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COMMUNIST CHINA'S INTERNATIONAL POSTURE

NOTE

China's return to active diplomacy raises new questions about the direction of its foreign policy. After four years in which the internal preoccupations of the Cultural Revolution thoroughly overshadowed foreign relations, Peking is now moving to repair its international image and to exploit new opportunities. In attempting to estimate how China will play this new role in international politics over the next year or so, this paper will examine Peking's options in terms of those policy factors which are most likely to remain constant and those which are subject to greater variations in response to domestic or external events.

It must be acknowledged at the outset that we have remarkably little information on the decision-making processes in Peking. Thus, estimates of short-run tactical moves are susceptible to considerable error. As in the past, sudden twists and turns in Chinese policies will probably continue to surprise us. But in the broader perspective of long-range goals and basic capabilities, this paper attempts to set useful guidelines on the course that China is likely to follow in adapting to the outside world.

CONCLUSIONS

A. With the waning of the radical and frenetic phase of the Cultural Revolution, Peking has substantially recouped its earlier diplomatic position and is moving to compete for influence in new areas. Its successes to date—due in large part to the receptivity of other nations to a more normal relationship with the Chinese—have been impressive, especially in areas of secondary importance to Peking. In areas of prime concern, i.e., the Soviet Union, the US, Southeast Asia and Japan, progress has been marginal and Peking's policy less sure.

B. Many domestic and foreign obstacles stand in the way of achieving Peking's basic goals, whether these be China as a great power and leader of the world revolution or as a more traditional but highly nationalistic country concerned primarily with Asian interests.

C. On the domestic side, stability and steady growth in basic elements of strength—economic, military, political—are far from assured. Even in the best of circumstances, China's marginal economy will serve to limit its maneuverability in foreign affairs. A great deal of work remains to be done to restore effective government administration, and to rebuild a communist party. So long as Mao lives, the possibility of disruptive campaigns exist and his death could usher in a period of leadership uncertainty and intense preoccupation with internal affairs.

D. Externally, China's aspirations remain blocked directly or indirectly by the realities of the international scene including: the vastly superior power and hostility of the USSR, its most immediate threat as well as rival for ideological leadership in the Communist world; the US presence and US commitments around the periphery of China; and the growth in economic strength and self-confidence of another traditional rival, Japan.

E. Even should the Chinese regime wish to alter its basic foreign policy approach and use its growing military force aggressively in peripheral areas, its options would be limited by the risk of provoking one or another of the superpowers. From Peking's point of view, military adventures in Southeast Asia, against Taiwan, in Korea, or in the Soviet Far East would be needlessly risky and the potential prize not worth the game. Peking does, however, have room, even in present circumstances, for some maneuver directly between the two great powers as well as around their flanks or under their guard in Southeast Asia, the Near East, Africa, and even in Eastern Europe.

F. At present, the Chinese see the USSR as their major military threat. By accepting negotiations with the Soviets, cooling border tensions, and improving their diplomatic image, the Chinese apparently judge that they have reduced the risk of hostilities with the Soviets. There is little prospect, however, of a genuine rapprochement emerging from the present Sino-Soviet talks. But both sides are apparently concerned that their dispute not end in a military test. Thus, as long as they both continue to exercise the present degree of military caution,

there is likely to be some improvement in diplomatic and trade relations but little movement in border talks. As long as Mao lives there is almost no chance of significant compromise on the ideological questions.

G. With the US, Peking has moved from its previous intransigence to a more flexible approach better designed to exploit the Sino-US relationship for Chinese purposes. The Chinese hope to unsettle the Soviets by playing on their fears of a Sino-American rapprochement as well as exploit the potential for changes in the balance of forces in East Asia resulting from the drawdown of the US military presence. In pursuing its new flexibility, however, Peking does not expect an early major improvement in Sino-US relations and any small improvements are likely to be limited to marginal issues.

H. Japan poses special problems to Peking because it too is an Asian power, is outstripping China in economic growth, and is strongly resistent to Maoist subversion or Chinese threats. And the Chinese, who remember Japanese imperialism in China during World War II, wonder what threat the Japanese may become to their security over the long term and fear Tokyo will one day take on the role of protector of Taiwan. The Chinese answer so far has been to continue with a rather rigid and vituperative propaganda attack on Japan's leaders, their policies, and their alleged ambitions in Asia. While this may impress the North Koreans and some people in Southeast Asia, it does little good for China's cause in Japan itself. Nonetheless, and despite the burgeoning growth in Sino-Japanese trade, any basic shift in China's approach to Japan seems unlikely in the present ideological climate in Peking.

