

**The People's Republic of China  
After Thirty Years:  
An Overview**

A publication of the  
Center for Chinese Studies  
Institute of East Asian Studies  
University of California  
Berkeley, California 94720

The Center for Chinese Studies China Research Monograph Series is one of three series published by the Institute of East Asian Studies. The other two are the Japan Research Monograph Series of the Center for Japanese Studies, and the Korea Research Monograph Series of the Center for Korean Studies.

Correspondence may be sent to:  
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University of California  
Berkeley, California 94720

Institute of East Asian Studies • *University of California, Berkeley*  
Center for Chinese Studies, CHINA RESEARCH MONOGRAPH No. 15

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After Thirty Years:  
An Overview

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Joyce K. Kallgren, Editor

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ISBN 0-912966-21-1  
Library of Congress Catalog Number 79-89491  
Printed in the United States of America  
\$5.00

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# Introduction\*

*Joyce K. Kallgren*

In 1978 many individuals thought that the thirty-year anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China would be celebrated with considerable fanfare. By 1979, celebrations had been eschewed as not appropriate for a nation devoting itself to the difficult task of modernization. Such shifts of mood, accompanying a review of policy or rethinking of goals, have been characteristic of much of China's post-1949 history.

Similarly, Western analysts of Chinese politics have found their appraisals changing. Many foreign critics of Chinese decisions in the late 1960s now consider the Chinese to be pursuing realistic goals in a sensible manner. Some foreign sympathizers with the ideology of the Cultural Revolution are dismayed and outspokenly critical of a "sellout" of the aims and policies of Chairman Mao. Academics suggest moderation in literal acceptance of Chinese self-criticism of backwardness and failures under their recent leaders.

During these policy reappraisals and in the accompanying atmosphere of domestic uncertainty, the People's Republic of China and the United States finally resolved their policy differences sufficiently to permit the formal establishment of diplomatic relations after a gap of thirty years. Since recognition, American officials have tried to foster a climate of cooperative goodwill so as to facilitate the resolution of remaining commercial, trade, and other conflicts, and thus to enhance American trade and exchange with China. Stress has been upon the positive contribution the United States can make toward Chinese modernization efforts and in exploring shared interests between the two nations.

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\*I wish to acknowledge the wise counsel of Mr. John S. Service, and the conscientious and professional assistance of Mary Akers, editorial assistant to the Institute of East Asian Studies.

A number of events in China encourage a positive view. A strong pragmatic Chinese leadership seems confirmed in power. Apparently broad changes in legal guarantees for those accused of crimes may have great significance if actually implemented. Alterations in elections procedures, and new policies for foreign investments may influence decision making and the role of non-Chinese in the modernization effort. The potential exists for further sharp departures in governmental and Party policies. What effect will they have on the future of political and economic institutions in China?

The pace and potential scope of these changes make it difficult to maintain an equilibrium in analysis of and approach toward Chinese political alternatives, foreign policy decisions, economic needs, priorities, options and the ongoing features of Chinese life. An overview of the thirty-year period since 1949 emphasizing selected aspects of politics and the economy, together with an appraisal of likely problems and trends, may provide a useful benchmark for the future. This collection of five essays is an attempt to contribute to the establishment of such benchmarks.

The scope of this volume and of the individual essays is limited. The use of the monograph format allowed contributors to incorporate quite recent developments. On the other hand, each author faced limitations with respect to length. Each essay is, therefore, of necessity a summary of key thirty-year experiences and policies.\* The monograph also limited the number of topics which could be the subject of a chapter. The editor has organized this volume around selected aspects of Chinese political-economic development. There is, of course, also a need for further analysis in such fields as science and technology, the role of the military, characteristics of local government. Some of the issues mentioned—such as health procedures, or aspects of economic development—would profit from a full chapter analysis. The essays touch implicitly or explicitly upon these matters, but a full examination must be left to others.

This volume is designed for the reader, academic or non-academic, who is interested in the problems faced and the successes achieved, as well as the innovative means that the Chinese have tried (and sometimes discarded), in an effort to attain national power and a socialist society. The essays look at the major issues to which the Chinese have addressed themselves as shown in the political and governing institutions and organizations, in the economic sphere with its own sharp constraints on modernization, and in foreign

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\*Because of space limitations, each essay is followed by a list of suggested readings, some items are annotated to allow the reader to pursue a special interest.

choices. All of these developments impinge on the life of the individual and the family.

The essays address three important considerations. The first is the development of political institutions in China since the establishment of the People's Republic. Two essays are devoted to this problem. James Townsend discusses the Party, and the governmental institutions it has evolved to lead and govern China. His essay covers not only the political institutions of government, but also the role and evolution of the Chinese Communist Party. Lowell Dittmer deals with the problem of governmental and Party institutions from a different but equally important perspective. His concerns are leadership, ideology, and politics. The two authors have coordinated their essays to insure adequate consideration of relevant issues.

The second topic addressed is economic policy and achievements. Professor Howe first considers the available statistical data. Recent events, including a decision to open enterprise books for outside observers and the publication of national data during the recent National People's Congress meetings, may indicate a more open policy in the future with respect to data. Howe then turns to the overall performance of the economy, first establishing a useful periodization in preparation for an appraisal.

Finally, Professors Kallgren and Scalapino address policy considerations internal and external to the nation state. Many of their observations and judgments assume those of Townsend, Dittmer, and Howe. Discussion of either foreign policy or domestic life inevitably includes considerations drawn from Chinese tradition and culture, as well as concerns that arise from the socialist nature of the leadership. Scalapino shows this in his central themes of nationalism and communism. Kallgren, while considering themes given high priority by the Communist leadership, finds continued dilemmas from traditional social and political values.

The Howe, Kallgren and Scalapino essays give a rather positive outlook on the record of the People's Republic. Though all three indicate strains, potential trouble spots, and ongoing dilemmas, they are still rather positive in their overall judgments. Scalapino concludes: "Yet far more than in the past century, initiatives and decisions now lie with the Chinese leadership." Howe carefully says: "Nonetheless, one need not be too pessimistic. . . . Internally, the Chinese, for all their current reevaluations, retain an impressive and stabilizing confidence in their future and may still find Mao's era to be far more than the negative legacy it is currently assumed to be." And Kallgren states: "Whatever the limitations and restrictions of 1979, medical care, educational opportunity, and social assistance are

available to large segments of the population who did not have those services some thirty years ago."

The progress here noted toward social and economic goals is not inconsiderable when one thinks back to 1949, when China was desolated from decades of external aggression and internal strife, when the country was riven by the bitterness of a long civil war, and when a relatively small Communist party took the reins with limited experience of urban government and large-scale administration. There have been handicaps: the vastness of the country itself, the pressure of population, divergent interests arising from regional differences and historical tradition, and a serious inadequacy in the communications system. Given these, the achievement and maintenance of unity, and the ability to recover from recurring turbulence caused by shifting revolutionary priorities, may deserve to rank among the great accomplishments of China in the thirty years since 1949.

# Political Institutions\*

*James Townsend*

Well before October 1, 1979, the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC), authorities in Beijing announced that there would be no large-scale celebration to honor the event. Money, not modesty, was the main reason for passing up lavish displays of revolutionary achievements. As the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) entered its fourth decade of rule, its sights seemed fixed on the year 2000, the target year for achieving the "four modernizations" of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology, and on the need to allocate funds for useful construction rather than symbolic celebration. The decision itself was a symbol, a sign that preparation for the rigors of the "new long march" ahead held budgetary priority over self-congratulation for the triumph of 1949.

Despite this gesture of fiscal sobriety, the thirtieth anniversary was an occasion for reflection on the part of Chinese leaders—and, as this volume attests, of those abroad who study the revolution's progress. The CCP's reflective mood was by no means uncritical: it acknowledged errors in the past, and difficulties ahead. But one persistent positive theme was that the PRC had entered a "new period" dominated by tasks of socialist modernization and economic construction, which could proceed precisely because of the success of revolutionary political construction. In other words, socialist institutions were securely in place, and while class struggle was neither dead nor to be forgotten, its role was essentially to safeguard a completed institutional transformation against a "small handful" of residual exploiters and "newborn bourgeois elements."

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\*I would like to thank Richard Kraus, Elizabeth Perry, and Bruce Cumings for their comments on a first draft of this essay.

The Third Plenum of the CCP's Eleventh Central Committee affirmed, in December 1978, that "large-scale turbulent class struggles of a mass character have in the main come to an end."<sup>1</sup> This position, attributed to Mao Zedong, was a direct repudiation of the argument advanced by the "Gang of Four" during the Cultural Revolution decade of 1966-76. The "radical" position, from the inception of the campaign in debates of the early 1960s until Mao's death in 1976, was that continuing class struggle was necessary to overthrow "capitalist" authorities who had penetrated the highest ranks of the Party and willfully perverted the socialist system. In contrast to this Cultural Revolution focus on internal class divisions and the need for continued revolutionization of the system, the Third Plenum emphasized the basic unity of Chinese society as a whole, the correctness of the CCP as a revolutionary vanguard, and the need for stabilizing and strengthening existing institutions.

The Third Plenum's ratification of the Party's shift to tasks of socialist modernization had profound implications for ideology, economic policy, foreign policy and the general quality of life in China, all topics explored in other essays in this book. And despite the fact that the new line rested on an endorsement of the institutional status quo, it also raised important questions about the past and present evolution of PRC political institutions. Three such questions deserve particular attention. I will introduce them here, to suggest the organization and emphasis of this essay, and then proceed to a more detailed examination of each.

One question concerns the basic institutional characteristics of the Chinese political system and how they have evolved. The first thirty years brought repeated upheavals or reforms with attendant institutional instability. The Third Plenum's insistence that Mao had endorsed the shift to emphasis on economic and technological revolution was a reference back to his writings of the mid-1950s. At that time, the CCP consensus held the "socialist transformation was in the main completed"; but the next two decades revealed sharp conflicts about the institutionalization of socialist society. What was the outcome of this prolonged and controversial consolidation of socialist institutions? What reason is there to think that the issue had been settled, clearing the way for modernization within a stable institutional framework?

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1. "Communique of the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," *Peking Review*, No. 52 (December 29, 1978), 6-16; the quotation is from p. 11.

A second question concerns the transformation of the CCP from a revolutionary to a bureaucratic organization. This phrase, a shorthand description for complex changes following the Party's 1949 victory, identifies one of the most significant institutional developments of the past thirty years. At its Seventh Party Congress, held in 1945 on the eve of the civil war that led to its assumption of national control, the CCP had about 1,200,000 members. They were overwhelmingly from peasant backgrounds, were concentrated in military and laboring occupations, and held non-salaried positions in which their political responsibilities consisted largely of mobilizing the people in face-to-face relationships. The top leadership was young, its average age in the forties, and upward mobility was open and rapid for those who survived the hazards of revolutionary activities. The Party was eager for new recruits to replenish losses and build for the future. The risks of membership tended to screen out opportunists and make revolutionary commitment the prime motive for joining. Performance in military action and political mobilization was the main determinant of advancement.

By 1979 there were 36 million CCP members. Almost all had joined since 1949. A significant proportion had above-average education and came from urban areas. Although some remained soldiers, workers, or peasants, many were cadres or office workers who performed executive or administrative tasks as salaried employees in the huge state and Party bureaucracies. Top leadership was very elderly and there were enough veteran cadres to fill most higher bureaucratic posts; upward mobility was correspondingly limited for those who had joined after the early 1950s. The change from revolutionary to ruling organization altered the meaning of membership, which after 1949 became an avenue to social status and political power. The CCP needed armies of new members to staff the expanding agencies of government and added an average of over one million per year between 1949 and 1979. Still there was a surplus of applicants for the valued status of Party member, creating monumental problems of personnel screening and control. Bureaucratic procedures and institutionalized career patterns became the norm for selection and advancement within the CCP.

How has this transformation progressed, and what are its implications? Our answers to these questions are imprecise, because less is known about the CCP's inner workings than about the policies and

conflicts of its leaders.<sup>2</sup> It is paradoxical that the world's largest bureaucracy has emerged from the Maoist era, an era celebrated for its anti-bureaucratic tendencies; and that an organization larger than most member states of the United Nations has not been the subject of more organizational studies. These difficulties notwithstanding, an assessment of long-term institutional change in the PRC must emphasize the bureaucratization of its most important organization.

The third question is more contemporary in focus: what are the emerging institutional problems or trends of the new period? Recent events and policies direct attention to two topics. One is the "new class" issue, the possibility that CCP bureaucratization and the implementation of the four modernizations will produce a technocratic elite. The other is the future of socialist democracy, a question sharpened by post-1976 strengthening of the legal system and by signs of vigorous participatory impulses from citizens.

## THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

A brief survey of post-1949 institutional history demonstrates the instability referred to above. The initial state system of 1949-54 was a temporary one that relied heavily on military-based regional administration to oversee reconstruction and the initiation of social reforms. The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), a national assembly controlled by the Party but including representatives of non-Communist parties and groups, symbolized the broad united front that underlay CCP claims to national leadership. Land reform, the beginnings of agricultural collectivization, and reform of urban administration created new local organizations that extended CCP authority to the grass roots. The adoption of a state constitution in 1954 replaced the ad hoc arrangements of early post-Liberation years with a centralized governmental structure to administer the transition to socialism. The Party also acquired a new constitution at its Eighth Congress in 1956. These constitutions of the mid-1950s were relatively formal, legalistic documents designed to provide an institutional framework for the transition from

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2. Excellent analyses of Party organization in the 1950s and early 1960s are found in A. Doak Barnett, *Cadres, Bureaucracy and Political Power in Communist China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967); John Wilson Lewis, *Leadership in Communist China* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963); and Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 2nd ed., enl. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968). There is no comparable work for the post-Cultural Revolution period, however.

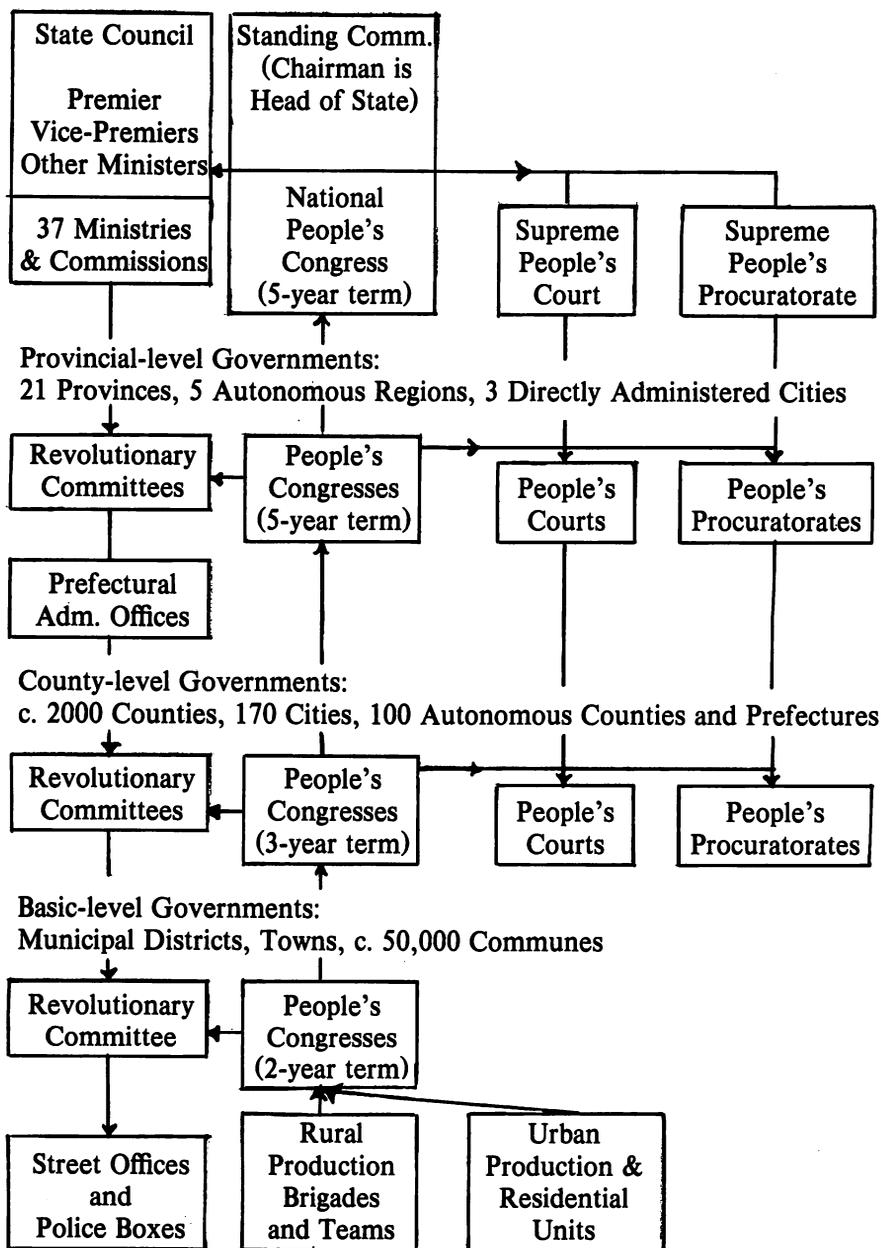
revolutionary mobilization to long-term socialist construction. They reflected the influence of the Soviet model, which the Chinese took as their general guide for their First Five-Year Plan (1953-57).

The Great Leap Forward (1958-60) and the emerging Sino-Soviet conflict upset this first consolidation effort. Legalism gave way to a new wave of mass mobilization and ideological appeals. Decentralization and Party assertiveness weakened the state administrative system. Introduction of the people's communes in the countryside unsettled rural organizations, creating collectives of much greater size than originally planned. As the Leap led into an economic crisis, the communes became smaller and less collectivized, reverting to a pattern more like that of the mid-1950s. Nonetheless, the compromises on rural collectivization remained controversial, and the Cultural Revolution inaugurated a decade of great instability in organizational forms and relationships.

Initially, the Cultural Revolution suspended or partially paralyzed much of the national political structure, in effect abrogating state and Party constitutions and eventually giving major administrative powers to the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Legal principles and united front organizations, vulnerable since the Great Leap, came under intensified attack. Red Guards replaced older mass organizations in the early stages of the campaign and were then themselves disbanded. New organizations known as revolutionary committees emerged as local administrative and managerial organs. Anti-bureaucratic tendencies reduced bureaucratic staff and agencies. Although some of these changes were more nominal than substantive, with a partial return to earlier patterns evident as the dust settled, the constitutions adopted in the campaign's aftermath were significantly different from their predecessors. New Party constitutions were approved at both the Ninth Congress of 1969 and the Tenth Congress of 1973, with a new state constitution adopted—after prolonged delay and debate—in 1975. Generally, the 1966-76 decade was characterized by an experimental attitude toward institutions, coupled with conflict and uncertainty about how to "revolutionize" them.

Following Mao's death and the purge of the Cultural Revolution radicals, the CCP leadership promoted yet another institutional shift represented in a new Party constitution adopted in August 1977 at the Eleventh Party Congress and a new state constitution adopted at the Fifth National People's Congress in March 1978. These documents were similar, although not identical, to the constitutions of the mid-1950s. They provide the basis for the following description, which will fill in the outline sketched so crudely in these

Chart 1. State Structure of the PRC, 1978 Constitution



Source for this figure is "The Constitution of the People's Republic of China," adopted March 5, 1978, by the First Session of the Fifth National People's Congress, text in *Peking Review* No. 11 (March 11, 1978), 5-14.

introductory remarks. The description begins with state organization, which defines the formal units of government, and then moves on to Party, PLA, and mass organizations.<sup>3</sup>

*State (see Chart 1)*

The National People's Congress (NPC) is, according to the 1978 and earlier constitutions, the "highest organ of state power." It is a large representative body, consisting of deputies elected by provincial-level congresses and army units. It has a term of five years and is to meet once a year, but the constitution allows advancement or postponement of meetings. NPC meetings have in fact been irregular since the body was established in 1954. Meetings are short, performing largely ceremonial and symbolic functions. The NPC's formal powers of legislation, amendment, and appointment are exercised mainly by its Standing Committee, a much smaller permanent body whose Chairman serves as the PRC's ceremonial head of state. The Standing Committee essentially ratifies decisions presented to it by the State Council and, of course, the CCP which the constitution cites as leading the state structure.

The State Council is the chief administrative organ of government. It includes the Premier, the several Vice-Premiers, and the heads of the ministries and commissions of the central government. Although nearly all its members are high-ranking Party officials, and it is subordinate to CCP authority, the State Council is a powerful body that translates Party policy into state decrees and supervises the entire apparatus of state administration.

Legal authority rests with courts and procuratorates. The Supreme People's Court at the central level and the various local people's courts are formally responsible to congresses at their respective levels. Procuratorates are supervisory, investigative, and prosecutory bodies set up to "ensure observance of the Constitution and the law." They were key agencies in the legal system of the 1950s but were attacked in the Cultural Revolution and not mentioned in the 1975 state constitution. Their restoration in 1978, with expanded sections on the courts, underscores the post-Mao revival of more regularized legal institutions. Despite institutional variations over the years, the PRC legal system has always been subordinate to the political leadership of the Party.

Local state structure consists of three sub-national governmental levels—provincial, county and basic—plus a variety of other

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3. The discussion that follows is based on James R. Townsend, *Politics in China*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, forthcoming 1980), especially Chapter 3.

units between and beneath them. Each governmental level has a people's congress and a revolutionary committee. Local congresses, like the NPC, have little independent power. It is the revolutionary committees (called people's councils before the Cultural Revolution), like the State Council, that manage governmental affairs at their respective levels. They are elected by their congresses, but higher levels approve their election and review their actions. Constitutionally, then, the Chinese system is highly centralized, with higher levels authorized to control all subordinate units. The decentralization that has in practice characterized PRC administration since the late 1950s is a conditional grant of powers to lower levels that can be reclaimed by the Center if it chooses. The principle of central control applies to "autonomous" regions and counties as well; the word "autonomous" designates units with significant minority populations, which have some guarantees on preservation of their cultures but do not have full autonomy in their relations with the central government.

The most important institutions for popular participation are those beneath the basic level of formal government. These primary units include production brigades and teams within rural communes; neighborhood and residents' committees in the cities; and some other units such as factories or large enterprises. All are political as well as basic production and/or residential units. They serve as electoral districts for deputies to basic-level congresses, which are the only congresses chosen by popular elections. Higher congresses are chosen by the congresses beneath them, not by direct popular election. In practice, most PRC elections consist of approval of a slate of candidates worked out in consultation with Party cadres. Nonetheless, the CCP "mass line" and the close, informal relationships that characterize these small primary units (which manage many production, community service, and other assignments) encourage significant citizen participation in elections within them. Citizens may also participate in selection of management committees for primary units and in discussion of their internal affairs.

*Party (see Chart 2)*

CCP organization roughly parallels that of the state, facilitating the assignment of Party members to overlapping roles in both hierarchies and providing the institutional setting for the "absolute leadership" that the Party constitution enjoins it to exercise over all state organs, army units and other organizations. Party and state organization are also similar in their twin hierarchies of representative and executive/administrative bodies. Like their state counterparts, Party congresses meet irregularly and briefly, serving largely to



approve reports or measures presented to them. It is the committees or standing committees and secretaries, elected by the congresses, that exercise Party authority and carry on day-to-day work at their respective levels. The National Party Congress is, of course, the most important of the various congresses. The Seventh Party Congress met in 1945, the Eighth in 1956, the Ninth in 1969, the Tenth in 1973, and the Eleventh in 1977. Despite the evident irregularity, each of these congresses was a significant event that produced a new constitution and elected a significantly altered Central Committee.

The Central Committee (CC) acts for the Congress and is the most powerful representative body in the PRC. Its full meetings, known as "plenums," occur about once a year on the average, although there have been some periods of more frequent meetings as well as lapses of up to four years. Plenums are a forum for discussion and ratification of major policies, but their most crucial function is election of the CCP's top leadership, namely, the Politburo, its Standing Committee, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the CC. The Politburo and its Standing Committee, recently including about 25 members, exercise all powers of the CC between plenums and constitute the supreme political elite of the PRC. Mao Zedong was CCP Chairman until his death in 1976, when he was succeeded by Hua Guofeng who had become Premier earlier in the year following Zhou Enlai's death. Despite Hua's two commanding posts, the most influential leader in 1978-79 seemed to be Deng Xiaoping, a Party veteran serving as only one of several Vice-Premiers and Party Vice-Chairmen.

The CCP's 1956 constitution established a Secretariat to administer Party work through numerous central departments and committees. The post-Cultural Revolution constitutions have been virtually silent on this administrative structure, but there is no doubt that the Party's powerful central bureaucracy not only exists but has basically regained its pre-Cultural Revolution position. Through it, the Politburo supervises execution of its decisions by the secretaries and standing committees that carry on daily Party work, from the provincial level down to the primary Party organizations that are established in every significant unit of Chinese society.

The CCP's basic organizational principle is "democratic centralism." Intra-party democracy calls for election of leading bodies and for open discussion and criticism within Party organs. Centralism requires strict discipline: "the individual is subordinate to the organization, the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level is subordinate to the higher level, and the entire Party is

subordinate to the Central Committee." The 1977 constitution contained strong language on the need for maintaining discipline, with heavy criticism of the Gang of Four for factional activities in violation of it. The most concrete sign of this desire to reverse the erosion of intra-Party discipline that characterized the Cultural Revolution decade was the constitutional provision for setting up "commissions for inspecting discipline" at central, provincial, and county levels. These commissions—a clear revival of the control commissions established by the 1956 constitution but omitted in the 1969 and 1973 versions—were charged with educating the membership on matters of discipline and taking action against violators of Party rules and regulations.

### *Army*

From its founding in 1927 to the present, the PLA has played important roles in Chinese politics. PLA and CCP organization were virtually inseparable during the revolutionary years and most Party leaders had extensive military experience or associations. Since 1949, the PLA has been active in economic construction and Party recruitment and training as well as performing its primary military and security functions. It provided the organizational base for regional administration in 1949-54. During the Cultural Revolution, from about 1967 until 1971, it again assumed major governmental responsibilities.

The PLA, numbering about 4 million in total strength, consists primarily of ground forces, with relatively small air and naval arms; it is also responsible for the PRC's large militia force. It is administratively subordinate to the Ministry of National Defense in the State Council, but the 1978 constitution names the Chairman of the CC as commander of the armed forces. In practice, Party leadership of the PLA rests on two main structures. One is the Military Affairs Committee of the CC, which has general responsibility for military policy. The other is the system of political departments within the PLA, which places political commissars or officers alongside military commanders in all army units. Political departments, commissars and officers are responsible to higher PLA political departments, as well as to CCP committees in their units, and ultimately to the Military Affairs Committee. They are to ensure implementation of Party policy within the PLA and to carry out political education among the troops.

PLA political involvement peaked around 1969, when Minister of Defense Lin Biao was identified as Mao's chosen successor at the Ninth Party Congress. It receded thereafter as state and Party organs regrouped from the shock of the Cultural Revolution. Lin Biao's

purge in 1971 brought a sharp reduction in PLA representation on the Politburo and hastened the army's retreat from the de facto administrative powers it had assumed. But the PLA remained close to the center of crucial issues and policy debates, supporting Hua Guofeng in his purge of the Gang in late 1976 and having an obvious interest in the military aspects of the four modernizations. The Sino-Vietnamese war of early 1979 was a telling reminder of the salience of security issues, and the inevitable influence of the military, in Chinese politics.

