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AN OUTLOOK CHINA IN THE 1980s-1981

10 AN OUTLOOK ON CHINA IN THE 1980s A Political Turnabout at Home and Improvement of Relations with the USSR

Mineo Nakajima

Experienced observers of the Sino-Soviet conflict cannot agree among themselves over the future of the relationship and the possible implications for defense strategies of the United States and Japan. Professor Mineo Nakajima, an expert on modern China at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, believes that China will continue on its current course toward the Four Modernizations under rational economic leadership, but he is not convinced that the intense Sino-Soviet rivalry will continue. In fact, he ventures a prediction that the two huge Asian nations may draw closer together at the party or government level some time in the mid- or late 1980s and cautions that Japan should adopt a "diplomatic strategy flexible enough to withstand possible changes in Sino-Soviet relations."

CHINA'S TURNABOUT AND THE CONTRADICTIONS INVOLVED

Any attempt at the difficult task of making predictions about China in the 1980s should begin with a correct analysis and understanding of the country's situation today. The People's Republic of China, which celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 1979, is now undergoing a tremendous change. Representing an unprecedented turn away from its foundation on the ideology of Mao Tse-tung thought; this

change involves many contradictions as well as favorable possibilities for the future. China today is facing a struggle between its past and present.

I visited China in June of 1979, my third visit to that country. The first was in the fall of 1966, when, just after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards were running rampant. The second was in early 1975, during the "Anti-Lin Biao, Anti-Confucius" movement, when I traveled by myself from Moscow through Ulan Bator to Peking—crossing the tension-ridden Sino-Soviet border and entering Peking from the West. On my last visit I saw the country after the fall of the Gang of Four. As an observer who had been watching the turbulent situation in China for more than a dozen years, I saw with real amazement the vast change taking place in Chinese society.

In the first place, as I had expected, Maoism was fast becoming a discarded theory, although it was still upheld officially. Unlike the late Premier Chou En-lai, Mao himself was now only nominally adored by the people, and the nation was finally coming to form a tacit consensus that Mao was a modern "Qin Emperor." This tendency was reflected in the fact that the Fifth National People's Congress at its Second Session gave top priority to democratization of institutions and codification of laws, as well as to the coordination of the "Four Modernizations" program, and declared that no leader is great enough to be above the law. It is noteworthy that the leader of this codification movement was Peng Zhen, who used to be the municipal leader of Peking and was an important target of the Cultural Revolution. In short, all this change was based on the serious conclusion that Chinese society cannot enjoy stability or growth unless socialist construction in China is upgraded from the level of "popular struggles" and institutionalized in the framework of national democratization. Thus, China is trying to institutionalize de-Maoization.

The Cultural Revolution is now being totally repudiated, and it is evident that today the term stands for everything evil. In fact, everything that was overthrown by the Cultural Revolution is being restored and turned around. It is important to note that China today is not only repudiating the Cultural Revolution but rehabilitating practically everyone victimized by Maoism since the mid-1950s. Economic leaders of the early 1950s like Bo Yibo and Bi Muqiao are now coming back as popular figures; and Ding Ling, the famous

woman novelist who went down after being branded as an "anti-party writer" in the antirightist movement of 1957, has once again appeared in good condition in a photo in *The People's Daily*. China is beginning to review and even disapprove of the process it has been through since the radical collectivization of farms in the late 1950s. Since the process was led by Mao, it is clear that China is turning against Mao's socialist construction policy.

Second, in considering what China is going to be in the 1980s, it is important to note that its "Four Modernizations" program (for modernizing agriculture, industry, national defense, and technology) involves contradictions. The program underwent substantial amendments (which actually meant reduced goals) in the form of "coordination, reorganization, streamlining, and upgrading" at the last session of the National People's Congress. It had initially been proposed by the realist group led by Chou En-lai and Teng Hsiao-p'ing as a political tool for de-Maoization during Mao's reign. This was not the kind of practical, concrete economic program for quick growth of the Chinese economy that Japanese big business hoped to find in China after the recent rapprochement between the two countries.

Since the Third Plenum of the Eleventh CCP Central Committee, at which Chairman Hua Guofeng and other leaders of the Cultural Revolution right wing criticized themselves, and Vice-Chairman Chen Yun and other old economic leaders were reinstated in important positions, the Four Modernizations program has finally been established as a universal national cause and can no longer remain a political struggle slogan. It is a national program that must be implemented strenuously. Teng Hsiao-p'ing himself—the chief promoter of the policy—seems to have stressed at the Third Plenum of the Central Committee that the Four Modernizations program should not be treated merely as a rosy vision but should be translated into a feasible form.