I. In Southeast Asia, Peking's earlier fear that the Indochinese war might spill over into China seems to have lessened. Indeed, the Chinese seem to believe that the US is being forced gradually to withdraw its military presence from the region and that this process will eventually improve the prospects for Chinese influence. Rather than use overt military force to exploit possible developments in this area, Peking's more likely course will be to increase its support to subversive and insurgent activity. The Chinese will seek to maintain their role as revolutionary leaders without exposing themselves to undue cost or risk. In addition they will rely on conventional diplomacy when this suits their needs. There is abundant evidence that Peking feels no need to

set deadlines and has no schedule to fulfill; it is clearly prepared for the long haul.

J. In the longer run, if Mao's successors follow a more steady and pragmatic course, they are likely to have greater success than Mao in expanding China's political influence and acceptance. We cannot be sure, of course, how future leaders will see their situation, and it is possible that they will be prepared to employ China's developing power in a more aggressive manner. We think it more likely, however, that they will continue to focus their foreign policy on diplomacy at the overt level and on subversion at the covert level. The open use of military force will probably be judged needlessly risky.

K. While we do not doubt that China would fight tenaciously if invaded, we see no compelling factors moving Peking toward a policy of expansionism, or even a higher level of risk-taking. For all its verbal hostility and latent aggressiveness, neither the present nor the probable future leadership is likely to see foreign adventures as a solution to China's problems.

DISCUSSION

I. FOREIGN POLICY: SOME PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

A. The Ideological Base

1. In part, Peking still perceives the outside world in traditional ways. The Sino-centric view of the Middle Kingdom has survived the advent of the communists. The past century has left a residue of bitterness and frustration among those Chinese—certainly the vast majority—whose sense of nationalism and patriotism has been outraged by what they see as unfair treatment of China by foreigners. This basic sense of injustice and frustration has facilitated the people's acceptance of enormous sacrifices and has permitted the communists to carry out revolutionary programs aimed at reaching grandiose—often unrealistic—goals. While popular expectations have been repeatedly disappointed, the basic dynamism of Chinese nationalism remains to be exploited again and again. Unlike the ideology of Maoism, which may not long survive its creator, the traditional sense of China's privileged role in the world will probably remain a constant theme in this and any foreseeable Chinese government.

2. Maoist ideology, which emphasizes the inevitability of class conflict and world revolution, adds an ingredient of violence and militance to traditional Chinese drives. It attempts to project the revolutionary experience of the Chinese civil war onto the world stage by advocating the defeat of the affluent Western Powers through the mobilization of the poor countries in the world.

Peking recognizes the limits of the revolutionary line, however, and has accepted and developed a policy of peaceful coexistence for application where this suits its needs. Analogous to the domestic united front policy which served the communists well in the Chinese civil war, the peaceful coexistence line was originally intended to be a temporary accommodation to the norms of international conduct which would be replaced as other countries followed China's revolutionary path. But as the prospects for world revolution have dimmed, peaceful coexistence has assumed a larger role in Chinese foreign policy, even while propaganda stress on the more orthodox policy of revolutionary struggle remains at a high pitch.

3. Ideology continues to play an exceptionally important role in the formulation of Chinese foreign policy. Although decision-makers may hold varying degrees of faith in revolutionary dogma, all are required to justify their proposals in its terms. Such justification has become particularly important as a result of the Cultural Revolution during which the purge and counterpurge of a divided leadership was rationalized by linking internal political deviations with external heresies. Many domestic figures deposed during the Cultural Revolution, for instance, were accused of following policies that were pro-Soviet or "social imperialist". As the excesses of the Cultural Revolution have subsided, even the return to more conventional diplomacy has been clothed in the rhetoric of Maoist ideology.

B. The Military Ingredient

4. Military strength has been a major preoccupation of a leadership long attuned to Mao's dictum that the "barrel of a gun" was the source of all political power. Moreover, the Chinese have been as sensitive to the needs of defense as they have been to the role of violence in advancing world revolution. Political concepts and programs are conceived in strategic and tactical military terms and transmitted to the Chinese masses and the rest of the world in martial rhetoric. The traditionally strong position of the military in Communist China has assumed new importance as a result of its vital role in underpinning the regime during the Cultural Revolution. As a by-product, the military appears to have increased its influence over the formulation and execution of policy.

