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ARMS CONTROL POLICY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA  
1949-1978

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by

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Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Subfaculty of International Relations in the  
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Abstract

This study investigates how the PRC, during the three decades since its establishment, has responded to international politics involving arms control and disarmament (ACD) issues, and explores the essence of China's approach to concepts of arms control and disarmament. The central finding is that, despite its seeming relaxation of hostility towards international ACD activities, and the more active and flexible part it has played in them at the UN since the mid-1970s, China remains unconvinced of the value of these activities. This does not make it dangerous, irrational or immature.

Chapters Two to Five provide a comprehensive account of the history of Chinese ACD policy between 1949 and 1978. Each chapter represents a distinctive period of Chinese arms control policy. Although more interested in the banning of the use, rather than the possession, of atomic weapons, the PRC behaved at first as an uncritical disciple of Soviet ACD positions (Chapter Two). During the second period (Chapter Three), China became increasingly uneasy about international ACD efforts and began to deviate from the Soviet stance. Moscow's denial of concrete assistance to China's nuclear weapons development, and the conclusion of the Partial Test Ban Treaty, eventually led the PRC into a period (Chapter Four) of open hostility towards nearly all international ACD initiatives. Then, in 1964, China's first nuclear test likewise radically changed its outlook on ACD matters. The final period (Chapter Five) examines its record at the UN in this regard, showing how the PRC was persuaded to commit itself to the Tlatelolco Treaty and to the 1978 UN Special Session on Disarmament.

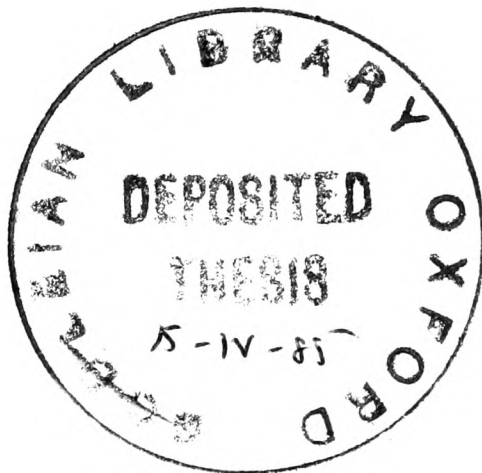
In conclusion, however, there is no evidence to suggest that the PRC has been committed to the concept of a disarmament process through arms control which both the US and the USSR, in their very different ways, have accepted. China has participated in international ACD negotiations while not really believing in their objectives, based as these are on a permanency of two superpowers. It is to be hoped that China's increasing involvement in the UN disarmament negotiation machinery will feed back into PRC policy-making and lead to a more positive and more willing participation in these ACD negotiations.

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Everyone contributes to the problem of a world-wide arms-race,  
Everyone must contribute to its remedy.

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J.C.H.

## List of Abbreviations

ABM	Anti-ballistic missile
ACD	Arms control and disarmament
AGWC	Anti-germ-warfare campaign
<u>AS</u>	<u>Asian Survey</u>
<u>BR</u>	<u>Beijing (earlier Peking) Review</u>
BWC	Biological Weapons Convention
CCD	Conference of the Committee on Disarmament
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
<u>CDSP</u>	<u>Current Digest of the Soviet Press</u>
CESC	Conference on European Security and Cooperation
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
<u>CQ</u>	<u>China Quarterly</u>
<u>DOD</u>	<u>Document on Disarmament</u>
ENDC	Eighteen-nation Disarmament Committee
<u>FBIS</u>	<u>Foreign Broadcasting Information Service</u>
<u>FEER</u>	<u>Far Eastern Economic Review</u>
<u>GAOR</u>	<u>General Assembly Official Record</u>
GCD	General and complete disarmament
GPCR	Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution
ICBM	Intercontinental ballistic missile
IRBM	Intermediate range ballistic missile
<u>KMJP</u>	<u>Kuang Ming Jih Pao</u>
MBFR	Mutual and balanced force reduction
MIRV	Multiple independently-targeted reentry vehicle
MRBM	Medium-range ballistic missile
<u>NCNA</u>	<u>New China News Agency</u>
NFU	No-first-use
NFZ	Nuclear-weapon-free-zone
NPC	National People's Congress
NPT	Non-proliferation treaty
NUF	Non-use-of-force
<u>NYT</u>	<u>New York Times</u>
<u>PC</u>	<u>People's China</u>
<u>PD</u>	<u>People's Daily</u>
PKI	Indonesian Communist Party
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PTB(T)	Partial test-ban (treaty)
SALT	Strategic arms limitation talks
<u>SCMP</u>	<u>South China Morning Post</u>
<u>SJIS</u>	<u>Stanford Journal of International Studies</u>
SLBM	Submarine-launched ballistic missile
<u>SWB</u>	<u>Survey of World Broadcasting</u>
<u>TKP</u>	<u>Ta Kung Pao</u>
TNDC	Ten-nation Disarmament Committee
<u>UNDYB</u>	<u>United Nations Disarmament Yearbook</u>
UNSSOD	Special Session of the UN General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament
<u>UNYB</u>	<u>United Nations Yearbook</u>
WCAAHB	World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WPC	World Peace Council



## CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Arms control and China are both popular subjects for students of international relations. Yet there have been few efforts to link the two for serious academic enquiry. The sudden surge of interest, immediately after the first Chinese atomic explosion in 1964, soon spent itself as it became apparent that China, being extremely cynical about the value of international arms control talks, was in no mood to attend any such talks. Nonetheless, questions related to the present, horrendous stage of the arms race should be a matter of increasing human concern. However remote the chance of China's being positively involved in international arms control negotiation might be, and however critical and hostile the tone of Beijing's arms control statements remains, unremitting efforts must be maintained to monitor and analyse the arms control policy of China, now the world's third greatest military power. The fact that Chinese arms control policy has been 'deviant', and might continue so, should underline the need for it to receive special attention rather than rejection as propaganda. Only an understanding of the forces shaping Beijing's outlook on arms control issues will allow one to determine if, and where, there is a basis for significant dialogues and further agreements with China.

### OBJECTIVES

The above does not mean that the relatively few previous works in the field have not grasped the essence of the problem.<sup>1</sup> There have

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1 The works that were published during the latter half of the Sixties are: W.C. Clemens Jr., The Arms Race and Sino-Soviet Relations (Stanford, Calif.: The Hoover Institution, 1968); M.H. Halperin and D.H. Perkins, Communist China and Arms Control (London: Praeger, 1965); M.H. Halperin, ed., Sino-Soviet Relations and Arms Control (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1967) and Y.L. Wu, Communist China and Arms Control - A Contingency Study, 1967-1976 (Stanford, Calif.: The Hoover Institution, 1968).

been commendable contributions; but as China evolves as a relatively more stable nuclear power, the steady decline of academic interest in the subject since the sixties must be met by fresh initiatives to examine the development of Chinese arms control policy, against a background of international relations markedly different from two decades ago. What follows is therefore a survey of the record of Chinese arms control policy between 1949 and 1978, a period covering the first thirty years of the PRC. Its primary purpose is to identify the salient features and the changes in that policy. Beyond that, it also seeks to answer these five major questions:

1. What is the PRC's basic approach to the concepts of arms control and disarmament?
2. What are the specific considerations, or 'specific objectives', governing Chinese arms control policy?
3. What factors best account for the formulation and variations of Chinese arms control policy?
4. What is the role of arms control in China's foreign policy? How can a broadened understanding of Chinese arms control policy - which is what the present work hopes to achieve - increase our knowledge of the dynamic of overall Chinese foreign policy?
5. What are the implications of Chinese arms control policy for international and global arms control objectives?

#### APPROACH

To describe an aspect of Chinese foreign policy as 'arms control' policy might cause the PRC to take exception. A perusal of the Chinese literature on arms control issues reveals that the term hardly appears in the PRC's political lexicon. Beijing's early approval of the concept of 'partial measures of disarmament', which tends to overlap to some extent with the notion of 'arms control', was merely a reflection

of its unconditional endorsement of the Soviet introduction of that concept during the mid-1950s. As soon as Sino-Soviet relations soured, Beijing rejected any arms control measure that would only serve a 'confidence-building' function, without any actual arms reduction. Until now, at least in its official language, the PRC insists upon the use of the term 'disarmament' as the exclusive label for all arms control activities. 'Arms control' has never been accepted either as an alternative, or a supplement, to the concept of 'disarmament'.

Like many other concepts of international relations, 'disarmament' and 'arms control' have been used in so many different contexts that their meaning has become too fluid to be precisely defined. There is even an argument that it would be 'neither necessary nor desirable' to introduce definitions for them.<sup>2</sup> However, a classic and generally acceptable set of definitions is as follows:

Disarmament is the reduction or abolition of armaments. It may be unilateral or multilateral; general or local; comprehensive or partial; controlled or uncontrolled.

Arms control is restraint internationally exercised upon armament policy, whether in respect of the level of armament, their character, deployment, or use.<sup>3</sup>

The primary difference between the two is that one strives for actual arms 'reduction or abolition', while the other only for 'restraint'. But such a clarity in theory does not automatically lead to a corresponding clarity in the practical applications. As a result of different perceptions of the connection between them, 'disarmament' and 'arms control' have been used in four different ways.

In the first approach the two terms are understood to be synonymous and are used indiscriminately. Even arms control experts do

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2 D.G. Brennan, 'Setting and Goals of Arms Control', in Brennan, ed., Arms Control, Disarmament, and National Security (N.Y.: George Braziller, 1961), p.30.

3 H. Bull, The Control of the Arms Race (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961), p.ix.

this.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the US Government is also said to have followed this practice during the late 1950s and the early 1960s.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, building upon a persistent, unyielding popularity of the ideal of actual arms reductions, 'disarmament' is used to embrace all arms control activities. This is particularly evident in UN practice, where all references to 'arms control' come under 'disarmament'. Singer provides the theoretical basis of this approach: that if classified in terms of the degree of reduction, 'disarmament' becomes 'total disarmament', 'partial disarmament' and 'arms control'.<sup>6</sup> This appears to be closer to China's conception than any of the other three, but it remains to be seen if Beijing would ever subscribe to this approach to the extent of affirming the positive value of 'arms control' negotiations.

The third approach adheres closely to the 'classic' definition cited earlier, and shows no biased preference for either 'disarmament' or 'arms control'. It specifies that 'disarmament' and 'arms control' are two different things, for 'there can be disarmament which is not controlled, and control which does not involve a reduction of armaments', but it also acknowledges that the two concepts do 'intersect' with each other, and that international negotiations in recent years have been mainly concerned with this 'area of intersection'.<sup>7</sup>

The fourth approach, seeing it as no longer pragmatic to conceive arms control negotiations only in terms of reduction, and stressing the

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4 See for instance, L. Henkin, 'The Citizen's Interest in the Control of Armaments', in Henkin, ed., Arms Control: Issues for the Public (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961), pp.1-17.

5 Halperin and Perkins, op.cit., p.157.

6 J.D. Singer, 'Disarmament', International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (N.Y.: Macmillan and the Free Press, 1968), pp.192-202.

7 Bull, op.cit., p.ix.

element of 'communication and cooperation' which should be an integral part of any agreement on 'regulation and restraint', broadens 'arms control' to include 'the possibility of an actual reduction in arms, that is, disarmament, either in limited or extensive ways'.<sup>8</sup> Its essence lies in recognising the possibility that a country's military relations with its potential enemy need not be 'pure conflict and opposition', but involve elements of mutual interest, in e.g.:

1. 'the avoidance of a war that neither side wants';
2. 'minimising the costs and risks of the arms competition'; and
3. 'in curtailing the scope and violence of war' if it occurs.<sup>9</sup>

In this context it is obvious that the reduction of arms becomes a secondary consideration, for 'arms control' is prompted to deal more with the 'incentive' to war and less with the 'capability' in fighting a war. Such an expansion and elevation of the role of 'arms control' grew out of the disappointment over the meagre record of post-war 'disarmament' efforts. In the words of Dougherty:

[I]n retrospect, it is difficult to believe that any government could have looked upon the blueprints for complete disarmament tabled by the Soviet Union in 1959 and by the United States in 1961 as representing a feasible policy goal to be achieved within the foreseeable future.<sup>10</sup>

Hence he describes the shift of American and Soviet positions, during the mid-1960s, from 'general and complete disarmament' (disarmament) to 'partial measures of disarmament' (arms control) as a 'maturing' process. His message was not disguised: the age of 'disarmament' had

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8 Brennan, op.cit., p.31.

9 T.C. Schelling and M.H. Halperin, Strategy and Arms Control (N.Y.: The Twentieth Fund, 1961), p.1.

10 J.E. Dougherty 'Introduction', in Dougherty and J.F. Leman, Jr., ed., Arms Control for the Late Sixties (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand, 1967), p.xxi.

gone, the age of 'arms control' was dawned.

Although they appear to be more semantic than substantial, the contentions of these approaches yield three useful guidelines.

First, 'disarmament' and 'arms control' are different concepts, each with its own features and not to be used interchangeably.

Second, where the first approach differs from the third is that one ignores the difference between these two concepts, the other recognises it. Where the second differs from the fourth is that one upholds the element of reduction and the other does not.

Third, there is no fundamental contradiction between any of these viewpoints. In particular, no one would view 'disarmament' or 'arms control' as alternatives to each other. The contention is not over the subject matter or the final objective, but hinges upon the choice of a proper strategy. As far as actual arms reduction is concerned, it seems that no one would reject 'a world disarmed' as the ultimate goal.

I hope that the above analysis makes clear that the adoption of the expression 'Chinese arms control policy' is not arbitrary. It reflects the mainstream of current thinking in the field; it epitomises a major assumption of the present study, i.e. unless the PRC comes to grips with the political and military instrumentalities of contemporary arms control activities, it is not likely to be active and constructive in the international arms control arena; and finally it does not prejudice 'arms control and disarmament' (ACD) as an overall description, if only to break the monotony of over-frequent employment of a single term. However, attention must be called to the fact that the use of 'arms control' as an all-embracing expression has been criticised on the ground that it encouraged 'thinking and action towards the acceptance as "arms control measures" of compromises with scant or nil

disarmament effect'.<sup>11</sup> This perhaps is a price that needs to be paid, at least in the short term. Experience has told us that disarmament is not likely to be achieved in a single leap, and 'arms control', however modest its result in actual reduction might be at certain stages, may prove to be a more effective and realistic - albeit intermediate - path leading to the ultimate goal.

A record of Chinese arms control policy can only be established by scrutinising what the PRC has said and done with regard to various ACD issues. Given the sharp contrast between the volume of its ACD statements and the dearth of its actual performance in arms control negotiations - especially during the pre-1971 period in which the PRC remained outside the UN framework - one must rely heavily on the verbal data emanating from Beijing. In the same way, caution must be exercised in order to avoid equating what the PRC wanted the world to hear and what it really had in mind. After observing the PRC's practice at the UN, Kim concludes:

[T]he PRC often follows a diplomatic double track, with militant revolutionary verbalization on one hand and cautious and pragmatic behaviour on the other. Often there seems an inverse relation between the rhetorical militancy and the pursuit of realpolitik.<sup>12</sup>

'Militant rhetoric' notwithstanding, however, the present study finds persuasive evidence, from a number of internal Chinese official documents which have become available outside China in the past decade or so, that no significant gap exists between the version of the world China produces for foreign audiences and that for internal consumption.

11 Alva Myrdal expresses grave regret over the use of 'arms control' as an overall term. Her main criticism is that the term is 'nothing but a euphemism, serving regrettably to lead thinking and action towards the acceptance as "arms control measures" of compromise with scant or nil disarmament effect'; see her book, The Game of Disarmament (N.Y.: Pantheon, 1976).

12 S. Kim, 'The People's Republic of China in the United Nations', World Politics, 25 (April 1974), 328.

On the other hand, one must not dismiss Chinese statements because they appear to be merely ideological. 'Propaganda' often is a very effective foreign policy instrument, for Communist governments and others alike. In the case of a political system as tightly controlled as that in China, 'propaganda' provides a most valuable source of data for concerned observers: it is official, controlled, purposeful, and carries meaningful signals.

As arms control is viewed as part of the broad spectrum of Chinese foreign policy considerations, the same factors apply as are normally taken into account when explaining Chinese foreign policy. These factors can be classified in five categories:

1. Historical and cultural: including the traditional elements of China's image of world order;
2. Ideological: the more recent addition to China's political culture including Marxism-Leninism plus Mao's own interpretation and extension of these doctrines;
3. Military-security: China's security perceptions and its defence requirements, especially in the nuclear dimension;
4. Political, domestic as well as international, considerations;
5. Economic issues involving the national economy, armament, and other developmental issues.

This categorisation is neither precise nor exhaustive. It is produced here only to indicate the general tracks along which I follow in seeking to investigate the myriad of factors behind the making of Chinese arms control policy during the past thirty or so years. I am aware of those epistemological and methodological debates that are current in Chinese foreign policy studies as such, but consider it both unwise and unnecessary to link the present study with those debates.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See over.

This study is at best a concentrated analysis of Chinese arms control policy. While not divorced from the considerations of general Chinese foreign policy and contemporary arms control activities, it makes no claim to have adequately addressed itself to the many important issues involved in these considerations. In other words, it does not purport to be a work on overall Chinese foreign policy, or on general arms control.

#### FOUR PERIODS

In this work the presentation and analysis of Chinese arms control policy is divided into four periods. Each of these periods represents a distinct stage in Chinese foreign policy: 1) the first period, during which Sino-Soviet friendship prevailed and the PRC unconditionally supported all ACD positions of the Soviet Union; 2) one in which that friendship began to crack, and the PRC began accordingly to deviate from Moscow's positions; 3) the third period, during which Moscow and Beijing went into open rift and the PRC grew hostile and critical not just to all Soviet ACD positions, but also to nearly all other international ACD initiatives; and, 4) the final period, in which the PRC acquired UN membership and itself became involved in international ACD activities.

The first period began in late 1949 with the establishment of the PRC. There is little argument that, from this time on, this new communist giant in Asia embarked on a diplomatic course of 'leaning to

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13 For a recently published discussion of the 'roots' of Chinese foreign policy, see Part I, Kim, China, the United Nations, and World Order (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1979), pp.19-93. Another useful reference is Clemens's 'Underlying Factors in Soviet Arms Control Policy: Problems of Systematic Analysis', Peace Research Society: Papers, VI, Vienna Conference, 1966, 51-70.

one side' and gave unconditional backing to all Soviet ACD positions. In fact, the backing was so 'unconditional' that the PRC appeared to have been simply 'echoing' whatever Moscow was saying. What were the substance of these 'echoes'? Were they as such not meaningful in their own right? Were they really as 'uncritical' as they seemed? How and why did the PRC move away from the practice of offering unconditional support for the Soviet Union? To what extent has the PRC's 'unconditional support' for Moscow affected, or even contradicted, Chinese arms control policy of later years? These are the questions that will be dealt with in the study.

Unlike the start of this first period, which is clear-cut, it is difficult to locate the precise line which marks the eclipse of Beijing's policy of unconditional support for Moscow's ACD positions. A Chinese statement points to 1956 as the year during which Beijing changed its mind:

From 1946 to 1956, the Soviet Government insisted on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons. They were correct then and we firmly supported them. In his summary report to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, the Soviet leader divorced the cessation of nuclear tests from the question of disarmament. Subsequently, they were wrong on certain issues and correct on others, and we supported them in all their correct views.<sup>14</sup>

This reflects the popular belief that Sino-Soviet relations began to deteriorate when Khrushchev publicly condemned Stalin in the speech of 1956 just mentioned. Another study, however, suggests that it was only 'in retrospect' that the PRC became significantly disturbed by Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin in 1956, and that not until 1957 were Sino-Soviet relations 'progressively' worsened over the question of 'the

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14 'Statement by the Spokesman of the Chinese Government - A Comment on the Soviet Government's Statement of August 3, August 15, 1963', Peking Review (later changed to Beijing Review, hence 'BR') XI/33, 16 August 1963, 7-15.

development and control of nuclear weapons'.<sup>15</sup>

The documentation in the following pages shows that, at least in terms of the PRC's 'uncritical' support for Moscow's ACD positions, neither 1956 or 1957 should be taken as the 'watershed' year. Beijing's support for Moscow's ACD initiatives did not reach its peak until May 1956, and lasted until the autumn of 1957. Moreover, Beijing and Moscow did not sign the alleged 'agreement on new technology for national defence', in which Moscow was said to have promised Beijing the supply of technical data for the production of atomic weapons, until as late as 15 October 1957. It is doubtful whether Beijing would have ceased its unconditional support before that particular 'promise' was secured. The PRC leadership simply had to conceal whatever dissatisfaction they had towards the Soviet Union.

Despite the PRC's official version, which also dates the beginning of the Sino-Soviet dispute from February 1956, Mao himself once indicated that the decisive turn was made in 1958. He was reported to have said, in 1962, that:

Since the founding of the Chinese People's Republic, twelve years have already gone by. These twelve years can be divided into a first period of eight years and a second period of four years: 1950 to the end of 1957 constitute the first eight years; 1958 to now is the second four years.'<sup>16</sup>

Mao did not specify his criteria for this division. But whatever they might have been, it was not likely to be too far away from the omnipotent shadow of worsening Sino-Soviet relations. This has been endorsed by Yahuda, who argues that it was from early 1958 that the PRC became 'a relatively independent and critical member of the socialist

<sup>15</sup> Halperin, 'Sino-Soviet Nuclear Relations, 1957-1960', in Halperin, op.cit., p.117.

<sup>16</sup> Mao Zedong, 'Talk at an Enlarged Central Work Conference, 30 January 1962', in S. Schram, ed., Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed, Talks and Letters: 1956-1971 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), p.186.

camp under Soviet leadership'.<sup>17</sup>

If China's statements with regard to ACD issues are taken as an indicator, the first public sign of Beijing's possible deviation from the official Moscow line did indeed wait until 1958. That February, the PRC made what seems to be its first-ever independent ACD policy announcement, in supporting an Indian proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone (NFZ) in Asia. Thereafter it continued to deviate from the Soviet position. Though still supporting Moscow's proposal for 'general and complete disarmament' (GCD), Beijing took the unilateral action to stress, at the same time, that it would be impossible for the West to accept the GCD proposal. It is therefore apparent that the PRC began 'to display independent creativity in pioneering ... [its] own way' from 1958 onwards, both in terms of its general foreign policy and in the particular sphere of arms control considerations.<sup>18</sup>

The second period starts in February 1958, and ends with the signing of the Partial Test-ban treaty (PTBT) in August 1963. In this period Sino-Soviet relations were characterised by a process of gradual deviation of Beijing's ACD position from the 'orthodox' Soviet line, by the formulation of a Chinese ACD policy markedly at variance from Moscow's, and by the movement of Beijing's position to a point where it came into fierce collision with the Soviet one. Eventually, the PRC was 'forced' into a position hostile to both superpowers. The period covers the entire process of the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations from latent frictions to an open rift. Three further considerations are important.

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17 M. Yahuda, China's Role in World Affairs (London: Croom Helm, 1978), p.103.

18 Ibid., p.40.

First, it is from the beginning of this period that Beijing's approach to the external world underwent a substantial transformation. Before 1958, Beijing's international posturings were identical to those of the Soviet Union. Since 1958, the PRC began 'to develop a view of the characteristics of the international environment that was totally at variance with that advanced by the Russians'.<sup>19</sup> As a corollary, the PRC was also said to have produced its own 'special line on all key problems of the day', including that on the problem of war and peace.<sup>20</sup> The problem of war and peace, evidently, could not exclude the ACD issues.

Secondly, it is also at the beginning of this period that Mao himself was believed to have given the decisive 'go-ahead' for the production of a Chinese 'bomb'.<sup>21</sup> The exact background against which such a decision was made remains unclear. According to Hsieh, an important and extensive debate had been going on within the PRC leadership since 1954, and its central issue was whether China should seek to achieve military modernisation through a gradual build-up of native industrial capacity, or a 'quick-fix' with large-scale Soviet material transfers.<sup>22</sup> While the 'quick-fix' solution argued for an instant boost of military strength, it also carried the risk of Moscow's domination of the PRC's military establishment. By January 1958, the 'quick-fix' argument had begun to lose ground, culminating in the

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19 Yahuda, op.cit., p.103.

20 A description of this 'special line' can be found in: V. Rybakov, 'The People's Republic of China and the Disarmament Problem', International Affairs (Moscow), Sept. 1972, 26-32.

21 Mao, 'Speech at the Group Leaders' Forum of the Enlarged Meeting of the Military Affairs Committee (28 June 1958)', in Schram, op.cit., 125-130. See also J. Gittings, The World and China, 1922-1972 (London: Eyre Methuen, 1974), p.231.

22 Alice L. Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in Nuclear Era (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), Chapters Two and Three.

dismissal of Marshal Peng Dehuai as China's Minister of National Defence, in September 1959.<sup>23</sup>

Hsieh also observes that, by mid-1958, Beijing had become disillusioned with the prospect of 'an immediate grant of a nuclear capability from the Soviet Union', and had therefore decided to rely on its own indigenous production of nuclear weapons through 'stepped up efforts for industrial and scientific development'.<sup>24</sup> This observation is based on a) the assumption that the defeat of the 'quick-fix' argument considerably impaired Sino-Soviet relations by removing the pro-Moscow elements in the PLA; and b) the fact that after the summer of 1958, Beijing began repeatedly to drop hints that it was determined to become a nuclear power.<sup>25</sup> However, it emerged in the mid-1960s that Beijing had continued to press Moscow for nuclear assistance until mid-1959.<sup>26</sup>

Lastly, it was during this period that the two superpowers, through a series of crises and confrontations including the Berlin blockade and the Cuban missile crisis, came to see how important it was to lessen tension. Their attempt to reduce the explosiveness of crisis situations culminated in the the Hot-line agreement and the PTBT. These were Beijing's first taste of losing an ACD battle.

The third period takes up where the second leave off, i.e. the signing of the PTBT in August 1963, and terminates with Beijing's United Nations entry in October 1971. It is a period in which the PRC was least restrained, in the sense that, after fully dissociating

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23 Hsieh, op.cit., pp.109-113. Also consult: Ellis Joffe, Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949-1964 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1971, 3rd edition), pp.100-106. Joffe offers a succinct account of the Peng affair.

24 Hsieh, op.cit., p.111.

25 Ibid., pp.109-113.

26 'Statement ...', above fn.14.

itself from former alliance entanglements, it enjoyed a high degree of freedom and flexibility when making ACD statements but yet (still without UN membership) was not under the kind of demands and pressures which would accompany the role of a major power within the UN system. Beijing was thus free both to speak out or remain silent at will and also to oppose almost all international ACD negotiations and agreements.

During this period Beijing appeared 'unconditionally' critical and hostile to nearly all international ACD activities. It was during the 1960s that the two superpowers not only achieved the PTBT and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), but also, in late 1969, initiated the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). All these developments deeply increased China's fear of facing the two superpowers at the same time, as two arch-enemies. Furthermore, it was also during the latter half of the 1960s that the PRC experienced the unprecedented domestic political storm of the 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' (GPCR), which unavoidably affected China's external behaviour. Indeed, Chinese foreign policy towards the end of the 1960s entered a period of self-imposed isolationism, blended with xenophobic ideological-revolutionary radicalism. Hence Beijing openly accused the two superpowers of forming 'a military-nuclear alliance' against China.<sup>27</sup>

This accusation, of 'a military-nuclear alliance' against China, led to the unfolding of a most meaningful and interesting debate within the Chinese leadership, on the question of how the strategic relationship between the two superpowers should be interpreted. The controversy was between those who perceived such a relationship as basically 'collusive' and those who believed it was essentially 'contending'.

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<sup>27</sup> Commentator, 'A Grave Step in Forming a U.S.-Soviet Counter-Revolutionary Nuclear-Military Alliance', originally in People's Daily (PD), 13 Mar. 1968. Also in BR, XI/12, 22 Mar. 1968, 31-32.

Surprisingly, this debate has been almost completely ignored by students of Chinese affairs. As the interpretation of the superpower strategic relationship cannot but influence China's position on arms control issues, the present study embodies one of the few attempts to examine closely the nature and development of this debate.

The last of the four periods deals mainly with PRC statements and voting record on arms control issues at the UN after 1971. During this period Beijing is often required not just to take a stand on certain new issues, but also somewhat to relax the rigidity of its previous positions. In other words, the PRC's entry into the UN produced mixed results. Achieving UN membership, without having to compromise on any major issue, gave the PRC an enhanced great power status. This status built up the need and expectations for Beijing to become active - or at least to be seen and heard - in almost all forms of UN activities. Moreover, the UN voting and lobbying practices were to substantially reduce the kind of freedom and flexibility that Beijing used to enjoy when outside the UN. Thus Beijing began to find it increasingly difficult to avoid assuming immediate public positions on most arms control issues.

Beijing's entry into the UN also establishes a convenient channel for a regular or irregular, overt or covert, exchange of views with other powers. Facts show that it has frequently utilised this channel to air its opinions, to muster support, and to mobilise opposition against those proposals it dislikes. In a sense, Beijing's UN membership has offered the PRC an excellent opportunity to learn how to manipulate its arms control positions, in order to derive political and other benefits not necessarily confined to arms control matters.

The Tenth Special Session of the UN General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (UNSSOD) which was held in May 1978 has been chosen as

the end-point for this last period as well as for the entire period under study. This choice was made for two reasons. The first sounds artificial: because it neatly rounds off three decades for this survey. But secondly, UNSSOD occupies a unique role in the history of Chinese arms control policy, as being the very first international disarmament meeting the PRC had ever attended. Agreement to such a global ACD forum after decades of persistent but largely frustrated efforts from many quarters of the world was in itself an important event for all students of arms control. Beyond it, though, the fact that China went along with the gradual fulfilment of the plan, actually participated in the conference, and did not insist upon the kind of uncompromising pre-conditions it previously demanded, gave a valuable perspective from which I could re-assess my findings and draw conclusions with added confidence.

## CHAPTER TWO: 1949-1957, The Early Years: An Uncritical Discipleship?

Chinese arms control policy between 1949 and 1957 is not a subject to whet academic appetites. It is either completely ignored, or just mentioned in passing as the repetition of Soviet positions - overall Chinese foreign policy during the same period was indeed 'leaning to one side'. Furthermore, international ACD efforts were hopelessly stalemated at the time when the PRC came onto the world stage. Prior to 1949 the Soviet Union had advanced a number of ACD proposals including the prohibition of 'the production, storage and use' of nuclear weapons, the reduction in conventional armed forces and armaments, and so on. All these, however, were bogged down by the central problem of 'control and verification' on which no compromise was possible. Dallin observes that there were no 'significant initiatives' from Moscow during 1948-1953.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the support of the PRC for Moscow's initiatives could easily be taken as lacking real significance.

Such an assumption is misleading. It overlooks the possibility that China might have sought to express certain considerations through its support for the Soviet Union. Beijing's motivation to support Moscow's positions can be understood in at least two ways:

- a) Being a new actor on the international stage, the PRC was unskilled in certain ACD (as well as other) matters. The best - and most prudent - course of action was to repeat what the Soviet Union was doing.
- b) For both political and security reasons, as will be explained later, the PRC desired to be identified as a member of the socialist camp, and to imitate the Soviet Union helped in this.

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<sup>1</sup> A. Dallin et al., The Soviet Union and Disarmament (London: Praeger, 1964), pp.11-16.

Yet Beijing's support was not as 'uncritical' as it appeared. While the viewpoints of Beijing and Moscow seemed to be identical, their motivations were not the same. To no degree could Moscow have then considered the 'China factor' an important element in the formulation of its ACD policy. There were also subtle discrepancies in Beijing's support for Moscow's positions. For instance, it is clear that when Moscow was propagating a ban on the 'use' and 'possession' of nuclear weapons, Beijing demonstrated an interest only in the 'use' aspect. Thus Beijing's ACD pronouncements between 1949 and 1957 did have their own messages, and they must be accepted as an integral part of the overall Chinese ACD policy. Accordingly, any attempt to achieve a 'comprehensive' understanding of the PRC's ACD policy must begin in the first days of the PRC's birth, rather than with the announcement of the PRC's first 'independent' ACD proposal in February 1958.

#### THE 'WORLD PEACE MOVEMENT': To Ban or Not to Ban the Bomb?

Early Chinese ACD activities cannot be dissociated from the 'World Peace Movement' which was started in April 1949 with the establishment of the Prague-based 'World Congress of Defenders of Peace'.<sup>2</sup> This body, later renamed the 'World Peace Council' (WPC), remains to this day a Soviet front organisation. One of its earlier achievements was the 1950 'Stockholm Peace Petition' which reportedly collected some half-billion signatures (of which a total of 234,095,785 were claimed

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2 This is the English name of the organisation that was used by China. There are, however, other translations in the West. D.W. Treadgold, a specialist on Soviet Affairs, calls the organisation 'Partisans of Peace'. See Treadgold, Twentieth Century Russia (Chicago: McNally, 1964), p.462. In the early Fifties, the more popular translations of the name were 'World Peace Council' or 'World Council of Peace'.

by the PRC).<sup>3</sup> More recently, the WPC is said to be behind some of the anti-nuclear, 'anti-neutron' and 'anti-Cruise' demonstrations in Western Europe. The original 'World Peace Movement' did not itself last as long as the front organisation it created. Toward the end of the 1950s, the Movement, in the form of a 'peace offensive' or 'peace campaign', gradually lost its appeal and ceased to exist.

The PRC's establishment coincided with the onset of the 'World Peace Movement' and Mao wasted no time in showing enthusiasm. On its second day the PRC announced the formation of the 'Chinese Congress of the Defenders of World Peace', known for short as the 'Chinese Peace Congress', as a subordinate body to the Prague organisation.<sup>4</sup> The actions of the Movement were actively supported. In addition to the collection of signatures for the 'Stockholm Peace Petition', local branches of the 'Chinese Peace Congress' were set up in many major Chinese cities, PRC delegations were dispatched to various international meetings and, upon their return, mass rallies were called to provide heroic welcomes; the Chinese press devoted generous coverage to such activities at home and abroad; and 'peace propaganda teams' were even organised to tour China's rural areas.<sup>5</sup>

Beijing did not provide enthusiastic support for these 'peace' activities without calculating their domestic and international implications. After a long and devastating civil war, the PRC was in desperate need of a 'peace-loving' image. That image, internally,

3 'Release', New China News Agency (NCNA), 29 May 1951, reveals this figure of Chinese signatures. Quoted from '"Peace" Signatures and Votes Against Japan's Rearmament', Survey of World Broadcasting (SWB), Part V (London: BBC) 111, 5 June 1951, 18. For the half a billion claimed by the WPC, see Treadgold, Ibid., p.463.

4 'China Council for the Defence of World Peace Inaugurated', SWB 25, 11 Oct. 1949, 30.

5 Details of these 'peace' activities can be found in SWB, between October 1949 and about July 1950.

could facilitate the process of consolidation by providing confidence and stabilising the society. Externally, it would also help to earn international sympathy and support. Above all there was the Soviet factor. The new China needed to assure not just the Kremlin, but also its own people and the rest of the world that it was - or, perhaps more accurately, had been accepted as - a firm and faithful friend of the Soviet 'Big Brother' and an active and dedicated member of the socialist camp. Whatever Moscow or the whole socialist camp took up, Beijing would follow suit, sometimes with even more zeal.

The 'World Peace Movement' had a strong flavour of anti-armament. When inaugurating the 'Chinese Peace Congress', Beijing recited Moscow's attack that the 'American and British imperialists were ... engaging in a feverish armaments race and expanding their networks of military bases and alliances ...'<sup>6</sup> Curiously absent in this and in other peace literatures at that time, however, was the theme of 'banning the bomb'. This was not because Beijing had decided to duck that theme. On the eve of the birth of the PRC, for instance, the People's Daily published a lengthy editorial 'Act in Response to the Call of Vyshinsky' which approved the significance of the Soviet proposal to convene a conference of the five great powers, including China, to sign a peace pact and to ban nuclear weapons.<sup>7</sup> However, a reading of early Chinese literature on peace and disarmament creates an impression that Beijing's support for the banning of the bomb was, at least until about April 1950, only lukewarm.

The first known Chinese Communist reference to the bomb had been made by Mao on 13 August 1945, one week after Hiroshima. Mao denied

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6 'China Council for the Defence ...', (above fn.4).

7 NCNA, 1 Oct. 1949. The editorial was printed in: PD, on 30 Sept. 1949.

that the impact of the bombs had caused Japan to surrender and warned that it would be 'a big mistake' to believe 'that the atom bomb is all-powerful'.<sup>8</sup> Such an argument was basically inconsistent with any serious calls for the ban of the bomb. If the bomb was not 'all-powerful', why should one bother to call for its banning? But this was only a peripheral and perhaps superficial reason for Beijing's reluctance in actively campaigning for the ban. The essential factor was that the PRC did not want the Soviet bomb project to be affected by a possible ban on the American bomb, given the fact that Moscow had by then only conducted atomic tests, but had not yet formally announced possession of the actual weapon. Beijing had high hopes for the Soviet bomb. On more than one occasion, it revealed what seemed to be a belief that because Moscow possessed atomic capability, the 'peace' (i.e. socialist) camp should have sufficient strength 'to pulverise all criminal plots of the warmongers'.<sup>9</sup> In May 1950, Beijing was more explicit. In an article published to hail a WPC meeting held in Stockholm that March, a Chinese delegate to it pointed out that 'the best guarantee for peace' were the signatures of the Soviet delegates on the meeting's manifesto, because, he stressed, the Soviet Union was 'a country which possessed the knowledge of the use of atomic energy'.<sup>10</sup>

This must strengthen the belief that from the start the PRC had not failed to appreciate the power and 'deterrence' value of atomic weapons. A number of possibilities go further. Was the PRC reluctant to support a ban because it was also, even as early as the

8 Mao, 'The Situation and Our Policy After the Victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan', Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, vol.4 (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1969), pp.11-26.

9 'China Council for the Defence ...', (above fn.4).

10 'May Day and World Peace', PD, 1 May 1950, in SWB 55, 9 May 1950, 24.

beginning of the 1950s, cherishing a hope of eventually becoming an atomic power itself? Or because it was convinced that the Americans would never give up the bomb? Or because, in a confrontation such as existed between the imperialist and the socialist camps, experience told the Chinese communists that giving up arms would only breed insecurity? What is clear is that during 1949 and 1950, even before the start of the Korean War, Beijing was already concerned at the possibility of American invasion. Accompanying the inauguration of the 'Chinese Peace Congress' came the stern message that, although China was opposed to war, it was 'decidedly not pacifist' and would determinedly fight the 'warmongers and imperialists forces'.<sup>11</sup> By early June 1950 Beijing was to declare that, 'The defence of peace and the struggle against aggression is one'.<sup>12</sup> As if to stress the significance of this declaration, the Congress's name was later changed to 'Chinese People's Committee in Defence of World Peace and Against American Aggression'.