### *Mass Organizations*

PRC political institutions also include a great variety of mass organizations which create links between leaders and citizens and help to mobilize the population for political and economic tasks. In some cases, they administer service programs for their members; at some times—although with little consistency—they have served as something like interest groups for the people they represent. The most important mass organizations are those for youth, women and workers: the Communist Youth League (CYL), the All-China Women's Federation, and All-China Federation of Trade Unions. Most other occupational and professional groups also have their national organizations. In a special category are the "democratic parties," a collective designation for eight minor political groups that cooperated with the Communist-led united front of the late 1940s and continued to operate, in a sharply limited status (for example, representation on the CPPCC), by virtue of their acceptance of CCP leadership and the demand that they undertake "self reform."

The major mass organizations were active in the 1950s, expanding their memberships and contributing their organizational resources to all of the great campaigns. The CYL became exceptionally important as the primary screening and training organization for new CCP members. The Cultural Revolution brought radical attacks on all mass organizations as creatures of the bureaucratic establishment of the "capitalist roaders." They were suspended, with new organizations known as Red Guards or "revolutionary rebels" rising to take their place in organizing mass participation in that movement. Despite their prominence in 1966-68, Red Guards and rebels failed to establish themselves as national organizations and were soon disbanded. The old mass organizations began to revive after 1969, but it was clear that they remained controversial. It was only after the fall of the Gang, who were accused of "wreaking havoc" on the mass organizations, that their reactivation gathered momentum.

By 1979, the mass organizations were once again an established feature of the Chinese system, holding national conferences and

affirming their dual responsibility to represent members' interests and assist in carrying out Party policies. Even the democratic parties—which had been criticized heavily as early as 1957 and had apparently been abolished in the Cultural Revolution—were in the news again, as was the old united front vehicle, the CPPCC. The political influence of the democratic parties and the CPPCC is negligible, but the symbolic importance of their reinstatement is substantial. It reflects the revival of united front themes, of broad unity among all strata of Chinese society, and by the same token it weakens the theme of sharp class struggle that was so strong between 1957 and 1976.

### *Changing Institutional Patterns*

Three points emerge from this survey of PRC institutional history. First, institutional experimentation and controversy, rather than stable institutional growth, characterized the 1949-79 period. For example, at the most general level one can identify an early period of PLA administrative power, then a period of state ascendance during the mid-1950s, then the phenomenon of "Party as government" during the Leap, then the virtual collapse of state and CCP institutions and the resort to military rule in the Cultural Revolution, and finally renewed institutional strengthening of state and Party since 1976. These generalizations overstate the contrast—the CCP retained some degree of political leadership throughout—but they suggest a pattern of frequent changes in institutional relationships. Similar contrasts emerge in shifts between legalistic and mobilizational approaches to institutions, between top-down controls and spontaneity in mass organizations, and between repression and encouragement of popular criticism. The institutionalization of the Chinese revolution has been a prolonged, controversial, and even open-ended process. It is essential to keep this history in mind, as a cautionary note, in assessing the post-1976 trend toward stabilization.

Second, there are some lines of institutional continuity that make predictions of greater future stability plausible if not certain. Institutional factors have remained much the same since 1949; the relationship or balance of power among them has been in flux, but the basic cast of state, Party, army, and mass organizations has held firm. The political leadership of the CCP has been a constant, despite the severe shock of the Cultural Revolution. Local institutions and administrative units, which experienced pronounced changes in the 1950s, have been essentially stable since the early 1960s. Central state and Party institutions bore the brunt of the Cultural Revolution, and it is possible that they may now settle down with their period of greatest turmoil behind them. Political trends of

1976-79 suggest this is the case, although they are far from proving their permanence.

Finally, it is apparent that the institutional dispensation of the late 1970s is quite similar to that of the mid-1950s. This similarity has been an asset to Mao's successors, who have been able to cite all kinds of precedents and documents from the 1950s—including Mao's own words—to legitimate their institutional reforms. There is no need to note the specific similarities, most of which have been mentioned in the preceding discussion. The more important question is how the late 1970s *differ* from the mid-1950s; if they were the same, the "new period" would in fact be reactionary. To explore this question, and to emphasize ways in which PRC political institutions have evolved since the 1950s, I will look more carefully at post-1949 change in the CCP—the organization that is, after all, by far the most critical in any assessment of Chinese political life.

## TRANSFORMATION OF THE CCP

The most dramatic changes in the CCP have been those associated with elite conflicts and related campaigns. These are the events that have been headline news around the world, publicizing the dialectical character of PRC political processes. Elite cleavage and its ideological underpinnings are analyzed elsewhere in this book. The discussion here focuses on less dramatic but equally significant developments in Party membership, organizational problems and societal relationships. Although it deals only with general trends, it suggests that the transformation of the CCP has redefined some of the key issues of the first thirty years and has set the stage for what is legitimately termed a "new period."

### *Membership*

In 1949 the CCP had about four and a half million members.<sup>4</sup> Over the next four years, it added slightly over two million more, many of whom were peasant activists emerging in land reform struggles. The CCP in 1953 was still essentially an organization of peasants and experienced revolutionaries, relatively free of urban, intellectual and bureaucratic components. The years of the First Five-Year Plan (1953-57) marked a fundamental shift. Membership almost doubled as it rose to nearly thirteen million in 1957. The primary cause of this spurt was expansion of governmental staff

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4. For Party membership policies and problems in the 1950s, see Lewis, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-120.

required by socialization of the economy. The number of state cadres rose from less than a million in 1949 to nearly eight million in 1959,<sup>5</sup> while organizations outside the formal state structure were also adding staff rapidly. The CCP faced a critical choice: should it remain a relatively small organization of political cadres overseeing the bureaucracies needed to run the new system, or should it ensure control of the bureaucracy by incorporating large elements of it into its own ranks? The CCP made the latter choice, hoping to politicize the bureaucracy from within by filling it with Party members. In the long run, the result was to bureaucratize the Party, an outcome foreseen and struggled against by Mao and others but never effectively counteracted. In retrospect, it seems unlikely that the CCP could have remained a "party above the state" and still have provided the close political direction its policies required. In any case, the early decision to make Party membership nearly coterminous with administrative authority and political leadership at all levels of the system set in motion a process of growth and bureaucratization with far-reaching consequences.

The first consequence was a new pattern of recruitment as the CCP began to add urban workers, young people with intellectual or technical skills, and some older intellectuals who had the qualifications needed for governmental positions. By 1957, the CCP included large numbers of workers and intellectuals. Although still greatly outnumbered within the CCP by members from peasant backgrounds, these urban types seemed the wave of the future. Intellectuals, for example, constituted 15 percent of the membership in 1957; the two million in question represented a very large proportion of China's educational elite. Intellectuals were in such demand as members that their chance of admission had become far greater than that of any other social group.

The Maoist upsurge of the late 1950s, which was in part a reaction against this trend, halted the deliberate recruitment of intellectuals and other "experts." For the next twenty years, they were regarded with suspicion as the most likely carriers of "bourgeois" influence. But a second major consequence of the decision to expand Party ranks was now emerging: the CCP was becoming an organization of post-1949 recruits who lacked revolutionary experience. As early as 1961, 80 percent of the then 17 million members were post-1949 recruits and 70 percent had joined since 1953.

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5. Ying-mao Kau, "Patterns of Recruitment and Mobility of Urban Cadres," in John Wilson Lewis, ed., *The City in Communist China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971), p. 106.

Growth continued over the Cultural Revolution decade, despite the disruptions and purges of that campaign. By 1977 (as announced at the Eleventh Congress), CCP membership had grown to over 35 million: almost all members had joined since 1949 and, indeed, nearly half had joined since the start of the Cultural Revolution.

CCP recruitment policies between 1958 and 1976 were cautious about "experts"—scientists, technicians and other intellectuals—while favoring young people of "good" class background. In all likelihood, however, those recruited had a better-than-average education, simply because they could not perform the largely administrative or clerical tasks demanded of them without it. The need for skilled recruits was acknowledged after Mao's death; and by 1979 the CCP had announced a new policy of actively seeking intellectual members, especially scientists and technicians. Crude as this data is, it establishes three important points. The CCP's desire to ensure political control by staffing bureaucratic agencies with Party members led to steady growth after 1953 and produced an organization of 36 million members by 1979. This phenomenal growth transformed the Party rank-and-file from peasants and revolutionaries to post-1949 recruits whose qualifications and orientations were more bureaucratic in nature. The greatest need was for highly-educated members—given their relatively few numbers in China—and although Maoists tried to limit their influence, they were primary targets of recruitment in the mid-1950s and again after 1976.

### *Organizational Problems*

CCP organizational problems reflect its growth; *any* organization of such size faces difficulties in managing its affairs. In the case of the CCP, the task is compounded by the extraordinary demands of membership.<sup>6</sup> The Party sees itself as a tightly-knit, highly-skilled, cohesive, dedicated, and disciplined body. It calls for extreme care in recruitment, training, and advancement, with detailed records and assessments on each and every member. Expectations that seem most appropriate for elite army units, religious orders, or clandestine organizations govern a huge conglomeration of high-level bureaucrats, technical specialists, and low-level functionaries. One wonders how CCP personnel departments handle this load, how often organizational principles are disregarded, when files will be computerized, and so on. Rhetorical questions aside, there are specific problems that deserve special mention.

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6. For an official exposition, in 1974, of CCP characteristics and its expectations of members, see "Fundamentals of the Party," translated in *Chinese Law and Government*, VIII: 2-3 (Summer-Fall 1975).

A cursory look at changes in the CC indicates that CCP top leadership has not been immune to organizational growing pains.<sup>7</sup> The CC grew from 77 members in 1945 (Seventh Congress) to 333 in 1977 (Eleventh Congress), becoming less a cohesive working group and more a representative congress of diverse interests. Growth and purges brought substantial turnover of personnel; the lowest percentage of new members in a newly elected CC was 31 in 1973, the highest 81 in 1969. The number of members who came from the PLA rose sharply at the Ninth Congress (1969) and then declined in the 1970s, although remaining higher than in the 1950s. Members from provincial-level units also increased significantly during the Cultural Revolution and have retained over 60 percent of the seats ever since, underscoring the CC's acquisition of a more nationally representative quality. These fluctuations reflect long-term changes in the Party, and elite conflict over how to cope with them.

The crux of the top elite's organizational problem was the continuing dominance of the first generation of revolutionary leaders. Despite high rates of turnover, new CC members continued to come mainly from members who had joined the Party before the epic "Long March" of 1934-35. Long March veterans held about 80 percent of the Ninth CC seats; they declined to 63 percent of the Tenth CC and then rose again to 67 percent of the Eleventh. In some ways an asset in terms of experience and continuity, the Long Marchers' dominance also created strains. It blocked access to the top for more recent recruits, exacerbating Cultural Revolution conflicts. It complicated the leadership's grudging accommodation of the organizational trends described, creating disputes between those willing to accept the demands of bureaucratic leadership and those who wanted to retain the older, more informal, personalized style. As the years went by, the CCP developed new modes and institutions of decision making and communications,<sup>8</sup> but they were not easily assimilated, especially so long as Mao's presence encouraged more personalized executive processes. The Long Marchers' dominance also perpetuated old controversies, which became more bitter with successive factional battles. Finally, it produced a significant gulf between the experiences of the elderly elite monopolizing the highest posts

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7. See Jurgen Domes, "China in 1977: A Reversal of the Verdict," *Asian Survey*, XVIII: 1 (January 1978) 1-16; and Townsend, *op. cit.*, Chapter 6.

8. Documented and analyzed in Kenneth Lieberthal, *A Research Guide to Central Party and Government Meetings in China, 1949-1975* (White Plains: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1976); and *Central Documents and Politburo Politics in China* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Chinese Studies, 1978).

and those of the Party rank-and-file.

Mao's successors have taken a big step toward bridging this gulf. They have begun to raise younger people to the top and have called for institutionalization of modern management techniques throughout the system. The 1980s will end the first generation's dominance and see the rise of some elites closer to the general membership in background experiences. The transition will be difficult, however, for an organization that has grown so fast and developed such complex layers of interests.

A second major organizational problem has been recruitment processes. The CCP began to institutionalize recruitment in the early 1950s, relying largely on the CYL and the PLA as feeder institutions. Since the CYL was strongest in the secondary schools and colleges, and since the PLA also had its pick of China's youth, access to the Party became a highly competitive game that depended on the special skills or opportunities needed to pass the first organizational hurdle. Those who made that hurdle still had to face close review by the Party itself. By the early 1960s, Maoist rhetoric notwithstanding, this recruitment system had entrenched itself and seemed to favor prospects who had more education or closer ties to the bureaucratic establishment.

The Cultural Revolution attacked this recruitment process with calls for "fresh blood" and renewed efforts to bring in worker-peasant types. Admission was simplified by dropping the requirement for a year's probation before full membership; scattered reports suggested that admission procedures became quicker and more flexible. The growth from 17 million CCP members in 1961 to over 35 million in 1977 probably came mainly after 1968, favoring Cultural Revolution activists and others sponsored by the Gang of Four. The Gang's downfall brought another reversal, essentially back to the earlier pattern. The 1977 constitution restored the probationary requirement and called for tighter admission procedures. The CYL resumed its screening role and the Party adopted its forthright policy of encouraging recruitment of intellectuals. The new leaders lambasted the Gang for "crash admittance" programs that were said to have confused and undermined organizational discipline.

This last point about discipline suggests a third organizational problem, namely, the difficulty of maintaining the CCP's desired standard of unity in an organization that has experienced such rapid growth under such controversial circumstances. The Party rank-and-file in 1977 was divided into two roughly equal groups: those recruited between 1949 and 1966 under the CYL-dominated process, and those recruited after 1966 when the schools and the CYL were

in disarray and the influence of Cultural Revolution radicalism was strong. This cleavage, which was both generational and political, was only one of many divisions produced by CCP expansion as a bureaucratic organization; geographic and agency or functional differences were also potential sources of interest conflicts.

The Eleventh CC's Third Plenum of December 1978 demonstrated the complexities of the issue. On the one hand, the Plenum warned against problems of bureaucracy and "overconcentration of authority," calling for decentralization, simplification, and rationalization of management. It specifically attacked the "substitution of Party for government and the substitution of government for enterprise management," thereby identifying the fundamental cause of the CCP's long-term growth and bureaucratization. In an indirect acknowledgement of organizational diversity and complexity, it reiterated the need to observe principles of intra-Party democracy and collective leadership. On the other hand, the Plenum insisted that the new commissions for inspecting discipline—subsequently identified as direct descendents of the CCP control commissions of the 1950s, said to have been abolished by Lin Biao and the Gang—were essential agencies for maintaining discipline, centralism, and observance of rules and regulations within the Party. There is no easy way out of this classic bureaucratic conundrum. The leadership is no doubt sincere in its desire to moderate bureaucratic tendencies; but since it cannot be expected to dismantle itself, it resorts to bureaucratic modes of addressing the problem. Its most likely course is to muddle through, advocating efficiency and responsiveness even as it installs agencies for enforcing disciplined compliance with central regulations and policies.

### *Societal Relationships*

In his "Political Report" to the Eighth National Party Congress in 1956, Liu Shaoqi observed that revolutionary war and the post-liberation reconstruction had required leading the masses in direct action to "liberate the people from reactionary rule and to free the productive forces of society from the bondage of old relations of production." He continued: "Now, however, the period of revolutionary storm and stress is past, new relations of production have been set up, and the aim of our struggle is changed into one of safeguarding the successful development of the productive forces of society."<sup>9</sup> This view, widely shared at the time, soon gave way to Mao's emphasis on the contradictions within socialist society and the need

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9. *Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Vol. I: Documents* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1956), pp. 81-82.

for long-term class struggle to overcome the danger of capitalist restoration. In the Cultural Revolution, the Maoists identified Liu as the leading "capitalist roader" for his views and insisted that only repeated cultural revolutions could defeat persistent bourgeois influences within the "superstructure" and indeed the Party itself. Party statements on this issue in 1977-79 resembled Liu's position, explicitly rejecting the Gang's contentions about continuing class struggle against the "bourgeoisie within the Party." This is only one of many ways in which the "new period" seems a throwback to the mid-1950s.

Similarities between the late 1970s and the mid-1950s identify the precedents for many institutional and theoretical formulations and help to illustrate the major poles of Chinese political debate over the past thirty years. Nevertheless, the "new period" is not simply a restoration; the similarities are real and important, but the times have changed. Perhaps the most important change is in the CCP's relationship to society.

Mao's concern that the CCP might "change color," its ruddy revolutionary hue fading to revisionist pallor, took shape in the late 1950s. It reflected his assessment of the bureaucratization associated with the First Five-Year Plan, of the emergence of Soviet revisionism, of the bourgeois character of China's intellectuals as expressed in the "Hundred Flowers" episode of 1957, and of the sheer effort needed to overcome China's underdevelopment and the social inertia that underlay it. He saw the proletarian vanguard as vulnerable to penetration by these forces. The CCP in 1956 was, after all, still distinct from much of the society it governed. Its members were less than two percent of the population. Its primary organizations had still not penetrated all local units. It was still dominated by revolutionary cadres, who had just promoted a series of sweeping reform campaigns within a society only partly ready to receive them. There had been heavy doses of terror in these campaigns, leaving many of the surviving targets and their relatives embittered. The "experts" whom the Party needed were in most cases justly identified as "bourgeois intellectuals." They were also in place as the teachers of the next generation, so that the Party had nowhere to turn for educated youth entirely free of pre-1949 influences. Socialist economic institutions were in place but scarcely secure; peasant withdrawals from collectives were common whenever the CCP relaxed its collectivization drive.

In this light, the first institutionalization of the mid-1950s was premature. Liu was correct about basic completion of institutional transformation but overly optimistic about the stability of the new

institutions. Granted that subsequent upheavals were man-made, or Mao-made, it is clear in retrospect that Mao was more accurate in his perception of the CCP's vulnerability to the influences he feared. The current emphasis on institutionalization rests on a different social foundation, however.

By 1979 the ratio of Party members to population had roughly doubled, to nearly four percent, and CCP organization was thoroughly entrenched at the grass roots. Party members in the localities were no longer outside cadres sent in to implement drastic and possibly threatening changes, but in the main—there were still exceptions, of course—were locally recruited leaders who had a natural place in their units. The CCP had become a product of the society it governed. It was still an elite organization in terms of political leadership and social status, but its membership was no longer so distinct from Chinese society as a whole. Whereas in 1949 the CCP was representative mainly of the peasant-based revolutionary movement, in 1979 its members came from exceedingly diverse sectors, regions, and groups, so that organization contained representatives of most of the significant interests within Chinese society.

The danger that the CCP might be captured by bourgeois experts, which was not implausible when they were the only experts to be had, was by 1979 greatly diminished. New intellectuals trained since 1949 greatly outnumbered the old intellectuals, whose political significance and numbers had declined drastically; some might display "new-born bourgeois" characteristics, as Mao feared, but their social background was very different from that of the older group. More significantly, the pool of potential recruits for the Party—those with special educational or organizational skills—had expanded enormously. Middle school enrollments increased from about 10 million in 1958 to nearly 60 million in 1977. The CYL claimed 48 million members in 1978. And decades of mass line practices had heightened political skills and awareness among the population generally. These potential recruits, unlike those of the 1950s, had lived, worked, and been educated wholly within the institutions of socialist society. Whatever the CCP might think of the qualifications of its current and future recruits—and indeed of those joining at any time since the mid-1960s—they bear the imprint of Party-dominated institutions and policies.

The main point is this. In the 1950s, CCP organization was distinct from much of Chinese society. Its members possessed qualities very different from those of ordinary citizens. Its institutions were new and insecure. They were staffed in part by people unfamiliar with, and even hostile toward, Party goals and principles. As it

expanded, the CCP had to assimilate new members not of its own making. By the late 1970s, Party and society had merged in a way that blurred these earlier problems. There were still conflicts in Chinese society, still doubts about the future of Chinese socialism, but the antagonists and alternatives were no longer adequately described in terms of a socialist party versus a non-socialist society.

## EMERGING INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS

The preceding discussion has suggested, albeit very cautiously, that the "new period" is likely to bring institutional stabilization and a moderation of the Maoist fear that non-socialist forces will stage a "capitalist restoration." The post-Mao leadership has replaced images of internal class struggle with emphasis on the basic unity of socialist society. Two decades of institutional growth and experimentation make the current proclamation of socialist consolidation far more credible than that of the mid-1950s. But even if the socialist structure is now secure, and to some extent institutionally stabilized, there are two major sources of strain within it.

The first of these revolves around the changing character of the PRC bureaucratic elite and the possibility that it will produce new cleavages in Chinese society as formidable as the old ones. Throughout most of PRC history, the CCP portrayed itself as leading the working population against the feudal and bourgeois influences of the old society. The bourgeois intellectuals and descendants of landlord families were convenient representatives of non-socialist classes existing in socialist society. When "capitalist roaders" were discovered within the CCP during the Cultural Revolution, their "new class" character was linked to the continuing influence of these old social forces. The post-Mao leadership has undermined this image of social cleavage in two ways.

First, it has renounced the previous image of class struggle—by defining intellectuals as part of the working population (mental rather than manual laborers, but workers nonetheless), by granting amnesty to many branded as class enemies in past campaigns, and by removing class labels for the descendants of landlords and other exploiting elements. Generally, it has supported these proclamations by arguing that socialist transformation has produced a new society in which socialist education and institutions have dissolved the old class divisions. There is a functional division of labor now—as between mental and manual labor—but no grounds for class struggle among the vast majority of the population. Second, it has called for recruitment of intellectuals into the Party and simultaneously urged

CCP cadres to acquire the expertise needed to oversee attainment of the four modernizations.

These changes point to the creation of a new technocratic elite, one that is indeed "red and expert" but hardly in the Maoist sense. For Mao, "redness" was genuine revolutionary experience or behavior, "expertise" a loose category not limited to high-level technological skills. In the post-Mao version, "redness" has become much more attainable, since virtually everyone has socialist credentials, whereas "expertise" has taken on more concrete connotations of academic, technical and managerial skills. If this merger of political and intellectual elitehood proceeds unchecked, it will yield a dominant stratum much more powerful than the "class enemies" of the 1950s and 1960s. If it is to be checked—an act that would require legitimating class analysis—it is difficult to see how the question of a "new class" within socialist society can be avoided. Maoism is a weapon in reserve for those who might wish to pursue this question in the future.

A second source of strain is the problem of socialist democracy. Just as in the 1950s, the proclamation of socialist unity has brought calls for more legalistic and regularized procedures, with particular emphasis on strengthening socialist democracy. This trend gathered momentum throughout 1977-78, with many references to the importance of legal codification and study, to the Gang's abuse of democratic procedures, and to the need to fulfill constitutional guarantees on popular rights. By the winter of 1978-79, a new "Hundred Flowers" atmosphere had appeared, with vigorous academic debate of sensitive issues and a burgeoning democratic movement manifested in daring wall posters critical of the system, much public discussion and argument over this criticism, and a few public marches and demonstrations to dramatize grievances. In the spring of 1979, the CCP cracked down, arresting some of the dissidents, announcing sharper limits on the definition of acceptable forms of expression, and reminding all concerned that PRC democracy is for the benefit of socialism and not for its "enemies."

These events are too fresh to assess properly, but the issue of socialist democracy will remain lively and controversial in the years ahead. The Maoist period, with its stress on populism and the mass line, left a legacy of popular political activism that responded quickly to the post-Mao "liberalization." Encouragement of socialist democracy and legality created opportunities for the airing of conflicts and grievances that are an inescapable part of China's drive for modernization. Yet at the same time the CCP remains committed to the democratic centralism and Party dictatorship that buttress its

monopoly of decisions directing that drive. Populism and Party leadership coexist in a contradictory relationship that will continue to test and at times unsettle Chinese political institutions.

Professor James R. Townsend is a member of the faculty of the Department of Political Science and of the School of International Studies, University of Washington, Seattle.

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# Political Development: Leadership, Politics, and Ideology

*Lowell Dittmer*

The purpose of this paper is to survey the general nature and thrust of political development in China over the past thirty years. Whereas James Townsend has been primarily concerned with changing structure and processes of political institutions, in this essay political development is conceptualized in terms of three analytical categories: leadership, politics, and ideology. "Leadership" refers to the way central leaders mobilize the popular and bureaucratic support they need to formulate and implement national policies. "Politics" refers to the way leaders mediate power relationships among themselves, whether through dispute, compromise, or domination. "Ideology" refers to the vision of the general goals toward which the leadership is attempting to move the political system ("line"), and the method and pace of this movement. We shall discuss each of these topics separately for the entire thirty-year period, then conclude by trying to extract some generalizations from all three.

## LEADERSHIP

Although much of what China has achieved in the past thirty years has been due to the high quality of her leadership, her leaders have exhibited a curiously ambivalent attitude about their own role. Mao Zedong has consistently belittled the importance of leadership, intending thereby to ascribe more importance to the role of the masses. The masses, Mao insisted, are enthusiastic and resourceful, the source of historical innovation: "The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history."<sup>1</sup> Or during the land reform: "The masses have an immense force of

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1. Mao Zedong, *Selected Works* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), III, 257. [Hereafter *SW*.]

enthusiasm for socialism . . . [they] are endowed with an unlimited creative power." In 1968 he put it more trenchantly: "Humble people are the most intelligent, and prominent people the most idiotic." Yet on the other hand, Mao has also indirectly attributed great influence to leadership, particularly intellectual leadership. The Cultural Revolution was based on the notion that ideas (the "superstructure") may determine history, and that those ideas may be manipulated by political leaders. One of the more benign effects of this notion is that the "people" are never blamed for falling into error; they have been misled by "backstage backers," by evil leaders.

Although there is perhaps a certain logical inconsistency between these two positions, the paradox is resolved in the form of a charismatic form of leadership that places equal emphasis on mass participation and elite inspiration. While Mao showed remarkable patience in his career, and an ability to adapt to changing political opportunities, he found the ideal vehicle for the exercise of charismatic leadership in the *mass movement*.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the early 1950s, the mass movement played a critical role in the transformation of the Chinese political landscape: mass movements socialized the means of production, ostracized and punished enemies of the people, rectified the world of ideas and culture, even cleaned up public sanitation and essayed national economic reconstruction. And at the forefront of each of these campaigns, exhorting the masses with pithy slogans and chiding balky bureaucrats, was Chairman Mao, whose stature was appreciably enhanced by the series of successes achieved.

Ultimately, the ambition to restructure Chinese social reality through campaigns came to grief in the Great Leap Forward. And despite the revival of the campaign style (in somewhat modified form) in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution about a decade later, the mass movement was never really able to reclaim its efficacy as a vehicle for charismatic leadership and social change. Part of the reason was that the campaign had overreached itself, being used to accomplish tasks for which it was not ideally suited, such as the attempt to restructure the primary family by building communal mess halls, dormitories and crèches during the Great Leap. But even before this, subtle changes were taking place in Chinese society that tended to undermine the conditions under which the campaign could be most effective. The three most important of these

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2. A comprehensive examination of the mass movement may be found in Charles Cell, *Revolution at Work: Mobilization Campaigns in China* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

conditions were mass consciousness, credible opposition, and a close relationship between leaders and masses. We shall now define these three conditions more explicitly and show how they were being undermined.

