 1964, there were nine documents, all in reply to the Soviet letter of 14 July: "The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves" (6 September 1963); "On the Question of Stalin" (13 September 1963); "Is Yugoslavia a Socialist Country?" (26 September 1963); "Apologists of Neo-colonialism" (22 October 1963); "Two Different Lines on the Question of Peace and War" (19 November 1963); "Peaceful Coexistence--Two Diametrically Opposed Polemics" (12 December 1963); "The Leaders of the CPSU Are the Greatest Splitters of Our Time" (4 February 1964); "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchev's Revisionism" (31 March 1964); and "On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World" (14 July 1964). These materials are of course as valuable as for the history of the Sino-Soviet relations and Chinese modern history.

Mao was certainly merciless. In comment No.4, "Apologists of Neo-colonialism", he denounced Khrushchev as a lackey of imperialism, wanting to share in a dual hegemony to enslave the world. To someone who asked him, "when will these polemics cease?", he answered, "The sky won't fall, trees will grow, women will have children and fish will swim, even if we go on forever," and then added that it might take "ten thousand" years.<sup>51</sup> By contrast, increasingly troubled within the Soviet Union, Khrushchev was somewhat contrite. In October 1963 he offered to end open polemics between the two countries, to deliver again industrial equipment and spare parts, and to return the technicians to China. He also offered to negotiate the troublesome Sino-Soviet border dispute, which had started with the

clashes in 1959 and 1962 in Xinjiang.<sup>52</sup>

As early as 8 March 1963, Renmin Ribao had recalled nine unequal treaties which former Chinese governments had been forced to sign. The Soviet position was that the "unequal treaties" must be accepted as binding and legal, for "no-one makes history all over again".<sup>53</sup> The Chinese standpoint was that China would never recognize the unequal treaties as equal, though it was ready to accept them as a basis for an overall settlement of the frontier. Meanwhile the status quo should be preserved. Boundary negotiations actually began in Beijing in February 1964, but they were suspended without result in May. Then on 10 July, speaking to a Japanese Socialist Party delegation, Mao Zedong brought up the Siberian frontier question.<sup>54</sup> Thereupon each side accused the other of systematic border violations.

Pravda fiercely attacked Mao's Japanese interview on 2 September: "Mao Zedong's pronouncements on the territorial question patently show how far the Chinese leaders have gone in the 'cold war' against the Soviet Union. He is not only claiming this or that part of Soviet territory, but is portraying his claims as a part of some 'general territorial question.' We are faced with an openly expansionist program with far-reaching pretensions."<sup>55</sup> Under such circumstance it was impossible for the Chinese to accept Khrushchev's tentative olive-branch.

In a letter of reply, the Chinese blamed the Russians for withdrawing experts and scrapping contracts in 1960 and causing enormous damage to Chinese industrialization.<sup>56</sup> "For many years we have been paying the principal and interest on these Soviet loans", said the letter; Russian aid was "neither a one-way affair nor gratis", the repayments of food products alone amounted to more than two billion rubles, and in minerals

and rare metals essential for missile production 1.4 billion rubles. "Now you have again suggested sending experts...To be frank, the Chinese people no longer trust you...You have for years used trade for political pressure...You violate the independence and sovereignty of fraternal countries...oppose their efforts to develop their economy independently".<sup>57</sup> As far as concerned to the Soviet desire to stop the polemics, the Chinese answer was to try to talk revisionism to death. The war of words continued briefly.

From the autumn of 1963 to the summer of 1964, Sino-Soviet relations were dominated by the question of a further conference of Communist and Worker's Parties proposed by Khrushchev, now more determined than ever to have the Chinese doctrines and leaders condemned. On 14 February 1964, Suslov, who had had a long and bitter controversy with Deng Xiaoping in 1960, prepared an indictment, in the form of a letter sent to all Communist Parties except the CCP, openly advocating the toppling of Mao at an international conference. "There must be...a struggle against the Trotskyite views and sectarian and undermining activities of the Chinese leaders".<sup>58</sup> It was not published in the Soviet press until 3 April because the Romanians tried to mediate for some weeks.<sup>59</sup> But on 31 March Mao's comment No. 8, "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchev's Revisionism", called Khrushchev the greatest capitulationist in history and advised "leading comrades" of the Soviet Party to throw him "on the rubbish heap of history". Khrushchev counter-attacked with his strongest comments yet on Mao in Budapest in April, accusing him of "hegemony", irresponsible gambling, great China chauvinism, and so on.<sup>60</sup> On 28 July the Chinese Party definitely rejected the calling of a world Party conference, dubbing it a "schismatic meeting" whose purpose was to split the international Communist

movement.<sup>61</sup> The name-calling reached a crescendo when two days later, on 30 July, the CPSU invited twenty-five Communist Parties to send delegations to Moscow to plan for a world conference in 1965; and in August the Chinese reprinted all Khrushchev's pro-Stalin speeches and opportunistic statements. Both sides had previously intensified their radio propaganda, and by 1964 Moscow radio was broadcasting for 70 hours a week and Beijing radio for 63 hours.

There were specific internal and external grievances between China and the Soviet Union. The 'cold war' atmosphere was also fuelled by a deep-seated ideological dispute with domestic implications for both Parties and both leaders. But it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the actual polemics had taken on a life of their own, preventing attempted reconciliations and promoting further tension.

#### 4.5 Sino-Soviet Economic Relations and their Interaction with Politics

Economic considerations in these years lost much of their significance as an indicator of and a factor in Sino-Soviet relations; the political aspects were both more publicised and, as the dispute intensified, more important. But in fact Sino-Soviet economic co-operation deteriorated - for several reasons.

First, from 1959 to 1961, the Chinese economy had been struck by an unprecedented series of natural disasters in which over half of China's arable land had been more or less seriously affected. Droughts, floods and disease had had a disastrous effect on crops, bringing famine and suffering to the whole nation. The Chinese leadership had been forced to change their economic policy and particularly to abandon the Great Leap

Forward, though their position in the country had not been called into question. At the same time, they had been made even more dependent upon Soviet economic aid, a situation Khrushchev had attempted to make use of to bring economic pressure to bear on them for political reasons. However, 1960 was a turning-point not only in Sino-Soviet political relations, but also in economic relations. As a result of the unilateral Soviet decision to withdraw specialists and cancel contracts with China, Sino-Soviet economic co-operation was greatly damaged.

Secondly, the Chinese government had to take emergency measures to overcome the effects of the natural disasters and man-made difficulties. The 9th Plenary Meeting of the CCP Central Committee held in January 1961 decided to curtail the scope of capital construction and to adjust rates of development. The measures proceeded in accordance with a policy of taking "agriculture as the foundation of the economy and industry as the leading sector" formally adopted at the Plenum. This implied a massive suspension of work at enterprises, and from mid-1961 the termination of capital construction in industry and transport. All this reduced the need for Soviet deliveries and technical assistance.

Thirdly, from the Soviet point of view, in the midst of international political rivalry with China, it would have been troublesome to subsidise competition in socialist construction. So the Soviet Union was unwilling to extend assistance that would reduce its own pace of development or provide for a rate of Chinese growth faster than its own. This was an attitude that became more rigid as time went on.

Fourthly, the Chinese began to complain about the inferior quality of Soviet goods. In February 1964, in responding to the alleged Soviet desire to expand commercial relations, Mao claimed: "We can do a little business,

but we can't do too much, for Soviet products are heavy, crude and high-priced, and they always keep something back. So it's not so good to deal with them as with the French bourgeoisie, who still have some notion of business ethics."<sup>62</sup> For all these reasons China's trade pattern and economic development programme changed significantly:

a) Its previous reliance upon the Soviet Union as a major trading partner sharply decreased, and its trade was not allowed to go above the limit necessary to amortise outstanding debts;

b) From the beginning of 1961, in order to cope with repeated crop failures, it bought various surplus grains from the major Western producers, especially Canada and Australia;

c) China's foreign trade began to be determined more by commercial motives such as the search for foreign exchange and better credit terms, standards of quality, and effectiveness, than by politics.<sup>63</sup>

Consequently, in 1960, the turnover of Sino-Soviet trade decreased by 19 per cent from the 1959 level. Soviet exports fell by 14 per cent, and imports by 23 percent,<sup>64</sup> and the conclusion of a long-term trade agreement was put off for an indefinite period. In 1961 the reduction in the economic co-operation between the two countries continued. Under the agreement of 19 June the Soviet Union would give China technical assistance in building only 66 projects for the period 1961-1965. As a result in 1961 Soviet deliveries of complete plant and equipment was reduced to one-fifth of the 1960 volume.<sup>65</sup> Towards the end of 1962, business relations reached an all-time low in every field. The volume of economic co-operation was roughly equivalent to only 5 percent of the 1959 volume. Supplies of Soviet equipment, materials, technical facilities and documents were reduced to 41-42 million rubles as against 428 million

rubles in 1960. Supplies of complete plant amounted to 7.8-8 million rubles as compared with 336.5 million rubles in 1959.<sup>66</sup>

The turnover of trade was down to 599 million rubles in 1963, roughly equivalent to that of 1950, a reduction of 20 per cent. The Soviet Union's share of China's foreign trade in 1963 fell to 23 per cent as against 29 per cent in 1962 and 50 per cent in 1959.<sup>67</sup> The figures set-out below illustrate how economic factors reflected political, and how one issue governing Sino-Soviet relations affected another.

	Soviet exports to China	Soviet imports from China	Turnover
	(in million U.S. dollars) <sup>68</sup>		
1960	817.00	848.00	1665.00
1961	367.33	551.00	918.33
1962	233.31	515.82	749.13
1963	187.20	412.75	599.95
1964	135.20	314.20	449.40



## Notes: Chapter IV

1. David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev, (London, 1964), p.130.
2. Mao Zedong, "Talk at an Enlarged Central Work Conference", English translation, see Mao Zedong Unrehearsed, p.168.
3. Mao Zhushi lun jieji he jieji douzheng", (Beijing, 1969).
4. G.F. Hudson, The Sino-Soviet Dispute, 1961, published by The China Quarterly, p.6.
5. The Leaders of the CPSU Are the Greatest Splitters of Our Times, Foreign Languages' Press, Beijing, 1964.
6. See Jiu Ping, Beijing, 1964, especially Yi Ping, "The Origin and Development of the Difference Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves" (6 Sept. 1963); Si Ping, "Apologists of Neo-colonialism" (22 Oct. 1963); Wu Ping, "Two Different Lines on the Question of War and Peace" (19 Nov. 1963); Ba Ping, "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchev's Revisionism" (4 Feb. 1964).
7. See "Letter from CPSU Central Committee to CCP Central Committee" (30 March 1963); "Open Letter of the CPSU Central Committee" (14 July 1963); "Soviet Government Statement" (21 August 1963); O.B. Borisov and B.T. Koloskov, Sino-Soviet Relations 1945-1980, Moscow, 1980.
8. G.F. Hundon, The Sino-Soviet Dispute, p.7.
9. "Long Live Leninism", Hong Qi, 16 April 1960, Beijing.
10. Ibid..
11. Otto V. Kuusinen, Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, (London, 1961), p.581.
12. Deng Xiaoping's internal talks, 1960.
13. "Khrushchev's Bucharest Speech", Soviet News, (London: Soviet Embassy), 22 June, No.4292, 1960.
14. Peng Zhen's speech at Bucharest Conference--22 June, Beijing Review, No.26, 1960.
15. Renmin ribao, 10 September 1960.
16. "The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves--Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU (1)", Renmin ribao and Hongqi, 6 Sept. 1963.

17. "Sino-Soviet Split--Withdrawal of Soviet Specialists", International Journal (Toronto), Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (Summer 1971), p. 559. Klochko, needless to say, did not write his recollections of the event in the Soviet Union. He was granted political asylum in Canada in 1961.

18. Khrushchev, Last Testament, Chinese translation, Beijing, 1988, p. 270; O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Sino-Soviet Relations 1945-1980, Moscow, 1980; Chinese translation, Beijing, 1982, pp. 210-212.

19. See note 17, p. 556.

20. Many Chinese publications described the situation at that time, e.g. Xinhua yuebao, Renmin wenxue, and Xinhua wenzhe, etc.

21. "The 1960 Moscow Statement", World Marxist Review, December 1960.

22. See "The Path of the Great October Revolution is the Common Path of the Liberation of Mankind", Hongqi, No. 20-21, 1960; "Hold High the Red Banner of the October Revolution. March from Victory to Victory", Renmin ribao, 7 November 1960; etc.

23. "The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves", Comment on the open letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU (1), 6 September 1963, Renmin ribao.

24. "The 1960 Moscow Statement", World Marxist Review, December 1960, Moscow.

25. Han Suyin, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, (London, 1976) p. 227.

26. Beijing Review, No. 6, 10 February 1961.

27. Ibid..

28. Beijing Review, No. 17, April 28, 1961.

29. Mao Against Khrushchev, pp. 140-141.

30. Wei Ling, Dierci shijie dazhanhou guoji guanxi dashiji, 1945-1979 (Chronology of Major Events in International Relations Since the Second World War), (Beijing, 1983), pp. 282-283.

31. Renmin ribao (RMRB), 28 September 1962.

32. "The Revolution in Tibet and Nehru's Philosophy", RMRB, 6 May 1959.

33. RMRB, 14 October 1962.

34. "Truth About How CPSU Leaders Ally With India Against China", Beijing Review, No. 45, 1963.

35. ibid.

36. Nearly 60,000 people between April and August 1962; also see "Yi Ping", RMRB, 6 September 1963; George Moseley, A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier, the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Chou, Harvard East Asian Monographs, Cambridge, Mass. 1966.

37. See note 30, p. 301.

38. Collection of Khrushchev's Statements, Shijie Zhishi Press, Beijing, 1964.

39. "On the Statement of the Communist Party of the USA", 8 March 1963, RMRB; the Soviet attitude towards the Cuban crisis, see "Open Letter of CC of CPSU to Party Organization and All Communists of the Soviet Union", Pravda, 14 July 1963.

40. Detailed discussion see David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev, pp. 325-371. Also see Chinese source: "Statement of the Chinese Delegation to the 12th Congress of Czechoslovak Communist Party", 8 December 1962, RMRB; "Workers of All Countries Unite, Oppose Our Common Enemy", 15 December 1962, RMRB; "The Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us", 31 December 1962, RMRB; "Leninism and Modern Revisionism", 5 January 1963, Hongqi; Chinese delegate Wu Xuzhuan's speech at Six Congress of East German Communist Party, 18 January 1963, RMRB; "Let Us Unite on the Basis of the Moscow Declaration and Statement", 27 January 1963, etc. Russian source: "Strengthen the Unity of the Communist Movement for the Triumph of Peace and Socialism", Pravda, 7 January 1963, the article replied to Chinese criticism on all main points and for the first time named the Chinese communists as the opponents in the dispute, it defended the Yugoslav communists and the policy of rapprochement with Yugoslavia; "For Marxist-Leninist Unity of the Communist movement, for Close Relations between the Countries of socialism", Pravda, 10 February 1963, etc.

41. RMRB, 24 February 1963; slightly shortened English translation of the letter see Mao Against Khrushchev, pp. 371-374.

42. XHA, 14 March 1963.

43. It is entitled as "A Proposals Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement", also known as letter in twenty-five points, Foreign Language Press, 1963, Beijing, the main idea of the letter is as following: 1) The general line of the international communist movement must take as its guiding principle the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory concerning the historical mission of the proletariat and must not depart from it; 2) the general line of the international communist movement at the present stage is Moscow Declaration and the Statement, that is, workers of all countries, unite; workers of the world, unite with the oppressed peoples and oppressed nations; oppose imperialism and reaction in all countries; strive for world peace, national liberation, people's democracy and socialism; consolidate and expand the socialist camp; bring the proletarian world revolution step by step to complete victory; and establish a new world without imperialism, without capitalism and without the exploitation of man by man; 3) for a very long historical period after the proletariat takes power, class struggle continues as an objective law independent of man's will, differing only in form from what

it was before the taking of the power...the proletarian party must exist together with the dictatorship of the proletariat in socialist countries. On 18 June TASS stated that the letter of the CCP would not be published in the Soviet press because of its polemical nature.

44. "The Statement of the Chinese Government", RMRB, 31 July 1963, the Statement condemned Test-Ban Treaty and proposed complete prohibition of nuclear weapons; Pravda on 3 August published a Soviet Government Statement, criticizing Chinese position on the treaty. 31, 1963.

45. Pravda on 14 July 1963 published text of CCP's letter of 14 June, along with 15,000-word text of "Open Letter from CC of CPSU to Party Organizations and all Communists in the Soviet Union"

46. RMRB, 19 July 1963.

47. "Soviet Government Statement--Reply to Statement made by the Chinese Governemnt", 21 September 1963, Soviet News, Nos. 4896 and 4897, 23-24 September 1963, pp. 159-174.

48. Mao Zedong, Lun Shijie Geming, Beijing, 1967; Han Suyin, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, p. 200.

49. Letter of CPSU CC to CCP CC, 29 November, 1963, RMRB, 9 May 1964, the letter also proposed an international conference; also see Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute, (Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 162-163, 217-218.

50. Soviet position on Sino-Soviet border dispute at the time, see "National Minorities Incidents on Xinjiang Frontier", Pravda, 23 September 1963; "Soviet Government Statement", Pravda, 21 September 1963; V.M. Khvostov, "The Chinese 'Account' and Historical Truth", Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn', No. 10, October 1964 (translation from the Soviet Press, No. 526).

51. Mao's interview with Japanese Socialist Party mission to Beijing, 10 July 1964, Sekai Shuho, Tokyo, 11 August 1964; Doolin, Territorial Claims in the Sino-Soviet Conflict, pp. 42-43.

52. Soviet response to Mao's talk with the Japanese, see "In connection with Mao Zedong's Talk with a Group of Japanese Socialists", Pravda, 2 September 1964; Khrushchev's Statement to a Japanese Parliamentary Delegation, Tass International Service, Moscow, 19 September 1964; Doolin, Territorial Claims in the Sino-Soviet Conflict, pp. 68-72.

53. Letter of CCP CC to CPSU CC, 29 February 1964, RMRB, 9 May 1964.

54. Ibid..

55. "On the Struggle of the CPSU for the Solidarity of the International Communist Movement", Report by M.A. Suslov on February 14, 1964 at the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Pravda, 3 April 1964.

56. "The Romanian Worker's Party which throughout the controversy had played an independent role, attempted in February and March 1964 to act as a mediator between the USSR and PRC. After receiving the Soviet letter of

12 Feb. 1964, the Romanian leadership appealed to the Soviet party not to publish Suslov's report, and to the Chinese party to put an immediate end to polemics, and suggested a meeting of the leadership of the two parties. The Soviet party agreed to delay publication of the report on condition that the Chinese ceased public polemics, whilst the Chinese party agreed to a temporary truce and invited a Romanian delegation to visit Beijing. Talks took place in Beijing on 2-11 March 1964, between a Romanian delegation headed by the Prime Minister, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, and a Chinese delegation headed by Liu Shaoqi, but produced little result, as the Chinese leaders maintained that polemics could be stopped only after an agreement on the conditions of their cessation had been reached through bilateral or multilateral discussions." See China and Soviet Union, 1949-1984, 1985, UK, p. 53.

57. More see China and Soviet Union, 1949-1984, pp. 54-55.

58. Letter of CCP CC to CPSU CC, 28 July 1964, RMRB, 31 July 1964.

59. For a detailed discussion see Marshall I. Goldamn "Sino-Soviet Trade: A Barometer", Problems of Communism, November-December 1962; William E. Griffith, The Sino-Soviet Rift, 1964, USA, pp. 231-238.

60. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Sino-Soviet Relations, Moscow, 1980, Chinese translation, p. 212.

61. Ibid., p. 213.

62. Ibid., p. 249.

63. Ibid., p. 252.

64. 1960-1963, see Alexander Eckstein, "Communist China's Economic Growth and Foreign Trade", 1966, p. 158; 1964, see Far Eastern Economic Review, 29 September 1966, P. 17.

## V.

**Sino-Soviet Relations Before the Cultural Revolution  
(1964-1965)**

The new leaders of the CPSU have faithfully taken over the mantle of Khrushchev...they remain out-and-out Khrushchev revisionists, pursuing Khrushchev revisionism, but without Khrushchev. '

Renmin Ribao

1964-1965 was a short but very important period in the development of Sino-Soviet relations. Khrushchev's fall from power seemed to offer an opportunity for reassessment and improvement. And there were other moments when a change seemed possible. But Brezhnev and his colleagues could not make a major leap, and Mao hardly tried. Outside events took a hand. And eventually everything seemed to conspire to let Mao give free rein to his bitterness against those he regarded as revisionists in the Soviet Union and at home.

### 5.1 Soviet Foreign Policy after Khrushchev's Fall

On 14 October 1964 Khrushchev was removed as First Secretary of the CPSU and Chairman of the Council of Ministers by the Central Committee as a result of a conspiracy carried through against him by his designated

successors, Brezhnev and Kosygin.<sup>2</sup> The question that arose in Chinese minds was whether the new Soviet leaders were going to change Khrushchev's policy or just make an adjustment to it. It did not take long time to get the answer. The Central Committee resolution announcing Khrushchev's "resignation" reaffirmed the validity of the 20th and 22nd CPSU Congresses, thus automatically cutting off any possibility of fundamental changes.<sup>3</sup>

The strategy of the new leaders can be summed up as follows:

1) In the first place, they would be preoccupied with the serious domestic industrial and agricultural situation. To many people, the primary causes for Khrushchev's fall were internal and bureaucratic in character: issues of foreign policy did not play a major role. Because of Khrushchev's "sins" - "harebrained scheming; half-baked conclusions and hasty decisions and actions, divorced from reality; bragging and bluster; attraction to rule by fiat; unwillingness to take into account what science and practical experience had already worked out",<sup>4</sup> - the economic situation was quite depressed. According to official figures, the economic growth rate in 1961-1965 was 6.5 per cent compared with 9.2 percent in the period 1956-1960.<sup>5</sup> The growth rate of agriculture dropped from 5.9 to 2.4 per cent at the same time. The growth rate of real income per capita decreased from 5.7 to 3.5 per cent as well.<sup>6</sup> It was not surprising that soon after Khrushchev's fall his drastic reorganization of the Party and government structure into parallel industrial and agricultural hierarchies was cancelled. The new leaders also announced the removal of "unwarranted limitations" on the size of private plots and private livestock holdings. In industry the way was opened for reforms in the incentive system designed to provide increased rewards for managerial efficiency in the use

of resources.<sup>7</sup>

2) The Soviet leaders, as Griffith observed, wished to continue detente with Western countries, mainly with the United States, but restricting it rather more than Khrushchev had done in order to counter the Johnson administration's increased military activity abroad.

(a) With respect to Vietnam they wanted to adopt a more forward policy, involving intensification of military aid to North Vietnam and simultaneous utilization of the stepped-up military operations in the South to influence the North to choose Moscow over Beijing as the more effective supplier of arms.

(b) With respect to Europe and disarmament, they were anxious to revive revival of disarmament negotiations, thus (1) putting further strain on NATO and blocking German nuclear armament, multilateral or otherwise, and (2) stalling if not preventing another leap forward in the arms race.<sup>8</sup>

3) The new leaders also aimed to reconsolidate the menaced Soviet positions in Eastern Europe, in Southeast Asia and in Cuba.

(a) In Eastern Europe this meant (1) readjusting Soviet-East European relations on the basis of a differentiated rather than a monolithic alliance, centring on geopolitical and military rather than on ideological factors, that is, giving priority the minimum essential security interest in: East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia; (2) moving toward rapprochement with Romania; and (3) intensifying the rapprochement with Yugoslavia.

(b) With respect to Southeast Asia it involved countering Chinese influence by (1) the policy towards Vietnam just described, and (2) by similar means, improving relations with North Korea.

(c) As for Cuba, Moscow's policy included (1) improving relations



through more development aid, and (2) providing more financial and technical assistance--probably reluctantly--to stepped-up guerrilla operations in Latin America.<sup>9</sup>

4) With the Chinese the new Soviet leaders would continue their polemics on issues of principle. But they would make adjustments, thus keeping to purely ideological features and avoiding a dispute between individuals. From October 1964 to June 1965 they adopted more flexible tactics allowing for national autonomy and neutralism among socialist states and Communist Parties.

