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The Historical Roots Of The Sino-Soviet Conflict

Louis Donald Zenowich

THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT

BY

LOUIS DONALD ZENOWICH

B.S.F.S. Georgetown University, 1965

THESIS

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(TITLE)

LOUIS DONALD ZENOWICH
(CANDIDATE)

POLITICAL SCIENCE
(DEPARTMENT)

Brian E. O'Neil
DEAN

May 18, 1967
DATE

Committee

Marbell Sumner
CHAIRMAN

Lawrence Lee

Henry J. Tobias

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The Sino-Soviet split is a devisive force in the world Communist movement. World Communism has become a far less imposing force in international relations because of the loss of unity which the split has caused. There are many reasons, including ideology, terminology, and method, that should bind the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China together, but there are also important differences that drive them apart. These devisive forces include the character of international Communism, ideology, different revolutionary experiences, economic theory, political environment, military tactics and racial antagonisms. Another cause of the conflict is the historical relationship between China and Russia. The purpose of this thesis will be to explore the historical relationships between Russia and China, especially during the period 1924-1927, and to gauge their effect on the current Sino-Soviet dispute.

Imperial China and Tsarist Russia began formal diplomatic relations in 1689 with the Treaty of Nerchinsk. For the next two hundred years Manchu China suffered diplomatic reverses and humiliations at the hands of Tsarist diplomats.

By 1895 the domestic popularity of the Manchu government was at a low ebb and a nationalist revolutionary movement began in China. In 1911 the Manchus were deposed and the Chinese revolutionary movement began a long internal struggle to determine China's course. Constant frustration and Yuan Shih-kai's usurpation of power had alienated the intelligentsia from the Republican experience by 1918. In addition, the intellectuals hated the Versailles Treaty, the continued economic exploitation and the ineptness of Western diplomats in China. Some joined the Kuomintang of Sun Yat-sen and others saw a solution to China's problems in the success of the Soviet Bolshevik experience.

Chen Tu-hsiu and Li Ta-chao were the first important Marxists in China. They organized a Marxist movement at Peking University and on May 4, 1919 demonstrated against the Chinese government. The May Fourth Movement was brutally suppressed but did not die. In 1920 the Soviet Union dispatched a Komintern agent G. Voitinsky to China and the Chinese Communist Party was soon formed. From its creation, the ideological position of the C.C.P. was controlled from Moscow. Any member with deviationist tendencies was forced to admit his errors or leave the Party. On Moscow's orders,

but with severe reservations, the C.C.P. joined in an alliance with the Kuomintang during 1923-1924. The results of this alliance were to be disastrous for the C.C.P. They soon found themselves ideologically subordinate to the Kuomintang, which was by no means a Marxist party. Whenever the C.C.P. gained dominant political influence in any area it was brutally suppressed by the Kuomintang. Stalin, however, maintained his support of the Kuomintang. In 1927, after bloody defeats at Canton, Shanghai, and Wuhan, the C.C.P. was nearly destroyed. The view held by many Communist leaders that agrarian revolution was the proper vehicle was never accepted by Stalin and the C.C.P. continued to suffer reverses from 1927-1930. By 1931 Soviet influence in China had declined and leadership of the C.C.P. fell to Mao Tse-tung, who eventually led the party to victory.

In almost every instance the historical relationship between Russia and China has resulted in Chinese defeat or humiliation. While the basic cause of the current Sino-Soviet conflict is a complex combination of nationalism and national interest, the historical factor does play a role. Current Chinese leaders must remember the humiliations

that their nation and party suffered at Russia's hands. While the current rift might still exist, even if the past had been different, the historical factor can only add bitterness and hostility to the atmosphere of the current dispute.

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ABBREVIATIONS

C.C.P.----------Chinese Communist Party

C.E.R.----------Chinese Eastern Railroad

C.P.S.U.----------Communist Part of the Soviet Union

KMT----------Kuomintang

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> The distinctive feature of the relations existing between the countries of the socialist community are complete equality, mutual respect for sovereignty and independence and fraternal mutual assistance and cooperation. In the socialist community none have, or can expect special rights or privileges.
>
> --The Draft Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 1961.

In contrast to such statements as this a serious split has developed in international Communism. The primary contestants in the dispute are the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The Sino-Soviet split is real, yet mystifying, because there is theoretically so much that binds them together. They are dedicated to a common purpose and bound by a common ideology. They share a common terminology, common assumptions, and most important, a common method of viewing the world which ties them together since their actions, methods and aspirations are related to this view.[1] The unity of the Communist world is one of its greatest assets in the conflict with the West. Recent internal strife has caused the bloc to be a far less imposing force in international relations.

The Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China recognize the advantages of unity, yet they cannot resolve their differences. It is important to remember that the only immediate benefactor of the continuation of such a conflict can be the United States. The reasons for the conflict are so basic that neither Communist power is willing to compromise.

The most important and basic cause of the Sino-Soviet rift is the character of international Communism itself. Because the Communists attach such great importance to ideology, it is necessary, for unity and effective action, to have one general line to guide the strategy and tactics of the Communist international movement. This, at the current time, is even more difficult to accomplish than it was during the almost monolithic days of Stalin's domination of the world Communist movement. Today there are many different national Communist regimes with leaders whose varied experiences in coming to power have given them different conceptions of what the general and specific policies should be. So, Communists, each of whom believe that they have the only accurate Marxian scientific method for viewing reality, are quick to translate all types of differences into ideological struggles of the highest level.[2] In

addition, as the movement grew larger and approximately forty per cent of the world's population came under the sway of the Communist form of government, the problems heightened. Marxism-Leninism was not flexible enough to embrace the world-wide pattern of change that has been characteristic in our world since World War II. Lenin derived his doctrine for nations that were in early stages of capitalist development and this ideology was adapted to those rural agrarian societies experiencing their first contact with industrialism and nationalism. Original Leninist theory has become inadequate for the more advanced Communist states, so they altered it to fit their needs. This action brought protests from those Communist nations whose situation was still served by orthodox Communist theory and started the "Orthodox" vs. "Revisionist" controversy which has begun to shake international Communism.[3]

Also contributing to this general ideological conflict among Communist nations was the growth of national Communism or the wielding of state power by many independent regimes. As the Communist nations became independently secure with their own power base, ideological and political control by Moscow became more difficult and the independent regimes

argued that their interests should be heard. In sum, the interests of the international Communist movement are no longer identified with those of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.[4]

In addition to these general ideological conflicts that have split the Communist world, there are many specific ideological disputes between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. A few of the more important will be mentioned here. The first is Maoist chauvinism. Mao Tse-tung believes that he is the Asian Marx. He does not consider himself a disciple of Communism but one of its prophets. He believes that he has created an Asian Marxism which is radically different from Soviet Marxism and specifically suited to Asian conditions.[5] The ramifications of this position are many, but the most important seems to be Mao's view that since the other prophets of Marxism-Leninism (Marx, Engels, Lenin, and perhaps Stalin) are dead, he should be regarded as the spiritual head of World Communism and its prime ideological theorist. It is obvious how this position would put the Chinese Communist regime in direct ideological conflict with the C.P.S.U. The Soviet Union has always considered itself as the center of world Communism

and as having direct control over the strategy and tactics of that movement. This Maoist ideological challenge is especially repugnant to the current Soviet leaders because none of them have a revolutionary or ideological prominence due to the fact that they developed politically after the Communist system had been successfully imposed on the Soviet Union (1917-1921). They are products of the system and did not gain prominence by establishing a Communist system in the face of violent opposition, as did Mao.

Another aspect of the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute grew out of Mao's revolutionary experience. There was a great difference between the Soviet and the Chinese Communist Parties' rise to power. The C.P.S.U., even though it agitated for many years, gained power in a quick and decisive coup while the C.C.P. acquired power only after a long and oftimes nearly disastrous struggle. These opposite experiences give the two parties different revolutionary perspectives and opposing ideas on the correct strategy and tactics for the imposition of Communist-type revolutions in the world's underdeveloped areas at the current time.[6] This whole question of the "National Liberation Movement" vs. the "Peaceful Road to Socialism" will be discussed in more detail in a subsequent section of this paper.

While ideological considerations permeate the entire realm of the Sino-Soviet conflict there are other, more concrete, areas in which disagreement has been visible. One of these areas is economics. The Chinese economy is primitive and hardly adequate to provide for the gigantic Chinese population; in other words, China is a have-not nation. In contrast, the Soviet Union, with her rapid industrial development during the Stalinist period, is in many ways a developed nation.[7] The Soviet economy is entering a period of abundance and is becoming acutely conscious of consumer demand. In the eyes of the Soviet leadership their economic success is ample proof of the fact that their method is the most successful road to a Communist society.

The C.C.P. has openly and directly contradicted this contention. At the Eighth Congress of the C.C.P. in 1956, it was decided that there must be a great strengthening of party influence in all spheres of Chinese life and that economic decision-making powers would be gradually disseminated to lower levels. These tendencies became the forerunners of the Chinese concept of mass action, which is in direct opposition to the Soviet model of centralism.[8] This concept of mass action was the basis in 1958 for the Great Leap

Forward in which the dynamic impetus of Chinese economic progress was transferred from the central bureaucrats to basic economic units called communes.[9]

The commune, a type of integrated economic unit, was the extreme result of functional decentralization and was designed to take advantage of the labor intensive character of the Chinese society. Schools, hospitals, and banks were all included in each commune and administered by the commune's leadership.[10] The Great Leap was proclaimed by the C.C.P. as a sure indication that China was nearing a state of Communism and the Chinese offered their system as a model for use by other underdeveloped nations. Here again was a thinly veiled challenge to Soviet leadership, and the C.P.S.U. responded to the Great Leap with poorly disguised displeasure. The Great Leap proved to be disastrous to China, partly because of a series of natural calamities that befell Chinese agriculture and partly because of its radical nature and organizational complexity. Much to the satisfaction of the C.P.S.U. Mao was forced to abandon the Great Leap in 1960. This public acknowledgment of the C.C.P.'s failure was not sufficient to satisfy Khrushchev, who was bitter for a variety of reasons, and he effectively heightened

the Chinese economic crisis in August, 1960, by withdrawing Soviet technicians from China and by cutting off Soviet credits to the Chinese.[11] Here alone is sufficient cause for Chinese hostility to the C.P.S.U.

A few words might also be said about the differences in the political environment of the two Communist powers. The Soviet Union is more and more becoming an accepted member of the world community. She has wide diplomatic representation and is consulted and her advice heeded by many nations. In contrast, China is relatively isolated from the international decision-making process. This, in addition to the existence of the Nationalist regime on Taiwan which offers an alternative to discontented Chinese elements, has tended to make the Chinese leadership insecure and somewhat unpredictable. Her policies are not subject to the great number of moderating influences that those of the C.P.S.U. are subject to, and so accommodation between the nations is even more difficult.[12]

The Chinese People's Republic and the Soviet Union have also experienced differences of opinion concerning military policy. The Chinese military establishment is primitive and has only in the last few years begun to

acquire a limited nuclear capacity. Without going into great detail, this means that China, who faces hostile United States' nuclear deterrent power in the area contiguous to its boundaries, cannot use its military forces to achieve political goals such as the re-annexation of Taiwan. In essence she must rely on Soviet nuclear power and this is not automatically available in all situations.[13] This, in addition to the fact that Soviet assistance to Chinese nuclear development programs has been halted, is another factor in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

Other differences exist between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China in the areas of foreign policy and trade relationships. Intense competition in intra-bloc relations and in dealings with the underdeveloped world can often be traced to basic differences in these fields. Another factor is that of racial antagonism, but its impact has not yet been successfully measured.

An additional question of undetermined influence in the rift is the historical factor. This includes the diplomatic relations between China and Tsarist Russia, the onset of the Chinese Revolution and the historical relationship between the C.C.P. and the C.P.S.U. This paper will concentrate on the coming of the revolution to China and

the relationship between the C.C.P. and the C.P.S.U. during the C.C.P.'s alliance with the Kuomintang (1924-1927). This latter period has special relevance to the current dispute.

A. Firstly, a thorough study of the period of the Kuomintang Alliance should make it explicitly clear why Mao Tse-tung is determined to plot a Chinese course independent of Soviet policy.