*Mass consciousness* designates the awareness that one has certain interests in common with the "masses," however the latter are defined at the time. The term is a variant of "class consciousness" designed to take into account the CCP's preference for working with united front-style class coalitions. The early campaigns were able to mobilize mass consciousness by making fairly explicit appeals to common interests. For example, both land reform and the early stages of collectivization advertised, and to some extent provided, material benefits to the poor and lower-middle peasants. The campaign to implement the Marriage Law of 1950 appealed to women and to the younger generation, the constituency that most obviously stood to gain from a reform of the traditional extended family.<sup>3</sup>

But the Great Leap Forward, which made commitments to its mass constituency that it proved unable to fulfill, inaugurated a new era of dwindling campaign resources.<sup>4</sup> One of the reasons the Socialist Education Movement never really got off the ground is that it became embroiled in controversy over how to define its mass constituency, with one leadership group referring to a central cleavage between advanced and backward productive sectors or the "four clean" and the "four unclean," and the other attempting to mobilize the poor and lower-middle peasants against a vaguely defined assortment of elites.<sup>5</sup> The Cultural Revolution made implicit promises of power and ennoblement to its radical constituents that were cruelly dashed during the subsequent campaign to send young people "up to the mountains and down to the villages."<sup>6</sup> And many of the later campaigns launched under the auspices of the "Gang of Four" had the effect of repudiating the idea that the masses should aspire to realize their interests through political action. For example, the campaign against "bourgeois right" condemned the principle of

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3. See Elisabeth Croll, *Feminism and Socialism in China* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

4. For an interesting discussion of the role of resources in campaign dynamics, see Albert Breton and Raymond Breton, "An Economic Theory of Social Movements," *The American Economic Review*, LIX: 2 (May 1969), 198-205.

5. See Richard Baum and Frederick C. Teiwes, *Ssu-ch'ing: The Socialist Education Movement of 1962-1966* (Berkeley: University of California, Center for Chinese Studies, 1968).

6. See Thomas Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976).

reward according to work and encouraged people to work voluntarily in the public interest, condemned the privileges that had become vested in China's socialist leadership, and denounced the exchange of political favors and patronage.<sup>7</sup>

Even the more strictly economic campaigns, such as the campaign to emulate Dazhai, apparently resulted only in a more egalitarian distribution of existing resources in most cases and did not deliver on their promise to increase the productivity of the unit. Although the post-Cultural Revolution campaigns were directed chiefly against errant members of the leadership, and therefore sought to lay claim to a mass interest in enhancing their own status by derogating that of their superiors, they also imposed some extra burdens (such as more frequent attendance of study meetings), and entailed added risk of committing "errors" and thereby falling subject to criticism.

Mao deemed *credible opposition* essential to political action for several reasons. Employing metaphors from the blast furnace as well as the inoculation ward,<sup>8</sup> he has emphasized the need for would-be adherents to test their commitment under adverse conditions. Those who survived the ordeal would be "steeled," while those who wavered should be sloughed off.<sup>9</sup> Another function of opposition was to provide the movement with a clear target for the catharsis of negative impulses and to suggest the positive (opposite) direction of movement. Credible opposition was thus indispensable to the effective functioning of the campaign. Yet within the People's Republic there were few resources on which opponents could draw, and the latter proved acutely vulnerable to the campaign tactics of ostracism and universal criticism. The very success of the campaign at discrediting opposition led to a steady diminution in the supply of those willing to profess opposition.

One way of dealing with the decline in the supply of professed

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7. See Lowell Dittmer, "The Radical Critique of Political Interest, 1966-1978," *Modern China*, forthcoming.

8. Mao uses the "inoculation" metaphor in "Talks at a Conference of Secretaries of Provincial, Municipal and Autonomous Region Party Committees" (January 1957), *SW*, V, 369-70. The "blast furnace" is discussed in "Beat Back the Attacks of the Bourgeois Rightists" (July 9, 1957), *SW*, V, p. 459.

9. As he notes in retrospect to the Cultural Revolution: "Actually, it only disrupted the enemy and tempered the good people. . . . Without the disorder, how would it be possible for us to discriminate between the good and the bad people; how could we have forced Lin Biao to jump out?" "Mao's Talks to Liberated Cadres and Cadres from Wuhan" (Autumn 1974), *Fei-ch'ing yüeh-pao*, XVII:12 (February 1975), 78-79.

opponents was to identify opponents on the basis of some objective criterion, such as class background. This identified the opponent, whether he professed it or not, and eliminated the uncertainties of the search. However, because the classification of class backgrounds was conducted only once and the stigma of a bad class background could rarely be overcome, this resulted in the same people being brought out for criticism during every campaign regardless of their conduct.<sup>10</sup> To the extent that this trend was allowed to continue, it introduced a fatalism to the moral struggle and threatened to rigidify class into caste.<sup>11</sup>

To those most committed to ideological objectives, it was therefore necessary to deemphasize class and to intensify the search for those who opposed the revolution. Because the latter refused to manifest their opposition, the searchers tended to fasten upon increasingly insubstantial differences as evidence of opposition. In the pre-Liberation period, opposition figures such as Zhang Guotao or Wang Ming made the grounds for their opposition clear, even articulate.<sup>12</sup> Although we know perhaps less about the Gao Gang-Rao Shushi purge than any other major leadership dispute, they too seem to have made a fairly frank statement of their position.<sup>13</sup> In the case of Peng Dehuai, about which our information is relatively complete, Peng seems to have gone to rather elaborate lengths to present his objections to Great Leap policies in a discreet way; but the nub of his disagreement was still discernible, and Mao pounced on it and blew it out of proportion in order to justify getting rid of the old marshal.<sup>14</sup>

But in the case of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, notwithstanding the oceans of ink expended on big-character posters and polemical tabloids, the extent of the actual difference between the "proletarian revolutionary line" and the "bourgeois reactionary line"

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10. See for example Ying Lai, *The Thirty-Sixth Way* (New York: Doubleday, 1969).

11. See Richard C. Kraus, "Class Conflict," *China Quarterly*, 69 (March 1977), 54-75.

12. See Lynn Feintech, "The Life and Thought of Ch'en Shao-yü," M.A. Thesis, Berkeley; University of California, 1974; and Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party, 1928-1938* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1972).

13. For an interesting but controversial interpretation of this position, see Roy F. Grow, "Soviet Models in China: Kao Kang and the Politics of Economic Development," unpublished manuscript, Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass., November 1978.

14. See Union Research Institute, *The Case of P'eng Te-huai, 1959-1968* (Hong Kong: Union Research Press, 1968).

remained extremely subtle, if due account is taken of those periods when Mao cooperated in the implementation of a moderate line.<sup>15</sup> Whether substantive policy differences were at issue in the break with Lin Biao and Chen Boda is still a matter of controversy given our lack of reliable evidence, but at least one prominent student of this episode has concluded that policy differences were very minor if they existed at all.<sup>16</sup> Although great pains have since been taken to place distance between Mao and the Gang of Four, whether and how much such distance actually existed also remains a matter of dispute, particularly in view of the probability that the Four could not have survived without Mao's support. (The assumption that there were policy and ideological differences between the Four and many other senior officials can be more easily sustained, though even this has been exaggerated considerably.)

Despite—or in defensive reaction to—the increasingly invisible evidence of deviation, the polemical indictment supposedly derived from this evidence underwent steady inflation. Whereas the purge of Gao and Rao proceeded internally and was then briefly revealed to the public as a *fait accompli*, the purge of Peng Dehuai was followed by a vigorous public repudiation of the charges he had aired—in the form of a revival of the Leap. The purges of Liu Shaoqi and Lin Biao were each followed by about two years of public invective. The increasingly protracted and comprehensive character of these criticism campaigns have tended to support a sharp shift from the policies associated with the old "line" and a somewhat self-deceptive optimism about the prospects for the new one. Finally, after all was said and done, there was also an increasing likelihood that the target of the campaign would be rehabilitated to a leadership position within a few years. Gao and Rao were not heard from again, but Peng's followers were rehabilitated in the early 1960s (and even Peng in 1978), and nearly every victim of the Cultural Revolution but Liu himself has reappeared.<sup>17</sup>

When the history of the use of opposition targets in mass movements over the past thirty years is surveyed, the values that these targets were chosen to symbolize seem too disparate—ranging

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15. See my *Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 214-297.

16. Michael Y. M. Kau, *The Lin Piao Affair: Power Politics and Military Coup* (White Plains, N.Y.: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1975), pp. xix-lix.

17. See Hong Yung Lee's articles, "The Politics of Cadre Rehabilitation Since the Cultural Revolution," unpublished paper; and "The Entanglement of Ideology and Cadre Politics After the Cultural Revolution," Association of Asian Studies Convention, March 1979, Los Angeles, California.

from the radicalism of the Gang of Four, through the liberalism of Hu Feng, to the pragmatism of Deng Xiaoping—to add up to any cumulative impact. The impact seems to have been more on the *form* that politics took than on substantive value change: a continuing and sometimes intense search for deviance, increasing overt conformity at all social levels and in many aspects of life, a constant escalation of public invective, and a zigzag pattern of policy change. All of this seems to have undermined the credibility of opposition and contributed to the ritualization of public criticism. According to refugee accounts, the masses accepted cadre designations of targets and criticized them punctiliously but without conviction, considering the target a victim of circumstance rather than a villain, and remaining aware that the "spearhead" could easily shift.<sup>18</sup>

The third condition for successful charismatic leadership, a *close relationship between leaders and masses*, was a major focus of Mao's concern in the early 1960s. Alerted to the issue by his critique of Yugoslav and Soviet revisionism, Mao began to detect a tendency among Chinese officials as well to become alienated from the masses. This he attributed chiefly to "bureaucratism." Certainly it was true that there had been a tremendous growth in the size of the bureaucracy since Liberation, but this alone was not the reason for the change in the quality of the relationship between leaders and masses in China. Whereas in the pre-Liberation era the Party had depended on its constituency for survival, relying on the masses for military and material support which the latter might conceivably deny to them and award instead to an ever-threatening enemy, now the Party had control of the administrative apparatus of the State. Although the leadership continued to derive its wherewithal from the masses, it was no longer so dependent upon them; in fact, given the array of sanctions and inducements at its command, the relationship was in many ways reversed. The masses were dependent upon their leadership for the allocation of security, status, income, power, and for upward mobility in access to any of these values. Through its monopoly of the national military and police networks, the leadership had a monopoly over legitimate violence, and it also disposed over a highly effective apparatus of propaganda and persuasion.

The articulation of a modern mass communications network, through which all messages from the center may reach every participant simultaneously in identical form, greatly enhanced the

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18. Interviews conducted by the author in Hong Kong in the spring and the summer of 1977. See also Bao Ruo-wang and Rudolph Chelminski, *Prisoner of Mao* (New York: Penguin Books, 1973).

communicative capabilities of the central leadership, while simultaneously reducing those of the masses to contribute feedback. It became increasingly difficult to imagine how the "mass line" ideals of reciprocity, developed under small-scale, essentially face-to-face communicative conditions at Yen-an, could function under these radically altered circumstances. In short, the growth of the bureaucracy and of a multiplicative media network changed the relationship between leaders and masses in two ways: it attuned everyone to the wishes of the authorities and fostered a sense of passive dependence among the masses, and it made the persuasive powers of the center more powerful but at the same time less discriminating.<sup>19</sup>

In Mao's attack during the Cultural Revolution on the problem of bureaucratism, he made use of the second of these changes to try to reverse the first. Frustrated in his efforts to instigate the type of reform he wanted from within the bureaucracy, he took advantage of the cult that had been cultivated around his thought and person to communicate directly to the masses through the media, leading to the mobilization of the Red Guards against the bureaucracy. Initially enthused by the almost instantaneous nationwide response his words could evoke through the media,<sup>20</sup> Mao later found that the media were too indiscriminate for him to control the mobilized masses. The Red Guard movement factionalized after overcoming the chief bulwarks of civilian political authority, and each faction tended to interpret Mao's "latest instructions" according to its own interests.<sup>21</sup> To restore order, Mao ultimately had to resort to work teams ("Mao Zedong's Thought propaganda teams") and a reconstructed Party-State apparatus.

The second component of Mao's program for rectifying the relationship between leaders and masses was to encourage the latter to voice their demands and grievances to the leaders directly through big-character posters and unofficial publications. Both media proliferated widely during the Cultural Revolution.<sup>22</sup> Tabloid newspapers ceased publication with the deactivation of Red Guard factions in 1968-69, but the big-character poster has since been constitutionally guaranteed and has continued to appear sporadically. This outcome

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19. See Dittmer, "The Structural Evolution of 'Criticism and Self-Criticism,'" *China Quarterly*, 55 (October-December 1973), 708-729.

20. Mao, "Speech at a Report Meeting" (October 24, 1966), translated in *Current Background*, 891 (October 8, 1969), 70.

21. See William Hinton, "Hundred Day War: The Cultural Revolution at Tsinghua University," *Monthly Review*, XXIV: 3 (July-August 1972).

22. See T. K. Tong, "Red Guard Newspapers," *Columbia Forum*, 12:1 (Spring 1969), 38-41.

seems in accord with Mao's original intention to encourage a more reciprocal relationship between leaders and masses. There is no question, however, that the shift of initiative to the masses has made leadership much more difficult—especially during mass movements, which tend easily to run out of control. Although Mao had pointed to a real problem and even contributed in some measure to its solution, he failed to take into account the indiscriminate character of the mass media and the heterogeneity of mass interests.

Mao's demobilization of the Red Guards signalled his concurrence that the Cultural Revolution could not continue in the form it then had, but he remained ambivalent about the leadership style he had hitherto embodied. Though he no longer issued instructions to the masses after 1969, he did apparently grant special license to the Four to use his currently unpublished statements to inspire a series of campaigns. Thus the Four adopted an unambiguously positive attitude toward the Cultural Revolution legacy, probably hoping to succeed the Chairman as the source of charismatic legitimacy. Nonetheless, the Four proved unable to realize the conditions for successful charismatic leadership. Mass consciousness could not be aroused because of the Four's principled refusal to appeal to mass self-interest. The search for credible opposition, already rendered difficult by the purge of Lin Biao, was hardly facilitated by their decision to attack Zhou Enlai, a most prestigious and powerful Chinese leader, second only to Mao—whose support he still retained. Finally, the Four apparently believed the admonition to stay close to the masses applied only to lower-level bureaucrats and sent-down youth. After 1969, they tended to rely on the mass media for their own communications with the masses. But as we have noted, the mass media are indiscriminate and one-way. The indiscriminate character of this medium accounts for the tendency of the mass movement to get out of hand in 1974-1976, while its one-way character accounts for the Four's increasing loss of touch with the true mood of the people.

Since Mao's death, the new regime has been faced with the question of what to inherit and what to forget. Initially, Hua Guofeng seemed intent upon restoring the Maoist leadership style in whole cloth, assuming the mantle as the Chairman's chosen successor and framing the Four as targets in the "eleventh great struggle between two lines." But Hua could no more realize the conditions for charismatic leadership than could the Four—a fact which he has since come to recognize. As of this writing, an agreement seems to have been reached to abandon the campaign altogether, signifying a marked departure from CCP tradition.<sup>23</sup> The Party will appeal for a

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23. At a county meeting of rural cadres of Liaoning, a provincial Party secretary warned, "we want to tell 'bristly' movement admirers who threaten cadres

well-disciplined mass consciousness via material incentives and the promise of modernization, but has no further need for credible opposition (hence the rehabilitation of rightists, declassification of bad classes, and the demise of the purge). More reciprocal and candid communication between masses and leaders is now seen as something that should be tolerated and at times actively encouraged, but there is no longer provision for an exemption *qua* campaign for the masses to abandon normal canons of civility in expressing demands or venting grievances.

## POLITICS

There has been a good deal of discussion outside China of the nature of the decision-making process at the highest levels of the Chinese political system. This is only natural given the centralized structure of that system and the critical importance of that process. In view of the tight secrecy that usually prevails, much of this discussion has necessarily been quite speculative. Until 1966, the paradigm most widely accepted in the West was one of charismatic authoritarian leadership, consisting of a supreme leader worshipped by the masses and assisted by an administrative staff and a hierarchically organized bureaucracy. A slightly different model was that of collective leadership, with substantial collegiality among colleagues, and even the formation of opinion groups could be permitted for an extended period of time provided such groups did not engage in conspiratorial intrigue or try to mobilize outside forces on their own behalf.<sup>24</sup> Both models were premised on the ability of the leadership to maintain an external front of monolithic solidarity.

This ability was of course shattered by the Cultural Revolution. This led to the introduction of two similar but slightly different models of intra-elite relations. The first of these was the factional model. This held that the leadership was permanently divided into an indefinite number of factions or loyalty groups, based on either bureaucratic interests or such elemental ties as patronage or common background, and that these factions would alternate over time

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with the words 'wait until the next movement'. . . 'the movement you need will never come again.'" Radio Shenyang, 18 February 1979 (*Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, 22 February 1979), 18; as quoted in Victor Falkenheim, "Administrative Reform and Modernization in Post-Mao China," unpublished paper, April 1979.

24. See Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 48 ff.

between open conflict and uneasy coalition.<sup>25</sup> The second model was one of "two-line struggle." It posited a cleavage of the leadership into two "headquarters" (i.e., two organizationally distinct informal leadership groups,) two "roads" (i.e., two sets of policy priorities aiming in basically different directions), and two "classes" (i.e., supported by opposing mass constituencies). Both of these models had in common a denial of the previously accepted image of leadership solidarity. They differed in their conception of the possible number of conflict groups and the agent responsible for the formation of cleavage. The factional model tended to derogate the importance of ideology, and to emphasize the primacy of power-political considerations. The "two-line struggle" model discovered fundamentally different world views at the root of all conflict.

Actually all of these models have something to tell us about the nature of high-level politics in China at different times and under different conditions. We may for analytical purposes define two basic models: one of elite solidarity, and another of conflict. The first model generally characterized Chinese politics from 1944 to 1965; the second characterized the periods before and since that time. The solidarity model is a combination of charismatic and collegial leadership. The supreme leader was able, with the consent and support of his colleagues, to generate a cult around his *persona* and thereby to enhance the popular legitimacy of the entire regime. At the same time, his relationship to his Politburo colleagues was theoretically more equal, as symbolized by the fact that all Politburo members have an equal vote. In other words, the solidarity model is one of *primus inter pares*, and has vacillated between dominance of the charismatic leader when the masses could be mobilized to support him and collegial leadership when the masses were quiescent and the bureaucracy in control. Although it would be misleading to put precise dates on this vacillation, the Great Leap was clearly an example of charismatic dominance, the 1949-1955 period generally one of collegiality.

The conflict model is also a composite, comprising elements of factionalism and two-line struggle. Factional groupings are formed to seize power and implement policies. They are based on patron-client ties, common backgrounds and other enduring bonds of loyalty.<sup>26</sup> Two-line struggle, on the other hand, is based on commitment

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25. See Andrew J. Nathan, "A Factional Model for CCP Politics," *China Quarterly*, 53 (January-March 1973), 34-67.

26. See Tang Tsou, "Prolegomenon to the Study of Informal Groups in CCP Politics," *China Quarterly*, 65 (January 1976), 98-114.

to differing world-views. It involves a vertical coalition of an elite faction (or coalition of factions) and a mass constituency. Factionalism thus may exist among elites alone; but two-line struggle is a product of the polarization precipitated when elites mobilize the masses in a public clash of world-views. The 1966-1968 period was a two-line struggle, and the subsequent campaigns to criticize Lin Biao and Confucius in 1973-1974, or Deng Xiaoping in 1976, were more inconclusive two-line struggles, but the remaining years during the 1965-1976 period could be better characterized as factionalism. During these periods there was no sharp polarization of positions, there were more than two conflict groups, and the maneuvering was complex.

The present pattern of intra-elite politics seems to be one of leadership solidarity of a collegial sort without a charismatic leader. There has been an attempt to place Hua Guofeng in this role, but because of the somewhat half-hearted nature of the attempt and Hua's own lack of charismatic achievements or qualities, it has not had spectacular success. If Hua is to claim a personality cult—and he still seems the only eligible candidate on the political scene—it can only be on the basis of his longevity in office, as in the case of Brezhnev. This means that for the foreseeable future there is not likely to be anyone in the Party with sufficient authority to impose discipline and enforce a single policy "line" for a sustained period.

As in the case of the death of Stalin, the death of Mao inaugurated an era of pluralism among elites, during which countervailing policy tendencies and opinion groups maintain a delicate and shifting balance. Events since the summer of 1978 suggest that there has been an agreement within the new leadership to settle policy differences by reallocating functional responsibilities but to stop short of purge, leaving the minority group in a viable position for a late recovery. Factions are no longer necessary as survival mechanisms under these circumstances, and elite coalitions may be expected to become more fluid and issue-oriented. Such bold new *demarches* as Mao once attempted would require a mobilization of mass support that no one among the present leadership seems able or even desirous of achieving.

## IDEOLOGY AND CHANGE

In his famous pioneering analysis of political belief systems, Karl Mannheim proposed a distinction between "ideologies," which are contrived to justify and preserve the status quo, and "utopias," which are designed to transcend and transform it.<sup>27</sup> This was of course an analytical distinction in a world of mixed types, for even among the most conservative ideologies there are few that do not aspire to change certain aspects of reality; and even among the most radical, there are few that do not hope to preserve certain aspects of the status quo. It is therefore perhaps more useful to distinguish among ideologies on the basis of which aspects of reality they wish to change and which they wish to remain as they are.

Certainly this is a more useful way of distinguishing stages in the development of the Chinese Communist ideology, which has consistently maintained a commitment to radical change but has periodically shifted its emphasis concerning which aspects of reality should have priority and which should be temporarily overlooked. This has led to a tide-like sequence of change and consolidation in different sectors of the political system, often punctuated by leadership disputes. Those aspects of reality to be preserved tend to be ritualized; those to be transformed are either attacked directly or more subtly subverted through cooptation,<sup>28</sup> then preserved and ritualized in their innocuous form.

In terms of priorities of change, it is possible to discern three general stages in the development of CCP ideology. The first stage, from 1949-1958, was one of *institutional transformation*. The focus of change was on transformation of the primary units of social and economic organization. In the countryside, the attack on existing ownership relations was made quite iconoclastically: poor and lower-middle peasants were encouraged to confront their erstwhile oppressors and give cathartic release to their grievances [*tu ku*, or spit out bitterness].<sup>29</sup> In the cities, although the three- and five-anti

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27. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936).

28. According to the classic definition of Philip Selznick in his "Foundations of the Theory of Organization," *American Sociological Review*, XIII:1 (February 1948), 25-35, "Cooptation is the process of absorbing new elements into the leadership or policy-determining structure of an organization as a means of averting threats to its stability or existence." Cooptation may be resorted to: (1) when there is a hiatus between consent and control, so that the legitimacy of the formal authority is called into question; or (2) in response to the pressure of specific power centers.

29. See Richard Solomon, *Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971).

campaigns involved some violence, the socialization of the means of production proceeded through cooptation, employing a large number of former bourgeoisie in their former factories but rendering them politically powerless. The traditional family structure was attacked headlong in the campaign to implement the Marriage Law of 1950. The consequences were mixed, initially resulting in a steep climb in the divorce rate and a rash of suicides among women, but also eliminating such kinship-based political organizations as the clan that might have provided an alternative focus of allegiance.<sup>30</sup>

What the regime endeavored to preserve in the midst of this change was authority and hierarchical order. In the factories, and in other (mostly urban) areas in which the Party was not yet prepared to assert its own authority, old elites were actually solicited to continue to run things until such preparations were complete; any attempts by workers to seize control of factories on behalf of workers' councils or even to strike for higher wages were rebuked.<sup>31</sup> In the rural sector, no direct challenge to the landlord class was encouraged until the Party had consolidated its own network of control. Even during the Great Leap Forward, the most ebulliently iconoclastic of this series of assaults upon the old institutional order, Party leadership was maintained and even strengthened.

The second stage of ideological development was one of *cultural transformation*, lasting roughly from 1965 to 1976. These dates are somewhat arbitrary, for the initial step in this direction was taken with the Hundred Flowers Movement in 1957—which, however, raised problems the leadership was not yet prepared to deal with. After the Great Leap failed, grandiose ideological aspirations were shelved from 1960-1962 as the Party endeavored to repair the damage by whatever means seemed effective. The 1962-1965 period, a confusing interregnum in which the leadership was unable to arrive at a consensus on its next high priority task, was resolved when Mao purged his opponents and launched the Cultural Revolution. Much of the rationale for this stage actually arose from the failure of the Leap, which convinced Mao that a cultural revolution was necessary to change people's thinking before further institutional transformation would be feasible.

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30. See M. J. Meijer, *Marriage Law and Policy in the Chinese People's Republic* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1971); also David C. Buxbaum, ed., *Chinese Family Law and Social Change in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978).

31. See Kenneth Lieberthal, "Mao Versus Liu?" Policy Towards Industry and Commerce, 1946-49." *China Quarterly*, 47 (July-September 1971) 494-520.

While the stage of institutional transformation had exempted authority from its ambit, Mao had come to feel that this had been an error. Thus the Cultural Revolution was to remove this caveat and place authority relations at the center of its focus—in theory, only "bourgeois" authority (which was "blind," "unconditional") should be cast off, but in fact all authority came under suspicion. The general approach was iconoclastic: authority tended to be identified with repression, which was symbolized in the polemical rhetoric as an impermeable barrier bifurcating the world into sets of opposing values. By symbolically shattering the taboos of legitimacy and shame, the inhibitions against radical change could be overcome. By doing those things that they had once feared to do, people would overcome fear and revolutionize their personalities.<sup>32</sup>

Although the Cultural Revolution initially seemed to effect a much more radical transformation of the Chinese political system than any previous such effort since Liberation, in retrospect its lasting impact appears relatively modest. It has in consequence lost validity as a legitimating ideology even among many of its original supporters. There are at least two important reasons for this disappointing outcome. First, its sponsors lost sight of the *relativity* of change. At the outset there was some attempt to impose priorities: change should be confined to authority relations and to the cultural superstructure, exempting the economy, science and technology, and so forth. But the rectification of authority relations proved difficult to contain, showing a strong tendency to spill over and affect other aspects of social organization. Attempts to impose priorities were construed as attempts to reassert arbitrary authority, and hence rebelled against. This resulted in an attempt to pursue radical change everywhere at once, with chaotic consequences that invited a backlash.

Second, there was no clear *positive model* for change. The masses were given an illusion of certainty about the moral direction in which the movement was moving by the stark clarity with which the negative qualities of the target were depicted. But despite several years of experimentation with alternate forms of organization, it proved very difficult to find one that eliminated "bourgeois" authority relations without also inviting factionalism and indiscipline. And it proved equally difficult to reconcile many young people who had experienced the exhilaration of combat, travel, and political emancipation to a constructive but much more humble and passive

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32. See Dittmer, "Thought Reform and Cultural Revolution," *American Political Science Review*, LXXI: 1 (March 1977), 67-85.

role in society. Ultimately, radical elites moved all the way from their early endorsement of rebellion to an enthusiasm for "proletarian dictatorship" and a correspondingly circumscribed range for the expression of dissent.

