

China Policy Study Group

BROADSHEET

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A YEAR OF PEOPLE'S VICTORIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND CHINA

China established diplomatic relations with the Republic of the Philippines on June 9 this year, and with the Kingdom of Thailand on July 1, during the respective visits to China of Filipino President Markos and Thai Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj. It is appropriate to consider on this 26th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China these events in the context of the worldwide struggle against domination by imperialism.

The establishment of relations with China by these two countries is most significant in the period of the people's mounting struggle against oppression. With the great anti-fascist victory of World War II, the Japanese imperialists were compelled to withdraw from all the territory they had occupied in Asia. Turning the older colonial powers into its junior partners while also competing with them the United States attempted to rush in and seize the fruit of the people's victory. Especially since the foundation of the Chinese People's Republic, the U.S. pursued a policy in Southeast Asia which was actually hostile to China, while at the same time also using this hostility as an excuse to occupy countries in the area, plant military bases and exploit the working people. Under the signboard of support for democracy and anti-colonialism, the U.S. propped up a series of miserable regimes composed of a traitorous handful utterly divorced from the people.

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation established in 1954 could muster only two real Southeast Asian countries, Thailand and the Philippines (the other members were Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Britain, France, and the U.S.A.). Over two decades, a succession of reactionary regimes in these countries were all loyal servants of Washington, and especially in the Indochina war they aided their masters by supplying troops. Particularly significant were the military and naval facilities possessed by the U.S. in Thailand, which formed the core of its would-be genocidal war effort.

Unintended education

The leadership of these two countries were also among the most violent anti-China slogan-mongers. In fact such calumnies only discredited the cliques themselves and their American bosses, who always wish to keep the masses ignorant of politics and international affairs but in fact persistently educate them by negative example. In both countries there are active Communist Parties guided by a correct appraisal of concrete conditions, and the people are demanding friendship with China. These conditions form the basis of change, and the anti-popular anti-China diehards can't stay this way for long. As Mao Tse-tung has written:

Actually, the die-hards may be hard, but they are not hard unto death, and in the end they change—into something filthy and of no account, like dog's dung. Some change for the better and that is also the result of our repeated struggles against them—they come to see their mistakes and change for the better. In short, die-hards do change eventually.

Faced with the hostility of statesmen of small countries who are victims of imperialism, China has never taken an overbearing attitude. Contradictions between them there are bound to be, but China makes every effort to transfer the handling of such contradictions into the non-antagonistic mode, where they naturally belong. Without interfering in internal affairs, China welcomes every sign of development in this correct sense.

Years of victory

In recent years the people of many areas, including Southeast Asia, have set a shining example of what can be achieved in struggle for national independence. In the past year there have been the victories of the revolutionary forces in Cambodia, South Vietnam and Laos, and the less spectacular ones of the anti-imperialist forces in the Philippines and Thailand. Each victory weakens the imperialist enemy. China's own policy also helps to provide external conditions for a switch of policy in favour of national independence on the part of countries previously subservient to imperialism. Correctly assessing both the international essence and the national form of their socialist policy, the C.P.C. led by Mao Tse-tung has undertaken the great movement to criticise Lin Piao and Confucius which, among other things, provides a mighty critique of big-power chauvinism, ensures that China will not degenerate into a superpower and that the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat will remain a tool in the hands of the working class, for foreign policy purposes as well as internal political purposes. Were capitalism to be restored in China, she would soon undoubtedly make a bid for hegemony in the Southeast Asian area. Instead, China's policy is defined as the opposite of that of a superpower, and she is a leading force in combating hegemonism.

The victory of the Chinese revolution overcame the initial barrier to a friendly co-operative relationship between China's people and those of other countries. China's breakthrough on the diplomatic front in the past few years marks a further qualitative change in this process. It is a fact that only a handful of people in the countries of the Third World willingly accept and support neocolonialism. Imperialism with its record of bloody aggression against defenceless peoples, its occupying armies and bases, its denial of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Third World countries, its racism, and other such

features, is regarded as a good thing only by a few. More than 90 per cent of the people would want to see an end to it, and to the regimes which serve it locally. Their strength, however, could grow only as they could overcome the trivial divisions and the political confusions fostered by neocolonialism, learn to organise and discover leaders among themselves and find the will to bear the suffering and material losses involved in fighting imperialism.