5. Communist China's military power is impressive by Asian standards but remains markedly inferior to that of the superpowers. The People's Liberation Army (PLA), whose basic strength lies in the size and fighting ability of its ground forces, has the capability to put up a formidable defense of the mainland against any invaders. However, while persistent efforts over the past 20 years to strengthen and modernize the Chinese Armed Forces have yielded some creditable results, economic and political disruptions have left the PLA vulnerable in certain areas against a modern opponent. Some of its more evident problems are an apparent deficiency in motorized transport and heavy armament, an air defense system which probably lacks adequate communications and data processing capabilities, and a navy which remains little more than a coastal defense force.

6. Since China's intervention in the Korean War, which Peking considered a defensive move, China's military posture has remained basically cautious and prudent. Moreover, after this experience Peking appeared somewhat more restrained in the use of military threats to further its foreign policy objectives. The abortive move against the off-shore islands in 1958 and the defensive reinforcement along the Formosa Strait in 1962 both reflected Peking's concern over another confrontation with the US. Even against the demonstrably weaker power of India, Peking was careful in 1962 not to become embroiled in a lengthy campaign. Peking was probably satisfied to make the point that, in spite of severe internal difficulties, China was still ready and able to defend itself.

7. For all Peking's militance in the ideological field, the deployment of China's military forces remains basically defensive. Maoist military doctrine emphasizes defense in depth and the engagement of the entire civilian population to overcome an attack. The fear of a US attack has eased, in part because of a lessening concern since 1965-1968 that the Southeast Asian war might spill over into China, and is probably lower now than at any other time in the past 20 years. The Chinese now view the Soviet Union as posing the most immediate military threat and over the past year have been conducting an extensive campaign to prepare for the possibility of an eventual war. In accordance with this altered threat, there are indications that the Chinese are adjusting their military deployments, although there has been no wholesale movement of troops to the northern border.

8. Even though the main approach to the defense of China still emphasizes defense in depth—e.g., Mao's "people's war"—there is more to its military posture than a readiness to fight a prolonged, defensive war within China. The Peking leadership has clearly given a high priority to acquiring the military symbols of a great power, especially strategic weapons, but also conventional forces as well. Peking probably wants the strategic weapons primarily as a deterrent against a Soviet or US attack and to increase Chinese bargaining strength on international issues. There is no evidence that the achievement of a strategic capability will necessarily make the Chinese more aggressive. They will continue to be deterred by overwhelmingly superior US and Soviet power both from outright attacks and from engaging in "nuclear blackmail" in East Asia. China wants its views to have impact on the international scene and is willing to expend scarce resources to achieve this goal, but it can be expected to continue to exercise caution in employing its conventional and nuclear strength. Peking expects its political influence in Asia to grow, not from the open use of military power, but through active diplomacy and the encouragement and support of subversive and revolutionary activities, all backed by the looming presence and growing power of immemorial China on the Asian scene.

C. Domestic Constraints Affecting Foreign Initiatives

9. In addition to the ideological and military preconditions cited above, domestic factors determine and often severely restrict the range of foreign policy tactics and instrumentalities open to Peking. These domestic constraints operate

to limit the economic, psychological, and bureaucratic resources available for the conduct of foreign relations.

10. The Chinese economy during the 1960s did not even approach the high sustained growth rates of the 1950s. A combination of factors were responsible for this failure—the distorted planning and bizarre management of the Great Leap Forward at the end of the 1950s; the cessation of Soviet aid; bad agricultural conditions in the early years of the decade; and finally, the disruptions of the Cultural Revolution. At the same time, the proportion of resources devoted to the military sector increased, adding to China's technological capabilities, but further hobbling development of the civilian economy.

11. This failure to maintain a high rate of growth in the civilian economy limits China's capability to use economic leverage for foreign policy goals. China's image in the early 1960s as the economic model for Asia has been largely destroyed. The fabled potential of the "China market" has lost much of its attraction to world traders, thereby reducing the political concessions Peking can exact in exchange for trading privileges.

12. Policy ineptitude also hinders the Chinese. If Peking's intense preoccupation with internal politics had paid off in terms of rapid economic, social, and political development, the Chinese might now have a sounder domestic base for the conduct of foreign affairs. In fact, the major experiments designed to push China ahead, including both the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, have been disasters. Although the economy has largely recovered, party organization remains disrupted, civil administration has been hampered, and lasting tensions have been created within the leadership as a result of the Cultural Revolution.

13. The foreign policy apparatus proved as vulnerable as other bureaucratic organs to the impact of the Cultural Revolution. For nearly three years, the formulation and execution of foreign policy were paralyzed by political infighting. Red Guard activities in embassies abroad and within the foreign ministry itself brought constructive activity to a virtual standstill. All ambassadors but one were recalled to Peking, embassy staffs were substantially reduced, and militant posturing was offered as a substitute for traditional diplomacy.