The third stage in the evolution of CCP ideology is one of *economic transformation*, launched under Zhou Enlai's auspices at the 4th National People's Congress in 1975 and continuing to the present. During this phase, the chief objective is economic change as expressed in the "four modernizations": the modernization of industry, agriculture, science and technology, and national defense. Change in other sectors will be subordinated to these priorities, under the assumption that it will follow logically from them. Thus, whereas it was argued previously that economic productivity followed automatically from revolution, it is now alleged that economic growth is a material precondition for revolution.<sup>33</sup>

Although the ends of change seem reasonably clear and priorities have been established, the *means* of change have not yet been settled upon, leaving room for some debate. The experiments that have been conducted since the death of Mao indicate that the regime is willing to consider a comprehensive system of material incentives calibrated to labor input, reinterpretation of the law of value to permit greater flexibility in pricing policy, an expanded reliance on foreign trade and investment to encourage the rapid influx of advanced technology, and the devolution of authority from political generalists to economic specialists. What is to be preserved in the context of such changes is the existing institutional and political structure, even including (after sweeping reinterpretation) the ideological umbrella of Mao Zedong Thought. Cultural borrowing from the West has been resumed, and the artifacts of traditional culture have emerged from the ravages of the Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four to bask in full official approval, partly perhaps because of the new regime's interest in the tourist trade, but partly also because of its desire to legitimate itself by association with the glories of the past.

What may be concluded from this brief survey of ideological development in the PRC? The overall legitimacy of the regime has been (and still is) based on its commitment to drastic, revolutionary change. Experience, however, has demonstrated that change is a relative concept and cannot occur everywhere at the same pace.

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33. See Gu Shutang, Zuo Mu and Tang Zaixin, "The Question of Bourgeois Right and the 'Gang of Four's' Counterrevolutionary Plot," *Hongqi*, 8 (August 8, 1977), 65-70.

Priorities must be set, and there are fights about this that sometimes result in a priority shift. A shift of priorities does not necessarily mean that the regime has forfeited its claim to revolutionary status. But people (both leaders and masses) may become attached to a specific order of priorities to the degree that they come to identify it with the revolution and resist any shift. If dissident leaders cannot be propitiated, the Chinese political system is so structured that they must be purged (if the majority is strong enough to do so), and there will be a corresponding (but less drastic) shift of constituencies at the mass level. The leadership is thus periodically (but not at any determinate junctures) faced with a choice between a shift of priorities, with the attending visible cost of economic disruption and elite cleavages, or accepting the opportunity costs of maintaining the existing set of priorities.

## CONCLUSIONS

Over the past thirty years there have been profound changes in the Chinese political system, some of them unfolding according to a logical developmental pattern, some of them deviations from this pattern leading to dead ends that have had to be abandoned. It is important to discriminate between these two types of change, for while those aspects of the present political system that follow from the cumulative impact of past developments may be considered solid bases for the prognostication of future developments, those aspects that were previously tried and abandoned for necessary reasons may be considered less likely to be tried again.

With regard to leadership, the early period of rapid and sweeping structural change through charismatic leadership and mass movements seems to have been undermined by the pattern of subsequent developments. The functional differentiation that accompanies modernization leads to the fragmentation of mass interests, making it increasingly difficult to define a set of issues on which the masses can converge at a unified consciousness. The formidable effectiveness of the mass movement at destroying opposition tends to drive would-be opponents underground and to enforce a stifling overt conformity and widespread covert resentment. Developments in communication technology enable leaders to mobilize the masses more easily, but also makes it difficult to control them once they are mobilized. This is not to say that charismatic leadership and mass movements cannot reappear, only that given the overall pattern of development their reappearance would entail relatively high costs and few benefits for the political system as a whole.

According to this analysis, the general thrust of historical change is from charismatic to collective leadership, from the conflict model to elite solidarity. This trend, however, is not inexorable. Collective leadership is relatively unstable, and incurs certain costs in the ease and flexibility of decision-making. Although the conditions for charismatic leadership are not now present, it may again be possible for an individual leader over time to gain sufficient public visibility and prestige to bypass the bureaucracy and make a direct appeal to the public. It should even be conceivable for such a leader to mobilize the masses against the bureaucracy, provided he is willing to pay the price in terms of disruption, elite cleavage, and loss of productivity. Should the current order of priorities lose momentum or encounter serious difficulties, there might be a temptation for such a leader to thus broaden the conflict in order to overcome resistance to a shift in priorities. The present leadership is so delicately balanced that it is difficult to conceive of such a leader emerging without the unified support of his colleagues, who may be assumed to have a strong aversion to any *primus inter pares* arrangement precisely because of the enhanced risk to themselves.

The stage of economic transformation in which the regime is currently engaged is qualitatively different from the stages of institutional or cultural transformation, posing different and in some ways more potent challenges to the legitimacy of the leadership. Modernization is not really an ideologically derived goal, as were the socialization of the means of production or the creation of a proletarian culture and a new man. Rather, it is a goal widely shared among various classes in any less developed country. Non-Party elites, for example, are likely to desire the prestige of major power status, while non-Party masses desire the material conveniences of a consumer economy.

If the goal of modernization is widely shared, so also are the requisite resources and skills. This enables the leadership to shift from the mobilization of a partisan constituency against a designated opposition to the inclusion of all interested and functionally necessary social groups in a common project.<sup>34</sup> But it also means that the Party risks losing its claim to a monopoly of insight into the nature of the goal culture and the scientifically appropriate means of attaining it. The coopting of non-Party experts challenges the Party to redefine the relationship between knowledge and power in such a way that objective scientific knowledge can be exploited without

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34. See Kenneth Jowitt, "Inclusion and Uncertainty in European Leninist Regimes," *World Politics*, XXVII:1 (October 1975), 69-97.

according professionals direct access to political decisions. The non-Party masses must be included and given a stake in the post-campaign political process—through socialist legality, elections, and so on—without relinquishing what Lenin called the Party's "leadership role." The Party must redefine its own legitimacy in the face of these meritocratic and democratic challenges at a time when its ideological leadership seems weaker than it has been for many years.

Professor Lowell Dittmer is a member of the faculty in the Department of Political Science, and Chairman of the Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

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# Foreign Policy

*Robert A. Scalapino*

The movement of the Chinese Communist Party from a small guerrilla force to unchallenged control over China, and the gradual emergence of that nation into increasing prominence, has resulted in a curious mixture of continuity and change in CCP leaders' attitudes and policies toward the world. From the very beginning, while they proclaimed themselves internationalists dedicated to the global solidarity of the proletariat, Chinese Communist spokesmen exhibited a strong nationalism deeply implanted in their society. The communist movement of China was nurtured on anti-imperialism, a conviction shared with the Nationalists, and the transformation of China from a quasi-colony to a fully independent nation was a primary goal.

Nationalist sentiments, indeed, contributed at least as much as internationalist values to the initial reception given the Bolsheviks. In the New Russia, the Chinese Communist adherents perceived a nation whose leaders were prepared to treat China as an equal, abandoning the old Czarist privileges and concessions. As time passed, the Chinese Communists progressively compromised their nationalism insofar as the Soviet Union was concerned. They swallowed the Soviet severance of Outer Mongolia from China, and sought to justify the Russian position in the Chinese Eastern Railway controversy that erupted in the late 1920s. And like orthodox communists throughout the world, they staunchly upheld the thesis that to defend the Soviet Union unswervingly against its liberal and Fascist opponents was to defend the fatherland of the global proletariat, hence, to perform one's solemn internationalist duty. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, moreover, the CCP took its foreign policy lines loyally from the Comintern. When leaders such as Chen Duxiu became openly disillusioned with Stalin's errors concerning China and his quickness to blame the Chinese Communists leaders for those mistakes, he was naturally forced out of the CCP, taking

refuge for a time in the Trotskyist movement. Later, at the time of the "kidnapping" of Chiang Kai-shek in Sian in December 1936, Mao reportedly was furious at Moscow's insistence that Chiang be released; but the CCP, including Mao, were to herald Chiang's release after the event and acknowledge him as the leader of a united front against Japan. Up to their ascension to power, indeed, the Chinese Communists did not deviate from a single position of the USSR in the international realm, whatever private qualms various individuals within the movement may have held from time to time.

Nevertheless, the CCP was simultaneously cultivating Chinese nationalism throughout these years. Indeed, it was their principal weapon, especially in attracting a growing body of student-intellectual supporters. To proclaim oneself as opposed to civil war and dedicated to the struggle against Japanese imperialism was the essence of the communist appeal to all Chinese after 1936.

Thus, when the Communists led by Mao Zedong inaugurated the People's Republic of China in 1949, they were dedicated to a particular form of internationalism, one centering on the USSR, and represented by a "socialist camp" comprising the world's orthodox communist states, parties, and movements. When Mao asserted proudly "we lean to one side," in making clear China's commitment to international socialism "led by the great Soviet Union," he was following in the CCP tradition of thirty years.\*

In this period also, China's sense of revolutionary mission accorded with the desire of the Soviet Union to feed nationalist fires throughout the Afro-Asian world, returning to the Leninist tactic of weakening the capitalist states by attacking their "soft underbellies." Thus, although its material capacities were strictly limited, its rhetoric soared in support of revolutionary movements everywhere. In a few places, China's assistance could be important. The changing political character of the China border was critical to the subsequent successes of the Vietnamese communists. And the heavy

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\*The currently popular thesis that different U.S. policies toward the Chinese Communists in the 1940s could have created a Chinese Communist movement independent from the USSR is naturally impossible to prove or disprove, but a survey of available data—and an analysis of the broad forces affecting international relations during this period—cause me to believe first, that an American policy supportive of the Chinese Communists could not conceivably have been established, and second, that had it been possible, it would not have achieved the results latter-day critics claim for it, both because of the nature of the Chinese Communist movement of that era, and because of available Soviet leverage on the Chinese Communists.

Chinese commitment to the North Koreans after Kim Il-sŏng's invasion of South Korea floundered is well known.

The latter action, however, was probably undertaken with some reluctance, and represented less an act of international solidarity and more a requirement of national interest. PRC leaders felt they could not tolerate a unified non-communist Korea supported by American power—on their borders and close to their Manchurian industrial complex. This was but one manifestation of that second legacy which the new Chinese leadership carried, the legacy of nationalism.

In addition to its portions of Marxist-Leninist internationalism and Chinese nationalism, Chinese Communist foreign policy contained a third legacy, that of traditionalism. This legacy was manifest both in attitudes and in style. The classic view that China was the central kingdom, and that the world was essentially divided between those who had accepted Chinese culture and barbarians, could be given new vigor by a concept of the superiority of socialism—the new Chinese culture—over alternatives. More broadly, China's traditional prerogative of rewarding or punishing those barbarians on its borders, depending upon their behavior, could be projected into the modern era. The PRC leaders no less than their dynastic predecessors came to power with these views and values deeply if unconsciously implanted, and from the very beginning they were manifested in the execution of China's foreign policy. Visits to Beijing were made into pageants for select Asian and African leaders, with costumed minority peoples, theatrical extravaganzas, presents, and even a chance to see the new emperor.

Events like the agreement on a Sino-Burmese boundary were followed by a massive exchange of gifts. Yet as the Vietnamese were to discover at a later point, those considered unruly barbarians could be punished. One does not risk the wrath of the celestial kingdom lightly.

If the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China started in 1949 with these three legacies, the evolution of that foreign policy largely involves the diminution of Marxist internationalism and the rise of Chinese nationalism. To be sure, in this respect the Chinese communists were merely pursuing a path pioneered by the Soviet communists at an earlier point, a path they had refused to acknowledge as existing in more idealistic times.

Since "the problem of Russia" determined both the timing and the nature of the evolution noted above, a brief analysis of the genesis and progression of the Sino-Soviet cleavage is required. Behind the split between China and Russia that first emerged in the late 1950s lay a combination of growing differences over substantive

issues and continuing differences of political style reflective of cultural-historic diversity. The key substantive issue was how to handle the United States. In retrospect, it is ironic that the Chinese pushed for a confrontational policy against "American imperialism" even at the risk of war, a policy which Khrushchev was unwilling to pursue, not merely because of Soviet military inferiority but also because detente with the United States was essential if the internal problems of the USSR were to be tackled seriously. Yet once Beijing's leaders decided that the Soviet Union was not credible vis-à-vis the United States, the principal *raison d'être* for the Sino-Soviet alliance had vanished. To Mao and his followers, that perception came with the second Taiwan Straits crisis of 1958 and the events that followed.

There were other issues. Disputes over the terms and conditions of Soviet economic and military aid, and Chinese doubts about the validity of the Russian economic model for China had accumulated by 1957-58; and neither the commune experiment nor the Great Leap Forward contributed to alleviating the strains. As might have been expected, the emergence of tension produced another issue, namely, leadership and organization of the international communist movement. Gradually, the Chinese moved to the forefront of those who were calling for an end to Russian primacy, and for the application of the principles of equality and party sovereignty at international meetings.

Accompanying these issues and exacerbating them were differences of political culture and personal style. The Russian and Chinese differed in their identification of problems, style of decision-making, and sense of timing. Beyond this, Stalin's death removed a senior figure to whom homage was due, and Mao saw in Khrushchev both a competitor and a man crude of manner.

By the early 1960s, these factors had wreaked havoc with Sino-Soviet trust, and the alliance had become a hollow shell. The slow, painful stages by which the relationship was abandoned testifies to a recognition of the seriousness of the cleavage by both parties. At first, it was hidden from outsiders; then it was presented in Aesopian language; not until the traumatic events of the late 1960s did it burst forth in violent polemics which could not be mistaken by the world.

In the course of this transition, Chinese foreign policy underwent changes both in specific policies and in conceptualization. On the latter score, Beijing abandoned the idea of two global camps for an endorsement of a tripartite division of the world. The "super-powers," the United States and the Soviet Union, constituted the first

world, and both threatened war, exemplified imperialism, and warranted opposition. The second world, or as it was initially described, the second intermediate zone, consisted of the capitalist states of West Europe plus Japan, nations to which a nationalist appeal could be directed, ultimately weakening their links to the United States. The third world comprised all of the late-developing countries among which China now accounted itself a part. The "socialist camp," argued Beijing's spokesmen, had been dissolved by the abandonment of socialism on the part of the USSR, a nation now defined as a "social-imperialist" and "fascist" state.

Within this framework, Chinese foreign policy operated throughout the mid-1960s. At first, the USSR remained the unnamed but clearly identifiable "co-conspirator" while the United States continued to be an "enemy of the people of the world." Meanwhile, certain "independent" capitalist nations like France were praised, even cultivated. But the PRC gave central attention to the "nonaligned bloc," seeking acceptance of the newly emerging nations. The Cultural Revolution did serious damage to this strategy. In a period of irrationality, xenophobia ran wild, and even China's friends were alienated or bewildered. When this brief but intensive storm ended, China had few international ties of significance except those with Albania and Tanzania. Chinese aid, to be sure, had flowed in ample amounts to Vietnam, but Hanoi had been made extremely nervous because of China's refusal to cooperate with the USSR in making foreign assistance fully effective. Thus, at the time of the Ussuri River crisis between the USSR and the PRC in 1969, the Chinese were not in a position either to negotiate or to fight from strength.

In this period, the current strategy underwriting Chinese foreign policy began to unfold. If the PRC was to emerge from its isolation and find company in combating the perceived Soviet threat, it had no realistic alternative except to turn to the United States. The U.S. was the only available countervailing power to the Soviet Union on a global scale. Only through American sufferance, moreover, was access to the United Nations possible, or fully developed diplomatic relations with Japan and certain other nations.

At this point, revisions in the earlier conceptualization of the world were undertaken. The tripartite division was retained, but a distinction was drawn between the United States—a declining power—and the Soviet Union—an expanding power. The latter was the more dangerous, and a broad united front was required, a front combining the United States, the second world, and as much of the third world as possible against Soviet expansionism. For the PRC

leaders, this was not a new strategy. It had first been applied on the domestic scene in 1937-38, at the time of the second "Japanese Incident." Then, under the aegis of Comintern directives, the CCP had called for the broadest possible united front including the Kuomintang government (the United States put in later terms), the national bourgeoisie (Japan and West Europe), and the peasant-proletarian masses (the third world). The front was defended as a tactic, not as a permanent commitment—a necessary measure if the primary enemy were to be defeated.

Today, Chinese foreign policy is based upon this strategy, in its essence a conventional balance of power concept. Primary reliance, under current circumstances, must rest on the United States. From Beijing's standpoint, full diplomatic recognition by the United States was a natural culmination of events since 1971, and it was extracted more or less on PRC terms. Standing firm on its three conditions (the severance of diplomatic ties between the U.S. and the Republic of China on Taiwan; the removal of all American military forces and installations from Taiwan; and the abrogation of the Mutual Security Treaty with the ROC), the PRC succeeded in obtaining American acquiescence via the agreement of December 15, 1978. At the same time, it rejected U.S. appeals specifically to abjure the use of force in settling the Taiwan issue, and went no further than "an agreement to disagree" on the right of the United States to furnish defensive weapons to Taiwan pending a peaceful settlement of the question. In the aftermath of the December Agreement, moreover, Beijing's leaders sought to reinterpret the American position to accord with theirs. Huang Hua, PRC foreign minister, insisted that the U.S. had agreed to the principles of one China, *and* Taiwan as a part of that China, hence, any arms transfers to Taiwan would represent a violation of the treatment of the PRC as a sovereign and equal nation. The seeds of future controversy also lie in the fact that while the English version of the Agreement, following the terminology of the Shanghai communique, merely asserted that the United States *acknowledged* that all Chinese regarded China as one, and Taiwan as a part of China, the Chinese language version of the Agreement substituted the term *chengren* for the term *renshi* earlier used. The former word can be translated as "recognized" or "accepted." In fact, PRC leaders are well aware of the American position; hence, the "agreement to disagree." The stage is being set, however, for future protests and controversy, should Beijing deem these fruitful.

Nonetheless, Taiwan is presently of low priority as an issue in PRC-U.S. relations. The PRC has taken a soft line publicly, offering Taiwan economic and political autonomy in exchange for its

abandonment of sovereignty. At times, moreover, PRC leaders have indicated that they can be patient, although the period of patience has been variously defined—from one year to a century! Deng Xiaoping has also asserted that two circumstances might cause the PRC to use force: the involvement of the Russians with Taiwan, or the continued refusal of the Taiwan authorities to negotiate with Beijing. No military preparations for an invasion are underway, however, and it is generally agreed that the graver threats to Taiwan in the near term come from economic and political hazards on the home front, or possibly the creation of incidents by the PRC to exacerbate domestic problems for Taiwan.

The more immediate concerns of the PRC insofar as the United States is concerned relate to the global credibility of the U.S. juxtaposed to the USSR. Chinese media constantly warn against the forces of "appeasement" in the United States and the presence of a "Munich psychology." Deng and other Chinese leaders have asserted that they do not oppose the SALT Agreement but that no great hope should be placed in it. In recent years, the Chinese have shown particular solicitude toward Americans with the strongest anti-Soviet bent. Their favorite official has been Zbigniew Brzezinski; their favorite senator, Henry Jackson. Ideological or policy positions in general are waived in favor of measuring one's anti-Soviet propensities, a most extraordinary single-mindedness (especially for a communist state), yet one in keeping with the Chinese penchant for concentrating heavily on one or two priorities, both in domestic and foreign policy, and in keeping also with the degree to which the USSR has become central to the PRC's security and political concerns.

This is further revealed by the remarkable changes in the PRC attitude toward an American strategic presence in Asia. As late as the early 1970s, the United States continued to be condemned for its "militarist, hegemonistic" policies toward the Pacific-Asian region. Today, encouragement is given to such diverse American commitments as the Mutual Security Treaty with Japan, the renewed base agreement with the Philippines, the activities of the 7th Fleet, and the possibility of an heightened American naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Constantly referring to the augmentation of Soviet military units in the Pacific-Asian region (and especially aware of the nearly 50 Soviet division on its borders), the Chinese leaders have been anxious to see a matching U.S. response.

There are exceptions. Up to date, both publicly and privately, the Chinese have urged U.S. military withdrawal from South Korea, giving firm backing to Kim Il-sŏng's position on this and other

matters. Nor is there any indication that under present conditions, the PRC would be interested in any type of American military presence within Chinese territory. There can be little doubt, however, that a strong American military presence in Asia is a prime *desiderata* of Beijing at this point, and this position meshes with similar attitudes toward an American presence in West Europe, the Middle East, and Africa—all regions regarded by the PRC as vulnerable to Soviet penetration.

The Chinese have an old proverb, occasionally quoted by Mao: "The wise monkey sits on the hill and watches two tigers fight." It is not surprising that Soviet sources regard Chinese foreign policies as directed toward that end, namely, promoting an American-Soviet conflict from whence China would emerge the victor. Since the late 1950s, Russian leaders have accused Mao and his successors of taking a callous, irrational attitude toward war, particularly nuclear war. They insist that Mao dismissed the loss of several hundred million people with the remark that the rest would survive and socialism would flourish.

The Chinese version of these matters, while slightly different, lends some substance to the Soviet charge. Down to the present, Chinese leaders describe another world war as inevitable, although its timing can be delayed by firm measures against the USSR taken immediately. Such a war might not be a nuclear war, assert the Chinese (a modification of earlier views), but it will involve the Soviet Union and the United States as central actors. Five years ago, Chinese analysts insisted that the main theater of the war would be Europe, thereby forwarding their thesis that while the Russians were feinting to the east (China), they would strike in the west. More recently, the probable locus of conflict and the degree of Chinese involvement have been left obscure, but there has been no retreat from the "inevitability of war" doctrine.

Meanwhile, the Chinese have been involved in their own war, that against Vietnam, which they defined as a punitive action against a Soviet surrogate seeking to build an empire in Southeast Asia. We shall analyze the implications of this conflict more fully later; here only its implications with respect to the United States warrant attention. It now seems clear that the timing of U.S.-PRC resumption of full diplomatic relations was strongly influenced by Vietnam insofar as China's leaders were concerned. The consummation of the act, irrevocable once taken, provided Beijing with additional leverage in "punishing" Vietnam. In this sense, it was China that played the American card via "normalization," rather than vice-versa, and American efforts to dissuade Deng from the Vietnam incursion met

with no success.

Under prevailing circumstances, it is unlikely that the PRC would turn directly to the United States for military assistance, and even less likely that the latter government would contemplate such aid. However, Washington has interposed no objections to its European allies selling some types of military equipment to the PRC, although no major purchases have as yet been consummated. In addition, the U.S. has agreed to the sale of select high technology products, including computers, that have military applicability.

From a strategic-political standpoint, therefore, the People's Republic of China and the United States have achieved a certain congruence of interests without removing some highly important differences. Among the latter, the growing U.S. preference for an equilibrium strategy, that of seeking a rough balance in its relations with the USSR and the PRC and avoiding a sustained tilt toward either, sharply contrasts with the PRC call for a united front strategy directed against the Soviet Union. Taiwan and Korea constitute two more specific issues of potentially far-reaching consequence upon which there is no present agreement. It has been suggested that an ultimate bargain might be struck whereby the United States would make further concessions with respect to Taiwan in exchange for a softening of the PRC position on Korea—but any such arrangement would be certain to further weaken American credibility and produce additional divisions within the American people and Congress.

For the present, both China and America are willing to live with their differences because of a common concern about the growth of Soviet power and the thrust of Soviet foreign policies. This common concern, moreover, has brought Beijing and Washington closer together on a number of specific regional policies, as we have noted, ranging from Japan to West Europe, and increasingly including the Middle East. With regard to these regions, such differences as currently exist are generally a product of the Chinese feeling that American policies are too passive and weak when juxtaposed against those of the USSR.

On the economic front, China's American policy reflects the new emphasis on turning outward to the advanced, industrial world for science and technology. The decision to send thousands of students to Japan and the West, if fully carried into practice, could have far-reaching repercussions. It will test both China's capacity to absorb highly advanced technology and to absorb also a youthful elite who have had cultural and political exposure to vastly different societies. While the impact of the United States in these respects may be considerable over time, bilateral economic relations in the

form of trade, investment and loans are likely to develop slowly and on a selective basis, limited by the PRC's scarce revenue generating capacities and the comparatively high costs of U.S. products and services. PRC purchases will be restricted primarily to grain and to advanced technology products in certain fields where American primacy is clear. Some specialists have predicted that two-way trade which stood at \$1.2 billion in 1978 will reach a minimum of \$5-6 billion by 1985, but predictions of any type are hazardous given the variables involved. In any case, the PRC-U.S. economic relationship is likely to be of much greater importance to China than to the United States, especially as it relates to the transfer of technology, and possibly managerial skills.

The policies of the PRC with respect to the U.S. cannot be fully presented and projected without further reference to those involving the other "superpower," the USSR. Should one assume that the present PRC-USSR relation, that of extreme hostility short of war, will continue indefinitely, or do possibilities of change exist? Theoretically, at least, there are four alternatives in PRC-USSR relations: at the extremities are war and a revitalized alliance; the intermediate possibilities are those of limited detente and a continuance of hostility short of war. Given the tensions engendered over Vietnam, war seemed a distinct possibility in the not distant past, and since neither Indochina nor other issues of an equally grave nature are likely to be resolved in the near future, a Sino-Soviet war cannot be dismissed as impossible. Yet it is now clear that the only party that would have the military strength warranting the initiation of such a war, the Soviet Union, wants to avoid an all-out conflict with China. A war against China would not only be enormously costly, depleting Soviet power and influence in all other regions; it would also be unwinnable. This does not rule out the possibility of "incidents" or even of military acts of significant nature ranging from blockade to border forays and other forms of incursions, but a full-fledged war—conventional or nuclear— seems improbable.

Alliance of the 1950 type appears equally unlikely given the range of differences separating the PRC and the USSR. It is not merely that on specific issues, from policies toward Japan and India to boundary questions, the divisions are sharp; it is also that a lack of trust now represents a deep chasm separating the parties. As we have noted, moreover, geopolitics operates against a renewed alliance. Two major states, living cheek by jowl, both highly nationalist and with continuing expansionist proclivities, can rarely live in alliance unless they are united by the perception of a common enemy. The United States no longer plays that role; meanwhile, two empires

are moving toward each other, with no significant buffer states to separate them.

The odds between limited detente and hostility short of war are more difficult to fix. From the Chinese perspective, a logical case can be made for a reduction of tension with the USSR. Most concessions currently available have been obtained or are in the offing from the United States, and from Japan as well. Ultimately, the PRC, like other major states, would presumably like to occupy a more centrist position among its rivals, a position enabling it to play Moscow off against Washington, and one providing greater flexibility in its general foreign policy. Any reduction in tension with Russia, moreover, would appear to strengthen China's hand in Southeast Asia, providing additional leverage against Vietnam.

For these and other reasons, the PRC proposal for an exploration of means to improve state-to-state relations with the USSR, made in connection with its announcement in April 1979 of its intention to abrogate the security treaty with Russia one year hence, was noted in many capitals. The Russians have indicated their acceptance of this proposal, and discussions will presumably be forthcoming. Limited detente could take a number of forms—from a mutual withdrawal of troops along the border without any agreements on substantive issues to compromises on a few of the many issues now dividing the two nations.

Yet the obstacles confronting even limited detente are substantial, and in the recent past, they have grown rather than diminished. Certainly, the USSR might be reluctant to reduce pressure on China with the Indochina crisis unresolved and the PRC apparently unreconciled to Vietnamese hegemony in this region. On China's side, limited detente—however modest—might raise doubts in the United States, Japan, and West Europe about the desirability of providing the PRC with economic or military aid. In any case, however, the deeply rooted suspicions, historical in nature but now grounded in a host of recent experiences, stand as barriers to any agreement built upon respect or trust. Hence, some element of restraint is certain to persist.