One problem with this program is that it requires an immense amount of capital (estimated at US\$600 billion for the original version of the program), while China's foreign exchange reserves total less than \$3 billion. How to raise the needed capital is not the only problem. Having gone through political and social confusion for more than a dozen years, China is still without social systems for effectively controlling the economy—that is, its infrastructure is quite underdeveloped. Improvement of such economic circumstances cannot be done in a day.

Moreover, if the Four Modernizations mean rationalization of operations and mechanization of production in various sectors of the economy, the program will save labor, of which China has plenty. Thus, how to absorb and reassign the nation's vast surplus labor will be a big problem. Both the leadership in Peking and field executives at plants and people's communes are aware of this contradiction inherent in the modernization program.

Some estimate that China's population is already in excess of one billion. The government is hoping to reduce the natural population growth rate from the present 1.2 percent to 0.5 percent by 1985 and to achieve zero growth in population by the end of the century. But this ambitious population control goal seems very difficult to reach. Moreover, Peking's current stoic policy of enforcing stringent birth control and encouraging late marriage will be increasingly hard to maintain in the new "open China," although it has been practicable in the old "closed China." Some people in Chinese society are already beginning to argue that this unusual policy represents an oppression of human rights.

The third social problem in China today concerns the backwash of the Cultural Revolution and the new social pathological symptoms created by the process of change to an "open China." As unfavorable consequences of the Cultural Revolution, it will suffice at this moment to mention the tendency to vagrancy and delinquency of urban youths sent to rural areas for training, the general demoralization and opportunism of the cadres, and the emergence of an extensive group of dropouts represented by the "rural people coming up to town" from the lowest level of agrarian society to demand rehabilitation from false condemnation in the past and to ask for jobs. As many social values are being radically upset, increasing contacts with Japan, the United States, Western Europe, and the rest of the West are causing the Chinese people to show symptoms of "moral subservience to foreigners"—such as the "cult of the West" and "yearnings for Japan"—in reaction to the old prevalence of xenophobia. At the same time, some aspects of "old China" are beginning to reappear in various sectors of Chinese society, which, in fact, was never reformed completely even in Mao's days. China today is faced with the vital task of properly controlling these and other social problems and establishing new standards for its society.

CHINA AT THE POINT OF NO RETURN

Should we now expect that the political and social conflicts inherent in China today are so great that the country is likely to go through another process of political turbulence and swing radically once again from right to left? After the deaths of Mao and Chou, China experienced the ghastly "Tian An Men Square Incident" and the shocking political change in Peking (the downfall of the Gang of Four) in 1976 and has since been undergoing de-Maoization. From the way the country appears today, it does not seem likely that another radical change in domestic or foreign policy will occur soon. In other words, it now seems impossible to reverse the pragmatic trend against the Cultural Revolution—to go back on the policy laid down by the late Chou En-lai, who sought "de-Maoization under Mao" after the failure of the Cultural Revolution. Why?

The most important reason may be found in the objective, historical position in which China today finds itself. After a decade of political turmoil following the Cultural Revolution, the Fourth National People's Congress held its First Session in January 1975, and at this meeting, Chou En-lai delivered a political report—a kind of political legacy in which Chou prescribed China's future in the form of a "Four Modernizations" program aimed at building up modern industrial and economic systems in China. Whatever difficulties are in store for the program, China today has social and national reasons that compel it to proceed, without turning back, in the direction called for by the program. The old cycle of moderation and radicalism, which has been repeated consistently in the process of domestic construction since the foundation of the People's Republic, can no longer be repeated since decisive changes of the early 1970s. This was earlier demonstrated in a paradoxical way by the pay raise demands of the workers participating in the Hangzhou Incident of 1975.

This social development, like the Tian An Men Square Incident with its anti-Maoist implications, is even more significant than such political developments as the Lin Biao Affair in predicting the future of Chinese society. The same necessity makes China want to deal with other countries in a more open, stable way. Unless "Chinese world order" is threatened in peripheral areas along its borders, as in the case of the recent hostilities with Vietnam, resulting in a serious loss of Chinese prestige in the world, it seems that China in the 1980s

will have to seek such open relations with the rest of the world while taking meticulous care to maintain the balance of power with other major powers including the Soviet Union.