B. Secondly, the Chinese line toward underdeveloped nations and national liberation movements and its opposition to the Moscow theory of peaceful transition and cooperation with the bourgeoisie is to a large extent determined by the recollections of Chinese leaders of Soviet failures in China in the 1920's. A study of the historical happenings and ideological positions of the C.P.S.U. during that period will greatly heighten one's comprehension of these current ideological disputes.[14]

C. Also, the Chinese leadership has almost a psychopathic fear of being used as a pawn in Kremlim power struggles. Whether or not this has been the actual case has yet to be decisively proved,

but this feeling has had a definite and lasting impact on the Chinese leadership and makes Soviet policy positions toward China suspect to them.[15]

The purpose of this thesis, then, will be to explore the relevance of historic relationships between China and Russia to above-stated theories and to gauge their effect on the current Sino-Soviet dispute.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1]Donald Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-61 (New York: Atheneum, 1964), pp. 8-9.

[2]Z. Brzezinski, "Threat and Opportunity in the Communist Schism," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 41 (April, 1963), p. 513.

[3]Ibid., pp. 513-514.

[4]Ibid., p. 514.

[5]Zagoria, op. cit., p. 14.

[6]Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[7]Ibid., p. 18.

[8]H. F. Schurmann, "Peking's Recognition of Crisis," Problems of Communism, Vol. 10 (Sept.-Oct., 1961), p. 7.

[9]Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[10]Ibid., p. 8.

[11]Philip E. Mosely, "The Sino-Soviet Rift, Origins and Portents," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 42 (Oct., 1963), p. 13.

[12]Zagoria, op. cit., p. 17.

[13]Ibid., pp. 18-19.

[14]Ibid., p. 13.

[15]Ibid., p. 13.

CHAPTER II

CHINESE-TSARIST RELATIONS TO 1898

Imperial China, prior to the period of weakness she experienced in the nineteenth century, had at times been expansionist. All the dynasties had shown certain constant patterns of behavior. Ethnocentrism manifested itself in a strong feeling of cultural superiority. Weaker neighboring states were forced to accept vassal status and China demanded that all nations approach her as inferiors. Consequently, in light of her supposed cultural superiority and obvious political advantages, there seemed to be an inherent urge on the part of China to impose her will on peripheral nations by force of arms.[1]

Manchu China was first faced by a powerful western state upon whom she could not automatically impose her will in the area now known as Manchuria. Russia's eastward expansion had begun shortly after the expulsion of the Golden Horde and by the middle of the seventeenth century had traversed Siberia and reached the gates of the Amur Valley. It is interesting to note that unlike the later Western sea-born intrusions into China, Russian pressure

was directed at outlying regions of the Chinese empire and was of a commercial religious and military nature, in no sense of the word ideological in form. Russia, like China, was an autocratic system in which propriety and honor were of prime importance.[2] Perhaps these similarities, in addition to the geographical location of the Russian contact and a genuine curiosity on the part of the Chinese concerning the barbarians from the West, led the Manchu Dynasty to allow the Russians some contact with the Empire.

In 1689 the Tsarist government and the Li Fan Yuan (Hall for the Governance of Barbarians), which was the organ of the Chinese government that conducted foreign relations, signed the Treaty of Nerchinsk. Among its provisions was one that excluded Russian settlements from the Amur Valley, but the treaty also established a mutually profitable commercial relationship in which the Russians exchanged furs, leather, hides, and cloth for silk, cotton, tea, and porcelain.[3] The border in the Manchurian area was also defined as the line of the Amur then proceeding along the Yablonoi (Ovol) to the Dzhugdzhur Range and finally to the Ud Bay of the Sea of Okhotsk.[4] The Treaty of Nerchinsk remained the only formal agreement defining Russo-Chinese relations until 1727 when the Treaty of Kiakhta gave the

Russians the right to send one trade caravan to Peking every three years and also to maintain an Orthodox mission and six students of the Chinese language in that city. These accords were the basis of Russo-Chinese relations until the nineteenth century.[5] It is quote obvious that neither party gained unfair advantages or concessions to this point.

By mid-nineteenth century the balance of power in the Manchurian area had been substantially altered. China suffered from both internal misrule and foreign intrusions. In contrast, Tsarist Russia had increased her power and came to the conclusion that the status quo in the Manchurian area was intolerable. There were some quite substantial reasons for the Russian position. Colonization of the vast Siberian area was being limited by a number of factors. These included inadequate communications, bitter climate, and lack of a nearby source of provisions. In light of these circumstances, it was decided that the Amur Valley would provide food-growing areas and access to the Pacific. In 1847 the Governor General of Siberia, N. N. Muraviev, established a series of military posts in the Amur in direct violation of the Nerchinsk Agreement. China, facing the sea-based attacks of the Western powers, was powerless to resist

and a series of Tsarist encroachments on Chinese territory began.[6]

In the Treaty of Tientsin in 1849, Russia was accorded commercial rights and privileges similar to those already forced on China by the West. The treaty of Aigun (1858) was negotiated by Muraviev and local Chinese officials in the Amur Region who were not given power to negotiate by Peking. The treaty provided that:

1. The left bank of the Amur was to be occupied by Russia.
2. The right bank of the Ussuri River was to be occupied by Russia.
3. Chinese inhabitants in those areas were to retain their local administration and justice.
4. Russia was guaranteed the right of navigation and trade along the Amur and its principal tributary, the Sungari.[7]

This, in itself, was a bitter blow to the Manchu Dynasty, but the Russians under N. P. Ignatiev saw fit to compound it in 1860 with the Treaty of Peking. In this treaty the Aigun agreements were confirmed and China ceded to Russia vast territories between the Amur, Ussuri and the Pacific Ocean, a small bit of which was used to found

Vladivostok (Ruler of the East), a city that was to play a prominent role in Russia's history.[8] The Treaty of Peking was an all too apparent manifestation of the weakness of the Manchu Dynasty. For centuries the Manchu had maintained a private patrimony in Manchuria. The reasons for this included a professed desire to keep their homeland unspoiled and the ruling race pure and an unspoken wish to maintain an exceedingly profitable trade monopoly in that area.[9]

China's position vis-à-vis Russia did nothing but worsen. In 1862 a revolt broke out in Chinese Turkestan and the Manchus could not control it. In 1871 the Tsar, fearing that the disturbance might spread to his Turkestan holdings, occupied the rebel areas and allowed Chinese troops to re-enter and crush the rebellion. The situation became vastly more complicated when Russian forces refused to withdraw. China was again, in 1879, forced into a wholly unacceptable agreement. The Treaty of Livadia required China to grant vast territorial trade concessions in Turkestan and to pay an indemnity of five million rubles for Russian assistance in putting down the rebellion. For once, the Manchus showed signs of resistance. They declared the treaty void and prepared for war. Neither Russia or

FIGURE 1.

Asia (Russia and China) in 1860 (adapted from Barbara Jelavich, A Century of Russian Foreign Policy, p. 164).

FIGURE 2.

Asia (Russia and China) in 1904 (adapted from Barbara Jelavich, A Century of Russian Foreign Policy, p. 244).

the Western nations then engaged in partitioning of China desired the resurgence of unity and support for the Manchus that a war might bring; thus, after long negotiations, the Treaty of Saint Petersburg was signed in 1881. The size of Chinese territorial concessions was much reduced, but commercial privileges were retained and the indemnity was increased from five to nine million rubles. China was embittered, but felt she had won a moral victory of sorts.[10] This victory was, of course, short-lived.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the goals of the Russian imperialistic policies in the Far East became more concrete and aggressive. An ice-free port became paramount in the eyes of the Tsarist planners. This port would be invaluable for further colonization of Siberia and would have enormous strategic and military value to counter the emergence of a powerful Asian state in Japan. Russia, by the late 1880's, was also experiencing an industrial revolution, and the vast population of China was a very lucrative market. Another factor of some importance, but one difficult to measure, was the Tsar's commitment to the imperialistic notion of the White Man's Burden and his sometimes professed fear of the Yellow Peril which for a time held sway in European circles. Count Witte was the

driving force in Russian Eastern policy. In 1891 his pet project, the Trans-Siberian Railway was begun in earnest.[11] Witte's plans were immeasurably aided when in 1894 China suffered a great defeat inflicted by Japan. The Shimonoseki Treaty (1895) gave Japan many prerogatives in Russian areas of interest in northern China. Here Witte had alternative policies to consider. He could demand compensation from Japan or call for the revision of Shimonoseki and appear as the protector of China's territorial integrity. He chose the latter course and, with the complicity of Germany and France who were dubious of any increases in Japan's holdings in China, forced the Japanese to accede to the treaty revision.[12]

Russia now began to increase her political and economic holding at the expense of the Manchus. Foremost in Witte's plans was a Trans-Manchurian railway. This would be a continuation of the Trans-Siberian system and would serve Russian interest in many ways. The line would be of value in case of war with Japan. It would constitute a direct threat to the Chinese capital and indirectly, it would demonstrate China's weakness to the Mongolians, Dugans and others who might be tempted to revolt against the Heavenly Empire. In addition, Russia would be in a dominant

economic position in northern China.[13] Witte began negotiations in 1895 with some distinct advantages. He had defended China and helped gain a revision of Shimonoseki and now would offer a Russo-Chinese defense alliance and a barely concealed bribe of three million rubles. But problems still occurred; China would not accept a Russian-built and owned railroad on her territory.[14]

When finally revealed, the Sino-Russian Secret Treaty of 1896 contained the following provisions:

1. In event of Japanese invasion of Russian territory in Asia, the Chinese Empire or the territory of Korea, both the contracting powers, would take steps to defeat the Japanese.[15]
2. A railroad, the Chinese Eastern Railway, was to be constructed under the supervision of a Russo-Chinese bank.[16]
3. The railroad company had police power and jurisdiction over the track in the areas through which it passed.

This agreement, in essence, was another defeat for China because all the capital for the Russo-Chinese bank came from Russian sources and the police powers on the road were enforced by Tsarist occupation forces. Russia, now in

an advantageous position in northern China, expanded her holdings. In 1896 a Russo-Japanese condominium was established over Korea at the expense of the Manchus, and within the next two years, Witte's policy of at least paying lip service to China's integrity disappeared entirely. In 1898 the new Russian Foreign Minister, Count M. N. Muraviev, forced China to lease the Liaotung Peninsula to the Tsar for twenty-five years, and obtained the right to build a port at Dalny and a naval base at Port Arthur. Yet another railroad, the Southern Manchurian, was to connect Dalny to Harbin. These forced concessions were accepted by France, Germany, Japan, the United States, and Great Britain,[17] yet Russia would pay dearly for them in a few years.

The course of diplomatic relations, 1689-1898, between Tsarist Russia and the Chinese Empire, had two primary consequences, neither of which was to be beneficial to the Manchus. The weakness of the Chinese system was conclusively proved to her foreign enemies, and they soon demanded further concessions. In addition, domestic opponents of the Chinese regime were given an additional justification for their attempts to overthrow the Dynasty. Nationalist sentiment, which had been primarily directed against the foreign intruders, was now concentrated on the foreign or Manchu rulers. The

results of this changing emphasis would be all too evident in a few short years.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1]Edmond O. Clubb, Twentieth Century China (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 4-5.

[2]George A. Lensen, Russia's Eastward Expansion (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1964), p. 89.

[3]Barbara Jelavich, A Century of Russian Foreign Policy (New York: Lippincott History Series, 1964), p. 162.

[4]Peter S. H. Tang, Soviet Policy in Outer Mongolia, 1911-1931 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1959), p. 4.

[5]Jelavich, op. cit., p. 162.

[6]Ibid., p. 163.

[7]Andrew Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy: 1881-1904 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), p. 12.

[8]Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 164-165.

[9]Tang, op. cit., p. 16.

[10]Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 165-167.

[11]Ibid., pp. 235-236.

[12]Ibid., pp. 237-238.

[13]Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 75.

[14]Ibid., p. 79.

[15]John K. Fairbank and Ssu-Yu Teng, China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey (New York: Atheneum, 1963), pp. 130-131.

[16]Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 80.

[17]Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 239-240.