The general course of relations with the USSR has shaped and will continue to shape the PRC's policies toward Japan and West Europe in similar degree to those with the United States. As suggested earlier, the initial attitudes exhibited by Beijing toward these states was either one of hostility or an effort to reward evidence of nationalism directed against "U.S. imperialism." Throughout the 1950s, PRC spokesmen denounced the Japanese government as a "reactionary, monopoly-capitalist regime," aiming at a restoration of

militarism, and, together with the United States, representing the chief threat to Asia. During the Korean War, China gave refuge to the leading Japanese communists who had been driven underground, primarily because Beijing had taken the lead in helping to steer them toward open rebellion. At a later point, its ties with the left socialists of Japan became close, with socialist leaders like Asanuma agreeing to joint commmuniques defining American imperialism as the common enemy of the Japanese and Chinese people.

As the 1960s wore on, however, increasing contacts were made with Japanese conservatives from both the political and economic communities. The Chinese interest lay in trade, but also in splitting the dominant Liberal Democratic Party on such issues as Taiwan and a full acceptance of U.S. Asian policies. These efforts paid dividends, although the major moves in Japanese policy toward China awaited the U.S. shifts that took place in the Nixon era. By the early 1970s, however, the tides in Japan were running toward policies favorable to the PRC. Japan's general commitments to separating economics and politics, doing business wherever possible, and avoiding political-security commitments of a regional character, were generally conducive to a rising interest in China, especially after the Cultural Revolution had run its course. The prospect of promoting the Chinese industrial revolution excited many Japanese businessmen, particularly if this could be coupled with Japanese involvement in the development of Siberia. And as the latter prospect became increasingly beclouded by strategic, political, and economic troubles between Japan and the USSR, the China market appeared all the more important, together with the desirability of a general improvement in Sino-Japanese relations. Only one problem emerged from time to time, namely, the propensity of the PRC to inject itself into Japanese internal affairs, playing off one faction, party, or business group against another.

Sino-Japanese relations reached a new high point in 1978 with agreement on a treaty of friendship after strenuous negotiations. Earlier, in 1972, Japan had established formal diplomatic relations with the PRC, derecognizing the Republic of China on Taiwan. The so-called Japanese formula provided for continuing economic and cultural relations with Taiwan via quasi-governmental agencies. Since Japan had never had security commitments to Taiwan, that problem did not exist. Some issues remained unsettled, notably the question of the Senkaku Islands, islands south of Okinawa, under Japanese control. Both the PRC and the ROC on Taiwan claim these islands, and in early 1978, a fleet of PRC fishing boats with placards demanding acknowledgment of Chinese sovereignty

temporarily encircled the islands. The real struggle delaying the 1978 treaty, however, was the PRC's insistence upon an anti-hegemony clause clearly pointed at the USSR. This issue was finally compromised by a second article stipulating that the treaty was not intended to interfere with either state's relations with any third party. The Russians's, however, were not assuaged by this Chinese concession, and strongly denounced Japanese "capitulation" as an unfriendly act.

By 1978, therefore, Chinese diplomacy had scored a major success in its relations with Japan. Some assistance, to be sure, had been garnered from the United States; the Carter administration had nudged the Japanese to conclude the treaty, and in certain other respects appeared to look favorably on closer interaction among China, Japan, and the United States. In exchange, the PRC had radically changed its view of Japanese "militarism" and U.S.-Japan relations. After the early 1970s, China regarded the U.S.-Japan mutual security treaty as a necessity, and commenced to encourage the Japanese to develop a more substantial military capacity in order to forestall Soviet "hegemonism." Chinese support for Japanese nationalism became increasingly evident, especially on issues like the four northern islands. And Deng Xiaoping openly called for Japanese participation in a united front against Russia. Meanwhile, Japan maintained and strengthened its position as China's leading trading partner, with two-way trade reaching a total of \$5 billion in 1978.

The current situation, however, has become somewhat more complex. China's standing with the Japanese people remains relatively high, especially in comparison with the USSR. Yet the PRC invasion of Vietnam in early 1979, coupled with the abrupt suspension of contracts for Japanese plant importation, caused substantial shock waves in Tokyo. China's efforts to put pressure on Japan to halt economic aid to Hanoi were only temporarily successful. A larger issue, moreover, loomed up: Japan's resistance to an anti-Soviet united front stiffened. The euphoria over the China market also declined, although the long-term prospects continued to be regarded as promising.

Thus, as the 1980s approach, Sino-Japanese relations are, in general terms, a testimony to the new, pragmatic Chinese foreign policy, based upon Beijing's appraisal of its immediate interests, and with a minimum of ideological content. Attention is focused largely upon state-to-state relations, with cultivation of the Komeitō and the Japanese Socialist Party in addition to the Liberal Democrats, but with no concessions to JSP pacifism or neutralism. The Chinese strategic line toward Japan is relatively simple and straightforward:

prepare for confrontation with the Russians by building a strong defense, and combining with others who face a similar prospect, including the United States. Economic relations, meanwhile, although of vital importance to China, are hampered by the PRC's weak economy and a host of specific problems relating to financing, product, and—in broader terms—China's decisions regarding basic economic policies, together with its capacity to execute these decisions effectively. While Japan is likely to be the main key to the success or failure of the PRC's economic policy of "turning outward," several Japanese economists have doubted whether China trade will reach more than 5 percent of total Japanese trade, at least in the near term.

The prospects are thus for a Sino-Japanese relationship of importance, but one falling considerably short of alliance, and involving elements of competition, even antagonism, as well as cooperation. Fundamentally, China and Japan have different interests with respect to areas like Korea and Southeast Asia. Accommodation may be possible, but the differences in economic and political institutions are certain to be reflected in some degree in both the objectives and the implementation of their respective foreign policies.

West Europe falls into the same basic political category as Japan for China even though it is more remote, both geographically and culturally; policies are therefore basically similar. First, China has moved from a position of hostility—or an attempt to cultivate European nationalism against the U.S.—to a position of support for West European governments and NATO, with an emphasis also on strengthening the American strategic presence in Europe. What is striking about the PRC's attitudes and policies toward Europe is that, as in the case of the United States, special homage is paid by Chinese leaders to select conservatives, those judged to be vigorously anti-Soviet and committed to strong defense policies. The West European left rarely commands Beijing's attention or respect. Moreover, the effort to separate West Europe from the U.S. has been suspended. On the contrary, PRC organs report favorably upon such military and political collaboration among NATO allies as takes place, emphasizing always the mounting Soviet threat to European security.

Policies toward both the "superpowers" and the "second world," as we have seen, are profoundly affected by China's military weaknesses and economic backwardness. Despite its massive size, the Chinese army is poorly equipped and, as Vietnam indicated, lacking in military experience at this point. It is no match for the Soviet

Union, and even against the Vietnamese the military results were decidedly mixed. However, the quest for rapid military modernization, undoubtedly supported by a number of PLA leaders, must compete for funds with other modernization objectives. Although the military influence in Chinese politics continues to be strong, the outcome of this struggle for priorities is by no means clear. At present, indeed, military modernization continues to be accorded a lower priority than agricultural or industrial growth. Thus, at this point, China must keep firmly in mind its weaknesses in formulating its foreign policies. For this reason, the most realistic alternatives narrow to those of united front policies versus accommodation to hostile (notably Soviet) power—although some mix of these is not wholly impossible.

Turning toward East Europe, current PRC policies range from the coolness shown those states considered appendages of Soviet policy, notably East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, to the ardor displayed toward Rumania and Yugoslavia, the foreign policy mavericks of the region. This was not always the case. In the era of the Sino-Soviet alliance, the Chinese followed their Russian comrades in treating Yugoslavia as anathema. Only in recent years has Tito acquired respectability in Beijing both for his domestic and foreign policies. The Sino-Soviet alliance era was also one during which PRC leaders urged the East Europeans to maintain solidarity with "the Great Soviet Union," in striking contrast to their later denunciations of the authoritarian quality of the Soviet baton. Accompanying recent changes has been the dissolution of the PRC's curious alliance with Albania. Ties that were once described as those uniting true Marxist-Leninists broke under the pressures of post-1969 PRC policies. Today, bitterness has replaced comradeship, Chinese aid to Albania has been halted, and Enver Hoxha's picture and collected works are no longer to be found in Beijing bookstores. For its part, the Albanian leadership denounces post-Mao Chinese policies in a fashion quite similar to the attacks on post-Stalin Russian policies emanating from Beijing.

The primary thrust of the PRC in East Europe today is directed toward encouraging all nationalist impulses that manifest themselves, hoping to weaken the Soviet Union's inner alliance system—a policy identical with that applied to West Europe and the United States at an earlier point. Chinese leverage, however, is very limited. Consequently, it can exult or decry but rarely influence the course of events in this region.

The Third World policies of the PRC have also undergone significant alterations in recent years. The relatively undifferentiated

support for "revolution," the call for a global assault upon the capitalist, imperialist forces led by the United States, was a hallmark of PRC rhetoric for some two decades after 1949. From the beginning, however, the Chinese faced certain complexities and contradictions in dealing with such a vast and heterogeneous portion of the globe. At times, such as during the Bandung Conference of 1954, Chinese leaders seemed determined to present a benign countenance to the fullest range of "Third World" states, suggesting a willingness to forego ideological differences and to abide by the principles of peaceful coexistence. At other times, the PRC made clear distinctions between "friendly" and "unfriendly" states, supporting revolutionary forces against the prevailing governments in some instances, providing assistance to non-communist regimes in others. Chinese policies, like those of other large states, were frequently shaped by targets of opportunity, sensing situations where Chinese interests could be advanced, and making commitments accordingly.

Thus, the Chinese paid particular attention to Africa where a large number of independent states were emerging. In North Africa, early efforts were focused on Egypt, correctly perceived as a nation of strategic importance, but soon the Chinese were also wooing Algeria and several Arab states. Slightly later, Beijing mobilized its relatively meager resources for assistance programs in Black Africa. Small factories were constructed in Mali and Guinea, but the big monument to Chinese efforts came in the Tan-Zam railway. A range of other activities were undertaken, including pilot agricultural programs and trade exhibits.

It is not difficult to discover the reasons for the increasing Chinese interest in Africa. The socialist camp was now split asunder, and fierce competition was taking place between Moscow and Beijing for leadership or influence over "progressive" states and revolutionary movements everywhere. Africa, having many units and close connections with both the Arab and the Black populations, was a logical battleground. Each year saw fierce battles fought within organizations representing the so-called non-aligned community of Afro-Asian states as each major communist nation tried to line up its supporters. Revolutionary movements were now forced to choose sides in most instances, and nearly every communist movement in the world was factionalized.

In these respects, Beijing's reach into Central and Latin America was comparatively limited, although a valiant effort was made to win over Cuba in the early period of the Sino-Soviet dispute. The failure in Cuba epitomized the Chinese problem. For those states or movements desiring material assistance, the Soviet Union was a far

more likely source than the People's Republic of China. Neither economic nor military aid lay within Chinese capacities on a substantial scale. The Chinese did provide economic assistance beyond their means to a few select parties. They also gave guerrilla training to *their* guerrillas in some areas. But in comparison with the USSR, not to mention the West, their resources were meager. Yet an increasing number of Third World nations, having had their revolution, now wanted development. Some became increasingly suspicious, if not hostile, to Beijing's strident revolutionary rhetoric. Even where the objective continued to be a change in the status quo, however, such as in the Middle East, China's capacities to render assistance were minimal.

One part of the Third World constituted a partial exception, namely Asia. Here, China had both a geographic and a cultural presence. Thus, while PRC pronouncements might speak of their nation as poor and backward, attuned to Third World needs and aspirations, many of the neighboring states of Asia were quick to discover in China certain of the attributes of a major power. In Southeast Asia, China exhibited a tendency to seed and feed various communist guerrilla movements while at the same time soliciting state-to-state relations from Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Burma. Boundary issues also became a source of tension, even conflict in the case of India.

Today, the distinctions between China as Third World representative, and China as aspiring major power, remain. In the former capacity, the PRC continues to attack both "superpowers" on many occasions. The United States is accused of seeking to defend past, ill-gotten gains, while the USSR is charged with the graver crime of attempting to carve out a new empire. Typically, the PRC seeks to vote with the newly developing countries in the United Nations, and when they are badly split, it sometimes abstains. Nor has the commitment to supporting global revolution been totally abandoned. The oft-used statement, "the world is in turmoil; the situation is excellent," has been set aside, as has been the assertion "nations want liberation, people want revolution." Yet Chinese leaders disclaim any intention of ceasing to aid the forces of revolution, and maintain ties with various guerrilla movements flying Maoist banners.

At the same time, however, the dominant thrust of Chinese foreign policy toward the Third World is in a different direction. Alignments follow balance of power, not ideological lines. China now maintains formal diplomatic relations with more than 120 nations, and some of its most intimate relations are with monarchies,

conservative authoritarian governments, and military regimes. Like other major states, the PRC places heavy weight on security issues, especially those involving the region of which it is a part.

In this context, the intrusion against Vietnam is understandable. China does not want an aggregation of power on its border, especially since the PRC regards Southeast Asia as a legitimate sphere of Chinese influence. With the important exception of Indochina, Beijing has made considerable progress toward this goal in recent years. It has established formal diplomatic relations with all states of the region except Singapore and Indonesia. ASEAN has its support, a blessing given before Vietnamese-Soviet approval was bestowed. At the same time, it continues to be the chief model for the major communist movements of the region, and while assistance to these movements appears to have been reduced in almost every case, it has not been terminated. Indeed, in Southeast Asia as well as elsewhere, the PRC has had three primary instruments of foreign policy: state-to-state, people-to-people, and comrade-to-comrade relations. By shifting the mix of these in accordance with needs and circumstances, a reasonably high degree of flexibility is achieved. Nations, large and small, are put on notice that sticks as well as carrots are available.

In summary, the People's Republic of China has maintained one broad consistency in its foreign policies over the past three decades amidst many startling reversals, namely, the predominance of national interest as perceived by the top political elite over all other motivational forces. While the internationalist quotient in Chinese foreign policy was prominent in the rhetoric of the 1950s, even during this period concrete policies turned primarily upon issues of domestic security and economic development. Like the Soviet Union when it was militarily and economically weak, the PRC during those initial years sought to substitute politics for power, or more accurately perhaps, to convert politics into power. Thus, it proclaimed its solidarity with the international proletariat, and disseminated radical propaganda intended to abet the cause of global revolution. Paradoxically, however, direct contact with revolutionary movements throughout the world was minimal. China's basic ties were with the USSR. The PRC looked to Russia for ideological leadership, but more importantly, for military security and economic assistance.

When the Russians were perceived to have failed them, Chinese leaders sought to turn outward to the Third World, identifying themselves with other late developing societies, seeking to make common cause in the name of opposing the hegemonistic drive of

the two superpowers. Yet this policy served China's national interests poorly. No conceivable coalition of Third World forces could provide for the PRC's security and developmental needs. For a time, moreover, beginning in the mid-1960s, domestic upheaval caused rational considerations of foreign policy to be swept aside. China retreated into isolation and fanaticism, alienating even its friends and displaying those xenophobic characteristics deeply imbedded in its culture.

While the Cultural Revolution flew the banners of radicalism, in its essence it harbored the type of traditional exclusivism—fear and hatred of the external world—that had been so damaging to China in earlier decades. By 1968-69, the growing crisis with the Soviet Union served to rekindle a sense of peril in such a course. A new path was charted in the name of national interest, albeit midst uncertainly and confusion.

Today, Chinese nationalism is truly triumphant. "Revolutionaries" in various places will be given at least moral support *if* their movements serve the Chinese cause (especially by thwarting Soviet advances), but so will "conservatives." Beijing's formal abandonment of the Sino-Soviet alliance represents both the final act in the shedding of the Marxist myth of a socialist world, and the culmination of a process of seeking security and development through other means. The present goal is a broad united front cutting across ideological lines, dedicated to the containment of Russian expansion. Neither this policy nor that of turning outward to the advanced world for economic assistance is new. At earlier stages in its long, painful struggle to achieve modern nationhood and economic growth, China undertook similar policies. They proved abortive or short-lived. Will the current venture turn out differently?

It is not clear, of course, that a pragmatic, developmental, highly nationalist China will be less threatening—especially to its small neighbors—than an inward-looking, traditionalist and relatively stagnant China. Already, the PRC has begun to exhibit certain of the tendencies characteristic of any major society enroute to power. Its determination to achieve national boundaries which *it* considers legitimate and to build a buffer zone or sphere of influence to protect those boundaries has now been made manifest. And Chinese security will not be ultimately guaranteed unless and until some accommodation with the Soviet Union is achieved. The form and timing of that accommodation cannot but be of concern, both to the small states existing on the perimeters of the Eurasian continent and to the other major nations of the world.

One final observation is in order. Chinese foreign policy may well take additional twists and turns as the 21st century approaches, some of which will be influenced or even dictated by external events over which the PRC itself has limited control. Yet far more than in the past century, initiatives and decisions now lie with Chinese leadership. China is no longer a leaf helplessly tossed by the international winds. Thus, the PRC political elite's interpretation of China's national interests will be the truly crucial determinant of Chinese foreign policy in the decades ahead.

Professor Robert A. Scalapino is Robson Research Professor of Government, Department of Political Science, and Director of the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

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# The Trend and Pattern of Economic Growth

*Christopher Howe*

Thirty years is a substantial period in a country's economic history. It is a period long enough to absorb aberrations and special factors and, in the case of the Soviet Union, for example, is longer than the period from the beginning of the First Five Year Plan (1928) to the death of its author Stalin (1953), by which time the economy had been structurally and quantitatively transformed. In the context of the post-World War II era, thirty years seems even longer, since this has been a time in which rates of progress in both developed and underdeveloped economies have accelerated to historically unprecedented levels, in which world trade has produced a new degree of international economic interdependence, and in which there have been major spurts in the application of scientific progress to production. For most of the period, these changes have been related to each other and generally beneficial although the full significance of trade and technological changes has only become dramatically obvious in the 1970s when, partly as a result of changing levels of oil and commodity prices, the world has had to handle their consequences in a context of stagnation and unemployment.

Until recently the economic development of China was largely a domestic affair. It was initially linked, it is true, to Soviet and Bloc politics, but it was not closely related to the expansion of world markets or the advance of Western technology from the mid-1950s onwards. Against this background, it is the purpose of this essay to seek answers to two questions. (a) Does the statistical evidence suggest that the Chinese have succeeded in achieving a rate of economic growth that satisfies, at least minimally, the requirements of the population for private consumption and the requirements of the State for public goods (i.e., for various kinds of infrastructure,

capital equipment, and defence provision)? (b) To what extent may we say that this performance can be explained in terms of the ability of the authorities to establish efficient patterns of resource allocation and appropriate institutional arrangements? Within this framework, I shall try to indicate the principal trends, historical turning points, and analytical issues that put the past thirty years of China's economic history in perspective.

## THE STATISTICAL RECORD

The sources for the statistical record may be divided into three groups. First are the Chinese data produced between the early 1950s and 1960. Notable among these were a book, *Great Years*, and survey materials published in the journal of the State Statistical Bureau, *Statistical Work*. During the 1970s, official Chinese sources began to open up again, and these have produced numerous claims for output of different kinds during the past eight years. There has, however, been no resumption of official publication of handbooks of statistical data or of statistical periodicals.<sup>1</sup> The third major group of sources comprises estimates made by foreigners, which are invariably related in some degree to the official record. In the 1950s, much of this work consisted of attempts to reconstruct the Chinese national accounts along lines made familiar by similar work on the Soviet Union. In the 1960s, the problem was to try and find figures to fill the vacuum left by official data. And in the 1970s, most foreign work has consisted of interpreting new data and of reconciling estimates made in the 1960s and early 1970s with recent official data. This has proved much more difficult than might be imagined. The official 1950s data were fairly detailed. They were prepared under the leadership of statisticians, most of whom had been trained before 1949, and who were organized within the framework of the State Statistical Bureau and its local offices or within individual industrial and administrative systems. The Bureau was a serious and effective institution within the limitations imposed by the contemporary situation. Unfortunately it did not get under way until the mid-1950s and during 1958 was destroyed for political reasons. Nonetheless, between 1955 and 1958, it did undertake a series of important

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1. Two important economic periodicals have now appeared, *Jing-ji yan-jiu* (Economic research) and *Jing-ji guan-li* (Economic management). The former resumes publication after a twelve-year suspension; the latter is new and approximates quite closely to industrial and problem-oriented journals of the 1950s.

investigations and laid standards for statistical work that must in some forms have survived its disappearance.<sup>2</sup>

The Bureau was primarily concerned to service central planning agencies. At local levels, much statistical work was also done and published in local newspapers. The task of analyzing and collating these local reports only began outside China in the 1960s, and publications based on these sources did not begin to appear until the 1970s. This time lag might seem so great as to undermine the usefulness of the data. This is by no means the case, however, since the credibility and meaning of the official data published in the 1970s (often fragmentary and vaguely defined) have only been established through careful analysis of the detailed picture for the 1950s.

Among the most important analysts of the 1950s data were two teams: Liu and Yeh at the Rand Corporation, and Eckstein and his colleague Chao Kang working at Ann Arbor. Liu and Yeh and Eckstein both produced major studies of China's national income and Chao Kang did important work on industrial production, capital formation, and the construction industry.<sup>3</sup> Working at the same time in Japan, Ishikawa Shigeru produced his own estimates of national income as well as other original quantitative studies of the Chinese economy.<sup>4</sup>

By the late 1960s and for most of the 1970s, the bulk of the statistical analysis of the Chinese economy has been undertaken within U.S. government departments. Notable examples have been the population and manpower studies of Aird and Emerson at the Department of Commerce, work on industrial development and many other topics by Field and colleagues at the CIA, and, more recently, work on agriculture at the U.S. Department of Agriculture by Liu and others. A notable example of U.S. government and academic collaboration has been an analysis of trends in provincial level industrial production by Field, Emerson, and Lardy.<sup>5</sup> The major

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2. Li Choh-ming, *The Statistical System of Communist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962).

3. Liu Ta-Chung and Yeh Kung-chia, *The Economy of the Chinese Mainland: National Income and Economic Development 1933-1959* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); Alexander Eckstein, *The National Income of Communist China* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1962); Kang Chao, *Capital Formation in Mainland China 1952-1965* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

4. Ishikawa Shigeru, *National Income and Capital Formation in Mainland China* (Tokyo: Institute of Asian Economic Affairs, 1965), *Chugoku keizai hatten no tokei kenkyu* (Tokyo: Ajia Keizai Kenkyu Sho, 1962).

5. R. M. Field, Nicholas R. Lardy, and John R. Emerson, *Provincial Industrial Output in the People's Republic of China, 1945-1975* (Washington: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1976).

sources in which these U.S. government estimates may be found are the periodic Joint Economic Committee *Papers* and the annual *China: Economic Indicators* published by the National Foreign Assessment Center, Washington.<sup>6</sup> In total, this material is now the dominant source of quantitative knowledge of the Chinese economy for most students; but, valuable as it is, it cannot be used without qualifications. One reason for this is that many series are quoted without reference to any sources at all. It is clear that for the most part these sources are simply published Chinese statements, but since these figures are themselves percentages rather than absolutes, part rather than full year, and otherwise imperfectly defined, their use involves a good deal more judgment than the data as presented may indicate to the inexperienced. A further problem with these data is that because they are the products of bureaucracies, they must to some extent be subject to bureaucratic pressures. Consistency, for example, seems important and this has led to considerable difficulties—for example with grain output, where it has been necessary to relate old estimates based on very fragmentary clues, with recent Chinese figures for the same years. Also, since the course toward the normalization of Sino-American relations began in 1972, it must have become progressively more difficult for U.S. government departments to present a picture of China greatly at variance with the Chinese view of themselves—even if such a picture seemed to have a strong basis in reason and fact.<sup>7</sup>

The importance of these points is that one must emphasize: (a) the slightness of the statistical base provided by the Chinese for our understanding of their economy, and (b) that a great deal of widely-read material is the product of organizations with their own strengths, weaknesses, and points of view. Many judgments about China require fine statistical measurements and, in these cases, we must be very careful indeed. On the food situation, to take one crucial example, only marginal differences in estimates of grain and population growth may be combined to produce either rising or falling per capita consumption.

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6. Joint Economic Committee *Papers* were published in 1967, 1972, 1975, and 1978.

7. This withdrawal from frank, published comment on China is reflected in the termination of *Current Scene*, for many years one of the most useful aids to studying contemporary developments.

Table 1  
 RATE OF GROWTH OF INDUSTRY IN CHINA, 1950s TO 1970s  
 (percent per annum)

	1952-1957	1957-78	1970-78	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1978-85(Plan)	1978 Absolute output
Industrial output	15.8	9.3	9.4	+4	+10	0	+14	+13	10.1	
Steel	33	8.8	7.5	-16	+14	-14	+14	+32	12.1	31.7 mmt
Electric power	21.5	10.7	10.7	+7	+12	+6	+10	+10		162 billion kwh
Crude oil	30.3	22.2	17.9	+20	+13	+13	+8	+11		100.3 mmt
Coal	14.5	7.6	8	+3	+17	+2	+12	+11	6.4	605 mmt
Cotton cloth	5.6	3.9	3.4	n.a.	n.a.	-7	+12	+11		11.1 blm
Machinery	24.8	14.6	14.6	+7	+7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.		

Sources: National Foreign Assessment Center, *China: Economic Indicators* (Washington, 1978); Jetro, *China Newsletter No. 21* (1979), and *China Reconstructs*, No. 4 (1979), p. 39.

## TRENDS IN THE GROWTH OF OUTPUT AND STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

### *Industrial Production*

In Table 1 are data on the growth of the index of industrial production and six key industrial commodities. Data for three periods are illustrated: the First Five Year Plan (1953-1957 inclusive); the long run since the end of the Plan; and the 1970s. This periodization is unusual in that it fails to bring out the peaks of 1958-1960 and the crash and recovery of 1961-1965. It is, however, perhaps the best periodization to illustrate the long-run performance of the economy which can then be used to judge recent and prospective (planned) performance. The argument for this is that although some new capacity was coming on stream in 1955-57, to a large extent the growth of industry (and also of agriculture) up to the end of the Plan was still mainly a result of increasing intensification of the use made of the pre-1949 capital stock. The long period since 1957, however, excludes recovery and intensification effects, and includes both the boom of the late 1950s and the decline and gradual recovery that followed.

What do these figures indicate to us? Certainly the growth of aggregate output appears very high. The long-run 9.3 percent per annum, for example, is a rate higher than any achieved in the West European or American industrializations. It is at least 1 percent higher than the Western reconstructions of the Soviet industrial production indexes (although below the 11.7 percent claimed in the official Soviet index for the comparable period); it is also at least 2 percent higher than the rate of industrial growth in any comparable period in pre-war Japan, and about 3 percent higher than the rate achieved by India between 1951 and 1954. In China's own historical perspective, it is substantially above the 6 percent annum growth estimated to have occurred in the modern manufacturing sector in the long period 1914/18 to 1952.<sup>8</sup>

There are two other features of industrial production to note. One (shown) is the striking contrast between the 1950s and the subsequent period. The other (not shown) is the magnitude of year-to-year variations in the growth rate. This seems to have been

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8. Alexander Gerschenkron, "The Rate of Industrial Growth in Soviet Russia," *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge Mass.: The Belknap Press, 1962), pp. 54-269; Kazushi Ohkawa and Henry Rosovsky, *Japanese Economic Growth* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), Ch. 4; and John K. Chang, *Industrial Development in Pre-Communist China* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

exceptional by any standards, and appears to be the product of politically-induced variations in activity punctuated by, and to some extent interacting with, climatically-induced variations in agricultural output.