It should be noted that about 85 percent of China's external trade is already accounted for by trade with Japan, the United States, Western Europe, and other Western areas (Japan alone accounting for about 25 percent). Despite this structural change in Chinese trade, however, there will always be the possibility of China's trading more with the Soviet Union again. Thus oriented, China is beginning to reduce the esoteric nature of its political leadership. Erich Fromm, discussing the significance and functions of ideology in de-Stalinized Soviet society, wrote that what matters in evaluating the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is no longer its ideology but its social, political structure.¹ Similarly, China will soon reach the stage in which its social and political structure rather than ideology will count. Then the Teng Hsiao-p'ing type of leaders, once criticized as realists or "capitalist roaders" (such as Peng Zhen, Chen Yun, and Hu Yaobang, who is younger), will make the right party leadership orthodox and realistic enough for a nonideological type of regime.

Another reason why China cannot reverse its course soon again is the fact that China cannot afford to lose any more time in launching a long-range economic construction program—that is, a full-scale industrialization program. China's awareness of this fact will become keener as it learns more about the outside world. For example, liberation of Taiwan, despite Peking's loud calls for it, is actually not feasible either militarily or socially, and per capita GNP in Taiwan is likely to be, even in a conservative estimate, seven to eight times that of mainland China's in the 1980s.

Indeed, the People's Republic has never followed a specific economic construction policy consistently for five years. Apart from the economic rehabilitation period immediately following the revolution, China has been through a highly unstable series of economic policy phases, including the first five year plan period marked by the "General Transitional Policy," the second five year plan period characterized by the "Great Leap Forward," the economic readjustment period following the failure of the "Great Leap Forward," and the period of confusion during the Cultural Revolution. Clearly, China

cannot afford to undergo all this instability again. Today, China is in a position to participate fully in international affairs, while at home the people can no longer be enthused by the Mao Tse-tung type of revolution, envisaging an utopia in poverty. Under these circumstances, China can only hope to ensure the success of the revolution by bolstering it with material wealth rather than ideological or moral strength through the implementation of a full-scale economic construction program. Thus, China today has no alternative but to walk the long way toward an open society by carrying out the Four Modernizations program, whatever difficulties that may involve and whatever vicissitudes may lie ahead.

What will become of China tomorrow? After a quarter century of turbulence and faced with various difficulties today, the country may look forward to eventually developing a unique socialist society, but such a rosy prospect is still far off. At present, Chinese society is undergoing changes involving symptoms of something similar to Soviet revisionism. This tendency may be inevitable in socialism, although the society of China differs in some basic respects from that of the Soviet Union. Some of the choices made by the Peking leaders, whether they are aware of it or not, make one feel that they are going beyond Soviet revisionism and trying to find a solution in the Yugoslav type of mixed economy. In China's case, this path runs very close to reviving the old China, since Chinese society is a traditional, agrarian one with many elements inherently inimical to socialism. When the national policy of the Chinese Communist party is swallowed up in this traditional society, China will be a vast, commonplace developing country with an immense population in Asia.

What will become of China is of vital concern not only to the Chinese themselves but indeed represents the greatest question in the history of civilization in the twentieth century. Perhaps China may also turn out to be the biggest "North-South problem" in the present world.

CHINA'S FUTURE AND RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION

Sino-Soviet relations, which will have much to do with internal political trends in China, must be of vital interest to the United States, Japan, and other Western countries. Today, relations between

1. Erich Fromm, *May Man Prevail? An Inquiry into the Facts and Fictions of Foreign Policy* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1961).

China and the Soviet Union are so strained that we may well say they are in a state of cold war with each other. Peking's conflicts with Moscow have always been related to policy arguments within the Chinese Communist party (CCP), and whether true or false, charges of intimacy with the Soviet Union have always been hurled at such losers in intraparty policy fights as Wang Ming, Gao Gang, Peng Dehuai, Liu Shaoqi, and Lin Biao when they were condemned. There is no denying that Peking's view of and policy toward the Soviet Union have been closely related to policy struggles within the CCP. We cannot ignore the historical fact that relations with Moscow have been a more or less constant factor built into the internal behavior of the party.

If a significant change in Sino-Soviet relations is conceivable, to what extent might they improve? Will they change so importantly that the United States will be compelled to radically amend its world policy? Will there be a monolithic Sino-Soviet unity again that will be firm enough to threaten Japan's security?

To make valid predictions on these questions, it is essential to analyze the structure of Sino-Soviet discord. Sino-Soviet antagonism today consists of conflicts at four different levels, one resting upon another and forming a complex whole: (1) conflict between the two peoples or their nationalisms, (2) conflict between the two states or their egoisms, (3) conflict between the ideologies of the two countries or between their respective "heresies," and (4) conflict between their governments or between their foreign policies. These may be called respectively nation-to-nation conflict, state-to-state conflict, party-to-party conflict, and government-to-government conflict.

