

# China Policy Study Group

# BROADSHEET

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## SUITING ACTION TO WORDS

The days are past when it was fashionable to mock the Chinese for the ineffectiveness of their foreign policy and the choice of foreign notabilities to be received in Peking. This is another thing that sticks in the throat of China experts today, when political leaders of all countries hope for and take turns to accept invitations there. It is conceded that Chinese eyes were on underlying realities at a time when others were being misled by superficial appearances. But this conclusion does not go deep enough. Recent visits by foreign politicians to China are really signposts pointing to the main current issues of world politics. In relation to the Heath visit this fact escaped no one. Insofar as China and Britain are agreed in seeing a united Western Europe as a desirable counterpoise to super-power influence in the area, the ex-Prime Minister was the appropriate figurehead to signalise a common interest. When Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-Ping's speech of welcome placed equal emphasis on the need for West European countries 'strengthening their own independence and sovereignty', however, he was underlining the danger of their slipping into a position of dependence on other powers. Mr. Heath was never conspicuous for resisting this. Nor are any of Britain's other parliamentary leaders.

China's thesis that countries desire independence should strike an answering chord in the British people, as it does in the Third World. Nearer China's own borders a second factor operates simultaneously: the aspiration of formerly suppressed nations for liberation. Support for national liberation is handicapped without unequivocal recognition of nationality and the rejection of all qualification in the shape of dual nationality or similar compromise. The joint communiqué issued at the end of Malaysian Prime Minister Razak's visit to Peking—immediately following that of Mr Heath—was categorical in this respect.

The Government of the People's Republic of China takes note of the fact that Malaysia is a multi-racial country with peoples of Malay, Chinese and other ethnic origins. Both the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of Malaysia declare that they do not recognise dual nationality. Proceeding from this principle, the Chinese Government considers anyone of Chinese origin who has taken up of his own will or acquired Malaysian nationality as automatically forfeited Chinese nationality. As for those residents who retain Chinese nationality of their own will, the Chinese Government . . . will enjoin them to abide by the law of the Government of Malaysia, respect the customs and habits of the people there and live in amity with them.

The establishment of full diplomatic relations between China and Malaysia on an unambiguous basis will be seen as a striking example of the equal terms on which China has dealt and will deal with other Third World countries. Diplomatic relations, however cordial, imply no diminution of her political support for those independently engaged in revolutionary struggle in Malaysia, as they have already recognised. The Chinese are, in fact, leaving no one in doubt about their attitude to struggles taking place in other lands.

In the same week as Heath and Razak arrived in Peking Premier Chou En-lai and many of his most senior colleagues met Khieu Samphan, leader of the forces fighting against the Lon Nol régime in Cambodia, and concluded an agreement on the free supply of military equipment and ammunition during the remainder of 1974 ('the arms,' commented the Hong Kong press ruefully, 'that the Khmer Rouge so desperately needs.') This confirms the same direct aid by China to the revolutionary forces in Cambodia as was seen in the series of agreements last year with the People's Revolutionary Government in the liberated areas of South Vietnam.

## THIRD WORLD LEADING

The special April session of the United Nations General Assembly, on the problems of raw materials and development, was of exceptional importance. Suggested by President Boumediene of Algeria, it was sponsored by the Group of 77 nations and eventually received the support of the great majority of the nations of the world. Only the superpowers and other imperialists would have preferred to do without it.

China marked the importance of the occasion by sending as chief delegate Teng Hsiao-ping, member of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party and Vice-Premier of the State Council. The United Nations is a world forum and reports of its proceedings are read by millions. This session was epoch-making because the developing countries were united in their deter-

mination to bring about a complete change in the international economic order, to cast off imperialist fetters and to create the conditions essential for the independent development of their economies.

Teng Hsiao-ping's speech, on 10th April, was a thoroughgoing analysis of the world situation, made from the point of view of the Third World. It was only a part, but a most important part, of the Chinese world analysis, which develops out of that of Marx, Engels and Lenin, carrying it a stage further in the light of contemporary conditions. This analysis sums up the experience of a great revolutionary Party during more than 50 years of struggle and is therefore of assistance in the present-day struggle against imperialism, of which the battle for development and the con-

trol of one's own resources is an essential part.