In sum, with respect to Sino-Soviet relations the new regime in Moscow at most objected to some of Khrushchev's tactics against Beijing but shared with him his opposition to the fundamental capitulation that the Chinese apparently demanded. It was not altogether inauspicious, but not wholly unpromising either.

## 5.2 Post-Khrushchev Chinese Reaction

The fall of Khrushchev greatly strengthened Mao Zedong's position inside the CCP. It was an obvious personal victory for Mao himself. It was also, he probably thought, a victory for his policy. And on that same day China exploded its first nuclear device in spite of Moscow's having cut off all nuclear, military and economic aid.<sup>10</sup>

Chinese influence had been steadily rising as Soviet influence steadily declined in the international Communist movement. It would have been surprising if Mao had changed his tactics after such a victory; and, as it soon became clear, he did not. But at the beginning the Chinese wanted to improve relations with Parties such as the Romanian that were opposed to an international conference and wanted a decrease in Sino-Soviet

hostility. The signs of disquiet in Eastern Europe over Khrushchev's fall made this consideration even more attractive.

Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De and Zhou Enlai sent warm congratulations on the nomination of Brezhnev as Party First Secretary and of Kosygin as Premier, hoping that "the unbreakable friendship between the Chinese and Soviet peoples would continue to develop".<sup>11</sup> Moscow then invited a high-level Chinese delegation to attend the forty-seventh anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution, and on 5 November Beijing sent Zhou Enlai, Ho Long (a Politburo member and Vice premier) and, among others, Kang Sheng and Wu Xiuzhuan, both participants in the July 1963 Sino-Soviet bilateral discussions. However, Moscow also invited a Yugoslav delegation but not an Albanian representative. This was a clear sign that no decisive Soviet concessions were in the offing.

The celebrations demonstrated that substantive Sino-Soviet differences remained as great as ever. In his public speech on 6 November, and in "frank and comradly talks"<sup>12</sup> with Zhou Enlai, Brezhnev indicated clearly that the new leadership would continue Khrushchev's policy. He reaffirmed the validity of the 20th CPSU Congress. He emphasized the Soviet line of peaceful coexistence and especially endorsed the partial Test Ban Treaty. He appealed to the Chinese only to improve inter-state relations and to tolerate differences in methods of socialist construction, with effectiveness being the test of correctness. Brezhnev's most hostile statement, from the Chinese point of view, must have been his declaration that the time was "obviously ripe" for an international Communist conference to serve "cohesion" and "unity".<sup>13</sup>

The Chinese response was substantially as negative as before Khrushchev's fall. Although the Chinese press reprinted some Pravda

editorials and Brezhnev's Moscow speech, Peng Zhen's October Revolution speech in Beijing and the 7 November Renmin Ribao editorial repeated firmly the major Chinese themes: revolutionary violence, dictatorship of the proletariat, modern revisionism, and 13 socialist states (that is, excluding Yugoslavia). The editorial declared bluntly that "Khrushchev revisionism" had been and would be "spurned by the people...in the past...in the present...and in the future"- a clear warning to the new Soviet leaders.<sup>14</sup>

On the 14th Zhou Enlai went back to Beijing, and again Mao was at the airport to welcome him. Zhou later said that he had unsuccessfully tried to get the Soviets to abandon the conference proposal, but he had succeeded only in getting it postponed. The Chinese declared that the new Soviet leadership then "told the members of the Chinese Party and government delegation to their faces that there was not a shade of difference between themselves and Khrushchev on the question of the international Communist movement or of relations with China".<sup>15</sup>

On 20 November, Hongqi, the journal of the Central Committee of the CCP, published an article entitled, "Why Khrushchev Fell". It brushed off suggestions of ill-health, methods of work and age; Khrushchev fell because of the failure of his "revisionist line". The article summed up the 12 charges against him along the following lines:

1) He had attacked Stalin on the pretext of combatting the personality cult;

2) He had sought all-round co-operation with US imperialism;

3) He had sold out the interests of the Soviet people and prevented China from building up its own nuclear strength by signing the nuclear test ban treaty;

4) He had obstructed revolutionary movements by advocating a peaceful transition to socialism;

5) He had opposed and sabotaged national liberation movements by advocating peaceful coexistence;

6) He had supported the "renegade Tito clique";

7) He had injured and undermined "socialist Albania";

8) He had tried his utmost to "subvert socialist China";

9) He had opposed "the independent development of the economies of other socialist countries in the name of mutual economic assistance";

10) He had resorted to all sorts of schemes to carry out subversive and disruptive activities against other Communist Parties;

11) He had created an open split in the international Communist movement by playing the "patriarchal father Party role";

12) He had pursued "a series of revisionist policies leading the Soviet Union back to capitalism".

The article concluded with a barely veiled warning to the new Soviet leaders in the hope that events would not develop along the lines prescribed by Khrushchev, for should there be "Khrushchevism without Khrushchev", it would end up in a "blind alley".<sup>16</sup>

Simultaneously, Renmin Ribao began reprinting comments on Khrushchev's fall by foreign Parties, such as an Albanian editorial entitled "Khrushchev's fall Did Not Entail the Disappearance of Khrushchevian Revisionism", and a declaration by Aidit, leader of the Indonesian Communist Party, that Khrushchev's removal was not "the end of the struggle to smash modern revisionism" and that Moscow should amend the 20th, 21st, and 22nd Congress resolutions.<sup>17</sup> By January 1965, Renmin Ribao was reprinting much more bitter attacking articles, for example, a Japanese

Communist onslaught denouncing the new Soviet leaders for "disruptive activities" within the Japanese Party,<sup>18</sup> and an Albanian one condemning them for wishing to "restore all the links with the imperialists".<sup>19</sup>

### 5.3 Disagreements Over Policy towards Vietnam

The escalation of the war in Vietnam in the early months of 1965 contributed greatly to widening the gap between the USSR and the PRC. For domestic and foreign policy reasons the Soviet Union made great efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement, but China doggedly opposed any suggestion of a compromise.

In December 1964-January 1965 the White House probed the Kremlin, asking it to influence Hanoi to stop supporting the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front and to engage in "unconditional discussions".<sup>20</sup> Far from rejecting this approach, the Soviet government agreed to transmit the proposals to Hanoi, and Kosygin went in person to give the message to Ho Chi Minh in February 1965. But Ho Chi Minh and the National Liberation Front had made their positions clear in official statements.<sup>21</sup> The 1954 Geneva conference had recognized Vietnam as an independent, sovereign, unified nation. So the U.S. must now withdraw all its troops and weapons from South Vietnam. On 7 February, the day after Kosygin arrived in Hanoi, the U.S. started regular bombing raids on Vietnam, as if ensuring a negative response.

Kosygin then flew to Beijing on 10 February to put three points to Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai:

a) That there was a danger of escalation to "total war" unless the Americans were given an honorable way out of Vietnam. This was tantamount to asking Mao to help press the Vietnamese to liquidate their national

liberation struggle. Mao asked about Vietnamese honor.

b) That the international conference of all Communist Parties to be held in March was only a consultative meeting. So China should come, as a mark of unity.

c) That there should be "unity of action" to aid Vietnam, a bridge to convey weapons through China.

Mao's response was that an international conference in the present circumstances would only confirm the divergence of views. As to the cessation of polemics, he was willing to make it nine thousand years instead of ten, from a spirit of conciliation. As for unity of action, what particularly did the USSR have in mind? Unity to bargain with the U.S., using the Vietnamese as a pawn in a dirty game? How could there be unity of action to betray a revolutionary cause? As to "global war", Mao said he did not believe it would happen over Vietnam, a view he had made explicit earlier that year in an interview with the American writer, Edgar Snow.<sup>22</sup> When it came to passage through China, Mao refused to allow Soviet garrisons and a bridge, or an airlift. The whole of China's rolling stock was at the disposal of the USSR for sending any weapons they wanted. It was a hard line. But "Comrade Kosygin expressed agreement with our views at the time and stated that they would not bargain with others on the issue (Vietnam)."<sup>23</sup> But, in the event, when he returned to Moscow, he seems to have changed his mind.

The day after his return, on 16 February, a proposal for reconvening the Geneva conference went from Moscow to China and North Vietnam. Without waiting for a reply, the USSR as co-chairman also informed France and Great Britain. On 25 February the United States turned it down, saying it had not acquiesced in unconditional negotiations. The Chinese condemned the

proposal as another shameful betrayal.

The new Soviet leaders did deploy to some effect their own catchall phrase "unity of action" in aid to Vietnam.<sup>24</sup> They hoped in this way to introduce differences between the Vietnamese and the Chinese, and between the Chinese and other Communist Parties, by denouncing "obstructiveness" on the part of China. Obviously they were more able than the Chinese to offer Hanoi modern surface-to-air anti-aircraft defenses to limit the bombing. In April the Soviet Union also made two specific proposals, one for a tripartite meeting of itself, North Vietnam and China on the Vietnam war, and the other for sending through China some four thousand Soviet military to be stationed in Vietnam, the use and occupation of airports in China to be manned by five hundred or so Soviet experts, and the opening of an air corridor and free traffic for Soviet planes through China's airspace. This was essentially a repetition of what Kosygin had suggested in February. It was again rejected, since North Vietnam felt under pressure to open "unconditional negotiations".<sup>25</sup> and since Mao was still not convinced there would be a global war. For China the issue in Vietnam was really the battle against modern revisionism, and Mao was determined to carry the struggle against Khrushchev's version of it through to the end.<sup>26</sup> The Soviet approach was neither disinterested nor consistent. But the Chinese attitude was almost obsessively single-minded.

#### 5.4 From Escalating Polemics to Inter-Party Rupture

There were several events contributing to the escalation of the polemics between the CCP and the CPSU from March 1965 onwards. The first was the Moscow meeting of 19 Communist Parties that was held on 1-5 March. This meeting was originally announced by Pravda as the "first meeting of the

drafting commission"<sup>27</sup> of 26 Communist Parties for a world conference. But in late February, the Russians termed it only a "consultative meeting";<sup>28</sup>

What was the reason for this change? The invitation was accepted by all the parties invited except those of China, Albania, Romania, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Japan. Several of the Parties which accepted the invitation, notably the British, Cuban, Italian and Polish, did so with reservations. The result was that the Soviet Party had to abandon its original intention. The final communique made clear that the participants had only "held consultations" and "exchanged opinions", although some delegations were reported to have pressed for the adoption of a resolution fixing the date for a world conference and condemning the Chinese. The meeting only suggested a preliminary consultative conference of the 81 Parties taking part in the 1960 conference to discuss the question of a new international conference, and called for the discontinuation of open polemics, and the end of "the interference of some parties in the internal affairs of others".<sup>29</sup> It was hardly a Soviet success.

On 4 March, Renmin Ribao published a number of recent extracts from the Soviet press supporting "the line of the 'three peacefuls' and the 'two entires' (i.e, peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition, peaceful transition to socialism; the state of the entire people, and the Party of the entire people), which, it said, formed "the main content of Khrushchevite revisionism".<sup>30</sup> It was not exactly a friendly Chinese act. Then on 22 March Renmin Ribao published "A Comment on the March Moscow Meeting", a statement that marked the public death sentence for any Sino-Soviet reconciliation and signaled the opening of a major Chinese campaign against the new Soviet leadership. It denounced the Moscow meeting as "illegal and schismatic". It declared that "the new leaders have merely



changed the signboard and employed more subtle methods in order better to apply Khrushchevism, which could be described as 'three shams and three realities--sham anti-imperialism but real capitulationism, sham revolution but real betrayal, and sham unity but real split'. Playing with the now familiar arithmetic, the article continued, "if the Soviet arguments cannot be refuted in 9,000 years, then we shall take 10,000".<sup>31</sup>

While the Moscow meeting was still going on, about 2,000 Chinese, Vietnamese and other students demonstrated outside the U.S. embassy in Moscow. Serious fighting broke out between the students and Soviet police who protected the embassy; and quite a few students and policemen were injured. The Chinese government protested violently, alleging that the police had tortured the students and that hospitals had refused to treat them, and demanding that the Soviet government "admit its errors", "apologize to the students" and "severely punish" the police involved.<sup>32</sup>

The Soviet government rejected the protest, insisted that any similar riots would be "resolutely cut short", and stated that any international law required a government to protect foreign embassies.<sup>33</sup> On 16 March the Chinese sent another note, again demanding that Moscow "admit its mistakes" and apologize to the students.<sup>34</sup> When the injured Chinese students returned to Beijing they were received with all honors.<sup>35</sup> It was all rather puerile. Sino-Soviet relations continued to worsen from that time onwards. The dispute between the PRC and the USSR around the preparations for the Second Afro-Asian Conference (or Second Bandung) was another example. The core of the struggle was whether the USSR would be allowed to attend. Beijing was trying its best to set up and develop new Afro-Asian organizations from which Moscow would be excluded.<sup>36</sup> On the eve of the planned Conference, Moscow reaffirmed its right to participate. On

12 June, after glorying in Moscow's comprehensive support to the developing countries, Pravda maintained that "Statemen and the press of many Asian and African countries emphasize that the participation of the USSR would greatly enhance the authority of the conference and would serve the common cause of the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism."<sup>37</sup> However, the Chinese soon rejected the Soviet arguments for participation, saying that the Soviet Union was not qualified to participate, though only because "it is not an Afro-Asian country."<sup>38</sup> The Chinese Communist Party then made its first direct attack on the Soviet leaders since the dismissal of Khrushchev in a long editorial published in Renmin Ribao on 13 June, which declared that they "have not departed from the essence of Khrushchev's policies--revisionism, great-power chauvinism, and Soviet-American co-operation for the domination of the world."<sup>39</sup>

On 2 September, the twentieth anniversary of the defeat of Japan, two important articles by Defence Minister Lin Biao,<sup>40</sup> and Chief of the Army General Staff Luo Reiqing,<sup>41</sup> and a Renmin Ribao editorial<sup>42</sup> showed just how intense and extreme the Chinese line had become. The lesson of the protracted struggle with Japan was that a people's guerrilla war could overcome massive conventional military might--that the U.S. could be defeated by people's wars in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Describing the Khrushchev line of "three peacefuls" as "rubbish" Lin maintained that "the essence of the general line of the Khrushchev revisionists is nothing other than the demand that all the oppressed peoples and nations and all the countries that have won independence should lay down their arms and place themselves at the mercy of the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys..."<sup>43</sup>

The brief Indian-Pakistani war over Kashmir in August and September 1965

was another factor contributing to the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations. From the beginning of the crisis Moscow stressed its interest in the area and reiterated appeals for a cease-fire.<sup>44</sup> For example, according to a TASS statement on 7 September, Moscow wanted to increase its influence in India, to maintain at least normal relations with Pakistan, to prevent China from profiting from the conflict, and finally to avoid Washington profiting as well. The Soviet Union can hardly have been surprised at the Chinese response. Beijing was certainly enraged by what it correctly perceived to be Soviet-American co-operation towards ending the war. As Renmin Ribao put it on 18 September: "Who are their (the Indian reactionaries) backers? One is U.S. imperialism, the other the revisionist leadership of the Soviet Union... (which) is not one whit inferior to the U.S. in its imperialism."<sup>45</sup>

There followed a further slanging match. Pravda published a full statement, condemning the Chinese that they "force their will on other peoples" and "do irreparable damage to the cause of the working class". The Chinese counter-attacked by publishing an article entitled "Refutation of the New Leaders of the CPSU on United Action" in Renmin Ribao and Hongqi. This asserted that the new Soviet leaders were "still pursuing Khrushchev's line, but with double-faced tactics more cunning and hypocritical than his", and were "allied with U.S. imperialism". On 16 November, Pravda responded by describing the Chinese article as "saturated with impermissible, utterly groundless, slanderous and provocative fabrications".<sup>46</sup>

On 15 January 1966 the Soviet Union and the Mongolian People's Republic signed a new twenty-year Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance to replace the expiring 1946 agreement. Brezhnev headed the Soviet delegation.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps mindful of this, the CCP Central Committee sent a

letter to the CPSU on 22 March, refusing an invitation to its 23rd Congress. The Chinese missive alleged that the Soviet leaders had sent a letter to other Communist Parties "instigating them to join in opposing China as it was allegedly obstructing Soviet aid to North Vietnam". It went on to state that "the leadership of the CPSU has become the centre of modern revisionism".<sup>48</sup> By this action, relations between the two Parties were finally broken. Nobody at the time could have thought that this break would continue for the next 23 years. Over eighty foreign Communist Parties were represented at the Congress, including those of North Vietnam and North Korea, and also of Yugoslavia which sent a delegation for the first time since the war. In order to maintain solidarity for the success of the Congress, Soviet speakers were restrained in their comments on relations with China. In his report on 29 March, Brezhnev merely reiterated Soviet hopes for a meeting with the CCP at which "existing differences" could be examined.<sup>49</sup> But by this stage, Sino-Soviet differences had become so great that no tactical adjustment could resolve them.

Meanwhile, Mao began to prepare his struggle against revisionism at home. This time he was in a much better position than he had been in the early 1960s. His principal enemy abroad, Khrushchev, had fallen. His main rival at home, Liu Shaoqi, was gradually revealing himself as a "Chinese Khrushchev". In the light of the disastrous conditions confronting the Chinese government in the early 1960s, the rapidity of its recovery and the renewal of its economic growth were quite remarkable accomplishments.<sup>50</sup> Yet, while the policy of Liu Shaoqi brought these advantages, the social and ideological results, from Mao's point of view, were less salutary. There was a price to be paid for economic progress -- and that was the emergence of new forms of inequality.<sup>51</sup> As Mao saw it inequality had

provided a good opportunity for "new bourgeois elements, new bourgeois intellectuals and other exploiters" to "be ceaselessly generated in society, in Party and government organs, in economic organizations and in cultural and educational departments. These new bourgeois elements and other exploiters will invariably try to find their protectors and agents in the higher leading organizations. The old and new bourgeois elements and other exploiters will invariably join hands in opposing socialism and developing capitalism."<sup>52</sup> By 1965 Mao had begun to charge that some people within the CCP wanted to restore capitalism and were revisionist. At the December 1964-January 1965 enlarged Party meeting he challenged Liu by saying, "If revisionism appears at the centre, what will you do about it? There is the possibility, and it is a real danger."<sup>53</sup>

One year later, Mao's biggest move against revisionism, the Cultural Revolution got under way throughout China. In its course Liu Shaoqi would be named China's Khrushchev. Simultaneously Sino-Soviet relations would become the worst they had been since the rift first appeared in the late 1950s.

## Notes: Chapter V

1. Renmin ribao's editorial note to "Anti-Chinese Statements by New Leadership of CPSU and Their Followers", Renmin ribao, 10 November 1965.
2. See detailed discussion in "The Coup and After"--Merle Fainsod, "Khrushchevism in Retrospect"; Richard Lowenthal, "The Revolution Withers Away"; Robert Conquest, "After the Fall: Some Lessons"; Problems of Communism, Jan.-Feb. 1965, Vol. XIV, pp. 1-22.
3. Slogan alongside logotype of Pravda, 16 October 1964: "The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is firmly and consistently carrying out the Leninist general line worked out at the 20th and 22nd Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union", CDSP, Vol. XVI, No. 40, p. 3.
4. "Unshakable Leninist General Line of the CPSU", Pravda, 17 October 1964; reprinted in Izvestia, 18 October; CDSP, Vol. XVI, No. 40, p. 3.
5. Zbigniew M. Fallenbuchl, "Soviet Economic Reform", in Canadian Slavonic Papers, No. 3, 1988, p. 306.
6. *ibid.*; also see Alec Nove, An Economic History of the USSR, (Penguin, 1986), pp. 359-367.
7. Nove, p. 8.
8. William E. Griffith, Sino-Soviet Relations, 1964-1965, pp. 9-10.
9. *Ibid.*
10. The PRC statement, Renmin ribao 16 October 1964.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Pravda, 14 November 1964.
13. "47th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution--Report by Comrade L. I. Brezhnev at Formal Meeting in Kremlin Palace of Congresses 6 Nov. 1964". Pravda, 7 November 1964.
14. Renmin ribao 7 November 1964.
15. "Refutation of the New Leaders of the CPSU on United Action", Renmin ribao and Hongqi, 11 November 1965.
16. "why Khrushchev Fell", Hongqi, quoted from BR, No. 48, 27 November, 1964.
17. BR, No. 48, 27 November 1964.
18. "On a Series of New Attacks on Our Party by Prokharov and Others", Renmin ribao, 20 January 1965.

19. "Revolutionary Marxism Will Triumph in Europe", Renmin ribao, 21 January 1965.

20. A letter from the Chinese Government, published in the Observer (London), 14 November 1965.

21. Anna Louise Strong, Letters from China, Beijing, (1963-1965), Letter of 8 January 1965.

22. Edgar Snow, Interview with Mao Zedong, New Republic, 27 February 1965.

23. See note 15.

24. For example, see "Unity of Action Is an Imperative Requirement of the Anti-imperialist Struggle", Pravda editorial, 20 June 1965; CDSP, 7 July 1965.

25. For the role of Hanoi in the Sino-Soviet dispute, see Griffith, pp. 128-130.

26. "Carry the Struggle Against Khrushchev Revisionism Through to the End", Renmin ribao, 14 June 1965.

27. Pravda, 13 December 1964.

28. Pravda, 28 February 1965.

29. "Communique on the Consultative Meeting of Representative of Communist and Worker's Parties in Moscow", Pravda, 10 March 1965.

30. Renmin ribao, 4 March 1965.

31. Renmin ribao, 22 March 1965.

32. Note of the PRC, Renmin ribao, 7 March 1965.

33. Soviet note, Pravda, 13 March 1965.

34. Renmin ribao, 17 March 1965.

35. BR, 19 March 1965.

36. See further Griffith, "Sino-Soviet Relations, 1964-1965", pp. 56-58, 124-129; Guy J. Pauker, "The Rise and Fall of Afro-Asian Solidarity", Asian Survey, September 1965.

37. Ye. Primakov, "Strengthen the Unity of the Forces Fighting Against Colonialism on Convocation of Second Afro-Asian Conference", Pravda, 12 June 1965; CDSP, 7 July 1965.

38. "Soviet Union Is not Qualified to Participate in African-Asian Conference", Renmin ribao, 18 June 1965.

39. Renmin ribao, 13 June 1965; quoted from BR, 18 June 1965.
40. Lin Piao, "Long Live the Victory of People's War", Renmin ribao, 2 September 1965.
41. Luo Ruiqing, "The People Defeated Japanese Fascism and They Can Certainly Defeat U.S. Imperialism Too", Renmin ribao, 2 September 1965.
42. "U.S. Imperialism Can Be Defeated as Well", Renmin ribao, 2 September 1965.
43. Ibid.
44. Prada, 7 September 1965.
45. "Who Back the Indian Aggressor", Renmin ribao, 18 September 1965.
46. "Anti-Soviet Articles in the Chinese Press", Pravda, 16 November 1965; it was also reprinted in Renmin ribao, 20 November 1965, and BR, No. 48, 1965, p.23.
47. Xia Yishan, Sulian waijiao 65 nian jishi, 1964-1982 (Chronology of Soviet Foreign Policy in 65 Years, 1964-1982), (Beijing, 1987), pp.51-52.
48. Wei Ling, Dierci shijie dazhanhoude guoji guanxi dashiji, 1945-1979 (Chronology of the Major International Events Since the Second World War, 1945-1979), (Beijing, 1982), p.359.
49. CPSU, Report, 23rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, (Moscow, 1966), pp.16-17.
50. According to official reports, grain output rose from a low of 193,000,000 tons in 1961 to 240,000,000 tons in 1965; also see Mao's China, p.280.
51. For a detailed discussion see Mao's China, Chapter 16, The New Economic Policy, pp.274-286.
52. Zhou Enlai, "Report on the Work of the Government", 30 December 1964, BR, 1 January 1965, pp.6-20.
53. Han Suyin, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, p.305.