Referring to the first—nation-to-nation conflict—which is the deepest-rooted, the history of contacts between the Chinese and the Russians in the last 300 years is full of conflicts. The two great peoples have lived opposite each other on the Eurasian continent with the vast Mongolian territory lying between them as a sort of intermediate zone, and their competition for the control of this area has led to the hot rivalry between the two nations.

The second conflict, state-to-state, is based on the first and has been carried on historically over border and territorial issues. Indeed, it quickly damped the Leninist spirit of internationalism intoned in the Karakhan Manifesto (1919) following the success of the Russian Revolution. The subsequent emergence of Stalinism in the Soviet

Union and Maoism in China provided ideological justifications to their respective nationalisms or state egoisms, making them more exclusive of each other in their conflict at the interstate level. Generally, journalists and foreign policy experts tend to call diplomatic or intergovernmental conflicts discords "interstate." But what I mean by the "state-to-state conflict" here is one between two states aware of their different stands based on their respective nationalisms and ideological justifications, rather than a conflict in intergovernmental or diplomatic relations (which belongs to my fourth category).

The third conflict, party-to-party, refers to what began as the Sino-Soviet dispute in 1956 and is still continuing as an ideological conflict between the Communist parties of the two countries. In the general context of Sino-Soviet antagonism, the conflict at this level theoretically seems to be subject to change. Partly because Sino-Soviet relations have often depended on internal fights within the Communist parties of the two countries (especially that of China), it is always possible that this third conflict could be significantly affected by developments in such intraparty struggles and leadership changes.

The fourth conflict, government-to-government, can change not only in accordance with leadership changes and new developments in the party of each country but also with changes in international relations.

From the above considerations, it may be reasonable to assume that the Sino-Soviet conflict at the nation-to-nation level will probably remain irreconcilable. The conflict at the state-to-state level also will be hard to resolve unless, in some distant future, the existing social, political, and economic gaps between the two countries are filled. On the other hand, the conflict at the third level, party-to-party, may change as the result of a leadership change; and the government-to-government conflict is subject to change at any time. It should be remembered in this connection that the current Sino-Soviet antagonism began with Mao Tse-tung's intense antipathy against the Soviet Union and the latter's reaction to it and represents the culmination of a process in which the Sino-Soviet conflicts at the above-mentioned four levels have been growing in a complex, integrated form. Hence, Sino-Soviet conciliation was quite impossible while China was under Mao's leadership and will remain very difficult so long as the CCP leadership persists in its present Maoist

view of the Soviet Union. Within the limits of the fourth conflict, however, it is theoretically possible to think of some improvement in Sino-Soviet relations under the impact of some international developments, such as an unfavorable turn in Sino-U.S. relations.

As we have seen, China today is undergoing extensive de-Maoization at home, and it is no longer possible to reverse this trend. Leading the nation in this direction is Teng Hsiao-p'ing. With respect to his leadership and its future, it should be noted that although he is indispensable to China today, his intense personality often jars with his colleagues. After attending the twenty-first Congress of the CPSU in 1956, where de-Stalinization was launched for the first time; Teng spoke severely of the evils of personality cult in a report on amendments to the party rules delivered before the Eighth Congress of the CCP that year. In the early 1960s, while playing a leading role in China's dispute with the Soviet Union (at Sino-Soviet talks held in the summer of 1963, for example, he had a hot wrangle with CPSU Politburo Member Suslov in Moscow), he supported Luo Rui, then PLA chief of general staff, in his argument for a united front with the Soviet Union in the Vietnam War. Luo lost his position on account of this proposal and was not reinstated until 1975. This shows that Teng's view of the Soviet Union was basically different from that of Mao Tse-tung, who refused to regard the Soviet Union as a socialist society and flatly rejected the idea of an anti-imperialist united front with that country.

Thus, so far as the influence of China's internal affairs on relations with the Soviet Union is concerned, it should be noted that circumstances are maturing in favor of possible improvements in Sino-Soviet relations at the party-to-party as well as the government-to-government level. Under these maturing circumstances, China will—in the 1980s, at least—try to form its relations with other countries while paying constant attention to the "Soviet card." Despite the historic rapprochement with Peking, the U.S. Congress approved the Taiwan Relations Act by an overwhelming majority. Faced with this unexpected development, China was extremely careful in the spring of 1979 to serve notice of its intention of letting the Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance Treaty with the Soviet Union expire, thus avoiding excessive provocation to Moscow and paving the way for Sino-Soviet negotiations at the vice-ministerial level. This suggests that Peking already has the "Soviet card" in its

hands, and we should always remember that it is China itself, after all, that ultimately holds that card.