CHAPTER III

THE OUTBREAK OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

The domestic prestige of the Manchu Dynasty, which had been in decline since the mid-nineteenth century, was at an all-time low due to the defeat and subsequent concession forced by the Japanese in 1894-95. Nationalistic sentiment grew to great heights and the intellectuals of the nation concerned themselves with the finding of means to restore the empire. The long series of defeats at the hands of the Western powers convinced many of the intelligentsia that Western science, languages, and military techniques should be studied and their implications applied to China's problems. Yet these early reformers were severely hindered because all reforms were contemplated within the Confucian system and the innate conservatism of that system still held sway. There was no concerted effort towards devising avenues for social reform and economic and technological advance. In sum, China attempted to employ some characteristics of Western power without first building a modern substructure.[1] Perhaps the most important reformer, who truly called for social change, was K'ang Yu-wei. In his statement for the "Society for the Study of Self Strengthening" (1895) he discussed China's plight.

> Our enfeebled China has been lying in the midst of a group of strong powers and soundly sleeping on the top of a pile of kindling. In administration she cares only to prevent evils but does not care to develop sources of profit. Her officials know only how to be law abiding, but do not know how to judge the trends of the time. Her scholars specialize in the study of antiquity, not in the understanding of the present. Her people can defend their immediate surroundings but cannot go far afield. . . . It will not be long until we become Turks and Negroes.[2]

K'ang Yu-wei convinced the Emperor Kuang Hsu that only sweeping reforms could save the dynasty, and in 1898 Kuang Hsu ordered the following changes. The bureaucracy was to be modernized and an annual budget introduced. There were to be reforms of military and educational systems and the introduction of modern agricultural techniques. Other decrees abolished the privileges of the Manchu nobles and high bureaucrats. Needless to say, introduction of such measures into a system that believed itself philosophically perfect caused immediate opposition.[3]

The conservative opponents of the reformers generally can be divided into large categories. The first group believed that China should revert to her old ways and be ruled by men of virtue and that the tested Chinese form of government should be retained. The second group, slightly less absolute, believed that Chinese methods were superior

to the West's or that Western methods could not be fitted to Chinese culture, and in either case, no reforms were needed. All the conservatives felt that Western ideas would pervert the mind of the Chinese peasant and destroy the traditional Chinese precept of wang-to or rule by men who possess superior virtue.[4] In a short time all the forces of reaction had flocked to the banner of the Empress Dowager Tz'u Hsi and in a short struggle Kuang Hsu was defeated and the Reforms of 1898 undone. The official Chinese policy became xenophobia, which would shortly result in the Boxer Rebellion and eventually in the fall of the House of Manchu.[5]

The Boxer movement grew from nationalist revulsion caused by the defeat at the hands of Japan, the unfair economic privileges of the partitioning, China's unfavorable balance of trade, and the weakening authority of the central government. Natural disasters such as floods, famines, and droughts in many sections of China also worked to the Boxers' advantage.

The Boxers were a secret society, and in no way could be considered liberal reformers. The Boxer became prominent in 1898 by committing certain anti-government acts in Shantung. Troops of the central government pursued, defeated,

and executed many Boxers. At this point the Boxers became supporters of the Manchus and assumed a violently anti-foreign stance. Little is known of the exact reasons for this change of focus.[6] It may have been a matter of expediency (harassment by government troops) or perhaps Tz'u Hsi gave the group more than moral support. In any event, Boxers soon became active in Peking, where they committed a number of atrocities, including the murder of the German Minister, the Baron von Kettler. The foreign population of Peking came under siege and the Empress Dowager declared war on all foreigners.

Quickly the Western powers organized an expeditionary force, captured Peking and forced Tz'u Hsi to flee. The peace imposed on China was harsh. An indemnity of sixty-seven million pounds (£) was demanded, many Boxers and sympathizers were executed, and further encroachments were made on China's territory.[7] The Boxers failed for many reasons. The revolt was localized in northern China, and more importantly, the Boxers held a reactionary vision of the future and possessed no ideology on which a strong modern China could be built. The nationalists now turned to a task that could be more easily accomplished--the overthrow of the Manchus.[8]

At this point another event over which China had no direct control deeply influenced her destiny. Japan became concerned over Russian privileges in northern China and Manchuria. Russian troops who occupied those territories during the Boxer disorders have never been withdrawn. This, in addition to Witte's dismissal and the Anglo-Japanese Naval Agreement of 1902, which immeasurably strengthened Japan's position in the Far East, ultimately led to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904. Russia was totally defeated and hastened to accept the Treaty of Portsmouth (1905). This treaty stipulated that Russia would give up her special privileges in China, cede half of Sakhalin to Japan, and turn over her leases on the Liaotung Peninsula, Port Arthur, Dalny, and the Southern Manchurian Railroad to Japan. In addition Manchuria was to revert to Chinese sovereignty and Korea became a Japanese sphere of influence. In short, Russia's Far Eastern position was destroyed.[9]

The Japanese victory of 1905 also had profound effects on Chinese nationalist movements. For the first time a modernized Asian nation had defeated a European nation. In China it became a common theory that the adoption of a constitutional monarchy would strengthen the nation and

make the nation powerful again. In addition, many young Chinese students were sent to Japan to continue their education.[10] In 1905 the radical reform attitudes among the Chinese students in Japan were manifested in the founding of the Tung meng-hui (Alliance Society) which called for the immediate expulsion of the Manchus, restoration of China to Chinese rule, the establishment of a republican form of government, and the equalization of land ownership. In this society and in the student newspaper Min Pao, Sun Yat-sen first published his ideas of guided democracy which was to become the central principle of the modern Chinese revolution. This concept of guided democracy was characterized by the idea of political tutelage by a provisional government which would train the masses of peasantry for eventual participation in a constitutional democracy.[11]

Before the Revolution of 1911 there were three large political groups in China--the Revolutionaries of Sun Yat-sen, an organization that evolved from the Tung meng-hui, the Constitutional Monarchists (the Reformers) and the Yuan Shih-kai faction which had no defined political position. Each was opposed to the other and all were opposed to the Manchus. Yet when the revolution did come in 1911, it was

not a spontaneous rising of the populace. There had been a series of abortive attempts since 1906, and the Canton Uprising of 1911 seemed to be no different. To put the revolt down, the government appointed Yuan Shih-kai, Governor General of Hunan and Hupeh, and charged him with the suppression of the rebellion. Yuan, an ambitious man, had no desire to save the Manchus or to establish a republic. Yuan's actions were guided by purely personal ambition. Before he would even accept the Manchu appointment, he demanded that six conditions be fulfilled. These included the opening of Parliament within a year, the organization of a cabinet, an amnesty for revolutionaries, full authority for himself over the armed forces, legal recognition of the Revolutionary Party (Kuomintang) military funds.[12] Of course, these demands found great favor among the rebels and Yuan now had influence in both camps. After some early victories over the revolutionary forces, Yuan and the Imperial armies remained motionless and many southern and western provinces, including Szechwan, revolted and deposed the central government authorities. Yuan was now given full power to negotiate with the rebels, and through these negotiations, he succeeded in overthrowing the Manchus. Sun Yat-sen was named president

of the Republic and Yuan commander-in-chief of the armies. On February 12, 1912 the Manchus, faced with a preponderance of force in the hands of the opposition, abdicated. Soon after the abdication and on prearranged signal, Sun retired and Yuan assumed full presidential power. The whole episode smacked more of a well-planned coup d'etat than a revolution.[13]

An interesting aside, at this point, is an analysis by V. I. Lenin of the 1911 Revolution. In July 1912 Lenin described Sun's eclectic and rambling doctrine with the use of a single word: Narodnichestvo. To the Russian Marxist intellectual of that day, this word symbolized a romantic petit bourgeois socialism based on an agrarian reform program. Lenin's criticisms based on his Marxist orientation are obvious from this one word definition, yet Lenin believed that Sun's political program was the only one in China that generated "democratic enthusiasm" and was a program of the people. Lenin conceded that Yuan Shih-kai had perverted the revolution, but he believed that Sun's revolutionary bourgeois democracy was the best approach to the great problem of developing an active, resolute, and daring peasant force to cope with the question of political and agarian reform. Here in a primitive form

is the basis of Soviet policy that was so disastrous to the Chinese Communist Party in the Twenties. Lenin even formulated a definite Chinese revolutionary program which he stated in his 1912 writings.

1. He supported bourgeois elements led by Sun against the forces of monarchy and feudalism.
2. He believed that agrarian reform was the proper path to revolution.
3. He recommended the speedy development of a "capitalist stage" in China.
4. He also encouraged the emergence of a proletarian nucleus which would guard against petit bourgeois attitudes inherent in Sun's program.[14]

There were more formal contacts between the Yuan government and the Tsarist Regime. In 1913 a joint Russo-Chinese Declaration was issued in which the contracting parties agreed to recognize China's suzerainity over Outer Mongolia, which was given an autonomous status in the Chinese Empire. In exchange, China agreed to accept Russia's good offices in any disputes that might occur among the Mongolian tribes and to discuss Russian demands for special concessions in that area. As a result of this declaration,

Russia gained vast economic and political influence in Outer Mongolia and indeed by 1921-22 it was under effective Soviet control.[15]

In the meantime domestic affairs in Peking had gradually deteriorated. Yuan was consolidating his power and removing Kuomintang parliamentary opposition. When in 1914 German territories in China came under Japanese attack, Yuan was helpless to resist, primarily because he could not enforce his will in the provinces and was denied tax revenues and military levies. Recognizing China's weakness, the Japanese government, on January 18, 1915, issued its infamous Twenty-one Demands. This ultimatum was divided into four basic parts. The first demanded Chinese subordination to Japan's will. The second confirmed Japan's rights in their newly acquired Shantung area. The third group was a demand that China refuse to grant economic concessions to any other power, and the fourth was a demand for extensive railroad concessions.[16] The Western powers who were mortally engaged in France offered no more than a token resistance to the Japanese demands, and so on May 25, 1915, China accepted the Japanese dictates entirely. A new era had begun in Asia.

Yuan now proceeded to make himself more unpopular. For many years Yuan had desired to be crowned Emperor and with Japanese support gained by his accession to the Twenty-one Demands, he now made unmistakable signs that a restoration of the empire was imminent. To this plan the Western powers violently objected and Yuan was forced to abandon it. This personal defeat gave new courage to the opposition groups which by 1915 included the Republicans, the Kuomintang, and the military. Beginning in December, Yunnan revolted, and then in rapid succession, Szechwan, Kweichow, Kwangsi, and Hunan provinces threw off central control. On June 6, 1916 Yuan Shih-kai died and the presidency was assumed by Li Yuan-hung. His power was negligible.[17]

From 1916 onward, China was divided up by warlords. There were two major alliances; one was the Chihli (Hopei) clique and the other the Anhwei group. In addition, a new power, the Fengtien group, was forming under Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria. Into the midst of this disorder came Sun Yat-sen. He re-established the Republic of Canton with the blessing of the local warlord or tuchun Ch'en Chiung-ming. As an emergency measure President Sun prepared for a northern liberation march and appealed for popular support on the

basis of his San Min Chu I (Three principles of the people) which he had formulated earlier. His ideas deserve some comment. They were:

1. Nationalism--If China was to be saved and the Chinese race victorious, they must promote nationalism.
2. Democracy--This was the idea of paternal guided democracy and eventual evolution toward popular rule.
3. People's livelihood--China was not socially advanced enough for class warfare and so progress must be based on land reform and government regulation of capital.

However, all of Sun's plans came to naught in the early Twenties when he was forced to flee Canton.[18]

The republican experience was far from successful in China. After realizing the futility of the period 1911-1916, Chinese intellectuals searched for a new ideology that might cure China's ills. After the victory of the Bolsheviks in 1917, many felt that Marxism might be the solution. The Chinese Revolution to this point had been a confusing experience. Many leaders and a corresponding

number of power bases had appeared. Even if it was only considered because of its organizational principles, Lenin's revolution offered hope to the Chinese intellectual. A tightly disciplined elite party might have been the solution to China's problems. In addition, tenets of Leninism such as Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism were evidently becoming valid in Chinese reality. Events beginning in 1918 would eventually lead to the founding of the Chinese Communist Party.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]Clubb, op. cit., p. 17.

[2]Fairbank and Teng, op. cit., p. 152.

[3]Clubb, op. cit., p. 18.

[4]Fairbank and Teng, op. cit., p. 181.

[5]Clubb, op. cit., p. 18.

[6]Victor Purcell, China (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1962), p. 69.

[7]Ibid., p. 70.

[8]Ibid., p. 70.

[9]Jelavich, op. cit., p. 243.

[10]Purcell, op. cit., p. 73.

[11]Fairbank and Teng, op. cit., pp. 226-228.

[12]Purcell, op. cit., p. 74.