When the Korean War broke out on 25 June 1950, China's fear of an American invasion was heightened. Also affected must have been its attitude toward the issues of arms and peace. The Korean War led to the end of the period of Beijing's active but brief discussion on the issue of banning the bomb. Two months before the war began, China's attitude toward the issue underwent a dramatic change from passive to active. The PRC appeared to have been influenced by the Stockholm WPC meeting of March 1950. When the meeting's manifesto calling for the ban of atomic weapons was adopted, China's press immediately printed

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11 'China Council for the Defence ...', (above fn.4).

12 Kuo Moruo, 'Mankind Demands Peace', People's China (PC), No.2, 1 June 1950, 5-6.

its full text.<sup>13</sup> While this was nothing substantially different from reprinting Vyshinsky's speech in 1949, the 'Chinese Peace Congress' took an unprecedented move a few days later, in passing a unanimous resolution of support for the manifesto and called on the Chinese people to give an 'active response' to the appeal to ban the bomb.<sup>14</sup> Other labour, youth, women, and student organisations quickly joined in by pledging 'enthusiastic support ... for the unconditional ban on atomic weapons and for the designation as war criminals of the first Government to use them'.<sup>15</sup> It is imperative to note that China, in actively supporting the banning of the bomb, did not forget to elaborate its well-known principles such as the 'atomic weapon is a paper tiger' and 'man is the only decisive factor in war', an explanation that it was supporting the ban not because the bombs were exceptionally dreadful or likely to decide any war, but because they might be used in American imperialist 'criminal war plots' to slaughter thousands of peaceful people.<sup>16</sup>

Even if its original consideration in changing its attitude towards the 'ban the bomb' movement were only for the sake of demonstrating the 'unshakable unity of the socialist camp', Beijing probably soon realised that the change was not all that harmful. In the unlikely event of the ban being achieved, China would have nothing to lose with the elimination of the use, manufacture and possession of atomic weapons. If the ban were not achieved, Beijing would also have nothing to lose. An attitude actively supporting the movement would enhance the PRC's 'peace-loving' image and rouse public opinion to

13 'The World Peace Congress', SWB 49, 24 Mar. 1950, 17.

14 'Reaction to the Stockholm Conference', SWB 51, 11 Apr. 1950, 20.

15 Ibid. and 'World Peace Movement', SWB 53, 25 Apr. 1950, 20-21.

16 'World Peace Camp Versus Imperialism', SWB 59, 6 June 1950, 16.

deter possible use of the bomb, particularly against China. Furthermore it would offer a logical justification for China's attempt to manufacture its own bomb, since China could well argue 'It is because you didn't destroy yours, as I so sincerely asked, that I have to produce mine'.

Despite all these considerations, Beijing's enthusiasm seems to have been limited to prohibition of 'use', rather than of 'possession', of the bomb. This was evident in the position statement of the Chinese delegation to the Second WPC Congress held in November 1950. It listed five major stands:

1. In order to defend peace, 'American aggression' must be opposed.
2. The PRC 'strongly opposes the use of atomic weapons and demands that the government which first uses the atomic weapon be regarded as war criminals and be punished'.
3. All nations should simultaneously reduce their armaments and effective control should be established.
4. The world would not 'supinely tolerate the foreign aggression on the Korean people'. All men of 'good will' should force the 'foreign aggression troops' to evacuate from Korea immediately.
5. 'War propaganda of the warmongers' should be strictly prohibited, and 'MacArthur, Matthews, Acheson and the like' should be 'definitely branded as warmongers.'<sup>17</sup>

Although generally a reproduction of what the Soviets were saying, these points were the first ACD positions the PRC had ever put out publicly on its own initiative, as a comprehensive ACD policy statement. Of particular significance was, of course, the concentration on banning the 'use' of the bomb. But it would be misleading to assume that Beijing, in concentrating only on the 'use' aspect, had already deviated substantially from the Soviet position. Since the end of the 1940s, the Soviet Union had already for its own part stressed

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17 'Mandate for the Peace Delegation', PC No.10, 16 Nov. 1950, 26.

the importance of banning the 'use' of the bomb. However, while dwelling independently, at times, on the need to ban the 'use' of the bomb, Moscow would also at other times remember to stress the need to ban 'possession'.<sup>18</sup> In this regard, Beijing was different. Its interest in concentrating on 'use', while neither admitted nor elaborated, seemed too obvious to be unintentional.

Beijing's fear of American nuclear might seemed genuine. After the People's Liberation Army (PLA) crossed the Yalu River in late October 1950, the PRC entered into direct combat with US forces. Following President Truman's press conference of 30 November, on the possibility that atomic weapons might be used in Korea, there was a virtual blackout of all references to the atomic bomb in China's media, which lasted until the beginning of 1955.<sup>19</sup> This 'blackout' is seen by Hsieh as 'an effort ... to forestall the public anxiety that further discussion [on the atomic issue] might arouse'.<sup>20</sup> Such an interpretation reflects only part of the picture. With or without a 'blackout', it seems that until as late as the beginning of the 1980s, Beijing was still unwilling to permit its masses to discuss the consequences and implications of a nuclear war that might involve China.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the 'blackout' could also have foreign connotations. Later practice reveals that Beijing tends to keep silent on issues where it feels vulnerable, e.g. on its response to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. In this case, Beijing could have concluded

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18 For Soviet ACD policy during the late 1940s and the 1950s, see Dallin, op.cit. For a quick overview of Moscow's various proposals during 1946-1963, see Dallin's chart on p.283 of his book.

19 Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy ..., see Ch.1 fn.22.

20 Ibid.

21 J. Lee, 'How the Chinese Operate a Nuclear Smokescreen', Guardian (London), 22 Nov. 1980.

that further discussions on the bomb issue, which would inescapably involve the 'paper tiger' principle, might just provoke the Americans into doing something drastic. It was therefore not coincidental that when the 'blackout' was finally lifted in January 1955, the lifting was accompanied by China's public endorsement of Khrushchev's contention that nuclear war would mean not mutual destruction, but the burial of capitalism.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, in the very cases where Beijing did break silence and allude to the bomb during the period of the 'blackout', it did so only with reference to Soviet progress in the atomic field.

The first such case when Stalin announced on 6 October 1951 that the Soviet Union possessed atomic bombs. Although the earliest Soviet test had been in September 1949, Beijing was awake to the fact that Moscow had not yet formally acknowledged actual possession of the bomb. This was why, until then, all Chinese allusions to the Soviet atomic capability were made in the context of atomic 'energy', not 'weapons'; and also why Stalin's announcement was immediately extolled by the PRC with exceptional vigour. Numerous comments and analyses appeared in China's media, claiming that the American atomic monopoly had been broken by the Soviet Union, and hence American atomic blackmail was no longer feasible - a major line on nuclear proliferation that the PRC was to make much use of. More significantly, while stressing that the Soviet bomb had increased the confidence of the 'peace-loving' peoples all over the world, Beijing, for the first time, subtly implied that it might not be a bad thing for itself to have the bomb too. On 7 October, the day after Stalin's announcement, the

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22 Hsieh, op.cit., pp.7-8, 26-28.

People's Daily carried the following message:

Since the end of the Second World War, the US has never stopped making atomic weapons, and has time and again used the atomic weapons as a threat against the peoples of the Soviet Union, the People's Democracies, and the rest of the world ... at the same time, only the fact that other countries, in the first place the Soviet Union, possess the atomic weapon can bring America to believe that there is not the slightest advantage in atomic militarism.<sup>23</sup>

This was at best a veiled indication. A week later a radio broadcast went further and quoted a spokesman for a Chinese scientific organisation: 'Now we understand more clearly that only when we ourselves have the atomic weapon, and are fully prepared, is it possible for the frenzied warmongers to listen to our just and reasonable proposals'.<sup>24</sup> Such explicit remarks proved that at least part of the PRC leadership had long realised the strategic and political advantages of China's own bomb, and also understood that the most feasible, if not the only, way of acquiring the bomb was through an alliance with the Soviets. However, Moscow doubtless did not approve of such manifestations of China's desire to possess the bomb. Nor was the PRC to offer similar indications in August 1953, when it spoke out again to welcome the first Soviet hydrogen test. Instead, the PRC dwelt on the argument that Moscow was forced to develop nuclear weapons 'merely because the US refused to destroy its own'.<sup>25</sup> (Ironically, an argument later used again by Beijing to justify a Chinese bomb).

During the early 1950s, Beijing obviously felt more secure with

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23 Editorial, PD, 7 Oct. 1951, reprinted in Survey of Mainland China Press (SCMP) (Hong Kong: American Consulate General) No.190, 9 Oct. 1951, 1-2. Cited from W. Harris, 'Chinese Nuclear Doctrine: The Decade Prior to Weapons Development, 1945-1955', China Quarterly (CQ) 21, Jan.-Mar. 1965, 87-95. (Emphasis added).

24 This was broadcasted by Radio Peking on 14 Oct. 1951, original translation appearing in SCMP, No.195, 16 Oct. 1951, 7. Cited also from Harris, Ibid. (Emphasis added).

25 PD, 14 Aug. 1953, SCMP No.632, 15-17 Aug. 1953, 1; cited from Harris, op.cit.

the advancement of Soviet atomic capability to shield China against the US nuclear threat. During the Taiwan Straits crisis which began in September 1954, the PRC fiercely accused the US of trying to use atomic weapons against it.<sup>26</sup> Thus it presented Khrushchev's contention mentioned above, in the context of a security guarantee for itself. In the first few months of 1955, Beijing actually went as far as threatening the US and Japan with - Soviet - nuclear retaliation.<sup>27</sup> Beijing must have known that, without certain undertakings from Moscow, bluffing was too risky a business in a possible nuclear confrontation. Equally risky would be for the PRC deliberately to adopt a dangerous course so that Moscow might be coerced into an 'atomic commitment'. And it must have been even more doubtful whether Moscow were willing to risk direct conflict with the US on behalf of China. How, then, did Beijing arrive at the decision by which it was blatantly to threaten the world's strongest nuclear power with nuclear retaliation? One can only surmise that, no matter how unlikely, Moscow did promise China the 'nuclear shield' but later broke its promise; or that for one reason or another, Moscow deliberately misled Beijing into believing that it could rely on Soviet nuclear deterrence; or else that while Moscow never explicitly affirmed its stand on this question, Beijing somehow, perhaps willingly, misinterpreted Soviet intentions.

#### THE ANTI-GERM-WARFARE-CAMPAIGN: The PRC Adheres to the 1925 Geneva Protocol

As the 'ban the bomb' movement subsided into blackout, China's intervention in the Korean War brought two issues to the forefront of the peace movement: the appeal for 'a peace pact by the five great

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<sup>26</sup> Hsieh summarises Chinese press comments in this regard in Hsieh, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.22), pp.26-7.

<sup>27</sup> Kuo Moruo resorted to an implied threat of nuclear retaliation in February 1955. See his remarks in NCNA, 18 Feb. 1955, SCMP No.992, 21 Feb. 1955, 20. For Hsieh's discussion see Ibid., pp.28-9.

powers' and, more urgently, a call for the banning of bacteriological weapons.

The 'Anti-germ-warfare campaign' (AGWC) was a brief but meaningful episode in China's 'Resisting-America-Aiding-Korea' operation during the Korean War.<sup>28</sup> To this day, there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the US did employ 'germ' warfare in Korea. The general belief in the West is that the AGWC had little to do with the issue of 'germ' warfare. Simmonds, for instance, suggests that the AGWC was a 'substitute' for the Korean War, when the Korean armistice became 'a foreseeable and impending reality'. He believes that, 'with all the fundamental domestic problems remaining', the PRC was facing an 'imperative' need to 'keep the anti-American pot boiling'.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, Hsieh also argues that the AGWC, while posing as a movement about biological weapons, was really targeted upon US atomic weapons. She asserts that the AGWC was designed 'to inhibit even further any possible American plan to use the atom bomb, to allay domestic anxiety with respect to the bomb, and to maintain the spirit of resistance'.<sup>30</sup> However, both Simmonds and Hsieh fail to appreciate the fact that, in August 1952, the PRC ratified the 1925 Geneva Protocol on chemical and biological warfare. This protocol became the first and remained for more than two decades the only international ACD agreement the PRC ever signed. As it seems unlikely that Beijing would have signed the protocol for the mere cosmetic reason of making itself look better in

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28 One may consult the following works for details of the AGWC: R.D. Barendsen, 'The Chinese Communist Germ Warfare Propaganda Campaign' (Yale Univ. Ph.D. thesis, 1957); and B. Friedman, 'Germ Warfare, Is US Using It in Korean War?', New World Review, 20 (June, 1952), 17-27.

29 J.D. Simmonds, China's World: The Foreign Policy of a Developing State (Canberra: ANU Press, 1970), p.23.

30 Hsieh, op.cit., p.4.

the AGWC, one is tempted to suggest that the PRC could have been genuinely concerned about the employment of US 'germ' weapons in Korea.

Even before the eruption of the Korean War, the PRC had shown disquiet over the development of biological weapons in the West. In March 1950, quoting a Tass report revealing that Britain, the US and Canada were holding a secret conference in Ottawa on biological and chemical warfare, a Chinese broadcast attacked the 'Anglo-American imperialistic bloc' for its 'aggressive preparation for a ruthless bacteriological war'.<sup>31</sup> A few days later, another Chinese broadcast, commenting on the US Army Department's proposal for Congressional allocation of grants to support new research projects, again accused the US Army of 'preparing intensively to strengthen research work on germ warfare and poison gas'.<sup>32</sup>

Domestically the AGWC took a form not different from any other Chinese mass movement: rallies, wide press coverage, and so on. Internationally, various 'peace' meetings again served as useful forums for propaganda. A WPC meeting held in Oslo in November 1951 was first to offer support, with an 'Appeal Against Bacteriological Warfare'. In July 1952, at another WPC meeting held in Berlin, China detailed the alleged 'crime' of the US in using germ weapons in 'Korea and China', and later also marked the Oslo meeting in adopting a further resolution, demanding the 'ratification and observance by all countries of the Geneva Protocol'.<sup>33</sup> Three months after the Berlin meeting, at the Peace Conference for the Asian and Pacific Regions held in Beijing, the

31 'Western Powers' Conference on Bacteriological Warfare', Broadcast by Shengyang Radio on 20 Mar. 1950, in SWB, No.49, 24 Mar. 1950, 15.

32 'US Poison Gas Research', Beijing broadcast, 24 Mar. 1950, in SWB, Ibid., 5.

33 Kuo Moruo, 'Rally the Peoples of the World for the Triumph of the Spirit of Negotiation Over Decisions Imposed by Force', PC No.16, 16 Aug. 1952, 4-10.

PRC again placed the banning of biological weapons high on the agenda, giving it a priority the issue of atomic weapons used to enjoy. Beijing's focal point was in stark contrast to that of other delegates, particularly the Japanese, who concentrated on the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nevertheless, by referring to atomic weapons only in a very general demand for the banning of 'atomic, bacteriological, chemical, and other weapons of mass destruction', the Chinese delegates seemed determined not to be sidetracked.<sup>34</sup>

While the PRC obstinately kept the AGWC active within China until late 1953, international enthusiasm began to fade a year earlier, partly because of the reduction of hostilities on the Korean front. In December 1952, China staged an exhibition at a WPC meeting in Vienna, to corroborate its accusation against 'American germ warfare'. It was received passively. The final document of the meeting, known as the Vienna Appeal, made only mild reference to biological warfare. Not only did it fail to condemn the US, it did not even mention the name of any country. In the words of the Appeal:

We have heard the reports on the use of bacteriological warfare, ... we categorically demand the immediate prohibition of biological warfare and the adherence of all states to the Geneva Protocol.<sup>35</sup>

Such a poor response was not intended as a direct rebuff to Beijing's propaganda. By the end of 1952, the central concern of the peace movement had shifted to a proposal for the five 'great powers', including the PRC, to hold a conference to negotiate a peace pact between them. Indeed, the major purpose of the Vienna meeting seemed to have been to emphasise and to reiterate this call. There was no

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<sup>34</sup> NCNA, 3 Oct. 1952, cited from: Hsieh, op.cit., p.4.

<sup>35</sup> 'Appeal of the Congress of the Peoples for Peace', Supplement to People's China, No.2, 16 Jan. 1953. For the reference to the 'US Germ Warfare', see Special Correspondent, 'For the Right of Man to Peace', PC, No.2, 16 Jan. 1953, 22-23.

likelihood of the meeting extending an invitation to the US for a 'peace' conference while at the same time condemning it for a war crime. Beijing never publicly voiced any disappointment. Perhaps it did not matter that much. And if it did, the PRC should have found consolation in the fact that the peace conference proposal had put China on an equal footing with the other four major powers.

#### A PEACE PACT OF THE FIVE GREAT POWERS: An Equal Seat With the Big Four?

Beijing had shown interest in the idea of a five-power conference from its origin in a Soviet disarmament proposal at the UN in late 1950. In February 1951, when the idea became a formal resolution at the WPC meeting held in Berlin, China immediately described the resolution as a 'momentous decision' and declared that any of the five powers who refused to participate in the conference could render itself 'a public enemy of mankind'.<sup>36</sup> After this meeting, the Chinese Peace Committee repeated its routine support in adopting similar resolutions and calling on the Chinese people to strive for the realisation of the pact. Press coverage was extensive, but in no way could it be compared to that briefly commanded by the 'ban the bomb' movement. Aside from the AGCW, it appeared that the 'blackout' and the Korean War had substantially reduced Beijing's interest in the peace movement as a whole. Its delegation to the 1951 Berlin meeting presented a new five-point mandate which bore little resemblance to the one that had been proposed in Warsaw at the Second WPC Congress in November 1950. The new mandate demanded the 'immediate annulment' of the UN resolution labelling China an 'aggressor', the solution to the question of peace treaties with Japan and Germany, and the convening of an international

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36 'Berlin Peace Council Meeting', NCNA, 25 Feb. 1951, in SWB No.98, 6 Mar. 1951, 8-9.

conference for 'unfolding the movement against the arming of Germany and Japan by the USA'.<sup>37</sup> Nowhere did it mention the issues involving the arms race and atomic weapons, nor even 'foreign military bases', 'war propaganda', or 'warmongers', as it had done only three months before.

The subject of 'a five-power peace conference' came to the top of the agenda of WPC meetings again in Vienna in December 1952. By then, the WPC had perhaps detected that the West would not take great alarm at being declared the 'public enemy of mankind' by Beijing. A change of strategy was thus in force. The resulting Vienna Appeal gave an impression that the five powers were being urged to start negotiating 'at once', without necessarily committing themselves to the conclusion of any kind of a peace pact.<sup>38</sup> What mattered, as the Appeal implied, was no longer the peace pact itself, but the 'spirit of negotiation and agreement'. This was also indirectly confirmed by the PRC, when it later emphasised that international tension and problems should be dealt with 'in the first place by getting negotiations started between the Five Great Powers to conclude a pact of peace'.<sup>39</sup>

China's willingness to support and to attend the conference was understandable. A seat in such a conference would be a de facto recognition of the great power status of the PRC. With the conclusion of a Korean armistice in sight (the agreement was signed on 26 July 1953), that seat would also enhance Beijing's victorious image. Therefore on 28 April Zhou Enlai gave the official PRC reply to Vienna, stating that his government was 'in full agreement' with, and gave 'firm support'

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> For text of the Vienna Appeal, see fn.35 above.

<sup>39</sup> 'For the Right ...' above fn.35. (Emphasis added).

support' to, the Appeal.<sup>40</sup> Neither the conference nor the peace pact was ever realised, but Beijing's aspiration for an equal seat with the other four powers was soon satisfied with its participation in the 1954 Geneva Conference. The significance of Beijing's participation in that conference has been succinctly summarised as follows:

Korea was only a start: Indo-China was the lever which the Chinese ... successfully employed to effect an entry into the diplomatic council chambers. With [its] participation in the Geneva Conference of July 1954, China had 'stood up' diplomatically in the world as one of the five great powers - a message which the Chinese press hammered home ... Mao's Korean gamble had paid off: China had gained international stature both with - reluctantly - its American adversary and with - perhaps also reluctantly - its Soviet ally.<sup>41</sup>

BEIJING BEGINS NUCLEAR FISSION RESEARCH: No Evil in the Possession of the Bomb?

As early as April 1950, a document on the first All-China Natural Science Workers' Conference stated that 'conscientious science workers' should 'never tolerate the fruits of scientific research being used as a weapon to exterminate the people'.<sup>42</sup> This was the PRC's first public reference to the peaceful use of atomic energy. After that, further discussions of the issue did not take place until late 1953, when Eisenhower revealed his 'Atoms-for-Peace' plan. With Moscow immediately rejecting it, Beijing followed suit by accusing Eisenhower of 'faking peace gestures' because his plan had 'set no limits to the growing number of atomic bombs'.<sup>43</sup>

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40 'Foreign Minister Chou En-lai's Reply to the International Committee of the Congress of the Peoples for Peace', Supplement to People's China, IV/10, 16 May 1953.

41 Gittings, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.21), pp.193-5.

42 'Reaction to the ...' (above fn.14).

43 These remarks were originally published in PD, 26 Dec. 1953. Cited from Hsieh, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.22), p.4.

While disparaging the American plan, Beijing did not forget to commend Moscow's 'achievement' in the same regard. For the PRC itself was by then on the drive to establish its own atomic research industry, and felt inevitably the need to justify and elaborate the positive and peaceful aspects of a nuclear programme.<sup>44</sup> It was partly with this consideration that Beijing decided, in July 1954, to drop its blackout and hail the commissioning of the world's first atomic power station in the Soviet Union. Beijing claimed that the event was proof of Moscow's sincerity in seeking to prohibit nuclear weapons and to develop peaceful use of atomic energy; and, in contrast, that the US had not commissioned any such stations was stressed by Beijing as having 'further exposed' America's intention to use atomic energy 'for wars and as a means of blackmail'.<sup>45</sup>

In October 1954, the Sino-Soviet Scientific and Technical Co-operation Commission was established to offer to China general 'scientific and technical' assistance from the USSR. But there seemed one particular Chinese desire the Commission could not satisfy. Six months later, in April 1955, a further agreement was signed to promise China the supply of Soviet research reactors and 'the necessary amounts of fission materials'.<sup>46</sup> Thus the start of China's fission programme, which later continued without Soviet assistance and culminated in China's first atomic test at Lop Nor in 1964. After January 1955, China became extremely reluctant to return to the subject of the

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44 For an account of Beijing's search for nuclear capability, see for instance A. Doak Barnett, 'The Inclusion of Communist China in an Arms-Control Program', in Brennan, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.2), pp.282-303. For a classic work in this regard, also consult Halperin, China and the Bomb (N.Y.: Praeger, 1966).

45 These views expressed by various Chinese newspapers are summarised in Hsieh, op.cit., p.6.

46 Barnett, op.cit., p.284.

peaceful uses of atomic energy, except when their first reactor went into operation in June 1958. For a country that was publicly to encourage the spread of nuclear weapons, the subject of the peaceful use of nuclear energy indeed seemed irrelevant.<sup>47</sup> Thus even as late as the mid-1980s there is still not a single civil nuclear power station in China.

It is significant, however, that Beijing considered only the 'use' of atomic weapons as the 'evil' part of the whole question of nuclear proliferation. In January 1955, the State Council of the PRC passed a resolution to welcome Soviet atomic assistance to China. A paragraph reads:

An atomic pile can produce electric power to serve peace. It can also produce dangerous fissionable substances for the manufacture of atomic weapons to serve war. It is obvious that only by banning the use of atomic and hydrogen weapons can atomic energy be fully and effectively used for peace, and to create happiness for mankind.<sup>48</sup>

Was this to suggest that, if one knew how to make use of atomic energy and thus had also acquired the knowledge of how to produce the bombs (to the extent of even owning a few bombs), one would not be condemned, as long as the bombs were not going to be used? Here, again, Beijing's concentration on the ban of the 'use', not of the 'possession', is significant.

#### RENEWED SOVIET INITIATIVES: Early Chinese Support for the Test Ban?

In clear contrast to the lack of initiatives between 1948 and

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<sup>47</sup> Beijing had by the mid-1950s made clear its support for the nuclear weapon development programme of the Soviet Union. See for instance, fn.23. It had also 'hinted' at its intention to acquire the 'bomb' status. See fn.24.

<sup>48</sup> 'The State Council Resolution on Soviet Aid in Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy', Supplement to People's China No.4, 16 Feb. 1955, 22.

1953, the Soviet Union entered a new phase of ACD offensive the year after that, while Beijing's support also increased correspondingly, reaching a peak during 1956 and 1957. The new Soviet offensive was launched at the UN on 30 September 1954, with a proposal for an international convention to reduce in two stages both conventional and nuclear armament.<sup>49</sup> This proposal symbolised an important transformation in Moscow's modus operandi for tackling the disarmament dilemma. Moscow had shifted from the earlier insistence on 'banning the bomb', to a 'step-by-step' approach. This shift did not affect Beijing's approach, though it could have represented that Moscow was moving from 'disarmament' to 'arms control'. Beijing's support still came promptly on the proposal.<sup>50</sup> However, in Hsieh's view Beijing was really interested in this proposal because it called for PRC help in the negotiation for a joint declaration in which the five major powers would all renounce the use of 'atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction'.<sup>51</sup>

The period of blackout ended at the beginning of 1955. During the first few months of that year, atomic issues dominated the Chinese media unprecedentedly: the US was again accused of threatening China with nuclear weapons; the campaign for 'banning the bomb' was revitalised; the theory that 'weapons cannot decide the outcome of war' was reiterated; Khrushchev's remark that communism, not capitalism, would survive a nuclear war, was repeated; and the claim was even made that Moscow would retaliate on Beijing's behalf should any country attack

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49 The United Nations and Disarmament, 1945-1965 (N.Y.: U.N., 1967), pp.52-57.

50 'Atom Weapons Must Be Banned', Editorial, PD, 4 Oct. 1954, in SCMP No.902, 6 Oct. 1954, 30-32.

51 Hsieh, op.cit., p.6.

China with nuclear weapons.<sup>52</sup>

It was against this background that Beijing received the well-publicised Soviet ACD plan of 10 May 1955. Basically an extension and modification of the Soviet 'step-by-step' proposal of 30 September 1954, this plan initiated a period of serious East-West negotiations between mid-1955 and mid-1957.<sup>53</sup> It also paved the way for the four-power Geneva summit conference of July 1955, which offered a ray of hope that ACD negotiations were finally heading for something.<sup>54</sup> However, one month after the conclusion of the Geneva summit, the newly-appointed US Presidential Disarmament Assistant, H.E. Stassen, announced that he was to 'place a reservation' on all previous American ACD proposals save for the 'open-skies' plan. The move was unexpected and negative in the sense that Stassen was actually 'wiping the slate clean' and starting all over again.<sup>55</sup>

Consequently, negotiations did not regain momentum until March 1956, when the UN Disarmament Subcommittee reconvened in London. Then, both the US and the Soviet Union presented new proposals based on the element of 'confidence-building'. The Soviet one, in particular, contained three different 'partial disarmament' measures: a) the limitation and reduction of conventional forces and armaments by stages; b) a European zone of limitation and inspection of armaments; and, c) a ban on the tests of thermonuclear weapons, independently of

52 Ibid., pp.26-34. This is an excellent summary and analysis of Chinese press remarks during the period.

53 W. Frye, 'The Quest for Disarmament Since World War II', in Henkin, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.4), pp.18-48. For the text of this Soviet proposal, see UN and Disarmament (above fn.49), pp.55-6.

54 For a brief account of the Geneva summit, see UN and Disarmament, (Ibid.), pp.57-8.

55 Frye, op.cit., pp.28-9.

disarmament.<sup>56</sup> These measures immediately raised speculations in the West that the proposal of 10 May 1955 still stood - i.e., Moscow still upheld the elimination of nuclear weapons as the ultimate objective. However, Gromyko also indicated that Moscow considered that conventional and nuclear disarmament should be dealt with in two separate categories.<sup>57</sup>

China has never publicly complained about the fact that it was not invited to the 1955 four-power Geneva summit meeting. If anything, it continued to re-affirm its readiness to become involved in any future disarmament conferences. On 30 July 1955, while offering a formal endorsement to the Soviet proposal of 10 May, Zhou told a meeting of China's National People's Congress (NPC):

If a world conference on general disarmament and prohibition of atomic weapons as proposed by the Soviet Union is successfully convened, China will be ready, at the conference, to undertake obligations along with other countries.<sup>58</sup>

Given that the PRC naturally desired to increase its international standing, was it equally sincere in attempting to prohibit nuclear weapons? On the surface, it sounded sincere. Throughout 1956 and 1957, Beijing enthusiastically endorsed Moscow's three major themes, namely, 'confidence-building' measures, reductions of conventional armaments, and the ban of nuclear tests as an independent measure.<sup>59</sup> Beginning in 1957, as the 'test ban' became the central issue in the ACD negotiations, Beijing's propaganda support intensified accordingly.

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<sup>56</sup> UN and Disarmament, p.62; Ibid., pp.30-32.

<sup>57</sup> For a description of these developments, see Frye, op.cit., pp.31-32.

<sup>58</sup> Zhou Enlai, 'The Present International Situation and China's Foreign Policy', PC, No.16, 16 Aug. 1955, 3-8.

<sup>59</sup> For a collection of these comments, see 'Disarmament and Points at Issue', PC, No.11, 1 June 1956, 39-40. See also 'China's Appeal for Disarmament', PC No.20, 16 Oct. 1956, 39-40.

For example, a Chinese commentary published in March claimed that an 'immediate' test ban could 'easily be solved separately from the entire question of disarmament'.<sup>60</sup> Another commentary published that same month further predicted that, if a test ban agreement were reached, 'the international atmosphere will be greatly improved and trust between nations increased. It could lead to an agreement on overall disarmament as well as a ban on nuclear weapons'.<sup>61</sup> In addition, the People's Daily on 15 May, when commenting on a Soviet proposal for a tripartite test ban agreement (which eventually evolved into the PTBT of 1963), declared that such a treaty would 'conform to the aspirations of the people the world over'.<sup>62</sup> Most interesting of all, Beijing did not even make any attempt to contradict the assertion, made by a Soviet representative in July, that the PRC would be willing to sign the proposed test ban agreement if and when it materialised.

However, on closer scrutiny, Beijing's sincerity in making these statements appears doubtful. The PRC later became renowned for its strident objections to 'arms control' or partial disarmament' measures. Until the late 1970s, China showed little interest in 'conventional' disarmament. As for the test ban, Beijing claimed in 1963 that from the start it thought that Khrushchev should not have 'divorced the cessation of nuclear tests from the question of disarmament'.<sup>63</sup> By saying so the PRC was contradicting its previous statements, which had supported the Soviet test ban initiatives.

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60 'Ta Kung Pao Urges Ban on H-Bomb Tests', Ta Kung Pao (TKP), 29 Mar. 1957, in SCMP No.1503, 30 Mar. 1957, 31-32.

61 'Observer on Soviet Disarmament Proposals', PD, 30 Mar. 1957, in SCMP No.1503, 30 Mar. 1957, 29.

62 'Press On Urgency to End Nuclear Armament Race', PD, 15 May 1957, in SCMP No.1533, 15 May 1957, 25.

63 'Statement by the Spokesman of the Chinese Government ...' (see Ch.1 fn.14).

The suggestion that Beijing originally viewed the prospect of its acquiring the 'bomb' as unaffected by the Khrushchev test ban initiatives and became uneasy about these initiatives 'only in retrospect' seems tenable.<sup>64</sup> Two factors support it.

First, comments on the test ban issue and on the larger subject of general arms control, made widely in the Chinese press, nowhere reveal any indication that Beijing might forego - voluntarily or otherwise - the plan to acquire the bomb. The vital issues are referred to either separately as 'the prohibition of nuclear weapons' and 'the suspension of nuclear test', or - in a very few instances - jointly as the banning of the 'use and explosion' of nuclear weapons.<sup>65</sup> What is conspicuously missing is still any ban on the 'possession' of nuclear weapons. This must add strength to the assumption that Beijing was still determined to acquire nuclear status, most likely with Soviet aid in the form of a ready-made 'bomb'.

Secondly, Beijing could not have actively supported Moscow's test ban initiatives without certain 'assurances' from Moscow that such a ban would not adversely affect the chance of Beijing becoming a 'bomb' power. According to Halperin, Beijing actually began to press Moscow for 'an increase in assistance to the indigenous Chinese nuclear production' in the early months of 1957.<sup>66</sup> Had Moscow's response been discouraging, Beijing would have had little motivation to intensify its propaganda campaign for the test ban. Halperin therefore argues that the continuation of Soviet nuclear aid was in fact the basis of Beijing's continuing support for the test ban initiatives. In all

64 This is Halperin's view; see Halperin, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.15).

65 'Kuo Moruo Speaks at Colombo Conference', NCNA, 11 June 1957, in SCMP No.1550, 11 June 1957, 30-31.

66 Halperin, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.15), p.120.

probability, Beijing was not only convinced that a possible ban would not in the least impede its own nuclear programme, but was also led to believe that the test ban initiatives were primarily a tactic to prevent West Germany from becoming a nuclear power. During mid-1957, Beijing did stress more than once that West Germany might be on the threshold of such status, warning that: 'It would be more difficult to ban the weapons of mass destruction if an agreement to that effect was repeatedly delayed to let West Germany become the fourth nuclear power'.<sup>67</sup>

Although the materials produced by the Sino-Soviet polemics during the 1960s have not disclosed any specific 'assurance' Moscow might have given Beijing to secure the latter's support for the test ban initiatives, they do contain Beijing's allegation that Moscow had promised it a sample 'bomb', but had later broken that promise and proposed instead the stationing of Soviet nuclear forces in the Chinese territory, under a joint Sino-Soviet command.<sup>68</sup> This allegation seems credible and has never been contested by Moscow. In any case, the allegation is also consistent with the development of the 'quick-fix' debate which, as already mentioned, was then going on in China.<sup>69</sup>

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67 See: 1. 'Press on Urgency' (above fn.62); 2. 'Jen Min Jih Pao on Atomic Weapons for West Germany', PD, 13 Apr. 1957, in SCMP No.1512, 13 Apr. 1957, 57; and 3. 'Kuang Ming Jih Pao on West German Scientists' Opposition to Atomic Weapons', Kuang Ming Jih Pao (KMJP), 16 Apr. 1957, in SCMP No.1514, 16 Apr. 1957, 41.

68 See 'Statement by the Spokesman of the Chinese Government' (see Ch.1 fn.14), for the disclosure of the 15 October agreement. The alleged Soviet proposal for the stationing of Soviet nuclear forces in Chinese territory was revealed in September 1963 in: 'The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves - Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU, September 6, 1963', BR VI/37, 13 Sept. 1963, 6-23. Text of the latter statement also in William Griffin, The Sino-Soviet Rift (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1964).

69 Refer to Ch.1 fns.22, 23 on pp.13-14, for the 'quick-fix' debate.

The side of this debate which advocated a rapid military modernisation by relying heavily on the Soviets must have welcomed the signing, on 15 October 1957, of the agreement on 'new technology for national defence', which obliged Moscow to supply Beijing with 'a sample of an atomic bomb and technical data concerning its manufacture'.<sup>70</sup> Such an agreement would not have been possible had there not been considerable willingness from both parties to promote or to maintain Sino-Soviet amity. However, far from being the basis of any amity, the agreement and its aftermath fuelled the debate in a manner favourable to those who were against a closer military relationship between China and the Soviet Union. For it was precisely the 'intimacy' of military cooperation, such as that symbolised by the 15 October agreement, which led Moscow to propose to Beijing, probably in early 1958, various schemes such as a joint naval command and a joint radar network. These proposals were perceived by the PRC as infringing upon its military independence and were rejected in the middle of the year. Even then, though, neither Soviet nuclear aid to China nor Beijing's support for Soviet test ban initiatives was immediately affected.

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<sup>70</sup> 'Statement ...' (see fn.68 above).

### CHAPTER THREE: 1958-1963, The Uneasy Years: Deviation, Division, and Collision

It is an accepted judgement that between 1949 and 1957 the PRC closely matched the arms control position of the Soviet Union. But it is also clear that, behind this harmonious 'echoing', Beijing's considerations on certain ACD issues were at variance with those of Moscow. The root of the variance was the question of Beijing's acquisition of 'bomb' status. Understandably, Beijing relied heavily - if not solely - upon Moscow to achieve that status, while Moscow's support on this issue was less than unswerving. Therefore, although Beijing's echoing of Soviet ACD positions during this early period appeared 'unconditional and uncritical', the seeds of division were, in retrospect, already formed.

Between 1958 and 1963, as the PRC gradually moved away from 'orthodox' Soviet ACD positions, the problem of Beijing's desire to own a bomb was still the most crucial issue plaguing Sino-Soviet relationships. On the one hand came increasing Chinese pressure for concrete Soviet nuclear assistance - 'concrete', in that Beijing was asking for a sample atom bomb. On the other hand, there were accelerated Soviet (and international) efforts to achieve a test ban agreement. These developments inevitably pulled Moscow and Beijing further apart, and led to Moscow's alleged refusal, in June 1959, to give Beijing its sample bomb. From then on, Sino-Soviet relations steadily worsened, culminating in open polemics after the signing of the PTBT.

#### AN ASIA WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS: The PRC's First Independent Move?

The concept of a 'nuclear-weapon-free zone' (NFZ) originated during the mid-1950s as a Soviet design to preclude deployment of

American theatre nuclear weapons in West Germany.<sup>1</sup> Adam Rapacki, the then Polish Foreign Minister, first formalised the idea in a proposal to the UN General Assembly on 2 October 1957, stating that: 1) if the two German states committed themselves not to produce, possess, or acquire nuclear weapons or to allow these weapons to be stationed on their territories; 2) if the US, the UK, France and the Soviet Union were all to respect such a 'denuclearised' arrangement; and 3) if an effective control system could be established to monitor the implementation of the above two points, Poland would voluntarily also commit itself to the arrangement. This proposal - the 'Rapacki Plan' - at once generated great interest. However, while Moscow lauded the plan within three weeks of its announcement, Beijing did not support it until as late as mid-December.

The delay in Beijing's comment is noteworthy because the Rapacki plan came during a period in which Beijing normally gave rapid endorsement to all ACD proposals made or supported by Moscow. In fact, the volume of such endorsements peaked between mid-1956 and late 1957. After all, October 1957 was also the month in which the Sino-Soviet agreement 'on new technology for national defence' was signed, as the two communist giants were striving for an atmosphere of unity to impress the Moscow Congress of Ruling Communist Parties due the following month. Why, then, did Beijing hold back its support?

Hsieh argues persuasively that the delay reflected uncertainty over the Soviet position on the issue. The plan was apparently under serious discussion between Moscow and some of its East European satellites from November 1957 to the following January. As the Soviet

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1 For the development of the concept of a 'Nuclear-free Zone', see: UN Office of Public Information, Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (New York: UN, 1977). And, also by the UN, Comprehensive Study of the Question of Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones in All its Aspects (New York, UN, 1975).

position itself did not advance 'from a backing of the idea in general to an endorsement of the specific proposal' until early 1958, Beijing would understandably also be cautious in providing its own response.<sup>2</sup> When Beijing's support to the plan finally came on 19 December, it was as general as Moscow's, and was brought forth only because Beijing felt obliged to demonstrate its backing for other Soviet 'peace' proposals.<sup>3</sup> Had there not been such a need to act at that juncture, Beijing's support for the plan would probably have been even later.