14. This is not to say, of course, that China's presence was not felt in the outside world during the Cultural Revolution. Trade and aid programs continued, as did support for subversion in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. And China's potential as a great power was evident to the world as the development of nuclear weapons continued despite domestic turmoil. Nonetheless, it was not until 1969 that Chinese ambassadors began to trickle back to their posts, and the current campaign to retrieve China's international status and influence started in earnest. The return to pre-Cultural Revolution diplomacy has been slow and uneven, and the balance between radical and more pragmatic influences remains delicate and potentially unstable.

II. PROSPECTS AND CONTINGENCIES

A. Peking's Activist Foreign Policy

15. With its foreign affairs apparatus largely restored, Peking is moving quickly to recoup its pre-Cultural Revolution diplomatic position and to compete for influence in new areas. This drive has emphasized peaceful coexistence and has sought influence through conventional, diplomatic means. Its successes to date—due in large part to the receptivity of other nations to a more normal relationship with the Chinese—have been impressive, especially when compared to the almost total isolation at the height of the Cultural Revolution. Most of the gains, however, have come in areas of lesser concern to Peking and under circumstances which have made improvement in relations easy and relatively cheap.

16. In areas of prime interest to the Chinese, Peking's policy has been less sure. Uncertainty and cautious experimentation have been characteristic of relations with the Soviet Union, the US, Southeast Asia, and Japan. In these areas where policy decisions are more difficult, differences within the leadership apparently come to the fore and strain the entire decision-making process. This was especially marked in the fluctuations of Chinese policy toward the USSR during 1969 and the continuing holding operation pursued vis-à-vis the Soviets in 1970. Peking's handling of the recent turmoil in Cambodia—and its effect on Sino-American relations—also betrayed an initial hesitance which underscored the regime's difficulties in formulating policies on major foreign issues.

B. Sino-Soviet Relations

17. Though some of the immediate danger has been removed from the situation, the Sino-Soviet dispute remains the single most important bilateral concern for Peking. At the same time, it conditions and determines many aspects of the Chinese posture in dealing with other Communist states, the Third World, and the West.

18. Although relations between Moscow and Peking had been deteriorating markedly over the last decade, and the Soviet troop deployments along the Sino-Soviet border had been building since the mid-1960s, the Chinese did not appear to take the threat of Soviet military action seriously until after the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Even then, Peking sought to deter the Soviets by adopting a harshly militant posture, combining provocative behavior on the border with strident propaganda and an intensive war preparations campaign. Soviet pressure continued to grow in 1969, however, and after bloody clashes on the Ussuri in March and in Sinkiang during August, Soviet diplomats began to drop broad hints about a possible pre-emptive strike against Chinese nuclear and strategic weapons facilities. The Chinese, aware now that they might be faced with the choice between backing down and risking their nuclear installations, finally agreed in September to the border negotiations which opened in Peking October 20.

19. The experience of that tense summer moved the Chinese to reassess their foreign policy tactics. Far from deterring the Soviets, their militant posture had not only raised the possibility of broad conflict with the Soviets to an unacceptable level, but also deepened Chinese diplomatic isolation. After what was apparently a prolonged debate early in the fall, the leadership decided that border talks offered the most viable means of defusing the dangerously tense situation. At the same time, the decision was apparently taken to launch a wide-ranging diplomatic campaign to restore China's world status and influence, both as a deterrent to the Soviets and in support of Chinese objectives outside the bilateral Sino-Soviet framework.

20. Since the opening of the border talks, there has been no evidence of progress on any of the basic issues confronting the negotiators. In spite of the stalemate, however, there have been no specific reports of new border clashes, which argues that the mere existence of the talks has had some stabilizing effect. For their part, the Chinese have demonstrated their concern for maintaining the talks at the highest possible level by vigorously resisting any move which might lead to their downgrading. The Soviets seem to have conceded this point, possibly because of their preoccupation with events in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, and a consequent unwillingness for now, to trigger new complications with China.

21. Despite the soothing effect of the talks, the border situation remains potentially explosive. The Soviets have continued their force build up along the border. Although the Chinese have not significantly beefed up force levels near the border, there is some evidence that they have deployed troops north into areas close enough to be readily available in an emergency. They are also trying to improve the effectiveness of their paramilitary forces. Chinese civil defense campaigns to build air raid shelters, disperse population and stockpile food—all of which are useful for domestic political reasons as well—remain in effect.