[13]Clubb, op. cit., pp. 40-42.

[14]Allan S. Whiting, Soviet Policies in China: 1917-1924 (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1962), pp. 12-15.

[15]Tang, op. cit., p. 324.

[16]Clubb, op. cit., p. 52.

[17] Ibid., pp. 53-58.

[18] Purcell, op. cit., pp. 78-81.

CHAPTER IV

THE FORMATION OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

By 1917-1918 Chinese intellectuals were completely alienated by the Republican experience, the continuation of economic exploitation, the Versailles Treaty, and the ineptness of Western diplomats in China.[1] Only a foreign event served to stimulate excitement among the Chinese intelligentsia. This was the October Revolution in Russia. For China, Marxist-Leninist ideology had a tremendous significance. Recent events indicated that the international community had no place for her as a modern nation-state based on a capitalist economy free from imperialistic influences. The plans of native capitalists for complete independence clashed on all levels with the political, economic, and territorial stances of the foreign powers. Nor could the intellectuals convince the ruling class of the necessity of revitalizing the Chinese system. This, of course, would have been self-defeating for the governors since the first step in the revitalization of China would necessarily have been agrarian reform and this would have destroyed the warlords' own position. To the intelligentsia, the rise of an urban proletarian population, in combination

with Marxism-Leninism offered a radically new point of departure in their search for reform.[2] Marxism-Leninism seemed capable of solving all of China's ills. Lenin's revolution was successful in a relatively underdeveloped nation, and its possible pertinence was not overlooked by the would-be reformers.

By far the most important early Marxists in China were Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Li Ta-chao. Ch'en (1880-1942) was a scholar who early in his career had been trained in the traditional Confucian style. At the beginning of the twentieth century, he came under the influence of Western philosophy, science, and culture, which he felt was personified by the French tradition. He was a revolutionary for many years before the creation of the Republic and even then continued to criticize political, economic, and social institutions. In 1916 he was appointed Dean of the School of Letters at Peking University, and there he took an active part in the intellectual developments that led to the creation of the C.C.P.[3]

Li Ta-chao was a professor of history at Peking University. Late in 1918 he was instrumental in the formation of a Marxist study group whose membership included Chang Kuo-t'ao, Ch'u Ch'iu-pai, Li Han-chun, Mao Tse-tung, and

Chou Fu-hai. All of these men were to play vital roles in the future events that gripped China.[4] On November 15, 1918, Li discussed in The Victory of Bolshevism his plans for the revival of China and the reshaping of the world. "All those who work should join a union and there should be a central administrative soviet in each union. Such soviets should then organize all the governments of the world. There will be no congress, no parliament, no president, no prime minister, no cabinet, no legislature and no ruler. There will only be the joint soviets of labor which will decide all matters."[5] Here then was the first task that the Chinese Communists set for themselves: the infiltration, control, and exploitation of the fledgling Chinese labor unions.

Before discussing the May Fourth Movement and its implications for China, it is interesting to note that the newly created Soviet Union found favor among Chinese intellectuals in an area other than that of ideology. Immediately after the Revolution of 1917 the Soviets evacuated Russian extra-territorial holdings in Tientsin. This, coupled with People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs Chicherin's statements to the Fifth Congress of Soviets

(July, 1918), which renounced Tsarist conquests in Manchuria, offered to sell the C.E.R. back to China and abrogated all indemnities owed to Russia, brought immediate approval from Peking. The Karakhan Manifesto of July, 1919, issued by L. M. Karakhan, Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs, offered to return the C.E.R. without compensation of any sort and was an additional reassurance of the Soviet Union's good intentions.[6] Many, in later years, failed to recall that little came of these Soviet pledges.

The above mentioned circumstances, combined with the fact that Chinese intellectuals were completely alienated by the Treaty of Versailles, had serious repercussions in 1919. Many had placed great value on Wilson's Fourteen Points, and when China was denied the right to reclaim German holdings in Shantung, Tsingta, and Weihaiwei, many intellectuals became violently anti-Western. On May 4, 1919, Peking University students demonstrated against the supine attitude of the government to Japanese pressure and demanded the punishment of three high officials, the Ministers of Communication and Currency and the Minister to Japan. Each in some way had been connected with China's accession of the Twenty-one Demands. The demonstrations were also

aimed at the Versailles Treaty.[7] The Peking intellectuals who fomented the disorders hoped they might spark a cultural renaissance and social reforms.[8] The movement spread to other major cities, but was quickly crushed. While in terms of immediate reforms the results were negligible, the May 4th Movement was the first concerted effort by the intellectuals to take an activist role in the politics of China since the fall of the Republic. With its failure, Marxist sympathizers then reverted back to agitation in the labor unions and universities.

China faced the year 1920 with many limitations. There was an astonishingly low literacy rate and few modern methods of communication available. The Chinese peasant was committed to the Confucian ethic--an ethic of the status quo and of strong family ties. The urban proletariat was of negligible influence and political activity was limited to Peking, Shanghai, and Canton.[9] There were many centers of power, which, because of expedient temporary warlord alliances, were constantly quarreling and unstable. The central government at Peking and the Kuomintang alternative at Canton existed only because of the tolerance of the tuchens (warlords).[10]

Into this atmosphere in the spring of 1920 the Comintern (formed in 1919) dispatched two agents, Grigorii Voitinsky and Yang Ming-chai, to formally organize the Chinese Communist Party. In Peking, Voitinsky made contact with Li Ta-chao, who introduced him to Ch'en, who by this time headed the Shanghai cell. Voitinsky proceeded to Shanghai with Ch'en where, because of the shortage of actual Marxists, he assembled leftists of all shades to form the nucleus of a new revolutionary party.[11] In September a meeting was called to discuss the creation of a bona fide C.C.P. based on Communist ideology, and the task of organizing ideologically pure cells began.[12] Later in the month groups similar to the one in Shanghai were established in Peking, in Hunan under Mao Tse-tung, and in Hupeh under Tung Pi-wu. During this early period a series of splits occurred in the movement. Basically these ideological disagreements were between the anarchists and those who faithfully adhered to Marxist-Leninist dogma. In Peking the anarchists disputed the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat and when they received no satisfaction, many left the party. Gradually most fellow travelers fell away, but by no means was ideological purity yet achieved.[13]

On July 1, 1921, the First National Conference of the C.C.P. was convened in Shanghai under the auspices of the Communist International. The Comintern was represented at this meeting by Maring (Sneevliet). Twelve delegates attended the conference. They were: Chang Kuo-t'ao, Ch'en Kung-po, Ch'en Tan-ch'iu, Ch'en Wang-tao, Chou Fu-hai, Ho Shu-heng, Li Han-chun, Li Ta, Liu Jen-ching, Mao Tse-tung, Pao Hui-seng, and Tung Pi-wu. Immediately officers were elected: (1) Ch'en Tu-hsiu (Chairman of the Central Committee), (2) Chou Fu-hai (Vice Chairman), (3) Chang Kuo-t'ao (Organization Chairman), (4) Li Ta (Propaganda Chairman).[14] The party was to be organized along Bolshevik lines with a politburo, central committee, secretariat, and guided by the principle of democratic centralism. Ch'en Tu-hsiu, in his draft program of the Conference, also emphasized the need for education, discipline, and democratic spirit among party members. He also cautioned those who held the view that an immediate attempt should be made to seize power by saying that there was need for a great deal of preparatory work before any such activity could take place. In other words, cooperation with bourgeois nationalists was compatible with party aims. A party line was formulated which cautioned the members to be critical

of the literary works of Sun Yat-sen but to be sympathetic to his practical and enlightened actions by offering any assistance in a strictly individual capacity.[15] The party did not wish to be publicly committed to collaboration with the KMT.

The First Conference also condemned another deviationist position, that of Legal Marxism whose adherents wished to turn the party into an academic institution for the study of Marxism-Leninism.[16] One more act of significance was the creation of a Trade Union Bureau under the leadership of Chang Ku-t'ao. This bureau was to have an undetermined but important influence in the railroad strike on the Tientsin-Poukow line (1922). The workers involved struck not for better wages but for recognition of their union, and, although the strike was drowned in blood, it made a great impression throughout China. In a short time the textile workers in Shanghai began to organize and the sailors in Hong Kong started a strike which closely approximated an open revolt against British authority. While none of these events were very successful, they vividly illustrate the course of Communist strategy.[17]

The First Conference was fruitful in other ways. It solidified Mao's view that Leninism was more than an

ideological doctrine. Mao was one of the few early party members, not excepting Li and Ch'en, who saw that Leninism's greatest value was as an organizational technique. This idea, in addition to his organizational activities in Hunan, made him realize that "only mass political power secured through mass action could guarantee the realization of dynamic reforms." This insight would eventually make him the leader of the C.C.P. and would be instrumental in his seizure of power.[18]

Events now began to move quickly and were somewhat beyond the control of the C.C.P. Its destiny was more and more being shaped in Moscow. The Congress of the Toilers of the Far East was held in Moscow (January-February, 1922) to acquaint the peoples of Asia with Bolshevik views. Both C.C.P. and KMT delegates were in attendance, and to the dismay of the C.C.P. delegates, the Comintern made a statement of qualified support for the KMT.[19] The C.C.P. was quite openly divided over the question of the KMT.

The debate simmered in the Chinese party and was heightened by the issuance of two documents: The First Manifesto of the C.C.P. on the Current Situation (June 10, 1922), and the Manifesto of the Second Congress (July, 1922).

The First Manifesto deserves some lengthy perusal. It began with a summary of the 1911 Revolution:

> The Revolution of 1911 had two historical tasks: first, the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty and second, the liberation of China from foreign aggression and the transformation of China into an independent state. In this second objective the 1911 revolution aimed to create within a framework of national and racial independence, favorable conditions for the industrial development of China. The 1911 revolution expressed the transition from the political system of feudalism to a democratic regime, from manual labor and an artisan economy to capitalist production. The revolution in China--under the definite conditions of its historical environment--did not consummate a victory. The democratic party . . . resorted to compromise with the counter revolutionary class of the feudal lords.[20]

This statement showed to some extent that there was a distrust of the KMT, within the leadership of the C.C.P., and implied that the party to which the Soviet Union was extending its revolutionary blessing might in some way be responsible for the failure of China to achieve and maintain a capitalist stage of development. The Manifesto continued by stating that a truly democratic party is easily recognizable by its adherence to democratic principles and its struggle against feudal military elements. It admitted that the KMT was the most revolutionary party (other than the C.C.P.) in China, bur voiced suspicion over the degree of democratic spirit

and revolutionary zeal that the KMT had achieved.[21] Yet the C.C.P. remained faithful to the Moscow line and pledged joint action with the democratic party to overthrow the feudal regime and hasten the coming of the proletariat revolution.

Yet the party strove to maintain some semblance of independence by issuing its own program for action:

1. The entire system of tariffs, extra-territorial rights, and economic and transportation concessions must be revised.
2. Destruction of the militarists and distribution of their property among the poorest peasants.
3. Universal suffrage and freedom of speech, press, and assembly, and the right to strike.
4. Restricted land tax, compulsory education, and an end to child and woman labor.
5. End to the likin system (provincial transit taxes on domestic trade).
6. Revision of Legal Codes and the immediate abolition of the death penalty and physical torture.[22]

This program was far more liberal than the KMT concept of paternal democracy, and thrust the C.C.P. into the vanguard

of the revolutionary camp.