## VI.

## The Cultural Revolution, the Czechoslovakian Invasion and Sino-Soviet Relations, 1966-1969.

The Soviet Union today is under a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the German fascist type, a dictatorship of the Hitler type.<sup>1</sup>

Mao Zedong

The period 1966-69 saw Sino-soviet relations deteriorate to the point of border fighting. More particularly it saw the Cultural Revolution drive China into an all-out ideological assault on the Soviet Union, and Soviet expansionism, characterised by the invasion of Czechoslovakia, push Moscow into authorising the seizure of Chinese territory. But at the point at which there was even talk of war, both sides drew back enough in substance if not in polemics to allow talks to begin which at least involved the beginning of a new phase in the troubled relationship.

### 6.1 The Chinese Campaign against Soviet Revisionism

The 11th plenary session of the 8th Central Committee of the CCP, which was held from 1 to 12 August 1966, officially endorsed the policy of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution". A long communique issued on 12 August reaffirmed the Party's hostility to Soviet "revisionism" and its refusal to co-operate with the USSR on the Vietnamese question. Its main thrust concerned revisionism, both in China and at abroad. It approved all of Mao's directives concerning the class struggle as well as the long polemical battle against the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> Why did Mao Zedong initiate the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" at the age of 72? There are still many arguments about this. But there is no doubt that the struggle

against Soviet revisionism which dominated Mao's mind in his later years was one of the main motives.

Internationally, as Mao saw it, there were two equal enemies at the time, the imperialist U.S.A. and the revisionist USSR. Indeed, when the Cultural Revolution was launched, the United States military intervention in Vietnam was massively escalated, bombs were being dropped very near the Chinese border, and there was a threat of extending the war to China itself. But the Cultural Revolution was undertaken not because of the threat posed by the American intervention in Vietnam. In terms of the world revolution, Mao believed that the internal class struggle in China was far more important than anything else. The purpose of the movement was the overthrow of "those within the Party who are in authority and taking the capitalist road".<sup>3</sup> Mao Zedong the Soviet leaders of having "betrayed Marxism-Leninism, betrayed the great Lenin, betrayed the road of the great October Revolution, betrayed proletarian internationalism, betrayed the revolutionary cause of the international proletariat and of the oppressed peoples and oppressed nations, and betrayed the interests of the great Soviet people and the peoples of the socialist countries."<sup>4</sup> The Soviet Union was therefore a target for Chinese attack and could not "be included in the united front"<sup>5</sup> against American imperialism. And those Chinese who held Soviet type views were automatically a target for Mao's attack.

Domestically, it had been Liu Shaoqi, later named as China's Khrushchev, who had issued the strongest warnings that China was prepared to come to the assistance of the Vietnamese people in their struggle against American imperialism.<sup>6</sup> During the Cultural Revolution, Liu was accused of relying on Russian industrial aid especially in the armaments industry.<sup>7</sup> On the crucial issue of relations with the Soviet Union, Liu had opposed Mao's

hard-line policy and advocated a more conciliatory approach. In 1965 he had said openly, "You will find it difficult to draw a conclusion on what kind a country the Soviet Union is. At the present time, it is also difficult to draw a conclusion about the nature of the Soviet Communist Party."<sup>9</sup> In fact, Mao told Edgar Snow in 1970 that one of the major reasons he had been determined to depose Liu was because he had proposed reviving the Sino-Soviet alliance to ward off the American threat in Vietnam, and thereby delay the cultural revolution.<sup>9</sup> During the early months of the Revolution among those most violently denounced as "revisionists" was Deng Xiaoping, the Party Secretary-General who had headed the delegation at the 1960 Moscow conference and the 1963 Moscow talks, and Peng Zhen who had been a member of the same delegations and had also represented China at the Bucharest conference.<sup>10</sup>

The Revolution gathered pace as the summer wore on. Hong Wei Bing were organized by thousands of students on 18 August, in connection with a mass meeting in Tiananmen Square. Thereafter, Hong Wei Bing repeatedly demonstrated outside the Soviet embassy, carrying portraits of Mao Zedong and Stalin, and they renamed the street leading to it the "struggle against revisionism street". Foreign missions were informed on 20 September that all foreign students should leave by 10 October. On 7 October, Moscow informed Beijing that all Chinese students should depart from the Soviet Union by 31 October. This caused fresh demonstrations against the Soviet embassy in Beijing. The Cultural Revolution had taken on a particularly anti-Soviet slant.

There then occurred an incident in Red Square on 25 January 1967. 69 Chinese students returning from France and Finland via Moscow clashed with the police when they went to Lenin's mausoleum to lay wreaths. This

caused enormous protests from both sides. New demonstrations took place outside the Soviet embassy in Beijing. As a result on 9 February the Soviet government unilaterally cancelled the agreement allowing Chinese and Soviet citizens to visit each other's country without a visa. Similar action was taken by the Chinese government the following day.

Factors influencing Mao in this would appear to have been as follows:

a) It was the struggle against revisionism at home and abroad that made him start the Cultural Revolution. In his mind Liu Shaoqi was the representative of the revisionist line inside the Party who must be dealt with. Smashing revisionists at home was a heavy blow at revisionists abroad. Mao's thoughts at the time were conveyed in a letter he wrote to his wife, Jiang Qing, on 6 July 1966.<sup>11</sup> He showed his fundamental worry about a change in the colour of the Party, "There are more than a hundred Communist Parties in the world. The great majority no longer believe in Marxism-Leninism...They have reduced Marx and Lenin to dust. If this happens to them, why not to us?...Our task at present is to overthrow the right partly (not totally, for this is impossible) throughout the Party and the whole country".<sup>12</sup>

In Mao's mind, the fate of the world revolution was inextricably linked with the fate of the Chinese revolution. What the Chinese took to be "proletarian internationalism" received its fullest expression in Lin Biao's 1965 article, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War", that projected the Chinese revolutionary experience into a global vision of a worldwide revolutionary process where the "revolutionary countryside" of the economically backward lands of Asia, Africa, and Latin America would surround and overwhelm the advanced "cities" of Europe and North America. This, to be sure, was more a description of the world situation than a

prescription for Chinese action, but it was the view held by the leaders of the Cultural Revolution. It was assumed that the success of socialism in China, to be guaranteed and demonstrated by the Cultural Revolution, would serve as the model and stimulus for successful socialist revolutions elsewhere. A socialist China, as Mao hoped, would thus become the "revolutionary homeland", replacing a morally bankrupt Soviet Union in which revisionism at home and expansionism abroad were leading the forces of world revolution astray. In 1967, Mao not only called China "the political centre for world revolution" but also proposed that it become "the military and technical centre."<sup>13</sup>

b) The second influential factor was the necessity to end the few remaining contacts between the Russians and their last Chinese informants and to destroy the illusions of those Chinese who still placed hope in the Soviet Union.

c) Lastly it was useless for China to preserve even the appearance of organic unity with the Soviet Union, since the possibility of having an international Communist conference in the near future could not be excluded.

In commemorating the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution, a joint editorial appeared in the leading Chinese newspapers, asserting that the Soviet Union had "changed its political colour as a result of the usurpation of Party and state leadership by the handful of top persons in authority (who are) taking the capitalist road within the CPSU". The language was the same as that used on the home front for the Cultural Revolution. The USSR was also said to be becoming "the centre of modern counter-revolutionary revisionism." The Soviet rulers were called "a group of despicable scabs" who keep the Soviet people "under oppression and

enslavement." The Cultural Revolution should thus be viewed as a "theory of the continuation of the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat" and "not merely within national bounds"; , it is "likewise a revolution of an international order." Finally, the editorial expressed the hope that "the genuine Soviet Communists and the great Soviet people...will not tolerate for long the renegade clique of Soviet revisionists."<sup>14</sup>

This interventionist tone was developed in mid-October, at the conclusion of an Albanian Party and state delegation visit to China. The two governments had issued a joint communique expressing their confidence that Soviet Communists and the Soviet people would "launch a revolution to overthrow and fully wipe out the renegade Khrushchev clique" headed by Brezhnev and Kosygin. For its part the first and second plenary session of the 9th CCP Central Committee in their resolutions revealing its intention to carry the struggle against the Soviet Union and the CPSU through to the end. A Chinese pamphlet on the Sino-Soviet border incidents asserted that it was impossible to have any peace on the border against Soviet revisionism.<sup>15</sup>

Yet minimum inter-state relations persisted. The commission on navigation on the border rivers continued to function. A civil aviation agreement was signed on 4 April 1966, and a technical and scientific co-operation agreement on 6 November. Shipments of Soviet aid to North Vietnam through China involved some co-operation. However, the trade turnover decreased greatly during the Cultural Revolution. In 1967 it should have been 228,000,000 rubles, but in practice it was only 96,000,000 rubles a decrease of 2/3 from . The Soviet Union dropped to 14th partner in Chinese foreign trade. In 1968, the turnover was

86,000,000 rubles, a 10 per cent decrease from 1967. In 1969, it was only 51,000,000 rubles, the lowest since 1949.<sup>16</sup>

## 6.2 Soviet Denunciation of Mao and the Cultural Revolution

The Soviet reaction to the Cultural Revolution was very cautious in the first few months. One reason for this may have been that Moscow was still uncertain whether the volubly anti-Soviet Peng Zhen, who was fighting hard to retain his position, would succeed in riding out the purges. When he was finally removed in mid-May, there was a notable change in the tenor of Soviet propaganda, which began to call attention to signs of serious disaffection within the ranks of the CCP. In June the Soviet press began publishing descriptions of the Cultural Revolution,<sup>17</sup> and in July, after the first US bombing of Hanoi, the Soviet media resumed regular attacks on China for the first time since the ouster of Khrushchev.

The summoning of the Hong Wei Bing on 18 August, apparently threw Moscow off stride, because eight days passed before the press began to report it.<sup>18</sup> But soon thereafter, perhaps in the belief that the chaos in China might create an opportunity for Soviet intervention, Soviet Izvestia published an extract from a set of memoirs stating that the success of the CCP after the Japanese war was due to the presence of Soviet troops in Manchuria in 1945-46. According to this account, the Red Army had protected Chinese Communist organs that were in the process of rallying popular support and establishing democratic self-government. The Soviet troops had been fulfilling their international duty to the people of China.<sup>19</sup> As things turned out, however, the intercession of the Hong Wei Bing proved to be not at all conducive to Soviet intervention, but just the opposite.

The Soviet Party Central Committee declared at its mid-December plenary session that the "anti-Soviet policy of Mao Zedong has entered a new, dangerous stage...The course promoted by the present leaders of the CCP in the international arena, their policy with respect to the socialist countries, their hostile campaign against our Party and the Soviet people and their splitting activities in the international Communist movement--all this has nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism...This policy and these actions damage the interests of socialism and the international workers' and liberation movements and the socialist gains of the Chinese people themselves and objectively assist imperialism."<sup>20</sup> The USSR began to take a much tougher line on China from that time onwards. But the other way round, the year 1967 saw the climax of the Cultural Revolution as far as its external impact was concerned. The Soviet embassy in Beijing was besieged for several weeks in January, and again in May and August, by great mobs of Hong Wei Bing.

In January 1967 Leonid Brezhnev openly deplored the Cultural Revolution as a "great tragedy for all Communists in China".<sup>21</sup> Thirteen Soviet divisions were moved to China's frontiers. Moscow began to condemn "Mao and his group" by name and called for another international conference to condemn the CCP. From February onwards the Soviet press published a series of fierce attacks on Mao Zedong personally and his policies. The most important was a long article condemning the Cultural Revolution in Pravda on 16 February. "The destruction of Party organizations and the persecution and extermination of Party militants are now being carried on under the banner of the 'Cultural Revolution' by Mao Zedong's shock troops, with the support of the army and the security organs...One of the principal aims of the anti-Soviet hysteria they are stirring up is to cut off the Chinese



people from authentic Marxism-Leninism and the experience of world socialism...Their policy shows that to keep power they are ready to sacrifice everything-the interests of socialism, the interests of their own people, and the interests of the revolution..."<sup>22</sup>

Leopold Labedz, editor of the London monthly on Russian and East European affairs, Survey, noted that Soviet hostility reached such a pitch that, in attacking Maoism, writers were a fortiori castigating the whole Stalinist past.<sup>23</sup> Moscow Radio increased its Chinese broadcasts to 84 hours a week. Another station, Radio Peace and Progress, which had previously broadcast only in European languages, began broadcasting in Chinese on 1 March 1967. Both stations made violent attacks on Mao and his closest supporters, such as Lin Biao and especially Kang Sheng whose hands were said to be dripping with the blood of thousands of Communists whom he had tortured and shot. During this campaign, correspondents of Izvestia, Komsomolskaya Pravda, and the press agency Novosti were expelled from China. And on 6 May 1967 Pravda's correspondent in Beijing was ordered to leave China within 7 days on the grounds that he had "slandered the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese people, and Chairman Mao."<sup>24</sup> At the same time, the Chinese Foreign Ministry protested against the press photograph ban which had been announced by the Soviet authorities for Chinese correspondents in Moscow. The journalists claimed that they had been "savagely beaten" and that their cameras had been destroyed while they were taking pictures of some of the incidents in the Russian capital.

Eventually the behaviour of both sides was equally unseemly. One Soviet writer compared Chinese excesses to Trotskyite, nihilist and anarchist attitudes: "In carrying out their anti-Leninist line, the left-sectarian elements, especially the Trotskyites, try at various times to utilize the

immature stratum of young people as a tool for the struggle against the Party."<sup>25</sup> According to another, there were three objects of persecution among the Chinese Communists in the Cultural Revolution: a) past opponents of the Great Leap and the People's Communes; b) the supporters of Soviet Party decisions on de-Stalinization; and c) the advocates of a united front with the Soviet Union against imperialism.<sup>26</sup> At a joint session of the Supreme Soviets of the USSR held on 3-4 November, Brezhnev criticized "the ideological and political degradation of some of the leaders of the CCP", and declared that "the attitude of Mao Zedong's group hampers coordinated assistance to Vietnam from all socialist countries".<sup>27</sup> Conversely the CCP, describing the Kremlin leaders as "renegades", did not send a delegation to the fiftieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution in Moscow in November 1967. And at a mass meeting in Beijing on 6 November, Lin Biao denounced the Soviet leaders as "accomplices of U.S. imperialism" who had betrayed the revolution and restored capitalism. An editorial the same day in Renmin Ribao described them as "renegades to the October Revolution" and claimed that the Cultural Revolution represented "the third great milestone in the history of the development of Marxism". In this atmosphere even minor agreements and small areas of co-operation went out of the window. Both sides were shouting; neither was thinking.

### 6.3 The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia and Heightened Tension

During the night of 20 August 1968 Soviet forces together with Polish, Hungarian, East German and Bulgarian units invaded Czechoslovakia and put an end to the liberal regime of Alexander Dubcek, a move which in Chinese parlance "unmasked the hideous features of the Soviet revisionism". In fact, the invasion ruptured the socialist camp, for both Romania and

Yugoslavia (and of course Albania) protested. For his part, Zhou Enlai described the invasion as "the most barefaced and typical specimen of fascist power politics played by the Soviet revisionist clique against its so-called allies", and declared that "the Soviet revisionist clique of renegades has long since degenerated into a gang of social-imperialists and social-facists".<sup>29</sup> Albania automatically supported China. On 13 September the People's Assembly at Tirana approved the formal withdrawal of Albania from the Warsaw Pact (in which it had been inactive for years). Prime Minister Shehu had already indicated that Albania counted on China for its protection. On 17 September Mao Zedong, Lin Biao and Zhou Enlai returned the favour. "The seven hundred million Chinese will always and in all circumstances be found firmly at the side of their brother people in Albania".<sup>29</sup> On the same day the Xinhua news agency announced that the Foreign Ministry had delivered a note to the Soviet charge d'affaires, Yuri Razdukov, protesting against Soviet violations of Chinese airspace in Heilongjiang province. Cataloguing 119 violations of Chinese airspace by Soviet military aircraft from August 1967 to August 1968, and 29 during August alone, the note complained that these intrusions "have been thoroughly organized and planned by the Soviet government in order to support the kind of atrocious aggression already perpetrated against Czechoslovakia".<sup>30</sup>

The invasion of Czechoslovakia nevertheless had a major impact on the relations between China and the Soviet Union. From the Chinese point of view, this was a strong gesture that Moscow might do the same thing to Beijing. At the end of September, Zhou Enlai calimed that Moscow was actually planning military aggression. He accused the USSR of deploying military forces to menace Albania and China, of acting to encircle China in

particular by massing troops along the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Mongol frontiers. He warned that such action would have no effect on the Chinese and Albanian peoples, "who are armed with Marxism-Leninism".<sup>31</sup>

In order to justify the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev laid down the doctrine of "limited sovereignty" while addressing the Polish United Workers' Party Congress on 12 November. He declared that when internal developments in a Communist country endangered "the socialist community as a whole", other Communist countries were justified in intervening. Such a step, he added, "may be taken only in case of direct actions by the enemies of socialism within a country and outside it, actions threatening the common interests of the socialist camp".<sup>32</sup>

This so-called Brezhnev Doctrine was strongly denounced by the Chinese presumably because it could be used to justify Soviet intervention in China. Lin Biao commented on 1 April 1969 in his report to the Ninth Congress of the CCP: "In order to justify its aggression and plunder, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique trumpets the so-called theory of 'limited sovereignty', the theory of 'international dictatorship' and the theory of 'socialist community'. What does all this stuff mean? It means that your sovereignty is 'limited'. while his is unlimited. You won't obey him? He will exercise 'international dictatorship' over you--dictatorship over the people of other countries, in order to form the 'socialist community' ruled by the new tsars..."<sup>33</sup> Lin Biao also pointed out that: "China has drawn a clear line between itself on the one hand and U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism on the other."<sup>34</sup> These two were now equally China's enemies. In fact, the essence of this principle was written into the new Party Constitution.

The World Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties, held in Moscow

from 5 to 17 June 1969; three months after the armed clashes on the Ussuri River and six weeks after the Ninth Congress of the CCP, was a partial failure for the Soviet Union in terms of its relations with China. Yugoslavia, Albania, Cuba, North Vietnam and North Korea did not attend. Brezhnev reproached the Chinese for their armed provocations, their territorial claims, their appeals to the Soviet people to rebel against their government, their rejection of "scientific communism", and their pretension to impose the thought of Mao Zedong on the whole world. He had the backing of the French and Polish Communists, but the Italians and the Romanians, who supported equal rights for all Parties with no central leadership, opposed him. The final resolution did not condemn China. Mao's remark on the Soviet effort was that "the Soviet revisionist clique is like a notorious prostitute who insists on having a monument erected to her chastity".<sup>35</sup>

Nevertheless, Brezhnev utilized the conference to suggest an Asian collective security pact. To the Chinese its meaning was plain. The USSR intended to step into Southeast Asia, into every territory or base which the United States would vacate in its withdrawal. "This so-called collective security pact is only an anti-Chinese military alliance, but it will not disturb a hair on our heads", Mao said later; but in talks with Asian heads of state from Thailand and the Philippines, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping, had warned them to be careful, "when they repelled the wolf from the front gate, not to let the tiger in the back door". China's policy of opposing any hegemony in the region would be introduced.

#### 6.4 The Frontier Confrontation

The boundary question between the PRC and the USSR has been a very complicated problem which has occupied a most important position in the Sino-Soviet relationship.

The Sino-Soviet frontier, at 7,300 kilometers one of the longest frontiers in the world, falls into two sections: a) the Western, which divides the Chinese province of Xinjiang from the Soviet Central Asian Republics of Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Kazakhstan; and b) the Eastern, which divides the North-Eastern provinces of China from Siberia. From the 18th century onwards the Russian frontier in Central Asia was pushed steadily eastwards from Lake Balkhash, and large areas formerly under Chinese control were annexed in 1864 and 1881. In the Far East the Treaty of Aigun (1858), which was imposed by the Tsarist Government at a time when China had been weakened by a war with Britain and France, gave Russia sovereignty over 230,000 square miles north of the Amur River (Heilongjiang) and placed 150,000 square miles east of the Ussuri River under joint Sino-Russian control. The Treaty of Beijing (1860) incorporated the territory east of the Ussuri into the Russian empire.<sup>36</sup> After the October Revolution, the Soviet government proclaimed on 27 September 1920 that it "declares null and void all the treaties concluded with China by the former governments of Russia, renounces all seizure of Chinese territory and all Russian concessions in China, and restores to China, without any compensation and for ever all that had been predatorily seized from her by the Tsar's Government and the Russian bourgeoisie."<sup>37</sup> But this promise was not fulfilled and a host of problems was stored up for the future.

From the founding of the People's Republic until 1960 the frontiers

between the two countries were quiet and peaceful. The problems only came to the fore as relations between the two countries deteriorated. Subsequent statements from both Soviet and Chinese sources revealed that border incidents began in July 1960, after the withdrawal of Soviet technicians from China. In his political report of 1 April 1969 to the Ninth Congress of the CCP, Lin Biao stated that China had proposed to the Soviet government as early as 22 August and 21 September 1960 that negotiations should be held to settle the boundary question. A Soviet government statement on 21 September 1963 merely alleged that the "Chinese servicemen and civilians have since 1960 been systematically violating the Soviet border. In the single year 1960 over 5,000 violations of the Soviet border from the Chinese side were recorded."

Boundary negotiations began in Beijing on 25 February 1964, but were suspended in the following May without any progress having been achieved. The Chinese Foreign Minister, Marshal Chen Yi, then accused the USSR on 20 May 1966 of provoking over 5,000 incidents between July 1960 and the end of 1965, of concentrating troops on the Chinese frontiers and of conducting military manoeuvres which presupposed that China was the enemy.<sup>39</sup> Western sources estimated the number of troops on the Sino-Soviet border before 1969 at nearly 40 Soviet divisions, many of which had been transferred from Eastern Europe.<sup>39</sup>

More serious armed clashes between Soviet and Chinese frontier troops, causing considerable loss of life, occurred on 2 and 15 March 1969 on the Island in the River Ussuri called Zhen Bao, just a few weeks before the Ninth Congress of the CCP.<sup>40</sup> The USSR claimed the Island as part of its territory, an assertion which contradicted both international law and the unequal treaty of 1860. The latter named the River Ussuri as the border

between the two states; and according to regulations for safeguarding the state frontiers of the USSR on navigable boundary rivers the border should run along the center of the main channel, or the Thalweg of the river according to international usage. Zhen Bao Island hugs the Chinese bank, separated by a rivulet in the dry part of the year. Moscow insisted that the frontier was actually on the Chinese bank, denying free use of the inside of the river to the Chinese.<sup>41</sup> Moscow then started an astonishing diplomatic offensive. Ambassadors and Ministers of the USSR approached their counterparts in Washington, Paris, Bonn and London to discuss the enormous danger to the world of China's "chaotic internal situation" and suggested concerted measures against it. The Yellow Peril myth was once again resurrected.