22. There have been signs of some slow, halting normalization of state relations, although the ideological gulf remains as broad as ever and questions of principle and substance are no closer to solution than before. After protracted haggling an exchange of ambassadors is in the final stages of arrangement, and discussions for the 1970 Sino-Soviet trade protocol have been completed.

23. The prospect of a genuine rapprochement growing out of the Sino-Soviet talks now seems remote. As long as Mao lives there is almost no chance of significant compromise on the ideological questions. Peking, seeing no prospect of a military advantage over the Soviets, appears committed to the long-term process of keeping tensions below the flash point while attempting to pile up political points in the communist world by embarrassing the Soviets at every opportunity. Even with a continuation of the deep national antagonism and the ideological schism, both sides are apparently concerned that the dispute not end in a military test. Over the last year both sides have had cause to estimate the costs of a prolonged military confrontation, presumably a prospect that neither finds particularly advantageous.

C. The Triangular Relationship: US/USSR/China

24. The Chinese approach to the US has been strongly affected by their political conflict with the USSR. This was apparent earlier this year when Peking moved from its previous intransigence against the US to a more flexible approach better designed to exploit the Sino-US relationship for Chinese purposes. The primary aim was undoubtedly to unsettle the Soviets by playing on their fears of a Sino-US rapprochement. By demonstrating their concern over this possibility, the Soviets have probably insured that the Chinese will continue to exploit the "triangular relationship" wherever and whenever it suits their needs. Even though events in Cambodia caused the Chinese to take a harder line against the US, they have clearly maintained the option to return to a more flexible posture when it serves their interest.

25. The potential for changes in the balance of forces in East Asia resulting from the drawdown of US military presence is another factor encouraging more flexible Chinese tactics toward the US. The Chinese will hope to speed American troop withdrawals from the area, especially from Taiwan. At the same time, they see possibilities for improving their relations with states now forced to rely less on American guarantees. Peking may also hope that it can exert its influence to exacerbate frictions caused by a reduction in the US posture. The Chinese probably see the US-GRC relationship as particularly vulnerable in this respect.

26. There are no indications that Peking expects to bring about an early, major improvement in Sino-US relations. The Chinese probably expect no far-reaching US concessions on Taiwan, which remains the main test for Peking. Nor are they likely to give up the US as the prime target in their ideological offensives against the capitalist-imperialist enemy. Nonetheless, Peking will wish to maintain sufficient flexibility to exploit the triangular relationship and to move promptly in whatever direction offers the maximum benefits.

27. For these reasons any early improvement in Sino-US relations is likely to be limited. For example, although recent US trade concessions have been studiously ignored by the Chinese in public, they have privately shown some interest in how far the US might move in this direction. While likely to reject any formal trading relationship, the Chinese seem ready to accept more subtle, indirect trading through third parties. Similarly they are likely to show little interest in formal diplomatic recognition so long as the US remains committed to the GRC. At the same time, however, they will probably retain an interest in keeping lines of communication open through contacts such as those at Warsaw. The pace of Chinese gestures will probably be slow and erratic, subject to pressures felt in Peking from changes in Sino-Soviet and Soviet-US relations.

28. For some years to come, Sino-Soviet relations will be Peking's major concern in foreign affairs. Peking has already shown an acute sensitivity to the possibility that the US and the USSR might find considerable common ground in opposing China. In reaction, Peking will attempt to exacerbate the existing

suspicions between Moscow and Washington; will increasingly portray itself before the world as the innocent victim of "collusion" between the superpowers; and will throw out lines to other Western Powers and the Third World in an effort to elicit new support. The more direct solution would be for Peking to seek a rapprochement with Moscow, but there seems little likelihood that Mao could accept the shifts required to move his regime closer toward the Soviets. Thus, over the next few years, or until Mao's death, Peking will probably concentrate on keeping the Sino-US-USSR relationship as fluid as possible in order to prevent any alliance against China.

D. China's Regional Aims

29. *Southeast Asia.* Peking's early fears that the Indochinese war might spill over into China seems to have lessened in recent years. Even though Peking has expressed apprehension that US frustration in Vietnam might lead to further escalation, the basic judgment of the Chinese seems to be that the US is bogged down in an indecisive effort that is more likely to lead to a withdrawal than to further expansion of the fighting. Their confidence in this judgment must have been shaken temporarily by the US move into Cambodia, but their calculation of the ensuing political costs for the US has probably persuaded them that it is still valid. Thus, what we believe to be their long-range estimate probably remains unchanged; i.e., in a protracted struggle Hanoi's patience will outlast that of the US.