'At present', Teng Hsiao-ping said, 'the international situation is most favourable to the developing countries and the peoples of the world. More and more, the old order . . . is being undermined and shaken to its foundations. International relations are changing drastically. The whole world is in turbulence and unrest. . . all the political forces of the world have undergone drastic division and realignment through prolonged trials of strength and struggle.'

Since World War II, he continued, three important changes have occurred. First, many Asian, African and Latin-American countries have achieved independence and are playing an ever

greater role in world affairs. Second, the socialist camp which existed for a time has ceased to exist. Third, the western imperialist bloc is disintegrating. Consequently, the world today consists of 'three parts, or three worlds, that are both interconnected and in contradiction to one another. The United States and the Soviet Union make up the First World. The developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other regions make up the Third World. The developed countries between the two make up the Second World'.

This is an important formulation which, in our view, should not be seen as revising earlier statements (as at the 9th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party) about the four main contradictions in the world. In fact, it harks back to Mao Tse-tung's interview with Anna Louise Strong in 1946, when he said that the U.S. would not be able to attack the Soviet Union (then heading the socialist camp), until they had subjugated the 'vast zone' separating them. The present formulation makes it clear that the separation referred to was a political, not a geographical, concept.

Analysing the balance of forces in the world today Vice-Premier Teng pointed out that the 'really powerful are the Third World and the people of all countries uniting together and daring to fight and daring to win'.

To change the existing form of international economic relations demands persistent struggle against superpower penetration and plunder. Though developing countries may have won political independence they are not yet free of economic dependence on the superpowers. Imperialism uses neo-colonialist methods, exports capital and uses international monopolies for economic plunder and political interference, and takes advantage of its dominant position in international markets to raise the prices of its own products and force down those of raw materials. The Arab countries, using oil as a weapon, 'did well, and rightly too. This was a pioneering action taken by developing countries in their fight against imperialism'.

### Irreconcilable contradiction

The two superpowers are contending for world domination and the contradiction between them is irreconcilable. 'Their compromise and collusion can only be partial, temporary and relative, while their contention is all-embracing, permanent and absolute. In the final analysis the so-called "balanced reduction of forces" and "strategic arms limitation" are nothing but empty talk . . . They may reach certain agreements, but their agreements are only a facade and a deception . . . So long as imperialism and social-imperialism exist, there definitely will be no tranquillity in the world, nor will there be "lasting peace". Either they will fight each other, or the people will rise in revolution.'

From this analysis it follows that the Second and Third Worlds should unite if they wish to oppose the superpowers and win or maintain real independence. In this alliance the revolutionary countries of the Third World must lead. Ultimately, the only hope for the revolutionary forces of the Second World lies in opposing imperialism and capitalism and allying themselves with the Third World.

The new international economic relations desired by the Third World demand persistent opposition to superpower penetration and plunder. Though developing countries may have won political independence they are not yet free economically. They are still exploited and controlled by the superpowers. U.S. imperialism uses neo-colonialist methods and 'trans-national corporations' for economic penetration and political interference. The Soviet Union, applying its theory of limited sovereignty to the economic field, makes great play with the 'international division of labour', the theoretical cloak for its policy of exploitation.

To achieve independence and sovereignty the developing countries must take control of their own resources and protect their own rights. In so doing they must rely on their own

efforts, follow a policy of self-reliance and at the same time supplement their strength by cooperation with other developing countries.

By self-reliance, Teng Hsiao-ping said, 'we mean that a country should rely mainly on the strength and wisdom of its own people, control its own economic lifelines, make full use of its own resources, strive hard to increase food production and develop its national economy step by step and in a planned way.' In different countries such a programme will be worked out in different ways. 'In many countries the production of raw materials accounts for a considerable proportion of the national economy. If they can take in their own hands the production, use, sale, storage and transport of raw materials and sell them at reasonable prices on the basis of equitable trade relations in exchange for a greater amount of goods needed for the growth of their industrial and agricultural production, they will then be able to resolve step by step the difficulties they are facing and pave the way for an early emergence from poverty and backwardness.'