The Manifesto of the Second Congress (July, 1922) instituted formal procedures for Comintern membership and qualified the party's support of the KMT when it stated:

> . . . if the proletariat extends a hand to promote the democratic revolution, this does not mean that the proletariat should capitulate to the bourgeoisie. The C.C.P. is a party of the proletariat and its aim is to organize the proletariat, to use the methods of class warfare, to set up a workers' and peasants' dictatorship, eliminating the system of private property and gradually attaining a Communist society. . . . The workers must not become an appendage of the petty bourgeoisie, but must continue to fight for their own interests.[23]

This was another sign of the C.C.P.'s displeasure with the Soviet line, and at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, the Soviet Party made its reply. Karl Radek scorned the Chinese delegates Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Lin Yen-chin (Liu Yen-ching?) by stating that some Chinese Communists studied Marxism-Leninism as they once had studied Confucianism. They were not aware of the real world in which they lived. He further argued that China was not ripe for socialism or for a soviet system. He admonished them to face up to the tasks at hand: the organization of the working class and cooperation with the bourgeoisie elements in the struggle against imperialism.[24]

What were the Bolsheviks' reasons for this support of a non-Communist party? Moscow had no intention of placing all its hopes for the Chinese revolution in the hands of the small and politically inexperienced C.C.P. The U.S.S.R. needed a potent ally in the Far East to counter the Japanese position. There is evidence that the Kremlin had courted (1920) the warlord Wu P'ei-fu until he proved unable to mobilize China's massive energy. When Wu provided no hope of success, the Comintern, because of the advice of Maring and later Adolph Joffe, turned to the KMT of Sun Yat-sen as a viable force to unify China. This led to a greater emphasis on the doctrine of bourgeois nationalism (which Lenin had enunciated as early as 1912 in regard to China) and its facets which included alliance with the bourgeois and the necessity of a capitalist phase.[25]

These Soviet policy lines caused an open split in the ranks of the C.C.P. Ch'en Tu-hsiu still insisted that the achievement of socialism was imminent, while Li Ta-chao accepted the Comintern line and was supported by the Soviet Embassy in Peking. Still Ch'en persisted that according to Marxist-Leninist dogma, political parties were representatives of economic classes. Therefore, Maring's contentions (late

1922, early 1923) that the KMT was not actually a bourgeois party but one that cut across all classes, caught him by surprise and, shorn of his ideological footing, he heeded the Comintern's directives. Yet there are no grounds to speculate that he expected anything more than a limited collaboration with the KMT while still maintaining the C.C.P.'s identity.[26] Joffe was, however, at that very moment discussing an entirely different arrangement with Sun Yat-sen.

By 1923, Soviet presence had already made itself felt in the leadership echelons of the C.C.P., while the course that the C.C.P. would follow was, even at this early date, being largely determined in Moscow, no irrevocable errors had yet been committed. However, C.C.P. leaders were becoming wary of Soviet intentions. During the next three years the C.C.P. leadership, including Ch'en Tu-hsiu, Li Ta-chao, and Mao Tse-tung, would realize just how expendable they were in Moscow's plan. Those C.C.P. leaders who survived 1927 would never forget Stalin's brutal manipulation of their party.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1]Julie Lien-ying How and C. Martin Wilbur, Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisors in China, 1918-1927 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 43.

[2]Harold R. Isaacs, The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), pp. 46-47.

[3]Fairbank and Teng, op. cit., p. 239.

[4]Benjamin I. Schwartz, Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 25.

[5]Fairbank and Teng, op. cit., p. 247.

[6]Whiting, op. cit., p. 30.

[7]Purcell, op. cit., p. 94.

[8]Conrad Brandt, John Fairbank, and Benjamin Schwartz, A Documentary History of Chinese Communism (New York: Atheneum, 1966), p. 29.

[9]Whiting, op. cit., pp. 60-62.

[10]George Kennan, Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1961), pp. 266-267.

[11]Robert C. North, Moscow and the Chinese Communists (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 54.

[12]Schwartz, op. cit., p. 33.

[13]North, op. cit., p. 55.

[14]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 30.

[15]North, op. cit., pp. 56-59.

[16]Purcell, op. cit., p. 96.

[17]Franz Borkneau, World Communism, A History of the Communist International (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 303.

[18]Schwartz, op. cit., p. 35.

[19]North, op. cit., p. 61.

[20]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 55.

[21]Ibid., p. 58.

[22]Ibid., pp. 62-63.

[23]Schwartz, op. cit., p. 40.

[24]Ibid., p. 37.

[25]Ibid., p. 38.

[26]Ibid., p. 40.

CHAPTER V

THE PERIOD OF ALLIANCE, 1924-1927

Joffe had arrived at Harbin on August 9, 1922. After months of negotiations with Sun Yat-sen, a joint manifesto was issued on January 26, 1923. The parties agreed that because of the existing state of Chinese society, it was impossible for a communistic society or even a Soviet system to be instituted in China at that time. The manifesto declared that the Soviet Union was willing to negotiate boundary and treaty disputes on the basis of the Karakhan Manifesto (1917) and that she held no imperialistic ambitions concerning Outer Mongolia. The parties also agreed to further discussions on the fate of the Chinese Eastern Railroad.[1] This accord was, in every sense of the word, a victory for Chinese diplomacy. Sun was overjoyed and when additional Soviet advisors arrived in China during 1923, he was more than willing to listen to their suggestions.

Mikhail M. Borodin (Gruzenberg) was the leader of this new group of advisors. Borodin, born in Tsarist Russia, had emigrated to the United States and returned to Russia in 1918. Since that time he had carried out party assignments in Mexico and Great Britain.[2] Once in Canton, Borodin began

to reorganize the KMT along Bolshevik lines. The party structure was molded into organizational units by pyramiding upward. The ultimate sources of party and government authority were the Annual Congress and the Central Executive Committee which was to rule between Congresses.[3] The prime organizational and policy-making principle was democratic centralism, something that Borodin would live to regret.

To supplement this centralized party structure, Borodin attempted to convince Sun of the necessity of mass popular support for his party. Sun was hesitant to accept this idea until his position in Canton was threatened by the warlord Ch'en Ch'iung-ming (November, 1923). Borodin, with the help of the C.C.P., mobilized the workers in Canton and Ch'en was easily defeated. Sun was now convinced that Borodin was a wise councillor, and together they set out to draft a new program for the KMT.[4]

Parallel to this political reorganization of the party, the military forces of the KMT underwent some fundamental changes. Joffe and KMT officials had created plans for a military academy based on the lines of Trotsky's army system. A Chinese delegation was sent to Moscow on August 23, 1923. Its leader was Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang was born in Chekiang Province in 1887. He was sent to Tokyo Military College and

joined the Tung meng hui during the revolt against the Manchus. He had since been an officer in the KMT's army. Once in Moscow, Chiang studied Bolshevik strategy, tactics, organizational techniques, and ideology. While there, he conferred with Stalin, Trotsky, Chicherin, and General Vasily K. Blücher (Galen).[5] These Soviet leaders pledged material assistance to the KMT army and promised to keep ideological intrusions at a minimum. General Blücher was sent to head a small military mission in China. He was ordered to create a KMT army which could defeat the northern warlords, to promote democratic tendencies in the army and among the masses, to make Communism popular, and to further KMT friendship for the U.S.S.R.[6]

On his return to China, Chiang was named commander of the newly created Whampoa Academy. Yet Whampoa almost never opened. Chiang felt that Soviet demands for intensive political indoctrination were excessive. Soviet requirements were softened and early in 1924 Whampoa opened with Chiang as commandant and Liao Chung-kai as political commissar. Chiang, in an address to the first class of cadets, stated that the prime objectives of their training were to be obedience and discipline.[7] Chiang's words were to have

little meaning since even at that early date Whampoa was hopelessly divided. The non-Communists formed a Sun Yat-sen Society and the Communists a Union of Youth. The latter group is of some interest because among its ranks could be found Chu Teh, Lin Piao, and Chou En-lai.[8] While the history of Whampoa was at the least stormy, it did allow the KMT to create something it desperately needed--an effective, well trained officers corps.

Because of the work of Borodin and Sun Yat-sen, the Communists gained entry to the KMT in January, 1924. They promised individual allegiance to its programs and obedience to its leadership. They even pledged to adhere to Sun's Three Principles which, in essence, negated their own belief in the class struggle.[9] The situation created by these conditions bordered on the absurd. Any individual would find it very difficult to be loyal to two separate organizations which both utilized democratic centralism as their primary organizational principle. In addition, it is hard to accept the idea of a Communist acting as an individual. The idea of the highly centralized elitist group of revolutionaries, functioning as a unit, is fundamental to Lenin's concept of the party.[10]

In any event, the First National Congress of the KMT met in January, 1924. Among the ranks of the delegates were many newly acquired Communist associates. Sun Yat-sen announced a re-interpretation of his Three People's Principles. The KMT was now to be allied to the U.S.S.R. in foreign affairs, allied to the C.C.P. in domestic policy, and it was to further the struggle against imperialism by expanding its influence among the workers and peasants.[11] The Congress responded to this new program by calling for strict party discipline, an intensive propaganda campaign, social legislation, the equalization (not confiscation) of land, and state control of capital and monopolisitic industries.[12]

Li Ta-chao was named to the Central Executive Committee and other Communists were given high party posts. But of greater importance was the fact that by employing agitation techniques, the Communists made immediate advances towards their goals. They believed that, since the Chinese proletariat was immature and not politically conscious, the best method for preparing the masses for the coming class struggle was to use the organs of the KMT. Since the KMT had been weakly structured in the past, it was not difficult for the Communists to usurp control of lower echelons of

its structure.[13] Once in control of the masses, they planned to use that control to influence and eventually oust the KMT decision-makers. Through some incredible loss of perspective, they forgot that Borodin had created a new KMT based on democratic centralism and that in such a system power flows in the opposite direction.[14]

This and other Communist methods caused uneasy feelings among the right wing of the KMT leaders. They charged that the Communists were not acting as individuals within the KMT. As evidence they cited "Resolutions of the Socialist Youth Corps" (1923), which in essence instructed C.C.P. members to act as a party within a party.[15] Sun ignored these rightist protests. He felt that, in spite of the Communists' actions, their collaboration was essential if the northern warlords were to be defeated and national unity achieved.[16] His position was also tempered by the favorable treaty he signed with the U.S.S.R. on May 31, 1924. The Sino-Soviet Treaty was another diplomatic victory for his regime. The U.S.S.R. agreed to recognize Chinese rights in Outer Mongolia, to void all Tsarist Treaties, to renounce all indemnities forced on China, and to settle the Chinese Eastern Railroad controversy.[17]

The Second Plenum of the Central Executive Committee of the KMT, meeting in August, 1924, approved of Sun's proposals concerning the collaboration. Its report stated that the C.C.P. was not a creation of a foreign power but a political organization which had grown out of the class struggle in China. It further affirmed that the KMT's sole responsibility was to keep the C.C.P.'s conduct in harmony with the KMT's principles and platforms. Other than this the Communists were free to function as they wished. The collaboration was now formalized, much to the distress of many rightist leaders.[18]

Sun faced other problems in the summer of 1924. The most important was a challenge to his authority in Canton by an armed group called the Merchant Volunteers. This private army was financed by local businessmen and British financial interests. On August 26, the British Consulate threatened armed intervention if the KMT attempted to destroy the Merchant Volunteers. Sun sent messages of protest to London and to the League of Nations, but received no satisfaction. Here again he fell back on Soviet advice, and in October an armed force made up of Whampoa cadets, workers, and peasants disarmed the Volunteers. No action was taken by the British. Events became more stable in

Canton until late February, 1925, when Ch'en Ch'iung-ming once more threatened the KMT regime. However, the KMT army, with aid from Communist-led peasant guerillas, easily defeated Ch'en.[19]

With Sun in full control in Canton and ever more certain of his alliance with the Communists, the future of the Chinese revolution seemed somewhat more promising. Sun had never been a Marxist but was becoming increasingly impressed with Bolshevik revolutionary techniques and their relevance to the Chinese situation. Then, unexpectedly, on March 12, 1925, he died. His testament to his party was inspiring: "My charge to the Kuomintang Party before all is that it shall continue to promote the cause of the national revolutionary movement for the emancipation of China. . . . I express hope that the day is approaching when the Soviet Union will greet in a free and strong China its friend and ally."[20] Yet, for all this rhetoric, Sun had not chosen a successor, and the following months would reveal a power struggle among the KMT leadership.