On 21 March, Soviet Premier Kosygin telephoned Beijing, urgently demanding to speak to Premier Zhou.<sup>42</sup> He was told that there were normal diplomatic channels through which he could communicate. This strange call the Chinese regarded as part of the usual ploy of trying to create panic. They concluded that it had a purpose, to negotiate something, somewhere. And indeed on 29 March Moscow suggested that negotiations on the frontier, interrupted since 1964, be resumed. Apart from the fact that Kosygin was more moderate than Brezhnev, several possible causes for the Soviet shift can be suggested. As observed by Harold Hinton,<sup>43</sup> one possibility was that the Ussuri clashes may have let Beijing obstruct transshipments of Soviet military equipment bound for North Vietnam, prompting Hanoi to urge Moscow to ease its pressure on China. Another consideration may have been the fact that many in the international Communist movement were plainly dismayed by the spectacle of the two major socialist states engaging in armed conflict and were calling on both sides to compose their



differences.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, the crisis with China was not having the effect Moscow had hoped it would toward inducing the Warsaw Pact powers -- particularly Romania -- to tighten their security ties with the Soviet Union. But most important factor of all, was probably Moscow's concern about the possibility that excessive Soviet pressure might impel the Chinese to seek a rapprochement with the United States. No doubt the Kremlin leaders took due note, in this connection, of an important speech delivered by US Senator Edward M. Kennedy in New York on 20 March. Advocating better Sino-American relations, Kennedy stated; "Even now the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations in the wake of the recent border clashes may be stimulating at least some of the leaders in Beijing to re-evaluate their posture toward the United States and provides us with an extraordinary opportunity to break the bonds of distrust."<sup>45</sup>

From Mao's point of view, the USSR leaders were trying to divert attention from their real target, Europe, so that they could push forward the European security conference, a primary aim since 1954. There were hard-liners in the Red Army who looked with suspicion at disarmament, even just as a word, and felt Brezhnev's policy of detente was a danger to the Soviet Union. By the action against China, Brezhnev could smother the dissidents and proceed with detente. "They shout towards the East but their target is the West",<sup>46</sup> Mao concluded. He was also convinced that the USSR was now baring its paper tiger teeth and demonstrating itself a young imperialism on the offensive. The United States would find it difficult in the future to defend what it had; for the USSR would now compete everywhere, including in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The USSR, in his eyes, was now the chief enemy of the peoples of the world, even more cunning than the U.S. His views forced a great change in China's foreign

policy in the 1970s.

"Prepare for war, prepare for natural calamities, and do everything for the people".<sup>47</sup> "Dig tunnels deep, store grain everywhere, and never seek hegemony".<sup>48</sup> China began its preparation for the defence of the country by building well-stocked underground cities and storing grain. Negotiations regarding the contested Sino-Soviet border were still frozen. The Chinese replied affirmatively to the March-April letters from Moscow. The Soviet Foreign Ministry followed up its note of 29 March with another two weeks later proposing specifically that talks be re-opened in Moscow on 15 April or "at another time in the near future convenient to the Chinese side."<sup>49</sup> The Chinese reply on 24 May insisted that Beijing's policy sought the avoidance of border incidents and the settlement of the dispute through diplomatic negotiation. It charged the Soviet Union with responsibility for the March clashes on Zhen Bao Island, as well as for other border incidents; reaffirmed that Zhen Bao was Chinese territory even under the unequal treaty of 1860; and claimed that the Soviet Union had illegally occupied territory beyond what China had been forced to cede under the 19th-century treaties, not only in the Amur-Ussuri region but also in the Pamirs, on the western frontier of Xinjiang Province. The note went on to propose a cease-fire along the "line of actual control" on the Amur-Ussuri frontier, and demanded the annulment in principle of the unequal treaties as a preliminary to a comprehensive border settlement, but agreed that these treaties might be taken as the basis of a settlement subject to "necessary adjustments at individual places". The note rejected the 15 April date already past) proposed by Moscow and suggested that another date be agreed upon through diplomatic channels.<sup>50</sup> In content if not in tone the letter was surprisingly conciliatory, especially with respect to

the treaties.

The Soviet answer was sent to Beijing on 13 June. It insisted on the continued validity of the treaties, reasserted the Soviet right to ownership of Zhen Bao Island and again alleged Chinese responsibility for all the border incidents. Nevertheless, it welcomed Beijing's agreement in principle to the holding of border talks and proposed that they should be resumed in Moscow within two to three months.<sup>51</sup> This, too, was a basically conciliatory reply. But with the three months deadline set by Moscow for the start of border talks approaching and no reply yet forthcoming from Beijing, Pravda on 28 August published an editorial denouncing in unusually strong language China's "adventurist course" both on the Sino-Soviet border and in world affairs generally. After noting Beijing's failure to reply and reiterating Moscow's desire for peace and good relations, the editorial went on to warn that "if war were to break out under present conditions, with the armaments, lethal weapons, and modern means of delivery that now exist, not a single continent would remain unaffected." Fairly obviously, Moscow wanted to cow Beijing into thinking that the countries stood on the brink not just of war, but of nuclear war.<sup>52</sup>

However Moscow too, found itself under certain restraining pressures. One was its own concern -- stimulated by the action of the Nixon administration in improving relations with China -- that excessive Soviet pressure might drive China into the arms of the United States. The situation was clarified for Kosygin in September. On his return trip from Hanoi, he stopped in Beijing on 11 September for a two-hour meeting with Zhou which was described as "frank". Zhou made three proposals as the basis for negotiations. There should be an agreement on the maintenance of the status quo on the border and the prevention of conflicts; this would be

achieved by withdrawing the forces on both sides to an agreed distance from the boundary in the disputed areas. The agreement should include provision for non-use of force and for mutual non-aggression, with no radio and press attacks while negotiations proceeded; the talks would be taken up at deputy ministerial level. The Chinese would accept the unequal treaties as the basis for setting the boundary question.

Despite the understanding Kosygin apparently reached with Zhou at Beijing airport, attacks against China resumed as soon as he got back to Moscow. The USSR still refused to agree to the maintenance of the status quo on the border, and it looked as if no progress whatsoever was likely to be made. However, on 7 October, China officially stated that differences on questions of principle "should not prevent China and the Soviet Union from maintaining normal state relations on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence",<sup>53</sup> and that "there is no reason whatsoever for China and the Soviet Union to go to war over the boundary question".<sup>54</sup> The Soviet warning had been heeded. But up to a point the conciliatory Chinese approach had also been recognised.

Talks on the Sino-Soviet border question opened in Beijing on 20 October, at the level of deputy minister. This marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of relations between the two countries, which continued until about 1982.

## Notes: Chapter VI

1. A talk of Mao on 11 May 1964; English version see BR., No.17, 24 April 1970.
2. "Communique of the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party", BR., No.34, 19 August 1966.
3. Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Beijing Foreign Language Press, Beijing, 1966.
4. See note 2.
5. See note 2.
6. Ho Chi Minh's letter to Liu Shaoqi, and Liu's reply to him see BR., No.6, 4 February, 1966;
7. BR., No.1, 3 January 1968.
8. Renmin ribao, 5 September 1967.
9. Edgar Snow, The Long Revolution, Random House, (NY, 1972), pp.17-20.
10. Peng Zhen was down with several months before the 11th plenary of the Central Committee of the CCP; detailed discussion see Mao's China, pp.311-340.
11. A Document of the Central Committee of the CCP, Beijing 1971.
12. ibid.
13. Maozhuxi lun shijie geming (Chairman Mao On World Revolution), (Beijing, 1968), pp. 86-87.
14. "Advance Along the Road Opened Up by the October Socialist Revolution", a joined editorial of Renmin ribao, Hongqi, and Jiefangjunbao
15. "Leninism or Social Imperialism", Renmin ribao, Hongqi, and Jiefangjunbao, 22 April 1970.
16. O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Sino-Soviet Relations, 1945-1980, Chinese translation, Beijing, 1982, pp.374-377.
17. "China's Great Cultural Revolution", Pravda, 26 June 1966.
18. "Beijing in the Course of the Cultural Revolution", Pravda, 26 August 1966.

19. Col. General I. Lyudniknov, "The Storming of the Great Khingam", Izvestia, 3 September 1966.
20. Pravda, 14 December 1966.
21. Selection of Brezhnev's Speeches, No. 2, translated and published by the International Liason Department of the CCP CC, 1970, Beijing, p.162.
22. Pravda, 16 February 1967.
23. "The Soviet Union and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China", Survey, April 1967.
24. Renmin ribao, 6 May 1967.
25. S. Kovalev, "Sotsializm i kul'turnoe nasledie", Pravda, 16 September 1966.
26. Oton Ambroz, Realignment of World Power, the Russo-Chinese Schism, Vol. II, (NY, 1972), p.19.
27. Pravda, 4 November 1967.
28. Renmin ribao, 24 August 1968.
29. Renmin ribao, 17 September 1968.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. International Affairs (Moscow), No.11, 1968.
33. Documents of the Ninth Congress of the CCP, Beijing, 1969.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Detailed discussion see Dennis J. Doolin, ed. Territorial claims in the Sino-Soviet Conflict: Documents and Analysis, Stanford University Press, 1965.
37. The True Face of the Soviet New Tsar, People's Publisher, Beijing, 1969.
38. Renmin ribao, 21 May 1966.
39. Horold C. Hinton, "Conflict on the Ussuri: A Clash of Nationalism", Problems of Communism, January-April 1971. Also see "Shameless Claque", Renmin ribao, 22 January 1969.
40. The Soviet version of the clash on 2 March, see Soviet protest made to China, TASS News Agency, 3 March 1969; also see "A Provocative Sally of

the Beijing Authorities", Pravda, 8 March 1969. The text of the Chinese protest published by NCNA on 3 March. Text of Soviet note released by TASS on 15 March 1969; Text of the Chinese note released by NCNA, same date (both notes reprinted in the New York Times, 16 March 1969. A separate NCNA report of 15 March referred to the 1860 Sino-Russian treaty, whereas the Soviet statements after the clash did not.

41. See "Down with the New Tsars", editorial, Renmin ribao, Jiefanfiunbao 4 March 1969. The USSR has admitted that Zhen Bao Island belongs to China in boundary talks held in 1989.

42. The only published source for Kosygin's telephone call is Lin Biao's report on 1 April 1969, to the 9th Party Congress, text released by NCNA on 27 April 1969.

43. On the atmosphere of concern in Moscow at this time, see Charlotte Saikowski, "Kremlin Alarmed", Christian Science Monitor, 22 March 1969; on division of opinion within the Soviet military, see Christan Duevel "Disarray Among the Soviet Marshals", Radio Liberty Dispatch, 22 May 1969.

44. See e.g., statement by Japanese Party Chairman Sanzo Nosaka, headlined "Chinese and Soviet Governments Should Settle Border Dispute Through Talks", published in Akahata (Tokyo), 18 March 1969.

45. Text in A Doak Barnett and Edwin o. Reischauer, eds., The United States and China, the Next Decade, (NY, 1970), p.155.

46. The conclusion can be often seen in Mao's talks with foreign guests in early 1970s.

47. Instructions of Chairman Mao During the Proletarian Cultural Revolution, (Beijing, 1974).

48. Ibid.

49. Text of the note broadcast by Moscow Domestic Service, 12 April 1969.

50. Text released by NCNA, 24 May 1969.

51. Text released by TASS, 14 June 1969.

52. Detailed discussion see Chang, Friends and Enemies, the United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972".

53. Renmin ribao, 7 October 1969.

54. Ibid.

## VII.

## Tension and Watershed in the 1970s

Of the two imperialist superpowers, the Soviet Union is the more ferocious, the more reckless, the more treacherous, and the most dangerous source of world war.<sup>1</sup>

Renmin ribao

In 1970 when Mao Zedong looked at the state of the world, two main possibilities presented themselves: either a world war would eventually occur, and in its wake would bring revolution to many countries, or the rising tide of world revolution would stop world war. "The danger of a new world war still exists, and the people of all countries must get prepared".<sup>2</sup> Why did Mao come to such a conclusion? Would the border clashes lead to a Sino-Soviet war and a wider antagonism? It was not easy to answer these questions at the time. From the Western point of view, the Soviet Union had begun its detente with the West in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In February 1969 the Soviet Union and West Germany signed an agreement whereby the latter was to supply a wide-diameter pipeline for the transmission of natural gas from Siberia to Central Europe, and on 12 August 1970 the treaty of Moscow was concluded between the two countries. With this and other treaties concluded between West Germany and East European countries, the Soviet Union had built close diplomatic and economic ties with West Germany and through it with Western Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile it had also achieved a rough parity with the United States in



nuclear weapons and felt able to negotiate from a position of strength. It became ever more positive in its efforts to establish a closer relationship with the United States. The first round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) was held in November-December 1969.<sup>4</sup> A treaty on the exploitation of minerals in the sea-bed was concluded between the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain in February 1971.<sup>5</sup> The second round of the SALT talks in November 1972 produced an agreement sanctioning a superiority in Soviet ICBMs and not affecting weapons in which the United States was superior -- notably strategic bombers, U.S. carrier-based strike aircraft and MIRVs.<sup>6</sup> Tension between the two super-powers relaxed considerably.

From a Western point of view that was all very satisfactory. Viewed from Beijing, however, the situation was quite different. The Sino-Soviet cold war continued. Detente in the West made war in the East all the more likely. On the other hand, the possibility of military attack by the Soviet Union on China made an enormous contribution to the normalization of Sino-American relations, to the likelihood ultimately of detente in the East.

### 7.1 The Development of Soviet Policy Towards China

There were several tendencies dominating Soviet policy towards China in the 1970s, all of them contained within the Brezhnev Doctrine. There were five theoretical strands:

- 1) There was the theory of "limited sovereignty". Safeguarding the interests of socialism meant safeguarding "supreme sovereignty."<sup>7</sup> This gave the Soviet Union the right to determine the destiny of other socialist countries "including the destiny of its sovereignty."<sup>8</sup>

2) The theory of the "international dictatorship" gave the Soviet Union the right to "render military aid to a fraternal country to do away with the threat to the socialist system."<sup>9</sup> The Soviet view was that: "Lenin had foreseen" that historical development would "transform the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national into international one, capable of decisively influencing the entire world politics."<sup>10</sup>

3) Under the theory of the "socialist community", the Soviet Union insisted that "the community of socialist states is an inseparable whole"<sup>11</sup> and that "united action"<sup>12</sup> by and behalf of the socialist community must be strengthened.

4) The theory of the "international division of labour" was already well developed in Eastern Europe. But it was now to be extended to other countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America which could not "secure the establishment of an independent national economy,"<sup>13</sup> unless they co-operated with the Soviet Union. "This co-operation enables the Soviet Union to make better use of the international division of labour."<sup>14</sup>

5) Finally, there was the more blatant theory that "our interests are involved" which meant that "the Soviet Union which, as a major world power, has extensive international contacts, cannot regard passively events that, though they might be territorially remote, nevertheless have a bearing on our security and the security of our friends."<sup>15</sup> A corollary of this was that "Ships of the Soviet Navy" will "sail...wherever it is required by the interests of our country's security."<sup>16</sup>

In practice, the transfer of the Brezhnev Doctrine from West to East took the form of promoting an "Asian collective security system", aimed at isolating China. The means to this end were to build up Soviet armed forces in the Far East in exercising pressure on China and Japan and

compete with the United States in the Pacific; to use the "Cuba of Asia", Vietnam, as a base for seizing the whole of Indochina so edging the United States out of the continent. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was a specific late example of the policy, not only of imposing Soviet control in one country, but also of furthering the long-term strategic objective of expanding Soviet power in South Asia and the Middle East.

#### A) The Struggle for an Asian Collective Security System

As early as June 1969, the Soviet Union proposed an Asian Collective Security System at an international conference of Communist Parties in Moscow. Brezhnev fiercely attacked the Chinese in his report to the conference: "The combination of the Chinese leaders' political adventurism with the atmosphere of war hysteria continually incited by them... is introducing new elements into the international situation which we have no right to ignore".<sup>17</sup> Subsequently the Soviet Union redoubled its efforts to obtain influence over Japan; to establish control in the Indian Ocean; to obtain a footing in the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Singapore; and to encircle China. By concluding with one Asian country after another treaties of "peace and friendship" or of "good-neighbourliness and co-operation", it hoped to build up a network and eventually bring these countries together into a collective security system. Already in May of that year Kosygin had visited India, Afghanistan and Pakistan; in early June, Mikhail Kapitsa, head of the Southeast Asia department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and a specialist on Chinese affairs, made a tour of Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, Kampuchea and Thailand; and in July-August, a high-level Soviet delegation visited Indonesia. Altogether in 1969 there were more than twenty Soviet delegations which went on "conspiratorial missions" to

various Asian countries.<sup>19</sup>

In 1971 the treaty of friendship and alliance with India permitted the latter to realize its ambition of smashing Pakistan by leading a military expedition against it under the pretext of liberating Bangladesh.<sup>19</sup> Yet the Asian collective security system itself met with little success among Asian countries desirous of good relations with China. In a speech delivered in March 1972 Brezhnev declared that "collective security in Asia must... be based on such principles as renunciation of the use of force in relations between states, respect for the sovereignty and the inviolability of borders, non-interference in internal affairs, and the broad development of economic and other forms of co-operation on the basis of full equality and mutual advantage".<sup>20</sup> This made the Soviet aim sound less like a single multilateral security pact, and more like a network of bilateral treaties with individual Asian countries on the model of the Soviet-Indian treaty.<sup>21</sup> It would seem to follow from this that the Soviet Union intended to try to win converts first among the Southeast Asian countries on the strength of the Indian example, and only later extend its efforts to East and Northeast Asia.

Although Moscow had stated that China could become a full member of its new system, what this really appears to have meant was that once the rest of the system was in being, China would be invited to join on terms set by the Soviet Union and its partners. Meantime the Soviet Union would fill the vacuum left by the gradual reduction of American and British military forces in the area. It would also deal with the possible emergence of new alliances or groupings of Asian nations under Japanese leadership. All this can be deduced from Soviet behaviour, and was certainly assumed by Mao. But it remained more of a hope than a reality.

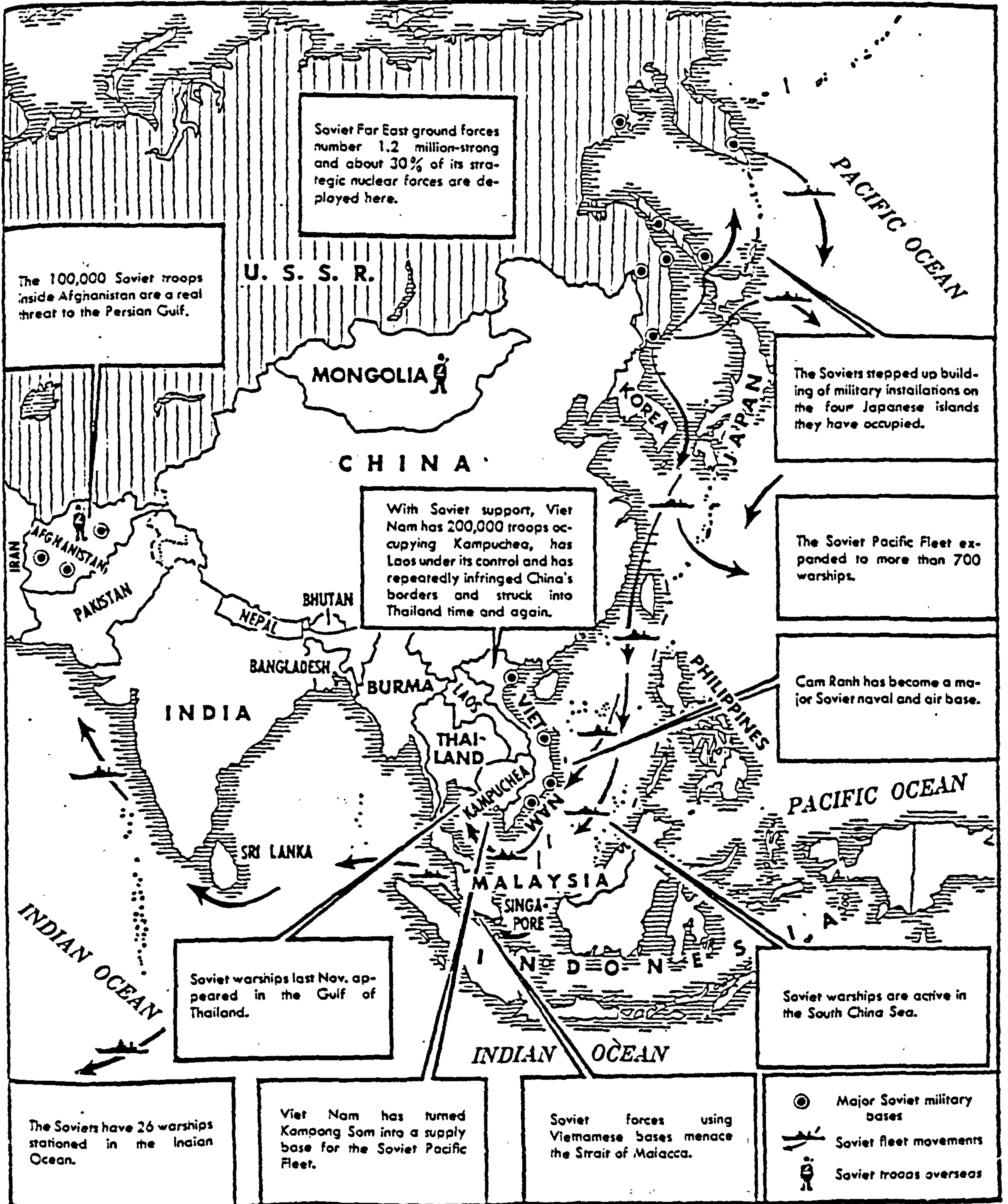
## B) The Soviet Military Build-up in the Far East

In 1973 the Americans at last extricated themselves from the disastrous war in Vietnam. They now stood weakened, their military reputation tarnished, and with a new mood of isolationism overtaking the majority of their people. From then on, it seemed a good time for the Soviet Union to build up its global strength, especially its strategic forces deployed against the United States, and those confronting China.

By the end of the 1970s, according to Chinese sources,<sup>22</sup> (see table I) about one-fourth of the total Soviet ground forces, numbering more than one million men in 53 divisions with 14,000 tanks, were stationed in the Far East. The Soviet Pacific fleet had become the largest of the four Soviet fleets, with about 90 major surface combatants, 135 submarines, and a naval infantry division with amphibious craft. And one fourth of the Soviet Air Force was also in the Far East with about 2,200 combat aircraft. Both naval and airforce Backfire bombers had been deployed to the region, along with other modern aircraft, including Tu-16 bombers sited at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. The most significant development in the late 1970s was a substantial increase in Soviet strategic forces in the Asian-Pacific region. There were two categories of such weapons. The first was more than 170 SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMS) mainly deployed along near the northern Mogolian border and capable of reaching China, Japan and much of Southeast Asia; the second was submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMS), some 30 per cent of the Soviet total being in the Pacific.<sup>23</sup>

The naval base of Cam Ranh Bay permitted the Soviet Union to extend its naval operations some 2,000 nautical miles south from Vladivostok. Soviet warship operating from Cam Ranh Bay could easily track American, Japanese,

# GROWING SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE EAST



Sketch map by Zhu Yulian

West European and other vessels using the Straits of Malacca and the South China sea. It is significant, too, that the Soviet High Command overcame to a large extent, its traditional logistic difficulties in Siberia and the Far East. Siberia was built up into an important strategic base. In 1970 it produced only 31 million tons of oil. In 1974, however, crude oil production passed the 116 million mark. And by 1980 Siberian oil made up fifty per cent of the total annual production.<sup>24</sup> With the construction of more refineries, Soviet forces in the Far-East had ample energy supplies within easy reach. Industrialization in Soviet Central Asia also vastly increased Soviet war capabilities on the southeast frontier. It has been estimated that the Eastern part of the USSR came to produce thirty-two per cent of the total Soviet output of tanks, almost forty per cent of planes, and twenty five per cent of warships, and a quantity of guided missiles.<sup>25</sup>

The result was that in the course of the 1970s the Soviet Union developed an absolute capacity to menace China from the east and south as well as from the north. While the major land threat remained concentrated in the north, naval and missile assaults could be launched from around the eastern and southern peripheries. Thus, the Soviet Union became China's most dangerous enemy.

### C) Intervention

The aggression against Kampuchea by Vietnam, instigated and supported by the Soviet Union, was an important part of the global strategy employed by Moscow. Indochina is midway between the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. With a foothold in Indochina, the Soviet Union could send its own fleet through the Straits of Malacca into the Indian Ocean and on to the Red sea and the Horn of Africa. It could thus seize control of the important oil routes

to Western Europe, the United States and Japan, and also complete the strategic encirclement of China. In the days of the tsars Russia worked desperately to gain access to the Indian Ocean. The Soviet Union was both more ambitious than the old tsars and more successful.