### No self-seclusion

Self-reliance, however, does not mean self-seclusion. Much is to be gained, the Vice-Premier suggested, from economic and technical exchanges based on respect for sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit, and the exchange of goods to make up for each other's deficiencies. The only really effective aid, one might perhaps say, is from one developing country to another.

An important lesson that developing countries can find in Teng Hsiao-ping's speech is that today the third world *can* take control of its own development and can defeat imperialism and the superpowers and open the way to a future of peace and progress. China's ideas have long been known, but many were dubious of their validity. Now their truth is being shown in practice: a small nation can defeat a big one, self-reliance is possible and rewarding, unity brings victory.

China is both a socialist country and a developing one; she remains totally opposed to the imperialist policies of domination, subversion, exploitation and plunder. Her support and sympathy are entirely with the efforts of the rest of the third world to set their feet firmly on the path of development, and with all those countries subjected to superpower bullying, 'as well as with the people of the whole world, including the people of the United States and the Soviet Union.'

The present campaign to criticise Confucius and Lin Piao is intended both to prevent capitalist restoration and to ensure that Socialist China will always stand by the oppressed. 'If one day China should change her colour and turn into a superpower, if she too should play the tyrant in the world, and everywhere subject others to her bullying, aggression and exploitation, the people of the world should identify this as social-imperialism, expose it, oppose it and work together with the Chinese people to overthrow it.' The campaigns to study the Marxist-Leninist classics, including Lenin's *Imperialism*, have given the Chinese people in their millions an understanding of the theoretical bases of the policy which Teng Hsiao-ping put forward.

We in the Second World can see that it is here, above all, that the necessary lessons have not yet been learned. Governments are not yet convinced of the need for unity to oppose the superpowers and the peoples are not yet convinced of the need for revolution. Among organisations styling themselves Marxist-Leninist, sectarianism is rife and they seem to put last the need to 'unite with all who can be united'. Hair-splitting discussion, gossip and intrigue, staying on the sidelines, every manifestation of liberalism as defined by Mao Tse-tung, must be done away with. Participation in the struggle is the key; once struggle is begun it will be found that experience, backed by Marxist-Leninist theory, is the best teacher.

'History develops in struggle, and the world advances amidst turbulence.'

# GRASSROOTS ORGANS OF POWER

The drastic overhaul of political, governmental, and mass organisations during the earlier years of the Cultural Revolution has often been described (see, for example, BROADSHEET, June 1971, December 1973, January 1974), as well as the class struggles which underlie all changes (see BROADSHEET, November 1973 for the 'Ten Major Struggles'). In the years since the emergence during the Cultural Revolution of the Revolutionary Committees, the various organisations at all levels have become more clearly defined in make-up, role, and mutual relationships. Now one can see a picture of orderly diversity where basic functions are the same but details vary according to the specific conditions and requirements of the locality or the enterprise. A complete analysis of the people's organs of power in socialist China would be an extremely complex and extensive undertaking. Here we deal with only a small section of the whole structure and examples have been chosen to indicate how basic organs of power function in industrial enterprises.

The changes engendered by the Cultural Revolution have necessarily taken several years to work themselves out. Now one can say that Revolutionary Committees are the administrative bodies and people's organisations such as the trade unions, women's associations and committees, peasants' associations, and Red Guards are the mass organisations through which all participate in life and work. These mass organisations, some of which were disbanded or in abeyance in the earlier years of the Cultural Revolution, are now in full activity stimulated by the political consciousness deepened in the 60's and in the current campaign to criticise Confucius and Lin Piao. The people's militia, responsible for security, is under the control of one or other of the administrative or mass organisations, perhaps the trade union in a factory, perhaps a brigade Revolutionary Committee on a commune. The Communist Party, with its local committees, is in overall control, with specific responsibilities for political guidance and ideological education. At the same time it comes under the scrutiny of the masses through their various organisations.