Once undertaken, this struggle must be carried through to the end or else the people will find themselves subject to a new and more savage oppression. The peoples of many countries, including the Filipinos who defeated Spain only to be swept into the sphere of influence of the U.S.A., are accumulating valuable experience in this respect. During the recent visit of the Thai Prime Minister to Manila, the two leaders stated in their joint communiqué that S.E.A.T.O. would be abolished in two or three years.

The people can make and remake every feature of world politics and now demand to assert their own voice in opposition

to hegemonism. As for the ruling groups, however, they are certainly aware of the inability of U.S. imperialism to protect them any longer, but they cannot be relied upon to oppose hegemonism in general. The base for Marcos' dictatorship had become so narrow that he was in danger of just toppling over into destruction. Like the Thai ruling class, who prostituted their country and its people, using force and deception, for their own personal gain, the Filipino ruling class have been forced to retreat, in order to survive. In entering into diplomatic relations with China, they are only acknowledging the decline of U.S. imperialism, and trying to broaden the base for their own dictatorship. They may find it convenient and necessary to join a new counter-revolutionary alliance—such as that which the U.S.S.R. is peddling in the form of an Asian Helsinki accord. But of the fact that the peoples of the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore have grown stronger in relation to the comprador regimes that oppress them there can be no doubt. Chinese policies, free of ultra-left rhetoric as well as of big-power intrigues, have helped them.

CHINA'S REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION

2. Running the School with the Doors open

'The whole graduating class went out to sell fish in the local market last term,' said the headmaster. 'That was part of "running the school with the doors open." It was hard work, especially during the Spring Festival rush in February. It was cold, too, and their hands got badly chapped handling the frozen fish. But they learnt a lot. Some were afraid at first of being seen by their friends and relatives: "High school students doing such a menial job." We discussed this and the students came to realise that it showed they hadn't got rid of the intellectuals' contempt for shop assistants and service trades—a hangover from the old society, which conflicts with our principle that all work for socialism is equally honourable. After the students got straight on this they had to straighten out the parents' ideas. Some of the parents thought: "I wanted my kid to go to high school so that he'd qualify for university, not so that he'd sell fish." The market management felt that the job was hard for the youngsters, so on the eve of the Spring Festival they announced that the students would be allowed to buy fish for their families without queuing up like ordinary customers. This touched off a big debate among the students: "Why did we come to this market—to get privileges or to learn how to serve the people?" In the end every one of them turned down the offer. The management were glad to find out that they'd underestimated the students. They criticised themselves.

This story, told us by the principal of a high school in the suburbs of Peking gives some idea of the struggle going on in China today to revolutionise education along the lines pointed out by Mao Tse-tung. Running schools with the doors open, like most of Mao's principles, has a history of decades. In 1926-27, when there was a Communist-Kuomintang government in Wuhan, Mao was principal of the Revolutionary Peasant Movement Institute there. The Institute was in a factory district and industrial workers flocked in after hours to hear him lecture and to swap experiences in revolutionary organisation and struggle, with the peasant-students who came from all over China. The doors of the school opened outwards, too. These students, like those of today, not only got a general and political education; they did military training. The sports ground was used for drill; the armoury was as important as the library. When local reactionaries staged a counter-revolutionary uprising, the students, under Mao's leadership, put down their books, took up their guns and helped suppress it.

Though the roots of Mao Tse-tung's educational principles go far back, their implementation has always involved sharp two-line struggle. In the Yenan days of the '30s and '40s Mao's

line of integrating education with revolutionary struggle, with production and with serving the people, emerged victorious. But for nearly a decade after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949 it suffered setbacks. Liu Shao-chi and his followers, in the name of 'ending guerrilla work-style and regularising education' and 'learning from advanced Soviet experience' advocated training an intellectual elite of experts. This line closed the doors of the schools after driving the students inside to bury their noses in books. It cut them off from the labouring people.