From the mid 1970s, the Soviet Union began to increase its support for Vietnam. In 1975 it concluded two economic agreements -- one for aid and trade during 1976, the other a long-term pact to coincide with Hanoi's five-year plan for 1976-1980. Under these agreements, further co-operation was to include co-ordination of economic development plans, the dispatch of Soviet experts and continued training of specialists in economic, technical and cultural affairs. As worked out in January 1976, Soviet economic and technical assistance was to involve the construction of some 40 projects. These included a hydropower engineering project on the Black River with a hydroelectric station of 1.7 million kilowatt capacity, a thermal power station of 500,000-kilowatt capacity, a coal mine with an annual production of 2.4 million tons, and expansion of the Lao Cai mine to an annual production of 1.5 million tons of anthracite. There was also to be assistance in prospecting for oil, gas, and minerals, and in developing agriculture. This technical aid is to be "on a compensation basis".<sup>27</sup> In 1978 Vietnam became the 10th full member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. On 3 November 1978 a treaty of friendship and co-operation was signed which Brezhnev termed one of "special significance" in view of China's alleged military pressure.<sup>28</sup> About a month later, Vietnam began a full-scale invasion of Campuchea. During the invasion, Moscow gave Hanoi 3 million U.S. dollars each day in military and economic aid.<sup>29</sup> Where the military and the money went, so did political power.

The military occupation of Afghanistan was a new move taken by the



Kremlin partly to outflank China and partly as a move in its so-called "dumb-bell strategy" — its attempt to build a power base with the Pacific at one end and the Indian Ocean at the other and the Straits of Malacca as the bar joining them.

Afghanistan figured high in Moscow's overall strategy because it adjoins Iran and Pakistan and is only some 400 kilometres from the Indian Ocean. From Afghanistan, Soviet military aircraft were within striking distance of the strategic Hormuz Strait at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. Afghanistan also links West and South Asia and its strategic attraction was considerably enhanced by the fact that the region about the Persian Gulf is the world's chief oil-producing centre.<sup>30</sup>

The invasion marked a major escalation in the USSR's long and persistent interest. Direct involvement had increased substantially after April 1978 when a coalition of the two rival factions of the People's Democratic Party overthrew the Mohamad Daoud regime, and it became greater still as the internal situation began to deteriorate seriously. Finally, on 27 December 1979, Soviet forces entered the country starting the first direct invasion of a Third World country by a major power since World War Two. Brezhnev's justification in a speech in February 1980 was in part that "American and Chinese interference in Afghanistan was a threat not only to that country, but to the USSR as well", the kind of "united action" he could not accept.<sup>31</sup> But as more observers than the Chinese recognised, the Soviet Union was also to close the Asian net against China.

## 7.2 China's Reaction

One of Mao's main reflections on Soviet policy in this period was that "The ghost of John Foster Dulles has now taken residence in the Kremlin".<sup>32</sup>

A somewhat more elaborate view was presented in an editorial in Renmin Ribao which noted that, "U.S. imperialism is finding the going tougher and tougher from year to year...and its endeavours abroad have failed to turn the tide, a fact which shows all the characteristics of a decline...By contrast, the Soviet Union seems more potent and active: in the all-round striving for hegemony; Soviet revisionist social imperialism shows a greater momentum and extends its reach further and wider than the U.S."<sup>33</sup> It was reflections such as these that, in the face of Soviet aggressiveness, helped to promote a reappraisal of Chinese foreign policy.

Throughout the 1970s, therefore, China sought an external policy that would: a) reduce or eliminate the threat of a two front war against more than one major enemy; b) more generally deflect political and military it by preventing encirclement by its enemies; c) form the broadest possible international united front against hegemonism; and, d) gain stable, diversified foreign trade partners and sources of advanced technology, thereby enabling it to modernize its economy.

In order to realize these objectives it was felt that China should: a) first of all clearly identify its principal enemy at any particular time and then focus its main efforts on combating that enemy; b) in confronting an enemy, it should be flexible and exploit all possible contradictions, and it should try to form a united front that would include all who could be induced to oppose the main enemy; c) in doing this, however, it should maintain a strong posture of self-reliance and not compromise its essential "independence and initiative".

In all the circumstances of the 1970s it did not take long for the Chinese to deduce which was their principal enemy: "of the two imperialist superpowers, the Soviet Union is the more ferocious, the more reckless, the

more treacherous, and the most dangerous source of world war."<sup>34</sup> The editorial department of Renmin Ribao explained the reasoning behind this in a long article entitled "Chairman Mao's Theory of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds is a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism". The article pointed out:

"First, Soviet social-imperialism is an imperialist force following on the heels of the United States and is therefore more aggressive and adventurous... 'Without a compulsory redivision of colonies the new imperialist countries cannot obtain the privileges enjoyed by the old (and weaker) ones.' To attain world supremacy, Soviet social-imperialism has to try and grab areas under U.S. control... This is a historical law independent of man's will."

"Second, because comparatively speaking Soviet social-imperialism is inferior in economic strength, it must rely chiefly on its military power and threats of war in order to expand."

"Third, the Soviet bureaucratic-monopoly capitalist group has transformed a highly centralized socialist state-owned economy into a state-monopoly capitalist economy without its equal in any other imperialist country and has transformed a state under the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state under fascist dictatorship. It is therefore easier for Soviet social-imperialism to put the entire economy on a military footing and militarize the whole state apparatus."

"Fourth, Soviet social-imperialism has come into being as a result of the degeneration of the first socialist country in the world. Therefore it can exploit Lenin's prestige and flaunt the banner of 'socialism' to bluff and deceive people everywhere... This duplicity peculiar to the Soviet Union, increases the special danger it poses as an imperialist super-power."<sup>35</sup>

Given reasoning like this, Chinese policy was bound to change from the early 1970s onwards. One of the first moves was on China's National Day in 1970 when Edgar Snow and his wife stood next to Mao Zedong on the Tien An Men rostrum. That was a "signal" to the United States, which had already taken moderate steps to relax Sino-American relations. In a long interview with Snow in December, Mao expressed his willingness to talk with Nixon, since he was the American people's choice, either as a tourist or as President. Nixon was welcome to visit China. Snow's report was published in Life on 30 April 1971. Also in April a young American ping-pong team came to Beijing -- the first break in the wall of containment so long erected around China. Then, in July, Henry Kissinger visited Zhou Enlai to prepare Nixon's visit for February 1972.

Meanwhile, the Chinese people were being educated about the diplomatic change which would occur. Mao's On Policy and On the Chungking Negotiations from 1940 and 1945 were reprinted.<sup>36</sup> They contained the essence of Mao's thinking on how to deal with various enemy contradictions and how to grasp the opportunities offered by any struggle, loopholes, or contradictions in a flexible manner. Nixon's arrival in Beijing on 21 February was the most fully televised, commented on, and watched event in the world at that time. On the very afternoon of his arrival he met Mao. Mao was frank about the backwardness of China and the difficulties of the Cultural Revolution. He showed that he knew the Americans were no fools; they were fully aware of China's weaknesses but also in need of China.

The improvement of Sino-American relations had already brought considerable benefits. First, was the admission of China to the United Nations in October 1971, then the relaxation of its connections with Japan and other Asian countries. During the period 1970-1972 China

established diplomatic relations with 38 capitalist countries and greatly strengthened its international position. And following Nixon's visit much greater advantages beckoned.

In Asia, China had assailed the Soviet proposal for a collective security system as a scheme to make Asians fight Asians and as a cover for Soviet "aggression and expansion" against Asian countries.

But the most dramatic official statement of China's changing world view was contained in Deng Xiaoping's 1974 UN speech, which analyzed global affairs in terms of three worlds. Deng identified the two superpowers as the First World, the other industrialized nations as the Second, and the developing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as the Third. The most important struggle he asserted, was that between the Third World and the First, with support for the Third to be expected from the Second on some issues. Deng also proclaimed publicly what had been implicit in China's policy for some time -- namely, that in the Chinese view the socialist camp no longer existed and that China belonged to the Third World.<sup>37</sup>

Chairman Mao's death in September 1976 was followed by a period of reaction and consolidation in which foreign policy changes had to hang fire. The Chinese Government's main task of modernizing the Chinese economy required political stability and Party discipline. But after the so-called "Gang of Four", Zhang Chunqiao, Jiang Qing, Yao Wenyuan and Wang Hongwen, were arrested on charges of plotting to seize power attention could once more be devoted to external relations. One of Mao's initiatives was the first to be realigned. On 1 January 1979 China was able to normalize its relations with the United States and thereafter it made significant progress in developing its contacts with Japan and with Western Europe.

Otherwise it was Mao's conservatism that persisted. Despite the old man's death his hostile approach to the Soviet Union was continued. On 1 November 1977, Renmin Ribao devoted itself exclusively to Mao's "theory of the three worlds". The authors' judgments were remarkably unequivocal, and marked the continuing triumph of Mao's ideas: "The Soviet Union has decided to employ an offensive strategy to encroach on the sovereignty of all other countries and weaken and supplant U.S. influence in all parts of the world....The people of China and the people of the rest of the world firmly demand peace and oppose a new world war. Faced with the gigantic task of speeding up our socialist construction...we in China urgently need a long period of peace..."<sup>39</sup>

At about the same time, Chinese writers began to define the dangers seen in Soviet policy. Soviet pressure against vulnerable locations in Asia and Africa was interpreted as "striving to create a situation to outflank Europe from the north and the south".<sup>39</sup> Equally less direct but more effective means of subjugating the West would focus on the supply lines to Europe, control of which would "put a stranglehold on Western Europe". So construed, Soviet involvement in Angola, Zaire, and the Horn of Africa could still be treated as "peripheral wars" in the larger Soviet-American competition "for hegemony over Europe and the world as a whole".<sup>40</sup> But this was in addition to the central threat to China. With the dramatic escalation of Sino-Vietnamese tension in the spring of 1978, Renmin Ribao declared on 17 June that, "It is now very clear that the Soviet leadership is the main instigator and backer of the anti-China and anti-Chinese campaign in Vietnam".<sup>41</sup>

And so the anti-Soviet rhetoric continued. But Moscow now had considerable help from Vietnam, for the first time identified as an

exponent of "regional hegemony". All such activity was simply one component of Moscow's "global strategic plan...to outflank and encircle Europe and isolate the United States" and "to encircle China".<sup>42</sup> On 1 October Hongqi offered an extended analysis of the Soviet Union's use of Cuban mercenaries in Africa and of "new agents patterned after Cuba" in Asia: "For the sake of preparing for a new world war, the Soviet Union is presently searching around for peripheral areas. It uses every means to scramble for strategic bases, passages, and materials in the areas of the Middle East, Africa, and even in Asia....The intensification of the Soviet expansionist offensive has accelerated the danger of a new world war." But the article added a new twist: "The international united front against hegemony...is consolidating and expanding. The one who is plotting encirclement is now being encircled by the people of the world."<sup>43</sup> Thus, with no particular fanfare, the need to combat the "hegemonism" of the "less dangerous superpower" had been removed from the tasks of the international united front. Indeed, the United States had almost seemed recruited into the front. Another article in Renmin Ribao noted the danger of Soviet actions to the American positions in the Pacific<sup>44</sup>, and even to the unhappy consequences for China of any weakening of the United States.<sup>45</sup> One fundamental element in the gradual non-alignment of China's foreign policy was the virtual revolution after 1978 in its domestic policy. The re-emergence and dominance of Deng Xiaoping led to the drive for all-round modernization of the country by the year 2000. Hence, China began to move in the direction of greater openness towards the outside world, economically and culturally, and also politically in the sense of international contacts. In this context, Beijing showed an inclination not only to adopt Western-style rewards and incentives for its workers but also

to seek technology from the capitalist West and Japan in order to develop the PRC's vast underlying sources of economic power. It even went as far as to consider accepting long-term loans, once anathema in Chinese thinking, and to send students to the West for training. This fundamental policy change of seeking closer ties with the capitalist West and Japan received the formal endorsement of the Central Committee at its Third Plenary Session in December 1978.<sup>46</sup>

In late January and early February 1979, Deng Xiaoping paid a visit to the United States. By March, an exchange of ambassadors had taken place between the PRC and the USA. On the eve of his visit Deng had told an interviewer from Time that "after setting up a relationship between China, Japan and America, we must further develop the relationship in a deepening way. If we really want to be able to place curbs on the polar bear (the USSR), the only realist thing for us is to unite. If we only depend on the strength of the U.S., it is not enough. If we only depend on the strength of Europe, it is not enough. We are an insignificant, poor country, but if we unite, well, we will then carry weight." He had then gone on to say that "it is not only of interest to China but also of great significance to world peace, world security, and world stability that there be friendly relations between China, America, Europe and Japan."<sup>47</sup> During his actual tour of the United States, he reiterated these arguments for a Sino-Japanese-American alliance against the Soviet Union, and he took every opportunity to denounce its "hegemonic aspirations." On his way back to Beijing, he stopped over in Tokyo for two days of talks with Japanese leaders, during which he delivered the same message.

Moscow viewed the normalization of trans-Pacific relations as suspicious



if it materialized in an alliance organized by Beijing, Washington, and Tokyo. While it treated the establishment of diplomatic ties between the United States and China as the culmination of a long process which it could not do other than support, it was against an entente directed against itself. Thus, the opening of official relations between Washington and Beijing strengthened the already pronounced Sino-Soviet rivalry in Asia. The result was most apparent in Indochina.

Immediately after Hanoi and Phnom Penh began to publicize their border conflict, Moscow threw its support openly behind Vietnam. China tried briefly to mediate, but by February it had come out firmly on the side of Kampuchea. On many occasions, Chinese officials stressed the consistency of Chinese opposition to "regional hegemony." They pointed out, for example, that China had supported Pakistan against India, which had aspired to a South Asian confederation of itself and its smaller neighbors like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Burma, Nepal, and later Bangladesh. Moreover, they contended that the USSR endorsed regional hegemony in the context of its drive for global hegemony and that it therefore backed Vietnam against the "weaker party". This interpretation of the Indochina conflict, of course, ran directly counter to that offered by the Soviet Union and Vietnam. During his visit to the United States, therefore, Deng signaled Chinese intentions to move against Vietnam by hinting that China might have to take some "punitive measures" against the Hanoi government. At a meeting with US Senators, he was even fairly explicit on the subject. He indicated that "sometimes we may be forced to do something that we do not want to do."<sup>49</sup>

On 17 February the Chinese government announced that its troops had

struck along much of the 600-mile Sino-Vietnamese border, because "the Vietnamese authorities have of late continually sent armed forces to encroach on Chinese territory" and thereby threatened "seriously the peace and security of China".<sup>49</sup> However much truth there was in this explanation, one objective was certainly to contain the Soviet Union. Sino-Vietnamese hostilities lasted for 17 days. On 5 March the Chinese government announced that it was withdrawing its troops from Vietnam.

There are disagreements about the success or otherwise of this venture. One certainty is that China did succeed in demonstrating that any country which signed a friendship treaty with Moscow was not necessarily immune to military action by other major powers. Despite Moscow's admonitions about the consequences of any punitive measures against Vietnam, China succeeded in carrying out its intervention without provoking Soviet retaliation. Indeed, the Soviet Union showed itself to be a "paper tiger". As a result, Beijing proved to any doubters in Southeast Asia that the USSR did not have unlimited capacities to exercise hegemony in the area, even in co-operation with a "proxy". Nevertheless, the Chinese did not succeed in getting the Vietnamese to withdraw from Kampuchea. The Soviet Union was one thing, a little power was another.

### 7.3 Pervasiveness and Complications of the Border Issue

For a decade after the spring and summer fighting in 1969 the border issue continued to plague Sino-Soviet relations. Negotiations were on and off. The one certainty was that there was no settlement. In many ways the state of play over the borders was a kind of temperature chart. When feelings ran high on other matters, there were no meetings - and vice versa.

The border negotiations opened in Beijing on 20 October 1969 as a result of the Kosygin-Zhou airport meeting on 11 September. The two premiers had reached a measure of agreement,<sup>50</sup> but the Chinese were then inclined to be critical.<sup>51</sup> The negotiations continued with a number of breaks until July 1973. At one session on 15 January 1971 Moscow offered a new non-aggression treaty or a reaffirmation of the old 1950 treaty, and it also accepted the Thalweg as the frontier in navigable rivers and the mid-channel in non-navigable ones. It expressed its willingness to hand over to China certain islands in the Ussuri including Zhenbao, but not the disputed Black Bear Island close to Khabarovsk. None of this was acceptable to the Chinese, who considered that all that was required was an intermediate agreement to maintain the status quo on the borders and Moscow's acceptance of their concept of disputed areas. They had complained before about lack of restraint on Soviet military forces<sup>52</sup> and about Soviet unwillingness to recognise the frontier treaties as unequal.<sup>53</sup>

On 20 March 1972 Ilychev, a Deputy Foreign Minister who replaced Kuznetsov on 15 August 1970 as leader of the Soviet delegation, returned to Beijing to re-open the talks bearing an important new concession: namely Moscow's willingness to establish relations with China on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence, thus accepting the ideological stance enunciated in November 1970. This was clearly intended to achieve some results between Nixon's February 1972 visit to Beijing and his projected May visit to Moscow, leaving Brezhnev better situated to deal with him. Further Soviet offers on 14 June 1973 (the day before Brezhnev met Nixon in Washington) and 25 June 1974 (48 hours before Nixon's final visit to Moscow) were also meant to influence relations with the United States. The 1973 package included long-term trade agreements, the

resumption of deliveries of industrial equipment, scientific, medical, and other exchanges, and the signature of a non-aggression pact. China rejected both proposals as pointless unless the Soviet Union carried out the agreement of 11 September 1969, to withdraw its forces from disputed areas. If China proved very stubborn, the Soviet Union was a little so. Instead of pulling back its forces in the border regions, it reinforced them to a total of 42 divisions by 1972 and even to 53 by 1978 according to some estimates.

In a message of greeting on 1 October 1974, on the 25th anniversary of the founding of the PRC, the Soviet government renewed its offer of a non-aggression pact. The Chinese government replied in a message of greetings on the anniversary of the Russian Revolution on 7 November 1974, repeating the proposal that such a pact should be accompanied by the withdrawal of all armed forces from disputed border areas. Brezhnev rejected this on 26 November in a speech in Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia: "Beijing declares outright that it will agree to talks on border questions only after its demand concerning the so-called disputed areas is met. It is quite obvious that such a position is totally unacceptable, and we reject it."<sup>54</sup> In December the Chinese journal Li Shi Yan Jiu reaffirmed the Chinese position, asking the Soviet government among other things to admit that Russia had seized Chinese territory by force in the 19th and early 20th centuries. And so it went on.

Mao Zedong's death was greeted in Moscow with an almost total cessation of polemics against China, and the return of Ilychev to the negotiating table on 27 November 1976. He had a meeting on 28 January 1977 with Huang Hua, the Chinese Foreign Minister, but thereafter the talks were again suspended sine die.

They were resumed in 1978, and despite ups<sup>55</sup> and downs<sup>56</sup> a session was held as late as 30 November 1979. However, following the entry of Soviet military forces into Afghanistan at the end of December 1979 the Soviet government had its hands full and the Chinese government decided that it was inappropriate to continue the negotiations; no further talks were held until October 1982.

There were three features worth noting about the 1969-79 negotiations:

a) Their focus was whether there were disputed areas on the Sino-Soviet border. The Soviet Union flatly refused to acknowledge that the treaties relating to the existing boundary were of an unequal nature. On the contrary, they contended that these treaties had been signed "to promote good-neighbourly relations."<sup>57</sup> Secondly, according to Chinese sources the the Soviet government "insisted on a settlement of the boundary question on the basis of a so called 'historically formed' and 'actually defended' line unrelated to these treaties."<sup>58</sup> Thirdly, the Soviet Union still stuck to its 1964 position that there was no territorial problem existing between it and China, denying that there were numerous disputed areas. Fourthly, the Soviet side rejected the Chinese proposal on the disengagement of armed forces from the disputed areas, and on the conclusion of an intermediate agreement. To this end, it denied that an understanding had been reached during the 11 September 1969 summit between the Premiers of the two countries.

For its part the Chinese government advocated a clear distinction between right and wrong on historical issues and confirmation that the treaties were unequal, having been imposed on China by tsarist Russian imperialism when the Chinese and Russian people were powerless. Secondly, China maintained that "both sides should, in the light of actual

conditions, and taking these treaties as the basis, bring about an all-round settlement of the Sino-Soviet boundary question through peaceful negotiations and determine the entire course of the boundary." China did not want to take back the territory seized by tsarist Russia. Thirdly, the Chinese contended that either side invading and occupying the territory of the other in violation of these treaties must, in principle, return the territory unconditionally. But both sides could, considering the interests of the local inhabitants, make necessary adjustments along the border according to the principles of consultation on an equal footing, and of mutual understanding and accommodation. Fourthly, the Chinese government held that a new and equal Sino-Soviet treaty should be signed to replace the previous ones and that the boundary line should be surveyed and demarcated for this purpose. Finally, the Chinese made it clear that the understanding reached by the Premiers of the two countries should be implemented, and that until an all-round settlement of the boundary question was reached through peaceful negotiations, the status quo should be maintained, armed conflicts should be avoided, both armed forces should withdraw from the frontier or refrain from crossing it and an agreement to maintain the border status quo should be signed.

b) The second feature to note is that the incidents never stopped on both the Central Asian and Far Eastern sectors of the border. Many of them were not made public. Between 1972 and 1977 the Soviet Union absorbed 1,080 square miles in the Ili River region of Western Xinjiang, expelling Kirghiz and Uzbek herdsmen and blocking access with barbed wire barriers. About 20 areas along the Xinjiang border were in dispute, varying in size from 390 to 11,600 square miles, as the Russians moved into Chinese territory like a silkworm devouring a mulberry tree leaf by leaf.

On the Far Eastern section, a number of clashes were reported by both sides in completely opposed versions. There were three major incidents made public: the helicopter incident of 1974 in Xinjiang, the Wusuli clash of 1978, and the Tersadi incident of 1979.

The helicopter incident took place on 14 March 1974 when a Soviet military helicopter carrying three servicemen flew 70 kilometres deep into China's Xinjiang Uigur Autonomous Region and made several landings in Habahe County. Chinese frontier guards and militia forces eventually succeeded in capturing it and its crew.<sup>59</sup> The event was not made public until a week later, when TASS bluntly charged Beijing with acting contrary to international practice by holding the Soviet crew and aircraft. It asserted that the crew was on a "first aid" mission, sent to pick up a "seriously ill serviceman."<sup>60</sup> The helicopter "encountered difficult meteorological conditions, lost its bearings and, having used up its fuel supply, made a forced landing near the border in PRC territory."<sup>61</sup> Moscow also declared that the crew "reported the situation by radio to their airport," and that the USSR informed the PRC of the incident as early as 15 March 1974.<sup>62</sup>

Beijing of course did not accept the Soviet explanation and reacted strongly. On 23 March the Chinese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yu Zhan, summoned V.S. Tolstikov, the Soviet Ambassador, and personally delivered a note of protest. According to this the helicopter was an MI-4 armed reconnaissance craft, and thorough investigations by the Chinese showed that it carried neither medical personnel on a "first aid" mission, nor any medicine or medical equipment; instead, it carried arms and ammunition and reconnaissance equipment. The Chinese condemned "Soviet authorities" for sending it "to intrude into China for purposes of

espionage"<sup>63</sup>

Moscow denied Beijing's accusation of espionage in a note of 28 March 1974 contending that "the Chinese side, deliberately distorting the facts, seeks to use the forced landing of the Soviet helicopter to aggravate an atmosphere of hostility towards the USSR and further to exacerbate Soviet-Chinese relations."<sup>64</sup> Because the crew remained in Chinese hands, the Soviet government escalated its diplomatic pressure in the following months. In a declaration of 2 May it insisted on the immediate return of the crew and helicopter and stated that "if the Chinese side intends to detain the helicopter and its crew even further and make a mockery of the Soviet people, it thereby assumes full responsibility for the inevitable consequences of such a provocative action."<sup>65</sup>

The incident remained unresolved for nearly two years until its unexpected ending on 27 December 1975 both the crew and the craft were returned. Some international observers considered that the Chinese decision to end the incident in this manner was a tactical manoeuvre to ease the strained Sino-Soviet relations against the background of a coming succession period in China and on the eve of the 25th Soviet Party Congress.