## Revolutionary Committees

Revolutionary Committees are elected by the workers and staff of factories or enterprises, and are responsible to them for production planning and carrying out plans in accordance with allocations under the state plan. They are essentially administrative bodies, but with the obligation to consult the workers for suggestions and criticisms and to report to them. Their composition varies but the basic principle of balanced membership is general, with age-groups of young, middle-aged and old workers. At the same time there must be a balance of other categories. For example, the Revolutionary Committee of a textile factory in Hsinhsiang, Hunan Province, has 28 members including cadres, workers and militia, four being women.

At a small factory of 320 workers in the Western District of Peking, which started as a small neighbourhood workshop organised by housewives and now makes sophisticated transistor equipment, the Committee of nine includes the age-group balance and has three cadres, representatives of the militia and workers elected through their trade union. Six of the nine are women. At a leading hospital in Tsinan, Shantung Province, the 25-member Revolutionary Committee, including five women, is mostly middle-aged but also includes old and young, with representation of doctors, nurses, technicians, workers and administration. At the Shanghai No. 2 Iron and Steel Works, the Revolutionary Committee of thirty members has representatives of cadres, technicians, and workers in diff-

erent workshops. These are but four random examples. Membership and work necessarily varies according to the nature and requirements of the enterprise but the basic organisational and political principles are the same. In all cases the responsibility of Revolutionary Committees to act as organs of the proletarian ruling class is evidenced by their practice of consulting and reporting, and equally by the vigilance of the mass organisations. Everywhere big character posters are to be seen.

Among the mass organisations in industry the trade unions now play a leading role. Virtually non-existent during the earlier years of the Cultural Revolution they have been reinvigorated (see BROADSHEET, June 1971), and are now actively engaged in the class struggle, stimulated by the anti-Confucius, anti-Lin Piao campaign. Whereas before 1966 comparatively few workers studied and the main concentration was on material matters, there is now regular and concentrated study of the Marxist classics. Reports from factory after factory show how morale has been raised, how sharpened political consciousness has led workers to involve themselves directly in the struggle to increase production, to experiment and to bring about improvements in methods and equipment.

A leading member of the trade union, also a member of the Revolutionary Committee, at Shanghai Harbour reported that before the Cultural Revolution the administrative authorities held that production was the main task and to stimulate it economism prevailed. Wage gradings were solely for work done; bonuses and special awards created jealousies among the workers and their wives; special privileges were granted. During the Cultural Revolution the workers took control, with the help of workers from local factories and Red Guards. Now the trade union organises political study and supervises the carrying out of work as well as the payment of wages. Wage gradings are according to work done and political attitude as assessed by fellow workers at trade union meetings. Before, drivers received special payments for saving petrol, a good thing to do but perhaps done for wrong motives. Now, with heightened political consciousness, more petrol is saved without bonus.

The trade unions are responsible for the training of technicians and cadres from their ranks and generally for the two-line struggle against bureaucracy and other anti-socialist tendencies within their enterprise. At the Shanghai docks stress is laid on the need to strengthen proletarian internationalism, and the study of foreign languages is regarded as important. At the same time the trade unions have many other responsibilities, security against sabotage, self-reliance and economy, safety at work and the welfare of workers and their families. It is also the trade unions which organise cultural and sports activities of the workers. In other words, their functions cover the ideological, cultural, and material aspects of the lives of the workers concerned.

## Womens' role

Through the women's committees and associations tremendous steps have been taken to encourage and enable women to take a bigger part in production and political and social life, but it is noticeable that generally women are still in the minority on leading bodies and are only gradually taking on jobs formerly done solely by men. The changes are part of the whole process of transforming the ideology of both men and women, a slow and arduous advance but one which is definitely moving forward. One of the elements of Confucian thinking now under most severe criticism is his classification, approved it seems by Lin Piao, of women as inferior beings. The present

regarded as transitional and the present position one to be transformed.

The question has been raised as to the role of the Communist Party in a society where the masses are the owners of the means of production, whether in the form of collective ownership (communes) or ownership by the whole people (state industry), and when the masses participate so fully in the running of production and administration. The overall control and guidance of the Party is accepted as essential, except by the 'handful' who doubtless still remain and who have to be educated or exposed as enemies. This control and guidance is essential in the continuous two-line struggle which goes on everywhere. This struggle appears in the argument whether it is better to buy ships from abroad or to build them; whether to depend on a state loan for industrial expansion or to improvise; whether to rely on the workers in a factory to do a new and difficult task or to wait for help from experts. The Party would stress self-reliance.