In early 1958, China's support for the plan gathered momentum. Repeated endorsements appeared in the Chinese press, including those in late January favouring the establishment of a NFZ in the Middle East.<sup>4</sup> At the end of February, as Soviet support for the plan became definite, China's media expanded the theme with a claim that the establishment of a NFZ in 'Central Europe' (i.e. the 'Rapacki Plan') would set a 'good precedent' for 'the appearance of such atom-free zones in all parts of the world'.<sup>5</sup>

China's first public reference to NFZs 'in all parts of the world' was by Kuo Moruo that February 4, in an interview with L'Unità - an organ of the Italian Communist Party. In his capacity as the Chairman of the China Peace Committee, Kuo suggested that a conference of the heads of the US, UK, France, Soviet Union, Canada, India, Egypt, and

2 Hsieh, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.22), p.104.

3 'Statement by the People's Republic of China supporting the peace proposals of the Soviet Union, 19 December 1957', NCNA 19 Dec. 1957, in SCMP No.1678, 24 Dec. 1957, 42-3.

4 TKP, 23 Jan. 1958, in SCMP No.1700, 28 Jan. 1958, 34-35; KMJP, 24 Jan. 1958, and PD, 25 Jan. 1958, both in SCMP No.1701, 29 Jan. 1958, 25-6.

5 'Jen Min Jih Pao Commentator Supports Polish Memo on Atom-Free Zone', NCNA, 19 Feb. 1958, in SCMP No.1717, 22 Feb. 1958, 31-2.

China be convened and an agreement be reached 'as soon as possible' to:

1. set up 'de-atomised' zones;
2. stop the flight of planes carrying nuclear weapons over foreign territory;
3. stop nuclear weapon tests in the high seas;
4. ban 'the manufacture, stockpiling and use' of nuclear weapons.<sup>6</sup>

Kuo's remark on the 'de-atomised zones' has been interpreted by Hsieh as an indirect response to an Indian proposal made by Nehru on 30 January 1958 which advocated the establishment of an Asian NFZ.<sup>7</sup> Hsieh believes that, while an official position on the problem of an Asian NFZ was being discussed in Beijing, Kuo was informally setting out China's conditions for a world disarmament conference (WDC) which would probably include discussion of the establishment of an Asian NFZ. Of these conditions, the most significant was the insistence on banning 'the manufacture, stockpiling and use' of nuclear weapons. The PRC had not particularly wanted a ban on either the 'manufacture' or the 'stockpiling' of nuclear weapons, presumably because these terms lay too close to the 'possession' of these weapons. Was this new insistence therefore a quid pro quo for China's admission to an Asian NFZ? And was a real belief in the NFZ concept now prompting China to extend the ban to other prospective members?

Hsieh offers an interesting observation. She argues that, whether acceptable to the West or not, the idea of an Asian NFZ was a powerful 'political-psychological instrument' for Moscow and Beijing, which could 'stimulate neutralism' among Asian countries by offering them 'a way of avoiding embroilment in a nuclear war. In particular, Hsieh

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6 'Kuo Mo-jo Answers Italian Paper on Nuclear Weapons', NCNA, 4 Feb. 1958, in SCMP No.1708, 7 Feb. 1957, 40-42.

7 Hsieh, op.cit., pp.103-4.

believes that both Moscow and Beijing would have benefited tremendously and in four ways from an Asian NFZ accepted by the West. It would have removed a possible United States nuclear presence from Asia, prevented the Japanese from contemplating 'going nuclear', maximised the potential of China's conventional forces, and, allowed the PRC to pose as a non-atomic power among Asian powers 'behind the shield of the Soviet Union's nuclear retaliatory capability'.<sup>8</sup>

Hsieh therefore does not completely rule out the possibility that Beijing might have considered the 1958 Asian NFZ arrangement a feasible policy option. In this sense, the insistence upon the banning of the 'manufacture, stockpiling and use' of nuclear weapons would have been a quid pro quo. However, this would also assume that Beijing had considered giving up the 'nuclear option'. Such an assumption certainly needs more substantiation before it can be accepted.

In any case, Beijing would have recognised the benefit of supporting the idea of an Asian NFZ, whether such a zone could be realised or not. Thus, on 10 February Zhou declared China's first official approval of Nehru's proposal for an Asian NFZ.<sup>9</sup> This declaration has been widely regarded China's first independent statement on any ACD issue. For Zhou did not endorse Nehru's proposal in the usual manner of following Moscow's footsteps. He did it ten days after Nehru made the announcement, before any response from Moscow was publicly known. Zhou's motivation remains unclear.<sup>10</sup> This could have been routine support in which timing was not intended to be meaningful. Or Zhou could also have carefully calculated the timing of the move in order to

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8 Ibid. p.103.

9 'Premier Chou En-lai on World Situation and China's Foreign Policy', NCNA, 10 Feb. 1958, in SCMP No.1712, 13 Feb. 1958, 1-7.

10 See the brief discussion by Halperin and Perkins, in Halperin and Perkins, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.1), p.99.

surprise Moscow.

It is possible that China found it difficult to reject the principles of Nehru's proposal in any case. It was China itself, back in July 1955, which first advocated a similar concept of a regional peace plan covering the Asian-Pacific area, as a supplement to a Soviet ACD proposal.<sup>11</sup> Beijing had also supported the Rapacki Plan which could have been interpreted as Beijing's general endorsement of the NFZ concept. Above all, the recent Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Cairo had resolved that 'Asia and Africa should be a peace zone in which no foreign country should deploy nuclear and rocket weapons'.<sup>12</sup> Since Moscow and Beijing (and India) participated in that conference, it could be assumed that they had both consented to the establishment of an Asian NFZ at least in spirit even before Nehru announced his proposal. Perhaps, then, the PRC thought that its support for an Asian NFZ contained no element of 'independency'. In this case, the timing of Zhou's move is insignificant.

The above analysis (and that of Hsieh's mentioned earlier) very much assumes that Sino-Soviet amity was in good shape. However, since the early months of 1958, this amity had become strained. Take the case of Sino-Soviet military co-operation, for instance. Signs of a conflict were appearing within three months of the signing of the 15 October agreement. Here was Marshal Peng Dehuai, until 1959 China's Minister for National Defence, stressing to an Armed Forces Logistics Conference on 22 January that China had to stand on her own feet to modernise militarily - a dramatic retreat from his earlier support for

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11 This was done by Zhou on 30 July 1955, see Current Background (Hong Kong), No.342 (Aug. 1955). Cited from: H. Chiu, 'Communist China's Attitude Towards Nuclear Tests', CQ 13 (Jan/Mar. 1965), 98.

12 Zhou mentioned this in his 10 Feb. report. See above, fn.9.

the 'quick-fix' solution.<sup>13</sup> While at the same time the Chinese press was hinting that China might soon receive finished nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union.<sup>14</sup> Against such a background, Zhou's declaration takes on even more interest. Surely it was incompatible for Beijing both to support an Asian NFZ and to claim the arrival of a Soviet bomb!?

As far as one can reconstruct what happened, Zhou's declaration could well have been made after taking into consideration these two incompatibilities. The triggering event may have been Washington's announcement, late in January 1958, that the US was about to introduce delivery systems for 'tactical' nuclear weapons into South Korea. Perceiving that as an urgent threat, Beijing confronted Moscow with a demand for a prompt transfer of operational nuclear weapons. As it seemed obvious that the Soviet response, even at this initial stage, was faltering, Beijing probably decided to undertake certain 'defiant' policy initiatives. The announcement of an independent position on the Asian NFZ issue followed. It was an attempt that could both mobilise popular opposition to the possible stationing of US nuclear forces in South Korea, and, more importantly, force Moscow to show its cards in the game of Sino-Soviet nuclear relations. What Beijing was bidding for was Moscow's response to a formal Chinese declaration indicating that Beijing might opt for non-nuclear status.

Beijing would not have chosen the Asian NFZ issue to test Moscow's response, if the issue had not been in general agreement with Moscow's previous positions. Thus Beijing could not be accused of having made a 'wrong' move; the move could at most be said to have been 'ill-timed'. Such deliberate ambivalence is a frequent characteristic of a bold or

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<sup>13</sup> Hsieh, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.22), p.110.

<sup>14</sup> Halperin, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.15), pp.127-8.

risky political initiative, for it retains a safe retreat which may become quite useful should the initiative backfire. In this case if Moscow was annoyed by Beijing's 'independent' statement, and if Beijing did not wish to provoke Moscow, China could easily claim that there was nothing 'independent' in its support for Nehru's proposal.

Whatever had taken place behind the scenes, Moscow responded warmly to Zhou's declaration. Then, between March and April 1958, there was an outburst of Chinese propaganda favouring the establishment of NFZs in Central Europe, in Africa, and in Asia. With reference to the one in Asia, four features stand out:

1. The PRC claimed that an Asian NFZ was the only way to reduce the danger of a nuclear disaster in Asia, for it would prevent the US from building nuclear bases in the area.<sup>15</sup>
2. Beijing dropped its initial support for the whole of Asia to become a NFZ. Instead, it implied that an Asian NFZ should be limited to 'the whole of East Asia and the Pacific region'.<sup>16</sup>
3. China began stressing that the NFZ should only be 'a temporary measure' and 'a beginning' which should lead to the complete prohibition of the military use of nuclear energy.<sup>17</sup>
4. China advocated an Asian collective peace pact and insisted that the conclusion of that pact and the establishment of an Asian NFZ were 'inseparable'.<sup>18</sup>

These arguments give rise to a number of interesting conjectures. Was then Beijing no longer insisting upon 'the banning of the

<sup>15</sup> NCNA, 10 March 1958, in SCMP No.1730, 13 March 1958, 49. Cited in Hsieh, op.cit., p.106.

<sup>16</sup> See above, fn.9.

<sup>17</sup> Kuo Moruo, 'Asia Without Nuclear Weapons', BR, 1/7, 15 Apr. 1958, 8-9.

<sup>18</sup> See above fn.9 and also, NCNA, 10 Mar. 1958, in SCMP No.1730, 13 Mar. 1958, 49.

manufacture, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons', for an Asian NFZ? Was it instead asking the US to promise not to station nuclear forces in the area and to sign a collective peace pact with the countries involved, so that China's security against a US nuclear attack could be guaranteed? Or was China reasoning that it might only have to offer part of its territory, viz., the area geographically defined as East Asia, towards an Asian NFZ, thus being able to secure a US nuclear withdrawal from Korea and Japan while retaining its own nuclear option?

These questions may never be conclusively answered because China soon ceased discussing the Asian NFZ. After mid-1958, when Beijing finally decided to reject Moscow's proposal for some form of a joint military command in China, Beijing's enthusiasm for the Asian NFZ also dwindled. The last 'voluntary' support for the establishment of the zone was offered on 10 May, by Chen Yi, who had succeeded Zhou as China's Foreign Minister that February.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, the PRC broached the subject only when forced to do so. This explains the subtle variation between the Korean-Vietnamese communiqué and the Sino-Korean communiqué when Prime Minister Kim Il-song of North Korea visited Hanoi and Beijing in December 1958. Whereas the former communiqué openly endorsed NFZs for Europe and Asia, the latter made no specific reference to the topic.<sup>20</sup> Even when Khrushchev personally revived the concept of an Asian NFZ, on 26 January 1959 at the 21st CPSU Congress, by urging that 'a zone of peace, above all, an atom-free zone, can and must be created in the Far East and entire Pacific basin

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19 Die Welt, 12 May 1958, Stuttgarter Zeitung, 12 May 1958. Cited from Hsieh, op.cit., pp.107-8.

20 For the text of the North Korean-Vietnamese communiqué, see Release of Korean Central News Agency, Pyongyang, 2 Dec. 1958. For the Sino-North Korean one, see NCNA, 8 Dec. 1958, in SCMP No.1912, 11 Dec. 1958, 33-6.

area', Zhou, who addressed the Congress the next day, made no attempt to conceal his lack of enthusiasm. Neither he nor the editorial of the People's Daily published on 8 February to hail the 'achievement' of the Congress mentioned anything about the Asian NFZ.<sup>21</sup> Indeed the editorial even twisted the meaning of Khrushchev's statement by saying that he had proposed the establishment of 'an area of peace covering the Far East and the whole Pacific region' - a phrase in which the element of 'denuclearisation' was totally ignored. However, perhaps due to Moscow's pressure, Beijing did reaffirm its support for Khrushchev's proposal for an Asian NFZ toward the end of February 1959.<sup>22</sup> That support was short-lived and clearly reluctant. The PRC soon returned to its passive posture on the question of an Asian NFZ.

Such developments make all suggestions that Beijing might have seriously considered giving up the nuclear ambition and opting for a NFZ at best speculative. Zhou's initial declaration notwithstanding, Beijing's support to the concept of an Asian NFZ following that declaration, would not have continued without Soviet encouragement. But, as the situation developed, Moscow's over-enthusiastic response to Beijing's posture, coupled with other developments in Sino-Soviet military relations, must have prompted Beijing to ponder seriously whether Moscow was becoming unwilling in keeping its promise to help China to acquire nuclear weapons. On the other hand, facing repeated and intensified requests from Beijing for Soviet nuclear assistance,

21 'Premier Khrushchev's Speech to the Twenty-first Party Congress', Pravda, 28 Jan. 1959, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press (CDSP), 11/4, p.21, for the text of Khrushchev's speech. For Zhou's, see NCNA, (Moscow) 28 Jan. 1959, in SCMP No.1948, 4 Feb. 1959, 1-7. The 8 Feb. editorial of PD, is in NCNA, 8 Feb. 1959.

22 Hsieh points out that North Korea and North Vietnam had both supported Khrushchev's stress on the establishment of a NFZ in the Far East and the Pacific region, during the first week of February 1959. But Beijing's endorsement of this specific issue did not come until after 14 February. See, Hsieh, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.22), p.156.

Khrushchev might well have sought to use the zeal for an Asian NFZ to create an atmosphere less favourable to Mao's nuclear aspirations. Therefore, as Moscow's enthusiasm for an Asian NFZ grew, so too did Beijing's suspicions about the true intent of such Soviet enthusiasm. What added fuel to the fire was the fact that, by about mid-1958, China had already decided that it must become a nuclear power, Mao reportedly declaring on 28 June 1958: 'Let us work on atom bombs and nuclear bombs. Ten years, I think, should be quite enough'.<sup>23</sup>

Consequently and also inevitably, Beijing began to show reservations on the question of the further spread of nuclear weapons. This was first revealed by Zhou's response to Khrushchev's 'open letter' to major heads of government, among them Eisenhower and Zhou, of 4 April 1958. Khrushchev wrote that the Soviet Union was prepared to end all nuclear tests as of that 31 March, from which date, in order to demonstrate its sincerity, Moscow had already unilaterally stopped testing. What bothered Beijing most was perhaps the fact that Khrushchev went on:

If the tests are not terminated now, other countries may develop nuclear weapons within a certain space of time and then it will, of course, be more difficult to reach agreement on ending tests thereof.<sup>24</sup>

Khrushchev could easily have explained that with 'other countries may develop nuclear weapons' he meant Japan, France and West Germany. After all, as indicated earlier, arguments of exactly the same nature had previously been produced by Beijing itself. Nonetheless it seems Beijing had by then already become cautious. In his reply to

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23 Mao, 'Speech to Military Affairs Committee Enlarged Conference', text in Chinese Law and Government (New York). 1/4. Winter 1969. Cited from: Gittings, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.21), p.231. However, in the excerpts of the text of this speech that appears in Schram, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.16), pp.125-130, one does not find any trace of this remark by Mao.

24 Pravda, 6 Apr. 1958, in CDSP, 10/14, p.26.

Khrushchev issued on 13 April, while declaring that the Chinese government 'fully supported' the Soviet proposal for a test ban and the unilateral decision to first discontinue, Zhou in no way echoed Khrushchev's worry on the problem of more countries becoming nuclear.<sup>25</sup>

#### INTENSIFIED TEST BAN INITIATIVES: Beijing Remains Calm

By mid-1958, Beijing had become quite apprehensive both about the Asian NFZ issue and the attempts to stop the further spread of nuclear weapons. But such apprehensions did not immediately affect Beijing's endorsement of Moscow's line on the test ban question. All along the PRC continued to regard a test ban arrangement as primarily a measure to prevent West Germany from becoming a nuclear power, and to ban American nuclear tests in the Pacific area. In early March 1958, for instance, most major Chinese newspapers urged 'all those who love peace' to protest the projected US H-bomb tests on Eniwetok, while further asserting that 'US obstruction is the only reason why the Soviet proposal for ending nuclear tests has not been turned into positive action'.<sup>26</sup> On 1 April, following a Soviet announcement on the previous day of the unilateral suspension of tests, the People's Daily characterised the Soviet decision as 'good tidings for humanity' and 'a great initiative of the Soviet Union to promote the peace and happiness of mankind'.<sup>27</sup> However, it continued by remarking, 1) that Soviet unilateral suspension of tests did not mean that 'the danger of atomic war no longer exists' because it was 'only the very first step in the direction of ending such tests throughout the world'; 2) that,

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<sup>25</sup> Zhou's reply to Khrushchev's letter is in NCNA, 14 Apr. 1958, in SCMP No.1753, 43-6.

<sup>26</sup> 'Ban Nuclear Tests', BR, 1/2, 11 Mar. 1958, 19.

<sup>27</sup> NCNA, 1 Apr. 1958, in SCMP No.1746, 4 Apr. 1958, 34-38.

as had been noted by the Soviet Union, Moscow would - and according to Beijing, should - resume testing if the US and the UK did not stop; and 3) that the US still seemed prepared to furnish West German armed forces with nuclear weapons, despite the progress of the test ban negotiations.

Why, in an article ostensibly about the Soviet unilateral test-suspension, did the PRC trouble to bring in the possible transfer of American nuclear weapons to West Germany? Halperin sees this as an attempt to tell the Kremlin that 'Washington did not view a test suspension as incompatible with nuclear sharing'.<sup>28</sup> This argument is convincing because, in a statement published that June on the convening of the Conference of Experts on Detection of Nuclear Tests, Beijing again pointed out that the US was about to increase its exchange of information on nuclear weapons with Britain and France in order to encourage them to accept a possible test ban.<sup>29</sup> Clearly, Beijing did not expect its support for the Soviet test ban initiatives to impair in any way the continuation of Soviet nuclear assistance to China, despite its refusal of the Soviet request for a joint military command and its recalcitrance at Soviet enthusiasm for the Asian NFZ.<sup>30</sup> The PRC might have even believed that, by endorsing at least the most dominant and essential portion of Soviet ACD positions at the time, i.e., the suspension of nuclear testing, it could promote the sense of Sino-Soviet unity that was under stress for a variety of reasons, and thus increase Soviet willingness to assist in the indigenous production of a Chinese bomb.

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28 Halperin, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.15), pp.135, 137 and 138.

29 NCNA, 27 June 1958, in SCMP No.1803, p.49. Cited from Ibid., p.137. For a brief account of the Conference of Experts on Detection of Nuclear Tests, see The UN and Disarmament, 1945-1965, (above Ch.2 fn.49), pp.143-145.

30 Halperin, Ibid., p.131.

It is not known if the Soviet Union had thought of having Chinese scientists participate in the Conference of Experts on Detection of Nuclear Tests. According to one press report in the West, if a proposal to that effect had been made by Moscow, the US would have accepted it.<sup>31</sup> But the Soviet position on this question was unclear. In a letter dated 30 May, Khrushchev, agreeing to the American suggestion that British and French scientists should be invited to attend the conference, proposed that Czech and Polish experts be asked also.<sup>32</sup> Then, curiously, he went on: 'It seems advisable to invite experts from India also, and possibly from certain other countries, to participate'. Was China one of those 'certain other countries'? Did Moscow ever specifically suggest the inclusion of Chinese scientists? Was a Soviet suggestion for Beijing's participation quietly rejected by the US?

Again, one laments the inadequacy of information here. What is known is that Moscow never claimed that it had tried to help the PRC attend the conference; nor did Beijing ever express dissatisfaction about China's absence. If anything, China's attitude toward this conference was exceptionally positive. Not only did Beijing sanction the aims, it also made no attempt to reject the proposal in the final conference report for the installation of eight 'control stations' inside Mainland China.<sup>33</sup> A press comment of 31 August even gave the impression that the PRC was only too anxious to see the conclusion of a test ban agreement, Beijing arguing that, since 'the experts at Geneva have found detection possible', the US and the UK should then suspend all tests and conclude an agreement with 'all powers' for a permanent

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31 New York Herald Tribune, 5 June 1958. Cited from Ibid., p.137.

32 'Letter from the Soviet Premier to President Eisenhower, May 30, 1958', in Documents on Disarmament 1945-1959 (Washington, GPO, 1960), pp.1050-1.

33 Halperin, op.cit., pp.137-8.

test ban.<sup>34</sup>

Between 31 July and 3 August Khrushchev paid a sudden visit to Mao. Three weeks after this visit another major crisis developed over Quemoy. No definite connection has been confirmed between the two events. Mao himself stated to an internal audience, late in 1958, that the assault on Quemoy was not discussed with Khrushchev.<sup>35</sup> As for the question of nuclear weapons, Hsieh thinks the visit produced no impact on China's attitude toward the nuclear issues but served 'to stimulate the Chinese to underscore their disparagement of nuclear weapons'.<sup>36</sup> However, it was after the visit that rumours began to circulate in Eastern Europe that Khrushchev had agreed both to supply China with nuclear weapons and to assist China in launching an earth satellite.<sup>37</sup> Such rumours, though never substantiated, made more persuasive the assumption that Mao was using his support for Soviet test ban initiatives to obtain further Soviet assistance, nuclear and otherwise. Perhaps as a direct result of the Mao-Khrushchev meeting, Moscow did undertake in August 1958, and also in February 1959, to aid China in the construction of an additional 125 industrial projects.<sup>38</sup>

It is unlikely that the test ban issue was not raised at the Mao-Khrushchev meeting. Judging from the joint communiqué, Khrushchev did succeed in pressing Mao to reaffirm his recognition of the value of

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34 NCNA, 31 Aug. 1958, in SCMP No.1846, 4 Sept. 1958, 3. Cited in Ibid., p.138.

35 Mao, '"Regional Conference", speeches to leaders of economically coordinated regions', in Mao Tse-tung Sixiang Wan-sui (Long Live Mao Zedong Thought) (Beijing: no publishers, 1969), 254-256. Cited from Gittings, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.21), p.226.

36 Hsieh, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.22), p.121.

37 See, Barnett, op.cit., (above Ch.2 fn.44), p.287. Barnett cites from the New York Times (NYT), 18 Aug. 1958.

38 Yahuda, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.17), p.127. This is his observation.

arms control and test ban:

In order to maintain and consolidate peace, the primary task at the moment is to bring about agreement among nations on the reduction of armaments, discontinuance of the testing of atomic and hydrogen weapons and prohibition of their use, elimination of all military bases on foreign soil, and the conclusion of pacts of peace and collective security.<sup>39</sup>

However, this paragraph on the ACD issues was by no means a total submission of Beijing to Moscow. With regard to the banning of nuclear tests, Beijing was only willing to specify 'the prohibition of ... [the] use', and not the 'manufacture' or 'possession', of nuclear weapons. There was also no reference to the undesirability of further spread. And significantly, missing too was the Soviet enthusiasm for an NFZ in the 'Far East and the Pacific region' which Khrushchev had personally floated only six months earlier.

More conspicuously, the People's Daily of 22 August 1958, marking the Fourth World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (WCAAHB) which had met in Tokyo, avoided any reference to the establishment of an Asian NFZ, in spite of the fact that the general wish of that conference was to give overwhelming support for such an idea.<sup>40</sup> Thus Beijing appeared determined to keep its support of the Soviet ACD positions in line with its own policy. With regard to a test ban, it continued to be active. On 1 November 1958, the People's Daily again acknowledged Beijing's support in principle for the permanent suspension of nuclear tests, while endorsing Moscow's decision to resume testing since the Western powers had not joined in the moratorium.<sup>41</sup> A little over a week later, the paper returned to the same subject,

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39 'Communique on Meeting Between Mao Tse-tung and N.S. Khrushchev', BR, 1/24, 12 Aug. 1958, 6-7.

40 'Against Nuclear Bomb Threat', BR, 1/20, 10 July 1958, 22. Also see Hsieh, op.cit., p.109.

41 PD, 1 Nov. 1958, NCNA 1 Nov. 1958, in SCMP No.1889, 5 Nov. 1958, 44-5.

describing the joint US-British declaration of a one-year suspension of nuclear tests as 'unreasonable and hypocritical' and a 'completely untenable proposal' which was 'a deliberate attempt [of the US and the UK] to prevent the [Geneva test ban] talks from reaching an agreement'.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, on 28 December Chinese press comment applauded a USSR Supreme Soviet resolution which instructed the Soviet government to continue its efforts for the 'universal cessation' of nuclear tests 'now and for all time'.<sup>43</sup> The Chinese comment assured Moscow that the PRC would 'struggle resolutely together with the Soviet Union against the nuclear war policy of the US and British imperialism'.

One does not know if the PRC, by saying that it would 'struggle resolutely with the Soviet Union', was implying that it would go as far as a test ban agreement. But Moscow was certainly moving toward the conclusion of such a treaty, with the assumption that the PRC would sign. This was easily discernible during the first half of 1959, despite the general deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations. That February, for instance, Moscow asked for three seats on the governing body for the proposed test ban control organisation to be reserved for itself and 'states friendly or allied with the Soviet Union'.<sup>44</sup> In April, when the three powers in the test ban negotiations adopted a treaty preamble, the hope that all other countries would sign the treaty and take part in the work of the control organisation was included in the draft.<sup>45</sup> Significantly, Beijing still took no action to refute these expectations.

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42 'US-British Humbug on Nuclear Tests', BR, 1/38, 12 Nov. 1958, 19.

43 'Soviet Resolution for Peace', BR, 11/1, 6 Jan. 1959, 28.

44 Verbatim Transcript, Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapon Tests, PV52, 11 Feb. 1959. Cited from: Halperin, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.15), p.139.

45 Ciro E. Zoppo, 'The Test Ban: A Study in Arms Control Negotiations' (Columbia University Ph.D Thesis, 1963), p.318. Cited in Halperin, Ibid., p.139.

MOSCOW REFUSES TO SUPPLY SAMPLE BOMBS: Beijing's Nuclear Determination Undeterred

By mid-1959, after Khrushchev had accepted a proposal made by Macmillan with regard to the number of on-site inspections, all the signs were that a test ban treaty might be close. In May, Macmillan predicted that a nuclear test ban agreement was a few months away.<sup>46</sup> On 10 June the New York Times offered a similar observation.<sup>47</sup> If the PRC had ever thought that a test ban agreement was an impossibility, it must have been very alarmed by the progress and the new tempo of better relations between Moscow and the West. It is believed that, at this juncture, Beijing felt it imperative to press the Soviet Union for that 'sample of an atomic bomb and technical data concerning its manufacture'.<sup>48</sup> Moscow's response to these Chinese demands was later known to have been negative. In a statement not published until the open rift in July 1963, Beijing accused Moscow of 'unilaterally' tearing up the agreement on 'new technology for national defence', signed between them in October 1957, and of refusing to provide China with the materials just quoted.<sup>49</sup> In this statement, Beijing also revealed that Moscow's refusal was made on 20 June 1959.

Few if any in the outside world was conscious that such a crucial turn had taken place in Sino-Soviet relations. It was only in retrospect that Mao's decision at the Lushan Plenum, between July and August 1959, to crush the pro-Soviet elements in the Chinese political-military leadership appeared to have something to do with the worsening of the nuclear relations between Moscow and Beijing. Mao was determined to remove any control or influence Moscow might have be able

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<sup>46</sup> Cited from Halperin, op.cit., p.140. Original source not given.

<sup>47</sup> The NYT, 10 June 1959.

<sup>48</sup> See Halperin's analysis in Halperin, op.cit., p.141.

<sup>49</sup> 'Statement by the Spokesman ... ', (above Ch.1 fn.14).

to exercise within the Chinese military establishment, especially after he had rejected Moscow's request for a joint military command. However, as he had no reason to force Khrushchev into an open confrontation, certain conciliatory gestures toward Moscow were in order.

On 1 August, Zhou endorsed the establishment of an Asian NFZ and stated that the PRC wanted 'the countries in Asia and around the Pacific, including the United States, to conclude a peace pact of mutual non-aggression and make this whole region nuclear weapons free area'.<sup>50</sup> China's sudden revival of the Asian NFZ concept was extremely surprising. In particular, Zhou no longer referred to the area of the zone as that of 'the Far East and the Pacific region'. Instead, he described it as the 'whole region' in 'Asia and around the Pacific'. Such a change of description prompts one to wonder if Zhou was returning to this subject merely to placate the Soviets. Or, perhaps, the PRC was seriously contemplating the feasibility of making the whole of Mainland China, and not just its Far Eastern portion, 'nuclear-free' - an option that could only become attractive to it after Moscow's refusal to supply China with a 'sample bomb'.

Beijing was to admit, in its documents of the 1963 polemic, that in order to conceal its differences with Moscow it had made 'conciliatory' gestures to the Soviet Union after the bomb refusal of 20 June 1959.<sup>51</sup> The Asian NFZ issue, on the other hand, was never to be revived by the Chinese again. In any case, they probably still preserved a lingering hope that Soviet nuclear assistance, albeit short of the provision of a sample bomb, would not come to a complete halt.

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50 'Premier Chou and Vice-Premier Chen Yi Speak at Swiss National Day Reception', BR, III/32, 11 Aug. 1959, 14.

51 'A Comment on the Soviet Government's Statement, August 21, 1963', BR, VI/36, 6 Sept. 1963, 7-16.

Hence with either or both of these considerations in mind, Beijing continued to support most Soviet arms control initiatives.<sup>52</sup> For Beijing, the Sino-Soviet rift was not to be openly displayed until 9 September 1959, when TASS issued a statement declaring in effect Soviet neutrality in the Sino-Indian border conflict (which also coincided with an agreement on Soviet credits for India's Third Five Year Plan).<sup>53</sup> The Soviet Union, for its part, must have realised after the 20 June refusal that the conclusion of a test ban agreement by the Geneva tripartite negotiations could mean a formal break between Moscow and Beijing. Whatever agreements the negotiation could come up with, the chance of Beijing's adherence to them would be remote. Under that circumstance, Khrushchev faced a difficult decision: should he continue to offer China nuclear assistance and directly contribute to the possibility of a nuclear China, which would conceivably be the only nuclear power uncommitted to international nuclear arms control restrictions?

Khrushchev also seemed unwilling to let Sino-Soviet relations suffer any further injury. Various press accounts in the West between July 1959 and January 1960, including a report on the interview Khrushchev gave to Governor Harriman, give a picture of continuous, if less close, Sino-Soviet military cooperation with regard to 'sophisticated weaponry'.<sup>54</sup> One would assume, in retrospect, that such signs of Sino-Soviet unity were deliberately produced by Moscow, not only to dispel any possible doubts in the West of that unity, but also to reassure Beijing that Moscow's refusal to supply China with a sample bomb was not necessarily the end of the road. The PRC was obviously

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52 'A Test of Good Faith', BR, 11/36, 8 Sept. 1958, 3.

53 Gittings, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.21), p.215.

54 Barnett, op.cit., (above Ch.2 fn.44), pp.289-290.

very pleased to have been given that assurance. On 11 October 1959, the People's Daily published a feature article entitled 'China Marches Forward in Big Strides in Regard to the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy', written by China's foremost nuclear physicist Qian Sanqiang.<sup>55</sup> While confidently announcing that 'a strong scientific and technological force [in the field of atomic energy] has grown up' in China, Qian specifically stressed that the 'selfless and comprehensive' assistance from the Soviet Union was the chief factor in that growth. He also left no doubt that he was convinced that Sino-Soviet 'scientific cooperation' (i.e. Soviet nuclear aid) would continue.

Regardless of the implications of the title of his article, Qian did not actually dwell, to any extent, on the subject of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. This was consistent with the general reluctance of Beijing to discuss this subject since the beginning of 1954.<sup>56</sup> But, during mid-1958, as a number of Chinese political and military leaders, including Mao himself, began to reveal China's determination to acquire a nuclear weapon capability, discussions on the military aspect of China's 'peaceful' nuclear programme became inevitable. In particular, certain Chinese leaders clearly felt the need to justify the continuing development of China's nuclear research projects on military grounds. Thus, reported for mainly domestic consumption on 2 August 1958, the Chairman of China's Science and Technology Commission, Marshal Nie Rongzhen, who was in fact in charge of China's atomic energy development, came to be the first Chinese leader to publicly link China's nuclear research projects with military

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55 Qian Sanqiang, 'China Marches Forward in Big Stride in Regard to the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy', PD, 11 Oct. 1959; in Current Background, 608, 8 Jan. 1960, 13.

56 Barnett, op.cit., p.286, and also Hsieh, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.22), p.112.

implications:

We should and absolutely can master, in not too long a time, the newest technology concerning atomic energy in all fields ... There are people who think that as long as we receive assistance from the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries, there is no need for us to carry out more complicated research ourselves. This type of thinking is wrong.<sup>57</sup>

The PRC did not totally discard its previous practice of paying lip service to the cause of peaceful use of nuclear energy. For a short while, it appeared to have chosen to mention the peaceful application of nuclear energy in juxtaposition with military ones, as evident in another speech made by Nie in the following month.<sup>58</sup> However, as China's first experimental atomic reactor and cyclotron were officially commissioned (27 September), Beijing's tone changed yet again. In a report greeting the commissioning, the Chinese declared that the development of atomic science in China was 'for the purpose of serving the people, serving her peaceful socialist construction, and to benefit the [sic] mankind'.<sup>59</sup> Such vague terms as 'serving the people' and 'to benefit mankind' left much to be pondered upon. When viewed in the context of the report, they seemed to imply that Beijing no longer held the division between peaceful and military application of nuclear energy as 'rigid' as generally recognised by other countries. Were they suggesting that the military application of nuclear energy could also have peaceful consequences? If not, then it certainly seemed odd for a report written in honour of China's 'peaceful' nuclear research to go as far as warning the Americans

57 Nie Rong-zhen, in PD, 2 Aug. 1958, in SCMP No.1831. Cited from: Harold Ford, 'The Eruption of Sino-Soviet Politico-Military Problems, 1957-1960', in Raymond Garthoff, ed., Sino-Soviet Military Relations (London: Praeger, 1966), p.103. (Emphasis added).

58 Nie, NCNA, 18 Sept. 1958, in SCMP, No.1859, 23 Sept. 1958, 26-7. Cited from Hsieh, op.cit., p.152.

59 'New Stage in China's Atomic Science', BR, I/31, 30 Sept. 1958, 7-8.

explicitly that they should 'cool down a bit and realise that in the present era atomic weapons cannot be monopolised by them'.

This contention that even military applications of nuclear energy could produce a positive contribution to world peace, though obscure then, is perhaps the genesis of China's position on the question of nuclear proliferation. It also provided China with the justification for its nuclear weapon capability. The claim that 'atomic weapons cannot be monopolised' became the basis of China's propaganda during the 1960s: 'nuclear monopoly' must be broken to safeguard peace. As for the specific subject of the peaceful use of nuclear energy itself, Beijing again became reticent, even after its admission to the UN still showing little inclination to be involved in debating resolutions on this subject.

#### BEIJING OPENLY DEFIES MOSCOW'S TUTELAGE: No More 'Unconditional' Support

Although optimistic observations were made repeatedly in the summer of 1959, a tripartite test ban agreement did not materialise until a little over four years later. In the meantime Soviet-American relations at first improved impressively, with Khrushchev's historic visit to the US in the autumn of 1959. By then, Moscow had drawn away from serious negotiation of a test ban, because, it seemed, Khrushchev had in mind a more ambitious disarmament programme. Later referred to as the proposals on 'General and Complete Disarmament' (GCD), this programme aimed at the elimination, under international control, of all armed forces and armaments of the world, in three stages and within a period of four years.<sup>60</sup> Khrushchev personally launched this programme

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<sup>60</sup> See The UN and Disarmament (above Ch.2 fn.49), pp.78-107.

in a speech to the UN General Assembly on 18 September. Three days later, an editorial of the People's Daily offered apparently a warm and unqualified support for it.<sup>61</sup> This support was probably made, if only in part, as a welcoming note to Khrushchev's planned visit to the PRC, after his meeting with Eisenhower in the US. The Chinese would have had high hopes for Khrushchev's visit, at a time when relations between Moscow and Beijing were disturbed: Khrushchev was to be an honoured guest at the celebrations to mark the tenth anniversary of the PRC. However, the visit turned out to be disastrous for Sino-Soviet relations. According to Beijing, Khrushchev not only tried 'to sell China the US plot of the "two Chinas"', but also 'read China a lecture against testing by force the stability of the capitalist system'.<sup>62</sup> Undoubtedly, Beijing felt more than disappointed; indeed it probably felt betrayed by the 'socialist big brother'.

Again, China's sentiment was not immediately revealed, at least not in any of its statements regarding the GCD issues. Nevertheless, a new theme did gradually take shape in these statements. As if it were worrying that Moscow had placed too much trust in the Americans, Beijing cited time and again American behaviour that, to Beijing, worked against a lessening of tension. This theme first appeared in a document written by Foreign Minister Chen Yi, published on 6 October 1959.<sup>63</sup> It was reiterated in a resolution adopted by China's NPC, on 14 October, to support the Soviet GCD proposal.<sup>64</sup> A week later the

61 'Soviet Disarmament Proposal', BR, II/38, 21 Sept. 1959.

62 'The Origin and Development ... ', (above Ch.2 fn.68).

63 Chen Yi, 'Ten Years of Struggle for World Peace and Human Progress', BR, II/40, 6 Oct. 1959, 10.

64 'NPC Standing Committee Resolution Supporting Soviet Disarmament Proposal', BR, II/42, 20 Oct. 1959, 10.

People's Daily took it up.<sup>65</sup> Then on 15 December a more direct analysis was published:

There has recently appeared the beginning of a certain relaxation in world tension. But the ruling circles in the United States do not really want to see any easing of tension ... Many facts show that they are putting on a peace show ... Behind this smokescreen, ... the US ... are actively preparing for war.<sup>66</sup>

The Kremlin could not have failed to know Beijing's uneasiness over the progress in Soviet-American relations, and the PRC was not the only socialist country to be puzzled and alarmed by the evolution of a Sino-American thaw. In an attempt to allay these suspicions, Khrushchev stated in his report to the USSR Supreme Soviet on 14 January 1960 that Moscow had 'no intention of reaching agreement behind the backs of other states on questions in which their interests are directly involved'.<sup>67</sup> Yet this reassurance did not seem to have been intended for China. Elsewhere in the same report, Khrushchev reached a peak in his thinly veiled criticism of Mao's prediction that the socialist camp could sustain the grave loss of - and win - a nuclear war. Khrushchev implicitly compared Mao with Hitler and quoted Hitler as saying 'When I give the order for war, I shall not hesitate to send ten million young people to their death'.