30. As regards the likelihood of the PLA being sent into Southeast Asia for offensive action, the evidence of the past 20 years suggests Peking would be inclined in this direction only if China's security is seen as threatened, as on the Sino-Korean border in 1950, or if China is provoked, as on the Sino-Indian border in 1962. Thus, we continue to believe that China would use its military forces to prop up North Vietnam if it appeared that there was a real danger of that government collapsing. Similarly, China would no doubt react with the PLA to a direct military threat elsewhere along its southern borders.

31. Peking's more likely response—and almost certainly its initial response—to aggravation in this area would be to increase its support to subversive and insurgent activity. The fact that China continues its long-term improvement of its logistic capabilities along this border, including the current road building in northern Laos, illustrates Peking's desire to have support facilities ready for whatever contingencies may develop. The character of the facilities, operational considerations, and recent history all suggest that Chinese plans in this area relate to the defense of south China and the assistance of nearby insurgencies rather than to a massive push by the PLA into Southeast Asia. The objective, as before, would be to bring into existence friendly governments responsive to Peking's political influence; and, in Peking's view, this could be done better by indirection—including diplomatic pressure—than open aggression.

32. *Thailand and Burma* are already targets for a subversive effort. Thailand's close ties with the US guarantee China's continuing hostility. Thus far, Peking

has had little opportunity to apply diplomatic pressure on Bangkok and has been relying on a long-term campaign to encourage insurgency against the government. There is no suggestion that Peking sees this as an easy task or one that can be accomplished quickly even if given a high priority. On the contrary, Peking is consistent in advocating local self-reliance and has given little material aid to the active insurgents. Should there be a substantial reduction in the US presence in Southeast Asia, the Chinese may combine this low-level activity with more positive diplomatic blandishments.

33. In Burma, Chinese propaganda is encouraging revolutionary activity, supplemented by small amounts of aid in arms and training to dissident ethnic minorities. But diplomatic contacts with this neutralist government have been damaged rather than broken. Peking's return to moderation in other areas of its diplomacy may eventually be extended to include improved relations with Rangoon. Indeed, it now appears that both sides are prepared to resume more normal relations. Even so, Peking is not likely to abandon its support of Burma's insurgents.

34. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, the Chinese are likely to persist in encouraging local revolutionaries, but in these relatively remote areas, significant material assistance is unlikely to be provided. The Chinese will continue to find it difficult to refuse requests for aid from any source that claims an insurgent or revolutionary capability, but they will continue to urge self-reliance rather than dependence on outside aid. Thus, the Chinese will maintain their role as revolutionary leaders but without exposing themselves to undue cost or risk. There is abundant evidence that Peking feels no need to set deadlines and has no schedule to fulfill; it is clearly prepared for the long haul.

35. *South Asia.* China's interest in India has a relatively low rank on Peking's scale of priorities. China is concerned with Sino-Indian border issues, with persistent rivalries with the Soviets over influence in South Asia, and with demonstrating that India is incapable of playing the role of a leading Asian power. Toward these ends Peking has sought to embarrass and intimidate New Delhi, but without becoming deeply involved in the effort. For instance, Peking has propagandized and provided limited arms and training to Naga and Mizo tribesmen in eastern India without, however, attempting to turn this into a major campaign.

36. On a larger scale, Peking's military aid to Pakistan—the major non-communist recipient of such Chinese aid—was born out of common enmity to India. In the process the Pakistanis have become major clients of the Chinese and Peking will probably seek to preserve and nurture this relationship even if Sino-Indian relations should improve somewhat in the coming years. Tentative feelers between Peking and New Delhi suggest both parties may be ready for a return to conventional diplomacy. While formal ties may be restored, in line with Peking's current effort to bolster its diplomatic image, the relationship will undoubtedly remain cautious and cool for some time to come

37. *The Asian Communists.* Peking now seems determined to consolidate the currently improved ties with both North Vietnam and North Korea. If only because of the primacy of the Sino-Soviet conflict, Peking is likely to go to some lengths to improve its relations with Pyongyang and Hanoi, preferably at Moscow's expense. The error of pushing Pyongyang and Hanoi, whether ideologically or politically, now seems to be clear to Peking and is unlikely to be repeated in the same gross forms as during the Cultural Revolution.