In 1958, with the mass movements of the Great Leap Forward and the setting up of the people's communes, Mao Tse-tung issued his call that education must serve proletarian politics and be combined with productive labour. For a time his revolutionary lines in education prevailed. But not for long. In the early '60s Liu Shao-chi, attributing China's hardships (actually wrought largely by natural disasters and Soviet sabotage) to the Great Leap and the communes, tried to counter them with a set of policies which actually propelled China away from socialism towards capitalism. His line in education, serving his general objectives, was against mass movements and for the cultivation of an intellectual elite. Liu upheld the Confucian concept of 'studying to become an official'. He also advocated boarding schools where the children of senior officials and officers enjoyed privileged conditions. At the same time, by 'putting marks in command' of school entrance and promotion, he virtually excluded the children of workers and peasants from the universities.

To counteract this elitist trend, in 1963 Mao Tse-tung launched the Socialist Education Movement, which sent masses of students to the countryside for weeks at a stretch to strengthen their links with the labouring people and bring their education down to earth. This movement achieved something, despite being distorted by Liu Shao-chi. But its scope and depth were not enough to bring about a profound and lasting change in education, still less to stave off the danger of capitalist restoration. So the Cultural Revolution which, among other things, brought about Liu's fall, became essential.

But after Liu's fall in 1966, Lin Biao, whose driving force throughout life was personal ambition, carried elitism even further. While Liu had openly opposed Mao Tse-tung, Lin affected supreme loyalty to him—in order to take his place. But privately he undermined Mao's educational principles. Lin maintained that students' participation in physical labour, which Mao stressed in order to prevent elitism, bureaucracy

and revisionism, was 'punishment' or 'disguised unemployment'.

Now, four years after Lin Piao's death, the majority of China's university students are workers, peasants and soldiers and a powerful struggle is being waged, inspired by Mao Tse-tung, to ensure that leadership of the ongoing revolution in education is entrusted to the working class and that the peasants shall re-educate the youth.

In one school the Chinese composition course was moved out of the classroom into a nearby commune. One student, captivated by his first taste of rural life, composed a poem about the cosy glow of the fires in the peasants' homes at dawn, with smoke curling aloft and lingering lazily in the air as fragrant odours arose from the breakfast cooking in the pots. He proudly read it to some commune members. 'You don't know the simplest things about our lives', they said, 'so your writing doesn't reflect our feelings. We peasants are hard-working, plain-living people. We have a quick bite to eat in the morning—mostly leftovers—and we're off to work in the fields. Our big meal is in the evening, when we have got time to enjoy it. To write well, you must learn about the life of the working people, use their words, express their feelings.' The student took the lesson to heart. Later he wrote a piece called *The New Bride*, about a young woman who broke with the tradition of having an elaborate wedding, with gifts and a feast. This composition was praised by his former critics.

Another class went to a village which had been burnt to the ground by the Japanese invaders in the '40s. One of the few survivors was the old village Party Secretary. He longed to write the history of his village but he was almost illiterate. So he called on the students to write it for him, while he provided the facts. He proved to be an exacting critic and the students had to write and re-write the history five times—not because their use of language was faulty or the facts were not straight, but because their writing lacked the class feeling he demanded. Some students had been lukewarm about composition-writing before this. But they were so moved by the old man's spirit and his story of the villagers' suffering and heroism that now they felt they must master it so as to do justice to their subject; otherwise they would betray those who had given their lives for their country. Thus the problem of motivation was solved.

DAVID CROOK

(to be concluded.)