Beijing reacted quickly and strongly. One week after Khrushchev made the criticism, an unusual sentence was included in an almost routine resolution of China's NPC. The resolution was to support a Soviet disarmament proposal made by Moscow on 15 January, but contained the sentence: 'Any international agreement concerning disarmament,

65 'Washington Fears Disarmament', BR, II/43, 27 Oct. 1959, 25.

66 'Behind the US Smokescreen of Peace', BR, II/50, 15 Dec. 1959, 3.

67 N.S. Khrushchev, 'Report to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR', Pravda, 15 Jan. 1960; English text in Supplement to New Times (Moscow), 4 Jan. 1960, 21.

without a formal participation of the Chinese People's Republic and the signature of her delegate, cannot, of course, have any binding force on China'.<sup>68</sup>

This declaration of 'non-commitment' was probably not directed at any specific ACD agreement. With GCD initiatives just launched and the test ban negotiation inconclusive, the PRC was not, at that particular time, facing any immediate prospect of being drawn into any ACD agreement. Most likely, therefore, it was simply telling Moscow that Beijing was offended by Khrushchev's innuendo. What could be more appropriate in this context than a declaration of China's non-adherence to any ACD agreement in which the PRC had not been involved, which would demonstrate Beijing's open defiance of Moscow's tutelage in international ACD activities? At the same time, it might weaken Moscow's position on such negotiations and thus reduce the chance of agreement being reached.

An alternative interpretation of the resolution was that this was a bid by China for an invitation to future ACD conferences. Yet such a bid was inconsistent with China's general policies, unless it was seeking to link attendance at an ACD conference to its aspiration of being accepted by the UN, something which it did try several months later. On 8 May 1960, Zhou explained in answer to a question that:

If China [were] invited to take part in the big Power disarmament conference while the People's Republic of China [was] not recognised [by the United Nations], we, of course, cannot consider the matter. How can one who is not recognised go to attend a conference with those who do not recognise him? This is inconceivable.<sup>69</sup>

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68 'China Supports Soviet Disarmament Proposal', BR, III/4, 26 Jan. 1960, 19-20.

69 Zhou's remark was published in BR, III/20, cited from Chiu, op.cit., (above fn.11), p.101.

Thus it seemed that Beijing's position on disarmament hardened in early 1960. In a speech delivered to a meeting of Warsaw Pact powers, held in Moscow in February 1960, China's observer Kang Sheng outlined three key points:

- a) China would not accept any ACD agreement where it had not attended the negotiations;
- b) Moscow should not create an impression that any achievement in the field of ACD, however 'limited' and 'procedural' it might be, was the result of diplomacy. The achievement was only possible through 'repeated struggle', not negotiation;
- c) The US dared not oppose disarmament, but it had always 'sabotaged universal disarmament'. This meant not only that the struggle for 'universal disarmament' was a 'long-term and complicated' one, but also that the GCD programme was premature.<sup>70</sup>

While the first point merely reiterated a previous stand, the second and the third were new arguments, and they later became two of the core themes in the Sino-Soviet polemics later.

The Soviets initially appeared to ignore these pronouncements, perhaps because Moscow was unsure of Beijing's true intention. It then seems to have decided to test the Chinese position through a proposal for the first stage of the GCD programme, which it made at a meeting of the Ten-nation Disarmament Committee (TNDC) on 16 March 1960. A Soviet representative, discussing a plan of general troop reductions, took the liberty of putting in the reduction of China's armed forces to 1,700,000 men. He also suggested that this plan be discussed by a UN General Assembly, or a world-wide conference on GCD.<sup>71</sup> This proposal appeared

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70 Translation of Kang's speech in: G.F. Hudson, et al., ed., The Sino-Soviet Dispute (N.Y.: Praeger, 1961), pp.73-4. Cited from: Halperin and Perkins, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.1), pp.106-7.

71 Verbatim Records of the Meetings of the Ten-Power Disarmament Commission, Cmd. 1152 (London: HMSO, 1960), p.37. Cited from: Halperin and Perkins, Ibid., p.104.

deliberately to flout China's recently announced principle that it would not accept an ACD agreement which it had not been involved in negotiating, and caused great irritation in Beijing.

Sino-Soviet relations thus entered a new phase. In April 1960, Red Flag, the theoretical journal of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), published a lengthy article entitled: 'Long Live Leninism!'.<sup>72</sup> This explicitly condemned Tito as a 'modern revisionist', but left little doubt that it was accusing Khrushchev of 'revising, emasculating, and betraying' the true essence of Leninism, and giving peace and disarmament unacceptable priority over 'national liberation movements'. It argued that peace must not 'distort' the policy of peaceful co-existence 'of countries with two different systems' into 'elimination of the people's revolution in various countries'.

The acrimonious tone of 'Long Live Leninism!', coupled with the fact that it received world-wide prominence, ruled out further pretence by Moscow that policy differences did not exist with China. A Soviet reply came swiftly on 22 April: it insisted that the current 'main task' of the international communist movement was 'to bring about disarmament', and argued that it was 'dogmatic' for anyone 'to repeat the old truth that imperialism is aggressive'.<sup>73</sup> However, Moscow made no direct or even implied criticism of either Mao or the CCP. In return, Beijing's tone also moderated slightly. In a press comment concerning the work of the TNDC, published in mid-May, Beijing attacked only the US, not the Soviet Union.<sup>74</sup> At the same time, Mao's tone also grew milder. When receiving foreign visitors, although still

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72 'Long Live Leninism!', BR, III/17, 27 Apr. 1960.

73 Otto Kuusinen, (Speech on 22 April 1960), text in CDSF, XII/17, 25 May 1960, 10. Excerpt in Dallin, op.cit., (above Ch.2 fn.1), pp.246-7.

74 'US Wants No Disarmament', BR, III/19, 10 May 1960, 24.

saying that 'the winning of world peace should depend mainly on the resolute struggle waged by the peoples of all countries', Mao expressed support for the holding of a summit conference on GCD.<sup>75</sup>

Despite this mellowing in the verbal exchanges between Moscow and Beijing, it was obvious by May 1960 that China was no longer prepared to offer Soviet ACD positions the kind of 'unconditional' support that had formerly been almost routine. The basic reason for this, albeit still hidden, was that Beijing was insisting on 'revolutionary struggle' as the basis for East-West relations, while Moscow preferred 'disarmament and peaceful co-existence'. In other words, the PRC was not interested in disarmament with the West, it wanted to 'struggle' against it.

This was again spelt out, at the end of May, by Zheng Shenyu, a Chinese delegate to a WPC committee meeting. Despite Beijing's usual practice of using this type of 'peace' meeting to air its views on ACD matters, Zheng did not mention the word 'disarmament' at all. Instead, he elaborated on the unreliability of the US and the importance of 'unremitting' revolutionary struggles.<sup>76</sup> Zheng's argument was reproduced in a PRC government statement of 6 June ostensibly supporting an earlier Soviet GCD proposal, but in fact seeing Khrushchev's new GCD attempt as a call for the peace-loving peoples of the world 'to struggle to oppose the arms expansion and war preparations of the imperialists.'<sup>77</sup> While such assertions were undoubtedly distorting Moscow's intention with the GCD proposal, a People's Daily editorial

75 'Chairman Mao Tse-tung's Talks with Guests from Asia, Africa, Latin America', BR, III/20, 17 May 1960, 5-7. (Emphasis added).

76 Zheng Shenyu, 'Winning of World Peace Must Depend on the Struggle of Peoples', BR, III/23, 7 June 1960, 31-3.

77 'Chinese Government Supports New Soviet Disarmament Proposals', BR, III/24, 14 June 1960, 8. (Emphasis added).

went further the next day and presented the Soviet proposal as a 'test', predicting that 'the imperialist countries headed by the United States will never agree to general and complete disarmament'.<sup>78</sup>

Beijing would therefore have been pleased that the 'U-2' incident not only wrecked the planned Paris summit between Soviet and American leaders, but also brought the TNDC to an abrupt end. On 27 June, the five East European participants in the TNDC charged that their Western counterparts had been dodging the GCD issues and withdrew from the committee. Beijing must have perceived such a development as a vindication of its argument against holding ACD negotiations with the West, which it regarded as a means of 'hoodwinking the people' - 'a thing to which the socialist countries absolutely could not agree'.<sup>79</sup>

#### THE UNPEACEFUL 'PEACE' CONFERENCES: Neither Negotiation Nor Struggle

The demise of the TNDC in 1960, though welcomed by the PRC, did little to prevent the further erosion of Sino-Soviet fraternity. Three weeks earlier, Beijing had already passed the point of no return by clashing publicly, for the first time, with Moscow over ACD issues at an international front meeting - the General Council of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), held in Beijing that June. Chinese delegate Liu Zhangsheng, in his major speech to the conference, launched a blunt attack on the Soviet strategy towards the West and the developing countries. He challenged Moscow's thesis that war could be eliminated before the end of imperialism, and declared that only when socialist revolution is victorious throughout the world could there be

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78 'Intensify the People's Struggle to Defend World Peace', PD, 7 June 1960, in BR, III/24, 14 June 1960, 6-8.

79 'Chinese Governments's Note in Reply to Soviet Government on Disarmament', BR, III/28, 12 July 1960, 6.

a world free from war, a world free from arms. Predictably, Liu also repeated that one should rely mainly on 'the struggles waged by the peoples of the world' to win world peace, and urged that these 'struggles' must not be bought off by 'diplomatic negotiations'.<sup>80</sup> However, he also offered a Chinese analysis of the role that could be played by ACD proposals:

We support the disarmament proposals put forward by the Soviet Union. It is of course inconceivable that imperialism will accept the proposals for general and complete disarmament. The purpose of putting forward such proposals is to arouse the people throughout the world to unite and oppose the imperialist scheme for arms drive and war preparations, to unmask the aggressive bellicose nature of imperialism before the peoples of the world in order to isolate the imperialist plot headed by the United States to the greatest extent, so that they will not dare unleash a war lightly.

Liu's analysis could be seen as a tell-tale exposition of at least part of the motivation of the PRC in supporting some of Moscow's ACD proposals despite Beijing's lack of belief in them: i.e. the test ban, 'partial disarmament measures' ... etc. Liu fell short of declaring that disarmament policies were one of the means to destroy imperialism, but the implication of his analysis was clear.

Though not naming the Soviet Union, Liu criticised those 'people' who believed that ACD proposals could be realised when imperialism still existed, and that the 'danger of war could be eliminated' by relying on such proposals. He then went on:

As to the view that after disarmament, imperialism would use the funds earmarked for war purposes for 'the welfare of the labouring class' and for 'assisting underdeveloped countries' and that this would 'bring general progress to people as a whole without exception' - this is downright whitewashing and embellishing imperialism, and indeed this is helping imperialism headed by the United States to dupe the people throughout the world.

Moscow's counter-attack, launched by Khrushchev himself, came at

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<sup>80</sup> Liu Zhangsheng, 'Speech at the WFTU Council Session, June 8, 1960', BR, III/24, 14 June 1960, 13-4.

the Party Congress of the Rumanian Communist Party, held in Bucharest during late June 1960. While reiterating that 'one cannot repeat mechanically now ... what ... Lenin said many decades ago, ... and go on asserting that imperialist wars are inevitable until socialism triumphs throughout the world', Khrushchev raised the level of the verbal conflict by saying that 'If Lenin could arise from his grave he would take such people ... by the ear and would teach them how one must understand the essence of the matter'.<sup>81</sup>

According to one observer, at the Bucharest congress Moscow also criticised Beijing for bringing their disagreement out into the open at the last WFTU meeting in Beijing. And, during some bitter exchanges, Khrushchev allegedly even accused Mao of being ignorant of the realities of the modern world and of the danger of a nuclear war. Peng Zhen, the PRC's delegate to the congress, had to make clear that Beijing simply did not trust Khrushchev's analysis, and believed that the only way to oppose war was to oppose, not appease, the enemy.<sup>82</sup>

Throughout the summer of 1960, the Soviet press continued to denounce the 'dogmatic tendency' displayed by some 'groups' on disarmament matters. Yuri Frantsev, Director of the Academy of Social Sciences of the CPSU Central Committee, for instance, declared in a Pravda article of 7 August that those who wanted to give military 'push' to revolutions 'would merely play into the hands of the imperialists by helping them to spread false stories about the

81 Khrushchev's remarks quoted from 'A Chronology of Documents and Significant Events', in David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev: A Short History of the Sino-Soviet Conflict (London: Praeger, 1963), pp.279-280. Full text of Khrushchev's speech in Edward Crankshaw, The new Cold War: Moscow v. Peking (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin, 1963).

82 Text of Peng's speech in Donald Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict 1956-1961 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962), p.327.

'aggressiveness of Communism'.<sup>83</sup>

Meanwhile the PRC had not stopped putting forward its case,<sup>84</sup> and it seemed that, by mid-August, Moscow was losing its patience. On the 16th an implied threat to cut off Soviet aid to China appeared in the Soviet press:

Could one imagine the successful construction of socialism going on in present day conditions even in so great a country as, let us say, China, if that country were in a state of isolation and could not rely on the collaboration and aid of all other socialist countries?<sup>85</sup>

This 'implied threat' turned out to be an advance notice and justification for Soviet action. At the end of August, the withdrawal of approximately 1,300 Soviet economic and military advisers and technicians from China started. As described by Garthoff, the withdrawal was 'drastic, sudden, and virtually complete',<sup>86</sup> and it appeared to have come as a surprise to the Chinese. According to Mao, they had not even expected Moscow's counter-attack at Bucharest, for in January 1961, speaking to the Ninth Plenum of the CCP Central Committee, he described Khrushchev's criticism in Bucharest as a 'surprise attack'. Mao even speculated that Khrushchev might not have criticised China if 'Long Live Leninism!' and two other articles of a similar nature had not been published. However, he also summed up the developments thus, in his typical self-assured manner: 'They [the

83 Yuri Frantsev, in CDSP, XII/32, 7 Sept. 1960, p.5. Cited from Dallin, op.cit. (above Ch.2 fn.1), pp.249-250.

84 See, for instance, Liao Zhengzhi, 'The Present International Situation and the Tasks of the World Peace Movement', BR, III/29, 19 July 1960, 9-11; 'Premier Chou En-lai Greets the Conference', and, 'Peking Rally Support the World Conference Against A-H Bombs ... ', both in BR, III/32, 9 Aug. 1960, 6-8.

85 Press comment by S. Titarenko, in Sovyetskaya Latvia (16 Aug. 1960). Cited from G.F. Hudson, op.cit., (above fn.70), pp.149-150.

86 Raymond Garthoff, 'Sino-Soviet Relations, 1945-1966', in Garthoff, op.cit., (above fn.57), p.94.

Soviets] ... feared our Three Articles like the plague, but we did not fear their Three Denials [of aid, experts, and blueprints]'.<sup>87</sup>

Mao actually overstated his confidence. By the end of 1960 he had reached a temporary truce with Khrushchev and thereafter refrained, for nearly a year, from attacking Moscow's positions. It is unclear if this 'truce' was a product of Beijing's concern over the consequences of the Soviet withdrawal, but it has been suggested that Beijing was persuaded to suspend its public confrontation with Moscow for the sake of 'the unity between major powers of the Communist bloc' at the Moscow congress of Eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties (known as the Eighty-one Parties Congress), held in November 1960.<sup>88</sup> This latter view, however, seems less than persuasive. With verbal skirmishes already having taken place earlier in the year, would Beijing have accepted any call for unity if there had been no serious internal problems such as it had encountered after the withdrawal of Soviet assistance? Indeed, in the first few months after the 'withdrawal', Beijing did not seem prepared to halt, or even to relax, its verbal confrontation with Moscow. And at the Eighty-one Parties Congress, one of the CCP's delegates (Deng Xiaoping, then General Secretary) charged explicitly that 'the Soviet Party was opportunist and revisionist; it lacked any deep knowledge of Marxism; its ideas about disarmament were absurd ... peaceful co-existence could mean to deceive the enemy'.<sup>89</sup>

Yet despite these remarks the pressure for unity from other delegates to the congress was so strong that eventually both Beijing

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87 Mao, 'Speech to Ninth Plenum', in Long Live Mao Zedong Thought (above fn.35), II, 1967, p.262. Cited from Gittings, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.21), p.243.

88 This was Hudson's view. See Hudson, op.cit., (above fn.70), p.206.

89 Text of Deng's speech can be seen in Dallin et al., ed., Diversity in International Communism (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1963), p.524.

and Moscow had to give way, and a head-on collision was avoided. By the same token the final document of the congress was an ambiguous compromise which contained a mixture of the views of both the CPSU and the CCP. On disarmament, it affirmed the 'historic importance' of Moscow's GCD proposals, claiming that the realisation of the GCD programme would be the elimination of 'the very possibility of waging wars between countries'. Then it went on to reflect, albeit more moderately, Beijing's position:

It is not easy to realise [the GCD programme] owing to the stubborn resistance of the imperialists. Hence it is essential to wage an active and determined struggle against the aggressive imperialist forces with the aim of carrying this programme into practice.<sup>90</sup>

Naturally the PRC was not happy with the final document. A more elaborate version of its views on the matter came in a resolution adopted by the CCP Central Committee on 18 January 1961:

Owing to the fundamental change in the international balance of class forces, a new world war can be prevented by the joint efforts of the powerful forces of our era - the socialist camp, the international working class, the national liberation movement and all peace-loving countries and peoples. Peace can be effectively safeguarded provided there is reliance on the struggle of the masses of the people and provided a broad united front is established and expanded against the policies of aggression and war of the imperialists headed by the United States.<sup>91</sup>

While the tone of this resolution sounded considerably softer than previous statements on the subject since the beginning of 1960, it still shows that the focus of the difference between Moscow and Beijing was Beijing's stress on the value of 'revolutionary struggles' while Moscow opted for 'disarmament and peaceful co-existence'. By contrast, as late as 1958, Beijing was still endorsing Khrushchev's view that

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<sup>90</sup> Text of this document in Hudson, op.cit., pp.177-205.

<sup>91</sup> see over.

disarmament was 'the prime task' of the time.<sup>92</sup>

Even if Beijing accepted the policy of 'unity' as a result of the pressure of the Eighty-one Parties Congress, it does not seem likely that it would have maintained that policy and temporarily suspended its public confrontation with Moscow, had there not been internal pragmatic reasons. The 'sudden, drastic, and complete' withdrawal of Soviet assistance inflicted heavy blows on the development of China's economic construction and military modernisation programmes, especially in the field of atomic research.<sup>93</sup> Additionally, during the winter of 1960, agricultural production in China was in great disarray and conditions of near-famine were prevalent. China was in urgent need of external help and the USSR was still the country most likely and able to provide it. In addition, Beijing did not seem, even then, to have totally given up hope of reviving Sino-Soviet amity. In January 1961, Mao explained that his motive in criticising the 'wrong views' of the Soviet Union had been to settle 'the differences' and attain 'unity'.<sup>94</sup> The same speech presented a somewhat conciliatory version of his views on 'unity':

We must not mind if they [the Soviets] have cursed us a bit. We should not be afraid of it; every Communist Party has been cursed since the day it began, if not it would not be a Communist Party. It does not matter how they behave, we should adopt a policy of unity.

Given this emphasis on unity, a thaw took place in Sino-Soviet relations. Throughout most of 1961, Beijing's attack on Moscow's ACD

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91 'CCP Resolution on the Moscow Meeting, January 18, 1961' NCNA, 20 Jan. 1961. Also in Hudson, op.cit., pp.221-224.

92 Above fn.39.

93 For the consequence of the Soviet withdrawal, see Garthoff, op.cit., (above fn.57), pp.94-95. For a brief account of China's economic difficulty then, see Yahuda, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.17), p.111.

94 Above fn.87.

positions remained muted. This is not to suggest that the PRC had changed its views on disarmament, however, for it continued to stress the significance of the struggles of the national liberation movement, although much less frequently than previously and in a much milder manner. For instance, the People's Daily on 17 August emphasised that 'the correct way to strive for a lasting world peace' was to rely on the 'resolute struggle of millions of people'.<sup>95</sup> Whereas an official Chinese statement issued on 31 August to support Moscow's decision to resume nuclear weapon tests deliberately refrained from mentioning 'national liberation movements'.<sup>96</sup> Also significant was the fact that this statement was issued in Beijing on the very day that the Soviet decision to resume testing was announced. It seems likely that the improvement of Sino-Soviet relations was so 'real' that the Kremlin had informed Beijing of the decision in advance, in order to facilitate a positive and prompt response. Presumably, Beijing would welcome the decision, as it would be pleased to see any setback in the tripartite test ban negotiations (which we will examine in the next section).

Another interesting development also warrants attention. During September to October 1960, Chinese statements returned briefly to the subject of nuclear proliferation. Invariably the possibility of China's acquisition of nuclear weapons was presented in a positive context. Liao Zhengzhi told a mass rally in Beijing on 2 September: 'Nuclear weapons in the hands of the imperialists ... become their instruments for war blackmail and the massacre of the people, while in the hands of the socialist countries they become the means of

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95 '7th World Anti-A-H Bombs Conference', BR, IV/34, 25 Aug. 1951, 23.

96 'China Supports Soviet Decision to Conduct Nuclear Tests' BR, IV/36, 8 Sept. 1961, 6.

preventing imperialist aggression and defence of world peace'.<sup>97</sup> On 5 October Chen Yi also told an American correspondent that the spread of nuclear weapons to as many countries as possible would only increase the prospect for the complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons.<sup>98</sup> Do these statements suggest that the PRC was, or thought itself to be, on the verge of becoming a nuclear power? An internal Chinese military document reveals that on 1 August, Army Day, the Chinese Academy of Military Science made a presentation on how the PLA could incorporate battlefield use of atomic weapons in conventional warfare and urged the army 'to utilise well the effects of surprise atomic attack'.<sup>99</sup>

Probably some military leaders in China did think that the PRC would soon acquire nuclear weapons. Yet such thoughts would not have been encouraged by Moscow, despite the fact that Sino-Soviet relations were improving at that particular moment. Had Moscow once again made any gesture, or even a promise, which could lead or mislead Beijing to believe that Moscow was prepared to give a decisive 'push' to the final stage of China's bomb programme, Beijing would have mentioned it in later Sino-Soviet polemics.

In any case Sino-Soviet relations were to deteriorate again

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97 'A Timely Warning to War-Maniacs', BR, IV/36, 8 Sept. 1961, 6-7.

98 Interview given to Wilton Cole by Chen Yi, on 5 Oct. 1961. Cited from Hsieh, 'Communist China and Nuclear Force', in R.N. Rosecrance, ed., The Dispersion of Nuclear Weapons (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1964), p.159.

99 Academy of Military Science, 'Our Armed Forces Combat Laws and Ordinance Are Products of Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking', in Bulletin of Activities (1 August 1961). Cited from Hsieh, 'China's Nuclear Missile Programme: Regional or Intercontinental?', CQ, 44, 1971, 90. This Bulletin is an irregular secret publication for PLA officers with party membership at regimental level and above, for a detailed account and analysis, see J. Chester Cheng, ed., The Politics of the Chinese Red Army (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution, 1966).

following the 22nd Congress of the CPSU in October 1961. At this conference, Khrushchev openly attacked the leadership of the Albanian Communist Party, a protégé of China, greatly offending the PRC. Moreover, the conference also adopted a CPSU Party Programme which specifically reiterated all those Soviet GCD positions China had opposed.<sup>100</sup> Beijing's response to these actions was unprecedented. Zhou, head of the Chinese delegation, walked out of the conference and was later given a hero's welcome by Mao at Beijing airport.

This marked the end of the short period of thaw which had started at the beginning of 1961. Consequently, the various 'peace conferences' of the different international front organisations were to become, yet again, unpeaceful. A major Chinese offensive was launched at a WPC meeting held in Stockholm in December 1961. Liao, who was head of the Chinese delegation, pointed out in his speech that the struggle between the oppressed nations and imperialism was a 'life-and-death' struggle, and that 'so long as the imperial-colonial system is not completely smashed, the struggle ... for emancipation will not cease for a single moment'.<sup>101</sup> Liao was followed two days later by another Chinese delegate, Liu Ningyi, Vice-chairman of the China Peace Committee. Liu made it reasonably clear that he was not happy with Moscow's - still unnamed - dominance in the 'world peace movement'. He claimed that the movement was a 'mass movement' and therefore it 'should not be required to follow every step in the diplomatic moves in this or that country'.<sup>102</sup>

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100 For details of the CPSU Party Programme, see: Dallin, op.cit., (above Ch.2 fn.1), pp.254-6.

101 Liao Zhengzhi, 'The Way to Defend World Peace', BR, IV/52, 22 Dec. 1961, 12-4.

102 Liu Ningyi, 'The Peace Movement and National Liberation', BR, Ibid., 13-4.

THE COMING OF THE PARTIAL TEST BAN: Beijing and Moscow on Collision Course

In terms of arms control, the year of 1962 was full of disappointed hopes. The tripartite Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapon Tests, which had opened in October 1958 with great expectations, came to a permanent end on 29 January 1962. This led to an intensification of nuclear tests in the atmosphere by the US between April and November, and by the Soviet Union between August and December. However, the encouraging news was that the deceased TNDC was to be replaced by an enlarged Eighteen-nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC). Moreover, as the ENDC began to operate on 14 March, a sub-committee consisting of the US, UK and the Soviet Union, was instituted on 21 March, a week after the inception of the ENDC, to continue consideration of a treaty on halting of nuclear weapon tests.

Beijing maintained a non-committal, 'wait-and-see' attitude towards the ENDC. It did not belittle the significance of its establishment, nor did it directly endorse it. Furthermore, there was not any sign that Beijing would ever actually support the Committee. The 'wait-and-see' attitude seemed in truth only a policy of Beijing waiting to see when it could start attacking the ENDC. The only reason why Beijing had decided to withhold criticism of the ENDC (and also of other international ACD activities) was that, according to Griffin, there was a further relaxation of tension between Moscow and Beijing from April to September 1962, which not only provided a sudden lull of Soviet-Albanian polemics but also 'successfully contained' the Sino-Soviet verbal battle.<sup>103</sup>

This short and equally shaky 'truce' did not, of course, represent any substantial change in the ACD positions of both parties; it was a

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103 Griffin, op.cit., (above Ch.2 fn.68), pp.33-8.

restraint of hostility rather than a modification of policy. In January 1962, Mao had indicated that the Soviet leadership had been 'usurped by revisionists', and from that point on he placed no trust in it.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, soon after the ENDC began its work, Beijing reiterated an old message: that the PRC would not commit itself to 'any disarmament agreement or other international agreement in the discussion of which no Chinese representative has taken part and which no Chinese representative has signed'.<sup>105</sup> Yet periodically the PRC also publicly supported Moscow's proposals at the ENDC during this period.<sup>106</sup> This action demonstrated China's attempt to maintain a sense of unity, however temporary or superficial, with the Soviet Union. And in July 1962 a Chinese delegate to an international 'peace' meeting in Moscow explicitly affirmed the importance of Sino-Soviet unity:

Unity is strength, unity is victory. What the enemies of peace fear most is the great unity of the people of the world. This unity is the most reliable guarantee for the cause of world peace and general disarmament.<sup>107</sup>

The progress of the tripartite test ban negotiations soon shattered any hope of maintaining Sino-Soviet unity. Beijing's last public support for a Soviet decision with ACD implications occurred on 26 July 1962, when Vice-premier Xi Zhongzun expressed 'firm support for the decision of the Soviet Government to test its nuclear weapons'.<sup>108</sup>

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104 Mao said this in his '7,000 Cadres Speech to Enlarged Central Committee Work Conference' on 30 January 1962, original text in: Long Live Mao Zedong Thought (above fn.35). Cited from: Yahuda, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.17), p.111.

105 'Another Test for the United States', BR, V/14, 6 Apr. 1962, 5-7.

106 Ibid. and also 'Disarmament Talks and Political Blackmail', BR, V/28, 23 Feb. 1962, 13-14.

107 Mao Dun, 'The Way to General Disarmament and World Peace', BR, V/28, 20 July 1962, 5-13.

108 'China backs Soviet Decision on Nuclear Tests', BR, Ibid., 5-13.

Sino-Soviet relations then moved decisively downhill, and the PRC ceased to support any Soviet ACD proposals.

The standard explanation for this slide is that it was precipitated on 25 August by news from Moscow that a tripartite test ban treaty was imminent.<sup>109</sup> Moscow allegedly also told Beijing that the treaty would ask nuclear powers not to transfer nuclear weapons and relevant nuclear technology and facilities to non-nuclear powers; and non-nuclear powers would be asked to refrain from achieving or seeking nuclear status.<sup>110</sup> It was not credible that Beijing would ever accept an agreement of such a nature; and inevitably Beijing felt that it had once again been betrayed by Moscow.

Yet signs of a changed policy had already begun to show that month. During 1 to 4 August, the 8th WCAAHB conference was held in Tokyo, with delegates from both the PRC and the Soviet Union in attendance. As the Soviet delegates must have pressed support for their test ban position at the conference, China's media reacted by taking a more anti-Soviet line once the conference had concluded. On 9 August, the Chinese press, commenting on the conference, charged that it was 'obviously wrong' to maintain that 'the movement to prevent nuclear war and defend world peace should be separated from the struggle against military bases and for national defence'.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, it continued to give indirect justifications for a possible Chinese bomb.

Beijing had always publicly supported the Geneva test ban negotiations since their inception in 1958, and only modified its stance when

109 See the analysis in: Walter Clemens, Jr., 'The Nuclear Test Ban and Sino-Soviet relations', in Halperin, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.1), pp.147-8.

110 Ibid.

111 'Vital Questions for the Peace Movement', in PD, 9 Aug. 1962, BR, V/32, 17 Aug. 1962, 8-10.

the negotiations were switched to the forum of the ENDC subcommittee. It had frequently endorsed their significance as a partial measure leading towards general disarmament, and as late as April 1962 Beijing still stressed that 'if the imperialist countries can be compelled to accept even a partial agreement on disarmament and guarantee its implication, that will benefit the cause of world peace and we will welcome it'.<sup>112</sup>

From September 1962 onwards, however, Beijing appeared to have become very worried about the prospect of the conclusion of an international agreement on non-proliferation which could result in a concerted international effort to obstruct China's nuclear development programme. Such a worry was reflected in the Chinese press:

The reason US ruling circles are so interested in preventing what they called nuclear proliferation is no secret ... Washington is anxious to tie China's hands in developing nuclear weapons.<sup>113</sup>

This commentary then completely reversed China's previous public stand on the question of a test ban by arguing a) that 'only a complete ban on nuclear weapons and unconditional destruction of all existing nuclear weapons can prevent a nuclear war'; and b) that a test ban should 'under no circumstances' become a means by which the US might 'achieve and maintain nuclear superiority'.

Beijing changed its stance on the test ban because it was genuinely worried that such a ban would limit China's freedom of action. Mao secretly dispatched three memoranda to Moscow, asking the Kremlin not to 'infringe on China's sovereign rights and act for China in assuming an obligation to refrain from manufacturing nuclear

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112 Above fn.108.

113 Original Chinese text in PD, 12 Sept. 1962 and NCNA of the same day, English text in SCMP No.2820, 18 Sept. 1962, 30-31. Cited from: Clemens, Jr., op.cit., (above fn.109), p.149.

weapons'.<sup>114</sup> Mao also made clear that, if an agreement of non-proliferation should materialise, Beijing would have no alternative but to condemn it. He was thus threatening an open break with the Soviet leadership, but the threat did not prompt the Soviet Union to accommodate China's concerns. Perhaps by then, the focus of the Soviet ACD policy had already shifted from a general lessening of tension with the West to providing an international effort at preventing a West German bomb, as well as a Chinese one.

In October 1962, two dramatic events further exacerbated tensions between Moscow and Beijing: the Sino-Indian border war and the Cuban missile crisis. Faced with these two crises Khrushchev suffered defeat on both fronts. The initial Soviet reaction to the Sino-Indian war was said to have been 'agonisingly indecisive'; Khrushchev's 'mildly pro-Chinese' attitude 'disappointed the Indians and angered the Chinese'.<sup>115</sup> Eventually Beijing concluded that 'the leaders of the CPSU have allied themselves with India against China'.<sup>116</sup> The Soviet retreat in the Cuban missile crisis, on the other hand, drastically shattered Beijing's hope for a firmer Soviet stand against the 'American imperialists'. These developments would have not only substantially reinforced Beijing's own perception of the international strategic situation, they would also have deepened Beijing's fear of being betrayed by Moscow's 'capitulationism'.

Still with innuendoes and insinuations, the propaganda battle between Beijing and Moscow intensified from October 1962 onwards. At the end of 1962, for instance, the PRC launched a major assault through

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<sup>114</sup> Above Ch.1 fn.14.

<sup>115</sup> Griffin, op.cit., (above Ch.2 fn.68), pp.56-9.

<sup>116</sup> 'The Truth About How the Leaders of the CPSU Have Allied Themselves With India Against China', PD, 2 Nov. 1963, BR, VI/45, 8 Nov. 1963, 18-27.

the publication of a document entitled 'The Difference Between Comrade Togliatti and Us'. Although Togliatti was the leader of the Italian Communist Party, few could have failed to read this as a barely disguised attack on Khrushchev. In the document, Beijing insisted that 'world peace can never be achieved by negotiations alone' and therefore one must not 'pin' hopes on imperialism and divorce oneself from 'the struggles of the masses'.<sup>117</sup>

In January 1963 came the Soviet reply, in a speech by Khrushchev to the Sixth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of [East] Germany. Not only did Khrushchev defend the responsible nature of Soviet disarmament policy, he went further to characterise the 'Albanians', i.e. the Chinese, as ignorant and warlike:

To use a familiar phrase, blessed is he who talks about war without knowing what he is talking about. The Albanian leaders talked a lot about rocket and nuclear war, but nobody is worried by their talk. Everybody knows that they have nothing to their name but idle talk ...<sup>118</sup>

Such remarks incited the PRC to publish another major document, which refuted Moscow's surrogate accusations and described the Soviet Union (still unnamed) as betraying the international revolutionary movement. It argued, in particular, that the 'modern revisionists' always talk about peace and war 'in general terms' without making any distinction between 'just and unjust wars'; and that the claim that 'the people's liberation would be 'incomparably easier' after general and complete disarmament' was 'nonsensical', 'totally unrealistic', and 'like putting the cart before the horse'.<sup>119</sup>

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117 'The Difference Between Comrade Togliatti and Us', PD, 31 Dec. 1962, in BR, VI/1, 3 Jan. 1963, 11.

118 Text of Khrushchev's speech in Dallin, op.cit., (above fn.89).

119 'More on the Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us', Red Flag, III/4, 4 Mar. 1963, in BR, VI/10-11, 15 March 1963, 25.

A series of letters was being exchanged between the CCP and the CPSU while the esoteric polemics were going on. These letters were in essence more a bid to gain international support, although they had the appearance of sincere attempts by both parties to normalise relations between them.<sup>120</sup> Yet neither side showed any inclination to compromise. The Soviet Union stated on 30 March, for instance, that the CPSU considered it its duty 'consistently and steadfastly' to carry out its disarmament policy and that Moscow was 'firmly convinced that there are no grounds for revision of this policy'.<sup>121</sup> However, as a result of the letters both Moscow and Beijing did agree to hold a bilateral meeting to discuss their differences. The meeting was first set to take place in May but was postponed to 5 July.

It seems that by mid-June 1963 Beijing realised that it was no longer practical to expect Moscow not to reach a test ban agreement with the West. On the 10th it was announced that the three powers negotiating in the ENDC test ban subcommittee had agreed to hold further talks in mid-July to seek agreement on a test ban treaty. Four days later Beijing published 'A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement', which seemed like a battle plan for an open and total break with the Soviet Union. This document deviated from the previous policy of not naming the Soviet Union explicitly. It contained twenty-five points of major contention, but the main theme was that only the total victory of communism could abolish arms and banish the threat of war:

[C]ertain persons now actually hold that it is possible to bring about 'a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars' through 'general and complete disarmament'

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120 This is Griffin's observation, see: Griffin, op.cit., pp.114-119.

121 'Letter from the Central Committee of the CPSU to the Central Committee of the CCP, March 30, 1963', Pravda, 4 Apr. 1963, also in BR, VI/25, 21 June 1963, 23-32.

while the system of imperialism and of the exploitation of man by man still exists. This is sheer illusion.

Lenin said: 'Only after the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie will it be able ... to throw all armament on the scrap heap; and the proletariat will undoubtedly do this, but only when this condition has been fulfilled, certainly not before.<sup>122</sup>

On this basis China then attacked the GCD programme as 'deceiving the people of the world and help[ing] the imperialists in their policies of aggression and war'. Finally, while admitting that 'the possibility of banning nuclear weapons does indeed exist', it firmly argued:

[I]f the imperialists are forced to accept an agreement to ban nuclear weapons, it decidedly will not be because of their 'love for humanity' but because of the pressure of the people of all countries and for the sake of their own vital interests.

Soon after its publication, this document was translated into Russian and distributed widely by Chinese nationals in the Soviet Union. They were alleged to have scattered Russian texts of the document from car windows and from the Moscow-Peking train, and to have read them over the public-address system during train stops.<sup>123</sup> Moscow refused to tolerate such activities and expelled those Chinese students and diplomats responsible. Beijing retaliated by issuing a statement on 30 June accusing the Soviet government of deliberately trying to 'undermine Sino-Soviet unity ... and create obstacles to the talks between the Chinese and the Soviet parties'.<sup>124</sup>

However, with or without any 'obstacles deliberately created' by Moscow, the postponed bilateral talks seemed foredoomed to failure. On 2 July, in East Berlin, Khrushchev announced that he was prepared to

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122 'A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement', in PD, 17 June 1963 and BR, VI/25, 21 June 1963, 6-22. Also in Griffin, op.cit., (above Ch.2 fn.68), pp.259-288. (Emphasis original).