Turning to the industrial sector, some instructive contrasts are apparent. Steel, for example, exemplifies in extreme form the general industrial performance: very fast growth in the 1950s and very erratic growth throughout. (In the 1970s the average deviation from the growth trend was 17 percent.) Electric power, on the other hand, displays the periodization, but has been more stable—indeed the growth of capacity has been even steadier than output, indicating the steadiness of planners' intentions towards this sector. Behind the index for electric power lies coal and oil output. The difference between these two is very large and has resulted in coal's share of total energy supply declining from close to 100 percent in the early 1950s to an estimated 65 percent in 1977. The tightness of China's energy problems may be judged from the facts that in no period did the growth of coal output keep pace with that of industrial production, and that the rate of growth of oil output has been falling during the 1970s.

A more impressive picture is presented by the index of machinery output. This has consistently grown faster than industrial output as a whole, reflecting the insensitivity of this sector to even dramatic shifts of inter-sectoral emphasis—whether agriculture or industry is given priority, machine-building remains an indispensable activity.

Our last indicator, cotton cloth, is a commodity of great importance since it is not only a major component of domestic consumption, but it also plays an important role in China's export trade. Output is seen to have grown relatively slowly, and in no period has it achieved significantly more than one-third of the growth rate for industry as a whole. The constraints on this sector have been partly investment, but more important, the shortage of raw cotton from agriculture. The effect of this shortage has been to keep output below capacity in many years from the 1950s to the 1970s.

### *Agriculture*

Agricultural indicators are illustrated in Table 2. By far the most important of these is grain. This is defined in China (and here) to include soybeans as well as pulses and the standard types of coarse grains. On the left hand side of the table, growth of grain output is divided into five periods. The first shows the relatively rapid growth of the First Five Year Plan period and the Great Leap Forward. It must, however, be noted that inclusion of 1958 output

Table 2

RATE OF GROWTH OF AGRICULTURE IN CHINA, 1950s to 1970s  
(percent per annum)

Grain output by period of growth		Total output		Grain, cotton, hogs: the long-term trend	
1952/53-1957/58	4.1	1952	161 mmt	1952/57 - 1972/77	
1957/58-1964/65	-0.3	1958	206 mmt		
1964/65-1970/71	3.9	1965	194 mmt	grain	2.2
1970/71-1974/75	3.4	1970	243 mmt	cotton	2.7
1974/75-1977/78	1.3	1978	295 mmt	hogs	4.3
(1978-1985 plan)	(4.3)				

Sources: USDA, *People's Republic of China: Agricultural Situation, Review of 1977 and Outlook for 1978* (Washington, 1978); National Foreign Assessment Center, *China: Economic Indicators* (Washington, 1978); NFAC, *China: Demand for Foreign Grain* (Washington, 1979); and NFAC, *China: Agriculture in 1978* (Washington, 1979).

is important—without it the rate of growth would be reduced by .5 percent per annum. The second period, in which growth was just negative, includes the decline of output from over 200 to an estimated 156 million metric tons in 1960 and the subsequent recovery. After 1964/65, the effect of new policies towards agriculture becomes visible. New institutional arrangements combined with resources in the form of consumer goods incentives to the peasants, and of fertilizers, electric pumps, and other aids to production, were both important. Developments in the 1970s have been less satisfactory. In the early 1970s, performance began to decelerate, and since 1974 growth has been slight and year-to-year movements erratic. In terms of per capita output, the effect of this pattern of growth was that the 1957 output level was not recovered until 1973.

The long-run performance of grain is shown in the right hand side of the table. Two sets of considerations need to be borne in mind in forming a judgment about this. The first relates to the sources of growth, and here we must note that China has achieved growth almost entirely by rising productivity per unit of land. For although the sown area has been increased by multiple cropping (the multiple cropping index has increased from 134 in 1952 to an estimated 166 in 1976), increase in the arable area has been, at best, slight. Within grains, it has been the expansion of rice output (through higher yields and extension to northern areas) that has been the principal contributor to output increases.<sup>9</sup> Apart from sown area increases and the growing availability of fertilizers and machinery of various kinds, output increases reflect a growing labor supply which in turn has been a result of demographic increase and the policy of restricting the growth of towns. The productivity of this additional labor force has, however, been declining steadily.

The second major consideration in looking at these figures is that grain output is an aggregate not only of varying crops, but of varying localities. Judgments about the grain data must, therefore, take account of divergences in local performance and the relationship between these and local population trends. Recent data on this are scarce, but what we have suggest two things: (a) that there has been a marginal improvement in regional grain self-sufficiency, and (b) that this improvement has been necessitated by the relatively poor performance of the provinces of Szechuan and Heilungkiang, both of

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9. This section is based on reports by the United States Department of Agriculture and the National Foreign Assessment Center, as well as data supplied by Professor E. R. Walker from his forthcoming book on grain production and utilization.

which were once major contributors to inter-provincial grain transfers, but are now scarcely self-sufficient themselves.<sup>10</sup> In the case of Heilungkiang, the problem has been rapid population growth. In Szechuan, grain performance has been bad—so much so that when sent there in 1975, Deng Xiaoping is reported to have wept openly at the distress he found.

Data on other types of agricultural output are scarce. Below grain, the table shows data for cotton and hogs. Missing are comprehensive information on fruit, vegetables, and fish. Both of the last two are essential for a proper view of the food situation and both may have performed well. In the case of vegetables, output may have been stimulated as a result of the intensive cultivation now carried out on the urban peripheries (involving application of fertilizer, electrified irrigation, machinery and, in the north, polypropylene covering for winter cultivation).<sup>11</sup> Fish output, too, may have grown as a result of the widespread popularization of fish farming which has impressed the Food and Agriculture Organization.<sup>12</sup>

### *Gross National Product*

An overview of the economy's long-run performance usually starts with estimates of national product. Analytically this is crucial since, in conjunction with population data, such estimates give us figures of income per head and enable us to identify the extent and character of structural shifts as well as some measure of the sacrifice being borne by the population in support of all these changes.

One reason why national product data are so hard to estimate in the Chinese case is that, although we have some data on the output of commodities, indicators of services (e.g., commerce, transport, finance, education, and government administration) are very slight for the years after 1957. Conventional measures of these sectors usually take into account their costs (often available in budgetary material), their absorption of manpower, or some other indicator of their activity. For the years up to 1957, we do have some relevant budget and employment data. After that year, estimates of services have to rely on projections from the 1950s based

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10. Kenneth R. Walker, "Grain Self-sufficiency in North China, 1953-75," *China Quarterly*, 71 (1977).

11. There are many Chinese works on this subject and a most valuable pair of reports are: G. William Skinner, "Vegetable Supply and Marketing," *China Quarterly*, 76 (1978), and Thomas Wiens, *Vegetable Farming Systems in the People's Republic of China*, Report of the American Vegetable Farming Systems Delegation.

12. *Freshwater Fisheries and Agriculture in China* (Rome: FAO, 1977).

Table 3

## CHINA'S GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT, 1933-1970

	1933	1952	1957	1970
1. Index of Growth	100	107	155	294
Rate of growth (percent between years per annum)		.36	7.7	5
2. Shares of sectors (percent)				
Manufacturing	19.8	26.2	31.8	47.6
Agriculture	59.2	47.9	45.9	32.4
Service	21.0	25.9	22.3	20.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
3. Share of investment in gross domestic product	7%	19.5%	23.5%	31-32%

Source: Dwight H. Perkins, "Growth Changing Structure of China's Economy," in Perkins (ed.), *China's Modern Economy in Historical Perspective* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), pp. 115-165.

on assumptions about the relationship between services and other identifiable changes—for example in population on industrial production. Note can also be taken of policy statements and policy changes that must have some relation to the provision of services (for example, the evolving responsibilities of the People's Communes, and anti-bureaucratic measures taken during the Cultural Revolution). Unfortunately the arguments on these matters are often very questionable and the assumption of fixed relationships between services and other phenomena must frequently beg the very question one wishes to ask. For the size and efficiency of welfare work and bureaucratic organizations are touchstones by which we should be judging the efficiency of China's socialist development.

For the 1950s, Liu and Yeh's national product estimates are undoubtedly the most comprehensive, and the most persuasive attempt to bring them up to date is that of Perkins. The results are shown in Table 3. It will be seen that in the 1950s the growth of national product was considerable, and even over the long period 1957 to 1970 the Chinese have achieved rates of progress estimated to be exceptionally high. In this context, however, one must reiterate warnings about uncertainties in the underlying data and the problem of services.<sup>13</sup>

From the second part of Table 3, we can trace the evolving structure of the economy. The most striking development is the growth of industry's share in national product. Between 1952 and 1970 its share almost doubled, and may now be presumed to account for more than half of the total. Agriculture, which probably accounts for more than 70 percent of employment, accounted by 1970 for less than a third of total product.

Finally, the bottom line of the table displays the rising proportion of product devoted to investment. Although these figures are relatively sensitive to the choice of prices, it is clear that the transformation in the investment rate brought about immediately (i.e. by 1952) is remarkable, and that thereafter the trend has been upwards.

### *Population*

The significance of much of the above data—especially trends in food supply and national product—depends upon their relationship to population change. This topic, however, has been left until last

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13. Decadal rates of growth are almost twice as high as those recorded in Europe, Japan, and America over longer periods, as reported in Simon Kuznets, *Modern Economic Growth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), Table 2.5.

since it is the hardest upon which one can make any firm comment. It is agreed among demographers that only competent national census enquiries can provide firm data on population totals (sample surveys can provide useful information on age structure and vital rates). The Chinese have only had one full census, and that was conducted in 1953/54. This did produce a population total that was later linked to a series for 1949-1956. A certain amount of simple vital rate and age/sex structure data also appeared in the 1950s. No systematic provincial data ever appeared, although the local newspapers contain a great deal of fragmentary data of unknown reliability. Various official population register checks and other enquiries have been conducted from time to time, most recently it is believed between 1974 and 1977.<sup>14</sup> Much work has been done on all of this; but, in the end, it appears difficult to justify significant deviation from the range of total population 910 to 960 millions reported to be in use in Beijing in the summer of 1978. Using the official 1953 census total as a base, this yields an average growth rate in the range of 1.8 percent to 2 percent per annum. Of this range, the higher seems more probable than the lower. Within this quite long period it is generally agreed that during the 1950s the rate was above 2 percent, and that in 1960/61 food supply and other problems reduced the rate to zero or slightly above. After this there must have been quite a vigorous recovery, but for the 1970s, there are differences of opinion about the movement of vital rates. The view expressed in FDAD and related publications is that fertility in the 1970s has fallen very rapidly—mainly in response to official campaigns rather than to changes either in the age/sex structure or to endogenous social influences. Thus according to the most recent estimates, births per thousand have declined from about 37 to 30 between 1970 and 1978; and with death rates reduced to an estimated 9.3 per thousand in 1978, this is believed to have led to a fall in natural increase from 2.38 percent to 2.04 percent including, it is thought, two years (1975/76) when the rate dropped below 2 percent. For 1985, FDAD are predicting birth, death, and natural increase rates of 20.3, 8, and 13.3 (i.e., 1.33 percent growth per annum).<sup>15</sup> If these judgments and predictions prove correct, China will have accomplished a remarkable demographic transition for a country in which the *rural share of population has remained virtually static for twenty years*. If confirmed, this

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14. John S. Aird, "Population Growth in the People's Republic of China," in *Chinese Economy Post-Mao* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), pp. 459-475.

15. Reported in *China: Economic Indicators* (Washington: National Foreign Assessment Center, 1978), pp. 6-9.

transition will be of wide significance since it will show that a combination of rural medical infrastructure, education, and hard sanctions can be an effective route to population control.

## PATTERNS OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

We turn now to consider the policies and institutional changes responsible for the performance outlined above. The fundamental problem facing the Chinese in the early 1950s was how best to mobilize resources for investment. Only in unusual cases can high levels of investment be achieved without corresponding domestic sacrifices. In China, dependence on foreign saving was ruled out partly because the scale of the Chinese economy was so great that to find external resources equal to only a few percentage points of the national income was beyond the scope of potential donors—even if such were willing to help, which was largely not the case. Also, the Chinese leadership considered that China's past experience of foreign indebtedness had been extremely unsatisfactory and was, therefore, wary of further entanglement. On the positive side, the leadership could argue that the Soviet industrialization illustrated the possibilities of a policy of mobilizing domestic resources, and of using all the increments to income for further expansion in the investment goods sector, thereby generating high rates of industrial growth and, eventually, high levels of technical self-sufficiency. This pattern of development reduces (or at least limits) the growth of living standards of all sectors of the population and, in its early stages, presses particularly hard on agriculture whose savings are required for urban food, raw materials, and exports. As the latter suggests, trade plays a role in this pattern in that through it the economy gains access to raw materials and capital goods that either cannot be produced domestically or only at very high cost. Thus although trade flows may appear small in relation to total investment or national income, they may be critical to the feasibility of rapid expansion.

The construction of an institutional framework to implement a strategy of the type sketched above revolves around three points: (1) ownership, (2) the planning system, and (3) incentives. On all of these, within the parameters of socialism, the scope for choice is wide. For the first, choice is required between state, collective, and private forms of ownership. For the second, the key decisions are whether targets are to be flexible indicators, or fixed mandatory requirements, and how precisely power is to be distributed between central planners, local planners, and the producing units. The above

choices are themselves a decision on incentives in that ownership and the nature of the work situation as determined by the planning system both affect work performance. In addition, however, the authorities may provide further incentives in the forms of income structures and systems of coercion and education.

The Soviet system as it presented itself to the Chinese in the 1950s had three elements. (1) State ownership in industry, and in commerce and finance, and a preponderance of collective ownership in agriculture. (2) Centralized planning with, for industry, mandatory targets for outputs, inputs, technical and financial targets, and for agriculture, a system of indicative planning and forced deliveries at low prices (i.e., at prices at which the peasants would not voluntarily supply and which in some cases did not cover costs). Finally, (3) a combination of material incentives in industry (sharp income inequalities) and strong, coercive controls throughout the economy exercised by Party, control, and security authorities.

This system was remarkably stable for more than twenty years and, through it, the Soviets achieved considerable industrialization. It did, nonetheless, cause many problems. For example, emphasis on physical output targets produced well documented micro-inefficiencies, and the imposition of over-ambitious output and input plans led industrial managers to strive for a conservative, predictable security and thereby helped to produce an overall pattern in which growth came from additional resources, rather than from technical progress and other sources of productivity increase. Further, in this system agriculture was treated as an object of extraction rather than development, and as a sector able to "absorb" the errors made in other sectors. Thus although deliveries to the state grew, productivity stagnated and peasant incomes fell, thus establishing a vicious circle that lasted until well after the death of Stalin.

To the Chinese, all this experience was a matter of intense concern. Committed to similar goals of industrialization and self-reliance, and still numbering several admirers of Stalin, Mao and his colleagues were anxious from the outset to avoid Soviet errors. This was indeed absolutely essential since, because their initial resources were so limited, they could not afford to "pay" for either errors or systemic inefficiencies by drastic reductions in living standards and agricultural output in the way that Stalin had done.

*From the First Five Year Plan to the Great Leap Forward*

The allocation of resources proposed in the First Five Year Plan (1953-1957) resembled the early Soviet plans. A high rate of investment was to be used to accelerate industrialization. Institutionally, however, the Chinese diverged immediately. For, although

existing public sector enterprises were to be developed and important trade and finance institutions to be controlled, expansion of the state's role in the balance of the non-agricultural sector was to proceed in stages, by persuasion. In agriculture too, the program was piecemeal, voluntary collectivization based on examples of successful transformation.<sup>16</sup> All this reflected Chinese awareness of Soviet errors, and in the case of the treatment of the small-scale sector, awareness that China's primitive, labor-intensive economy could not dispense with this sector as the Soviets had done. In many ways the original Plan resembled the program claimed to be in Lenin's mind by critics of the violent revolution in the Soviet economy put through by Stalin between 1929 and 1931.

These policies did not provide a stable framework for growth. Agriculture's performance in 1954 and 1955 was inadequate, partly for climatic reasons and partly because of lack of investment and incentives, and/or ill-judged initiatives in socialization.<sup>17</sup> This immediately affected the food supply and industrial production, although the foreign trade sector (in which agriculture goods were buying plant) was cushioned. Problems also arose in the management of the urban economy. Under conditions of accelerated growth (especially 1953), conflicts between the private and public sectors were serious. As a result of campaigns against the private sector, urban output growth was increasingly constrained and since this coincided with poor rural conditions that propelled peasants into the cities, urban unemployment became substantial.<sup>18</sup> The policy of protecting the foreign trade sector from these difficulties made the adjustment in the non-trade sector that much more severe—domestic incomes were squeezed to maintain imports of capital goods.

One way out of the agricultural difficulties might have been to increase incentives to peasant households to produce and invest more; but this would have involved some reduction in targets for industrial expansion and lower overall growth in the short run. It would also have entailed political risks. A major purpose of the First Five Year Plan had been to establish economic foundations for a socialist political order, and a shift of the kind suggested would have been a retreat from this.<sup>19</sup> To understand what followed the crisis of

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16. *First Five Year Plan for Development of the National Economy of the People's Republic of China in 1953-1957* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1956).

17. K. R. Walker, "Collectivization in Retrospect: The 'Socialist High Tide' of Autumn 1955-Spring 1956," *China Quarterly*, 26 (1966), 17-26.

18. Christopher Howe, *Employment and Economic Growth in Urban China 1949-1957* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971) Chap. 1.

19. This point is brought out in Hsü Ti-hsin, *Chung-kuo Kuo-tu Shih-Ch'i Kuo-min Ching-chi ti Fen-hsi* (An analysis of the national economy during the transition period in China) (Beijing: Scientific Publishing House, 1959).

1954/55, we have now to include in the picture the personality and ideas of Mao. Mao appears to have been broadly in command of the situation as it developed in the early 1950s. Some dissidence from the initial strategy certainly existed, but this appears to have taken the form of support for slower growth, less emphasis on industry, and postponement of socialization campaigns. As between these ideas and the Plan as initiated, there can be no doubt where Mao stood. Faced with prospects of slower growth and political destabilization, Mao allowed his instincts to unwind and express themselves in a new, radical program by which the original targets were to be fulfilled and exceeded.<sup>20</sup> This program called for a new timetable for agriculture socialization, which, once started, acquired momentum and extremism of its own and was soon extended to the urban sector. In all, this phase of institutional transformation lasted from the High Tide of autumn 1955 to the establishment of the people's communes in the Great Leap Forward of summer, 1958. The features of this new economic order were as follows:

1) Rural reorganization into large, collective institutions which made control of output much easier and offered possibilities for developing social, political, welfare, and technical infrastructure in the countryside.

2) Socialization of small-scale economic activities and positive steps to develop small-scale, low technology industries.

3) Decentralization of planning powers, primarily to local coordinating authorities (city and province levels), but also to production units and their component parts (for example to industrial enterprises and to shops within enterprises).

4) The abandonment in the non-agricultural sector of both rising average wages and articulated income structures as incentives to performance and their replacement by ideological education. To some extent this was paralleled in the rural communes by payment systems based partly on need and partly on work, and by widespread involuntary labor.

Merely to list these points may suggest more order and conscious planning than occurred. For although initiated by Mao, the evolution of events depended not only on him and his ideas, but on his interaction with his colleagues and on their joint interaction with the interests, fears, and utopian aspirations of the whole population.

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20. A detailed account of this is Christopher Howe and Kenneth R. Walker, "Mao the Economist," in Dick Wilson, ed., *Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

The history of these extraordinary events remains to be written, but it is certain that the Great Leap of 1958 was the most important turning point in the past thirty years. For a variety of reasons—man-made, technical, and climatic—the Leap failed in its purpose of providing a new way by which ambitious goals could be achieved within the parameters set by China's limited resources. After it was over, however, the Chinese rephased their objectives and established policies that lasted with small modifications down to the death of Mao in 1976.

### *Policies After the Leap*

The most important reforms in the early 1960s were those relating to agriculture. The decline in grain output from above 200 million metric tons to about 160 million metric tons in 1960 was truly catastrophic. Average levels of output and consumption implied by these figures can give no idea of the actual decline in welfare since they obscure regional variations that must at the time have been critical. Recovery from this was the planners' first task; in the early stages, it was found necessary over wide areas of China to allow farming to revert from a commune to a household basis. But in the longer run, what is striking is the way in which the Chinese constructed an agrarian organization that linked household incentives and the collective interest with a degree of efficiency that few, if any, other collective systems have achieved (the European pattern has been either virtual decollectivization or stagnation). The core of the new Chinese system was emphasis on the three-level system of ownership and control, i.e., commune, brigade, and team, within which the team was the key group both for ownership and the planning of production. Frequently equating to the natural village, the team was usually a relatively cohesive group within which income could be related to work on basic farming operations, rather than being distorted by large-scale, often unproductive investment organized by units with a wider spatial perspective. The working of the system depended on the reasonableness of the level and price of compulsory purchases by the state, and the evidence is that there was some improvement in this in the 1960s. Also, additional incentives were allowed in the form of consumer goods on which cash incomes could be spent, and of toleration of private plots and rural markets.

The net effect of these changes, combined with new allocations of investment goods—especially fertilizer and electricity—were impressive. The measures constituted a new balance between the rural and urban, and private and collective interest. Their success is demonstrated not only by output data, but also by the ability of the countryside to hold its population. It is true that population control

also depended on legal and other measures, but these could never have been effective without some amelioration of urban-rural differences as the experience of the 1950s demonstrates.<sup>21</sup>

The reconstruction of the non-agricultural sector in the 1960s took several forms. To begin with, there was re-centralization of some planning operations—for example in finance, materials supply, and labor work. At the same time, planning was re-bureaucratized in the sense that formal rules, procedures, and channels of communication were restored. In spite of this, the balance between central and local powers never, after the Leap, reverted to the 1950s pattern.<sup>22</sup> One reason for this was that the incorporation into the sphere of planning of small-scale production and services sector made complete re-centralization unworkable—the number of units and their heterogeneity made local involvement indispensable. In the new balance, local coordinating organs worked only within broad central guidance, or in the case of large enterprises, in conjunction with the center. In the case of industry, there developed a system with which, if we consider the system as a hierarchy of layers in which the level of control, the sophistication of technology, capital intensity, and the wage rate rise together, the principle of planning is that each level minimizes the demands it makes on the level above. Thus each level is seeking self-sufficiency in the sense of seeking to supply itself with inputs that it could not initially produce for itself.<sup>23</sup> In this way the planners simulated a form of the "dual" structure found in developing market economies in the period of their technical transformation; a form that tended toward a full utilization of resources, economized on the ultimate demand for goods that could not be supplied domestically at all, and attempted to avoid conflicts between rival vertical planning bodies of the kind common to centrally planned socialist systems.

A further important modification of the 1950s system that survived the Leap was policy towards incentives. To appreciate this it is essential to emphasize one way in which China's first Plan deviated

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21. Thomas P. Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), and Lynn White, *Careers in Shanghai* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) both have important discussions of the techniques of population movement control.

22. The most important discussion of the evolution of the financial system is Nicholas R. Lardy, *Economic Growth and Distribution in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

23. The American Rural Small-scale Industry Delegation, *Rural Small-scale Industry in the People's Republic of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), Chap. 2.

totally from the Soviet one. In the Soviet case, development of the wage structure coincided with *a decline in real average wages*. This had been made possible (and compatible with "plans" promising rising wages) because of inflation.<sup>24</sup> But in China, inflation was ruled out since the Party correctly believed that its reputation for fiscal and monetary conservatism had been a major political strength. Thus income re-structuring (i.e., raising some incomes relative to others) required *a rising average of real wage*. The net effect of this (notably after the 1956 wage reform) was a sharp increase in the rural-urban income differential and an increase in inflationary pressures, concealed by official statistics but revealed in reports of rising prices for secondary (unrationed) foodstuffs. As a result, in 1957 the Party introduced the "rational low wage policy" which emphasized the need for wage stability and for local urban wage variations to relate closely to relevant rural incomes.

The long-run effect of these changes was, first, to ensure that savings and investment rates remained at high levels and even increased. The burden of sacrifice, however, was changed. Total product between 1957 and 1970 increased by nearly 90 percent. In the urban sector, wage policy ensured that little of this found its way back into consumption. But in the rural sector, incomes probably rose by about 15 percent, which although smaller than the potential increase, did lead to some narrowing of the rural-urban gap and provide some additional incentives to work.

The allocation of resources for investment between sectors since the Great Leap remains unclear in detail, although important work is being done on this at the present time. Between sectors there was clearly a shift towards agriculture. Between industries, priority was given to the oil, chemical, and machinery branches.

The reader will note that in these comments I have not distinguished between pre- and post-Cultural Revolution trends. This is because in allocation terms I do not think this was very important, and indeed in other ways too the economic effects of the Cultural Revolution are frequently exaggerated. In agriculture particularly, the authorities were largely able to insulate the system from disturbance; and even in industry, disruptions were fairly short-lived. The significance of this period for the economy consisted of three developments: (1) damage to the training and educational systems, (2) interruption of the rising trend of foreign trade contacts, and (3) the growth of confusion and political factionalism in enterprise

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24. Soviet inflation was first discussed in detail in Leo Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (London: Faber and Faber, 1937).

organization and overall economic planning. Serious as these were, the data show that both agriculture and industry performed better between 1965 and 1970 than they did in the 1970s.

### *The Late 1970s*

The argument of this paper has been that the development of the past thirty years has to be considered as consisting of two major phases: a modified "Soviet" phase that started in northeast China in the late 1940s and spread throughout the country in the early 1950s; this then gave way to a new system and a new equilibrium in both institutional arrangements and resource allocation that broadly lasted down to 1976. In this conclusion, I wish briefly to look at the light thrown by recent Chinese discussions on this and on the prospects for a third major phase.

In factual terms, recent materials have not told us a great deal about the past which careful readers of the Chinese press were not already aware of. Throughout the 1970s and particularly since 1974, the *People's Daily* and other sources have carried articles describing dislocation and confusion in the economy, and the official grain data also told a story that was plain to see. We have now learned more of budgetary and planning failures, have received some vivid, disaggregated accounts of industrial confusion and dislocation, and, very important, have had the seriousness of the agricultural problems spelled out.

The significance of these reports should, nonetheless, not be exaggerated. They all serve contemporary purposes—if one read the worst into everything published in China, one would be left with a picture incompatible with even the most cautious reading of the statistical evidence. The importance of current articles lies not in the past, but in the light they throw on prospects for the future. At the most basic level, for example, they illustrate a most interesting reevaluation of the nature of socialist systems: a reevaluation according to which the test of policies and institutions is pragmatic. It is so pragmatic that authors now speak of the *potential* superiority of socialism over capitalism and emphasize that centralization of economic planning carries tremendous risks as well as a potential for good.

The contemporary Chinese analysis of China's economic conditions emphasizes three points. First, there were specific errors in the past—for example, errors of investment misallocation between industrial sectors. Second, there was a failure to provide adequate incentives. In 1976 and 1977, analysis particularly emphasized industrial problems; more recently, articles have discussed the difficulties in agriculture resulting from low procurement prices and

pressure on side activities. Third, commentators are discussing two related points: failure to apply modern methods to production (technological and managerial), and loss of contact with the outside world in terms not only of trading relationships, but lack of intellectual and cultural contacts as well.