38. China's present call for "militant unity" is probably designed, in the first instance, to squeeze out the Soviet Union. It also serves to give the impression of a more active role in the "anti-imperialist" struggle than China's cautious actions warrant. Indeed, it seems likely that China will continue to tailor its role toward propaganda and material support of those on the front lines rather than expose itself to greater risk. This apparent effort to write itself belatedly into any possible settlement in Indochina, together with its sponsorship of Sihanouk, will require careful diplomacy if it is not to alienate Hanoi. Having borne the burden of the fighting, the Vietnamese are likely to be especially sensitive to any Chinese attempt to dictate strategy or tactics. Currently the Chinese are moving with finesse but their natural bent toward chauvinism is nearly as likely to erupt against the Vietnamese as against Westerners.

39. *Japan* represents a special case for Peking. Because of Japan's remarkable economic performance and US encouragement for it to assume a more active role in Asia, Peking is showing concern over Japan's potential military power, and its possible designs on another Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. This concern was heightened last fall by the signing of the Nixon-Sato communiqué on the reversion of Okinawa. Peking has always been apprehensive over Japan's expanding influence in Asia, particularly in Taiwan, and has taken the view that the Nixon-Sato communiqué signaled a more assertive and direct role for the Japanese in the area. Peking's reaction has been marked by indignation and by an unsettling conviction that as the US disengages from Asia, Japan will fill the void both economically and militarily and will assume the lead role in countering China. Adding to Peking's dilemma is the awareness that its political assets and leverage in Japan have markedly dwindled and its image has suffered from the extremes of the Cultural Revolution.

40. Despite its limitations—and past failures—Peking seems to have decided to continue on a course of limited meddling in Japan's internal affairs. Peking has also launched an intensive propaganda campaign which raises the specter of a remilitarized, imperialistic Japan, a foreign policy ploy designed to fan traditional Asian fears and to undercut Japanese influence. Moreover, the Chinese are attempting to build a case against US-USSR-Japanese "collusion," which is also intended to strengthen Peking's hand in its competition for influence in Asia. So far this approach has been successful in helping improve China's relations with North Korea, but has not had a significant impact on Peking's non-communist neighbors. Furthermore, the campaign has not been allowed to affect

materially China's burgeoning trade with Japan, which is expected to reach record levels again this year.

41. *Taiwan.* The continued existence—indeed thriving—of the Nationalist Chinese Government in Taiwan remains a central issue in Chinese foreign policy. This symbol of the unfinished revolution remains a highly emotional issue even after two decades. The Peking leadership faces the general frustration of knowing that they cannot take Taiwan by force, that it will not fall to them by default, and that the growing strength of the independence-minded Taiwanese could weaken Peking's claim to the island and perpetuate the issue indefinitely. The continued recognition of the GRC by many countries in the world and its presence in the UN and other international bodies blocks Peking from full international participation and remains a major irritant to the Chinese Communist leadership. Finally, the Taiwan issue is a complex obstacle to improved relations with both the US and Japan, thus severely limiting Peking's freedom to maneuver on international issues.

42. *Korea* continues to attract Chinese interest because of the strategic role of the peninsula, the quadrilateral competition for influence there, and the volatile relationship between the north and the south. Peking has worked assiduously to regain its influence in Pyongyang and has succeeded in reviving warm displays of friendship. While attempting to limit the role of the US, USSR, and Japan, however, Peking will also seek to limit North Korean adventurism. The outlook is for tough political support for Kim Il-song's propaganda outbursts combined with quiet restraint on his military excesses to avoid drawing China into another military confrontation on the peninsula.

E. China and the World Community

43. Where Peking's security interests are not directly engaged, Chinese diplomatic activity over the last year has involved far more tactical flexibility than has been shown vis-à-vis the US and the USSR. The face shown the world once again broadly resembles that displayed prior to the Cultural Revolution, a carefully nurtured image of reasonableness, but entailing little or no change in long-term goals. Sino-Soviet considerations are part of the equation in most of this diplomatic activity, and in some cases, notably in Eastern Europe, tend to dominate the Chinese approach.

44. Eastern Europe has become an attractive target for Peking because Soviet problems there seem to draw Soviet attention away from China. In addition to its close ties with Albania, Peking has been actively cultivating the Rumanians, and more recently has shown real flexibility in shelving ideology and improving long-frigid relations with Yugoslavia. Ambassadors have returned to Hungary, Poland, and East Germany. Peking is clearly preparing for long-term competition with the Soviet Union and for this reason alone is likely to give greater attention to the East Europeans. Much will of course depend on the subtlety and finesse of Peking's approach, but at this point the Chinese have apparently assessed the

opportunities as worth pursuing. In this effort as in other diplomatic endeavors now underway, Peking will likely recover ground lost during the Cultural Revolution, and, if it can hold to its new pragmatic diplomacy, achieve some forward movement.