The Wusuli incident of 9 May 1978 involved 18 Soviet armed motorboats, another military helicopter and about 30 Soviet troops who penetrated as far as 4 kilometres into China's side of the border in the lower part of the Wusuli River. They chased and tried to round up Chinese inhabitants, shooting continually and wounding a number of them.<sup>66</sup> The incident became public on 11 May, when the Chinese delivered a note of protest to the Soviet government.<sup>67</sup>

The border clash of 16 July 1979 took place in the Tersadi areas, Taching



County, Xinjiang Uigur Autonomous Region, involving shooting, wounding and killing. Immediately after the incident, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the Chinese Embassy that: "Four armed Chinese servicemen violated the border and intruded into Soviet territory for a distance of one kilometre; as a result of a clash with a Soviet border detail, one of the Chinese violators...was killed and a second was wounded and is now undergoing treatment in the USSR."<sup>68</sup> It was not until seven days later that the Chinese presented their description of the incident in an official note; "...Twenty-odd fully armed Soviet frontier soldiers lying in ambush...fired at Li Baoqin and Burumbutug, who were there to inspect pasture, a normal production activity. They killed Li Baoqin and wounded Burumbutug on the spot and then intruded into Chinese territory and carried Li Baiqin's body and the wounded Burumbutug into Soviet territory."<sup>69</sup> Like the other two incidents discussed, this was apparently initiated by the Soviet side while all the casualties were Chinese.

The third feature of the border was its "academic" aspect. Both the PRC and the USSR made great efforts to explore the background to the establishment of their boundaries in order to substantiate their respective positions through historical evidence. Handicapped by the weight of non-supportive historical evidence,<sup>70</sup> Moscow sought to revise earlier publications which were in contradiction to its present position. For instance, Ye. M. Zhukov, Director of the Institute of World History of the USSR Academy of Science, stated in the 1956 edition of the "History of International Relations in the Far East" that the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nipchu (Nerchinsk) of 1689 was concluded through negotiations based on equality. In 1973, however, when the third edition of the book appeared the same editor and author presented a totally different conclusion: the

Treaty was an "unequal one" which tsarist Russia signed under immense military pressure.<sup>71</sup> In 1973 the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation published a special decree changing into Russian some of the Han and Manchu names of towns and cities in the Soviet Far East.<sup>72</sup> This move, as Tsien-hua Tsui observed, "further demonstrated the Kremlin's strong intent to eliminate any traces of prior Chinese possession of the territory."<sup>73</sup>

The Chinese reacted strongly to this "academic war". "A Short History of Tsarist Russia's Aggression and Expansion" (1975), and "Soviet Fabrication and the Truth of History" (1977) were two major books written by Chinese scholars in the mid-1970s.<sup>74</sup> The publication in 1978 of a series of volumes, "Sha E Qin Hua Shi" (History of Tsarist Russia's Aggression Against China), indicated that the Chinese had become more alert to Moscow's efforts in redrawing the "picture" of Sino-Russian frontier relations.

In conclusion, looking at the decade as a whole, it can be said that the Chinese attitude toward the border issue was consistent. The Soviet position, on the other hand, underwent a remarkable shift. When the negotiations first started in 1969 Moscow took a much tougher stance, attempting to coerce the Chinese into submission.<sup>75</sup> In face of Beijing's unwillingness to yield, Moscow retreated from 1970 onwards to a position identical with its stand during the abortive border talks of 1964, insisting on the status quo as the basis for the boundary talks.

#### 7.4 Atypical Sino-Soviet Economic Relations?

Sino-Soviet economic relations had previously reflected political relations. Trade had steadily declined. This process had been accelerated

by the Cultural Revolution and in 1970 the volume of trade had fallen to 42,000,000 rubles, the lowest in history.<sup>76</sup>

Oddly enough, after that date, however, trade expanded: China's import needs -- of capital goods in particular -- grew with the rapid expansion of its economy, and although much of its imports of industrial equipment came from the West and from Japan, commercial relations with the Soviet Union were especially attractive because of their barter basis and the ease of direct deliveries by rail. The Soviet Union also stood in need of Chinese consumer goods by barter. So a new trade and payments agreement was concluded on 22 November 1970 by a Soviet delegation headed by Ivan Grishin, a Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade. Despite the political situation two further agreements were signed on 5 August 1971 and 13 June 1972. Under these agreements the value of trade was planned to increase to 140,000,000 rubles, three times of that of 1970.<sup>77</sup> In fact, 1972, it continued to increase to 211,000,000 rubles.<sup>78</sup>

A non-stop air service between Beijing and Moscow was introduced on 30 January 1974 under an agreement signed the previous month. Before the Civil Aviation Administration of China had served only the Beijing-Irkutsk line. It was agreed that the Soviet and Chinese companies would each handle one weekly direct flight, both using Ilyushin 62s. Annual trade and payments agreements were signed on 4 July 1974, 24 July 1975, and 21 May 1976, the agreed volume of trade being about 160,000,000 rubles in 1974, 110,000,000 rubles in 1975 and 170,000,000 in 1976, a lower and fluctuating level. The percentage of trade with the Soviet Union in overall Chinese foreign trade decreased sharply. It was 4.2 per cent in 1972, 2.8 per cent in 1973, and 2.1 per cent in 1974.<sup>79</sup> Further trade and payments agreements were signed on 17 April 1978 in Beijing, and 6 August 1979 in Moscow. The

volume of trade reached 338,000,000 rubles in 1978, the highest in the 1970s, but still no comparison with that of 1959, when it was 1,848,000,000 rubles.<sup>80</sup> The volume of trade in 1979 was almost same as that of the previous year. China and the Soviet Union were still at daggers drawn over other issues; and neither figured high in the other's trading list. But in their general economic relations they both showed growing glimpses of good sense, lacking elsewhere.

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16. Speech of S.G. Gorshkov, the Soviet naval Commander-in-chief, on Soviet Navy Day; BR, No.17, 24 April 1970, p.12.
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## VIII

**Steps Towards Normalization (1980-1989)**

**End the past and open up the future.'**

**Deng Xiaoping**

Since the early 1950s there have been four watersheds in Sino-Soviet relations. For most of the 1950s the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China were allied against the West, especially against the United States. From the late 1950s to the late 1960s, there was a historic split between them which transformed international politics. From the late 1960s, there was to the 1970s, there was a general confrontation between them. There was also the process of Sino-American rapprochement that, by the end of the decade, completely altered the strategic landscape and led almost to an incipient Chinese-American alliance against the Soviet Union. The fourth stage in the evolution began in the early 1980s and by the end of the decade Sino-Soviet normalization was almost realized. The process was long, difficult, and complex.

### **8.1 Frozen but Disturbed Sino-Soviet Relations in the Late 1970s and the Early 1980s**

The first round of talks about normalization between the USSR and the PRC took place in Moscow from 27 September to 30 November 1979. At this meeting, the Soviet side talked about what might loosely be called a non-

aggression pact. It was a draft declaration of the principles of mutual relations between the USSR and the PRC.<sup>2</sup> This declaration called for mutual recognition of the principles governing peaceful coexistence -- full equality, mutual respect for state sovereignty, respect of territorial integrity, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and non-use of force or the threat of force. The Soviet Union also proposed a discontinuation of "unfriendly propaganda" and an expansion of trade, as well as economic, scientific, technological, cultural, and other peaceful exchanges. China suggested four points for the re-establishment of normal relations:<sup>3</sup>

- a) a unilateral reduction of Soviet armed forces in the area bordering on China;
- b) a withdrawal of Soviet forces from the Mongolian People's Republic;
- c) the discontinuation of all Soviet support for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam;
- d) a settlement of the long-standing border dispute, talks on which had been going on without result since 1969.

Following the conclusion of the talks, the two sides agreed to hold a second round of meetings in Beijing in 1980. But it was postponed after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which added another Chinese "precondition" for normalization, namely the removal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup>

Sino-Soviet relations therefore remained frozen but disturbed. Deep-seated suspicions and fears still existed.<sup>5</sup> On 3 April 1979, the fifth Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Congress had passed a resolution not to extend the already long-disregarded Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance, a sign that China was ready to set up a different relationship on a more acceptable footing. On the

following day the Soviet government had attacked what it saw as a hostile action, intended further to sabotage Sino-Soviet relations. It had even threatened that "all responsibilities...rest with the Chinese side" and that "the Soviet Union, of course, will draw the appropriate conclusion" from China's action.<sup>6</sup> So things had got off to a bad start.

In the early 1980s the Soviet Union kept close tabs on Chinese writings about itself. According to O.B. Rakhmanin (writing under the pseudonym, O.B. Borisov), then First Deputy Head of the Central Committee's Department for Relations with Socialist and Workers' Parties and one of the most powerful of the China specialist in the USSR, Renmin Ribao contained more than 3,400 attacks in 1980 on the internal and external policies of the USSR and on the the leaders of the CPSU and the Soviet government, while in 1981 about 2,500 anti-Soviet items were published.<sup>7</sup> He also accused the PRC of distributing fabrications by anti-communist centres and of having Maoism without Mao.<sup>8</sup> Indications of the deep suspicion of China that existed within the Soviet Union could be found in an article by M. Ukraintsev published in the Soviet journal Far Eastern Affairs after Brezhnev's Tashkent speech of 24 March 1982.<sup>9</sup> It included the following accusations:

a) The Chinese leaders had adopted practices and doctrines that ran "counter to the principles of socialism".

b) Beijing's heretical stance had implications that transcended bilateral Sino-Soviet relations and threatened the ideological orientation of the entire international revolutionary movement.

c) The struggle against "distortions of scientific socialism" was particularly important at a time when an alliance was shaping up between anti-Communism of the Reagan brand, Beijing's social chauvinism, and

various brands of opportunism and right-wing nationalism.

d) The post-Mao Chinese leaders continued to throw mud at the CPSU.

e) Beijing's recent "tactical manoeuvres" to improve relations with the Soviet Union were designed to "blackmail the West with threats of improving relations with the Soviet Union."

f) The ideological reorientation now under way in China was simply designed to make Maoism more flexible, while retaining its essence of Sinified Marxism plus a hegemonistic foreign policy and anti-Sovietism.

g) The changes in China's domestic policy were not significant and they were aimed at providing a more dependable basis for Beijing's anti-Sovietism.

h) Under the PRC's Constitution and the rules of the CCP, struggle against the Soviet Union was a constitutional and statutory duty of each citizen and each Party member, reflecting repeated Chinese statements that struggle against the Soviet Union would be a long-term struggle.

i) It was up to China to take initiatives to improve relations; the Soviet Union had done all it could. This analysis was hardly friendly and promising, yet it came right on the heels of Brezhnev's supposedly conciliatory Tashkent speech.

At the same time, scepticism about the Soviet Union on the Chinese side was equally deep-rooted. Indications of the suspicions and grievances that the Chinese nursed could be found in many contemporary. Liu Keming, then Director of the Institute of Soviet and East European Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, summed up ten complaints about the Soviet hegemonism in an article written in late 1979:<sup>10</sup>

a) Soviet politicians had consistently tried to control China. In 1958, for example, they had proposed the establishment of a joint fleet actually

intended to control the Chinese coastline. Thereafter, they had tried to prevent China from acquiring its own nuclear weapons. They had wanted to turn China into a "nuclear protectorate".

b) In recent years the Soviet Union had repeatedly carried out separatist activities in China's border regions. In particular, it had had an eye on incorporating Inner Mongolia.

c) It had repeatedly carried out subversive activities within against China with the aim of establishing a pro-Soviet state.

d) It had obstructed the solution of the border problem by refusing to acknowledge the existence of disputed areas.

e) It had greatly increased the number of its troops along the border to strengthen its strategic position in Asia and to intimidate China.

f) It had lent its support to Vietnam to invade Kampuchea and make territorial claims against China.

g) To obstruct China's four modernizations, it had tried to interfere in China's trade with the West.

h) It had sought to isolate China from Japan, the United States, and India.

i) It had spread lies and distortions about Chinese policies, seeking to slander China as an aggressive power, out to provoke a world war.

In sum, Liu's article had concluded that the Soviet Union wanted to turn China into a client state. It had inherited the traditions of Russian imperialism; and it could not now allow a strong and powerful China at its side any more than it could allow the emergence of a powerful Europe in the West. The conclusion was that China must deal with the Soviet Union from a position of strength.

Chinese suspicions were reinforced by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

and its military buildup at the time. According to Western sources Moscow had increased the number of its modernized regular troops by the end of 1979 to 46 divisions along the border, including 6 tank divisions.<sup>11</sup> Japan's White Paper on Defence in 1980 estimated that the USSR had placed one fourth of its ground forces along the Sino-Soviet frontier, of which about 34 divisions or 350,000 regulars were located in the area from Lake Baikal to Vladivostok.<sup>12</sup> Chinese sources indicate that, in addition to Soviet regular divisions, the Soviet Union had also built up numerous missile units and air-force bases. Therefore, the total accountable number of Soviet forces in the region may have been well over one million men.<sup>13</sup> The Soviet Union had undoubtedly carried out a policy of increasing its offensive capability in Asia. The Soviet strategic military presence was far in excess of the level needed for defence purposes (see table 1). The normalization process of the two countries was bound to be protracted, difficult and complex.

## 8.2 Gradual Appreciation of the Need for Change

In the early 1980s, there was also another side to Sino-Soviet relations. A heated discussion got under way both in China and in the Soviet Union, involving many leaders and scholars, about whether the other country was socialist or not. One question that arises is whether Soviet spokesmen entertained different interpretations of Chinese political and economic policies while attacking them. Professor G. Rosman has explored this possibility in his book entitled A Mirror for Socialism.<sup>14</sup> He has drawn attention to differences of opinion between orthodox and reform groups in the Soviet Union on a wide range of issues pertaining to the social system and social classes in the PRC. He has also suggested in one of his articles

Table 1. Sino-Soviet Strategic Balance, January 1980\*

	Soviet Union	China
International Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs)	1,398	First true ICBM tested in 1980; two limited capability ICBMs deployed.
Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs)	950	None
Intercontinental-Range Strategic Bombers	156	None
Total Warheads	6,000	Chinese missiles are "ear generational" and carry only one warhead each.
Throw-Weight (lbs.)	11.8 million	Not Known
Intermediate-and Medium-Range Ballistic Missiles	About 40 new SS20 (each with three independently targetable warheads) deployed against China	About 100 ("early generational")
Medium-Range Bombers	About 40 Backfire supersonic bombers (half assigned to naval aviation) plus about 100 bombers of earlier vintage	Somewhat over 100 (old TU16 and TU4 planes)
Ballistic Missile Defence	Soviet antiballistic missiles deployed around Moscow and available at central Asian test site effective against projected Chinese ICBM designs.	No capability

\* Source: C. G. Jacobson, "Sino-Soviet Relations Since Mao", 1981, New York, pp. 33-34.



that the orthodox and reform groups had different outlooks on the possibility of improving Sino-Soviet relations as well as in their assessments of the post-Mao reforms.<sup>15</sup>

Among the Chinese, there were two opposing viewpoints about the nature of the Soviet system. The discussion began in secret in late 1979.<sup>16</sup> Quite a few people raised the possibility that the Soviet Union was, not a social-imperialist country, but still a socialist country. The discussion was soon stopped on the orders of the top leadership. But concepts of the USSR began to change.

Simultaneously China once again started to adjust its foreign policy to correspond to the changes in the international situation and to meet the needs of the country's internal modernization.

From the early 1970s to the early 1980s, China pursued a "united front" policy so as to find allies opposed to Soviet expansionism. This policy was based on the following assumptions:

a) Because the Soviet Union had tried consistently to impose its control on China, China had to unite all possible forces against the Soviet Union for the sake of its independence and future development.

b) Because a new world war would break out sooner or later with the Soviet Union as the aggressor, China must combine all possible forces to resist Soviet aggression.

c) Although the United States was one of the superpowers contending for world hegemony, its military strength could be used to balance that of the Soviet Union which was more aggressive.

Following through this policy, China had made some gains as well as some losses. But there were fallacies in the argumentation supporting it:

a) It was not objective to regard the Soviet Union as the main source

of turmoil in the world. The United States was responsible for some of the crises that arose, for instance, in the Middle East and Latin America.

b) Countries opposing the Soviet Union included some of the most notorious right-wing regimes in the world. China had harmed its reputation by maintaining good relations with these regimes.<sup>17</sup>

c) China had weakened its ties with some Third World countries which kept good relations with the Soviet Union. This policy was resented by many Third World countries.<sup>18</sup>

d) It had not dealt with some pro-Soviet Third World countries objectively, but had taken them as lackeys of the Soviet Union instead of analysing their positions more deeply.<sup>19</sup>

e) Because of China's one-sided approach and its need for high technology from the West, the United States and some other Western countries were trying to force it to obey their demands, for example in connection with the problem of Taiwan and the affair of textbooks in Japan.<sup>20</sup>

Because of these mistakes, China had been unable to play its full part in international affairs. Becoming aware of this, the new Chinese leaders began to adjust their foreign policy from 1982 onwards. The first changes could be observed in the political report to the 12th National Congress of the CCP made by the late General Secretary, Hu Yaobang. But an article entitled "Adhere to an Independent Foreign Policy", written by Huan Xiang, Chinese expert on world affairs who died in 1989, and published in Renmin Ribao at the end of October 1982, gave the best exposition of China's adjusted foreign policy:

a) China re-affirms that contention for world hegemony by the two super-powers is still the main source of international instability. It has

therefore stopped saying that the Soviet Union is the most dangerous source of war.

b) It has also abandoned the notion that a new world war is inevitable. Hu Yaobang pointed out in his report that a new world war could be prevented if people all over the world strengthened their unity and launched a resolute struggle against hegemonism. Huan Xiang explained this further: "The strength of the superpowers has been contained and worn down in the course of their confrontation and rivalry, by conflicts inside their own blocs, and by regional wars. As a result, an odd phenomenon has occurred in international relations that the military capabilities of the superpowers have been augmented to an extent never seen before, while their freedom to use such capabilities to manipulate world affairs and control their own spheres of influence has been unprecedentedly restricted."<sup>21</sup> Therefore there are two possibilities -- world war will either break out or it will be prevented.

c) In pursuing an independent foreign policy, China will never attach itself to any major power or group of powers, will never yield to pressure from any major power, and will constantly safeguard the nation's security and interests. As Deng Xiaoping said in his opening speech at the 12th Party Congress, "No foreign country can expect China to be its vassal or expect it to swallow any bitter fruit detrimental to its interests."<sup>22</sup>

d) The U.S. government had violated China's interests by passing the Taiwan Relations Act and continuing to sell arms to Taiwan as an independent political entity. Sino-US relations could continue to develop soundly only on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

e) The Sino-Soviet conflict had been caused by Soviet hegemonist

policy. China has stopped talking about ideological differences in the sincere hope that all barriers harmful to the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations will be eliminated.

f) China's socialist economic construction is based on "self-reliance" and at the same time on "opening up to the outside world." Some people wrongly believed that China needs certain countries' help and will therefore put up with outside threats and interference. This will not be the case.

g) China still belongs to the Third World. Its supreme international duty is to oppose imperialism and hegemonism along with other Third World countries.

h) Each Communist Party should be independent. The Chinese Communist Party hopes to develop its relations with other Communist Parties on the principles of independence, equality, mutual respect and non-interference in one another's internal affairs.

i) China hopes to develop relations with Western countries as well as East European countries.

By 1982 China's internal modernisation programme was well under way and extending from agriculture to industry. In many ways pragmatism had replaced ideology in domestic affairs, and it made increasing sense to adopt a similar approach in foreign policy. This made it possible to understand that mistakes had been made in the past, particularly with regard to the Soviet Union, and that they should be rectified. What Huan Xiang outlined was a generally fairly flexible and independent foreign policy within which China would on one hand, firmly oppose Soviet hegemonism, but on the other hand, try hard to keep normal relations between the two countries. This produced at least three new elements in China's policy towards the Soviet

Union:

a) A sincere wish to resume talks with the aim of relaxing Sino-Soviet tension.

b) A firm decision to reduce ideological criticism of the Soviet Union.

c) A clear objective to resume or strengthen relations with some pro-Soviet countries, such as Libya and Angola.

About the same time, the Soviet Union seems to have begun reconsidering its policy towards China. On 7 March 1981 Moscow proposed implementing "confidence-building measures" along the border, including advance notification of military exercises and the exchange of observers at those exercises, and then on 25 September it finally had called for a resumption of negotiations.<sup>23</sup> On 24 March 1982, Brezhnev made his important speech in Tashkent expressing the Soviet wish to improve relations. The main thrust of his speech was to recognize China as a socialist country and to show willingness to improve relations with China over a range of issues. The Chinese made a positive if cautious response.<sup>24</sup> In September, this time in Baku, Brezhnev again stressed the importance he attached to improving relations and, about the same time, the Soviet media began to halt anti-Chinese propaganda. In early October 1982 political consultation began at the level of Deputy Foreign Minister when Leonid Ilychev quietly arrived in Beijing for the first round of post-Afghanistan talks with Qian Qichen.

This adjustment in Soviet policy towards China was part of a general realignment of its foreign policy. At a time when relations with the United States were at a low ebb, the Soviet Union had a strong incentive to try to play its "China card" in the hope of pressing the Reagan Administration to be more flexible in the strategic arms negotiations.

Improving relations with China might also help remove the ever present risk of a threat or even a war on two fronts, west and East. Like China, the Soviet Union was also going through the process of reassessing its past foreign policy and of discovering a new understanding of the contemporary world. There were two obvious mistakes it had made in the past regarding relations with socialist countries. One was that it had not allowed for the existence of different models in building socialism; and the other was that it had refused to recognize different or even contradictory interests among and between various socialist countries. The final factor in the general rethinking of foreign policy was awareness of the wretched state of the Soviet economy. The relevance to relations with China was the possibility of increasing the import of badly-needed consumer goods. Brezhnev's speeches clearly indicated that even he had come to realise the connection between easing the Soviet Union's economic burden, on one hand, and reducing tension with China, on the other.

### 8.3 The Slow Process of Normalization and the Triumph of Pragmatism

No-one expected the process of normalization to be as long as it was. It might have been slow to get started; but the very fact of making a start seemed to remove a major obstacle. The first round of consultation at the Deputy Foreign Minister level took place on 3 December 1982. By the end of 1988, there had been twelve rounds altogether. These consultations played a very active role in relaxing tension in mutual understanding as well as in practical trading and economic matters. But political relations still remained at a stalemate and so the talks were slow. The main reason for this was that the Soviet Union for a long time refused to remove what China stated at the first meeting as the 'three main obstacles', that is,

the need for the Soviet Union to reduce the number of its troops stationed along the Sino-Soviet border and to withdraw its troops from Mongolia, the need for it to evacuate Afghanistan and the need for it to end its support to Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea. From the Soviet point of view these were enormous hurdles, amounting to a reversal of much of its Eastern policy to date. So under the pretext of "not harming the interests of a third country," the Soviet side refused to discuss the three obstacles. From the Chinese point of view, of course, all three issues were not only an acid test of Soviet intentions; they were all crucial to China's security and future.

On 14 November 1982, Huang Hua, then Chinese Foreign Minister, was sent to Moscow to attend Brezhnev's funeral and, following a lengthy meeting with Andrei Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister, Huang announced that he was "quite optimistic" about the prospect for improving Sino-Soviet relations. This was the first meeting between Foreign Ministers of the two countries in about twenty years. It attracted world-wide publicity. But Huang Hua was dismissed as Foreign Minister soon after his return to Beijing because of his excessive optimism. The fact was that there were different opinions among the Chinese leaders about how fast to proceed with the Russians.