The chief contenders for Sun's mantle were Wang Ching-wei (later prominent in Wuhan), Hu Han-min, and Liao Chung-kai, a financial expert and peasant organizer. However, none was strong enough to assume absolute power without

some type of coalition.[21]

Another death, that of Lenin on January 21, 1924, had had an immeasurable effect on the Chinese revolution. Lenin's death left a power vacuum in the Soviet Union. Almost immediately Trotsky and Stalin began to contest to fill it. Trotsky felt the immediate overthrow of the capitalist system was at hand and applied this thesis to the Chinese revolution.[22] Stalin, on the other hand, was of a more conservative nature, and in his message to the KMT on Sun's death, he stated that: "The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party believes that the Kuomintang will keep high the banner of Sun Yat-sen in the great struggle for liberation from imperialism, that the KMT will honorably carry that banner to the full victory over imperialism and its agents in China."[23]

Stalin also believed that the Chinese revolution was characterized by a regrouping of social forces. Before 1920 the leading classes had been the nationalistic bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie intellectuals, who were supported by the petty bourgeoisie (small shopkeepers) and the proletariat. As the struggle against imperialism grew, the peasantry became allied with the proletariat and together they sought

fulfillment of their demands in conjunction with the petty bourgeoisie and the capitalistic bourgeoisie. He argued that the Chinese revolution was at this stage in the spring of 1924 and that the KMT could best fulfill the demands of all the classes.[24] In addition, Stalin felt that the left wing of the KMT could be driven to a break with the right. The Chinese Communists were cautioned not to become the left wing of the KMT because if the break ever occurred, it would be difficult to characterize as intra-party strife and the C.C.P. was not strong enough to stand alone at that time.[25]

On July 1, 1925, the military government at Canton officially changed its name to the Nationalist Government of China, and the KMT armed forces were renamed the National Revolutionary Army. A leader had not yet been determined. On August 20, Liao Chung-kai was assassinated and Hu Han-min was implicated in the plot. Hu was sent into exile, and at Borodin's instigation, a triumvirate was formed to rule Canton. It was made up of Wang Ching-wei, Hsu Ch'ung-chih (KMT War Minister), and Chiang Kai-shek (Commandant of Whampoa).[26]

The summer of 1925 also witnessed large increases in the revolutionaries' membership. Two incidents, the May 30th

incident in Shanghai and the Shakee-Shameen Massacre in Canton had fanned tremendous flames of nationalism.[27] In both cases Communist agents acting in the name of the KMT were the prime movers, but the KMT was not able to exploit these sympathies because their leadership difficulties continued.[28]

Chiang Kai-shek was still distant from power. He needed the popular support that the Communists wielded in Canton and the material aid that only his Soviet advisors could supply. On the other hand, Borodin had not backed any of the KMT leaders. He distrusted Ch'ung-chih but was still convinced that the bourgeoisie was the only class to lead the revolution. This, in essence, made Wang Ching-wei a doubtful candidate for the leadership of the KMT because of his leftist and Communist support.[29] Borodin was not the only one who was disturbed by the situation in Canton. The right wing of the party declared that the Canton KMT was under Communist influence and refused to obey any KMT directives. They organized the Chungkuo Kuomintang Tungchih Club and gathered (autumn, 1925) all of their supporters at Sun Yat-sen's grave in the Western Hills near Peking to condemn the Communist participation in the Canton government.[30] The intellectual leader of this group

was Tai Chi-tao.

In this atmosphere of dissension, the Second National Congress of the KMT met in Canton in January of 1926. The meeting was packed with leftists and their Communist allies who together held a three-fifths majority. The Communists controlled the Secretariat and the KMT equivalent of the Bolshevik Orgburo. The Congress pledged solidarity with the Soviet Union and the C.C.P.[31] The right was virtually expelled from the party. Now even Borodin was fearful of the growing power of the Reds in Canton. Radical elements proposed land confiscation programs which he vetoed on the grounds that the KMT had a mixed class composition which could not support such a program and preserve the unity necessary to continue the revolution. Another source of uneasiness for Borodin was Chiang Kai-shek, who was making overtures to the right while pledging loyalty to the revolution and obviously hoping to gain absolute power.[32]

In late February Borodin left Peking on a diplomatic mission to the north. On March 20, Chiang accused the captain of the gunboat Chung Shan of plotting a coup against him. Without consulting Wang Ching-wei, he declared martial law and arrested Communist labor organizers and workers. Because of the implications that Chiang's coup had for

Wang's position he went into exile. Borodin demanded immediate restoration of the status quo, but Chiang was supreme in Canton.[33] Borodin, with the support of the Canton C.C.P., demanded military action against Chiang, but the Central Committee vetoed their plans on the grounds that a break with the KMT would not be valuable and that the Communists did not have sufficient forces to assure a military victory.

Chiang, now securely in control, proceeded to consolidate his position. In "A Resolution for Adjusting Party Affairs" (May 15, 1926), he called for exclusion of Communists from high executive posts, the limiting of Reds to only one-third of the membership in any regional or national KMT committee, the creation of a joint KMT-C.C.P. committee to issue orders to Chinese Communists, and the end of Communist criticism of KMT doctrine. To somewhat soften this harsh stand, he apologized to his Soviet advisor for any inconveniences Borodin might have suffered during the coup, apologized to the disarmed workers, purged some rightists, pledged submission to the Comintern, and reaffirmed his faith in the revolution.[34] The C.C.P. was outraged and offered counter-proposals to widen the popular base and amend the KMT constitution, but this plan was vetoed by the Comintern.

Chiang, conscious that these demands were almost impossible for Moscow to accept and aware that he still needed Soviet aid, agreed to a compromise on May 26. Chiang was named head of the Canton regime and Wang Ching-wei remained in exile. The Canton workers' militia was to remain disbanded and no Communist officers were to be allowed in the army. In addition, KMT leadership positions available to the Reds were strictly limited, Communist agitation techniques were to be controlled by the KMT, and the Soviets were forced to consent to the Northern Expedition.[35] This settlement amounted to an almost complete capitulation to Chiang. The reason that Stalin agreed to such an arrangement was to gain time to reappraise the mistakes made at Canton and to strengthen the C.C.P.

A report filed in Moscow by the Soviet military advisor, Stepanov, summarized the current Cantonese situation. The Canton Coup had taken place because the Soviet advisors had brought about a rapid centralization of the KMT army without placing an absolutely trustworthy officer in command. Also, excessive supervision of the generals and radical programs of political indoctrination in the army had caused Chiang and his followers to be unsure of their positions. Stepanov continued by offering a program by which the Soviets could

continue to use Chiang to carry out their plans. His recommendations, while somewhat contradictory to his analysis, included:

1. Strengthening the centralization of the military organs from the top down.
2. Continue to improve the organizational system of the army.
3. Improve conditions within the army. . . .
4. Elevate the standards of officers.
5. Improve the quality of the troops. . . .
6. Expand political propaganda work within the army.[36]

Stalin concurred with Stepanov's emphasis on the need for intensive political work in the army. In addition, he ordered the C.C.P. to remain in the KMT and to remove any prominent Reds from leadership positions. However, this was already unnecessary because of Chiang's coup.[37]

The Second Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.C.P. was held on July 18, 1926. At this meeting, the Central Committee, still not convinced of the wisdom of Moscow's directives, voted to continue independent action among the peasants of Kwangtung Province, to court the KMT left, to develop its mass organizations outside the KMT, and to incite the KMT left into conflict with the right wing.[38] But by this time the C.C.P. had lost sight of its goals. Its task had been to advise the KMT left and not to become it. The direction its policy was now taking

would soon be at odds with this precept and ultimately would lead to disaster.

Stalin had other opposition to his line in China. When Chiang had turned on the Reds in Canton, Stalin's position was severely shaken. Trotsky and his allies attacked on two levels. Their first attack was a theoretical one on Stalin's concept of socialism in one country and had little direct relationship to the Chinese situation, but the second level referred directly to the Canton Coup. Trotsky stated that the blame for the Canton Coup could be placed at the feet of the Soviet leadership. He believed that the significance of Chiang's victory was that it illustrated the bankruptcy of Stalin's and also Lenin's concept of collaboration with bourgeois groups in underdeveloped areas. According to Trotsky, Chiang had not betrayed the revolution but only upheld the supremacy of his class, which was not that of the workers and peasants.[39] He insisted that the Chinese bourgeoisie's interests were not opposed to those of the imperialists and that the only way the masses would be freed was by a party of the proletariat, and the KMT was not such a party. He also called for heavier reliance on his theory of permanent revolution.[40] By this

time, however, Stalin was in almost complete control of the Soviet regime, and his Chinese line survived the challenge. Trotsky's attacks on Stalin were intensive, but his alternative policies had little basis in Chinese reality. The KMT was too powerful to permit a proletarian party to exist, and the proletarian sector in the Chinese society was hardly strong enough to demand it.

The Northern Expedition, designed to liberate areas controlled by the warlords, was undertaken by the various factions for diverse reasons. Chiang hoped that the Northern Expedition would gather conservative support for the KMT and deprive the party of some of its revolutionary zeal, thus strengthening his position vis-à-vis the Communists. Stalin and the Soviet advisors (Borodin and Galen) believed that a military disaster would ensue and Chiang's position would be destroyed.[41] However, Chiang was never to be more astute at handling his Russian advisors and the Chinese Reds. The victories of his armies (fall, 1926) gave Chiang great prestige and made him somewhat independent of Stalin and Borodin. In addition, many warlords defected as the KMT moved north and the revolutionary army's size increased manyfold. With this increase, the preponderance of force which Chiang possessed grew and made the situation even

more dangerous for the Reds.[42] On the other hand, the Communists felt heartened by the opening of vast new territories. Red agitation caused rapid growth of the labor and peasant organizations in Hunan, Hupeh, and Wuhan.[43] Yet the C.C.P. neglected the task that Stalin had prescribed for it--the political subversion of Chiang's army. The reasons for this were impressive. It is hard to destroy the morale of a victorious army and KMT officers, drawn mainly from the landowning class, would tolerate no mention of agrarian reform.[44]

Despite this failure, Stalin, because of Trotsky's opposition, appeared pleased with the success of the Northern Expedition. In his "Prospects of the Revolution in China" (November 30, 1926), he described specific features which he noted in the Chinese situation:

> 1. . . . while the Chinese revolution is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, it is at the same time . . . spearheaded against the domination of foreign imperialism in China.
> 2. The second specific feature of the Chinese revolution is that the national big bourgeoisie is weak in the extreme.[45]

He minimized the desire of many Chinese Communists to form Soviets in peasant areas by stating that such organizations were not feasible at that time because the industrial

proletariat had not overthrown the old system and the peasants had not rallied to the Communist position. Stalin therefore suggested that the Communists use the KMT government structure, the army and peasant committees, to influence the masses.[46]

While these statements served to justify Stalin's policy of continued collaboration with the KMT, many Soviet leaders felt that a new and more inclusive policy statement was needed. The growth of Communist influence among the masses made many feel that betrayal by Chiang was imminent. Also, Trotsky and his supporters were becoming more vehement in their attacks on the party line. Therefore, the Seventh Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern issued a Thesis on the Chinese Situation (December, 1926). The Comintern pledged continued collaboration with the KMT because the Northern Expedition's success held potentially great diplomatic advantages for the U.S.S.R. (a unified China might counter Japan's military strength) and the KMT armies were also providing excellent avenues for the Communists to begin peasant movements. The Comintern stated that while a bloc of workers, peasants, and big bourgeoisie (Chiang) still controlled the revolution, there were noticeable signs that more power was being concentrated in the hands of the masses. This manifest was meant to reassure

Chiang that collaboration was to be continued and at the same time lessen C.C.P. demands for a break by offering them a road to power from within the KMT. Trotsky was now confronted with the problem of disputing a dynamic three-class analysis of Chinese society.[47]

The Central Committee of the C.C.P., meeting in late January, 1927, seemed to confirm this position. They urged the masses to give both financial and military aid to the Nationalist Government and conceded that the revolution was still a long way from completion. Yet they were disturbed by what they called a growing bourgeois ideology and cautioned their members to guard against its spread.[48]

Meanwhile, Chiang had captured Hankow and Wuchang in Wuhan Province. Borodin persuaded the KMT political leadership to move to those cities. This gave the Communists access to the large labor force in Wuhan and because of this mass support, Borodin felt that they could exert indirect pressure on the KMT leadership. Chiang, who was now in Nanchang, tried to counter Borodin's move by calling a meeting of the KMT Central Executive Committee, but the leftists refused to attend and even passed a motion to remove Chiang as commander of the army. The Third Plenum of the Central Executive Committee of the KMT was held in

Wuhan (March, 1927) and declared the establishment of presidiums to head all government departments. It also stated the party was in complete command of all political functions which the army had previously controlled. Chiang protested but did not move against Wuhan.[49] Instead, he moved to Shanghai where he gathered the support of businessmen and foreigners who were concerned by the radical direction that the KMT was taking. The old Western Hills faction also came to his aid. On April 12, 1927, Chiang's troops attacked the Shanghai Communists and their sympathizers. About three hundred of the Reds, who had earlier helped Chiang take Shanghai, were executed.[50]