The present campaign continues the task of educating Party members to lead while rectifying any tendency to elitism, and is simultaneously a programme of education which will enable the masses to supervise the Party. Since the purification of the Cultural Revolution the people have deep confidence in the Party. It is not an organisation above and apart from them. Party

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## BOOK REVIEW

**China's Socialist Revolution** by John and Elsie Collier. Stage I, London, 1973. Paperback 70p; hardback £3.30.

The focus of this account is on the early years of the Cultural Revolution, 1966-68, when the writers taught English in China and observed the acute struggles of those years. They also worked for short periods on a commune and in a factory. Because they were most of the time in Canton at Sun Yat-sen University (Zhongda), where there were sharp conflicts amongst militant groups and confrontations with leading personalities, they are able to report events in considerable detail. These details may seem disproportionate in a short history of China's socialist revolution, but they demonstrate vividly the living reality of the 'struggle between two lines' and against 'those in authority taking the capitalist road'. The book demonstrates how sectarianism and ultra-leftism in Zhongda confused contradictions amongst the people with those with the real class enemy. It also illustrates the role of workers, the P.L.A. and the Party leadership in helping to resolve inter-group conflicts. Meaning is thus given to the principle that 'the working class must exercise leadership in everything', including the field of education; and it is demonstrated that without proletarian unity socialism cannot be consolidated and advanced.

This reportage of observed events is made in the context of the developing socialist revolution. The opening chapters analyse the contradictions and struggles which marked the stages from 1949 onwards, leading to the Cultural Revolution and including contradictions within the Communist Party itself, where there were often differing views on the correct way forward. For example, the writers say that in 1956:

China was faced with two alternatives: either it could adhere to the Soviet pattern, that is, concentrate the energies of the people and the leadership of the Party exclusively on increasing production . . . without substantially altering the structure of society; or it could recognise that if socialist development were to stop at the stage reached, social stagnation would rapidly be transformed into social polarisation and finally into counter-revolutionary action.

It was in 1956 especially that the cooperative movement in the countryside was surging forward, only two years before the beginning of the communes. Liu Shao-chi and others like him sought to hold the movement back, stressing the family unit

members are ordinary workers and peasants who have become members only after their applications to become candidates have been discussed and approved by their workmates, on the basis of their political understanding and correct socialist attitude to work and people. Many of these ordinary workers have been elected by their workmates in the mass organisations to leading committees. They are at the same time active trade unionists and Party members who have earned the respect and affection of their colleagues. Only if it has the confidence of the people can the Party exercise leadership.

At enterprise level the Party Committee is basically responsible for guidance in the carrying out of national Party and state policy and plans. It is responsible for seeing that ideological education is carried out, although in many instances this is actually done within the mass organisations. The present campaign of criticism of Confucius and Lin Piao was initiated nationally by the Party, and it is the responsibility of local Party Committees to see that study and discussion are adequate.

Led by the Party Committees, the workers are now deeply involved within their own enterprises in continuing the struggle to eliminate ideas which could weaken their self-reliance and determination. The results of the campaign are widely evident in expanding production, many new inventions, and the growth of industry.

as the economic basis in opposition to those who advocated a strengthening of the collective.

The account of the contradictions and continuous struggles up to and through the beginning of the Cultural Revolution thus lays the basis for understanding the present. At the Tenth Party Congress reference to the 'Ten Great Struggles' illustrated the fact that class struggles with many twists and turns continue throughout the period of socialism. Today a further campaign is in progress to help people to grasp the meaning and see the dangers of the bourgeois ideas which still exist and which could undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat. Widespread and intensive study of the Marxist classics is arming the masses, providing positive guidelines; critical study of Confucian theory, which has for centuries influenced many, is helping to sharpen understanding of the reactionary significance of principles once thought virtuous. These studies are not mere academic exercises for cultural polish but help people combat reactionary ideas. The Colliers' book provides a theoretical background to the current campaign.

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