In February 1983 Hu Yaobang voiced considerable scepticism about the outcome of the dialogue with Moscow. "A complete normalization of relations is only possible," he said in an interview with Japanese journalists, "if the obstacles are removed."<sup>26</sup> This had determined that the talks would be a marathon. The second and third rounds of consultation were held in Moscow and Beijing respectively in 1983.<sup>27</sup> On 13 February 1984, a Chinese delegation headed by Vice-Premier Wan Li went to Moscow to attend Andropov's funeral, and on 15 February Soviet First Deputy Premier Aliyev

received him in the Kremlin. This was the first senior contact between government leaders since 1969.<sup>28</sup> From 12 to 26 March 1984, the fourth round of consultation took place in Moscow. At this meeting, the two sides were at least able to point out that, since the political discussions had begun, exchanges in the field of economy, trade, science, culture and sports had been markedly increased.<sup>29</sup>

The see-saw continued. On 27 April Zhao Ziyang, then Chinese Premier, informed President Reagan that consultations between China and the Soviet Union had not made substantial progress.<sup>30</sup> Yet on 21 September, Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian had a talk with his Soviet partner Gromyko at the U.N. headquarters in New York. This was the first formal meeting between Foreign Ministers for more than twenty years.<sup>31</sup> On 11 October 1984 Deng Xiaoping took a middle-of-the-road position. He told some Japanese guests that Sino-Soviet relations could not be improved substantially before the three obstacles were removed; but before normalization, the two countries could strengthen exchanges in the fields of economy and culture.<sup>32</sup> At the the fifth round of consultation later in the year both sides expressed willingness to increase exchanges to their mutual benefit.<sup>33</sup>

The year 1985 at least saw a rise in the level of contact. On 12 March Vice-Premier Li Peng headed a delegation to attend Chernenko's funeral. In a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev, the new General Secretary of the CPSU, Li expressed his wish for the Soviet Union to make great progress in its socialist construction. This was the first time that a Chinese leader had recognized the Soviet Union as a socialist country since the middle 1960s.<sup>34</sup> On 17 April Deng Xiaoping pointed out in an interview with a Belgian journalist that the Soviet Union could remove the three obstacles



one by one if it was too difficult to remove them at the same time.<sup>35</sup> Wu Xueqian talked with the new Soviet Foreign Minister, Edvard Shevardnadze, at the U.N.. They exchanged views on how to improve Sino-Soviet relations and extended invitations for a visit to each other's country. The sixth and seventh rounds came and went. And on 9 October 1985 Deng Xiaoping asked the Romanian President, Nicolae Ceausescu, who was visiting China, to pass a proposal to Gorbachev that there should be a Sino-Soviet summit, but on the precondition that the Soviet Union stopped its support for the Vietnamese in Kampuchea.<sup>36</sup>

Reporting to the 27th Party Congress in January 1986, Gorbachev indicated that Sino-Soviet relations had improved and that there was great potential for Sino-Soviet co-operation. At the same time, however, on the 29 January Hu Yaobang told Japanese guests that an exchange of visits between Foreign Ministers was dependent on the development of the situation and could not be decided at that time.<sup>37</sup> The eighth round of consultation was held in April in Moscow.<sup>38</sup> Then on 28 July Gorbachev made an important speech in Vladivostok, in which he made three points concerning China: first, he expressed understanding and respect for China's domestic reform and modernization drive; second, he proposed the main navigation channel as the demarcation line in the rivers between the two countries; and third, referring to the three obstacles he indicated willingness to withdraw some Soviet troops from Mongolia and Afghanistan and to discuss mutual reduction of the number of troops stationed in the border areas.<sup>39</sup> The process beginning with Brezhnev's recognition of China as a socialist country to Gorbachev's positive assessment of China's reform shows that the Soviet Union was gradually discarding subjective ideological elements in its attitude China's internal and external

policies and interests. Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech was a signpost indicating that Sino-Soviet relations had developed to the stage at which a solution of the objectively existing difficulties would be achievable.

One and half months later, China gave a cautious welcome to the speech, but meanwhile kicked the ball back to Gorbachev. On 2 September Deng Xiaoping called on him to "take a solid step towards the removal of the three major obstacles in Sino-Soviet relations."<sup>40</sup> Deng said that, of the three major obstacles, the main one was Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea. It had put Sino-Soviet relations into a "hot-spot" situation and produced a state of confrontation that took the form of pitting Vietnamese against Chinese forces. He even proposed a summit if the Soviet Union could contribute to the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea: "Once this problem is resolved, I will be ready to meet Gorbachev. Now I am over 82, already advanced in years, and have long accomplished my historical task of making overseas visits. If this obstacle in Sino-Soviet relations is removed, I will be ready to break the rule and go to any place in the Soviet Union to meet Gorbachev." Deng added further that "a meeting like this would be of great significance for the...normalization of Sino-Soviet relations."<sup>41</sup> He nevertheless criticized Gorbachev for not having taken a big step since soon "Soon after Gorbachev made his speech, "an official from the Soviet Foreign Ministry also made a speech that was different in tone. This shows that the Soviet authorities have yet to decide among themselves what China policies to pursue, and so we still have to wait and see."<sup>42</sup> The year petered out after the ninth round of consultation when Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Rogachev replaced Ilychev as the Soviet representative.<sup>43</sup>

On 15 January 1987 a spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry declared

that the Soviet Union would withdraw numbers of troops from Mongolia between April and June, a move that was welcomed by the Chinese side.<sup>44</sup>

In February the first round of actual border talks took place.<sup>45</sup> Before the tenth round of consultation was held in Moscow in April, the Chinese representative announced that the Soviet Union now expressed its willingness to discuss the three obstacles which it had refused to do for a long time. He hoped that this would be a good sign.<sup>46</sup> The second round of border talks in August<sup>47</sup> and the eleventh round of consultation in October<sup>48</sup> both produced modest progress. Deng Xiaoping in November,<sup>49</sup> then Gorbachev<sup>50</sup>, then again Deng Xiaoping in December<sup>51</sup>, and finally Gorbachev<sup>52</sup>, always through third parties, exchanged ideas on the possibility of a summit meeting, dependent on the Cambodian issue.

Progress was still desultory. But a significant change came in April 1988 when a peace agreement was signed at talks in Geneva which set a timetable for the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan between mid-May 1988 and mid-February 1989. This was welcomed by the Chinese who continued, however, to ask Moscow to exert its influence to get the Vietnamese out of Kampuchea. This and the twelfth round of consultation in June<sup>53</sup> led to the establishment of a special working group on the Kampuchean problem.

On 16 September 1988 Gorbachev made another speech on Soviet foreign policy, this time in Krasnoyarsk in South east Siberia. Referring to the Kampuchean talks between Deputy Foreign Ministers Rogachov and Tian, he said that they had "expanded in a certain way the zone of mutual understanding on this issue and contributed to improving Soviet-Chinese relations."<sup>54</sup> A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman agreed.<sup>55</sup> He also noted

the Soviet willingness, expressed by Gorbachev, to promote a more rapid settlement of the Kampuchean problem: "We hope that the Soviet Union will make practical efforts to this end."<sup>56</sup> Mutual willingness to do so was then expressed on 28 September by Qian Qichen and Shevardnadze at the U.N.<sup>57</sup>

Looking back it is possible to say that there were many positive changes in Sino-Soviet relations that led to a breakthrough in eliminating the three obstacles. It was after this breakthrough that Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen actually visited Moscow in early December, quickening the process of normalization. During his visit, both side strengthened their mutual understanding, increasing their common ground and narrowed their differences on the major topic -- the Kampuchean issue. Above all, they reached agreement in principle on a Sino-Soviet summit in the first half of 1989. At the same time, there was also something of a breakthrough in the border talks. From 20 to 31 October their third round was held in Moscow. The two sides made agreements on the Eastern and also discussed the question of the Western sector, eventually setting up a working group to solve the problem.<sup>58</sup> Finally, on 7 December, Gorbachev was able to say to the U.N. General Assembly that the Soviet Union would greatly reduce the number of its troops stationed in its Asian territory and would withdraw most of them from Mongolia. This was welcomed by the Chinese.<sup>59</sup>

A quantum leap was made in February 1989 when Shevardnadze paid a return visit to China. The two sides were able to issue a nine-point statement on a Kampuchean solution:

1) The Soviet Union and the People's Republic stand for a fair and reasonable political settlement of the Kampuchean question at the earliest

possible date and express their readiness to make every effort to help attain this objective.

2) They hold the view that a Vietnamese troop withdrawal from Kampuchea is an important component of any political settlement of the Kampuchean question.

3) After the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, all countries concerned should gradually reduce and eventually totally stop their military aid to any of the parties in Kampuchea.

4) China and the Soviet Union take the view that the internal problems of Kampuchea should be settled through negotiations by the parties in Kampuchea on the basis of national reconciliation and free from any outside interference. China and the Soviet Union will respect the results of future free elections in Kampuchea.

5) It is the view and concern of both sides that after the withdrawal of foreign troops from Kampuchea, no dangerous situation should emerge and no civil war should break out in the country.

6) The two sides are of the view that the United Nations mechanism may play its appropriate role in the process of a political settlement of the Kampuchean question as conditions gradually present themselves. The two sides are in favour of convening an international conference on the Kampuchean question when conditions are ripe.

7) The two sides hold that following the withdrawal of foreign troops from Kampuchea, an international guarantee should be instituted for the status of Kampuchea as an independent, peaceful, neutral and non-aligned state. China and the Soviet Union express their willingness to join in this international guarantee.

8) The two sides agree to continue to discuss their remaining

differences of views on settling certain aspects of the Kampuchean question.

9) The Chinese and Soviet sides hold that the settlement of the Kampuchean question will contribute to the removal of a source of tension in Southeast Asia, to a healthy development of the political situation and also to the promotion of peace and stability in the region.<sup>50</sup>

On that occasion, too, Deng Xiaoping and Premier Li Peng met Shevardnadze. There was agreement on the date of Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to China at the invitation of the Chinese President, Yang Shangkun, and on the topics for discussion. A new relationship should be set up on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. The mutual visits of the Foreign Ministers of China and the Soviet Union paved the way for the Sino-Soviet summit, the highlight of which would be Deng Xiaoping's talk with Gorbachev and the importance of which would be the beginning of normalized Sino-Soviet relations.

Why did it take so long to improve political relations between the two countries? Why was it so difficult for the USSR to remove the three obstacles? Of course, Gorbachev's policy was much more flexible than that of his predecessors, but his efforts produced very little effect at the beginning. The policy ran into trouble for a number of reasons.

First, Soviet policy towards China was inevitably subordinate to its global strategy. It had to put Soviet-American relations in first place because the major threat to its security came from the United States across Europe and world-wide, and the main reason for its inordinate military expenditure was its Cold War relationship with America. While talking peace, too, the Soviet Union had increased its military strength in the Far East in the mid-1980s. It had reorganized the command system of its three

armed services in the Far East; developed its Pacific Fleet into the country's largest; built a powerful radar station near Nakhodka; deployed nuclear weapons on Sakhalin and ground-to-ground, and ground-to-ship offensive cruise missiles on the Kurile islands; and expanded its naval base in Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. In short, it had an immense military presence in the East which it could not quickly take down.

Secondly, for a long time the Soviet leaders still maintained their old policy on the two Asian hotspots -- Afghanistan and Kampuchea - partly to pressurise the United States, partly to guard against an uncertain Chinese policy, and partly because it was difficult to contemplate the internal and external loss of face involved in admitting what would amount to defeat. Local conditions made the Vietnamese problem particularly intractable. Moscow continued to support the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, increasing its economic and military aid. Economic aid to Vietnam in the 1986-1990 Five-Year-Plan was twice the amount of the previous plan. In December 1986, Yegor Ligachev, a hard-line member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU, attended the Sixth National Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party at which Vietnam's leaders were replaced. This aim was probably to co-ordinate policies with the new leaders and encourage them in their invasion of Kampuchea so as to strengthen the Soviet Union's position in Southeast Asia, as he saw it.

This was perhaps a third reason. It probably took Gorbachev some time to conclude not only that it was safe to come to terms with China, but that it was wise. His foreign policy, like his domestic policy, was evolutionary - one stage at a time. Shevardnadze who toured Southeast Asia in 1987 possibly encouraged withdrawal from the Vietnamese conflict; but Ligachev restrained him. In his book Perestroika Gorbachev quite openly put Western

concerns ahead of Eastern. It was a combination of history and geopolitics. But when in his pragmatic way he did get round to looking at China he discovered a power that was far less ideological than in Mao's time and that in its pragmatic way was proving remarkably successful at home and abroad. So he reciprocated.

#### 8.4 Normalization and Its Possible Consequences

At the invitation of President Yang Shangkun of the People's Republic of China, Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and General Secretary Of the CPSU, paid his official visit to China from 15 to 18 May 1989. This may prove to have been the most special official visit of a generation. All the elements were there for an epic drama. The leader of one great nation travelled to another great nation which had not received such a visit for 30 years. The moment Deng Xiaoping shook hands with Gorbachev on 16 May marked the normalization of relations between the two largest socialist countries and the two biggest Communist Parties. It was an occasion that was applauded by the people of both countries.

Deng reaped the diplomatic harvest that he had sown three years before when he asked Ceausescu to transmit his suggestion that the three obstacles should be removed as soon as possible but could be removed one by one. Gorbachev said he remembered the message: "They needed three years to be removed, each one took a year,"<sup>61</sup> Deng summed up the summit in eight words -- "End the past and open up the future." While the two leaders mended the 30-year-old rift, their handshake seems to have had more profound meaning for Deng. He had been one of the main fighters against the Soviet leadership during the 1960s. Gorbachev, to some extent, had been



just a witness to a quarrel between former friends. Yet later, in Shanghai, he commented that the summit was so satisfying that the unpleasantness of the previous 30 years seemed to disappear. Gorbachev concluded that the Soviet Union had made mistakes. At the same time he made it clear that, although Deng's comments on the unhappy relations in the past were not groundless, he could not agree completely.<sup>62</sup>

However, the two leaders agreed to let bygones be bygones. What really mattered was for both to look forward and to take practical steps to expand bilateral relations. During a press conference on May 17, Gorbachev said that his meetings with Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng and Yang Shangkun were historically important and fruitful. He also said that he was happy to see that Soviet-Chinese friendship was deeply rooted in the hearts of the Chinese people, especially in the young. He said the friendship would further develop, he was confident of that.

On 18 May the two countries issued an 18-point joint communique. Its main ideas were as follows:

- 1) China and the Soviet Union agreed that their third high level meeting symbolized the normalization of relations between them. The normalization of their relations was not directed at any third country, nor did it harm its interests.

- 2) The People's Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would develop their relations on the basis of the universal principles guiding state-to-state relations, namely, mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

- 3) Both sides expressed their readiness to resolve all their disputes

by peaceful negotiation, and neither side would use or threaten to use arms against the other by any means, including the use of the land, water or air space of a third country bordering on the other. They confirmed the statement on Kampuchea issued by their Foreign Ministers in February 1989 and, in view of later developments, they had had an overall and in-depth exchange of views on the settlement of the Kampuchean question. They reaffirmed their continued efforts to promote its early political settlement in a fair and reasonable way.

4) Both powers agreed to reduce their military forces along their border to a minimum level commensurate with normal, good-neighbourly relations between them and to work for increased trust and continuous tranquility in the border areas. The Chinese side welcomed the decision of the Soviet Union to withdraw 75 percent of its forces from the People's Republic of Mongolia and hoped to see the complete pull-out of its remaining forces from that country within a specified short period of time.

5) The two sides favoured a fair and reasonable settlement of the Sino-Soviet boundary question left over from the past, on the basis of the treaties concerning the existing Sino-Soviet boundary and of the generally recognized principles of international law, and in a spirit of consultation on an equal footing and with mutual understanding and mutual accommodation.

6) China and the Soviet Union agreed to work for the development of economic, trade, scientific, technological, cultural and other relations in a planned way on the basis of the principles of equality and mutual benefit and to deepen mutual understanding and promote exchanges between the two peoples.

7) The two sides considered it beneficial for them to share information

and experience regarding their socialist development and reforms and to exchange views on bilateral relations and international issues of common concern.

8) The two sides agreed that the Communist Party of China and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union would develop their contacts and exchanges in accordance with the principles of independence, complete equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

9) The two sides stated that neither would seek hegemony of any form in the Asian-Pacific region or in other parts of the world. Both deemed it essential to denounce the attempt or action of any country to impose its will on others or to seek hegemony of any form anywhere in the world.<sup>63</sup>

Obviously, the Sino-Soviet summit was particularly significant for Sino-Soviet relations but also had an impact on international affairs. "But the momentous occasion was over-shadowed by mounting turmoil in Beijing," in the words of a typical Western newspaper, "as hundreds of thousands of students and workers filled the huge arena of Tiananmen Square, which is the symbol of the revolution, to demand democracy in China."<sup>64</sup> The so-called "Gorbachev whirlwind" was scattered by the demonstrators. At least four scheduled events, including the welcoming ceremony, laying wreaths at the Monument to the People's Heroes, visiting the Forbidden City and attending a press conference, were either changed or cancelled because of the demonstrations during Gorbachev's brief three-day stay in Beijing. There may be lessons in this for the future of Sino-Soviet relations; but that is work for another dissertation. However, assuming continued improvement in Sino-Soviet relations, the world may benefit in the following ways:

1) There may in due course be further relaxation and stability in international relations as the trend develops towards turning confrontation into dialogue.

2) A new international political order may be promoted based on increasing observance of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, rather than on the restoration of the old alliances.

3) The Sino-Soviet rapprochement should strengthen international economic co-operation.

4) It should equally facilitate the exchange of experience of reform among socialist or ex-socialist countries.

Despite these positive factors, the improvement and normalization of Sino-Soviet relations has aroused suspicion and concern among some people in the world. They are mostly worried about a resumption of the old Sino-Soviet alliance, fearing that this might upset the overall balance of strategic forces or harm the interests and security of third parties.

Such feelings are understandable, but unnecessary. First, the present international and domestic situations of China and the Soviet Union are fundamentally different from the 1950s so that there is no subjective or objective need for them to form an alliance. And second, the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations is unlikely to endanger the interests of the United States and the West, but, on the contrary, more likely to assist good relations between China, the Soviet Union and other powers in the long run.

At the same time it must be stressed that normalization of Sino-Soviet relations does not mean that there will be no more contradictions or differences between the two countries. China and the Soviet Union have their respective national interests and their foreign policies have

different concerns. It remains to be seen whether in practice the Soviet Union can thoroughly correct its big-nation chauvinism under the impact of internal change.

### 8.5 Sino-Soviet Relations in the 1980s

Despite political differences between the two countries they actively developed their bilateral relations, especially their economic and trade relations following the resumption in 1983. (see table 1) From 21 to 29 December 1984, Ivan Arkhipov, Soviet First Deputy Prime Minister, visited China to negotiate two agreements. One concerned Sino-Soviet economic and technological cooperation, the other the establishment of a Sino-Soviet Committee for economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation.

The Committee now meets annually in Beijing and Moscow in turn. The first meeting was held in March 1986 in Beijing when the two sides signed an agreement on the conditions for exchanging technical personnel.

In July 1985 it was the turn of Chinese Vice-Premier Yao Yilin to visit Moscow where two documents were signed: one a five-year trade agreement aimed at boosting trade from the US \$1.3 billion it had been in 1984 to \$10 billion by 1990; the other an agreement on economic and technical cooperation in renewing and building industrial projects in China.<sup>65</sup> In September 1986, Nikolai Talyzin, Soviet First Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of Gosplan, signed an agreement in Beijing on inter-Gosplan cooperation. By 1988 the total turnover of trade had reached 2.8 billion US dollars, 30 per cent more than the figure for 1987 and a nine-fold increase compared with the early 1980s. In the first half of 1989 it amounted to 1.7 billion US dollars.<sup>66</sup>

Border trade has been booming since Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech,

particularly between Heilongjiang Province, the Xingjiang Uigur Autonomous Region and neighbouring areas in the Soviet Union. Trade between Heilongjiang and Siberia has been recorded for over 300 years, focussing initially on the export to Russia of tea, silk, soya and alcohol, and on the import of furs and iron and steel products. It was not until 1986, however, that trade links began to be rebuilt at a fast rate, supported by the specialists at the Academy of Social Sciences in Harbin. Two of them published a paper, emphasising the complimentarity of the two regimes economies and proposing the border town of Heihe (which is still not open to Western visitors), as Heilongjiang's equivalent to Shenzhen, Guangdong's special economic zone neighbouring on Hong Kong. In May 1987 four border cities were paired for economic cooperation. Also in March 1988, the Chinese government agreed to open the border areas of Heilongjiang Province to Soviet economic activity; and in response, the Soviet government in vested its Far Eastern Region more decision-making powers. Barter trade is widespread with Swiss francs as the measure and repayment in kind.

The conduct of trade with the Soviet Union by more than 100 Chinese companies rather than by the one and only provincial foreign trade company has resulted in the rapid growth of both imports and exports in Heilongjiang, as seen from the following table:

Year	Imports & Exports (million Swiss francs)
1983	17.45
1984	31.66
1985	30.00
1986	29.85
1987	34.22
1988	196.00

Thus in 1988 the Province's trade with the Soviet Union was 5.7 times that of 1987, or the total of the previous two periods (1957-66 and 1983-87) put together.<sup>67</sup> In addition, it has established links with other Soviet regions as far away as Leningrad, the Ukraine, Moscow and other western areas.

In general bilateral economic relations have expanded from simple barter trade to include extensive economic and technical cooperation. By the beginning of 1989, the two sides had signed 157 contracts and agreements on economic and technical cooperation in the fields of vegetable cultivation, project contracting, lumbering, railway freight loading and unloading, and ship repair and maintenance. In 1988, Heilongjiang 1,300 workers to the Soviet Union on labour contracts. The figure in 1989 was expected to exceed 5,000.<sup>68</sup>

More varieties of commodity are being exported to the Soviet Union. In 1987, the Province sold some 50 different commodities, notably unprocessed farm produce and local specialities. This figure has increased to more than 3,000 with the addition of light industrial products, machinery, electrical equipment, precision instruments and meters, and building materials. Unlike other provinces that have counter-trade links with the Soviet Union, these are negotiated locally and profits stay in the Province. Beijing sets the framework for the trade and also keeps control of trade with other countries in Eastern Europe.

Border trade between the Xingjiang Uigur Autonomous Region and the Soviet Union rose to 17 million Swiss Francs in 1986. The total turnover in the first half of 1987 increased by 75 percent over the same period in 1986. In 1988 it reached SF 180 million, six times of that of 1987. In 1989 it was SF 200 million. In 1988 the two sides established 54 joint-ventures

including in textiles, electronics, food processing, and construction materials. In 1989, Xingjiang concluded a six-year agreement on economic, technical, and trade co-operation with the Khazakstan Republic. It covered 87 projects, among which were 25 large and 53 medium and small projects. The total investment amounted to one billion U.S. dollars. According to contracts between the two sides, Xingjiang will continue to export shirts, children's fur coats, woollen sweaters, towels and enamelware to the Soviet Union and import steel products, chemicals and refrigerators.<sup>69</sup> In addition, border trade has been expanded to Inner Mongolia. In July 1988 a delegation from Inner Mongolia signed a protocol with a Chita Region delegation to develop direct trade, and economic and technical co-operation. Since then, the trade turnover has been increased rapidly. Between September 1988 and July 1989 Inner Mongolia concluded 27 contracts with a total investment value of SF 130 million.<sup>70</sup>

There are still problems. There have been complaints from Chinese commodity inspectors about materials and finish. A Chinese trade official suggested that Soviet business methods were not flexible enough. Negotiations can continue for more than a year and then come to nothing. Yevgeni Bavrin, a Soviet Embassy commercial attache, admitted that such problems had existed in the past, but that they were now few. He pledged further improvements of timber supplies.<sup>71</sup> On the Chinese side, most problems have stemmed from insufficient funds and bureaucracy. In Heilongjiang Province alone, the authorities invested as many as 180 companies in a short time with the authority to conduct direct trade. This created some confusion. Railways serving the Sino-Soviet border, already running to capacity, also stand in the way of the rapid expansion of barter trade between the two countries.