The Shanghai Coup led to an immediate, total rupture between Chiang and the Wuhan regime. Wang Ching-wei, in exile since the Canton Coup, returned to become President of the Wuhan government. Communist leaders were restored to KMT positions that they had held before the Canton Coup and Wuhan became the center of Red activity.[51] Now the opposing forces were ready to make their bids for total power. Chiang had a modern army and some support among the masses. The Wuhan leftists and the Communists had held sway over larger workers' and peasants' organizations in southern

and central China. Each was convinced that the weapons it possessed would be adequate to destroy the other.[52]

Even Stalin seemed ready to declare open war on the Chinese bourgeoisie when he stated that the Shanghai Coup signified a new stage in the development of the revolution in which the KMT right had revealed its counter-revolutionary nature and, in doing so, had hastened the coming of a genuine agrarian revolution. He called for the expulsion and elimination of the right wing and the creation of a new KMT consisting of a bloc of Communists and the KMT left.[53] Stalin now embarked on a course which would prove disastrous. The C.C.P. was ordered by the Comintern in May to secure a hegemony of the working class within the KMT. The Fifth Congress of the C.C.P. which met later in May declared that nationalization of land and confiscation of property, with the exception of property belonging to military officers who supported the Wuhan regime, were its main tasks. One can discern from this significant exception that they were still intent on cooperation with the KMT left.[54]

The Reds were immediately faced with a grave problem. Partially because of the encouragement given by the Fifth Congress, the peasants began to seize land in Hunan and Hupeh. Stalin felt that the time was still not right for

the creation of soviets and pledged continued support for the Wuhan regime. So when the Wuhan regime moved against the peasants with force, the Communists were compelled, by Stalin's directive, to condemn the peasants' activities as acts which might hasten the counter-revolution.[55] On June 1, Stalin, still vacillating, sent a telegram to Borodin and Roy (an Indian Communist and Comintern agent) which recorded another shift in the Kremlin's strategy. Stalin ordered his representatives in China to commence a program of land confiscation without Wuhan's consent. In addition, he demanded that more workers and peasants be admitted into the Wuhan leadership, and, once they were established, that they should use their positions to overthrow the government. He recommended that unreliable KMT army officers be punished and that the C.C.P. should raise an army of seventy thousand workers and peasants.[56] Roy then made an incredible and still unexplained blunder. He showed the demands to Wang Ching-wei, the President of Wuhan. When Wang finished reading Stalin's message, he concluded that Stalin held the policy of collaboration to be obsolete and that the C.C.P. was probably preparing a coup. He was not in sympathy with such a move and declared all collaboration ended.[57] The Communist leaders, caught completely by surprise, issued a hasty

statement in which they recognized the KMT's ascendancy and reaffirmed their old pledge that they were participating in Wuhan as individuals. The KMT would not accept this pledge and moves against the Reds continued. The Communists, on the advice of Borodin and Ch'en Tu-hsiu, even promised to end agrarian agitation, a step tantamount to denying their ultimate purpose and reason for existence. The Wuhan regime refused to accept this total surrender. Roy and Borodin, and many others, fled the country, and the C.C.P. leadership was forced into hiding to escape the horrible forms of death that overtook a number of its followers.[58]

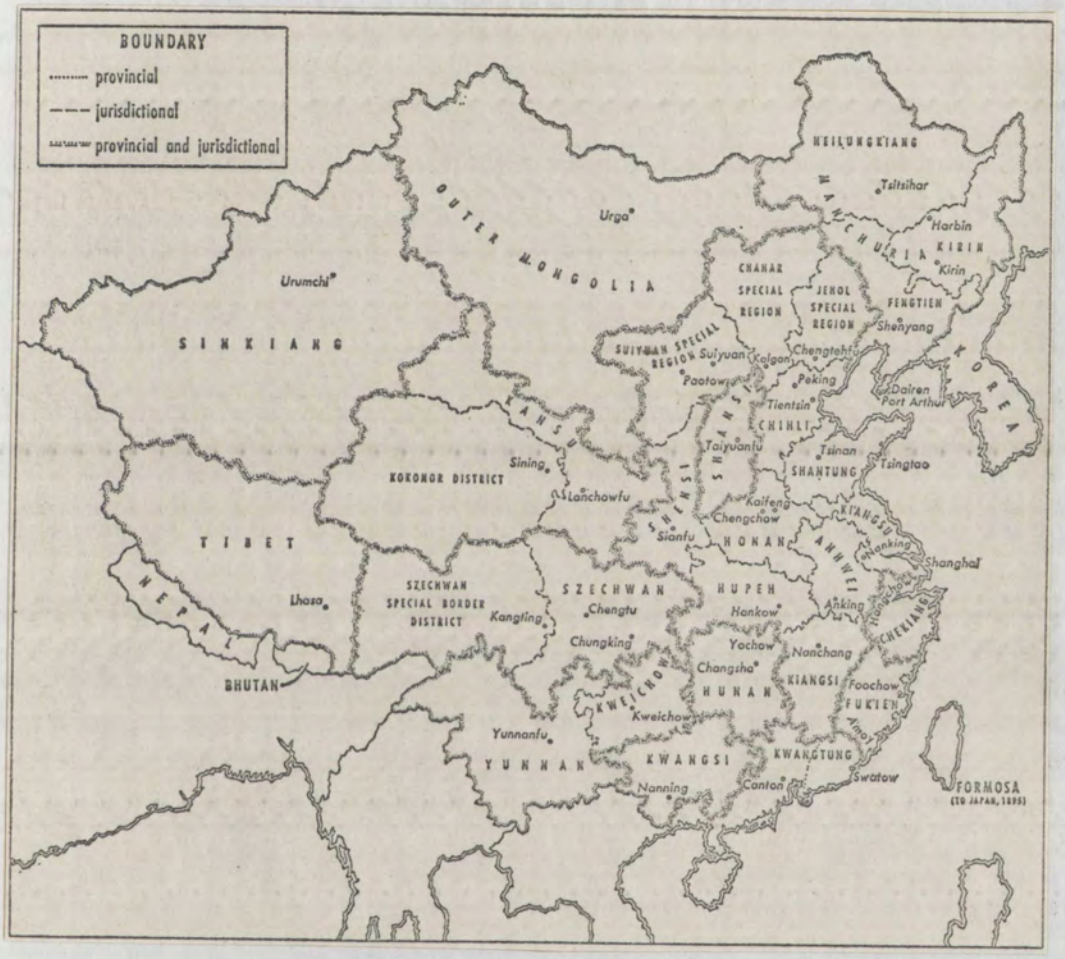

FIGURE 3.

China in 1924 (adapted from O. E. Clubb, China, p. 126).

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1]Whiting, op. cit., p. 183.

[2]North, op. cit., p. 72.

[3]Ibid., p. 75.

[4]Harold R. Isaacs, The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution (New York: Atheneum, 1966), pp. 63-64.

[5]Harley McNair, China in Revolution (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931), pp. 63-64.

[6]F. F. Liu, A Military History of Modern China (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), pp. 5-6.

[7]How and Wilbur, op. cit., p. 150.

[8]Franz H. Michael and George E. Taylor, The Far East in the Modern World (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1956), p. 376.

[9]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 68.

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[11]Mao Tse-tung, Report of an Investigation into the Peasant Movement in Hunan (Peking: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1953), p. 15.

[12]North, op. cit., p. 76.

[13]Schwartz, op. cit., p. 50.

[14]Conrad Brandt, Stalin's Failure in China, 1924-1927 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 45.

[15]North, op. cit., p. 83.

[16]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 77.

[17]Whiting, op. cit., p. 276.

[18]North, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

[19]Isaacs (1966 ed.), op. cit., p. 68.

[20]North, op. cit., p. 83.

[21]Clubb, op. cit., p. 130.

[22]North, op. cit., p. 79.

[23]Isaac Deutscher, Stalin, A Political Biography (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), p. 399.

[24]Alvin Z. Rubinstein, The Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union (New York: Random House, 1966), pp. 102-104.

[25]Brandt, op. cit., p. 61.

[26]North, op. cit., p. 86.

[27]Ibid., p. 81.

[28]Clubb, op. cit., p. 129.

[29]Isaacs (1966 ed.), op. cit., p. 83.

[30]North, op. cit., p. 85.

[31]Brandt, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

[32]Isaacs (1966 ed.), op. cit., pp. 88-90.

[33]Clubb, op. cit., p. 131.

[34]Brandt, op. cit., pp. 72-75.

[35]Borkneau, op. cit., p. 309.

[36]How and Wilbur, op. cit., p. 281.

[37]Brandt, op. cit., p. 75.

[38]How and Wilbur, op. cit., p. 281.

[39]Isaac Deutscher, The Age of Permanent Revolution: A Trotsky Anthology (New York: Dell, 1964), p. 241.

[40]Schwartz, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

[41]Borkneau, op. cit., p. 310.

[42]Brandt, op. cit., p. 88.

[43]Isaacs (1966 ed.), op. cit., pp. 112-113.

[44]Brandt, op. cit., p. 90.

[45]J. V. Stalin, Works, Volume Eight (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), p. 374.

[46]Ibid., pp. 384-387.

[47]Schwartz, op. cit., p. 58.

[48]How and Wilbur, op. cit., p. 432.

[49]North, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

[50]Clubb, op. cit., p. 137.

[51]Borkneau, op. cit., p. 313.

[52]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 69.

[53]J. V. Stalin, Works, Volume Nine (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), pp. 229-231.

[54]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 91.

[55]North, op. cit., p. 103.

[56]McNair, op. cit., p. 118.

[57]North, op. cit., pp. 106-107.

[58]Ibid., p. 108.

CHAPTER VI

THE VICTORY OF CHINESE COMMUNISM AND CONCLUSIONS

The destruction of almost everything that the C.C.P. had gained during the years 1924-1926 was nearly complete. Why had Stalin's plans failed so badly? A case can be made for the position that Stalin never had sufficient information on the Chinese situation. In addition, he never really understood Chiang Kai-shek and was outwitted by him. But even if Stalin's information and understanding had improved, it would have been fairly safe to assume that Stalin's policy would not have changed. Soviet-Chinese policy became a function of the Stalin-Trotsky debate that split the Bolshevik Party. China became a pawn in that struggle. By the time that this power struggle had been resolved, the course of the Chinese revolution had slipped from Stalin's grasp.[1]

Stalin sought to recoup his losses in a statement issued by the Executive Committee of the Comintern on July 28 which completely ignored his mistakes and placed the blame for the Wuhan debacle on the Chinese Communist leadership, especially Ch'en Tu-hsiu. He condemned the C.C.P. leadership for not opposing Wuhan policies and

pushing the agrarian revolution. He commanded the C.C.P. to correct its errors and to withdraw from Wuhan but to remain in the KMT.[2]

The C.C.P. held a conference in the foreign district of Hankow on August 7. They endorsed the policy of the KMT left, but stated that Wuhan had now become part of the counter-revolutionary right. They decided that the prime factor involved in their defeat had been the leadership of the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie. Ch'en Tu-hsiu was expelled and his rightist policies denounced. Ch'en refused to submit meekly. Although he accepted the idea that China had to pass through a capitalist stage of development, he had always felt that the policy of the C.C.P. should not have been close collaboration with the KMT but the preservation of the party's freedom of movement. In essence, Ch'en was a victim of the Comintern's campaign to absolve Stalin of the blame for the erroneous policies that he had forced on the C.C.P.[3]

The August Seventh meeting elected new leaders, including Ch'u Ch'iu-pai, Li Li san, Chou En-lai, and Lui Shao-chi. This leadership, with advice from Besso Lominadze and Heinz Neumann, the new Comintern agents, decided on a policy of armed insurrection. The first revolt took place in Nanchang

under Lominadze during the summer and was not completely successful. This was quickly followed by the Autumn Uprising which was led by Mao Tse-tung.[4]