45. Elsewhere in the world, Peking is showing revived interest in fostering better relations where the cost is cheap and the opportunities tempting. This does not rule out support for revolutionary activity, as is evident in the Near East. In contrast to the heavy arms aid from the Soviets to the Arab world, the Chinese apparently hope to sway the Arabs by concentrating their aid on the fedayeen. This will probably be mainly propaganda on "people's war" with some training and small-arms aid. This also serves to keep the pot boiling and the Soviets distracted. But while denouncing the ceasefire as an American-instigated "Munich" and declaring strong support for the fedayeen in the Jordanian crisis, the Chinese have carefully refrained from attacks on the Arab governments involved, apparently unwilling to compromise future state relations in the area.

46. In *Africa*, the Chinese will be concerned to restore diplomatic losses to the GRC in recent years. This will require more professional diplomacy and less proselytizing. Indeed, China's Foreign Ministry already seems to have accepted this retreat from Maoist missionary work. For the most part, aid projects are likely to remain modest but with special efforts to make them practical and highly visible. The construction of the $400 million Tanzania-Zambia rail line appears to be China's prestige project for Africa; the Chinese apparently also hope, through the provision of military aid, to convert Tanzania into a major beachhead in Africa.

47. In an effort which may be intended mainly to spotlight Peking's return to the world scene, the Chinese have also been displaying unprecedented interest in UN membership. In earlier years, Peking put preconditions on its membership which were clearly unacceptable to the international body. More recently, Chinese officials have dropped their extreme demands and have sent out a number of cautious feelers for support in the UN. Whereas Chinese diplomats formerly spurned such support, now they go out of their way to express appreciation for it. Despite all of this activity, Peking has not softened its opposition to any "two-China" formulation, and has continued to make it clear that the GRC must either withdraw or be dismissed before Peking would accept UN membership. Widened diplomatic recognition of Peking, such as by Canada and Italy, is steadily improving the chances for its admission to the UN; such an outcome seems likely within the next few years.

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48. In general, and barring the contingency of military attack by the USSR, China's future international posture is likely to depend more on Chinese internal developments than on external factors. If domestic political and economic problems accumulate, so will the pressure to give them even higher priority.

with a concomitant lessening in foreign interests. Mao Tse-tung remains the key variable. So long as he retains his dominance within the leadership, Mao could attempt to reverse the present relatively moderate trends. In the past, his impatience has grown as his goals for China have been frustrated by economic reality and recalcitrant human nature. His ability to retreat and consolidate is still evident, but it is questionable whether his age and health will permit another major push toward his visionary aims. In any event, despite his deep concern over the ideological conflict with the Soviets, Mao's attention is likely to remain primarily on developments within China. Nor is he likely to abandon his caution and risk the destruction of China by provocative moves against either the US or the USSR.

49. Mao's death during this period could create succession problems that could give Peking reason to project a low posture on the international scene for some time. Almost any foreseeable combination of successors—even presumably hard-core Maoists like Lin Piao, the designated successor—would probably play for time to consolidate their positions and to strengthen China to meet possible challenges. In the longer run, as those who follow Mao face up to the needs of China, the trend is likely to be away from the ideological excesses of Maoism toward a more realistic adjustment to the difficulties—as well as the opportunities—facing China. Indeed, if the successors persist in the present movement toward greater flexibility and pragmatism, they are likely to have greater success than Mao in expanding China's political influence abroad. And for the longer run, China's traditional ethnocentrism will continue to fuel an assertive and potentially aggressive nationalism.

50. Presumably they will continue to focus their foreign policy on diplomacy at the overt level and on subversion and insurrection at the covert level. This could include "war by proxy" as well as efforts to exacerbate US relations with its Asian allies and to exploit internal tension within these countries. We cannot be sure, of course, how future leaders will see their situation, and it is possible that they will be prepared to employ China's developing power in a more aggressive manner. It now seems likely, however, that the open and offensive use of military power will continue to be judged needlessly risky and therefore counterproductive. Even the development of an operational strategic weapons system may reinforce Chinese caution rather than encourage a more reckless policy. While we do not doubt that China would fight tenaciously if invaded, or if threatened directly with invasion, we see no compelling factors moving Peking toward a policy of expansionism, or even a higher level of risk-taking. For all its verbal hostility and latent aggressiveness, neither the present nor the probable future leadership is likely to see foreign adventures as a solution to China's problems.

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