CHINA AND ALBANIA A Model of Proletarian Internationalism

In October 1959, when a serious earthquake and widespread floods in Albania, following one of the worst droughts in the country's history, so depleted the grain reserves that the people were faced with an acute bread shortage, the Soviet Union, with a surplus of grain which they were trying to sell to other countries, refused to sell any grain at all to Albania. China was able to divert to Albania supplies of grain which carried them through this bad period. That one incident contains implicitly the relations of these three countries at a crucial stage in the development of the world communist movement.

Ironically enough, in May of that same year, Khrushchev on a visit to Tirana had urged the Albanians to give up the idea of making themselves self-sufficient in grain: 'The Soviet Union has such an abundance of grain that the mice eat more than you can produce here.' He also advised them not to develop their own industry: 'Turn your little country into a flourishing garden'—a nice holiday spot for Soviet tourists! The Albanian people who had liberated themselves from Italian and German invading armies by their own unaided efforts had no intention

of prostituting their popular sovereignty to any other power, whatever it called itself.

Albania, like China, was subjected to unilateral action by the Soviet Union: breaking all trading agreements and other contractual arrangements entered into when the Soviet Union was still a socialist country. Factories were left uncompleted and the blueprints destroyed to make it as difficult as possible for the Albanians to carry on these projects on their own. But in many cases, as for example the magnificent Cultural Palace in Tirana, the enterprises were continued on a more impressive scale than had been envisaged in the joint plan.

Such achievements are the fruit of the efforts of the Albanian working class, under the leadership of the Party of Labour of Albania. Any assistance that China has given (and it has been great) is part of the socialist cooperation between the two countries, in which each helps the other. It is with perfect sincerity and truth that the Chinese say that Albania's successes are of assistance to them too.

In Albania one can see many examples of the fraternal fruit of the great effort by the workers of China—the huge hydro-electric plants on the Drin River, the chemical works for making fertiliser and a tractor spare parts factory at Tirana, the fully-automated Mao Tse-tung textile factory at Berat. The spirit of this assistance from one socialist people to another is shown by a remark made by a Chinese worker at a textile factory in Shanghai when it was pointed out that the machines in use there were not nearly so good as those supplied to Albania: 'Nothing is too good for our friends.'

All the assistance China has made available to Albania is within the context of mutually-beneficial trading agreements. It is not a gift; neither is it paid for by a heavy interest-bearing loan. Furthermore, what China makes available and what Albania wishes to receive is always designed to make the Albanian economy more, not less, independent. In this respect it is totally different from the 'aid' from imperialist countries like the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. which economically enslaves the recipients and makes them perpetual clients of imperialism. Schemes like the Colombo Plan long ago sank under excessive interest charges and the Alliance for Progress cost the people of Latin America so much that they had to ask the U.S. to switch their 'help' to someone who could afford it.

The character of these exchanges is well exemplified in the personal relations between Albanians and the Chinese technicians who come to Albania to help install advanced equipment, stay to train Albanian workers in its use and then return to China, having made many friends during their visit. One Chinese worker who was killed while helping to set up a communications aerial on the top of Mount Dajti is a hero of labour to the Albanian people. The Albanians cannot but contrast the modest demeanour, the consideration for the way Albanians do things themselves and the simple living requirements of these fraternal guests with the Soviet experts just before the break with the U.S.S.R., who were arrogant, demanded luxurious accommodation and expected to be paid twice as much as the head of the Albanian state.

A country as small as Albania could not aim at setting up a wholly independent economy with all branches of machine-making and heavy industry developed to the point where every possible need could be met. Self-reliance does not mean self-sufficiency. As Mehmet Shehu has said: 'Abiding by the principle of self-reliance does not mean that we should lock ourselves inside our national hull . . . we should make a correct appraisal and grasp the positive experience of others and profit from the international aid of our real friends for building socialism in our country.' Valuable as this genuine assistance from China has been, covering a trading area of, perhaps, some ten percent of the overall economy, the real basis on which Albania has achieved the highest growth rate of any country in Europe, if not in the world, is the planned deployment of its own forces of production.