Of course, it may be argued that Sino-Soviet relations are generally unlikely to improve, since China today must depend on Japan, the United States, and other Western countries for assistance in the implementation of its Four Modernizations program, or that China will continue to need an outside archenemy to keep the people united in surmounting internal difficulties arising in the course of national modernization. As we have seen, however, analysis of the structural makeup and historical background of the Sino-Soviet antagonism indicates that important circumstances are now maturing in favor of possible changes in the conflict. Personally, I feel that a significant change might occur in Sino-Soviet relations in the late 1980s—sometime after 1985—when China will probably be faced with still greater difficulties in carrying out the Four Modernizations and may no longer feel freshness in relations with the West and also when Teng Hsiao-p'ing's present leadership will have to be replaced with a new group of leaders in Peking. Around that time, the Soviets also will probably be switching their current military expansion policy involving aggressive strategy in Asia due to a slowdown in the growth of the Soviet economy. When both countries thus find themselves in serious economic difficulties, will they continue to antagonize each other as they do now?

Since a wishful expectation of continued antagonism between the two countries lies at the basis of U.S. world policy today and since a significant improvement in Peking-Moscow relations can be a diplomatic threat to Japan, we tend to accept too readily the desirable prospect of a world with Sino-Soviet antagonism.

International communism and relations between socialist countries are no better than common international relations in changeability and amplitude of change. Today we look with amazement at the fact that Albania, which used to be China's only reliable ally and served as its mouthpiece for a very long time in its dispute with the Soviet Union, is now seriously at odds with Peking and is hurling strong accusations at the Chinese Communist party. President Tito of Yugoslavia, who had been Peking's long-time enemy, accused of "modern revisionism" and also annoyed by attacks from Albania "in his backyard," visited China at a late stage in his career, where he received a big welcome and had opportunity to look north from the

top of the Long Wall with a great emotion in his heart—a very ironic historical event.

Finally, I would like to point out that there is a basic difference between the stands on Sino-Soviet relations held by the United States and Japan, although they are bound together in the U.S.-Japanese-Chinese coalition, which might be viewed as an antihegemonist alliance. Located in East Asia, Japan has to deal far more extensively with China and the Soviet Union than does the United States, which as a global superpower is in a position to carry on a détente policy in the Europe-Atlantic area and an antihegemonist policy in the Asia-Pacific area, dealing with the Soviet Union and China across the Atlantic and the Pacific, respectively. Geographically destined to form a triangle with the Soviet Union and China in East Asia, Japan is in a more exposed position than the United States in dealing with these two Communist powers. It is important to note that the Washington-Tokyo-Peking coalition, though very convenient to the United States as the basis of its Asian policy aimed at counterbalancing the influence of the Soviet Union as a global superpower, is not equally convenient to Japan. This represents a potential new conflict within the U.S.-Japanese security system, since there are some areas of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and China in which Japan will find it impossible to share the U.S. stand completely. In other words, Japan has much less freedom than the United States in taking advantage of the tense relationship between Moscow and Peking and even manipulating it to some extent. Therefore, Japan needs a diplomatic strategy flexible enough to withstand possible changes in Sino-Soviet relations. At a time when friendly ties are being formed with China, Japan should give sufficient consideration to this foreign policy task of vital importance.

11 COMPREHENSIVE MUTUAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE MAJOR INDUSTRIALIZED DEMOCRACIES

James W. Morley

Dr. James W. Morley, professor of government at Columbia University, in this concluding essay examines the common interests of the United States, the other NATO nations, and Japan and explains why these industrialized democracies have committed so little to the common defense of their obvious mutual interests. Professor Morley points out that the comfortable habits of three decades, in which the United States shoulders the major military and economic burdens for its allies, must give way to a new sharing of responsibilities. Using a new and broader definition of "comprehensive mutual security," in the light of the new threats—particularly the threat of interruption of the flow of oil from the Middle East—Morley proposes a new strategy by which allied strength can be maintained simultaneously in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East and suggests a new way for the major powers to consult with each other on major security questions.

Many of the advocates of trilateralism in the early 1970s believed that once the industrialized democracies of North America, Western Europe, and the North Pacific realized how much they had in common, and how extensively their economies and cultures were interacting with each other—in a word, how "interdependent" they were—they would see the wisdom not only of harmonizing their economic policies, but eventually of broadening their mutual concerns