123 Griffin, Ibid., pp.148 and 151.

124 Text of this statement in BR, VI/27, 5 July 1963, 8.

sign a limited test ban treaty at the coming session of the tripartite subcommittee to be held in Moscow. This made it virtually impossible for the bilateral talks to achieve anything. The talks started as scheduled on 5 July and continued through to 20 July. But once the tripartite test ban meeting opened on 15 July, it became obvious that Moscow's interest in the bilateral talks had declined drastically, and Beijing began to feel that Moscow was insincere in continuing with them. This worsened Beijing's fear that it might become the principal target of whatever agreement the tripartite meeting could produce. On 19 July the People's Daily described the US proposal for a partial test ban as an 'out-and-out' fraud and reiterated the hope that the Soviet Union would not 'fall into this [American] trap'. It also quoted US Under-Secretary of State Harriman as saying that 'one of the reasons' for the three powers to reach a test ban agreement was 'to prevent China from getting a nuclear capability'.<sup>125</sup>

Harriman said that on 21 June, but Beijing did not acknowledge the existence of these remarks until almost one month later. Did Beijing think that by stressing Harriman's 'anti-China' remarks it could make it difficult for the Soviet Union to accept publicly the draft test ban treaty proposed by the US? If so, China was ill-advised, for (according to Halperin) since 1962 the Soviet Union had considered a test ban agreement as 'an effective move' in its 'bitter dispute and competition' with the PRC.<sup>126</sup> If a tripartite test ban treaty were an 'anti-China' move, then it was a concerted one by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union. On 25 July, Gromyko, Harriman and Hailsham initialled the historic partial test ban treaty, thus opening a new chapter in China's foreign policy.

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125 'US Nuclear Fraud Exposed', PD, 19 July 1963, in BR, VI/30, 30 July 1963, 47-9.

126 Halperin, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.15), p.143.

## CHAPTER FOUR: 1963-1971, THE ISOLATIONIST YEARS: Hostile and Critical

The PRC was hostile towards and critical of nearly all international ACD activities between 1963 and 1971. This stance was reinforced by the further improvement of Soviet-American relationships during the period, marked not only by the conclusion of the NPT, but also the initiation of the SALT talks. Most members of the international community welcomed these arms control initiatives, but the PRC remained hostile and critical, placing itself in a position of extreme isolation. Yet this isolation was self-imposed, as a consequence of two factors:

- a) Except for the first year or so after the signing of the PTBT, during which China launched a diplomatic offensive to justify its position on the PTBT question, China's general foreign policy orientation was dominated by the Cultural Revolution. This caused a general diplomatic retreat in China's relations with the outside world, leading China to turn inward and become preoccupied with domestic conflicts.
- b) China's hostile ideological approach to the problems of arms control and disarmament affected its international popularity and worsened its isolation.

Officially, this hostility was because the CCP's ideological credo would not accept that 'genuine' disarmament could ever be accomplished through diplomatic negotiations (i.e. at the price of sacrificing 'revolutionary struggles'), nor before the achievement of the 'unilateral' disarmament of the imperialists. However, another factor was China's determination to become a nuclear power. Since 'nuclear' disarmament had always been a centrepiece of general ACD efforts, and since this appeared to conflict with China's national interests, it naturally would not accept the value of these efforts.

One of the major developments during the period under study is China's explosion of an experimental nuclear device in 1964. The question of China's motivation and determination to become a nuclear power is a complex one, and has been investigated by numerous specialists in the field.<sup>1</sup> These studies will not be duplicated in the following pages. Rather, attention will be focused on variations in China's attitude towards ACD issues before and after it became a nuclear power. This is perhaps a more pertinent issue for the present study and has never been adequately examined before.

#### THE PARTIAL TEST BAN THAT LED TO A FULL-SCALE POLEMIC

Once the PTBT became irreversible reality, Beijing immediately made public its anger with Moscow. Moscow responded in kind, thus giving the Sino-Soviet rift a new and spectacular dimension. While numerous issues were involved in these polemics, the PTBT was one of the most basic bones of contention, with both Moscow and Beijing seeking to prove their own ideological correctness, to expose the ideological errors of the other party, and to rally support from other communist and 'underdeveloped' countries.

On 29 July 1963, a day before the full text of the PTBT was published in the Chinese press, the New China News Agency (NCNA) commented that the treaty would benefit no one but the US.<sup>2</sup> The Soviet role was described as one which 'deceived oneself and others'. This was a relatively mild criticism. Two days later, Beijing's tone

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1 See, for instance, Halperin, op.cit. (above Ch.2 fn.44); Arthur Huck, The Security of China (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971); Leo Yueh-yun Liu, China as a Nuclear Power in World Politics (London: Macmillan, 1972); ... etc.

2 'Partial Nuclear Test Ban - What the Chinese Press Says', BR, VI/31. 2 Aug. 1963, 3-4.

grew sharper when the People's Daily published extracts from previous Soviet statements and charged that Moscow, by signing the PTBT, had contradicted its previously 'correct' stands.<sup>3</sup>

On that same day, the PRC government also released its first official statement on the PTBT.<sup>4</sup> This declared that it would be 'unthinkable' for China to become part of the 'dirty fraud' of the PTBT; accused the Soviet policy of allying 'with imperialism to oppose Socialism' and 'with the United States to oppose China'; and described Moscow's acceptance of the PTBT as 'a capitulation to US imperialism'. It went on to propose a three-point disarmament programme. First, all countries were asked to declare that they would 'prohibit and destroy' nuclear weapons. Secondly, four initial steps would be taken: the withdrawal of military, including nuclear, forces from 'foreign soil'; the establishment of NFZs in the Asian and Pacific region, in Central Europe, and in Latin America; the halt of the international transfer of nuclear weapons and technical data for the manufacture of these weapons; and the ban of all nuclear tests. Thirdly, a summit conference of all countries should be convened to discuss questions concerning 'the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons' and the four initial steps mentioned above.

As this official statement did not ask for the abolition of the PTBT as a pre-condition for holding the proposed world disarmament conference, it appeared that Beijing was willing to recognise the PTBT as a fait accompli and proceed on that basis to discuss the possibility of a comprehensive test ban, leading to a complete prohibition and

3 Ibid.

4 'Statement of the Chinese Government Advocating the Complete, Thorough, Total and Resolute Prohibition and Destruction of Nuclear Weapons (and) Proposing a Conference of the Government Heads of All Countries of the World, July 31, 1963', in Griffin, op.cit. (above Ch.2 fn.68), pp.326-9.

destruction of nuclear weapons. But Beijing fell short of offering an explicit undertaking to forego its nuclear development plan if the proposed disarmament programme was accepted, and the area mentioned in Beijing's programme for the establishment of NFZs was so extensive that it could hardly be practical. The PRC may therefore have been less than sincere in proposing this programme, and probably did so for purely propaganda reasons. Beijing's hostility towards the PTBT had damaged considerably its international image, and with this proposal, it was trying to prove that it not only desired 'genuine' disarmament, but that it, too, could produce ACD initiatives.

China's proposals were quickly dismissed by Washington. For the US, they were too 'sweeping and unrealistic ... [and] stood little chance of being considered seriously'.<sup>5</sup> Beijing then responded in the People's Daily with a point-by-point defence of the proposal.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, as if to follow words with deeds, Premier Zhou sent a formal letter to all heads of state, on 2 August, specifically proposing the convocation of a world disarmament conference, but only Albania, North Korea, North Vietnam and Pakistan responded positively.

How did the Soviet Union react to the official Chinese statement of 31 July and the disarmament programme contained in it? On 3 August, Moscow and 'other socialist countries' declared the statement as 'an unprecedented and most regrettable act'.<sup>7</sup> The disarmament programme was described as 'nothing new' and merely a repetition of those proposals which had been 'already advanced by the Soviet Union and

5 'People of the World Unite! Strive for the Complete Prohibition and Thorough Destruction of Nuclear Weapons!', PD, 2 Aug. 1963, reprinted (in English) in BR, VI/32. 9 Aug. 1963, 8-10.

6 Ibid.

7 'Statement of the Soviet Government', BR, VI/33, 16 Aug. 1963, 16-9.

other socialist countries'. According to Moscow, Beijing was repeating these old proposals because it wanted to 'camouflage' its refusal to sign the PTBT. The logic of Moscow's argument was obvious: Beijing opposed the PTBT because it did not want to become part of it; and it did not want to become part of it because it was determined to develop its own nuclear bomb. The Soviet Union spelt this out three weeks later:

The desire to get hold of the bomb by every available means seems to be the underlying motive of Peking's attitude to the test-ban treaty and of the clamorous campaign against the Soviet Union now being conducted in the Chinese press.<sup>8</sup>

The issue of 'China and the bomb' was both a central issue in the heated polemics between Moscow and Beijing, and a common concern shared by the PTBT negotiators. Beijing soon asserted that the PTBT was a US-Soviet alliance against China 'pure and simple'.<sup>9</sup> On 15 August, moreover, in a move to justify its 'bomb' programme, Beijing argued that a 'class analysis' must be made on the question of nuclear weapons:

Whether or not nuclear weapons help peace depends on who possesses them. It is detrimental to peace if they are in the hands of imperialist countries; it helps peace if they are in the hands of socialist countries.<sup>10</sup>

Then it concluded: 'So long as the imperialists refuse to ban nuclear weapons, the greater the number of socialist countries possessing them, the better the guarantee for world peace'.

This document of 15 August also contained the first public revelation of the Sino-Soviet agreement 'on new technology for national

8 Cited from New Times, September 4, 1963, p.1. See: Clemens, op.cit. (above Ch.3 fn.109), p.154.

9 'A Betrayal of the Soviet People', originally appeared in the PD under a different title, reprinted in BR, VI/32, 9 Aug. 1963, 10-11.

10 Above Ch.1 fn.14.

defence' signed in October 1957, which, also allegedly, Moscow 'unilaterally' tore up in June 1959 and thus 'refused to provide China with a sample of an atomic bomb'. Moscow has never publicly refuted these allegations. On 1 September Beijing published another document, in reply to a Soviet statement of 21 August, stressing China's disappointment at Soviet actions:

True, if the Soviet leaders really practised proletarian internationalism, China might consider it unnecessary to manufacture its own nuclear weapons.

But it is equally true that if the Soviet leaders really practised proletarian internationalism, they would have no reason whatever for obstructing China from manufacturing nuclear weapons.<sup>11</sup>

In this statement Beijing also made laborious efforts to counter Soviet statements which portrayed the Chinese as dangerous, ignorant, and adventuristic 'madmen' who would easily risk a nuclear war. Moscow had alleged that Mao once claimed:

There is nothing wrong even if half of humanity, if 300 million Chinese perish, for on the other hand imperialism would be erased from the face of Earth and those who survive would rapidly create on the ruins of imperialism a new, a thousand times greater civilisation.<sup>12</sup>

This allegation was denied, as Beijing claimed that Moscow had greatly distorted the meaning of Mao's remarks in this regard made in 1957. Consequently, the Chinese went on to assure that: a) China wanted peace, not war; b) it was the imperialists who wanted to fight, not the Chinese; c) a world war could be prevented through resolute revolutionary struggles against the imperialists; and d) should a world war break out, the imperialist system, not mankind, would perish, and the

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11 'Statement by the Spokesman of the Chinese Government, September 1, 1963', PD, 1 Sept. 1963, also in BR, VI/36, 6 September 1963, 16-23. Text of the Soviet Government statement of 21 August 1963, to which the Chinese statement was a reply, in BR, Ibid., 7-16.

12 Soviet Government Statement of 21 August 1963, Ibid.

future of mankind would still be bright.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, Beijing's tone on the issue of 'universal and complete disarmament' also softened. The issue of nuclear disarmament was singled out and China acknowledged that 'the complete and thorough prohibition of nuclear weapons can be achieved while imperialism still exists, just as poison gas was prohibited'.

These attempts to reduce the aggressiveness of the PRC's image were part of China's strategy of minimising the negative effects of its critical attitude towards the PTBT, especially as to relations with the underdeveloped countries. With this consideration in mind, Zhou visited no fewer than fourteen countries in Africa and Southeast Asia during late 1963 and early 1964.

From September 1963 onwards, the Sino-Soviet polemic on the meaning of the PTBT and other ACD issues became gradually transformed into a 'great debate' over the leadership and direction of the international communist movement. Both sides released their own accounts of the origins of the Sino-Soviet rift and laid the blame on the other.<sup>14</sup> The interchange was started by Beijing on 6 September, when it published the first of a series of articles.<sup>15</sup> Indeed the series lasted until 14 July 1964, nearly a year later, and was in nine parts, later known by the Chinese as the 'Nine Comments'.<sup>16</sup>

In the course of this exchange, Beijing indicated that it viewed

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13 'Statement by the Spokesman of the Chinese Government, ...', Ibid.

14 For a description of this development, see Griffin, op.cit., pp.168-174.

15 'The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves - Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU', in BR, VI/37, 13 Sept. 1963, 6-23.

16 Gittings, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.21), p.256.

the PTBT as something which 'does only harm and brings no benefit'.<sup>17</sup> According to a quite comprehensive analysis offered by Beijing on 10 August 1963, the PTBT had to be denounced because:

1. The three nuclear powers had only stressed that the PTBT would stop nuclear tests in the atmosphere, outer space, and underwater, but failed to acknowledge that, because they had already acquired enough data from previous testing, the test ban would not affect their continued 'mass production' of nuclear weapons.
2. The PTBT consolidated the 'nuclear monopoly' of the three nuclear powers. It legalised underground nuclear tests by the nuclear powers while denying the right to conduct any kind of nuclear tests to non-nuclear powers. Article II of the treaty actually gave the three nuclear powers the right to veto any amendment to the treaty, and this right was not given to anyone else who might later become a party to the treaty. Hence the PTBT was 'unequal' in nature.
3. Article IV of the treaty stipulated that each party could withdraw from the treaty upon three months' notice. Thus the treaty could be violated by a 'simple unilateral decision'.
4. The PTBT damaged the prospect of a 'total nuclear ban and general disarmament' because it divorced the issue of nuclear tests from the overall concern of general disarmament. Moreover, the fact that Moscow had 'capitulated' to the US in accepting the US test ban proposals meant that it would be more difficult to force the US to undertake 'concrete' disarmament commitments. Thus the PTBT was 'a step to increase the danger of war', and not, as alleged by the nuclear powers, 'a first step towards peace'.<sup>18</sup>

THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT AFTER THE PARTIAL TEST BAN: To Share a 'Correct' Stand?

Beijing's attacks on the PTBT, like the overall Sino-Soviet schism itself, were not confined to the exchange of press editorials and

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<sup>17</sup> Observer, 'Why the Tripartite Treaty Does Only Harm and Brings No Benefit?', PD, 10 Aug. 1963, and BR, VI/33, 16 Aug. 1963, 20-24.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

government statements, but found themselves many other occasions. Despite the limited nature of its formal channels with the outside world, China launched a full-scale diplomatic offensive in the hope of gaining understanding and support.

The Ninth WCAAHB meeting, held 5-7 August 1963 in Hiroshima, was the first such occasion after the treaty for Beijing to explain its PTBT positions. When the meeting opened, the leader of the Chinese delegation, Zhao Puzhu, charged that the PTBT had given 'the aggressor the right of massacre' and denied 'the victim the right of self-defence'.<sup>19</sup> When Zhao rose to speak, all delegates from Moscow along with those from India, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia walked out, while the conference was seriously paralysed by competing attempts from Moscow and Beijing to earn support for their totally incompatible positions.<sup>20</sup> In the end neither side succeeded, and the final document of the conference simply ignored the whole PTBT issue.<sup>21</sup>

However, when the Tenth WCAAHB conference met in Tokyo the following year (30 July - 2 August 1964) the PRC scored a major victory. While the conference failed to adopt an 'anti-PTB' final document, this document moved much closer to Beijing's approach to the ACD questions than before.<sup>22</sup> Beijing also gained from the fact that the Soviet Union, after learning that it was not to be elected to leading posts, decided to withdraw from the organisation. The PRC

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19 Ha Yim Kwan, China and the U.S., 1964-72 (N.Y.: Facts on File, Inc., 1975), p.47. Original source not given.

20 Xiao Ming, 'At the 9th World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs', BR, VI/33, 16 Aug. 1963, 28-32.

21 'Appeal for International Common Action', BR, VI/33, 16 Aug. 1963, 32-33.

22 Correspondent, 'At the 10th World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs', BR, VII/32, 7 Aug. 1964, 17-20.

cheerfully characterised Moscow's retreat as 'slanderers' being 'nailed'.<sup>23</sup>

The diplomatic battle over the PTBT did not stop at the 'peace' organisations. Beijing took the matter straight to the capitals of many Afro-Asian countries. From 14 December 1963 to 4 February 1964, Zhou and his sizeable entourage visited the United Arab Republic, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Mali, Guinea, the Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia.<sup>24</sup> After this tour, he left China again on 14 February, for a tour of Southeast Asia that took him to Burma, Pakistan and Ceylon. Zhou did not return to China until 1 March.

To say that Zhou embarked on these overseas visits only because of the PTBT would, of course, be an over-simplification. Indeed, it has been suggested that the PTBT was not a major issue in Zhou's discussions abroad, as he went to Africa primarily in order to 'mend fences with the African governments in the aftermath of the Sino-Indian border war of 1962 and to survey the prospects for revolution south of the Sahara'.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless it would be unrealistic to assume that, during his trip, Zhou failed to take the opportunity to explain why China was opposed to the PTBT. It can indeed be argued that he travelled with at least four purposes:

1. China was in open rift with the Soviet Union and would thus need to seek support for its position in international forums generally and in the 'non-aligned movement' in particular.

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23 Ibid.

24 See W.A.C. Adie, 'Chou En-lai on Safari', in Roderick MacFarquhar, ed. China Under Mao: Politics Takes Command (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T., 1966), pp.462-482. Zhou also visited Albania.

25 This is Hinton's view, see: Harold C. Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest: An Analysis of China's Foreign Policy Since 1949 (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1972), p.111.

2. To explain China's stand on the PTBT. Because many African states had indicated they were prepared to sign the treaty, China must have concluded that direct talks were needed to convince African leaders that China's intention of conducting nuclear tests were peaceful.
3. Zhou also stated that he wished to 'learn' from the African states. This may not have been totally ceremonial. In view of the newly-gained flexibility and independence in China's relations with the external world after the Sino-Soviet split, Beijing could have felt that it was necessary to increase its direct contact with these Third World countries.
4. Lastly, Beijing sought to exploit all possible opportunities to place Moscow in a bad light. This was done without harsh words or direct attacks. Zhou could, for instance, urge 'self-reliance' in discussing aid to African countries, implicitly recalling China's own painful experience in failing to create a dependable aid relationship with the Soviet Union.<sup>26</sup>

At a time when the world perceived China as a militant, revolutionary and anti-status quo power, Zhou's task was difficult, and he faced some very embarrassing situations. In Tunis, for instance, President Bourguiba told Zhou:

You come to Africa as the enemy of the capitalist states, of the West, of the neutralists and the non-aligned, of India, of Tito, of Khrushchev, of everybody. You have not chosen an easy policy. I'll say that. Don't expect to score much in Africa. Others won't tell you straight; I will - you won't get far in this continent.<sup>27</sup>

Bourguiba also made clear his disquiet over China's use of force in the Sino-Indian border conflict and over China's refusal to become a party

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<sup>26</sup> Scalapino argues that Zhou made painstaking efforts to explain China's PTB position, see: Robert A. Scalapino, 'Sino-Soviet Competition in Africa', Foreign Affairs (July 1964), 643. The analysis of Zhou's motivation is based on: Bruce D. Larkin, China and Africa, 1949-1970 (London: Univ. of California Press, 1961), pp.68-69.

<sup>27</sup> Kwan, op.cit., p.8. Original source not given.

to the PTBT.

Zhou tried every possible means to justify China's hostile and critical stand towards the PTBT. At a press conference held in Cairo on 20 December, he elegantly explained that it was China's 'sacred duty to safeguard the destiny of mankind', and so China had 'no alternative but to expose' such a 'fraudulent treaty' which had increased the danger of nuclear war. Zhou conceded that there were 'well-intentioned people' who thought that the danger of nuclear war had been reduced as a result of the conclusion of the PTBT. But then he modestly observed: 'Time will give its final verdict!'<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, in order to present the PRC in a peaceful light, Zhou emphatically declared on 3 February 1964: 'The Chinese people ... resolutely oppose nuclear war', because 'if a nuclear war breaks out, China would lose more people than would other countries'.<sup>29</sup> This was in clear contradiction to Mao's past statements, in that the immense human resources of China were no longer an asset in the strategic equation; in Zhou's view, they had become a liability. Yet Zhou failed to convince his African hosts of the 'correctness' of Beijing's stand on the PTBT issue, for none of the joint communiqués contained any reference to, let alone attack on, the PTBT.<sup>30</sup> He did impress the world, however, with his well-mannered personal diplomacy and earned support from most of the countries he visited on the question of Beijing's admission into the UN; even Bourguiba consented to open formal diplomatic relations between the PRC and Tunisia. Unfortunately Zhou also angered a number of African

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28 'Premier Chou En-Lai's Press Conference', BR, VI/52, 27 Dec. 1963, 12-4.

29 'Premier Chou En-Lai's Interview With French Correspondent', BR, VII/7, 14 Feb. 1964, 14-6.

30 For a more detailed discussion, see Halperin and Perkins, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.1), pp.119-22.

leaders with his untimely pronouncement that 'the prospect for revolution in Africa is excellent'.<sup>31</sup> For this confirmed and worsened the suspicion that he had come to the continent to 'export' revolution.

Zhou's African experience taught him the impossibility of seeking explicit support from other states for China's negative stand on the PTBT (except, of course, from Albania), and therefore when he toured Southeast Asia in the second half of February 1964 the PTBT had a reduced priority on his agenda. The Sino-Soviet rift and the PTBT had made Beijing anxious to promote its peaceful image, to improve relations with other states, and to establish a 'post-PTB' diplomatic united front. Radical steps were taken by Zhou to achieve these objectives. He is reported to have requested General Ne Win of Burma to ask Nehru to come to Rangoon to discuss a settlement of the Sino-Indian border dispute. When Nehru declined to do so, Zhou changed China's traditional policy of neutrality towards the Indian-Pakistani Kashmir dispute and took side with Pakistan.<sup>32</sup> Most dramatic of all were his remarks, on 25 February, that he welcomed the 'good offices' of Pakistan's President Ayub Khan in bringing about a lessening of tension between the US and China.<sup>33</sup> Such remarks contrasted sharply with Beijing's response to a prior gesture of the US to try to improve Sino-Soviet relations. The previous December, US Assistant Secretary of State Hilsman raised the possibility of a new US 'open door' policy towards China, explaining that the US was determined not to foreclose the option of responding to favourable changes in China's

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31 'Premier Chou En-lai's Press Conference in Mogadiscio', in Afro-Asian Solidarity Against Imperialism (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1964), p.285.

32 Cited from Kwan, op.cit., (above fn.19), pp.14-5. Original source not given.

33 Ibid., pp.14-6.

posture.<sup>34</sup> Beijing's immediate response was to characterise the speech as a continuation of the 'aggressive policy' of the US, and as a call to China to 'open the door to welcome the thief'.<sup>35</sup> Two months later the People's Daily was still claiming that US policy towards China was 'in a blind alley'.<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, the latter statement came only about one week before Zhou's declaration in Pakistan that he welcomed the 'good offices' of Ayub Khan.

Clearly there was a divergence of opinion among the PRC leaders regarding China's relation with the US. While it has been suggested that Liu, then Head of State of the PRC, was pro-Moscow and thus reluctant to move China closer to the US, there is no doubt, at least in retrospect, that Zhou did not want to rule out the option of improving relations with Washington.<sup>37</sup> In any case, it would have been unwise for Zhou to reject outright the 'good offices' of Ayub Khan when China was hoping to consolidate its ties with Pakistan.

Chinese attacks on the PTBT subsided early in 1964, but the theme of 'Soviet-American collusion for world domination' which had evolved from them still dominated the Chinese press. It became Beijing's justification for its effort to establish a diplomatic 'united front'. Concentrating on this, China rejected every move from Moscow for a Sino-Soviet reconciliation. On 15 November 1963 NCNA described an appeal from Khrushchev for an end to the polemics as 'nothing but a

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34 Cited from Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Roger Hilsman's speech on China Policy to the Commonwealth Club, San Francisco, 13 December 1963, U.S. Information Service Press Release, 7 Jan. 1964, in MacFarquhar, Sino-American Relations, 1949-1971 (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1972), p.205.

35 Original response published in: TKP, 14 Dec. 1963. Cited from Kwan, op.cit., p.5.

36 'US Policy Towards China Is in a Blind Alley', PD, 19 Feb. 1964, reprinted in BR, VII/9. 28 Feb. 1964, 9-12.

37 See Yahuda's analysis, in Yahuda, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.17), pp.178-181.

trick to cover up the Soviet leaders' frenzied anti-Chinese activities'.<sup>38</sup> When a letter from the CPSU of 29 November 1963 proposed a suspension of polemics so that negotiations might try to resolve the dispute, the CCP did not issue its strongly-worded negative reply until 29 February 1964.<sup>39</sup> This raises the question of who in Beijing was so powerful as to dictate such a persistently uncompromising policy towards Moscow when the PRC's Head of State himself was pro-Soviet?

Who else but the 'Great Helmsman' Mao himself?<sup>40</sup> That March, when a visiting Rumanian Communist Party delegation asked Mao to suspend the polemics for three months, Mao replied that he would not stop even for three days; on the contrary he would continue if necessary for ten thousand years.<sup>41</sup> That statement was more than just Mao's idiosyncratic style of political witticism, it represented a deep-rooted belief in him. He summarised his verdict on the Soviet Union in an internal speech made in May 1964:

The present-day Soviet Union is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, a dictator like German fascism, a Hitler type of dictator, they are a pack of ruffians, even worse than De Gaulle.<sup>42</sup>

Mao's remarks on De Gaulle were hardly appropriate at a time when France had just decided to establish diplomatic relations - China's most important post-PTBT diplomatic breakthrough. De Gaulle believed

38 Keesings Research Report: The Sino-Soviet Dispute (England: Keesings Publications, 1970), p.62.

39 Ibid.

40 See Chapter 12 in Gittings, op.cit. (above Ch. fn.1), esp. pp.255-9.

41 See Ibid., p.258. Original source not given.

42 Mao made these remarks on 11 May 1964, when speaking to a so-called 'Planning Committee Leadership Group'. The Chinese text of this speech was reprinted in Long Live Mao Zedong Thought, I (above Ch.3 fn.35), pp.496-7. English translation cited from Gittings, Ibid., p.256.

that the tripartite test ban negotiations had grossly ignored France, and his decision to recognise the PRC was apparently affected by this consideration. It was only natural for him to move France closer to a state which was equally, if not more, at odds with the treaty. In the words of Hinton, France recognised China because De Gaulle suffered from 'an acute "Yalta complex"' in the aftermath of the PTBT.<sup>43</sup>

Mao was also deeply worried by the possibility of a Soviet-American 'conspiracy' to 'manacle' China. In February 1964, around the time when Zhou was touring Southeast Asia, Mao said in anguish: 'Do you think our nation will collapse or not? Imperialism and revisionism have joined hands and are beating at our borders'.<sup>44</sup> In the same month the PRC displayed an element of prudence over the explosive situation in Vietnam. When the People's Daily reprinted an editorial from a Hanoi paper, in which Hanoi had threatened that if the US were to attack North Vietnam, Washington would have to cope with China and the rest of the socialist countries, Beijing quietly deleted this passage and thus made void Hanoi's threat.<sup>45</sup> For Beijing did not wish to escalate the situation in Vietnam when it was itself in trouble with Moscow. It also had another reason to be exceptionally cautious: its nuclear development programme was entering a crucial stage and Beijing's first fission test was about to take place.

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43 Cited from Hinton, op.cit., (above fn.25), p.124.

44 Original text in Miscellany of Mao Tse-tung Thought, Part II (Washington: Joint Publication Research Service, 61269-2, 20 Feb. 1974), p.326. Cited from Michael Pillsbury, Dragon on the Salt, Chinese Views of the Soviet-American Strategic Balance (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand, p-5457, April 1975), p.7.

45 Cited from Hinton, op.cit., p.120.

## CHINA CONDUCTS ITS FIRST TEST: A Low-Profile Strategic Event

The initial stage of China's long-cherished aspiration to become a nuclear weapon state was fulfilled on 16 October 1964, when an atomic device was exploded at Lop Nor test site in the Taklamakan Desert area of Xinjiang. NCNA announced the test, calling it 'a major achievement of the Chinese people in their struggle to increase their national defence capability and oppose the United States imperialist policy of nuclear blackmail and nuclear threats'.<sup>46</sup> However, the general tone of the statement was more solemn than triumphant, a well-controlled low-key exposition of a new Chinese perspective on matters concerning nuclear weapons and disarmament.

The keynote of the statement was its insistence on the defensive nature of China's nuclear capability. Beijing claimed that it was 'forced' to develop nuclear weapons; that China could not 'remain idle and do nothing' in the face of the 'ever-increasing nuclear threat' posed by the US; that Beijing would not have developed nuclear weapons if its demand for 'the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons' were met; and that China's nuclear development programme was 'for defence and for protecting the Chinese people from the danger of the United States' launching a 'nuclear war'. In accordance with such a defensive posture, it was further declared: 'China will never at any time and under any circumstances be the first to use nuclear weapons'.

A 'No-First-Use' (NFU) pledge of this type as a preliminary step in the process of general disarmament had been originally proposed by the Soviet Union in 1955, to the UN Disarmament Commission, and was

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<sup>46</sup> Text of detonation statement in NCNA, 16 Oct. 1964, also in BR, VII/42, 16 Oct. 1964, ii-iv.

viewed as a multilateral measure.<sup>47</sup> Neither the US nor Great Britain was willing to accept it, and thereafter it became an intermittent component of Soviet ACD proposals. China, in adopting an overall defensive posture, appears to have decided to undertake the NFU commitment voluntarily, because it was only an infant nuclear power and had bad relations with all but one of the other atomic powers. The urgent task here would be to reduce the incentive for the others to launch a 'pre-emptive' or 'surgical' strike against China. A starting-point would therefore be voluntarily to renounce all intention to be the first to use nuclear weapons. Such a NFU pledge would also serve to enhance the image of a peace-loving China, and allay the uneasiness of some of China's non-nuclear potential adversaries. To this day, the PRC remains the only power to have openly and unilaterally committed itself to such an undertaking.

Beijing coupled the test announcement with a reiteration of its previous proposal for the convening of a world disarmament conference (WDC), to discuss the question of 'the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons'. However, it began to insist that this WDC should ban the 'use' of nuclear weapons as a 'first step'. This was entirely compatible with Chinese NFU strategy, for if all nuclear powers were to agree to a ban on the use of nuclear weapons, this would reinforce and extend any comprehensive NFU pledge. More significantly, the stress on banning the 'use' of nuclear weapons was also consistent with the PRC's traditional practice of concentrating upon banning the 'use', but not the 'possession' or 'production', of nuclear weapons.

Beijing may have considered that its call for a WDC could offer it advantages in itself, irrespective of whether an agreement banning the

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47 The U.N. and Disarmament, 1945-1965, (above Ch.2 fn.49), p.58.

'use' of nuclear weapons could actually be achieved. It would hopefully: a) promote the peaceful, and 'peace-desiring', image of a nuclear China; b) enhance deterrence to any attempt to launch a 'pre-emptive' or 'surgical' strike against China's nuclear capability, by marshalling international opinion against such a move; and c) gain China the kind of diplomatic support it was seeking in the Third World, since the Cairo Conference of Non-Aligned Nations which had met earlier the same month, had also proposed a similar WDC.

On 17 October, the morning after the test, Premier Zhou wrote to leaders of all countries explaining the Chinese detonation and restating the WDC proposal that had been made in 1963 on the conclusion of the PTBT.<sup>48</sup> The response to this letter was better than it had been a year earlier, though the initiative was foredoomed by the negative response of the US.<sup>49</sup> Dean Rusk quickly dismissed the proposal as a 'smokescreen' to confuse the real issue.<sup>50</sup> President Johnson, on 18 October, in a televised response to the Chinese test, ignored completely the PRC's call for a WDC and dwelt instead on the danger of further nuclear proliferation. He also declared his determination to continue to support the PTBT and to work for 'an ending of all nuclear tests'.<sup>51</sup> Most aggravating of all, to Beijing, was Johnson's specific call for China to sign the PTBT, a call which was swiftly rejected in the People's Daily on 22 October. This described Johnson's speech as a 'smokescreen' to 'conceal the obstinate

48 Full text of Zhou's letter in BR, VII/43, 23 Oct. 1964, 6.

49 See a description of the response in Walter C. Clemens, Jr., The Arms Race and Sino-Soviet Relations (Stanford, Calif.: The Hoover Institution, 1968), pp.87-91.

50 Rusk's remarks in NYT, 22 Oct. 1964, p.3. Cited from Halperin and Perkins, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.1), p.125.

51 MacFarquhar, op.cit., (above fn.34), pp.210-1.

and feeble stand of the United States which dares not undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons'.<sup>52</sup> It also devoted considerable space to the question of nuclear proliferation, repeating a number of previous arguments, such as the 'class analysis' (that nuclear weapons in the hands of 'socialist China' could be 'trusted' while those in the hands of US imperialism could not) and the belief that the hope of 'preventing nuclear war and prohibiting nuclear weapons' was to break 'the US nuclear monopoly' and that the more thoroughly this was done, the greater would be the possibility of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. While the tone sounded familiar, it is unmistakable that Beijing's encouragement for an unlimited spread of nuclear weapons (to all socialist countries, that is) was now become less explicit, and after November 1964 the PRC appears to have avoided for a considerable time any reference to the question of nuclear proliferation.

Another interesting development after Beijing's first test was a subtle change in Sino-American relations. Beneath a stormy surface, quiet diplomatic exchanges were taking place between Washington and Beijing via the Sino-American ambassadorial talks in Warsaw. The talks were used by Beijing to expound the Chinese post-detonation position to the Americans. This was the first known use of the Warsaw link as an ACD channel, and indicated that Beijing might be prepared to discuss such matters with Washington. Indeed, when representatives of both parties met again in Warsaw on 25 November, the PRC formally proposed an NFU agreement between the two countries. This was a significant change in China's foreign policy posture, for it was the first time since 1960 that Beijing had offered to conclude any agreement with the

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52 'Break the Nuclear Monopoly, eliminate Nuclear Weapons', PD, 22 Oct. 1964, and BR, VII/44, 30 Oct. 1964, 5-7.

US without the prior settlement of their differences over the Taiwan issue.<sup>53</sup>

Moscow's response to Zhou's October letter was markedly different from that of the US. Moscow supported the proposed ban on the use of nuclear weapons,<sup>54</sup> and Gromyko told the UN General Assembly on 7 December that Beijing's WDC call deserved 'positive consideration'.<sup>55</sup> Kosygin also wrote to Zhou at the end of the year stating that he was 'in complete agreement' with Zhou's proposal.<sup>56</sup>

The relaxation of tension between Moscow and Beijing was not so much a result of China's test, as a product of the ousting of Khrushchev. After the signing of the PTBT, the PRC had blamed Khrushchev personally for the worsening of relations. The fall of Khrushchev, only days before the Chinese test, offered both sides an opening to start all over again. According to Hinton, Khrushchev was 'seriously' contemplating a military strike against China, either at strategically-important Xinjiang or at the Chinese nuclear manufacturing facilities, on the eve of the test. China was aware of this and had threatened to retaliate by invading Outer Mongolia.<sup>57</sup> Khrushchev's fall at the crucial moment prompts Hinton to conclude: 'It seems highly probable that his [Khrushchev's] increasingly bellicose and inept policy was a

53 See the summary of these developments in MacFarquhar, op.cit., (above fn.34), p.187.

54 NYT, 26 Dec. 1964, 14. The Chinese also reported these supports in BR, VIII/3, 15 Jan. 1965, 3.

55 'Soviet Government Memorandum on Steps To Further Ease International Tension and To Limit the Arms Race'. Text in CDSP, XVI/50, 6 Jan. 1965, 9-11.

56 Text of Kosygin's letter to Zhou can be seen in Documents of Disarmament, 1966 (DOD 1966), (Washington, D.C.: US Dept. of State, 1967), pp.532-44. Cited from Thomas Larson, Disarmament and Soviet Policy, 1964-1968 (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p.76.

57 See the account offered by Hinton, in Hinton, op.cit., (above fn.25), p.126.

major if not the decisive count in the indictment against him'.<sup>58</sup>

Following the fall of Khrushchev, Mao and his colleagues sent their 'warm greetings' to Brezhnev and Kosygin.<sup>59</sup> For several weeks after the test, both Beijing and Moscow refrained from directly attacking each other; tension and polemics subsided. Not until 1 March 1965, on the occasion of the opening of the Moscow meeting of Nineteen Communist Parties,<sup>60</sup> did the PRC resume the quarrel. By the end of that month its press was again attacking the Kremlin leadership, declaring the meeting to be 'illegal' and 'schismatic', and accusing the new Soviet leadership of practising 'Khrushchevism without Khrushchev'.<sup>61</sup>

This brief honeymoon never really offered a chance of genuinely improving Sino-Soviet relationships, for neither side was willing to offer any significant concession in exchange for a rapprochement. Two top-level meetings took place during this period. One was the visit of Zhou and six other leading CCP officials to Moscow for the 1964 celebrations of the November Revolution. During this visit, Zhou held 'frank and comradely' talks with the new Soviet leaders and was given a number of proposals for the improvement of 'state-to-state' relations between the USSR and the PRC, since both sides accepted that the 'party-to-party' relations were permanently impaired by ideological and theoretical differences. However, these proposals led Mao to suspect that the new Soviet leadership was continuing to follow the revisionist line of Khrushchev; he thus decided to reject them 'in their

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58 Ibid.

59 Keesings Research Report (above fn.38), p.66.

60 Ibid. p.80.

61 Ibid. The conference itself was a fiasco. See Hinton, op.cit., (above fn.25), p.131.

entirety'.<sup>62</sup> The other meeting was Kosygin's stopover in Beijing on 11 February 1965, while returning from an official visit to Hanoi. Kosygin had a session of 'serious discussions' with Mao, but it seems that their meeting was overshadowed by the sterile aftermath of Zhou's recent Moscow visit,<sup>63</sup> and nothing resulted.

Beijing's nuclear test stirred up a resurgence of international enthusiasm on ACD affairs. On 22 October 1964, UN Secretary-General U Thant proposed a conference of the five nuclear powers to discuss the banning of nuclear testing. While Moscow remained non-committal about this proposal, France and the UK responded affirmatively. However, the US expressed reservations, though its UN Ambassador, Adlai Stevenson, 'speculated' that the White House might be willing to consider a five-power conference if China signed the PTBT.

Beijing's response on the conference was negative, but it is unclear if this was because the US had linked it with China's acceptance of the PTBT. On 22 November 1964, the People's Daily replied indirectly to U Thant's initiative, but elaborated quite extensively on a number of important ACD issues.<sup>64</sup> On the question of a five power disarmament conference, Beijing changed its previous stance and argued that 'the more than 100 sovereign countries in the world, big or small, with or without nuclear weapons' should have 'the same say' on the question of nuclear disarmament 'which has a vital bearing on peace and security in the world'.

The central question posed by the paper was how a 'first step' should be taken 'so as to facilitate the attainment of the complete

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62 Ibid. p.128.