Current programs for the 1980s are based on these ideas. They thus include programs for investment, for technical and scientific training for institutional change, and for an enormous enlargement of relations with the outside world. There is much that can be said about all of this, but here we are only concerned with two broad questions. Are we about to see a new phase in terms either of a change in the character of investment or of the system of economic administration? And second, what would the prospects for such a phase be?

At present, there is inadequate evidence to confirm a proposed change in either the rate or the structure of investment. It is true that references have appeared that promise rises in the proportions of investment allocated to light industry and agriculture; but, given the commitments still in force to heavy industry, it is not clear that even *planned* changes will be more than marginal. Much clearer are plans to embody in new investment very advanced techniques, imported from abroad if necessary. In terms of the system, the situation is very interesting. Recent articles suggest that the leadership are once again hoping to accelerate growth through institutional change and are looking for both a new flexibility in industrial planning and for a new balance between center and locality.

The principal danger in these policies is undoubtedly the temptation to go too fast. For, even if it proved possible to mobilize resources for an industrial spurt lasting a few years, this would have several undesirable consequences.

- 1) Excessive pressure on consumption and agriculture would bring the spurt to a halt and the economy would then have to go through a further period of readjustment. Such a spurt would also have the effect of establishing the need for investment "echo" when the current bunch of investments needed replacement—thus perpetuating an uneven growth path.

- 2) One of the principal problems of the 1970s has been imbalance between industries. A rapid spurt would be likely to create new imbalances, not only because the maturity of the industrial sector must be making inter-industry linkages more complex and more difficult to plan, but because of implementation problems arising, for example, from inter-industry variations in absorptive capacity.

3) The current attempt to accelerate growth in the short-run relies heavily on importation of advanced technology, notably in electronics and metallurgy. Such technology does, somewhat paradoxically, often economize on some categories of skills likely to be short in China at present. However, full utilization of it usually requires skillful adaptation to specific situations, high quality overall coordination, and good management at the enterprise level. These conditions the Chinese will find difficult to fulfill and it is arguable, therefore, that the attempt to "skip" too many technological stages will result in the benefits of new investment being considerably lower than anticipated at the planning stage.

The problems of the countryside are rather different. Here, the program of general mechanization has been abandoned, and more reliance is being placed on liberalizing the rural economy and providing incentives. This, however, may not work since loosening controls and keeping decisions at the small-scale unit of production (team rather than brigade) may prove to be postponing the central issue, which remains the scale of the transfer of resources to the countryside. The danger inherent in the new program is that it could lead to neglect of the production and control of grain which must remain the core of agricultural policy and without which industrial targets will not be fulfilled. The question, in other words, is whether the planners are correct in upsetting the balance between public and private and central and local interest which, as argued earlier, did last with reasonable results for a decade and a half. It is true that the risks of a new policy are to some extent to be offset in official plans by a concentration of investment in state farm "grain bases." Here, however, we have to bear in mind the poor performance of state farms in the past and, also, that if the *total* economic program is over-ambitious, agriculture may once again become the residual sector for investment. This is all the more likely if investment in industry is tied to foreign commitments of various kinds.

Finally, modernization of the economy as now planned is seen to depend on liberalization of various kinds. Training and education, the revival of science and technology, and the improvement of planning and administration are all understood as requiring some freedom of expression and an openness to new, foreign ideas. The issue, however, is whether such liberalism can in practice be restricted in the way apparently proposed. Will the population not use their freedom to demand more consumption, freedom to travel, and jobs in desired areas? The latter two are particularly crucial. Much of the success of China's development has been a result of the ability to control population movement. Through this the productivity

of the cities has been greatly enhanced. Collapse of population and employment control (linked possibly to weakening of food control) would remove some of the foundations of the Chinese economic system as we have known it.

## CONCLUSION

Thus the sum of our survey is this. In their first phase, the Chinese successfully raised and controlled the rate of investment and acquired with help from the Soviet Union an industrial base. The lesson learned from this phase was that they had to devise a new institutional framework congruent with their own economic, spatial, political, and cultural characteristics; and at the same time as evolving this, they had also to recognize the critical importance of their agricultural problem and the need to release their domestic economy from rigid external constraints in the form of long-term export plans. In their second phase (1960s to 1970s), the Chinese succeeded in stabilizing and balancing their economic performance, but came to learn that they could not sustain growth under conditions of economic and cultural isolation from the rest of the world.

In their third phase, which is just beginning, the main task will be to discover precisely how they can most profitably relate to the outside world, and what adaptations of their domestic systems this will entail. In seeking to make a transition to this third phase, the leadership has no precedents to guide it. The Soviet Union attempted something analogous after the death of Stalin and failed, while the level of development of the East European economies makes their reform experiences of doubtful validity to China. Nonetheless one need not be too pessimistic. The world trade climate is not generally favorable, but the permutations of world and East Asian politics are in some ways working in China's favor. Internally, the Chinese, for all their current reevaluations, retain an impressive and stabilizing confidence in their future and may still find Mao's era to be far from the negative legacy it is currently assumed to be. Mao's practical analysis of China's problems, his awareness both of the human dimension in economic life and of the fundamental indeterminacies in the historical process, could all still have relevance as the Chinese continue to search for a way to achieve their economic goals, while at the same time reconciling these with their wider aspirations as human beings. What resemblance the unfolding result will have to the experience of socialist systems as we have known them remains to be seen.

Dr. Christopher Howe is a member of the Department of Economic and Political Science, and of the Contemporary China Institute School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

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A brilliant account of a central aspect of the Chinese planning system—the budgetary process.

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A rounded account of the oil situation and prospects in China.

# Public Policy and Life in China

*Joyce K. Kallgren*

Analyzing life in China is both intriguing and difficult. Youngsters during the civil war years are now well into adulthood. Couples who were middle-aged in 1949 are now retired. The cohort of those who led the revolution is now much smaller. How have they all fared? Linking the life outcomes of these men and women and their children with governmental policies designed to alter conduct and attitudes is an exceedingly complex matter. The regional variations of China, differences between city and countryside, of customs and language, all make generalizations difficult. Yet since 1949, a constant emphasis upon the close link between politics and the community has been a characteristic of the Chinese Communist leadership.

The Communist Party, generally through the government with its own moral power as an adjunct, has attempted to alter social customs and priorities in such areas as marriage and child rearing, to reorder incentives in the work place, to allocate educational opportunities, to provide security, to encourage some actions and punish others, to enhance the opportunities and life chances of some groups of people, to foreclose and restrict the options of others. The public policies of China are the bedrock for an appraisal of opportunities. Because the topic is vast, it is useful to make explicit the emphases of this chapter. They are policies and life in the workplace, in health, social assistance, and education.

Except for the first ten years of the People's Republic, there has been little national data available on social conditions, such as personal income, education, health facilities, or social changes. There has been some local reporting about housing, prices, medical care, and related matters. Data is rarely provided in absolute figures; it

has been normally available either in percentage terms or on a case-by-case basis. This situation has changed somewhat in the past two years and there is some evidence of continuing improvement.<sup>1</sup>

Reports are generally in a rhetorical style that is habitual with the media in China and has characterized reporting for the past thirty years. Newspapers, radio, and television serve multiple roles. They convey messages to the leadership cadres, provide instruction, information and entertainment to the more informed reader, and perhaps create a historical record. Usually the press in China speaks with authority. But the outsider has few means to monitor the operation of a policy, and to measure its success or failure. Thus the certainty and enthusiasm of Chinese reporting is apt to engender in the reader an optimistic confidence in the results. Goals in China are frequently reported as over-achieved, students always volunteer for desired programs, results are generally universally positive or negative. It is difficult to retain a prudent skepticism about the extent of social change.

There are strategies for checking the media. Substantial experience has been developed with the use of Hong Kong refugee data. These accounts can usually detail procedures and aspects of life rarely reported in the press and virtually never available to the non-Chinese visitor. Though there have been reports of falsified data, it is a rare researcher who relies solely upon one individual account. When acquired in a thoughtful and careful manner, these personal stories are quite useful in appraising social change.<sup>2</sup>

There is now a genre of literature on China derived from the visits, often brief, of non-Chinese or, very occasionally, overseas Chinese.<sup>3</sup> Their value naturally varies. Some accounts, particularly

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1. The Work Report of Premier Hua Guofeng to the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress, June 18, 1979, reported in *Beijing Review* No. 27 (July 6, 1979), 5-32, provides more statistical data than has been available for some years.

2. A number of scholars of contemporary China have used refugee information to supplement their research based on published sources. Professor Lynn White, III, of Princeton University, has compiled a list of publications which incorporate research undertaken at the Universities Service Centre in Hong Kong. The list includes the names of virtually every scholar in the contemporary field working on domestic politics or anthropological or sociological problems.

3. Many China Center libraries have acquired on an informal basis a number of such accounts. In some cases, systematic efforts are being made to acquire reports together with selected oral accounts. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Nancy Hearst, Librarian of the Fairbank East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, and C. P. Chen, Librarian of the Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, Berkeley, in making available to me the collections in their respective units.

those by individuals familiar with Chinese conditions in the pre-1949 period, have emphasized positive changes in health, education, and general well-being. Reports by physicians, scientists, or experts in some specific technological field focus upon the speciality of the author. In such areas as public health, education, nutrition, and agriculture these accounts are quite valuable. Finally, some useful insights may be gleaned from the reports of non-specialists—whether the informal diary comments of a keen-eyed journalist, or the analytical judgment of an experienced traveler.

There are three limitations to the utility of these visitor accounts; what is seen, how it is presented, and the intellectual set of the reporter. Certain factories, communes, hospitals, and similar institutions are routinely open to foreign visitors. Undoubtedly, the tendency is to show the "best," though this tendency has recently been less pronounced. Chinese guides readily admit that the agricultural sites visited are often non-typical, largely because of their location adjacent to a city. Even with restrictions, it becomes possible over time to make some comparative observations about a given unit or between units.

Next is the manner in which information is presented. Virtually every aspect of life is linked to the revolution. Successful revolutionary leadership is eventually to bring ease, better living conditions, greater opportunity for children, and improved security for all. Policy is urged in the context of pre-1949 conditions. There are new "Long Marches," and new revolutionary efforts. Historical phrases invoke a set of social priorities and goals that are repeatedly urged on the population. Difficulties are attributed to past mistakes, evil class remnants, or mistaken leadership. Enjoyments postponed and sacrifices assumed are justified as building a "new socialist man" or a strong and powerful China. Just as socialism and nationalism are combined in foreign policy goals, or integrated into industrial targets, so too they are intermixed with the social policies that lead to a brighter tomorrow.

Finally, the outside visitor has a set of assumption and personal emphases. Many reports have started from a critique of Mao's revolutionary goals, predicted dire consequences after the Great Leap Forward, and foreseen chaos as inevitably resulting from the Cultural Revolution or following upon the death of Mao. These critics are more than balanced by those who have feared offending Chinese authorities and thus precluding further trips to China, who wish to give a socialist society the benefit of any doubts, or who accept Chinese hopes and aspirations as fact. Hence, statements that cancer has been abolished in China, 100 percent literacy has been achieved,

claims for acupuncture beyond those made by most Chinese authorities, and other overly-enthusiastic remarks.

Understanding how rules and procedures are translated into daily life requires a grasp of fact, perception, and opinion. These personal accounts make an invaluable contribution even though continued caution is necessary in their use—hence the extended discussion of these sources in this introduction.

## WORK AND THE WORK PLACE

An enduring image of pre-1949 rural China is of destitution and starvation: famine, drought, flood, pillaging by bandits and soldiers, the demands of landlords, all had a role. The cities by contrast seemed alive and busy. But they were filled with unemployed men and women who sold themselves and their children; and those lucky enough to be employed suffered from long hours, frequent layoffs, and inhuman conditions. Undoubtedly the picture was overstated in some respects. A period of peace would have provided the opportunity of recovery for some portions of the society. Any Chinese government would have tried to ameliorate the suffering of its people.

The government that came to power in 1949 was led by a party with an ideology which guided its approach to the economic problems that faced the country. Within a few years, the leadership declared that unemployment was virtually eliminated. Visitors to urban areas were told about the policies that resulted in full employment. Over the years, it has become clear that part of the solution has been to permit a degree of overstaffing. Difficulties with the growing youth population in the cities have recurred, though it has not always been taken as a serious problem. In the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward, economic dislocations, mismanagement, and disastrous weather brought near-famine to both city and countryside. Mistaken work force allocations contributed to the problems. In the 1960s, the need to provide employment for middle school graduates increased. The Cultural Revolution policy of sending youth to the countryside was, in part, an attempt to solve this.

In the countryside, there have been sporadic rumors of difficult economic conditions, but they have been difficult to verify except for the post-Great Leap Period already mentioned. Whatever the current difficulties confronting Chinese society, there has been success in mobilizing China's vast population in productive labor, especially in the countryside, and in minimizing the movement of individuals and families between the countryside and city. The efforts to reorder

work, and to develop social organizations which organize and reward it, may be usefully divided into the rural and urban efforts.

The Chinese have been successful in reaching higher grain outputs over the years in large part through the mobilization of their work force. This proceeded simultaneously with drastic changes in landholding patterns. Land reform changed the economic and social relations of China's countryside. Then, increased emphasis on collectivization progressed from the mutual aid teams to producer's cooperatives, through the advanced producer's cooperatives and finally to the people's commune.

The people's commune is the basic-level unit of rural government. In addition to social, educational and defense tasks, it is of key importance for agricultural production and, hence, for the survival and growth of the nation. There has been considerable experimentation with the appropriate size of the commune; the total number is now approximately 50,000. Allocation of authority between commune, brigade and work team has changed through time.

When the communes were initially established, peasant fears for the maintenance of their household possessions, animals, fruit trees, and other items resulted in the slaughter of animals, destruction of trees and a catastrophic shortage of food, fruits, and pork in the cities. Virtually immediately some private activity was restored to the family. A small portion of land, the so-called private plot, was allotted to each individual family and could be worked during off hours, with the profits from sale of the produce or animals retained by the family.

Despite the restoration of this small area of private initiative, there has been an ongoing wish by some leaders to reduce the autonomy represented by these activities, as well as the authority of the production teams in labor assignments and allocation of profits. The argument to assign responsibility to the brigade rather than the production team, and to abolish the private plots, was made on philosophical grounds of enhancing socialist values and also that increased economies of scale would promote agricultural modernization and raise peasant living standards. The model extolled was Dazhai, a production brigade where, against many obstacles, the people improved their own lives while increasing their productive contribution to China's agricultural effort.

In labor assignment and remuneration, the unit of calculation has been the work point. It is a measurement of physical effort or sometimes skill. Each individual's work points are periodically totalled and translated into a percentage of the net income of the

unit, generally the production team. A family with a large number of workers and few non-productive members will fare better than a family with few fulltime workers and many dependents. The latter family will often be short of food and may need to borrow from the team or receive a special supplement.

The system can be used for determining compensation due the team when some of its members participate in the work of neighboring teams or brigades or contribute labor to large-scale water conservancy projects. The awarding of work points on an individual rather than a family basis provides recognition of the contribution of women, children, and the aged.

Though the work point has remained, the basis upon which it has been awarded has changed at various times. The system could be employed to reward political attitudes and acts, as was the case in Dazhai. Points could be awarded for attendance at meetings or other political tasks. They could be assigned for service in medical programs, for teaching, or for cadre leadership duties—thus redistributing resources within the agricultural unit. However, in the past two years there has been a de-emphasis on political input and a search for increased productivity by providing higher prices for grain.

Work opportunities in the countryside have expanded considerably. In areas close to cities there seem to have been substantial increases in grain, fruit, and vegetables. An increasing portion of income is derived from small factories. In virtually every commune there are a number of locally developed factories, established with commune funding, initially helped by some technical training from a city enterprise, requiring minimal investment, and producing goods locally consumed or delivered on subcontract to a city enterprise. The workers are normally commune members, and usually receive salaries, or sometimes a combination of salary and work points. The jobs are eagerly sought because they are more remunerative, have fixed hours, are less physically taxing than farm labor, and often provide year-round employment. The pay and benefits are less than in urban industry and there is less security or opportunity for promotion. The extent of such employment is not known but the contribution to the economic growth of the commune as well as to the life of the individual so employed is substantial.

On the whole, work in rural China is physically exhausting and, compared to the cities, less well paid. The magnitude of the problem, both of capital requirements and population pressure, will certainly inhibit rapid change. Hence, the immediate future will see a continuation of the system of individual work points and the role of the production team. If the government is able to implement its

announced intention to increase investment in the agricultural sector, there will be a gradual and partial mechanization. This will release more of the work force for commune industrial enterprises.

Urban growth in China has been relatively modest, and generated more from internal development than from rural migration. Government policy has been fairly consistent to limit such migration. There were some dislocations in the early 1950s, and during the Great Leap. Also, during the period before the Cultural Revolution, there was some recruitment of temporary workers—who were then kept on for an extended time because of savings to the enterprise in lower wages and benefits. There actually have been significant movements of population from the cities to the country. These include particularly the school-leaving youth, and pressure on military and other retirees to return to the village.

The urban workplace is very different from the countryside in character of work, conditions of employment, incentives and benefits, and the extent of social organization. Salaries have remained the principal means of payment. Until recently these were frozen at early Cultural Revolution levels because of reliance upon moral incentives and non-material rewards, and criticisms of those suspected of "economism." The tight organization of the enterprise facilitated policies that stressed social and moral encouragement, with an emphasis on collective authority and decision making.

The patterns resulting from this emphasis now complicate implementation of new policies. These include: centralizing enterprise responsibility and leadership, new incentives that include a bonus system to reward higher productivity, and enforcement of higher quality standards. Skepticism about the permanence of the new rules, and some uneasiness about the appropriateness of new standards, have had some limiting effect.

In addition to large enterprises, there are smaller units affiliated with residential committees. These are locally financed enterprises, utilizing simple machines, largely staffed with housewives formerly unemployed and generally unskilled. These factories often work on subcontract to a larger enterprise. They are usually highly labor intensive, and the salaries are low. Recently more emphasis has been given to service and repair shops for the busy city resident. These are being presented as alternative employment opportunities for the growing numbers of China's middle school graduates unable or unwilling to go to the countryside, and unsuccessful in gaining admission to university. In the early 1950s, this type of employment provided a needed first step toward acquiring the skills for industrial employment; now the employment needs of China's factories are

likely to be met directly from middle schools.

There are contrasts in the labor of China's population. In rural China the work remains constant, and difficult. There are still seasonal labor shortages, when youngsters from the cities are sent to assist in harvests. The emphasis upon collective labor and reward continues, though the importance of private plots will not easily be overcome. Furthermore, the utility of local markets, together with interaction of all family members in private plots each according to his ability, continues customary interdependence that has characterized family and work in China. The need to increase production has led the government to advocate policies that emphasize both group and individual productivity. Such policies seem likely to preserve and possibly enhance the local autonomy and some of the individualism that still remain in China.

In urban China, there is a more equivocal situation. The power of the government (through organizations, the media, and control of desired benefits such as housing and schooling) gives the leadership wider options in pursuing new goals. The problems in the workplace remain the trade-offs in monetary cost and social conduct between policies. For instance, the gap between city and countryside may widen due to new regulations and the availability of consumer goods and other benefits in the city. Efforts to heighten efficiency through more rational assignments of workers, and more effective policies to determine productivity and quality control, pose a threat to some longstanding social values. Implementation of these policies will require great care in planning and resource allocation.

The stakes in Chinese modernization are high if only because of the huge populations involved. Even small policy changes—in terms of employment, workplace, conditions, benefits and rewards—affect numbers of people, whether urban or rural, who exceed the population of most countries. Setbacks and failures that are very modest in percentage terms may have great effect on productivity and future development. Thus, a figure of ten percent without sufficient food becomes a potential 96 million individuals.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, it is equally important to recognize that achievements of modest goals with respect to nutrition and health, levels of competence, and access to employment also involve populations larger than most of the nations of the world.

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4. Federal Broadcast Information Service, June 19, 1979, p. L11 (from *Ming Pao*, June 14, 1979, p. 4).

## HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

Since grain production has increased substantially in the past thirty years, why are there still complicated and pervasive rationing systems for most foodstuffs? What is the basis for recent comments about hunger in China? At the risk of simplifying, China faces continuing pressure to keep grain production ahead of a still burgeoning population. The problem is exacerbated by transportation inadequacies. Population growth is directly related to health policy.

Achievements in health and health care delivery constitute one of the most attractive aspects of life in China in the past thirty years.<sup>5</sup> While it is probably true that any Chinese government would have tried to improve the health and well-being of its population, the degree of success achieved by current programs has made them the envy of many and the focus of study by health practitioners. The differences between the Chinese efforts and those of other developing countries seem to lie in the effective governmental intervention for the provision of health care. Successful implementation of public health programs has reduced mortality rates and increased the survival chances of China's children.

In the first fifteen years, the government endeavored to bring a grossly underdeveloped and disparate medical system under state control. The effectiveness of the limited available resources was maximized through widespread social mobilization. Consolidation and control was established over the medical facilities in existence and over medical personnel. There was upgrading and some expansion of medical training facilities; integration of physicians trained in Western medicine and in Chinese medicine was enforced. Social programs to control and eradicate infectious diseases and health hazards, including venereal disease and the use of opium, were undertaken. Relatively simple but important practices reduced the risks of pregnancy and raised the survival rates of infants.

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5. Groups of physicians have been among the most numerous professional visitors to China. Two recent publications are of special interest in their careful appraisal of Chinese programs and the potential for transfer to other social settings. Robert J. Blendon's article "Can China's Health Care Be Transplanted without China's Economic Politics?" reprinted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, P. O. Box 2316, Princeton, New Jersey, from the *New England Journal of Medicine* CCC: 26 (June 28, 1979) 1453-1458, is an extremely informative and thoughtful account of some issues that underlie many of the physicians' reports. A recent article by David Lampton, "The Roots of Interprovincial Inequality in Education and Health Services in China Since 1949," in the *American Political Science Review* LXXIII: 2 (June 1979) 459-478, sheds considerable light on the issues suggested in this review chapter.

The policies were designed to attain efficiency with limited resources. Health care programs would be short of personnel for many years. Within the medical delivery field, there was an effort to rationalize the use of hospitals and related facilities. Some specialization of service was instituted. Highly specialized hospital and physicians largely acquired their patients through referral. General facilities served local populations, as well as providing some specialist surgery or treatment facilities. And local small hospitals and clinics provided initial diagnostic care.

The general hospitals, virtually always in urban areas, negotiated contracts with enterprises and administrative units to provide medical treatment to their employees and cadres. The labor insurance system provided the financing. A similar, but more limited, system existed in the provincial towns and rural areas. Personnel needs were met by the assignment of medical college graduates. But the limited facilities and personnel could not meet the needs of China's largely rural population. The personnel shortages and urban location of facilities meant that rapid diagnosis and treatment often depended on patient locale. Rural care chiefly involved public health programs, campaigns to upgrade the health practices of the rural midwives who delivered most of China's children, and programs to popularize birth control.

The past fifteen years have been largely spent in trying to remedy the lack of care and assistance in the rural areas. Principal methods have been the development of a locally financed rural cooperative health system, and the training of primary health care personnel to provide initial treatment and modest drug therapy for China's rural population. The program uses the commune facility for simple surgery, delivery, and treatment of common diseases, with further referral for injuries and diseases beyond the competence and facilities of the commune hospital.

The key element in the rural care system is the person charged with initial diagnosis and treatment. Commonly known as the "barefoot" doctor—though rarely barefoot and not a doctor in the sense of completing a medical training course—this individual is usually a local person briefly trained in a nearby provincial hospital to enable him to diagnose common ailments, provide birth control assistance, perform very simple suturing and splinting, and treat the most common illnesses and injuries. This individual is periodically given additional training and provided with backup assistance in the commune hospital. The barefoot doctor is paid in work points and also participates in physical labor.

The direct financial contribution of the state is minimal. It provides the training programs. Its power to redistribute physicians on a temporary or permanent basis made local training feasible. The commune normally runs the hospital. The costs of the services are borne by the nominal contributions of the families in the brigade, which is the organizing unit. The success of the program is in its provision of simple services where few or none have been available before. The integration of Chinese medicine into the system, and the use of local personnel, helped overcome some hesitancy of the conservative rural population in using the service.

The limitations of the program are not inconsequential. The multi-tiered system may involve difficult transportation. Funding is largely limited to the commune-provided facilities. Financing of treatment in provincial or other urban centers is often beyond the assistance of the commune, brigade, or family and may require loans or long-term debt. If the community is located close to an urban center, or the brigade and commune are reasonably well-off, the system operates in optimum fashion. Where the brigade is poorer and the distances greater, the system is only partially successful in meeting needs.

Health care can only partially be provided through the use of partially trained personnel. The shortage of physicians and nurses continues. The effects of the Cultural Revolution, especially the suspension of university education, was particularly damaging in the medical field.

The factory worker and the office cadre have a program to pay for their medical care, and access to better facilities for care. The worker's costs are completely covered, those of his dependents in part. As more and more women enter the work force, their medical costs are increasingly covered. Hence, larger proportions of the urban population are fully protected. Economic success in enterprises or the small cooperative factories is almost always followed by the provision of medical care if that is not already provided.

Except for the first few years of the People's Republic—when Marxism was interpreted to mean that a larger population was more desirable for a socialist state—there has been a relatively consistent effort to bring population growth under control. Eleven of China's 29 provincial units now claim a growth rate of not more than one percent. This effort has required a tremendous investment of skill and energy.

Important to a solution has been the availability of means for birth control (contraceptive devices and mechanisms, pills, sterilization procedures) adapted to the needs of the population under widely

differing circumstances and locations. The simple task of producing sufficient pills and devices was enormous.

The other component for success was the development of a social and administrative apparatus committed to the importance of the task and able to encourage popular support of the goals and use of the devices available. Given the conservatism of the society, the diverse interests involved, and the possible conflicts between individual goals and national policies, the apparently growing success is a reflection of effective social control.

One key element has been the emphasis on the role of women and their productive contribution to the nation. This emphasis on enhancing the role of women, longstanding in Chinese communist doctrine, first led to a new marriage law, which protects the wife and set minimum marriage ages at eighteen for women and twenty for men. This was a prelude to a national program endorsing delayed marriage for women and men, with the ideal ages of 25 for women and 27 to 29 for men. The effect has been to remove almost a decade from the child-bearing years of a great number of China's women. The policy also recommended two children (no more than three) with 3-4 years between them. The delay in marriage and spacing of children were to insure the health of the mother, the completion of education by both spouses, continued contribution to work, the opportunity for sufficient attention to each child, and related advantages. In sum, the delay and spacing policies are advanced in terms of the important advantages to accrue to the individual and the children.

The policies of delayed marriage and birth control are publicized by the health practitioners, the residential committees, the women's federations, and the barefoot doctors. Organizational activities are supplemented by rewards such as cloth allotments, special foods, rest periods during pregnancy, attention to the child's well-being, and housing. There are apparently a range of penalties for too many children. These include denial of rations and clothing allotments. The extent to which these penalties are invoked is unclear; and the role they play in determining conduct, especially in the countryside, is unknown.