Exchanges in the fields of culture, sports and specialist personnel have also been expanded rapidly . In May 1987 an important delegation from the Soviet Academy of Sciences, headed by the Deputy President P. H. Fedoseev, visited China. It included eight directors of various institutes and four of Gorbachev's advisers, notably the famous economist A.G. Agenbegian. It toured Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan and the special economic zone at Shekou adjoining Shenzen, and engaged in many talks. It is said that positive reports were made to the Central Committee of the CPSU. In 1988, there was an exchange of almost five hundred delegations. In the same year, China sent 450 students to study in the USSR, compared with as few as 10 in 1983, when the two countries decided to resume educational exchanges.<sup>72</sup> On 15 July of that year it was agreed that Chinese and Soviet citizens holding valid travel certificates would no longer need visas to visit each other's country on business. The regulation has come into force on 13 August 1988.<sup>73</sup> This represented a major departure from the past and a promising start for future in the relations.

## Notes: Chapter VIII

1. Renmin ribao, 18 May 1989.
2. Xia Yishan, Sulain waijiao liushiwu nianli shi, 1964-1982 (Chronicle of Soviet Foreign Affairs in the Past 65 Years), (Beijing, 1987), p.704.
3. Ibid., p.684.
4. From this time on, the Chinese officially raised "three obstacles" as a test to Soviet desire for improving Sino-Soviet relations. The three obstacles include: The Soviet Union must reduce its troops stationed along the Sino-Soviet border and withdraw its troops in Mongolia; The Soviet Union must withdraw its troops from Afganistan; The Soviet Union must end its support to Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea.
5. Detailed discussion see Gilbert Rozman, A Mirror for Socialism--Soviet Criticisms of China, Princeton University Press, 1985; The Chinese Debate about Soviet Socialism, 1978-1985, Princeton University Press, 1987.
6. BR, No.16, 20 April 1979, p.8
7. O.B. Borisov, "Nekotorye aspekty politiki Kitaya", Kommunist 1981:6, p.23.
8. Ibid.
9. M. Ukraintsev, "Soviet-Chinese Relations: Problems and Prospects", Far Eastern Affairs, 1982, No.3, Moscow.
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13. BR, No.4, 1980, p.17; No.12, 1981, p.21.
14. Gilbert Rozman, "Moscow's China-Watchers in the Post-Mao Era: The Response to a Changing China", The China Quarterly, June 1983, pp.215-241.
15. Ibid.
16. In the spring 1979, there was a meeting to discuss problems of socialist theory held in Beijing. This meeting was suggested by Hu Yaobang, then the Head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the CCP. About a hundred leaders and scholars took part in the meeting, among whom many people agreed that the Soviet Union was a socialist country, the idea which was contrary to that of the top leadership at the time.

17. Detailed discussion see Alvin Z. Rubjnstein, ed., Soviet and Chinese Influence in the Third World, New York, 1975.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. The U.S. government has violated China's interests by passing the Taiwan Relations Act and continuing to sell arms to Taiwan and treating Taiwan as an independent political entity. See Huan Xian, "Adhere to Independent Foreign Policy", Renmin ribao, 30 October 1982. As regards the incident of Text-book in Japan, the Text-book used the word "enter" instead of "agression" to describe the Japanese agression against China in 1937. This was approved by the Japanese Ministry of Education, and resulted in protest from the Chinese government.

21. Huan Xian, "Adhere to Independent Foreign Policy", Renmin ribao, 30 October 1982; BR, No.46, 1982.

22. Ibid.

23. "Sino-Soviet Relations: Problems and Prospects", Far Eastern Affairs, 1982, No.3, Moscow.

24. Pravda, 25 March, 1982; CDSP, Vol.XXXIV, No.12, pp.4-8.

25. Huang was criticized for his optimistic attitude towards the improvemnt of Sino-Soviet relations. Because the Chinese leadership had been trying hard to open up China to the West, aiming at attracting foreign investments and advanced tecnology. They were afraid that rapid improvement of Sino-Soviet relations could jeopardize that purpose.

26. BR, 1-7 February 1983, p.13.

27. Wen Fu, "Zouxiang zhengchanghuade lichen - Zhong Su guaozi dashiji, 1982-1988" (Chronicle of Normalization of Sino-Soviet Relations), Shijie zhishi, Beijing, 1989, No. 3, pp.11-14.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

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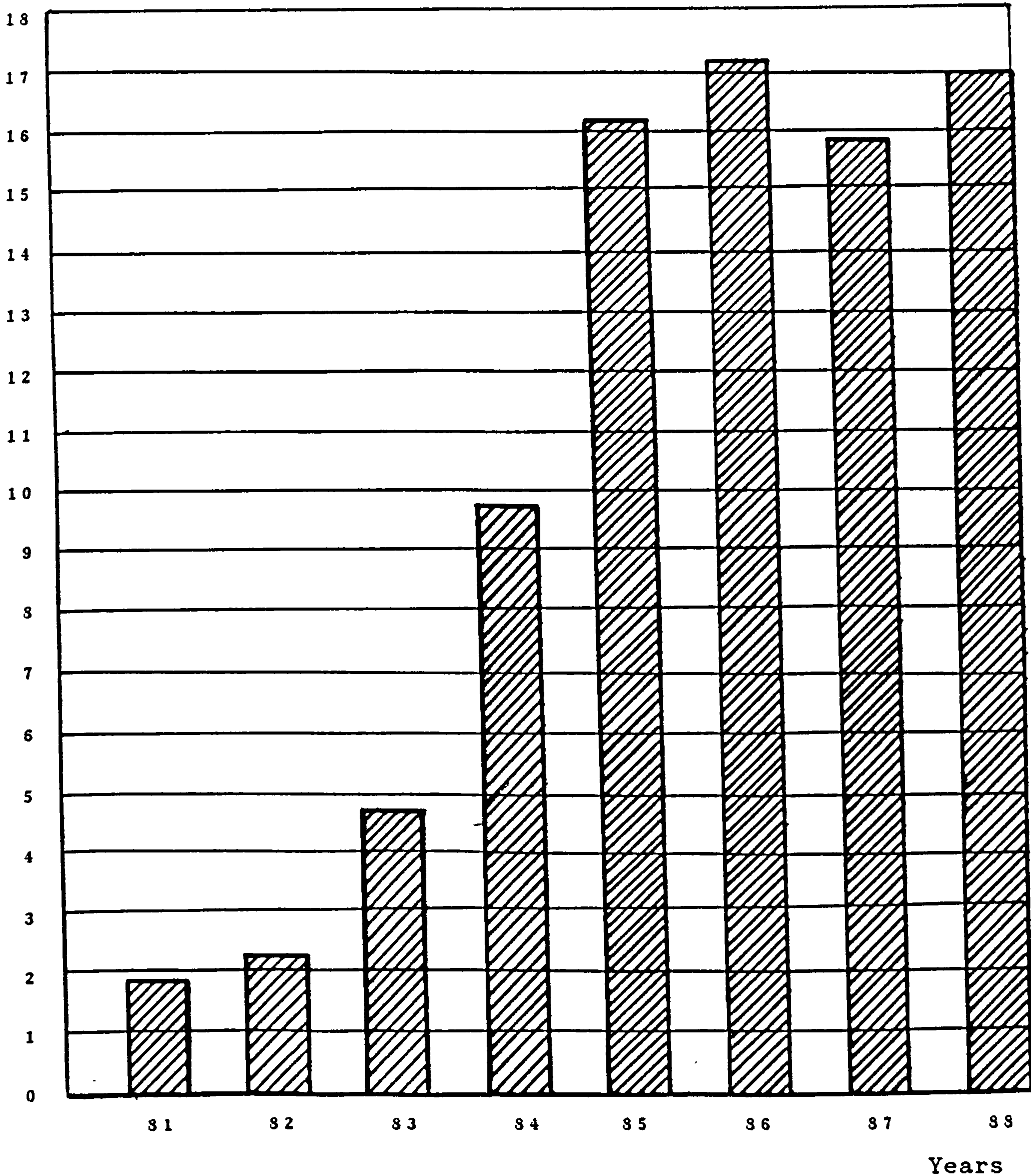
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39. "Speech by Mikhail Gorbachev in Vladivostok", Far Eastern Affairs, No. 1 1987, Moscow.
40. BR, 2 September 1986.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Wen Fu, pp. 11-14.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
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51. Ibid.
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53. Ibid.
54. "New Proposals", Far Eastern Affairs, No. 1, 1989, Moscow.
55. BR, 10-16 October 1988.
56. Ibid.
57. Wen Fu, pp. 11-14.
58. Ibid.
59. "Speech by M. S. Gorbachev at the United Nations", Pravda, 8 December 1988, CDSP, Vol. XL, No. 49, 4 January 1989, pp. 1-7.
60. "Sino-Soviet Summit in Sight", BR, Vol. 32, Nos. 7-8, 13-26 February 1989.
61. BR, Vol. 32, No. 22, 29 May-4 June 1989, p. 4.

62. Ibid.
63. Ibid., "Sino-Soviet Joint Communique", pp. 11-13.
64. The Independent, 17 May 1989.
65. "Sino-Soviet Relations Improved", BR, Vol. 28, No. 30, 29 July 1985, pp. 6-7.
66. Wen Fu, pp. 11-14.
67. Wu Naito, "Ice Melting on the Sino-Soviet Border", BR, 15-21 May 1989, pp. 17-21.
68. Ibid.
69. Renmin ribao (Foreign Edition), 2 May 1989.
70. Ibid., 16 July 1989.
71. Ibid.
72. Wen Fu, pp. 11-14.
73. Ibid.

SINO -- SOVIET TRADE (1981 - 1988)

Billion Rubles



Source: Soviet Commercial Counsellor's Office in China  
BR, Vol.32, No.5, 30 January - 5 February 1989.

## IX

## Conclusion

...the normalization between the Soviet Union and China...meets the interests and aspirations of the peoples of the two countries and promotes the maintenance of peace and stability all over the world. The normalization of Soviet-Chinese relations is not directed against third countries and does not infringe upon the interests of third countries.'

## Sino-Soviet Communique

The preceding discussion provides a foundation for assessing the respective policies pursued, and positions taken by the PRC and the USSR in the past thirty-six years, and for exploring possible directions for the development of Sino-Soviet relations in the near future. In view of the evidence presented and the analysis made above, several points can be made in conclusion:

1) From 1953 to 1957 solidarity and co-operation were the main features of Sino-Soviet relations. Of course there were differences that appeared at the time between the two parties, such as divergent opinions on how and to what extent to criticize Stalin. But still these differences were regarded as among comrades. The way of dealing with them was unity-criticism-unity.

2) The Years 1958-1959 were critical in the history of Sino-Soviet relations. The events in these two years, to a large extent, determined the whole future of the dispute. The cracks began to become open. But for the purpose of maintaining the solidarity of the socialist camp in face of the

West, both sides still held to the formula unity-struggle-unity for handling disputes since they thought that the disputes were caused only by mistakes committed by certain individuals in the two Parties.

3) The year 1960 was the turning-point in the development of Sino-Soviet relations. From this year on disputes were extended to the field of state relations. Khrushchev began to take economic sanctions to put pressure on China. At the same time, Mao raised the question of struggle against "modern revisionism". The formula was also changed to struggle-struggle-unity. From the Soviet point of view, in order to maintain the solidarity of the two parties as well as of the two countries, Mao had to step down. As for the Chinese, they had no doubt that Khrushchev should be ousted.

4) From 1966 to the late 1970s, as the Cultural Revolution attacked revisionism inside and outside China qualitative changes occurred in Sino-Soviet relations which resulted in an overall confrontation between the two countries. The formula was struggle-struggle-struggle.

5) The 1980s saw the slow process of normalization in Sino-Soviet relations. The formula was struggle-detente-normalization. The reasons were many. Internally, both countries carried out economic reforms which, to a large extent, eliminated their ideological disputes. Externally, the rapid development of science and technology and the emergence of environmental problems in particular strengthened co-operation among various countries with different social systems. Confrontation in international relations generally was gradually replaced by dialogue. The formula came nearer to criticism-dialogue-cooperation.

Personality also played an important role in the Sino-Soviet dispute. As the top Soviet leader for more than ten years, from 1954 to 1964,



Khrushchev bears great responsibility for the conflict. There is no doubt that he stood in the vanguard of reform after Stalin's death. But essentially speaking, he still belonged to the old generation with a traditional attitude. He was fully aware of the short-comings of the old system; at same time his ideas and behaviour were greatly influenced by it. He was the contradictionary product of the transitional period from the old system to the new. He went all out to fight Stalin's personality cult, while creating one for himself; he fought hard against bureaucracy and subjectivism, but a new bureaucracy and subjectivism reappeared repeatedly; he criticized Stalin's policy of chauvinism in dealing with fraternal countries, but at the same time he treated countries with different ideas ruthlessly, using extreme political and economic pressure. In a word, Khrushchev, as Brugger observed, "strode brashly across the face of Soviet history engendering an odd mixture of hope, exasperation and ridicule."<sup>2</sup>

Mao Zedong, as an experienced revolutionary, had been aware of shortcomings in the Soviet system. With keen political insight he successfully resisted high-pressure Soviet chauvinism. But involvement in Sino-Soviet polemics, among other things, put him under extreme pressure and caused him to bring a disastrous interpretation of the class struggle upon the whole nation. This was real historical tragedy that also impacted on Sino-Soviet relations.

In the "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", Marx commented on the fetters imposed by history: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem

engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never existed, precisely in such period of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirit of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene in world history in this time honoured disguise and borrowed language."<sup>3</sup> Commenting on the English bourgeois revolution, Marx noted that it took quite a long time before Locke supplanted Habbakuk and revolutionaries extricated themselves from the Old Treatment.<sup>4</sup> A similar situation arose in the Sino-Soviet dispute. In using the word "revisionist", Mao evoked the image of Bernstein and Kautsky with whom Khrushchev bore little resemblance. Khrushchev, for his part, painted Mao as another Trotsky, which was even more ridiculous.<sup>5</sup>

The development of Sino-Soviet relations, one of the most dramatic events since World War Two, has not only greatly affected the relations among the socialist countries and the Communist Parties, but has also enormously influenced the evolution of the whole international situation. Great changes have taken place and are still taking place inside both countries. What problems will arise in Sino-Soviet relations in facing these changes? Will there be new ideological polemics between the two countries, or will there be a new alliance? What is the prospect for Sino-Soviet relations in the 1990s? What will the impact of all this be upon the West? It is very difficult to answer these questions now. But one thing is sure: the relations between the PRC and the USSR will be as normal as between any other two countries. After Gorbachev's visit to Beijing in May 1989, the developing relationship between them has shown that both sides have come down to earth in dealing with each other:

- 1) Economic relations have taken priority and have developed rapidly. In

1989, Sino-Soviet trade turnover totalled 2.4 billion rubles (US\$3.8 billion), a 20 per cent increase over the year before, and in 1990 it was expected to increase 36 per cent.<sup>6</sup> During Premier Li's Moscow trip in May 1990, the two sides signed six documents:

---A Long-term Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation and Development Programme;

---A Co-operation Agreement on the Peaceful Use and Study of Space;

---An Agreement on the Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in the Sino-Soviet Border Areas and on the Guiding Principles for Enhancing Trust in the Military Fields;

---A Protocol on Consultations between Foreign Ministries;

---An Agreement on Governmental Credit for Daily-use Commodities Provided by China to the Soviet Union;

---A Memorandum on the Construction of a Nuclear Power Plant in China and a Soviet Government Loan to China.

Two thirds of these agreements were related to economic, scientific and technological co-operation, greatly widening the scope of co-operation.

2) Both countries have taken positive attitudes to reducing military confrontation. The Soviet Union said it would cut 200,000 troops in Asia and withdraw three-quarters of its troops from Mongolia during 1989 and 1990. Because the border issue is closely linked with the full normalization of relations and genuine political trust, teams of diplomatic and military experts from China and the Soviet Union have been discussing the situation.

3) There should be no ideological obstacles to the development of state relations. The Sino-Soviet rift was largely caused by ideological differences. Learning from bitter experience, the two sides have now

managed to avoid interfering in each other's internal affairs and no longer use harsh language that would hurt bilateral relations. When answering questions from Soviet journalists this year, Premier Li Peng said: "The socialist road needs to be continuously explored. The Soviet Union has its pattern and China has one too. This poses no obstacles to developing normal state-to-state and Party-to-Party relations."<sup>7</sup>

The potential of Sino-Soviet ties can be summed as follows:

1) The volume of Sino-Soviet trade, though considerably greater than one or two decades ago, is only 3.5 per cent of China's total foreign trade volume and about 1.5 percent of the Soviet Union's. It is far from reaching the level of the two countries' economic capacity. In 1989 Soviet-Chinese trade (US\$3.8 billion) was less than Soviet-Japanese (US\$6.9 billion) and Soviet-US (US\$5 billion). China and the Soviet Union have many favourable conditions for developing economic relations; particularly their complementary economic structures -- one possesses what the other lacks. Linked by land and rivers, they enjoy convenient transport. Having only a small gap in their economic performance, they co-operate easily. In practice, their economic relations are growing fast. In trade, for example, the Commodities Fair held in June 1990 in Harbin led within 10 days to the signing of contracts worth SF1.8 billion (US\$1.2 billion) between China and the Soviet Union and East European countries.<sup>8</sup> Beginning in 1991, spot exchange trade will replace barter trade as the chief form of bilateral trade. At the same time, barter trade will continue to be used for border and inter-enterprise trade. The Beijiang (northern border) Railway, completed in August 1990, will serve as another European-Asian continental artery much like the Far East Railway. Compared with the latter, however, the new rail line will save time and thus reduce freight

costs. After it opens to traffic, it will create more favourable conditions for trade. Moreover, the Soviet Union has made ambitious plans to develop Siberia and the Far East. It is preparing to open cities in the region and invite neighbouring countries to join in the building of special economic zones. China's relevant provinces are also planning to "revitalize frontier provinces by trade" and have mapped an economic development strategy. These plans are conducive to the expansion of economic relations.

2) An agreement to reduce military levels on the border is still possible. The two governments have already reached a preliminary agreement and teams of experts are negotiating the details. Exchanges have become normal practice and are occurring more frequently. For example, Chinese and Soviet Foreign Ministers held working talks on 1 September 1990 in the Chinese city of Harbin. According to the comprehensive news release issued on 2 September, "The two ministers' talks were part of an in-depth dialogue between China and the Soviet Union concerning the most important current international issues. The two sides analysed the situation in the Gulf region, exchanged views on the Asian-Pacific region, the Cambodian question, the Afghanistan issue, the situation in the Korean Peninsula and in Europe, as well as the issue of German unification, and discussed Sino-Soviet relations."<sup>9</sup> The article went on to point out that "The two foreign ministers expressed satisfaction with the speedy development of Sino-Soviet relations in various areas. The two sides pledged to continue efforts for the implementation of the agreements reached at the Sino-Soviet summit meeting last year, and to enhance the friendly neighbourly relations between them on the basis of the Sino-Soviet Joint Communiqué of 18 May 1989. The two ministers agreed that the border negotiations have made

progress and that the process should be accelerated in order to solve the problem as soon as possible. Both sides agreed that a regular meeting of the working groups should be convened later this October in Beijing. A decision was also made that existing talks on the reduction of armed forces and the strengthening of mutual trust in the military field should be held in Moscow on 10 September...Agreements were also reached on establishing a Chinese general consulate in Chabarovsk and a Soviet one in Shenyang as soon as possible."<sup>10</sup>

3) The continuing improvement in Sino-Soviet ties is part and parcel of the international trend towards detente. Normal Sino-Soviet relations have facilitated somewhat better relations between China and India, India and Pakistan, China and Vietnam, and between Indo-China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. All this should carry forward the trend towards peace and co-operation in the Asian-Pacific region.

But on the other hand, influenced by the many factors discussed above,<sup>11</sup> Sino-Soviet relations are still complicated. There will still be contradictions and divergences. China and the Soviet Union have their respective national interests, and their foreign policies vary on several issues. What is more, they now hold some fundamental differences on how to reform socialism. After the radical change in Eastern Europe over the winter of 1989-90, especially after the Romanian dictator Ceaucescu was executed in December, the Chinese Party and government were very critical, at least from January to March 1990, towards Gorbachev and his "new thinking". The Central Committee of the CCP sent a telegram to all Party members in late January, which was an unusual measure, blaming Gorbachev for the collapse of the Communist governments in Eastern Europe, saying that he was a traitor to socialism, and that his "new thinking" was

a reflection of the Second International. Simultaneously, the Central Committee of the CCP organized a group from different government institutions as well as from academic institutions to prepare a new type of polemics between the two countries. This affirmed that the Chinese viewpoint of the mid-1960s' was basically correct and held that the spirit of the "nine comments" was still suitable for the present time. Those who held that the Soviet reforms were still under the control of the CPSU and in accord with socialism found themselves under great pressure. Only in late March when Deng Xiaoping said that the Chinese Communists should first strengthen their position in their own country did the tune of the CCP begin to change. Jiang Zemin, the new Party chief, sent three people (one from the International Department of the CCP, one from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the third from the Institute of Soviet and East European Studies of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) to make a two-month survey of the Soviet Union. They gave a positive report about Soviet reforms. As a result Li Peng could go to Moscow in May. This development has indicated at least two things. First, the internal and external situations of the two countries are very different from that of the past. It is difficult for them to restart their polemics. They will try to solve their differences by means of peaceful negotiation. They have learned from their mistakes. Yet, secondly, the potential for a new ideological battle still exists. It cannot be totally excluded that a new type of conflict may emerge should their internal situations in particular, but also their external position, change radically from those obtaining at present.

## Notes: Chapter IX

1. From the Sino-Soviet Communique signed in Beijing on 18 May 1989, Renmin ribao, 19 May 1989.
2. R.F. Miller and F. Feher, eds., Khrushchev and the Communist World, 1984, p. 139.
3. K. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", 1963, New York, p. 15.
4. *ibid.*, p. 17.
5. Miller and Feher, p. 155.
6. Gu Guanfu and Chun-tu Hsueh, "Sino-Soviet Ties Grow Steadily", BR, No. 38, 17-23 September 1990, p. 8.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
8. Li Ming, "Trade With USSR, E. Europe Thrives", BR, No. 37. 10-16 September 1990, pp. 23-25.
9. "Beijing and Moscow: Normalization Continue", BR, No. 36, 3-9 September 1990, p. 8.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
11. According to my model testing the Sino-Soviet dispute, there are altogether eight elements influencing the evolution of Sino-Soviet relations. I did not mention, or mentioned a little about some elements in this dissertation, such as history, culture, and environment.



APPENDIX  
 China's Foreign Trade with USSR  
 (1950-1989) (in million Rubles)

Year	Import	Export	Turnover
1950	349.7	172.3	522.0
1951	431.0	298.4	729.4
1952	499.3	372.7	872.0
1953	628.4	427.7	1056.1
1954	684.0	521.1	1205.1
1955	673.5	579.2	1252.7
1956	660.4	688.5	1348.9
1957	490.2	665.0	1155.2
1958	570.6	793.1	1363.7
1959	859.1	990.3	1849.4
1960	735.4	763.3	1498.7
1961	330.6	496.3	826.9
1962	210.1	464.7	674.8
1963	168.5	371.7	540.2
1964	121.8	282.8	404.6
1965	172.5	203.0	375.5
1966	157.8	128.8	286.6
1967	45.2	51.1	96.3
1968	53.4	33.0	86.4
1969	25.0	26.1	51.1
1970	22.4	19.5	41.9
1971	70.1	68.6	138.7
1972	100.2	110.4	210.6
1973	100.5	100.8	201.3
1974	108.4	105.5	213.9
1975	93.1	107.8	200.9
1976	179.8	134.6	314.4
1977	118.4	130.1	248.5
1978	163.8	174.9	338.7
1979	175.2	157.3	332.5
1980	169.6	147.0	316.6

Year	Import	Export	Turnover
1981	82.6	94.2	176.8
1982	120.1	103.4	223.5
1983	255.6	232.6	488.2
1984	467.9	509.9	977.8
1985	780.4	834.5	1614.9
1986	910.3	911.7	1822.0
1987	724.3	750.6	1474.9
1988	1005.2	844.9	1850.1
1989	1328.5	1083.5	2412.0

Sources: Vneshnia Torgovlia, CCCP, Statisticheskii Sbornik, 1956-1989, Moskva.

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