63 Ibid. p.130-31.

64 'New Starting Point For Efforts to Ban Nuclear Weapons Completely', PD, 22 Nov. 1964, in BR, VII/48, 27 Nov. 1964, 12-4.

prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons'. Four such 'first steps' were discussed: the PTBT, a comprehensive test ban, the destruction of delivery vehicles, and a NFU agreement. The PTBT was condemned for both putting off 'indefinitely' the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons and serving as 'a smokescreen for US nuclear war preparations'. It was argued that a comprehensive test ban would be little different in its effect from a partial test ban, 'if it is not accompanied by the prohibition of the use, production, stockpiling, import, export and proliferation of nuclear weapons'. A complete test ban by itself, in other words, would 'only serve to consolidate US nuclear monopoly, deprive other countries of their legitimate right to develop nuclear weapons ..., spread a false sense of security and weaken the struggle' for the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons. As for the destruction of delivery vehicles, Beijing claimed that it merely 'complicated' the issue:

Devils are devils, whether they have long or short legs. Conventional weapons can launch nuclear bombs as well as the intercontinental ballistic missile. An ordinary aircraft can carry nuclear weapons as well as strategic bombers ... The proposal to first of all destroy the means of delivery in effect confuses the question of complete prohibition of nuclear weapons with the question of reduction of conventional arms and thus greatly complicated the issue.

After rejecting these three 'first steps', Beijing presented its criteria for a proper 'first step'. This must 'facilitate the taking of further steps' and be 'conducive' to the gradual attainment of the aim of the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons; it must help check the nuclear arms race and help lessen the threat of nuclear war, instead of 'serving as a smokescreen'; and it must serve to promote the struggle 'of the peace-loving people the world over' for the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons and 'not lower their vigilance and pull the wool over their eyes'. In accordance with such criteria, Beijing

then put forward the merits of its proposed NFU agreement:

- a) A nuclear power, after signing a NFU agreement, would be encouraged to cease the testing and production of nuclear weapons. Then, 'nuclear intimidation' would be impossible, and nuclear stockpiling unnecessary.
- b) If a NFU agreement were reached among the nuclear powers, the non-nuclear powers would have no need to develop or import nuclear weapons.
- c) The establishment of NFZs would be unrealistic without a NFU agreement. And,
- d) No question of international control and verification would be involved in a NFU agreement, thus removing one of the major obstacles in measures such as the PTBT, the comprehensive test ban and the destruction of delivery vehicles. 'So long as the countries concerned have peaceful intentions, a {NFU} agreement can be reached quickly'.

Here the PRC also explicitly asked the US if it were willing to reach a NFU agreement with the PRC, 'pending the convening of a world disarmament conference'. Indeed, as indicated above, on 25 November Beijing's Warsaw Ambassador handed his American counterpart a formal proposal for a bilateral NFU agreement between the two countries. It is not clear when and how the US rejected this proposal. However, in the PRC statement issued on 29 December 1964, in protest at the entry of the US nuclear missile submarine 'Daniel Boone' into Pacific waters, China indicated that it was still waiting for a response from Washington.<sup>65</sup> Beijing alleged that the movement of the 'Daniel Boone' was part of an American effort to 'throw a nuclear encirclement' around China, but it avoided describing the affair as an indirect American refusal to accept its NFU proposal. Perhaps it was then still

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65 'Protest Against U.S. War Provocation', BR, VII/1, 1 Jan. 1965, 20.

hopeful, though in spring 1966, both Zhou and Rusk made it clear that the US had eventually turned down this Chinese proposal.<sup>66</sup>

As the People's Daily editorial of 22 November 1964 is the most comprehensive Chinese ACD statement of the immediate post-test era, it is worth further comment. Beijing published three major ACD documents during this period: the official test statement on 16 October; the editorial of the People's Daily of 22 October; and the same paper's editorial of 22 November. The most striking new feature in them is the disappearance of any obvious hostility towards the Soviet Union, resulting from the 'honeymoon' between Moscow and Beijing after Khrushchev.<sup>67</sup> There were, though, three other areas in which Beijing appeared to have modified its stance: the WDC issue, the NFU pledge as a 'first step' towards disarmament, and the question of nuclear proliferations.

On the surface China remained unchanged on the WDC question. It had always advocated the convening of such a conference, had repeatedly issued calls to that effect and continued to do so after the test. But the subtle variation was that whereas China had supported previously both global ACD meetings and those attended by only some of the major powers, it now insisted upon global meetings only. It also made clear that, before the 'restoration' of its 'legitimate right' in the UN, it would not be involved in any UN-associated activities. The change in this regard could imply only two things: a) China viewed its newly-acquired nuclear status as a basis to claim an equal seat with the other 'big four' in a five-power summit conference; and b) with a

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<sup>66</sup> MacFarquhar, (above fn.34), op.cit., pp.226-7.

<sup>67</sup> It must also be remembered that Sino-American relationships were also entering a temporary stage of reduced hostility, with increasing use of the Warsaw link. If the Chinese had ever sought to become a nuclear power for increasing influence and prestige, they must have found the double development rather satisfying.

'bomb' in its hand, China felt more justified in demanding recognition and admission by the UN.

Beijing also shifted its position on the question of banning the 'use' of nuclear weapons. After the conclusion of the PTBT, China's previous preference in this regard was no longer apparent. In the official statement on the PTBT treaty issued on 31 July 1963, for instance, the PRC moved to demand a 'complete, thorough, total and resolute prohibition and destruction' of nuclear weapons.<sup>68</sup> The ban on use was missing from the four 'step-by-step' measures mentioned in the same statement. However, after Beijing conducted its first test, the preference for the ban on 'use' appeared again, in the form of a specific stress on a ban on 'first-use'. Beijing also started to advocate actively the value of a NFU agreement as a 'first step' to comprehensive disarmament.

It seems that Beijing's desire to reach a NFU agreement with all the other nuclear powers was genuine. The strategic need for such an agreement was obvious, and was emphasised by the low-profile nature of the test announcement and its unilateral NFU pledge. Furthermore, if Beijing did not really feel the need for a Sino-American NFU agreement, it would scarcely have taken the bold initiative of making a NFU proposal to the US, via the Warsaw link and before the 'Taiwan issue' was solved.

Lastly, Beijing displayed a decline in its interest in the subject of nuclear proliferation. Of the three major documents being considered here, the first two, published soon after the test, already showed a tendency to be less explicit and less militant about it. The last one, published on 22 November, completely dodged the issue. Did Beijing really change its mind? Or was the lack of interest in

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68 Above fn.4.

discussing the issue just a change of tactic, as part of China's overall defensive posture after the test? The following section explores these questions further.

#### AVOIDING THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION: A Change of Mind or a Change of Tactics?

For some seven months from late November 1964, Beijing deliberately avoided all public discussion of nuclear proliferation. Oran Young considers that this avoidance was primarily a change of tactics - that the pre-test stance of the PRC, favouring further proliferation, was 'a tactical stand in the Chinese push for their own nuclear capability', and so the post-test de-emphasis was a Chinese attempt to evade 'serious and sustained commitment to a pro-proliferation policy'.<sup>69</sup> This assumes that China had never really believed that the only way to achieve nuclear disarmament was to break the 'nuclear monopoly' with a greater number of nuclear weapon states, and that the primary motivation of China's pro-proliferation stance was to justify a Chinese 'bomb'. Thus, once it had the 'bomb', China no longer argued for the spread of nuclear weapons to other states, and refrained from raising any hopes that China might help other proliferators. Kenneth Lieberthal argues a slightly different case. He believes that it was the hope of repairing relations with Moscow, coupled with the fear of superpower sanctions, that persuaded the PRC to suddenly drop the subject of proliferation for a while.<sup>70</sup> He points out that: 'The almost total Chinese neglect of the proliferation

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69 Oran Young, 'Chinese Views on the Spread of Nuclear Weapons', CQ 18 (Apr.-June 1966), p.150.

70 Kenneth Lieberthal, 'The Impact on the USSR of Chinese Disarmament Policies, 1964-1967', in Larson, op.cit. (above fn.56), pp.268-9.

issue from late 1964 to May 1965, coincided with a phase of lessening of Sino-Soviet tension; Peking's subsequent emphasis on this issue coincided with a heightening of tension'.<sup>71</sup> Halperin shares only half of Lieberthal's view. He argues that Beijing resumed verbal support for nuclear spread solely because it became 'less concerned with the danger of a pre-emptive attack on [its] nuclear installations'.<sup>72</sup>

Young, Lieberthal, and Halperin all agree, however, that since China resumed discussing the non-proliferation issue 'soon' after China's second test, the 'correlation' - in Young's words - between the second test and resumption of the discussions on nuclear proliferation was 'notable'.<sup>73</sup> This second nuclear test was conducted on 14 May 1965. It was announced in a manner markedly different from the first test. There was no official Chinese government statement, no extensive press backup, and no new disarmament proposals. NCNA simply issued a press communiqué on the day of the blast, disclosing that 'China had successfully exploded another atom bomb'.<sup>74</sup> While Beijing did reiterate its previous positions on the defensive nature of its nuclear capability, on the unilateral NFU pledge, and on the need for a WDC, the tone and brevity of the communiqué leaves no doubt that the PRC had come to believe - or rather, wanted others to believe - that there was no longer much need to legitimise China's nuclear capability.

Whether it also reflects a lessening of concern in China over the danger of a pre-emptive strike, as suggested by Halperin, is still debatable. Sino-Soviet relations were then reverting to hostility,

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71 Ibid. p.261.

72 Halperin, China and Nuclear Proliferation (Chicago: The University of Chicago Center for Policy Study Monograph, 1966), pp.14-5.

73 Young, (above fn.69), op.cit., p.151.

74 'China Successfully Explodes Another Atom Bomb', NCNA, 14 May 1965, in BR, VIII/21, 21 May 1965, 6.

while Beijing was still trying to discern the true intentions of American policy over Vietnam. During much of 1965 the PRC leadership was engaged in a serious strategic debate about the precise nature of the American threat to China, and it was not until early 1966, following the purge of China's Chief-of-Staff, Lo Ruiqing, that they finally reached a conclusion on how to deal with the growing American presence in Indo-China.<sup>75</sup> The second Chinese test also provoked another wave of international protest, media in the US in particular urging the Johnson administration to take action to destroy Beijing's incipient nuclear capability.<sup>76</sup> These facts do not support the case that China had become 'less concerned' with the danger of a pre-emptive strike.

Yet renewed gestures from Washington aimed at relaxing Sino-American tension via a tacit assurance that the US had no intention of attacking China were not made to Beijing until April 1966.<sup>77</sup> Beijing by this time had decided to oppose both Moscow and Washington. Thus one is reluctant to support Halperin's view that the PRC resumed its public pro-proliferation posture because it was less concerned with a pre-emptive strike. This is not to deny that such a concern might have been important in prompting Beijing to adopt 'the policy of silence' on the issue of nuclear proliferation, since it wished neither to stir up any 'unrealistic expectation' that China could be the source of nuclear assistance (Young's view), nor to jeopardise the chance of improving

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75 For an analysis of this strategic debate, see Harry Harding and Melvin Gurtov, The Purge of Lo Jui Ch'ing (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand R-548-PR, Feb. 1971).

76 Editorial of New York Daily News, 17 May 1965.

77 See 'Rusk's Statement Before the Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 16, 1966', in Dept. of State Bulletin, LIV/1401, 2 May 1966, 693-5. This statement was not released until 17 Apr. 1966. See MacFarquhar, op.cit., (above fn.34), pp.213-4.

Sino-Soviet relations with a bellicose attitude towards the issue of nuclear proliferation which would be unacceptable to the new Kremlin rulers (Lieberthal's view), nor yet to encourage - or provide excuses for - the stronger nuclear powers to take action to destroy Beijing's nuclear capability (Lieberthal's and Halperin's view). The fact that these original considerations had a reduced priority would not in itself cause Beijing to break its silence. One of the major motivations for this move, as events later demonstrated, was apparently the desire of Beijing to further clarify its position on the issue, i.e. to discourage any 'unrealistic expectation' by stressing that China had no intention to become an unqualified source of nuclear proliferation. The other major motivation was probably that Beijing felt by spring 1965 that it could not remain silent on the issue, given the increasing international efforts to reach a global non-proliferation accord. In this context, one is inclined to suggest that Young, Lieberthal and Halperin have all overstated the relations between China's break of silence and its second test. The press communiqué on the second test did not make any reference to the issue of proliferation; Beijing's later remarks on proliferation did not mention the second test; and the earliest new statement on proliferation was not issued until late June, more than forty days after the second test.<sup>78</sup>

Zhou, in a message to the Eleventh WCAAHB conference in late July, claimed that international efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons were not only supporting the American nuclear monopoly and blackmail, but also hindering the achievement of the right of self-defence on the part of non-nuclear states.<sup>79</sup> The PRC then abandoned

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78 This was a NCNA broadcast which only touched on the subject of proliferation very briefly. See NCNA Hindi Broadcast to India, NCNA, 27 June 1965. Cited from Young, (above fn.69), op.cit., p.151.

79 Text of Zhou's message in NCNA, 27 June 1965. Cited from Young, Ibid.

its temporary restraint, and on 11 August the People's Daily reasserted the old line that the proliferation of nuclear weapons was the 'correct' way to prevent a nuclear war.<sup>80</sup>

Yet Beijing made no attempt to turn the WCAAHB conference into a pro-proliferation forum. In a major speech to the conference, Liu Ningyi, leader of the Chinese delegation, merely equated the meaning of nuclear proliferation to China's acquisition of nuclear status.<sup>81</sup> Beijing would have realised that a WCAAHB conference would not have welcomed any pro-proliferation propaganda. According to Young, its thinking may have been rather more complex, for he argues that the PRC was 'really more interested in gaining third world support for an expanded Chinese nuclear capability, than in encouraging the development of a lot of token programmes'.<sup>82</sup>

#### A NUCLEAR HELPING HAND FROM BEIJING: Myth or Reality?

A few months later, China made it clear that it would be 'unrealistic' for any country to expect China to offer assistance in the manufacture of the 'bomb'. On 29 September 1965, China's Foreign Minister, Chen Yi, in an unusual press conference, expounded these views:

There are two aspects to the question of nuclear co-operation. As for the peaceful use of atomic energy and the building of atomic reactors, China has already been approached by several countries, and China is ready to render them assistance; as for the request for China's help in the manufacture of atom bombs, this question is not realistic.

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80 'A Conference of Unity, Militancy And Victory', PD, 11 Aug. 1965, in BR, VIII/33, 13 Aug. 1965, 13-5.

81 Liu Ningyi, 'Holding High the Banner of Unity Against Imperialism', BR, VIII/32, 6 Aug. 1965, 23-6.

82 Young, op.cit., (above fn.69), p.152.

Any country with a fair basis in industry and agriculture and in science and technology will be able to manufacture atom bombs, with or without China's assistance. China hopes that Afro-Asian countries will be able to make atom bombs themselves and it would be better for a greater number of countries to come into possession of atomic bombs.<sup>83</sup>

While Chen's statement was remarkable in the sense that it was the first Chinese display of a reluctance to assist other states in developing nuclear weapons, it is also significant that he reserved Beijing's flexibility to share, when necessary, its nuclear technology with other states under the guise of 'nuclear co-operation' on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Beijing knew only too well that the division between civil and military nuclear programmes was extremely tenuous, for it had attained its weapon capability under a 'peaceful' civil nuclear research programme.<sup>84</sup>

It remains unresolved whether Chen's remarks of 24 September were meant to pave the way for, or put a brake on, Beijing's alleged nuclear co-operation programmes with Egypt and Indonesia. Clemens believes that Chen's statement offered a sign of China's 'maturity' on the question of nuclear proliferation - i.e. China was trying to dissuade any expectation that it was prepared to offer nuclear assistance to other states. But it could also be argued that Chen was preparing a theoretical basis for the legitimisation of China's 'peaceful' nuclear co-operation with other states, be it Egypt or Indonesia. This interpretation is consistent with a report in the New York Times of 5 August 1965 that Brigadier General Hartono, then Chief of the

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83 Chen Yi, 'China is Determined to Make All Necessary Sacrifices for the Defeat of U.S. Imperialism, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Chen Yi's Press Conference for Nearly 300 Chinese and Foreign Correspondents', BR, VIII/41, 8 Oct. 1965, 7-14.

84 For an account of China's development of the bomb, see Arnold Kramish, 'The Great Chinese Bomb Puzzle - and A Solution', Fortune, LXVIII/6, June 1966, 157-8.

Indonesian Army Arsenal, had predicted that Indonesia would be able to conduct its first nuclear test by the end of 1965.<sup>85</sup> However, the dramatic failure of the coup in Indonesia on 30 September, and the subsequent violent suppression of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), rendered Hartono's prediction unverifiable. Even if Chen's remarks had been intended to 'pave the way' for nuclear assistance to Indonesia, Beijing would have changed its mind after the failure of the coup, which led to a drastic deterioration in the relations between Beijing and Djakarta.<sup>86</sup> It is also possible that when the PRC realised how little influence it had over the Indonesian situation it had second thoughts on the whole question of offering nuclear assistance to other states. The prospects for Sino-Egyptian nuclear co-operation might thus have also been affected, leading to the eventual cancellation of any nuclear assistance agreement.

Chen Yi admitted that after China's successful test, 'several countries' had approached China for nuclear aid. Realising that its nuclear know-how was a powerful leverage in its relations with many countries in the Third World, Beijing must have faced a difficult dilemma. On the one hand came formidable international public pressure, not least from parts of the Third World, against the spread of nuclear weapons. On the other hand China was in desperate need of firm allies, particularly after the Sino-Soviet split and the Sino-Indian border dispute. The temptation to use the powerful leverage in improving China's difficult international situation must have been great.

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<sup>85</sup> NYT, 5 Aug. 1965. Cited from Clemens, op.cit., p.283.

<sup>86</sup> For Sino-Indonesian relations and the coup, see Antonie C.A. Dake, In the Spirit of the Red Bandung: Indonesian Communists Between Moscow and Peking 1959-1965 (The Hague: Mouton, 1973); S.W. Simon, The Broken Triangle: Peking, Djakarta, and the PKI (Baltimore, Md., Johns Hopkins Press, 1969); and T. Vitachi, The Fall of Sukarno (London: Andre Deutsch, 1967).

But why, among all countries, was Indonesia chosen as the only one with which Beijing seems to have conducted concrete negotiations about nuclear assistance? Several explanations are available.

First, Indonesia is a large Third World country, active and powerful in the Afro-Asian solidarity movement. The first Afro-Asian Conference, held in 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia, provided the PRC with a rare opportunity to expand its contacts with Third World countries. Obviously, Indonesia was a vital element in any plan Beijing may have had to construct either an anti-imperialism coalition or a post-PTB united front.

Second, there was a significant resemblance between Sukarnoist and Maoist ideologies, so much so that some have claimed that the two states shared a 'revolutionary nationalist élan'.<sup>87</sup> J.D. Armstrong summarises the resemblance between Mao and Sukarno in the following ways:

1. Both of them saw the transformation of their respective societies as a continuing revolution with international implications, and believed that 'revolution brought to the fore mental and spiritual as well as physical qualities in man'.
2. Both also emphasised the necessity of uniting all potential domestic and international revolutionary forces. Sukarno had called for the formation of an international anti-imperialism united front as early as 1933, long before Mao did so.
3. They both stressed a broader conception of 'the people' rather than the specific role of the industrial working class.
4. Sukarno described international relations as a constant struggle between the 'old established forces' and the 'new emerging forces'. This conforms to Mao's 'dialectical' view of the

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<sup>87</sup> This claim was made in J.M. Van de Kroef, 'Sino-Indonesian Partnership', Orbis (Summer, 1964), 332-356. This view was also shared by Simon. See Simon, op.cit., p.20.

contradiction and struggle between imperialism and revolution.<sup>88</sup>

Third, the Sino-Soviet rift increased the influence of Indonesia in the competition between Beijing and Moscow for control over both the international communists and non-aligned movements. Sukarno was not a communist. But the PKI was the largest and one of the more influential non-governing communist parties in the world, and Beijing cultivated Sukarno partly because of its existence. Moreover, in terms of the ongoing debate in the international Communist movement, both Moscow and Beijing eagerly wooed the PKI. In July 1964, Beijing even accused Moscow of 'ganging up with the Indonesian reactionaries in order to injure the Communist Party of Indonesia which upholds Marxism-Leninism'.<sup>89</sup> If one realises that the label 'Indonesian reactionary' could be applied to such non-communist elements as Sukarno himself, one appreciates how important the PKI was in the mind of the CCP leadership. So, as relations between Moscow and Djakarta became increasingly strained towards the latter half of 1964, the PRC quickly seized the opportunity and brought Sino-Indonesian relations into a state of unprecedented fraternity. By the spring of 1965 it was generally considered that an alliance relationship, informal or otherwise, existed between Beijing and Djakarta.<sup>90</sup> What remains unclear is whether a Sino-Indonesian nuclear co-operation programme had led to the

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88 J.D. Armstrong, Revolutionary Diplomacy, Chinese Foreign Policy and the United Front Doctrine (London, Univ. of California Press, 1977), pp.132-3. Armstrong also indicates that it is necessary to bear in mind that 'common ideology' could also be a 'barrier' to the development of a close relationship, as evidenced in the history of the relations among different European socialist movements (p.133). On the other hand, the Sino-Soviet rift could well be another example.

89 'CCP Central Committee's Reply to CPSU's Letter of 15 June 1964', in BR, VII/31, 31 July 1964.

90 See the discussion of this 'alliance' in Armstrong, op.cit., pp.130-1. Also in Vitachi, op.cit., pp.162-3.

alliance, or vice-versa. In any case, had it not been for the split between Beijing and Moscow, and Beijing's subsequent search for an independent role in the international arena, the Indonesian tie would not have been so firmly cemented at that particular moment.

There is a widespread belief that at the time of Chen Yi's press conference (29 September 1965) China was already contemplating sharing nuclear knowledge with other states. Indeed, according to Halperin, China appeared 'in fact, to have already done so with Egypt and Indonesia'.<sup>91</sup> Clemens is less certain. He states that: 'Rumour had it that Peking had planned to test an atomic device over Indonesian territory in 1965 and allow Sukarno partial credit'.<sup>92</sup> A more affirmative account has been offered by Lieberthal:

There is reportedly evidence that [the PRC] began giving nuclear information to Indonesia during or just prior to Foreign Minister Subandrio's visit to Peking in January 1965. This aid no doubt stopped after the abortive coup in Indonesia during the following September.<sup>93</sup>

Thus it appears that when Subandrio took a public stand favouring the spread of nuclear weapons, by stating that he would welcome the possession of nuclear weapons 'by every progressive nation in the world', he was not merely offering explicit support for a Chinese position, but was also hinting at the possibility of his country becoming a nuclear power, through a joint Sino-Indonesian venture.<sup>94</sup>

The case of Egypt is more obscure. An agreement on scientific and technical co-operation was concluded between Beijing and Cairo in

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91 Halperin, op.cit. (above fn.72), p.43.

92 Clemens, op.cit. (above fn.49), p.43.

93 Lieberthal, op.cit., p.264n. See also Tad Szulc, 'Sukarno Build-Up Linked to Peking', NYT, 8 Jan. 1965, in which it was specifically indicated that, as a result of Subandrio's visit, China had promised 'the training of Indonesian specialists at Chinese nuclear installations'.

94 Subandrio's statement was reported by NCNA. See NCNA, 25 Aug. 1965.

January 1965, and although the wording contained no reference to nuclear research, an Egyptian newspaper that April reported that there was a plan to send Egyptian nuclear scientists for training at China's installations.<sup>95</sup> However, there exists no evidence that this plan was ever implemented. It was also reported that Nasser wrote to Zhou after the 1967 War to ask for nuclear assistance, but that Zhou refused, emphasising: 'If the Egyptians wanted to step into the atomic field they would have to do it themselves. This was the way the Chinese did it and it was best'.<sup>96</sup> It seems highly unlikely, therefore, that Egypt ever received any form of nuclear assistance from China.

CHINA TO ATTEND DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: A Reasonable Hope Or Premature Optimism?

While verbal support for nuclear proliferation continued, Beijing's statements on ACD issues after 1965 became focused on attacking the accelerated international efforts to negotiate a non-proliferation accord. Their central theme was, as before, that the US and the Soviet Union were 'plotting the conclusion of a treaty to prevent other countries from developing nuclear weapons, and in this way to secure their nuclear monopoly'.<sup>97</sup> Conspicuously missing in these statements was the kind of sophisticated logic with which Beijing had previously expounded its case for the further spread of nuclear weapons. Neither was there any strong indication of a genuine Chinese objection to halting that spread. This shift in Beijing's policy was

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95 This report was quoted from Al Ahram by the NYT. See NYT, 9 April 1965.

96 In Yahuda, op.cit., pp.143-4, he cites Mohammed Heikal, Nasser: the Cairo Documents (London: New English Library, 1972), p.283.

97 See for instance, 'Preventing Nuclear Proliferation', BR, VIII/47, 19 Nov. 1965, 20.

so discernible that Rusk even claimed that all the nuclear powers, including 'possibly even' the PRC, were in agreement that nuclear proliferation was undesirable.<sup>98</sup>

Rusk's optimism was based in part upon Beijing's mild response to a move in the 20th UN General Assembly to organise a WDC. This was a follow-up to a resolution adopted by the Second Conference of Non-Aligned States which met in Cairo in October 1964, and it was envisaged that all nations would be invited. On 29 November 1965, the Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a preparatory committee that would arrange to convene, no later than 1967, a WDC to which all states - including China - would be invited.<sup>99</sup> Beijing's rapid official reaction to this resolution stated on 1 December that the PRC would 'certainly' neither attend a conference organised by the UN nor any other UN activities as long as its 'legitimate' right in the UN was not 'restored' and representatives from Nationalist China remained members of the body.<sup>100</sup>

Little mildness here, perhaps, but 1965 saw a tied vote on the question of China's representation in the UN, and some optimism existed that the PRC might be voted in at the next General Assembly. Beijing may have shared this optimism, and as a consequence reacted to the WDC resolution in a manner which was not entirely negative. Moreover, the resolution did not specifically stipulate that the WDC must be held within the framework of the UN, and thus Beijing's response could even be seen as confirmation of the PRC's participation in the WDC if the conference were held outside the UN. Four other indicators support this view. First, in a lengthy published review of the work of the

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<sup>98</sup> Rusk made this remark on 25 March 1966; see Larson, op.cit., p.252. Original source not given.

<sup>99</sup> The UN and Disarmament: 1945-1965, pp.103-5.

<sup>100</sup> NYT, 2 Dec. 1965, p.1.

20th General Assembly Beijing did not, as it normally would, condemn this WDC resolution.<sup>101</sup> Instead, the resolution was ignored, as if the PRC had deliberately left open the option of either to reject or to accept the invitation to the WDC. Second, Albania, whose moves in the UN sometimes reflected Beijing's thinking, voted affirmatively for the resolution. Third, a Japanese journalist reported from Beijing on 28 November that China considered the UN resolution on the WDC question a major diplomatic victory because this was the type of conference it had campaigned for since mid-1963.<sup>102</sup> Finally, in June 1966 rumours from Cairo hinted that the Chinese might attend the WDC if France also attended, if representatives from Nationalist China were excluded, and if Beijing were allowed to complete a planned series of nuclear tests.<sup>103</sup>

It is possible that Beijing did seriously envisage attending the proposed WDC. Particularly so if the PRC could be seated at the UN, and Nationalist China expelled from that body, before it was convened. The whole notion of holding the WDC outside the UN framework would then become irrelevant. Furthermore, if a conference were indeed held, Beijing would not have attended without contributing to the agenda. It would at least ask for the discussion of a NFU agreement, as a 'first step'. Unfortunately, the WDC never materialised. Nor was the PRC admitted into the UN for another six years. Instead, Beijing's diplomatic isolation, which had started during late 1965 with the disintegration of the bond between Beijing and Djakarta, was to continue and indeed became worse as China was engulfed by revolution.

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101 'The U.N. - A Market-Place for U.S.-Soviet Political Deals', PD, 27 Dec. 1965, p.1, in BR, IX/1, 1 Jan. 1966, 13-6.

102 Cited from Clemens, op.cit., (above fn.49), p.284.

103 Ibid.

## ENTERING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION: Retreat on the Diplomatic Front

The winter of 1965 was a period of failure for Beijing's diplomacy: in quick succession, China's fraternal ties with Indonesia, Dahomey, the Central African Republic, Cuba, and Ghana broke, destroying its attempt to build a post-PTB united front. Moreover, as the GPCR mounted, China became more inward looking and isolated. The fever of the revolution injected a remarkable degree of political irrationality into China's posture towards its external world, and at the peak of this convulsion, almost all Chinese ambassadors abroad were recalled and their posts left vacant. In Beijing, demonstrations were held outside foreign legations and staffs attacked. Even China's own foreign affairs apparatus suffered disruption; the Foreign Ministry was at one point taken over and run by a group of Red Guards, and Foreign Minister Chen Yi was subjected to mob violence. In sum, Chinese foreign policy during the GPCR period was characterised by an uninhibited sense of xenophobia, self-imposed isolationism, and a specific concern to uphold a rigid Maoist version of revolutionary-ideological purity.<sup>104</sup>

At the end of 1965 China was becoming increasingly anxious that war with the US might result from the situation in Vietnam. On 20 December, Zhou claimed that the US was 'making preparations' for expanding the war in Vietnam to all of Indochina and to China.<sup>105</sup> Lieberthal believes that Zhou's fear was genuine, and argues that it was therefore partly because of this anxiety that Beijing decided to

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104 See Yahuda, op.cit., chapters 7 and 8, pp.190-234; Wang Gungwu, China and the World Since 1949 (London: Macmillan, 1977), chapter 7, pp.106-30; and Alan Lawrence, China's Foreign Policy Since 1949 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), pp.189-204.

105 Kwan, op.cit., (above fn.19), p.81. Original source not given.

propose, back in November, a bilateral NFU agreement with the US.<sup>106</sup> Although America rejected this NFU proposal, it seems that in the indirect exchange of position statements between Zhou and Rusk, both Beijing and Washington signaled that it had no intention of attacking the other unless attacked first.<sup>107</sup>

However, the Byzantine nature of this exchange makes it uncertain whether these signals were actually received by their intended targets, and if so whether they were believed. Moreover, Zhou broke the agreement on secrecy: on 9 May 1966, the day of China's third test, he disclosed to the world the hitherto unpublicised American refusal to accept Beijing's NFU proposal.<sup>108</sup> This left Rusk in an awkward position, for he had to face an inquisitive press on 17 May and justify his refusal on the grounds that 'mere declarations on such matters would not be adequate'.<sup>109</sup> Yet on 25 May, US representatives at the Warsaw talks offered the Chinese a proposal whereby the US promised to consider entering a NFU agreement with China if it in turn agreed to sign the PTBT. Then, on 3 June, in a move which was perceived by China as a retaliation to Zhou's unilateral disclosure of the American refusal, the US State Department leaked the content of its own new proposal to the New York Times. This infuriated the Chinese, and on 20 June Beijing published an article describing the American offer as a 'big fraud', which was trying to 'fasten China to the tripartite test

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106 Lieberthal, op.cit., p.269.

107 For a collection of the texts of position statements involved in this indirect exchange, see MacFarquhar, op.cit., (above fn.34), p.222-9. The statements include: 1. 'Rusk's Statement ...' (above fn.77); 2. 'Chou's Four-point statement on China's Policy Towards the US, 10 Apr. 1966', in BR, IX/20, 13 May 1966, 5; and, 3. 'Rusk's Explanation Why the US Rejects a NFU Agreement, 17 May 1966', Dept. of State Bulletin, LIV/1406, 6 June 1966, 884-885.

108 Kwan, op.cit., p.136. Original source not given.

109 'Rusk's Explanation ...' (above fn.107).

ban treaty'. It also alleged that the US had planned to use China's refusal to be 'taken in' as 'a plausible excuse to refuse to undertake the obligation that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons, and put the blame on China'.<sup>110</sup>

This action ended the attempt to reach a bilateral NFU agreement with the US. It is interesting to note that Beijing's opposition to the PTBT was so strong that not even the lure of a possible NFU pledge from Washington could weaken it; a pledge which would have given the PRC a valuable security guarantee in the face of the dangerous Vietnam situation. Of course, two other possibilities can not be ruled out. First, Beijing may have come to believe that, whatever had happened (or might happen) in the Vietnam theatre, the US would not use nuclear weapons against China or even North Vietnam. And secondly, the American message of a peaceful intention may indeed have been received and trusted.

During early 1965, the situation in Vietnam, in particular the question of Hanoi's political-military strategy for dealing with the escalating American involvement, added greatly to the deepening Sino-Soviet rift. The failure of the February meeting between Mao and Kosygin, the long delay in acceding to Moscow's request to use the Chinese rail system to transport Soviet aid to Hanoi, and the victory for Maoist doctrine in the strategic debate within China's top leadership, symbolised by the publication of Lin Biao's famous article 'Long Live the Victory of People's War', were all symptoms of the trouble.<sup>111</sup>

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110 Observer, 'Exposing New US Fraud over Nuclear Weapons', PD, 20 June 1966, in BR, IX/26, 24 June 1966, 27-8. In this article the Chinese also mentioned that the US had made the proposal linking the PTB and the NFU agreement and then leaked it to the press.

111 See Hinton, op.cit. (above fn.25), for such analysis of events during early 1965, especially Chapter 4.

The renewed Sino-Indian border conflict in September 1965 also exacerbated the tension between Moscow and Beijing, and by the end of the year, the Soviet Union took the initiative in announcing that it was giving up hope for an early reconciliation with the PRC. On 6 November a Soviet Deputy Premier declared that the CPSU had done 'everything ... possible' to settle the differences with the CCP, and that any further conciliatory moves must now emanate from Beijing.<sup>112</sup> Sino-Soviet relations then regressed to a point where by the turn of the year armed border conflicts were reportedly a possibility, with ambassadors being quietly withdrawn from their posts during early 1966, which produced an increasingly warlike atmosphere.<sup>113</sup>

The situation did not get out of hand, because neither Moscow nor Beijing really sought armed conflict with the other at a time when the war in Vietnam required unity within the socialist camp. In a bid to defuse the explosiveness and demonstrate to the world that the 'party-to-party' tie between the CCP and the CPSU was still alive, Moscow sent the Chinese an invitation for the 23rd CPSU Congress in March 1966. Part of the Chinese leadership, notably Liu Shaoqi, wanted to grasp this opportunity to improve Sino-Soviet relations and pressed that a Chinese delegation should be sent. Mao, on the other hand, described the Russians as 'renegades and scabs' and strongly opposed Liu's suggestion. His argument was that if China stayed away from the congress, it would enable the CCP to unite with all the non-pro-Soviet forces in the international communist movement.<sup>114</sup> Liu was never in

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112 In Larson's 'Selective Chronology', Larson, op.cit., (above fn.56), p.250.

113 Observations made by Hinton, in Hinton, op.cit. (above fn.25), pp.133-4.

114 Mao, 'Speech at an Enlarged Meeting of the Politburo, 20 Mar. 1966', in Long Live Mao Zedong Thought (above Ch.3 fn.35), I, 634-40. Cited from Gittings, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.21), p.258.

any position to bargain with Mao. To say the least, he and his followers seemed to have been the major targets of the whole turmoil of the GPCR, which was then gathering in China. Thus Mao decisively rejected Moscow's invitation and crushed Soviet hopes of maintaining at least 'party-to-party' relations.

Mao's decision to break off totally with the Soviet Union meant that China was taking up a joint opposition against both Moscow and Washington. This reinforced Chinese allegations that 'Soviet-American collusion' was creating a 'counter-revolutionary ring of encirclement against China'.<sup>115</sup> Yet the decision had a deeper connotation: it was taken, according to Mao himself, in the light of China's internal political situation. Mao later told Edgar Snow that if China had compromised with either of the superpowers, there would have been 'a split on the home front'.<sup>116</sup> It is interesting to note that the upheavals of the GPCR, which purged thousands of officials at all levels of the bureaucracy and eventually toppled even China's formal head of state, were not regarded by Mao as 'a split on the home front'. By the same token, one can appreciate how deeply the leadership must have been divided on the issue of China's relations with the two superpowers.

One area in which the impact of the cultural revolution seemed to have been kept to a minimum was the Chinese nuclear development establishment.<sup>117</sup> There was a notable concentration of nuclear tests

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115 Commentator, 'Confessions Concerning the Line of Soviet-U.S. Collaboration Pursued By the New Leaders of the C.P.S.U.', Hongqi (Red Flag), No.2, 11 Feb. 1966. Reprinted in BR, IX/8, 18 Feb. 1966, 6-11.

116 Cited from Yahuda, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.17), p.184. Yahuda only says that this remark was made by Mao to Edgar Snow 'a few years later' after 1966, but gives no specific source.

117 Pollack argues that there was a slow-down in China's nuclear research and development programme between 1967-1968. See Jonathan D. Pollack, 'Chinese Attitudes Towards Nuclear Weapons, 1964-1969', CQ 42 (April-June 1972), p.254. The failure of the nuclear test on 24 Dec. 1967, could also possibly have something to do with the disruption during the period of the cultural revolution.

during the years 1966-1969. As we have seen, on 9 May 1966 China held its third test.<sup>118</sup> While the press communiqué was reflective of the political trend in China, i.e. the test was described as a political-ideological victory of Maoist doctrines, it offered nothing new in terms of nuclear disarmament.<sup>119</sup> What was puzzling was the fact that, while repeating Beijing's unilateral NFU pledge and emphasising the defensiveness of the Chinese nuclear programme, the communiqué also reiterated the proposal for a WDC. Such a reiteration seemed at odds with Zhou's public statement of a month before that a WDC would 'yield no useful, practical results' unless the US withdrew from Vietnam.<sup>120</sup>

This indicates that the Chinese leadership was in considerable confusion over the issue. On 14 May, five days after the third test, a Sino-Albanian statement reaffirmed Beijing's continued support for a WDC. But a little over a month later, on 20 June, in a press analysis (the same that revealed Washington's refusal to accept a NFU agreement with Beijing), it was stated that 'China will definitely not attend any world disarmament conference at the United Nations or outside it'.<sup>121</sup> It seems that Beijing had still not made up its mind on the issue at the end of the year. Although there were no more contradictory statements, Beijing failed to articulate any definite position. For example, the press communiqués on China's fourth and

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118 'China Successfully Conducts Nuclear Explosion Containing Thermo-nuclear Material', NCNA, 9 May 1966, also BR, IX/20, 13 May 1966, 4. It is believed that the test was not an H-bomb test, probably at the most Lithium 6 - a thermonuclear material - was involved.

119 'China Successfully ...' Ibid., and for the influence of the Cultural Revolution in the press communiqués for various Chinese nuclear tests during the period, see Pollack, op.cit., (above fn.117), pp.250-51.