THE ECONOMICS OF BROADSHEET

Inflation makes a further increase in our subscription rates unavoidable next year. This is something forced on us by the society in which we live and we must try to minimise the harm it does to us and our cause. We have given a good deal of thought to finding the best course and we want to give our readers some details of the considerations we had in mind.

In the figures that follow we exclude entirely those relating to the publication of our paperback books. Profits from them naturally diminish as time goes on because sales gradually slow down. Moreover we have to keep a fairly substantial reserve to pay the printers when a reprint is needed (we are at present reprinting *From Marx to Mao Tse-tung*). As will be seen, however, these books make a substantial contribution to BROADSHEET.

Our costs

The main items of expenditure are the printing and postage of this journal. During the 12 months from August 1974 to August 1975 printing accounted for 64.5 per cent of our spending, postage for 26.9 per cent and other expenses (office supplies, general correspondence, sending out invoices, fares, etc.) for only 8.6 per cent. The production of a journal like BROADSHEET can never be an 'economic proposition', but we have been able to keep going in a self-reliant way because our office is run very cheaply, many subscribers send donations and we make a profit from other publications.

Last year subscriptions paid for 77 per cent of our expenditure and donations for 7.4 per cent. The remaining 15.6 per cent was a deficit, made good from profits on our books. We drew rather heavily on our reserves.

The last 12 months have seen big increases in both printing and postage costs and in this respect the figures for expenditure mentioned above underestimate the seriousness of the position. They are the result of a year's working, but in fact our expenses at the end of that period were running much higher than at the beginning. So even if there were no more increases, next year's figures would be worse.

We have no alternative but to increase our rates for next year, but we propose to make the increases *selectively*. We think this is an important and correct innovation.

We know that many readers in Britain, the U.S. and other parts of the 'developed' world will regret the increases. But we also know—our correspondence tells us almost every day—that in the Third World there are friends who are far worse off and who would find it absolutely impossible to pay. Yet it is above all in the Third World that information about China's experience and achievements is needed. We believe that subscribers in the U.S. and the Second World will be willing, as they have shown themselves to be in the past, to help us to provide this information. We have therefore decided *not to increase at all* our rates for South America, Africa and the countries of Southern Asia, at present accounting for about one sixth of our total circulation. From January 1st we propose increases for other countries to the figures shown in the table below.

Readers' support needed

We are confident our readers will support these proposals. We cannot produce the paper much more cheaply; omission of the colour on our cover will save something like 10 per cent of our printing costs and we propose to do this from the beginning of next year. Our overhead costs are extraordinarily low and cannot be reduced.

We must still rely on donations from those readers who can afford to make them. We must continue to send free copies to some who cannot afford any payment at all and we want to make a drive for increased circulation. It is vital that we increase our readership in all parts of the world, for which increased donations would help us greatly.

In our very first issue (January 1964) we said that we aimed to summarise Chinese views and to publish reports on aspects of Chinese social, economic and political developments. Many parts of the world are at present being systematically deprived of such news and BROADSHEET is a main source of information for friends there. To help in its dissemination is to play a part (even if only a small one) in the crucial struggles now taking place throughout the world. Chinese experience is not to be copied blindly but it is an essential part of the experience of the world revolutionary movement and we seek to point some of its lessons.

We look forward to having the views of our readers on our proposals, to continued comment on our articles and to suggestions for topics with which we should deal. Ideas about ways to increase our circulation will be of particular value in the circulation campaign we plan for the coming months. We know we can rely on such help.

THE CHINA POLICY STUDY GROUP

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New Zealand	open — £2.85
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There are no airmail rates to Europe.

CORRECTIONS

We must apologise for some errors in our last issue:

In the article *Proletarian Dictatorship Unites Nationalities*, in the statement that '... tens of thousands of workers, peasants, tradesmen and cadres are active Party workers', the word 'tradesmen' should have been 'tribesmen'.

In the article *Forgetting the ABC of Marxism*, capitalist-readers were twice referred to as 'capitalist readers'. We think it unlikely that many subscribers in the U.S. or the Second World will have taken this phrase as applying to themselves!

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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