To increase confidence in the government's policy, an effort has been made to ensure that those women who become pregnant are successfully able to complete their pregnancy; and that the care available for the infant is sufficient to ensure his/her growth. In addition, the government has also addressed the special problems caused by the growing use of sterilization.

Sterilization is often criticized because it cannot be reversed. Many families, for example, found themselves without children in the aftermath of the Tangshan earthquake. In such circumstances, couples often wish to have another child. Some research in China is now directed to reversal of sterilization.

The major force in bringing about concurrence with the birth control policy is the local work unit, which determines the order for pregnancy of member couples. With the power of local ties and neighborhood social force behind it, the individual couple finds itself under considerable pressure to observe group norms, because a personal decision to become pregnant will affect the group and may preclude a child for another couple. In close-knit social settings, a personal decision counter to the group may be rare.

The focus of the birth control program is on China's rural community where the program is not yet as successful as in the urban areas. In the countryside stronger traditional desires for a large family still persist. Furthermore, the calculus of advantage still rewards the rural family with children. Unmarried working children add to the family's work point income. And children still are the chief source of security for old age. Consequently, change in the countryside is slower than in the city.

Government efforts to ensure compliance of couples in both city and countryside is intimately linked to health programs. The success of public health measures has increased population pressure. Longevity and the pattern of death causes now begin to approximate the industrial societies. At the same time, success in health care delivery and the fact that China's infants now survive, has played an important part in the increased willingness of individuals to forego the large families of thirty years ago.

## SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Work may be more assured in present day China, and medical care more available than some years ago, but the opportunity to utilize services rests upon income as well as access. When work is interrupted through accident or illness, or precluded due to age or youth, what means are at hand to maintain the individual? Are they adequate? If a parent considers an educational opportunity for his child, must the family forego an income from that youngster? What kind of social assistance is available in China and who provides it?

Few societies, developing or developed, are able to provide full protection against all the possible accidents of life. The more industrialized societies have developed increasingly comprehensive programs to shield the individual when subject to income interruption

just as need increases. Socialist societies claim that only in their system is real assistance provided to the worker and dependents because it is not contingent upon worker contribution. China's efforts to provide assistance go beyond that available in most societies of comparable development. But, as the Chinese themselves acknowledge, it still remains less than adequate for most segments of the population.

Social assistance may include a variety of income benefits and supplements. Such items as child care (nurseries and kindergartens), rest homes, sanatoria, special diets, medical assistance, retirement pensions, priority housing, special clothing rations, are all part of the package to assist members of the society with special needs or with special responsibility. These provisions and programs are more commonly available in the cities. It may also be argued, however, that they are more needed in the city.

Depending upon their place of employment, most urban industrial workers are protected by labor insurance regulations passed in 1951 and amended in 1953. There is a roughly comparable program for administrative cadres and the military. These programs, provided and funded by the employer, provide full income coverage to the individual for such hazards as job-related accidents. The income supplement may be extended to disability pay and ultimately retirement. In addition, many enterprises routinely provide their employees with subsidized services such as cafeterias, child-care facilities, occasional transportation assistance, housing, schools, and clubs for recreation. The scope and services of such programs depend upon the enterprise, its location, size, and overall budget. The level of financial support for an individual is based on status, longevity, salary level. Factories are expected to budget for such costs. Many were administered by the trade unions. When individual salary supplements were rare, the availability of services could often assist workers. Now thirty years after the establishment of the PRC, a comprehensive program is available to the relatively small but increasing number of industrial workers and national cadres.

Workers in the urban "cooperative" enterprises have some of the benefits available to those employed in larger units. When these cooperative units achieve a degree of financial solvency and permanence, the first benefit developed is often medical care, provided through a program negotiated with a nearby hospital. Many urban residential communities try to develop simple child-care facilities, nurseries, and after-school programs to facilitate the employment of a woman without requiring the assistance of an aged grandparent—who might be living in the countryside. Retired workers sometimes

assist in these services. While the factory services are usually free, the residential community service will often charge the recipient.

As one moves from the city to the countryside, the needs and programs change. Close to urban centers, the prosperous communes provide many of the benefits available to China's workers; a few even have modest retirement programs. Ordinarily, the medical care programs are comparatively comprehensive but limited to commune services. Most require nominal contributions by the individual or family. Sometimes, but not always, major expenses of serious illness are provided from brigade funds or the commune welfare account. Some child care facilities are available (though the nature of much rural labor does not demand permanent daily care), but ad hoc arrangements among neighbors, or the assistance of older family members, more often meet the need.

Missing in the countryside is any formal program of income maintenance or supplement for those ill, injured, or limited in their work capacity by age or youth. The costs of such a program are too onerous for contemporary China. Reliance, instead, is upon the family. There are some exceptions. The most common is the so-called "Five Guarantees." When the advanced producers cooperatives were developed in the mid-1950s, they paid the individual on the basis of his labor only and did not provide income on the basis of contributed land. Such a program immediately disadvantaged the aged, whose chief contribution had been land. The Five Guarantees (food, housing, clothing, medical care, and burial) were an attempt to provide the minimal guarantees to those disadvantaged in the remuneration system. The guarantees continued when the communes were established.

In addition to assistance for the aged, some special groups have received special treatment when in need, namely, the families of revolutionary martyrs (those having made special contributions to the revolution), and those suffering loss by the absence of a family member serving in the military. These programs provide support in kind and cash. However, these programs of income assistance, as well as all special facilities and the like, depend upon the economic well-being of the team, brigade, or commune. In those areas where resources are limited, the feasible level of assistance is less than in a richer area. These differences are not merely between communes, but may also exist within communes and reflect the uneven geographic realities, as well as the autonomy and relative efficiency of separate teams.

The rural sector of China still assumes that the family is the first line of assistance. Entry into the work force and withdrawal

from it is less sharp than in the industrial sector. Children can begin their work in the very early teens, earning a few work points for simple tasks. The aged member of a family may remain active with lessened tasks. Moral imperatives call for mutual assistance; the bonds of affection reinforce the assistance and help. In urban China, the institutionalization of social assistance is more common and accepted. There is a higher level of social security protection provided by the state to those in covered employment. In rural China, family assistance is still the cornerstone for those in difficulty and suffering from want.

## EDUCATION

The primary schools of China, no matter where their location, seem similar. The classes are generally quite large, with 40 to 55 students. The classroom atmosphere is more quiet than is familiar to most Americans except when youngsters are reciting in unison. Student behavior is remarkably restrained and attentive. Primary school lessons are comparable to those in other nations, with a strong music and art component, taught within the confines of approved political goals. Teachers are generally enthusiastic and interested.

There are also some differences between schools. Equipment varies considerably and usually is limited. The urban schools often have pianos and the rural, accordions; the physical education equipment will reflect the finances of the area. The teachers show a difference in training, perhaps reflecting the limited education that some have received. The clothes of the children vary not only with the seasons but also the general economic standing of the community. The consequences of successful completion of similar school programs may be quite different for youngsters. In those different outcomes are some of the more intractable problems for the country's socialist aims.

The Chinese Communist leadership came to power in 1949 with two substantial advantages with respect to educational development. There was a longstanding and general commitment to education, a legacy of the past altered to some extent by the upheavals of the 20th century but supportive of the expansion and development of a national educational effort. Secondly, there was a teaching staff and the facilities, generally located in the cities, that had survived the Civil War. The better schools and more experienced teachers were largely in the eastern seacoast cities. They often traced their development to missionary efforts or the national government

programs of the late 19th century and early 20th century. The Communist leadership naturally suspected the political commitment and ideological views of this group. The years since 1949 have been filled with controversy about the appropriate goals of Chinese education, the selection of those to have the opportunity of middle school and university education, and the nature of the training to be presented to them. To understand the nature of this controversy, it is necessary to place formal education in the context of the numerous educational efforts that are part of life in China.

In addition to the ordinary school system which expects more or less fulltime participation and study, there are a broad array of education programs. Some are more formal, some more rigorous than others. In many workplaces there are part-time or special courses for workers and technicians. In the countryside, there are occasional agricultural extension programs. In the residential communities, there are informal programs for newspaper reading, that serve both a social and educational purpose. The May 7th cadre schools, largely a feature of the Cultural Revolution, combined physical labor and intensive study of selected political texts. There have been repeated literacy campaigns directed toward the older Chinese population. For thirty years, the Chinese educational scene has been dotted with experiments in the development of small programs, national campaigns, and a variety of stratagems for raising the educational level of the population.

The central focus of China's efforts, though, has been on its youth, the enhancement of educational opportunities at the primary school level for all children—in the countryside as well as the city. It is difficult to agree on the level of literacy in China when the Communists came to power in 1949, or about the level of literacy achieved by 1979. Indeed, the question of what constitutes literacy is disputed. Some argue that the ability to read newspapers is the appropriate measure, others that knowledge of 1200 basic Chinese characters is the measure. Chinese commentators sometimes claim 100 percent literacy, apparently equating it with attendance for the school age population. Yet, Chinese youth returning from the countryside report that in the 1970s there were villages where none of the women could read. Whatever the situation, the government has tried for thirty years to reduce or abolish illiteracy. Undoubtedly, the number of children with only sporadic attendance in school is greater in the countryside. Primary school is five years; there undoubtedly are boys and girls who start at age seven, complete their schooling at age twelve, but for a variety of reasons are not functionally literate (an experience common in many industrial societies).

The announced short-term goal of the Chinese leadership is eight years of schooling in the countryside and ten in the city. This is composed of five years in primary school, with the regular five-year middle school course in the city but completion of only lower middle school (three years) for the rural areas. As with medicine, work, and social security, the advantage in education also rests with the urban youth. The shortage of equipment and finances, together with geographic factors such as dispersed population, make effective middle school education in rural China less easy to acquire. Sometimes the teenage must live away from home—with financial costs and additionally, the loss of his work in the fields to contribute to family income.

Education gives access to knowledge and information for the development of one's life and intellect, as well as opening career alternatives. In a society of diverse dialects, the printed page is a potent cultural unifier. The educational institution is a vehicle for assigning people to their work, for communicating political and social goals, for conveying specialized information and training in the broad array of skills that contribute to higher living standards for all. Education is an essential component in recording labor contributions, maintaining a history of the society, and training and educating those assigned to protect and defend the nation. It is basic to the science and technology necessary for a sophisticated industrial society.

In the socialist society of the past thirty years, dominated by Maoist doctrines, the ability to read has been an essential component for political advancement. The time when an illiterate cadre could advance (common during the pre-1949 period) has now largely vanished. Access to Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism required that individuals be able to read, and communicate in the language of the Party.

Why, despite the efforts to enhance the educational levels of all, did education become controversial and ultimately play such a key part in the Cultural Revolution? The answer rests on two considerations. First is the rapid population growth, the scarcity of resources for educational development, the problem of employment, and the very limited opportunities for continuation to the university. Given this sharp limit on the number of people able to continue their education, and the important consequences for the individual career and society that result from allocation decisions, the process for selecting those admitted to higher education became of crucial importance.

A second, related matter was the nagging question of how to integrate into the Chinese revolution the intellectuals, many of

whom had neither supported the revolution nor concurred in many of the post-1949 policies. Looked on with suspicion by the Communist Party, they were also suspected of holding the traditional Chinese view that education was a means for avoiding physical labor. The teachers and their students, it was feared, could potentially constitute a new Chinese class arising not because of their socialist commitment but rather through their access to a scarce resource.

If available positions had been less limited, then an effort to insure more chances for Chinese peasants, women, and soldiers in the educational process might not have clashed so sharply with the urban middle class aspirant. Reserved places in the educational system, and simpler educational training that could be absorbed by the students, might have lessened these difficulties. Indeed, it is possible to see the educational changes of the Cultural Revolution in these terms; the simplification of university training reflecting the pragmatic needs of a developing society; the same being true of the emphasis throughout the scientific community on practicality and applied research. The call for increased numbers of poor peasants entering into higher education, and the emphasis on a positive and correct political attitude and hard work (rather than examination results and grades) may be interpreted as an effort to insure greater distribution of the educational rewards of the system.

But along with the socialist aims of Chairman Mao and the now criticized Gang of Four, there is also the obvious need to achieve wealth and power for the nation. This requires an educational system able to mount, staff, and support the research efforts necessary to underwrite national development and to engineer and administer a complex industrial society. From this perspective, the limited resources of the educational system should be distributed for maximum efficiency and utility to those most capable of contributing to the national purpose. The educational system could not tolerate the wastefulness of random allocation of middle school and university school places. Non-academic admission standards, combined with a reduced educational curriculum, could not produce graduates able to contribute effectively to the industrial and scientific programs of the nation.

The theoretical arguments presented here overstate the case. Not all examinations were abolished, though their roles were limited. Cram courses to prepare students for university work, extended educational training periods, the repeating of work, did in fact occur. But for almost a decade, the values and administration of China's education system were largely at cross-purposes with effective modernization.

The values of the Cultural Revolution and the immediate post-Cultural Revolution period have now been altered or cast aside. Selection procedures for many middle schools and for all university-level work have now returned to the evaluation of grades and test scores. The emphasis is upon examinations and intense study almost to the exclusion of other activities. The universities and many middle schools have also been ranked, some being designated as "key units" to receive the best equipment, students, and teachers. This rapid reversal of education policies is justified as essential for modernization. Chinese contacted by foreign visitors usually are products of the former education system, have children who aspire to university attendance, or need competent university graduates for their research institutes, enterprises, and similar units. Understandably, they are strong supporters of the current policies. Since there is little opportunity to discuss these policies with those who will be disadvantaged, it is difficult to know the extent of opposition or doubt. Whatever the doubts, the planning targets and industrial goals, with the programs for overseas training of Chinese students and the recruitment of foreign teachers and experts, insure the continuance of the new programs to staff and restore institutes to meet the science and technological needs, and provide the engineering expertise required for China's modernization efforts.

In the pre-Cultural Revolution days, the education system included a number of special schools: boarding schools, special language training, and similar institutions. They were sharply criticized because of their elite nature and most were closed. In the post-1977 period they have not yet fully returned, though an effort to identify gifted children has already begun and may well lead to some special facilities. Schools for potential undergraduates for overseas study already have been set up. It is difficult to reconcile the contemporary programs with the strong egalitarian tradition of the Maoist legacy: this strain will continue for some time.

One consequence of educational selection procedures, based on rigorously integrated grades and examinations, is that youth from China's cities will again provide a large percentage of the university students. The urban home setting, including access to books, the special status of their schools, and the family encouragement that is a normal part of many of their lives, will provide the kind of background and support necessary for the difficult educational competition. Once successfully into middle school and university, the youngsters then become candidates for the special positions in the society that are an important part of the modernization effort. Given the policies that preclude movement from the countryside to the

city, it is difficult to see how rural youth can avoid finding themselves holding fewer places in the track that leads to rewarding and responsible positions.

There is evidence that the leadership is aware of the dilemma and is seeking to mitigate it. There are part-time educational opportunities in the countryside. Some gifted rural youngsters are no doubt identified and given the opportunity for special training. But it is impossible at this stage in China's economic development to provide fully equal access or opportunity in the educational system. Somewhat surprising has been the rapid abandonment of efforts to maintain more equality in the system. Given the priorities developing in the modernization effort, the advantages of the university graduate and some of the middle school graduates are likely to increase just as the education selection procedures loses the few remaining helpful exceptions (age limits) given to rural and "sent down" youth of the early 1970s. The educational system of post-1976 can apparently only enhance the differences between rural and urban China.

## LIFE IN CHINA

Life in China is a mixture of obstacles to overcome, with hopes and plans for the future translated into the experiences of each individual and family. The stories of China's older generation about the difficult pre-Liberation days, though obviously serving a political purpose, reflect the human need to look back, measure change, and assess opportunities won or lost. The difficulties of making past hardships meaningful for contemporary urban youth are understandable. In the cities, where books, magazines, and movies chronicle life's opportunities and possibilities, the stories of those who survived the difficult hardships are less compelling as codes of conduct. They have become a part of China's history, interesting, occasionally exciting, but not necessarily relevant to the challenges of the contemporary world.

In the countryside, this is less the case. In a rural production team, the traditional role of the aged has been less changed. The lack of competing stimuli make it easier to view the present and the past along a continuum. In both rural and urban China, society encourages planning and deferred reward. Policies toward marriage, birth, education, and savings mean a delay in the achievement of goals for the family or its members. Individuals are encouraged to plan for better days for themselves, their families, and their nation. Comparisons with the past and measurement of progress toward future goals are within the Chinese participants' own culture and time frame.

The comparisons of the temporary visitor are often intuitively or explicitly to other societies familiar to the viewer (including his own). Some contrasts are striking. One common to many travelers is the change in conduct, appearance, and style of work to be found in the move from rural Guangdong, through Guangzhou, to Hong Kong, all of which are Chinese communities. Even more thought-provoking is the experience of the visitor to Tokyo off a plane from China. Recalling the enormous labor investment in Beijing's rich suburban communes, he sees, from the Japanese airport bus, the single Japanese farmer or two driving a roto-tiller on a Sunday afternoon, having driven to his small acreage in a Toyota parked nearby. It is relentlessly attractive to compare and yet often inappropriate and misleading.

There can be little doubt that progress in the development of the nation's resources in health, education, and nutrition has been made, whether compared to 1949 or to other nations. This progress has been achieved in the face of substantial obstacles. The recent statements to the Fifth National People's Congress in June 1979 indicate that progress has sometimes been halting, often interrupted, and apparently less than many had claimed or hoped. Many of the policies outlined in this chapter have required large investments of personnel, time, and, to a lesser degree, financial resources. Whatever the limitations and restraints of 1979, medical care, educational opportunity, and social assistance are available to large segments of the population who did not have those services thirty years ago.

A child born in China today has a very good chance of survival, receiving an education, working productively, and finding some security in his old age. The likelihood varies among regions, in terms of the child's class background, and importantly between city and countryside. Despite substantial progress, the current leadership confronts in 1979, as it will until well into the 21st century, the hard task of reconciling different levels of support and assistance and opportunity among its citizens, of reducing the gap between life supports available to the city and the countryside, of enhancing the chances of 80 percent of the population without extensive damage to the lives of the remaining 20 percent.

The ideology of the Chinese Communist Party defines enemies. Though the revolution could be said to have been won for thirty years, the legacy for those classified as enemies in the first decade remains harsh. Landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries and other labeled as enemies, have suffered—and their families as well. In terms of job assignment, education options, medical access, income supplements or other benefits, segments of China's

population have been proscribed.

In 1979, there is reason to believe that inherited class labels may finally be reduced in effect. The leadership has said it will assess the role of an individual on the basis of his own contribution and political attitude. However, until current policies are firmly established, label changes may be only gingerly undertaken. Somewhat less permanent have been the consequences for those criticized in the various recurring political campaigns that have ranged over the political landscape. These individuals, though suffering substantial handicaps, have, upon occasion, been reinstated (no clearer examples of this can be found than the post-Cultural Revolution experience). Some costs of criticisms are not retrievable. Lost educational options, work experience, marriages foreclosed, cannot be replaced.

Two characteristics of life in China have drawn wide comment. First is the high quotient of politics in Chinese society, embracing every aspect of life. An offshoot of this has been the assumption that privacy has, for all intents and purposes, disappeared in Chinese life. While differences with respect to "degree" may be found, few students of contemporary China would question that political involvement has been remarkably high and the role of the state in the community quite pervasive. Some current reappraisal of these characteristics might be usefully made.

With respect to the political content of life, the post-Gang of Four period has lessened emphasis. The current slogan "to learn from experience," the educational revisions that have improved the role of intellectuals, the policies endorsing a limitation on political meetings for scientists, technicians, workers and peasants, the operational rules emphasizing increased production and rigorous quality control, all reduce the role of politics. At virtually every turn of life, the modernization programs call for a lessened political component.

A reduction in political language and the political component in life need not be assumed to be permanent. The recent decision to curtail Chinese contacts with foreigners, and the speed with which it was implemented, leaves no doubt about the effective power that can be brought to bear for change of policy.

What about the relationship between the state and the community? Contrasted with the pre-1949 period, there can be little doubt that Chinese intervention into virtually every aspect of life has been attempted. Bureaucratic intervention to reorder society has been general. Notable examples were the land reform campaigns, the development of labor unions in the city, and the Three Anti's and Five Anti's campaigns. These policies were designed to link the individual to social change, reorganize the society, and through the

administration of benefit programs, check and control the activities, experience, and work of China's population.

Reviewing the thirty-year period, the continued intervention of the state is now more questionable. Some attempts were abandoned due to cost. The reassertion of the role of the family in the countryside occurred at least in part because the resources were not at hand for alternative support systems. Practical considerations aside, the Chinese leadership has shown itself to be composed of individuals not only committed to Marxism but also subject to the pressures and traditions of Chinese culture. Consequently, the extreme language and direction of some early policies have been moderated in the intervening years.

By 1976, social dislocations were common in Chinese cities. The role of families, and their obligations with respect to immediate relatives, was confirmed. The reports (limited indeed) of crime and organizational dysfunction suggested that the mass organizations which were assumed to have facilitated Party/state intervention into society were not as powerful as many had thought—certainly not as efficient. A modified view of the effectiveness of Chinese state power should not deny either the impressive organizational apparatus that has contributed to social progress, nor discount the potential negative force that may be brought to bear upon opponents. Rather, it recognizes that some activities in China are less successfully policed by the state, and that state power is not always effectively exercised.

How mobile is Chinese society? Do people change occupations from those of their parents? Do they travel and move about with any ease? The question of mobility—social and physical—in Chinese society has been an interesting topic for scholars. Little is formally known, but some inferences can be made. Barriers to changes in occupation and jobs are implicit in the continuing efforts to prevent large-scale population movement between the rural and urban sector—though the reverse movement, city to countryside, is quite easy. The effort to limit urbanization of China is understandable. In the light of policies discussed in earlier pages, the limitations must negatively affect some individual plans.

One of the means for social mobility has been educational achievement. Another has been the military. Recruitment is primarily from the rural sector. This has provided, for those remaining in the services as well as those reassigned upon the completion of their term, the opportunity for new careers, special training, and the like. Many do not return to the rural area. In this sense, the military has served an important social function through reallocation of

politically acceptable men and women. A recent decision has been made to extend the required service period to upgrade service skills. Whether an effort to improve training and skills will result in increased recruiting from the urban areas remains to be seen.

Given the pivotal role of the Party for leadership in Chinese society, changes in its makeup have important sociological consequences. To date, the Party has been recruiting and absorbing individuals largely experienced and skilled with domestic policies, but having little experience in the foreign world. Unfamiliarity with international affairs and conditions is being remedied as officials participate in trips abroad. It seems unlikely, though, that the individuals most knowledgeable about the modern world—the scientists and technicians—will contribute importantly to leadership decisions in the near term.

Downward mobility also exists. Political classifications, in the early years of the People's Republic, and political alliance and allegiance may bring downward mobility, as well as upward progress. Downward mobility also seems to have been the experience of some of the "sent down" youth of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Revolutionary statements notwithstanding, being sent to the countryside resulted in substantial hardship and loss of career options. The policy of sending middle school graduates to the countryside had several justifications. It removed them from the politically seductive climate of urban areas and limited radical political activities. It helped upgrade rural life by using the training they had gained in urban middle schools. The policy also eased the problem of finding employment in the cities for increasing numbers of middle school graduates.

However the policy was publicly described, the sending down of youth permanently, as distinguished from a fixed period of service, was viewed by many as punishment. The policy had some harsh consequences. The students were promised the opportunity to apply for university training, but the limited number of places made success rarely possible. Most youth found it impossible to match the agricultural skills of their rural counterparts. And they were disadvantaged in finding marriage partners. Many of those sent to communes were subsequently reassigned to rural town factories, or were placed in rural schools as teachers. In that sense they did not remain agricultural workers. But their holding these positions reduced the opportunities for rural youths.

Opposition to the rustication policy had effectively weakened its administration before the recent changes in the program. Early assignments were to remote areas; by 1975-76, the rural commune

of assignment was frequently no further than the suburbs. The current decision is to limit the number of youth sent down and to permit return to the urban area after some express period of time. This is an improvement, but it can only delay and not prevent the employment problems that confronted the authorities in the early 1960s.

Another important legacy of the recent past is the heavy cost of the Cultural Revolution for at least a decade of China's youth. There has been a cohort of China's youth who received a minimal middle school or university education. They now find themselves either unable to compete successfully for the few university slots, or stigmatized in their work situation by the view that their education is inferior. There have been clashes in Chinese universities between students selected under the differing standards. Strains must also be expected between the technicians and workers whose opportunities will be increasingly circumscribed by their limited education and the men and women educated in the more rigorous programs now in existence. Downward mobility is likely to be permanent for many of those sent to the countryside in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Many policies designed to reorder social priorities, change conduct, and distribute social goods and rewards were revolutionary in their intent. The realities of economic constraints, conflicts about appropriate means or among competing tasks, and the limitations of administrative personnel all helped shape outcomes or limit achievements. In cases where community support for the goals (as in health, universal primary education, or social assistance) reinforced or was congruent with Party aims, the progress has been most pronounced and the likelihood of advance high. In cases where Party-desired change was more sharply discrepant with traditional values or practices, the new policy has required continued political urging, and has either been abandoned or altered when attention waned. Two examples are the policies with respect to higher education, and the attempts to alter the role of the production team in assignment and reward. The enthusiasm of the community may not be essential, but its absence greatly increases the political emphasis necessary for even modest progress.

Those who question the ability of a leadership to bring about desired social conduct except through the most draconian methods and at the risk of powerful social opposition, or who question the capacity of a society to adjust to the turmoil of new proposals, will need to look carefully at China's experience with its birth control policy. Here is forceful and effective leadership for a desired goal that has profound consequences for each couple. Yet there seems to

be gradual acceptance by a growing number of individuals of the birth control program. If the decline in birth rate is sustained for a decade, it will be evidence that in the special conditions of Chinese society, the state has been able to bring about a most important and far-reaching change in human conduct with all the implications this suggests for public policy.

Professor Joyce K. Kallgren is a member of the faculty of the Department of Political Science, Davis campus, and a Research Associate of the Center for Chinese Studies, Berkeley campus, University of California.

## SELECTED READINGS

*Beijing Review* (until December 1978 known as *Peking Review*). Published weekly in Beijing and airmailed to subscribers.

This is the most current and useful magazine published in English available to readers outside China. It includes accounts of progress in China, and reprints the major speeches of the Chinese leadership as well as key laws, regulations and related documents.

Delia Davin. *Woman-work*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976.

One of the few published accounts of Chinese efforts to alter the status of women in the post-1949 period that address the problem in both a positive and scholarly manner.

William Hinton. *Fanshen, A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village*. New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, 1966.

A famous account by the author of the land reform process as he observed it in a North China village. He sets out in a sympathetic manner much of the social upheaval and change as well as economic complications found in the land reform process.

Leo A. Orleans. *Every Fifth Child: The Population of China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972.

A good balanced account of the problems and progress of the Chinese with respect to this crucial and central issue in the development program.

William L. Parish and Martin King Whyte. *Village and Family in Contemporary China*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978.

An absolutely first-rate piece of sociological research using published documents and refugee interviewing that provides careful analysis to assess change and continuity in Chinese rural life.

Suzanne Pepper. "Education and Revolution: The Chinese Model Revisited." *Asian Survey* VIII: 9 (September 1978), 847-891.

This lengthy article is the most up-to-date and thorough account of changes in the education system in post-Mao China.