Mao Tse-tung was born in the village of Shao Shan in Hunan Province in 1893.[5] He attended Chinese schools and was present at Peking University during the May Fourth Movement. He was a charter member of the C.C.P. and gained prominence in 1926 when he became principal of the Sixth Session of the Peasant Movement Training Institute of the KMT Peasant Department. His most important duty was to train armed peasant cadres to support the KMT Northern Expedition. Mao's prime focus was on the organization of primary units.[6] Later, in March, 1927, he published his famous Report of an Investigation into the Peasant Movement in Hunan. In his report, he made some observations that merit attention: "A revolution is an act of violence whereby one class overthrows another. A rural revolution is a revolution by which the peasantry overthrows the authority of the feudal landlord class. . . . To right a wrong it is necessary to exceed the proper limit, and a wrong cannot be righted without the proper limit being exceeded."[7] Mao continued with a discussion of three systems of authority to which the Chinese male owed obedience. The first were

the gods and spirits (theocratic authority), the second the clan (ancestral authority), and the third was the state which manifested itself in the form of the landlord. Mao believed that once this landlord was destroyed then all the other systems would fail and the revolution would be complete.[8] In effect, Mao's report was a challenge to the policy of the Comintern. By placing his hopes on the peasants and the violent overthrow of the landlord system, he was in direct opposition to the alliance with the KMT, Stalin's vacillation over the question of land confiscation, and the Comintern's belief that the peasants should be influenced through the instruments of the KMT (i.e., the landlords).[9]

Later in 1927, Mao was sent to Changsa to organize a movement which eventually started the Autumn Crop Uprising. In Shangsa he attempted to dissociate himself completely from the KMT, raise a peasant army, confiscate all land, establish an independent Communist Party, and to organize soviets. He never received permission from the Central Committee for these actions, so when he failed to capture any major cities and faced defeat, the Central Committee dismissed him from the Politburo and the Party Front Committee.[10] Mao's actions were neither planned in Moscow

nor a part of the orthodoxy which was still considered correct by the rulers of the U.S.S.R. Mao's Autumn Uprising failed, but in time he would force Moscow to change its position in order to justify his new approach to the revolution in China.[11]

One more revolt was attempted by the C.C.P. during the last months of 1927. At the November Plenum of the C.C.P. Ch'u Ch'iu-pai, still considering proletarian support of any peasant revolution as essential for its success, laid the groundwork for another Communist takeover in Canton. There are some indications that Stalin ordered this new move to attempt to regain some of his lost prestige and to vindicate his ideological position.[12] There were many reasons for choosing Canton. Nationalist authority had never been deeply rooted there. There were peasant organizations in the vicinity which could be used to support the proletariat revolt and, lastly, Canton had always been a center of revolutionary unrest. By December 14 the Communists controlled the city, but they were shocked by the fact that proletariat support for their cadres was totally lacking. Their own forces were not sufficient to hold the city, and shortly the Nationalists regained control.[13] Again Stalin's plans for a proletariat-based revolution were frustrated,

and once more Stalin shifted the blame to the C.C.P. leadership. The Executive Committee of the Comintern stated that "to play with insurrections instead of organizing a mass uprising of workers and peasants is a sure way of losing the revolution."[14] The Comintern once more reaffirmed the task that it had set for the C.C.P. The peasant masses must be organized into effective bodies which would support the growth of a revolutionary proletariat. In addition, the C.C.P. was to institute steps to intensify the agrarian revolution.[15] This was a sign that Moscow was beginning to commit itself to Mao's position, but hardly an admission of Stalin's earlier errors. Chu Ch'iu-pai's name was added to the growing list of Chinese Communist leaders to be accused of deviationist tendencies, and the leadership of the C.C.P. fell to the Moscow-trained Li Li-san.

Immediately Li Li-san was faced with a difficult task. The Sixth Congress of the Comintern ordered him to accomplish the impossible. The Comintern named the agrarian revolution as the vehicle that the C.C.P. should utilize, but stated that the agrarian revolt could only be pursued under proletarian leadership. It charged Li Li-san with recapturing the loyalty of the urban masses. Li was only

allowed a short time for this difficult task because Stalin felt that immediate revolutionary advances were necessary to counteract Trotsky's charges that the tide of Communism had ebbed in China. In addition, Li was faced with the dilemma that all Chinese Communist leaders were thrust into by Moscow. If he hesitated to rebuild, he was delaying the tide of history, yet if he acted immediately and failed, he would be condemned as an adventurist.[16]

Any action that Li Li-san took was doomed to failure by the exact circumstance that had hindered Ch'u Ch'iu-pai: the urban proletariat could not be persuaded to actively support the C.C.P. It had been disillusioned by its experiences at Canton and Shanghai. Yet the Comintern would not allow Li time to change the proletariat's position; it continued to call for immediate revolution.

At this time there was an area in which the fortunes of the C.C.P. were rising. Peasant soviets were gaining power in South China under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung. Li attempted to use this power base to preserve his leadership.[17] In a document dated June 11, 1930, he called for closer coordination between the world revolution and the Chinese situation. In addition, he implied that South

Chinese peasant armies might be used to seize the urban centers, thus facilitating the task of mobilizing the proletariat.[18] The Comintern approved of this plan (July 23, 1930), only to later condemn it as adventurism after the failure at Changsa.[19]

On July 27, 1930, the Fifth Red Army captured Changsa, the capital of Hunan Province. But proletarian support that the Communists had hoped for failed to materialize. Foreign gunboats and Nationalist troops converged on the city and by August 3rd the Red Army fled. Attempts to conquer Hankow, Wuchang, and Hanyang also failed.[20]

For several months following these defeats Li was able to maintain his position, but in December, 1930, the Comintern condemned his general conduct of the revolution and accused him of questioning the Comintern's loyalty to the revolutionary struggle. After severe pressure, Li confessed his errors and was replaced by the relatively unknown Moscow-trained Returned Students' Leadership.[21]

Under the Students' Leadership the orientation of the C.C.P. gradually changed. The tendency toward agrarian revolution became more pronounced, and Mao Tse-tung, with the support of peasant soviets and the Red Army, rose to a position of supreme power. From this point the Soviet role

in Mao's rise is obscured and Soviet influence in the C.C.P. is reduced to a negligible quantity.[22]

During the period of the Kiangsi Soviet, Stalin was forced to acknowledge Mao's leadership of the C.C.P., but he gave the C.C.P. little material aid. Mao, in turn, considered himself a soldier of international Communism and was greatly disturbed by Stalin's attitude. The Red Army successfully defended the Soviet Republic until 1934 when the KMT forces, led by German advisors, successfully applied strangulation tactics to the Soviet area and forced a Communist retreat. Permission to begin the Long March was given in Moscow.[23] After a long struggle Mao and his followers reached Yenan. Here Mao's attitude toward the Soviet Union was solidified. There is little concrete evidence that the C.C.P. received any material assistance from their Soviet allies. At Yenan a spirit of independence in regard to ideology and policy was born, and it is still apparent today as one of the basic causes of the current split. Mao and his followers found that they could survive without Soviet assistance. Moscow never offered any explanation for its obvious abandonment of the C.C.P. at Yenan, but it is likely that China was no longer Stalin's prime concern. Pressures of industrialization, the beginnings of the purges,

and the growth of Fascist regimes in Japan and Germany began to occupy Stalin's attention.

In a short time Mao was given ample opportunity to put his plan for a peasant-based agrarian revolution into operation. Nationalist China, already ravaged by the years of revolutionary unrest, was soon engaged in a full-scale war with Japan. The war destroyed any plans that Chiang may have had for the modernization of his nation. Vast areas were occupied by the Japanese and in additional sections government authority and influence was almost non-existent. Nationalist campaigns against the Communists were suspended, and Chiang entered into an uneasy alliance with Mao in order to prosecute the war more effectively. This alliance was of great value to the Communist movement. Its army became an efficient and effective fighting force, and, as the Japanese defeat became a reality, they were able to occupy and secure territory without Nationalist interference. In addition, by being able to appear to the populace as liberators, their popularity was greatly enhanced. With the Allied victory over Japan, the Communist Chinese were forced to be reckoned with, while Chiang's government was fraught with corruption and decay. When feeble American attempts at coalition or compromise failed, the civil war

was renewed. By 1949, and much to the surprise of Stalin, who felt that the time was not yet ripe for the revolution, the Nationalists were expelled from the mainland of China.

Now the Soviet Union was forced to deal with China as a sovereign state and as a nation which might potentially be the most powerful force in the Communist Bloc. On February 14, 1950, Mao Tse-tung and Stalin concluded the Sino-Soviet Treaty which pledged friendship and a common desire to actively enhance the growth of international Communism.[24] In a short seventeen years this alliance has been reduced to a mere formality.

The purpose of this thesis has been to illustrate the existence of a historical basis for the current Sino-Soviet conflict. Russian, and later Soviet, interference in the domestic affairs of the Chinese state was apparent throughout the period considered and reached its greatest intensity during the years 1924-1927. In almost every case during those years, Soviet actions led to serious defeats for the C.C.P. These circumstances undoubtedly made an impression on the current Chinese leadership which grew to political maturity during those turbulent times. Liu Shao-ch'i, who until recently was an honored member of the ruling Chinese elite, has spoken of erroneous tendencies which caused

great hardships for the C.C.P. during the 1920's. His implication was clearly that those responsible for these hardships were to be found among the Soviet leadership.[25]

Another aspect of the current Sino-Soviet split is the ideological dispute concerning the Soviet concept of cooperation with national bourgeois movements in development of areas and Chinese adherence to the idea of national liberation movements. Here, too, the conflict may be placed in sharper perspective by a study of the period 1924-1927. The Chinese situation forced the C.C.P. to win its revolution through methods different from those which the Bolsheviks employed. The Chinese can claim with much validity that their methods are ideally suited to the developing nations, while the Soviet Union has not witnessed any success for its methods in the same areas. In addition, any Soviet continuance of support for the idea of cooperation with non-Communist revolutionary elements in the developing nations can only be viewed with suspicion by the C.C.P. leadership because of their experience with Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek, and the KMT.

Stress has also been placed on the relations between the Chinese Empire and the Tsarist government. While the

connection between these relations and the current state of the Sino-Soviet alliance is not nearly as direct as the relationship between the C.P.S.U. and the C.C.P., in almost every case the Chinese government suffered diplomatic reverses and humiliation at the hands of the Tsar's representatives. China's territorial integrity was repeatedly violated and her sovereign conduct of domestic affairs was often impaired. The current Chinese leadership is intensively nationalistic and must remember these defeats suffered at the hands of her estranged ally. For example, visible manifestations of Chinese discontent with the boundaries forced on their predecessors can be seen in the Sinkiang area and in the quarrels over the new Mongolian nation.

While these factors are not the prime causes of the Sino-Soviet split, it is doubtful that any one cause could be singled out as decisive. The historical factor does play its part, yet it must be combined with all the areas of disagreement between the two nations in order to form a complete picture.

In essence, the national interests of China and the Soviet Union are in conflict. National interests are the general long-term purposes which the state, the nation, and the government see themselves as serving. These interests

are rooted in the culture and social consciousness of the nation and are formalized by the policy makers. They serve to put a state's relations with the outside world in perspective and to give policy a general orientation.[26]

National interest and nationalism have proved themselves to be more potent than internationalism. The Sino-Soviet split might exist even if the past were different, but the bitter memories and hostile feelings generated by the past relationship between the C.P.S.U. and the C.C.P. are real and can only tend to poison the atmosphere in which the current debate over policy and ideology takes place.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]Brandt, op. cit., p. 79.

[2]North, op. cit., p. 108.

[3]Schwartz, op. cit., p. 63.

[4]North, op. cit., p. 112.

[5]Edgar Snow, Red Star over China (New York: The Grove Press, 1961), p. 123.

[6]Stuart R. Schram, "Mao Tse-tung and Secret Societies," The China Quarterly, No. 27 (July-September, 1966), p. 3.

[7]Mao Tse-tung, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

[8]Ibid., p. 40.

[9]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 78.

[10]Snow, op. cit., pp. 166-169.

[11]Schwartz, op. cit., p. 5.

[12]Ibid., p. 105.

[13]Ibid., p. 106.

[14]North, op. cit., p. 120.

[15]Ibid., p. 121.

[16]Brandt, Fairbank, and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 179.

[17]Ibid., p. 180.

[18]Ibid., pp. 184-195.

[19]Ibid., p. 181.

[20]North, op. cit., pp. 141-142.

[21]Ibid., pp. 142-144.

[22]Ibid., p. 146.

[23]John K. Fairbank, The United States and China (New York: The Viking Press, 1962), pp. 234-236.

[24]Robert C. North, "The Sino-Soviet Alliance," The China Quarterly, No. 1 (January-March, 1960), p. 53.

[25]Zagoria, op. cit., p. 13.

[26]Charles O. Lerche and Abdul A. Said, Concepts of International Politics (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1963), pp. 6-7.

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