120 Zhou's remark was made in his statement of 10 Apr. 1966, see 'Chou's Four-point Statement', in above fn.107.

121 Above fn.110.

fifth tests, conducted on 27 October and 27 December, completely ignored the WDC issue.<sup>122</sup>

Beijing's attitudes to other ACD issues by contrast had become firmly uncompromising. In the press analysis of 20 June, Beijing expressed doubts on the use of holding disarmament meetings, claiming: 'More than one thousand sessions of various disarmament meetings have been held in the post-war years, but the armaments of US imperialism have increased enormously instead of being reduced'.<sup>123</sup> Thus Beijing laid the blame for its rejection of the proposed WDC on America.

Beijing also discussed disarmament with reference to Vietnam. It argued that it could not 'sit at the conference table and discuss disarmament' while the 'US imperialism' was 'stepping up its aggression against Vietnam and threatening to spread the war flames to the whole of Indo-China and China'. Furthermore, the question of non-proliferation was also involved, though its allusion to the Vietnam question was more implicit:

The reason why the Soviet leaders were so impatient to strike a deal on the question of the prevention of nuclear proliferation was a hasty attempt to maintain the hegemony of the nuclear powers - the Soviet Union and the United States - through such a treaty so that they may collaborate in dominating the world, and at the same time to create the false impression that the international situation has relaxed so as to slacken and paralyse the anti-US imperialist struggle of the revolutionary people of the world.

Ultimately Beijing vowed: 'As long as the United States holds on to its nuclear weapons, China will determinedly continue to develop nuclear weapons and will never slacken its vigilance'. By saying this, it was really implying that if the US maintained its nuclear

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122 'China Successfully Conducts Guided Missile-Nuclear Weapon Test', NCNA, 27 Oct. 1966. And, 'China Successfully Conducts New Nuclear Explosion', NCNA, 28 Dec. 1966, in BR, X/1, 1 Jan. 1967, 6-7.

123 For this and the following references to the press analysis of 20 June, see fn.110.

capability, China would never discuss nuclear disarmament with the US, a position that had never been so openly stated before.

The rigid ideological nature of Chinese foreign policy, reflecting Mao's decision to confront both superpowers and also the effect of the GPCR, led to the termination of the exploratory exchanges of views on nuclear matters between Washington and Beijing via Warsaw, in the summer of 1966, and induced China publicly to vilify the Soviet Union. Beijing also ceased to participate in WPC and WCAAHB activities, rendering itself even more isolated than before. In April 1966, after a WPC meeting held in Budapest, Beijing charged that Moscow had 'exposed itself as the accomplice of US imperialism', because, in that meeting, Moscow 'took great pains' to sell the scheme jointly 'concocted' by the US and the Soviet Union on the 'prevention of nuclear proliferation'.<sup>124</sup> Also, the 9 May test communiqué included, for the first time in a detonation statement, an explicit attack on Moscow.<sup>125</sup>

Ever since summer 1964, Beijing had complained that the WPC was controlled by Moscow and was thus following an 'erroneous line' of policy.<sup>126</sup> But Chinese delegates continued to participate in various WPC meetings, partly because all possible channels - formal and informal - with the external world were important to the PRC, partly because Beijing wanted to wage a 'determined struggle' against Moscow on the issues regarding 'peace and disarmament'. A final confrontation came at a WPC meeting in Geneva in June 1966. At that meeting, according to Beijing, delegates from the PRC waged 'an intense and tit-for-

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124 'Soviet Leadership Exposes Itself as Accomplice of U.S. Imperialism', BR, IX/16, 15 Apr. 1966, p.22.

125 'China Successfully Conducts ...', above fn.118.

126 'At the 10th World Conference ...', above fn.22.

tat struggle' against the Soviets and publicly denounced Moscow for 'using the World Peace Council to peddle the US 'peace talks' fraud on the question of Vietnam'.<sup>127</sup> The Soviet Union lost its patience and the 'intense and tit-for-tat struggle' was to cost China its participation in future WPC activities. Some time in the second half of 1966, Moscow managed to prevent the Chinese member in the WPC Secretariat from renewing his Austrian visa and he was forced to leave his post. On 5 January 1967, Beijing lodged a letter of protest with the WPC Secretariat and then ceased all WPC activities, both internationally and internally.<sup>128</sup>

The end of China's participation in the WCAAHB meetings - another important forum of Beijing's unofficial diplomacy - took place even earlier in a more dramatic and abrupt manner. The PRC had planned to attend the 12th WCAAHB conference which was scheduled to open in Japan on 30 July 1966. On 20 July, Premier Zhou, as usual, sent a message greeting the conference, and called on the 'people of the world' to 'thoroughly expose and smash the criminal plot of the so-called "treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons"'. He also asserted that 'nuclear war can be prevented and nuclear weapons can be finally eliminated only after the peace-loving countries possess nuclear weapons and break the nuclear monopoly'.<sup>129</sup> Perhaps Zhou's pro-proliferation remarks disturbed the WCAAHB conference organisers, or perhaps Sino-Japanese relations in general had by then been worsened by the irrationality of the diplomacy associated with the GPCR. It became

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127 'Speech of Head of Chinese Delegation', BR, IX/26, 24 June 1966, 29-31.

128 See 'Peking and Arms Control', Current Scene, IX/8, 7 Aug. 1971, 11-2.

129 'Premier Chou En-lai Greet the 12th World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs', BR, IX/32, 5 Aug. 1966, 15-6.

clear on the eve of the conference that, although almost the entire Chinese delegation had arrived in Japan, the Japanese authorities were not prepared to grant Liu Ningyi, head of the Chinese delegation, a visa to enter their country. In protest, the Chinese delegates already in Japan immediately returned to Beijing, and China's long association with the WCAAHB conferences was terminated.<sup>130</sup>

From mid-1966 onwards, Beijing's ACD propaganda began to concentrate upon the international efforts to negotiate a non-proliferation treaty. By late 1966 it became clear that agreement between Washington and Moscow on the non-proliferation issue was imminent. On 10 October, Gromyko indicated that the US and the Soviet Union were 'striving to reach agreement to facilitate the conclusion of an international agreement' to halt the spread of nuclear weapons.<sup>131</sup> During the following month, the US joined in co-sponsoring a Soviet proposal at the UN, urging all states 'to take all necessary steps to facilitate and achieve at the earliest possible time, the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation'.<sup>132</sup> The overwhelming vote for this resolution (only Cuba abstained, and all other countries, except Albania, voted in favour) prompted the PRC to declare openly and clearly, in a press analysis published on 15 November, that it 'will never be party to the so-called nuclear non-proliferation treaty to deprive the non-nuclear countries of their rights, and injure the interests of the people of the world'.<sup>133</sup>

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130 Above fn.22.

131 NYT, 12 Oct. 1966, 1 and 10. Cited from Clemens, op.cit. (above fn.49), p.150.

132 Clemens, Ibid., pp.287-8, note 38.

133 Observer, 'Another Deal Between the Two Nuclear Overlords, the U.S. and the Soviet Union', PD, 15 Nov. 1966, and BR, IX/47, 18 Nov. 1966, 34-5.

The backbone of Beijing's contention against non-proliferation - that the 'prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons is feasible only when more or all countries possess them and when the US nuclear monopoly is completely broken' remained unchanged in the analysis of 15 November, but one new element was introduced. Beijing argued that the Soviet-American NPT efforts were also 'part of their monstrous conspiracy against China'.<sup>134</sup> It was not specified whether the 'monstrous conspiracy' was a nuclear one, but it was suggested that the rapid progress of China's nuclear development programme had made the two superpowers 'more anxious than ever to clinch such a deal in order to limit the influence of China'.<sup>135</sup>

This was also the first time that the PRC ever admitted, publicly but indirectly, that its nuclear capability would bring an increase in its political influence. Beijing was and still is very sensitive to any allegation that its increasing nuclear capability would give China a greater power status. Its standard position was spelt out in the November analysis:

China is continuing the development of its own nuclear weapons. But we will never consider ourselves entitled to any privilege on account of our possession of such weapons. Resolutely have we opposed, are opposing and will continue to oppose the big-nation doctrine. We have firmly advocated and will continue to advocate that all countries in the world, big or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, are equal.

Two other important ACD agreements, the Tlatelolco Treaty signed on 14 February 1967 to establish a NFZ in Latin America, and the Treaty on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space concluded on 27 January of the same year, received less attention and criticism from the PRC. The Tlatelolco treaty enjoys a very unique role in the arms control policy

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134 Ibid.

135 Ibid.

of the PRC in two respects: as will be discussed in the next chapter, it is the first ACD agreement devised since World War Two that the PRC has ever signed, and also one of the very few that Beijing has never attacked. However, Beijing did not sign the relevant protocol of the treaty relating to nuclear weapon states until six years after its conclusion.<sup>136</sup> Even then, the signature only came after much persuasion by the Latin American countries, particularly Mexico.

When negotiations on the Tlatelolco Treaty reached their final stage, the GPCR was fermenting in China. In May 1966, a working body of the Preparatory Commission for Denuclearisation of Latin America was asked specifically to 'explore informally' China's attitude towards the treaty.<sup>137</sup> It was presumed Beijing's response would be favourable, for at least four reasons:

- a) The initiative came independently from a group of non-aligned Third World states, which were free not only from the 'manipulation' of the two superpowers, but also from the influence of Yugoslavia and India, two of the leading Third World states that the PRC did not want to be associated with.
- b) A primary purpose of the NFZ arrangement was to prevent the presence of Soviet and American nuclear weapons in Latin America, and thereby reduce the possibility of superpower 'nuclear blackmail' - a task the PRC had always sought to further.
- c) China had shown a special preference for the NFZ concept, especially if a NFZ were to be established in an area without nuclear powers.

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136 The Tlatelolco Treaty has two 'Additional Protocols'. The first one, Additional Protocol I, concerns those non-Latin American countries that have 'de jure or de facto' territories in Latin America. The second, Additional Protocol II, is for the five nuclear powers to undertake obligations to honour 'the status of denuclearisation of Latin America' and not to use 'or threaten to use' nuclear weapons against parties of the Treaty.

137 This was indicated in Larson's chronology. See Larson, op.cit., (above fn.56), p.252. Original source not given.

d) China's support for the Latin American NFZ would bring ideological and political advantages. Beijing could demonstrate the sincerity of its propaganda stand of encouraging the Third World to struggle with the superpowers. Support could also improve China's relations with Latin American countries, and since most of these countries voted with Nationalist China on the question of China's UN representation Beijing might change their votes and facilitate its earlier admission to the UN.

But Beijing responded unfavourably. The atmosphere of the GPCR would have made it difficult for China to support any ACD agreement, especially one with which the two superpowers might become associated. Is it possible that China would have supported the Tlatelolco Treaty, had it not been for the GPCR? As with many such hypothetical questions, no answers are available. In any case, the fact that the treaty had been negotiated within the UN framework gave the PRC a prima facie excuse not to back it. Beijing's reply was given to the Mexican Ambassador in Cairo and its text was later circulated as a UN document. The PRC declared that it would 'have no part' in any UN activities since the UN had 'ignored all the rights' of the PRC, and therefore it was also 'in no position' to support the Tlatelolco treaty.<sup>138</sup>

When the treaty was signed in Mexico City on 14 January 1967, the Chinese press ignored the event. Such reticence was significant, if one considers that all other ACD activities had been, or were to be, attacked by the PRC during the period of the GPCR. Also significant was the fact that Albania did not vote against the treaty at the UN (it was 'absent'). Hence the fact that Beijing did not then support the treaty was not as ominous as it appeared, for if the US was to 'restore

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<sup>138</sup> This Chinese reply was reported in the New York Times, in NYT, 2 Oct. 1966, 27. See also Clemens, op.cit. (above fn.49), p.131.

all the rights' of the PRC in the UN, Beijing would find it difficult to continue its noncommittal stance.

The Outer Space Treaty did not fare so well as the Tlatelolco treaty. Although never mentioned by the Chinese press before its conclusion, it was attacked by it soon afterwards. The PRC obviously perceived the Outer Space Treaty as something basically different from the Tlatelolco treaty, in that the former was further proof of the 'unofficial alignment' between Moscow and Washington.<sup>139</sup> Yet Beijing attacked the Outer Space Treaty with far less enthusiasm than it did the NPT, because it perceived the latter as a continuation of the PTBT 'plot' aimed at China's nuclear capability. To the PRC, at least at that time, the question of outer space arms control was unconnected to this 'plot' and thus a lesser concern. Indeed China's attack on the Outer Space Treaty was never against its substance. Rather, it was always put as an indictment for the Soviet 'crime' in signing an ACD treaty with the US at a time when American 'aggression' against Vietnam was 'intensifying'.<sup>140</sup> This in fact reflected how the PRC had begun to feel extremely disturbed about the improvement in Soviet-American relations, to which the PTBT, the Outer Space Treaty, and the NPT negotiations had all contributed. So worried was Beijing that it shifted its stance slightly and started to identify a Soviet-American 'nuclear-military alliance' directed against the PRC. The following section will examine this development.

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139 'Imperialist Camp Enters Gloomy New Year', BR, X/4, 20 Jan. 1967, pp.29-31.

140 Ibid.

THE CONTENTIONIST VS. COLLUSIONIST DEBATE: From Non-Proliferation to a 'Nuclear-Military Alliance' Against China.

The rapid progress of China's nuclear development programme made it a H-bomb power on 17 June 1967.<sup>141</sup> But this did not make China feel any more secure. During 1967, the continuing development of 'Soviet-American collusion' on a 'nuclear monopoly' led Beijing to believe that an 'anti-China plot' was being formed by Moscow and Washington. The hysteria was triggered off by the 1967 Glassboro meeting between Kosygin and Johnson, which was characterised by China as 'the beginning of a new period of US-Soviet collusion in which the Soviet revisionists has [sic] flung themselves completely at the feet of the US imperialists and played a secondary role in the counter-revolutionary 'holy alliance' dominated by the United States'.<sup>142</sup>

The Chinese in fact greatly distorted what happened at Glassboro. According to one comment on the meeting:

If one reads the American accounts of this meeting, one receives the impression that great cordiality prevailed. In Pravda, ... Soviet readers were frostily informed that the first meeting took place at Johnson's request and that Kosygin read a stern lesson to him about Israel, Vietnam, and other assorted American misdeeds. But the rosiest account came from the ever-watchful China: 'Through the Glassboro talks, US imperialism and Soviet revisionism have arrived at an overall coordination and collaboration in their global strategy. They have not only struck deals over this or that issue, but have also made a package deal'. However reasonable such a package deal would have been, ... it existed, alas, only in the masochistic imagination of the Chinese scribe.<sup>143</sup>

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141 'China's First Hydrogen Bomb Successfully Exploded', NCNA, 17 June 1967, and BR, X/26, 24 June 1967, 6-7.

142 Observer, 'Big Betrayal at Hollybush', PD, 3 July 1967, in BR, X/28, 7 July 1967, 23-25.

143 Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, The History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-67 (N.Y.: Praeger, 1968), p.749. For discussions on the impossibility of a real détente between Moscow and Washington then, see pp.742-3.

Nonetheless, Beijing was to insist that the Glassboro meeting had paved the way for 'a vicious deal' against China.<sup>144</sup> It was convinced that both Moscow and Washington regarded China as their 'number one enemy', which was a 'common basis' for their 'collusion'. Furthermore, both NPT and Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) activities were cited by the PRC to justify its verdict on the Glassboro talks. Accusing Moscow and Washington of trying to reach a NPT 'in the hope of using it as a means of agitation against China and to contain socialist China's influence abroad', Beijing, on 3 September, contended that an agreed draft of the NPT was 'one of the concrete results of the secret talks in Glassboro'.<sup>145</sup> In addition, on 16 October, Beijing claimed that the US was about to construct an ABM system 'in an all-out agitation against China', and a French report was quoted in support of an allegation that the US decision to build such a system stemmed from 'a tacit understanding' reached by Johnson and Kosygin at Glassboro.<sup>146</sup> In the same comment Beijing also characterised Soviet-American 'collusion' - the nature of which had previously been described as a 'nuclear monopoly' - as Soviet-American 'military collaboration' against China.

Even eight months after the Glassboro talks, Beijing's resentment of them was being recorded in the Chinese press. According to NCNA in March 1968:

In recent years, Moscow and Washington have been busily plotting how to use their nuclear weapons to 'contain' China. During their Glassboro talks, they also reached tacit agreement on this question and stepped up their

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144 NCNA, 25 June 1967, in Larson, op.cit., (above fn.56), p.258.

145 Commentator, 'Nuclear Hoax Cannot Save U.S. Imperialism and Soviet Revisionism', PD, 3 Sept. 1967, BR, X/37, 8 Sept. 1967, 34; and, 'Soviet Revisionism Steps Up Collaboration With U.S. Imperialism', BR, X/52, 25 Dec. 1967, 40-43.

146 Commentator, 'The Pitiful Struggle of U.S. "Nuclear Overlord"', PD, 16 Oct. 1967, and BR, X/44, 27 Oct. 1967, 36 and 39.

preparation to carry out this counter-revolutionary plot ... Soviet revisionism has become the de facto military ally of US imperialism in opposing China.<sup>147</sup>

Beijing did not confine the meaning of the 'collaboration' between Moscow and Washington to a simple inter-state 'anti-China plot'. It indicated that such 'collaboration' was directed against the PRC because 'China is now the biggest obstacle in the way of the US counter-revolutionary strategy for world domination and the Soviet betrayal of the revolutionary interests of the people of the world'.<sup>148</sup> This line of reasoning was not created merely for propaganda, it illuminated the basic Chinese vision of what was taking place at a time when it perceived itself as the 'bastion of socialism' and the centre of world revolution.<sup>149</sup>

Although the PRC had briefly noted in October 1967 that there was a military element in the 'collusion' between Washington and Moscow, it was not until March 1968 that it highlighted this aspect of the situation. The precipitating factor was the agreement reached by the three nuclear powers at the ENDC on 7 March (France never attended that committee) to offer a guarantee of nuclear protection to non-nuclear NPT signatories. Two days later, Beijing alleged that the three-power agreement was a 'grave new step' which showed that 'the Soviet clique' had 'openly formed with US imperialism a nuclear-military alliance against China and against all revolutionary peoples'.<sup>150</sup> It was in this statement that the phrase 'nuclear-military alliance' was first used.

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147 Cited from Pillsbury, op.cit. (above fn.44), p.18. Originally appeared in SCMP No.4131, 5 March 1968, 29-30.

148 'Soviet Revisionism Steps Up ...' (above fn.145).

149 See Yahuda's analysis in Yahuda, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.17), p.192.

150 NCNA, 9 March 1968. Cited from Pollack, op.cit., (above fn.117), p.257.

However, the PRC soon showed a concern that it might have been premature in making such an allegation. On 13 March, another article on the same subject covered the same ground as that of the 9th, but avoided any implication that the 'alliance' had already been 'openly formed'.<sup>151</sup> Instead, it stressed that the US and the Soviet Union were 'forming an open nuclear-military alliance'. This shift of emphasis was not accidental, for until the end of the year, when Beijing completely dropped the 'alliance' theme, every new step in Soviet-American ACD efforts was depicted as a movement towards the forming of such an alliance, rather than a result of it. For instance, Beijing's response to the adoption of the NPT by the UN General Assembly on 12 June, published the next day, characterised the NPT as 'a big step forward' in Soviet-American collaboration against China.<sup>152</sup> Similarly, when Resolution 255 (through which the three nuclear powers involved in the work of the NPT undertook to offer nuclear protection to non-nuclear NPT signatories) was adopted by the UN Security Council on 19 June, the Chinese could still denounce it as 'a grave step in the materialisation of a US-Soviet military alliance'.<sup>153</sup> The same treatment had also been accorded to the Soviet-American initiative to discuss the restriction of their ABM systems. For the Chinese, such an initiative was 'yet another important step' of the US and the Soviet Union 'to enter into' an anti-China nuclear-military alliance 'under the cloak of "nuclear disarmament"'.<sup>154</sup>

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151 Commentator, 'A Grave Step in Forming a U.S.-Soviet Counter-Revolutionary Nuclear-military Alliance', PD, 13 Mar. 1968, in BR, XI/12, 22 Mar. 1968, 31-2.

152 Commentator, 'Nuclear Fraud Jointly Hatched by the United States and the Soviet Union', PD, 13 June 1968, in BR, XI/25, 21 June 1968, 17-8.

153 'Dirty Deal on Deal', BR, XI/27, 5 July 1968, 33.

154 Ibid.

Beijing's criticism of the NPT was not confined to its 'Sino-centric' characteristics. It also attacked the NPT as an 'out-and-out unequal treaty' which was 'more unscrupulous and outrageous' than the PTB:

Under this treaty, the US imperialism and Soviet revisionists are not only allowed to produce and stockpile nuclear weapons and expand their nuclear bases, but also undertake no commitments whatsoever not to use nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear states; on the other hand, the non-nuclear states are totally deprived of their right to develop nuclear weapons for self-defence ... In reality, it is tantamount to a demand that the other countries forever accept the position of nuclear monopoly of US imperialism and Soviet revisionism and live at their mercy.<sup>155</sup>

In short, the Chinese saw NPT as an instrument with which Washington and Moscow could 'turn other countries into their 'protectorates', so as to control and enslave them at will'.<sup>156</sup>

Despite its claim that the NPT was more 'unscrupulous and outrageous' than the PTBT, Beijing did not accord the NPT the kind of extended attack which the PTBT had received. Perhaps the implications of the PTBT were more serious than that of the NPT. The PTBT was concluded when China was committed to its first nuclear test, and was seen by Beijing as part of an international 'conspiracy' to prevent China from 'going nuclear'. The NPT, on the other hand, not only did not affect the continuous development of China's nuclear programme, it actually legitimised the existence of such a programme. And other events perhaps also intervened, such as the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, a reassessment of China's perception of the Soviet-American strategic relationships and, inevitably, the possibility of a Soviet-

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155 'Jen-Min Jih-pao Comments on Complete Text of Nuclear Non-proliferation Draft Treaty', NCNA, 24 Jan. 1968, in SCMP No.4108, 26 Jan. 1968, 5.

156 Ibid.

American strategic dialogue which was looming during most of 1969 and finally materialised at the end of that year.

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia took place during the night of 20 August 1968. On 22 August NCNA described it as 'the death-bed struggle of the Soviet ... clique in an attempt to avert the crisis of disintegration and imminent destruction of the entire modern revisionist bloc'.<sup>157</sup> On 23 August Zhou added that the invasion was 'the most barefaced and typical specimen of Fascist power politics played by the Soviet revisionist clique against its so-called Allies', and he declared that China would 'firmly support the Czechoslovakian people in their heroic resistance and struggle against the Soviet occupation'.<sup>158</sup> However, behind these tough words lay a deeper concern. Prior to the invasion, there had been a massive Soviet military build-up along the Sino-Soviet border. Of course one could argue that Moscow's move was intended to prevent the PRC from taking military advantage of the invasion of Czechoslovakia.<sup>159</sup> But to the PRC it appeared possible that Moscow was making preparations for a military operation against China. Moreover, the proclamation of the 'Brezhnev Doctrine', limiting the sovereignty of socialist countries provided further grounds for alarm. On 21 September, Beijing condemned Moscow and Washington for 'setting up together' nuclear bases around China, and warned:

In rigging up the anti-China ring of encirclement, the first aim of US imperialism and Soviet revisionism is of course to set up a strategic encirclement and prepare to launch military provocations against China.<sup>160</sup>

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157 NCNA, 22 Aug. 1968. Cited from Pollack, op.cit., (above fn.117), p.262.

158 Text of Zhou's statement in Keesings, op.cit., (above fn.38), pp.105-6.

159 This is Hinton's argument, in Hinton, op.cit., (above fn.25), p.159.

160 'Chinese Soldier Warns Anti-China Ring of Encirclement Designers', NCNA, 21 Sept. 1968, in SCMP No.4266, 26 Sept. 1968, 31.

There followed on 28 December 1968 a communiqué announcing Beijing's second successful H-bomb test. This contained a new element in the exchanges. Whereas the September comment had discussed the Soviet-American relations within the framework of a possible super-power 'nuclear-military alliance' against China, the test communiqué referred to that relationship as one in which the US and the Soviet Union were 'both colluding and struggling' with each other.<sup>161</sup> The addition of the element of 'struggling' was unusual, in that in those days Chinese statements of tens of thousands of words involving descriptions of Soviet-American relations never made even a single reference to the existence of any contention between Moscow and Washington. Did this therefore suggest that Beijing had, all of a sudden, come to realise that the two big powers were, at times, conflicting with each other?

Only a few careful observers of Chinese politics have attempted to answer this question. According to Sargent and Harris, there existed in the early 1970s a 'collusion vs. contention' debate inside the Chinese leadership, with the 'collusionists' perceiving the Soviet-American relationship as basically co-operative and the 'contentionists' considering the same relationship as essentially antagonistic.<sup>162</sup> If one applies Sargent and Harris's argument to the situation of the late 1960s, one sees that the debate was already in existence. One could even trace a steady retreat of the collusionists between March 1968 and November 1969.

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161 'China Successfully Conducts New Hydrogen Bomb Test', NCNA, 28 Dec. 1968, in BR, XII/1, 3 Jan. 1969, 5-6. (Emphasis added).

162 Unfortunately Sargent and Harris have not written extensively on this subject. See Peter L. Sargent and Jack H. Harris, Chinese Assessment of the Superpower Relationship, 1972-1974 (McClellan, Va.: The BDM Corp., BDM/W-75-128-TR, 30 June 1975).

The collusionists made major headway, on 9 March 1968, with the accusation that the two superpowers had 'openly formed' a 'nuclear-military alliance'.<sup>163</sup> But only four days after this, they were forced to publicly retract this analysis, saying that such an alliance was merely 'in the process of being formed'.<sup>164</sup> Quite possibly, the revision had resulted from the pressure of the contentionists. By the end of 1968, the phrase 'nuclear-military alliance' was dropped and the assertion that the two superpowers were both 'colluding and struggling' with each other took its place. This represented a considerable defeat for the collusionists, but not necessarily a total victory for the contentionists. Indeed the force of the collusionist camp proved to be strong enough to prevent the other from publicly elaborating the contentionist line until late March 1969.

The analysis of Sargent and Harris shows the collusionists led by Lin Biao and the contentionists by Zhou.<sup>165</sup> A key role in the defeat of the collusionists was played by the fact that Lin was held responsible for the failure of the Zhen-bao-dao conflict, and this changed dramatically the balance between the contentionists and the collusionists.<sup>166</sup> The conflict referred to took place in early March 1969, when the PLA ambushed a Soviet patrol on a disputed island known to the Chinese as Zhen-bao-dao (to the Soviets as Damiansky).<sup>167</sup>

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163 Above fn.150.

164 Above fn.151.

165 See Sargent and Harris, op.cit. (above fn.162), especially chapters 4 and 5.

166 Hinton discusses how Lin was charged with the responsibility for the failure; see Hinton, op.cit., (above fn.25), p.285.

167 For a reference to the 'Zhen-bao-Dao' incident, see, for instance, Thomas W. Robinson, 'The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute: Background, Development, and the March 1969 Clashes', American Political Science Review (Dec. 1972), 1175-1202.

Unofficial accounts suggest that, after the skirmish, the Soviet Union began seriously to contemplate launching a 'surgical' strike against China's nuclear installations. It has been alleged that Moscow originally hoped that the Americans would join them but that instead the USA tacitly dissuaded the Soviet Union from taking such extreme action.<sup>168</sup>

Despite these dramatic events, the change in the balance between the contentionists and the collusionists occurred gradually. On 21 March 1969, Beijing Review referred to the superpower relationships as 'contending and colluding', and, by doing so, revived for the first time in just over a year the use of the description 'contending'.<sup>169</sup> But the term 'contending' was mentioned only once in the article, and there was no substantiation or elaboration to back up that adjective. Moreover, the title of the article, 'Counter-Revolutionary 'Holy Alliance' - Soviet Revisionism is US Imperialism's No. 1 Accomplice', was unmistakably collusionist.

By the time of the 9th CCP Party Congress in April 1969, however, it became obvious that the contentionists had considerably improved their position. Although Lin was named Mao's heir in the new constitution adopted by congress, and was charged with the symbolically-

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168 A Soviet plan to conduct such a 'surgical' strike was revealed in H.R. Halderman and Joseph DiMona, The Ends of Power (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1978), pp.88-94. A more detailed discussion of this has been undertaken in Chinese, see Chen, Yu-Chen, 'Both Moscow and Washington Have Had Plans to Strike Mainland China With Nuclear Weapons', The Chinese Monthly (Chung-Kuo-Yueh-Kan), II/8, 72-8. Halderman's revelation was refuted by Allen Whiting, in 'Sino-American Detente', CQ 82 (Apr.-June 1982), 334-41. But it has been supported by US military experts; see 'General Backs Halderman's Version of Soviet-Chinese War Alert', The Times (London), 17 Feb. 1978.

169 'Soviet Revisionism Is U.S. Imperialism's No.1 Accomplice', BR, XII/12, 21 March 1969, 30.

important task of delivering the main report, he was forced, according to Zhou's revelations in 1973, to discard his original report and read another text against his will.<sup>170</sup> This text made Lin contradict his previous position and amplified the contentionist theme:

US imperialism and Soviet revisionist social-imperialism ... collude and ... contend with each other in a vain attempt to redivide the world. They acted in coordination and work hand in glove in opposing China, opposing communism and opposing people, in suppressing the national liberation movement and in launching wars of aggression. They scheme against each other and get locked in strife for raw materials, markets, dependencies, important strategic points and spheres of influence. They are both stepping up arms expansion and war preparations, each trying to realise its own ambitions.<sup>171</sup>

In addition, Lin also identified four 'major contradictions' in the world, and thereby introduced the concept of 'the contradiction between imperialist and social-imperialist countries', clearly an echo of the contentionist thesis.<sup>172</sup>

Just exactly how Lin was forced to read this revised report remains a political mystery. But it appears that sometime between April and October 1969 a compromise was reached between the contentionists and the collusionists. By October of that year, in celebrating the anniversary of the founding of the PRC, both Lin and Zhou could discuss Soviet-American relations with adequate, but not identical,

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170 See Zhou, 'Report to the Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China', in The Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1973), esp. pp.4-5.

171 Text of Lin Biao's report appeared in BR, XII/18, 30 April 1969, 16-35. (Emphasis added).

172 Lin's report could have been written by Mao. In Zhou's report of 1973 cited in fn.170, Zhou indicated that Lin's report was drawn up under Mao's 'personal guidance'.

elaborations on the elements of both 'contention' and 'collusion'.<sup>173</sup> Yet the compromise was not durable. The tug of war between the two conflicting views continued intermittently and became prominent again, even after the demise of Lin in September 1971.

The announcement on 25 October 1969 of the SALT negotiations between the US and the USSR came at a crucial moment, as it provided a test of strength in the conflict between these two Chinese factions. This is how Beijing reacted, on 14 November, to the birth of SALT:

This [SALT] is a big plot. It shows that the United States and the Soviet Union are contending with each other, each seeking to maintain its own nuclear superiority by restricting the other, while at the same time both are colluding with each other in a futile effort to further develop their nuclear monopoly, which has gone bankrupt, and continue to carry out their nuclear threat against the people of the world.<sup>174</sup>

While such an interpretation clearly showed that the compromise was still intact, it did reveal a significant strengthening of the collusionist position, as the phrase 'nuclear military alliance' was back after being absent for twelve months.

This strengthening of the collusionist position was understandable, for the initiation of a direct bilateral strategic dialogue between the two superpowers appeared to vindicate their stance. It even enabled them to review the action of the two superpowers on 7 October in submitting the seabed arms control draft treaty to the Geneva-based Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD). On 21 November Beijing's press dubbed this draft treaty 'another nuclear swindle' and went on to characterise its joint submission as 'a new step' by the two superpowers 'to speed up their collaboration ... to

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173 See 'Vice-Chairman Lin Piao's Speech', and 'Speech by Premier Chou En-lai', both published in BR, XII/40, 3 Oct. 1969, respectively 15-16 and 17-18.

174 'Essence of So-called Preliminary Talks on "Strategic Arms Limitation"', BR, XII/46, 14 Nov. 1969, 28. (Emphasis added).

legalise their intensified efforts in carrying out the nuclear armament race on the seabed'.<sup>175</sup> This was remarkable not just because it took the PRC more than six weeks to produce a public response to this draft treaty, but also because the formulation seemed to have broken the compromise, in that only 'collaboration' between the superpowers was explicitly acknowledged.

Although this change was short-lived (on 22 December, when China published its attack on the Soviet-West German negotiations on the question of 'mutual renunciation of the use of force', it repeated the line that Moscow was 'colluding and contending' with Washington 'for hegemony over Europe')<sup>176</sup>, in fact both terms disappear from discussion, for during 1970 and 1971 the PRC avoided mentioning the essence of Soviet-American relations. When necessary, it discussed Moscow and Washington separately, but never together. In addition, virtually no comments came from Beijing on the progress of the SALT negotiations during this period.

#### ALL QUIET ON THE 'SALT' FRONT: Indecision or Pragmatism?

There are three possible explanations for Beijing's silence on the SALT issue between 1970 and 1971. First, the Chinese leadership could not agree on what to say. Second, the PRC feared that its verbal attack on the SALT could produce unwanted consequences. Third, China refrained from commenting upon SALT because it was taking new policy initiatives towards Moscow and Washington. In the end, both the second and the third possibilities appear plausible.

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175 'Another Nuclear Swindle', BR, XII/44, 21 Nov. 1969, 30. (Emphasis added).

176 Commentator, 'A Dirty Deal', PD, 22 Dec. 1969, in BR, XII/51-52, 26 Dec. 1969, 42-43.

Pillsbury believes that Beijing became silent on the SALT issue because the Chinese leadership were unable to work out another compromise formula to interpret the state of Soviet-American relationships.<sup>177</sup> This assumes that the initiation of the SALT talks had intensified and complicated the struggle between the contentionists and the collusionists. But there is little evidence to prove that the intensification of the struggle had indeed contributed to the existence of any indecisiveness as alleged. In any case, Pillsbury's belief is question-begging in the sense that it does not explain:

- a) Why the original formula - 'colluding and contending' - suddenly became unacceptable, especially after it had been employed once, in November 1969, to characterise the inception of SALT?
- b) Why it took the PRC more than two years, an exceptionally long period, to reach another consensus, or compromise, with regard to Beijing's view of the superpower relationship?
- c) Why China refrained from mentioning SALT until May 1972, nearly eight months after the eclipse of the chief collusionist, Lin Biao? Should not the removal of Lin from the struggle between the two differing views have made a compromise easier to achieve and earlier?

Alternatively, it is possible that Beijing might have feared that its continuous verbal vilification of the SALT negotiations would produce counter-effects. A China publicly critical and hostile to SALT could have promoted the esprit de corps between Washington and Moscow, and thus might have facilitated the progress of the negotiations and also brought a joint Soviet-American 'anti-China' mentality. As a consequence, it was not until Beijing entered the UN and achieved rapprochement with the US that China felt able to criticise SALT, and to pass judgement on that Soviet-American relationship. China remained

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<sup>177</sup> Pillsbury, op.cit., (above fn.44), p.26.

silent when silence seemed the best policy, as had happened before in the 1950s, when Beijing censored all public references to atomic issues because it feared that President Truman might use nuclear weapons against China in order to bring an early end to the Korean War.<sup>178</sup>

The third possibility, which does not contradict the assumption (contained in the second possibility) that Beijing had remained silent out of fear, is that China was seeking to improve both Sino-Soviet and Sino-American relations. China's opening towards Washington became evident in April 1971 with the visit of a US table tennis team to the PRC, which led to Kissinger's clandestine meeting with Zhou and Mao and eventually to President Nixon's arrival in China on 21 February 1972. But well-documented research indicates that in the year before Beijing's public opening to the US, there was a concrete attempt in Beijing (and for that matter, in Moscow as well) to mend the schism between China and the Soviet Union.<sup>179</sup> And, so this argument goes, it was not until the PRC was sure that the 1970 'pro-Soviet tilt' was going to fail, that it decided to take up the American option. This analysis identifies three major forces dominating the process of foreign policy decision-making: the military faction led by Lin which favoured the pro-Soviet tilt, the moderates led by Zhou who favoured a pro-American policy, and the radicals who were anti-Soviet but not necessarily pro-American. Thus the analysis goes:

From the standpoint of the Military faction it [the pro-Soviet tilt] was a first step in a long-range strategy of struggling against the U.S. From their point of view, while the U.S. was reeling from political and economic crises and military defeat, the revolutionary people of Asia should unite and drive the U.S. imperialists out of Asia ...

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178 Hsieh, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.22), p.3.

179 John Garver, 'Chinese Foreign Policy in 1970: The Tilt Towards the Soviet Union', CQ 82 (Apr.-June 1980), 214-49.

Seen from the Moderate viewpoint, the tilt was probably mandated in the first instance by a need to ensure the military faction's co-operation in rebuilding the Party and governmental apparatus and repressing disorder. By supporting the tilt ... the Moderates also laid a basis for a future policy from seeming pro-American and cast the opponents to that policy in a pro-Soviet light. It also divided the Radicals from the Military faction on issues of foreign policy. From the Moderate perspective, the 1970 tilt ... was a tactical move through which Zhou Enlai built the coalition of support which enabled him to push through, with Mao Zedong's critical backing, his long thwarted policy. To the Moderates, the 1970 tilt probably had secondary utility as a stratagem designed to fool the Soviet leaders and lessen their negative reaction to the rapprochement with the US.<sup>180</sup>

The above analysis challenges Pillsbury's assumption that during 1970-71 Beijing could not achieve a compromise view in its assessment of superpower relationships. Such a view was achieved, and it was predominantly that of the collusionists. Consequently, a policy of reconciliation with Moscow was followed. It is therefore possible that the contentionists, while feigning support for Lin Biao's view and moves, managed to persuade the collusionists that it was better to avoid passing comments on the relationship between Moscow and Washington, so that Beijing's tilt towards Moscow would be less discernible and the chance of US interference would be minimised. For hostile references to Soviet-American relations, and especially to SALT, would not please Moscow and thus ran contrary to the aim of Sino-Soviet reconciliation.

It is significant to note that China's only reference to superpower relationships during this period of silence reflected a strong collusionist influence, thus substantiating in part the claim that the collusionist view was then in the ascendancy. During 1970-71 there were a number of occasions when it was to be expected that the PRC would comment on the superpower relationship, yet this did not happen. These included, for instance, the US announcement of its plan to

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

'consolidate, reduce, realign or close' some of its overseas military bases,<sup>181</sup> the success of Beijing's first satellite launch,<sup>182</sup> and the signing of the Soviet-West German treaty on 'mutual renunciation of the use of force'.<sup>183</sup> The only exception was the agreement, on 11 February 1971, of the seabed arms control treaty. On 5 March Beijing attacked this treaty as a 'plot' of the two superpowers 'to divide and dominate the seabeds and oceans'.<sup>184</sup> Nowhere in this comment was any reference made to the existence of any elements of contention, or even competition, between Washington and Moscow.

A SURPRISE CALL FOR A WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: China Refuses to be Seen as a Nuclear Power

Although the PRC pursued a policy of silence with regard to SALT and the Soviet-American strategic relationship, this did not prevent it from commenting on other issues. In particular, it moved to revive the idea of a WDC. This was done in a joint statement of the PRC's China-Japan Friendship Association and a visiting delegation of the Japanese Socialist Party on 1 November 1970, which reiterated China's proposal that 'a summit conference of all the countries in the world ... be convened to sign an agreement on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons' and, 'as a first step', to reach 'an

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181 Hung Zhuangzhi, 'U.S. Imperialism's "Reduction" of Military Bases Is a Big Fraud', BR, XIII/1, 2 Jan. 1970, 4-5.

182 'China Successfully Launches Its First Man-Made Earth Satellite', NCNA, 25 April 1970, in BR, XIII/18, 30 April 1970, 4-5.

183 Commentator, 'Comment on Soviet-W. German Treaty', PD, 13 Sept. 1970, in BR, XIII/38, 18 Sept. 1970, 7-10.

184 'U.S.-Soviet Plot to Dominate the Oceans', BR, XIV/10, 5 March 1971, 22.

agreement on not using nuclear weapons'.<sup>185</sup>

The sudden call for a WDC was puzzling. Since mid-1966 China appeared to have given up the idea of such a conference. Despite the fact that the role of the Japanese Socialist Party was important in the reconciliation between Moscow and Beijing, it did not seem likely that China would have issued the call purely as a friendly gesture to the Japanese. On the other hand, if the call had been part of Beijing's efforts to improve its international image after the GPCR, then its result was disastrous. Only Pakistan and Morocco offered support.<sup>186</sup> This time, not even North Vietnam and North Korea responded.

Nor indeed did Moscow or Washington respond; but seven months later Moscow produced a call of its own. On 15 June 1971 it delivered a statement to Beijing, which called for a conference of the five nuclear powers to consider 'the problem of nuclear disarmament as a whole'.<sup>187</sup> The WDC proposed by Moscow was markedly different from the one China had sought, in that its participation was limited to only five nuclear powers and it set no 'first step' preconditions. It seems probable that Moscow had designed its WDC call in such a way that it was bound to be rejected by China, so as to - in the eyes of Moscow - 'expose' Beijing's unwillingness to attend a 'practical' WDC. The Chinese reply came on 30 July and was predictably negative. It repeated China's argument that all countries, 'big or small', must have

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185 'Joint Statement of Delegation of China-Japan Friendship Association and 5th Delegation of Japanese Socialist Party to China Signed in Peking Today', NCNA, 1 Nov. 1970, in SCMP No.4776, 1 Nov. 1970, 64-8.

186 Ibid., and also fn.128.

187 This was mentioned in the Chinese statement of 30 July 1971, see 'Statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China, July 30, 1971', NCNA, 7 Aug. 1971, in People of the World, Unite and Struggle for the Complete Prohibition and Thorough Destruction of Nuclear Weapons (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1971), pp.1-4.

the right to attend such a conference, and argued that China could not accept Moscow's call because China's nuclear weapons were 'still in the experimental stage' and it was then not yet a nuclear power.<sup>188</sup>

The formula used in this reply - that the PRC was not yet a nuclear power - was extremely strange. Beijing had previously claimed that it would never become a nuclear superpower. Nor had it consciously admitted that its nuclear capability would transform it into a great power. But this was the first time that China had stated that it was physically not a nuclear power. This denial seemed unrealistic but its significance became clear once the PRC entered the UN. Beijing then fought fiercely against any attempt to put China on a par with the other four nuclear powers on ACD issues. Moscow had called for a disarmament conference of the five nuclear powers, but the PRC did not wish to be included in the 'club'. By the same token, it seemed plausible that when China insisted upon the participation of all countries, 'big and small', it considered itself a 'small' country. The explanation appeared to be that it saw disarmament primarily in terms of action taken by the US and the USSR, not by itself - a trend that was to become much clearer after Beijing's entry into the UN.

Beijing's reply to Moscow's proposal was also important in the sense that it reaffirmed a number of the basic stands of China's ACD policy: support for 'the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons', the unilateral NFU pledge, and the convening of a WDC of the kind that Beijing had repeatedly called for. The PRC also specified a set of new conditions that would have to be met before it took a positive role in international ACD activities. The two superpowers were asked to issue assurances to 'openly undertake' the NFU commitment, and to dismantle all nuclear bases on foreign territories

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188 Ibid.

and 'withdraw to their own countries the nuclear weapons stockpiled and nuclear armed forces stationed on those territories'.

The first condition had always been insisted upon by Beijing. The second one, however, seemed quite impractical. As Beijing could not genuinely expect the superpowers to 'withdraw' all their overseas nuclear forces before they attended a WDC, these conditions appeared to be a method of stalemating such a conference. Yet the revival of Beijing's involvement in ACD issues, as manifested by the 'surprise' call for a WDC (of 1 November 1970) and the publication of the extensive ACD statement (of 30 July 1971), was an encouraging sign. Moreover, three months later the PRC was voted into the UN and had for the first time to deal with these issues at something other than the level of polemics.

## CHAPTER FIVE: 1971-1978, THE EMERGENT YEARS: A Reluctant Partnership?

One cannot underrate the significance of the Sino-Soviet rift on Chinese foreign policy. The conclusion of the PTBT directly contributed to the open rift and also the formulation of an independent Chinese outlook on ACD matters. The Treaty gave a strong impression that it was hurried in to prevent the Chinese from 'going nuclear'. In retrospect, it is impossible that China would have either signed the PTBT or given up its nuclear option. Perhaps the 'China factor' had been mentioned merely as a negotiation technique by those who were eager for the PTBT. For them, a partial test ban was far too significant and necessary to be thwarted by considerations of Beijing. Against such a background, it was only natural that China should become hostile to and critical of almost all international ACD activities, especially those that grew out of the PTBT, such as the NPT and SALT agreements. Perhaps this was not realised by the three nuclear powers during the early 1960s. Even if it was, it would have been considered a price worth paying.

Of course there were a number of other factors that shaped China's outlook on ACD issues, for example ideology, and political and strategic considerations. Central was Beijing's unswerving determination to become a nuclear power, and to continue to develop its capability in that regard. This was why China's first fission test in 1964 produced even more impact on Chinese ACD policy than the Sino-Soviet rift. This was also why, in mid-1971, China refused to be recognised as a nuclear power, so long as such a recognition meant involvement in nuclear disarmament with the other four nuclear powers.

That fact that China, after its first nuclear test, toned down its verbal support for nuclear proliferation does not mean that Beijing had altered its basic position on this question. If anything, it was more

a clarification, than a change, of policy. Beijing's aggressive propaganda support for the further spread of nuclear weapons might have always been a veiled justification for its own nuclear determination. It had also never - explicitly or implicitly - indicated that it would actually help other states to develop nuclear weapons. But although the facts are still obscure, Beijing does appear to have seriously contemplated offering nuclear assistance to Indonesia and Egypt. Thus it seems that, at least during the mid-1960s, Beijing's position on the question of nuclear proliferation included both propaganda needs and practical considerations.

Although the PRC between 1963 and 1971 remained hostile and critical to nearly all international ACD activities, it is encouraging to note that it had also gradually come to grips with the instrumentalities of modern arms control activities. While arguing that disarmament was not possible with the imperialists, Beijing demonstrated a genuine interest in reaching a NFU agreement with the US. Thus, however 'anti-disarmament' its propaganda, Beijing could and would enter into an ACD agreement with even an antagonistic power, when necessary.

The analysis of this chapter proves this point. In 1973, the PRC signed its first post-war ACD agreement - the Tlatelolco Treaty. The process which led China to commit itself to this treaty remains unclear and has never been revealed. Yet it is a major purpose of the present chapter to trace the development of that process. Beijing's policy towards two other important ACD issues will also be examined for its persistent yet often varying opposition to the SALT talks and its reluctant support for a WDC.

The ultimate question of the chapter is of course if and how Beijing's entry into the UN has affected its ACD policy. It seems that after the initial years, Beijing did become more active and more positive with regard to ACD affairs in the UN. Since 1978-79, the Chinese have been involved not just in the work of the UNSSOD, but also in that of the Committee, later the Conference, on Disarmament in Geneva. Is this only because Beijing has successfully learnt how to manipulate ACD issues? Or because Beijing has substantially changed its position on these issues? In sum, for the past three decades, Beijing has been perceived as the 'black sheep' of the international ACD family. Is there now reason to alter this view?

#### BEIJING'S DEBUT AT THE UN: The Honeymoon That Never Was

Beijing's entry to the UN has been described as 'one of the most significant developments in post-war international politics' - 'comparable to the onset of the Cold War in the 1940s and the emergence of the Sino-Soviet dispute in the 1960s'.<sup>1</sup> Rejected by the UN for over two decades, Beijing was finally able to enter that world body with dignity and pride, a climax to the sweeping reorientation Chinese foreign policy had been undergoing since the early 1970s. It ultimately established a new phase in Beijing's diplomatic strategy, one characterised by increased pragmatism and by concern for keeping the international status quo against a perceived Soviet threat.

The solution of the 'China question' meant more than just the answer to a long-standing UN problem; it also heralded the end of the era of 'Pax Americana' within that body. The narrow defeat of

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<sup>1</sup> Harry Harding, 'The Domestic Politics of China's Global Posture, 1973-78', Stanford Journal of International Studies (SJIS), XV (Fall 1979), 93.

Washington's demand that the expulsion of Taipei be treated as an 'important question' showed the US unable henceforth to rely on support for any motion it deemed vital. Thus the UN became a more pluralistic organisation, and its doings more unpredictable. The Chinese themselves summed up the implications of their entry on 29 October 1971, the day they sent a cable to Secretary-General U Thant giving the first signal of their willingness to send a delegation to the 26th General Assembly: '[The] influence of the two superpowers is on the decline ... Great and small countries are equal. This is the irresistible trend of history'.<sup>2</sup>

Beijing's delegation arrived at the UN amidst great expectations. The allegation that the UN had been 'artificial' without the participation of the PRC gave rise to a widespread hope that, with Beijing now taking its seat, the world organisation would be 'strengthened in its effectiveness'.<sup>3</sup> It was also optimistically hoped that ACD matters would likewise have a more prominent role. 'The burning issues that are looming over the world, such as disarmament, international security and peace ... could not be solved without the active and constructive role of China' claimed a Kuwaiti representative on behalf of the Asian states, while a Czechoslovak delegate asserted, on behalf of East European states, that the participation of the PRC in the work of the UN would 'contribute to the solution of problems relating to the strengthening of international peace and security and to disarmament'.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, for those who had suspected that Beijing's

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2 'Declaration of the Government of the People's Republic of China, 30 October 1971', in PD, 30 Oct. 1971, 1. Cited from 'China and the UN, and the Taiwan Question', China News Analysis No.860, 5 Nov. 1971, 4.

3 Unto Vesa, 'The Development of Chinese Thinking on Disarmament', Instant Research on Peace and Violence, 2, 1974, 53-4.

4 Cited from Ibid.; also in BR, XIV/48, 26 Nov. 1971, 22-3.

involuntary absence from the UN was the major cause of its previous critical and hostile attitude toward international ACD activities, there was a definite expectation that Beijing would soon reverse its negative policy on ACD issues once it had joined.<sup>5</sup>

But Beijing's debut at the UN promptly shattered any hopes for a period of 'honeymoon'. Instead of an expected initial sweetness, the usual ideological-revolutionary militancy permeated Beijing's statements, its representatives merely repeating what the Chinese media had been saying for years. There was no indication of any possible relaxation of opposition to what had already been achieved in the field of international ACD activities. Nor was there any hint that Beijing would 'assume a new sense of responsibility' in the future. While stressing that it would be incorrect 'to put the blame for the arms race on all countries ... and ... to demand disarmament by all countries alike', Qiao Guanhua, China's Vice Foreign Minister, told the General Assembly:

International disarmament talks have been going on for many years now; ... The United Nations has passed a great number of resolutions ... the hard facts are that these resolutions remain but empty papers that are utilised by the two superpowers to hoodwink world opinion....

The time has now come to change this inglorious situation. We should endeavour to make a new start. None of us should act rashly and make hasty decisions on such a major problem as disarmament.<sup>6</sup>

The PRC did not seem to share the urgency felt by other members of the UN on ACD problems. On the other hand, the Soviet Union was quick to accuse the Chinese of trying 'to discredit all the agreements already achieved in the disarmament field' and of wanting to 'start all

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5 C.M. Roberts, 'Will China Assume a New Sense of Responsibility?', Washington Post, 22 Nov. 1971, A-16.

6 'Chiao [Qiao] Kuan-hua Explains Chinese Government's Principled Stand', BR, XIV/49, 3 Dec. 1971, 14-6.

over again'.<sup>7</sup>

Such an accusation oversimplified a complex situation. At least three reasons can be advanced to explain why Beijing did not alter its ACD policy upon entering the UN.

First and foremost, the assumption that Beijing would change its policy once it were a member was, at best, misguided. Such a belief placed too much faith on the degree to which UN membership was a prime aim of Chinese foreign policy. In retrospect, it is clear that UN membership scarcely impinged on Beijing's ACD policies.

Second, Beijing was caught unprepared. This is not to say it was taken by surprise. The Chinese had anticipated that they would enter the UN by about 1971-72. But the extent and unfamiliarity of UN work made it unlikely that they would embark on anything new. Indeed, during their first year at the UN, the Chinese were said to have acted like 'diligent apprentices' who were 'preoccupied in learning a new trade'.<sup>8</sup> Their stance was passive and their statements nothing but a repetition of previous positions.

Thirdly, Beijing's entry into the UN took place in the aftermath of one of China's most fierce and crucial internal power struggles, the so-called 'Lin Biao affair'. This concerned an alleged coup attempt by Lin which ended, during late September 1971, with the sudden death of Lin and of certain other top-ranking PLA leaders.<sup>9</sup> Designated by China's Constitution as Mao's official heir in 1969, Lin was believed to have been strongly opposed to Beijing's policy of opening to the West. His demise and the repercussions of his abortive plot

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7 V. Gusachenko, 'Disarmament and the Manoeuvres of Peking', New Times (Moscow) No.36 (Sept. 1972), 18-9.

8 Kim, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.13) p.110.

9 For the 'Lin Biao Affair', see Michael Yin Mao Kao, The Lin Piao Affair (White Plains, N.Y.: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1975).

undoubtedly upset the delicate balance within the Chinese leadership. Thus one wonders if that leadership, only weeks after pulling through such a crisis, could have been stable and effective enough to formulate any new or spectacular policy initiative for its delegates as they entered the conference halls of the UN.

Beijing's performance at the 26th General Assembly was thus characterised by two seemingly contradictory features - the reiteration of previous militant rhetoric, and the adoption of a low-profile passive attitude. In terms of ACD affairs, the former stressed an anti-superpower stand which led China into many furious clashes with the Soviet Union, while the latter resulted in a high degree of absenteeism in Beijing's voting pattern.

To discuss the latter point first, China made no attempt to conceal its unwillingness to vote on most ACD resolutions. Of the eighteen ACD resolutions adopted during the 1971 Assembly, Beijing voted on only five. This is a non-participation rate of more than seventy per cent. Beijing's determination to abstain was highlighted by its failure to vote even for ACD resolutions which seemed totally in line with its ideological stand, such as the one calling upon Portugal not to use chemical weapons in the wars of independence in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, and another requesting colonial powers to withdraw 'immediately and unconditionally' their military bases from colonial territories. The five votes Beijing cast were three noes against the resolutions calling for a nuclear test ban, one positive vote for the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a peace zone, and a presumed 'yes' to a compromise solution on the convening of a WDC which was adopted by acclamation.<sup>10</sup>

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10 For a quick reference to the PRC's voting record at the UN on ACD matters during 1971, see World Armaments and Disarmament, SIPRI Yearbook 1972 (SIPRI, 1972), (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1972), 562-573.

Why did Beijing opt for the unusual practice of non-participation? According to Kim, the Chinese themselves have indicated that they did not participate in the voting because of unfamiliarity with UN procedure and subject-matter, inadequate information, and lack of instructions from the home government.<sup>11</sup> But two other factors not identified by the Chinese were also pertinent. One, as pointed out by Kim, was that Beijing's non-participation in the voting for a resolution often represented dissatisfaction or reservations regarding parts of that resolution.<sup>12</sup> The other factor was that 'non-participation' allowed Beijing room to dissociate itself from the obligations of a particular resolution. The Chinese once stated this point indirectly during an early stage of their attendance at the UN. On 26 November 1971, in a move to threaten the Soviet Union not to put its WDC proposal to a vote, Qiao declared that if the Soviet Union did so 'the Chinese cannot but declare with regret that China will not participate in the voting and will assume no obligation as to the result of the voting'.<sup>13</sup>

During the 26th General Assembly, Beijing did not participate in the voting on the resolution for a Latin American NFZ but did vote in favour of the resolution on the Indian Ocean peace zone. China has always supported the idea of NFZs. However, following its nuclear test in 1964, the PRC began to stress that all nuclear powers must first

11 General Assembly Official Record (GAOR), 27th Sess., Fourth Committee, 2015th meeting (6 December 1972), para. 1; GAOR, 27th Sess., Fourth Committee, 2021st meeting (12 December 1972), para. 38; GAOR, 26th Sess., Special Political Committee, 780th meeting (16 November 1972), p.162. Cited from Kim, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.13), p.127.

12 Kim, Ibid.

13 GAOR, 26th Sess., 196th Plenary meeting (26 Nov. 1971), para. 138. Cited from Kim, Ibid., p.125. (Emphasis added). Full text of this speech also in People of the World, Unite ... (above Ch.4 fn.187), pp.5-13.

undertake a NFU pledge before any NFZ were established. After the PRC had entered the UN, however, statements made by its delegates revealed both that China considered that NFZs and peace zones should be handled in the same way and that its position on this issue had hardened considerably. In the words of a Chinese representative, Chen Zhu:

Really to free the nuclear-free zones and the peace zones from the threat of nuclear war, it is necessary, first of all, for all nuclear countries, particularly the two nuclear superpowers, to guarantee not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and in any circumstances; to dismantle all their nuclear bases on the territories of other countries; not to stockpile weapons and station nuclear armed troops on the territories of other countries; and immediately to stop their aggression, interference, control and subversion against other countries. Otherwise, there would be no guarantee at all for the establishment of nuclear-free zones and peace zones.<sup>14</sup>

In view of this hardened position, why did China still support the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a peace zone? One must first look at the content of the resolution. Notwithstanding Beijing's view which handled a NFZ and a peace zone in the same way, the two concepts are substantially different. The resolution on the Indian Ocean peace zone called on the UN 'to make the entire high seas of the Indian Ocean an international domain, subject to international regulation and responsibility, and to declare that area a zone of peace from which offensive and defensive armaments and military installations would be excluded'.<sup>15</sup> It therefore did not accord any special status or obligations to any power - nuclear or not - but put all countries, nuclear or non-nuclear, on an equal basis. It also did not affect, at least in theory, the sovereignty of any country (such as by limiting its nuclear development) because it dealt exclusively with the high

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14 Cited from Homer Jack, Chinese Positions on Disarmament at the United Nations (Washington, D.C.: SANE, Disarmament Report, 1 March 1973), 6.

15 The United Nations and Disarmament, 1970-1975 (N.Y.: UN, 1976), p.181.

seas. Nevertheless, the resolution would perhaps still not have attracted Beijing's support had it not been for the outbreak of the 1971 Indian-Pakistani war, which India won with Soviet support. Beijing probably hoped that declaring the Indian Ocean a peace zone would somehow hinder Indian support for the Bangladeshi forces, and also Soviet support for the Indians, and thus give Pakistan - the side which China was backing - a better chance.<sup>16</sup>

The ACD resolutions that produced the most acute embarrassment for Beijing during its first year at the UN were those on a nuclear test ban. Whenever such a resolution was put to a vote, Beijing instantly found itself and its staunch ally Albania casting the only two negative votes. The Chinese, during the debate, argued their usual case: that China's 'necessary and limited' nuclear tests were conducted 'entirely for the purpose of self-defence'; that the two superpowers had been conducting nuclear tests 'for decades' and so 'the partial or complete halting of nuclear tests will not inhibit the continuation of their production and use of nuclear weapons' and that 'the prohibition of nuclear tests will be of no positive significance if not linked with the prohibition and the destruction of nuclear weapons'.<sup>17</sup> But the overwhelming majority of UN members were seemingly unconvinced, and as a result Beijing became literally an outcast of the international ACD movement. It can have expected no alternative.

However, ACD debates during the 26th General Assembly focused on a proposal for the convocation of a WDC, rather than on the test ban or NFZ or peace zone issue. The WDC proposal was submitted by the Soviet Union in October but the debate on it was deliberately delayed until

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16 Chen Zhu, 'Supports Draft Resolution on "Declaration of Indian Ocean as a Peace Zone"', BR, XIV/51, 17 Dec. 1971, 19.

17 Chen Zhu, 'Opposes Adoption of Draft Resolution on So-Called Prohibition of Nuclear Tests', Ibid., 19-20.

the PRC took its seat in mid-November. Beijing's position on the WDC issue had last been made clear on 30 July 1971, when the Chinese turned down a similar Soviet proposal. On 15 November, when Qiao made his debut at the UN, he repeated briefly these principles.

One day after Qiao's brief remarks, the real debate began. The Chinese soon found themselves in a difficult situation because the new Soviet proposal, adopting the Chinese principle, called for a WDC attended by all states of the world, not just the five nuclear powers. Yet the PRC still rejected it. Toward the end of the debate, on 24 November, its delegation delivered a letter to the Secretary-General containing the statement of 30 July 1971, which adumbrated the PRC's position on the WDC issue, with a request that the statement be circulated as a UN document.<sup>18</sup> Qiao then launched an attack on the Soviet proposal, which indicated certain changes in this position. This speech was the first Chinese statement in the UN devoted exclusively to an ACD issue, and Qiao began by stressing:

The idea that all countries adopt measures for disarmament without distinguishing the aggressors from the victims of aggression and those who threaten others from those who are threatened can only lead the question of disarmament on to a wrong path and benefit imperialism.<sup>19</sup>

Thus had been Beijing's view during the 1950s and early 1960s, that weapons in the hands of the socialists should be treated differently from those in the hands of the imperialists. Its sudden reappearance in late 1971, but not in the important ACD statement of 30 July 1971, suggested that Beijing was prepared to use this argument if China came under pressure to become involved in any kind of practical disarmament, should a WDC materialise. Qiao then reiterated the two

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18 Text of this letter from the PRC to the UN Secretary-General can be seen in UN Document, No. A/8536 (S/10397) China.

19 Text of Qiao's speech in BR, XIV/49, 3 Dec. 1971, 14-6.

conditions which Beijing had previously put forward: the requirements of 'universal participation' and 'a clear aim in first reaching an agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons'. After that, Qiao indicated a subtle variation in Beijing's position:

The Chinese government also maintains that in order to realise the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, the United States and the Soviet Union which possess large quantities of nuclear weapons should, first of all, issue statements separately or jointly to undertake openly the obligations:

1) Not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and in any circumstances and not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries and against nuclear-free zones;

2) Dismantle all nuclear bases set up on the territories of other countries and withdraw all their nuclear armed forces and all nuclear weapons and means of delivery from abroad.

If one compares the above paragraph with an almost identical one in Beijing's 30 July 1971 statement, one sees Qiao deviating slightly from the original line.<sup>20</sup> The word 'also' and the phrase 'first of all' were inserted at the beginning of Qiao's paragraph, seemingly in an attempt to bind in the whole paragraph with the preceding one discussing the original two preconditions, as though part of them. Indeed, less than a month later Qiao's two points became explicit as Beijing's additional preconditions for a WDC.

In closing, Qiao attacked the Soviet proposal for having 'neither set out a clear aim nor put forward practical steps for its attainment' and said that the Soviet proposal, if carried out, would only produce 'a permanent club for endless discussions that solve no substantive problems, which will result in perpetual arms expansion alongside perpetual disarmament talks'.

Qiao's attack on the Soviet proposal sparked off a bitter exchange between him and the Soviet representative Malik. On 26 November, in

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<sup>20</sup> For a quick reference to the texts of these speeches, see People of the World, Unite ... (above Ch.4 fn.187). (Emphasis added to Qiao).

refuting the Soviet counter-attack on the Chinese position, Qiao declared that Beijing would not accept any obligations incurred if this Soviet proposal were put to a vote.<sup>21</sup> Such a threat led to extensive consultations, initiated by Third World countries, behind the scenes. Eventually a substitute resolution delaying the decision on the convening of the WDC for another year was worked out by Rumania, Mexico and twenty-five other countries. This substitute resolution also: a) invited all states to communicate to the UN Secretary-General their views and suggestions on the WDC question before 31 August 1972; b) requested the Secretary-General to submit a summary report on those 'views and suggestions' to the 27th General Assembly; and c) decided that the provisional agenda for the 27th General Assembly should include an item entitled 'world disarmament conference'. On 16 December the substitute resolution was adopted by acclamation. The Chinese went along with the consensus, claiming that the resolution had 'frustrated' the Soviet WDC proposal.<sup>22</sup>

The Chinese positions on ACD issues throughout the 26th General Assembly were thus obdurate. Chinese endorsement of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a peace zone was offered more from expedient political-strategic calculations than with ACD enthusiasm. Their support for the Rumanian-Mexican WDC proposal was made ostensibly in exchange for the abandonment of the original Soviet proposal. While on 16 December, speaking before the voting on the Rumanian-Mexican proposal, Chinese representative Huang Hua indicated that Beijing's position on the WDC issue had become more demanding. He stated that the two superpower 'obligations' - i.e. the NFU pledge and the withdrawal of foreign military bases - which had been touched on by Qiao

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21 Text of Qiao's speech in Ibid., pp.14-8.

22 'On Disarmament Question', BR, XIV/52, 24 Dec. 1971, 17.

nearly three weeks before were no 'necessary prerequisites' which 'must be created for the convocation of such a WCD conference'.<sup>23</sup>

The PRC made explicit what had been implicit only three weeks before, probably because of the inevitability of the adoption of the Rumanian-Mexican substitute resolution. The Chinese did not appear to want an early convening of any WDC, and therefore, despite their support for the substitute resolution, they did not even submit their 'views and suggestions' on the WDC question to the Secretary-General by 31 August 1972. However, this lack of enthusiasm was contradicted by a sudden new position during early 1972. On 9 January the NCNA, announcing Beijing's thirteenth nuclear test,<sup>24</sup> included in its communiqué, as usual, an outline of Beijing's basic stand on the question of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. But the part that dealt with the WDC issue attracted considerable attention because it stressed that 'as the first step' for an WDC, 'all nuclear countries' must reach 'a solemn agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons ... at any time and under any circumstance'.

This new formulation was so brief that it immediately sparked off conjectures that China was changing its position on the WDC issue. Was it dropping its insistence upon the preconditions of 'universal participation', the withdrawal of foreign nuclear bases, and the preliminary agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons? More significantly, was Beijing implying that, after all those bitter quarrels with the Soviet Union at the UN, it was reverting to the original Soviet proposal for a WDC of only the five nuclear powers, as long as these five powers all agreed on 'first reaching a solemn agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons'?

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23 Text of Huang's speech in BR (Ibid.).

24 Text of press communiqué in NCNA, 9 Jan. 1972, also in BR, XV/2, 14 Jan. 1972, 6.

By the end of the year developments in the UN disproved all these conjectures. Beijing did not soften its position on the WDC issue, nor did it ever show any overt willingness to consider a WDC of the five nuclear powers. Yet the question remained as to why Beijing had offered that sudden signal of a less rigid stand on the WDC issue. A slip of the tongue would be highly unlikely, from official propaganda machinery in a tightly-controlled society such as China. In fact, on 11 January, as if to give greater prominence to the NCNA communiqué, Huang Hua asked the UN Secretary-General 'kindly to arrange for the circulation of this news release as an official document of the General Assembly and the Security Council'.<sup>25</sup>

One imaginative observer of Chinese affairs offered an interesting explanation at the time, which cannot as yet be supported by hard data. He argued that the sudden relaxation of Beijing's attitude on the WDC issue was a 'political kite', 'something of a welcoming salvo for President Nixon' who was due in Beijing a month later. He concluded that 'the successful convening of a world summit conference of five nuclear powers may prove to be one of the most significant immediate political rewards of China's entry to the UN'.<sup>26</sup> Such an argument may never be substantiated, but there is no doubt that by early 1972 the Chinese had their eyes not only on Nixon's visit to Beijing, but also on his visit to Moscow that May, which culminated in the signing of the SALT 1 agreements.

#### SALT 1 AND THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE: Linkage Politics?

The relationship between the Shanghai communiqué and the SALT 1

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<sup>25</sup> UN Document, Nos. A/8654 and S/10503.

<sup>26</sup> C. Huan, 'Disarmament: China's New View', Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER), 15 Jan. 1972.

agreements has never been adequately studied - a manifestation of the problem that the paths of the 'China specialist' and of the 'arms control specialist' seldom cross. The two events were in fact closely related. Indeed they symbolised two extreme and conflicting Chinese interpretations of the strategic relationship between the two super-powers, that is, the contentionist and the collusionist view. Nixon's visit to Moscow and particularly the conclusion of the SALT 1 agreements provided an ideal corroboration for 'collusion', while his Beijing visit and the Sino-American Shanghai communiqué gave much support to 'contention'.

The precise course of the debate between the contentionists and the collusionists during 1970-71, as discussed in the previous chapter, remains unclear. But one may say that as late as summer 1972, the collusionists could still mount a major campaign hoping to frustrate Nixon's epoch-making visit. According to a leading Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong during early 1972, all but three Military Region commanders had cabled the central leadership opposing the visit.<sup>27</sup> By the end of July that year, even the PLA's Chief of General Staff, Huang Yongsheng, had publicly voiced doubts.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of the opposition of the collusionists, Zhou had managed to create from 1970 onward a foreign policy in general agreement with the contentionist thesis. And, when vital collusionists such as Huang Yongsheng and Lin himself disappeared after the 'Lin Biao affair', Zhou was quick to push through his 'pragmatic' contentionist foreign policy.

The defeat suffered by the collusionists was crucial and decisive,

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27 This was first reported in a Hong Kong Chinese newspaper Sing Tao Jih Bao, on 9 Feb. 1972. Translated in Foreign Broadcasting Information Service (FBIS), 10 Feb. 1972, A1-A2. Cited from Sargent and Harris, op.cit. (above Ch.4 fn.162), II-5.

28 NCNA Broadcast of 31 July 1971, in FBIS, 2 Aug. 1971, A5-A7. Cited from Sargent and Harris, Ibid.

but not total. Beijing's 1972 New Year message still characterised the superpower strategic relationship with the key phrase 'contention and collusion'.<sup>29</sup> This showed that whatever residual power the remaining elements of the collusionist camp still had, it was potent enough to show in the Chinese policy-making process. It could well be that it was the prospect of the SALT 1 agreements which saved the collusionist view from being completely written out of the lexicon of Chinese politics. But the view that saw the superpower relationship as collusion was never to dominate Chinese political thinking, and by 1974 the expression had disappeared totally from political statements.

A note of caution must be added here. Though Lin's demise had decisively crippled the collusionist force, the total disappearance of the term 'collusionist' did not mean that the advocates of the collusionist theory had also been driven off the stage. Harding's conception of the Chinese policy-making process helps to explain this. He suggests that policy-making in China proceeds through a series of 'rounds', with 'specific issues under consideration' as 'policy packages' changing from one round to another'.<sup>30</sup> The termination of a 'round' represents simply the general settlement of certain controversial issues, not necessarily the elimination of the losing party, or parties, in that 'round'. Besides, many participants in those 'rounds' do not really have a deep-rooted attachment to any particular foreign policy issues. They have their base mainly in the domestic arena - in the military, the economy, industry, education - and it is their interests in these domestic areas that dictate a 'preferred' interpretation of external affairs. This is to say that many members of the Chinese decision-making elite do not necessarily bring 'objectivity',

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29 FBIS, 3 Jan. 1972, B1-B6. Cited from Ibid., II-4.

30 Harding, op.cit., (above fn.1), p.134.

as we see it, to the task of analysing external events, they rather 'pluck from any external arena any evidence which support their "preferred" interpretation'.<sup>31</sup> Hence it should not be surprising to find that certain subsidiary issues of a defeated policy package of a previous 'round' reappear in a later 'round', albeit possibly in a different package and under a different label.<sup>32</sup>

It is believed that the position of the contentionists and the collusionists during early 1972 was more or less one of compromise, with a tilt favouring the contentionists.<sup>33</sup> The compromise seemed to be that the term 'collusion' was to describe the superpower relationship in very general terms only, and not to be used in referring to superpower policy towards China. This was clearly a further humiliation for the collusionists, as it would mean that they were effectively silenced during the run-up to Nixon's visit to Beijing. Zhou and his fellow contentionists were naturally trying to make sure that the Chinese media would not transmit any message which might embarrass themselves and their American guests.

Nixon thus visited China in what was a triumph of the contentionists. For the few months during and after the visit, only the contentionists were quoted in the Chinese press. But it was still a restrained triumph, as it did not generate enough optimism to breach a long, self-imposed policy of silence on Beijing's view of the superpower nuclear relationship, which had lasted since the end of 1969. No doubt everyone was awaiting the outcome from SALT.

In the meantime, three articles published in Red Flag during

31 Sargent and Harris refer to this in: Sargent and Harris, op.cit., (above Ch.4 fn.162), I-5.

32 The policy-packages of the 'Contentionists' and the 'Collusionists' respectively, can be found in Ibid., I-14-I-17.

33 Ibid., II-7-II-8.

April-June 1972 revealed more of the compromise between contentionists and collusionists.<sup>34</sup> Citing Lenin's dictum on 'the rivalry between several great powers in the striving for hegemony',<sup>35</sup> the author argued 1) that 'The nature of imperialism determines that, while frequently colluding, the imperialist countries have no way of reconciling their conflicts in contending for world hegemony'; and 2) that any collusion between the imperialist countries would therefore only be 'temporary compromise' leading soon to 'fierce struggle'. These arguments were probably aiming at a possible SALT agreement. Should the Moscow summit really produce a superpower agreement, the Chinese could easily argue that such an agreement would not work because it would be only a 'temporary compromise' leading to 'fiercer struggle'; and further, that 'irreconcilable contention' would still be the essence of the superpower relationship, despite a transient show of superpower collusion.

Indeed the Chinese were later to approach SALT largely within the scope of such arguments. But somehow the Chinese did not immediately unveil their response to the SALT 1 agreements. In any case, it was clear that, when a Chinese representative to the UN offered his observations on the superpower strategic relationship during the month immediately after their signing, he was avoiding passing any judgement on these agreements. Tang Ke, speaking on 10 June at a plenary session of the UN conference on Human Environment, did not refer specifically to SALT, though stated that the superpowers were 'frenziedly developing their nuclear weapons and stepping up their arms race in their struggle

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34 These articles appeared in the April, May and June 1972 issues of Red Flag, under the name of Shi Jun. See the analysis of these articles in Ibid., pp.II-7-II-8.

35 This dictum was made by Lenin in 'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism', Lenin, Selected Works (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1953), I, 433-568.

for hegemony'.<sup>36</sup> Such a description was essentially a contentivist argument, but Tang mentioned neither of the two key terms contention and collusion.

An unconfirmed Soviet source claimed that, immediately after the signing of the SALT 1 agreements, Zhou personally told certain 'foreign representatives' that China had 'nothing in common' with these agreements, and that two Chinese internal publications 'not available to the general public' had also 'regularly' carried 'extensive materials attacking the agreements'.<sup>37</sup> In public, however, the conspicuous silence of the Chinese propaganda machine on the subject was not broken until 17 July, when Zhou gave Beijing's official response nearly two months after the signing of SALT. Zhou stated these agreements to be part of a superpower 'fraud' which had not relaxed international tension; that the two superpowers were still 'contending for world hegemony'; that the superpowers had not tried to reduce or control conventional armaments; and that these agreements were 'by no means "a step" towards curbing the arms race ... but marked the beginning of a new stage of their [the superpowers'] arms race'.<sup>38</sup> This response was amplified by Qiao at the UN on 3 October 1972:

These agreements only stipulate some limitation on the quantity of certain categories of nuclear weapons in the possession of the Soviet Union and the United States, but impose no limitation at all on their quality, nor do they mention a single word about the destruction of nuclear weapons ... Moreover, the Soviet Union and the United States have stated in the document on the 'basic principles of relations' between them that they have a special

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<sup>36</sup> Text of Tang's speech can be seen in FBIS, 12 June 1972, A7-A12. Cited from Sargent and Harris, op.cit., (above Ch.4 fn.162), p.II-7.

<sup>37</sup> This claim was made by Gusachenko in his article: 'Disarmament and the Manoeuvres of Peking', New Times (Moscow) No.56 (Sept. 1972), 19.

<sup>38</sup> For Zhou's remarks, see 'Government Delegation of Arab Republic of Yemen Visits China', NCNA, 17 July 1972, in BR, XV/29, 21 July 1972, 6.

responsibility to avert conflicts which would serve to increase international tensions, and they have recognised each other's security interests based on the principle of equality. What special responsibility and equal security interests? According to Khrushchev's theory, do they not stand for Soviet-US collaboration for world domination?<sup>39</sup>

While Zhou's response in July followed precisely the contentivist logic, Qiao's comment in October went further. Although still avoiding the use of the term 'collusion', Qiao partially endorsed the collusionist view by referring directly to the 'collaboration' between the two superpowers for 'world hegemony'. Why, in so short a period, was there such a change of tone between the two statements?

Between October and November 1972 there had been a resurgence of the collusionist cause. The unstable compromise which marked a steady retreat by the collusionists during the first half of 1972 was challenged in the latter half of that year. Marshal Ye Jianying reflected the resurgence of the collusionist influence when he told an Albanian delegation on 6 November: 'The world is far from peaceful because Soviet revisionist socialist imperialism and US imperialism are contending and colluding with each other'.<sup>40</sup> Five days later Li Desheng, then the Director of the PLA General Political Department, threw his weight behind Ye by publicly endorsing the 'contention and collusion' description.<sup>41</sup>

Ye and Li may well have been the leaders of the collusionist camp after Lin's demise. But, significantly, their perception was slightly modified by Qiao at the UN. On 13 November, still not mentioning the charged word 'collusion', Qiao elaborated the nature of a possible

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39 'Speech by Chiao [Qiao] ... to the 27th UN General Assembly Plenary Meeting', BR, XV/41, 13 Oct. 1972, 8-10.

40 Ye's remark was reprinted in BR, XV/45, 10 Nov. 1972, 6.

41 Li's remark was reprinted in BR, XV/46, 17 Nov. 1972, 3.

Soviet-American 'collaboration' in the following manner:

Why should the Soviet Union frantically continue to develop its nuclear weapons while at the same time desperately opposing others' conducting the necessary nuclear tests for self-defence? The plain truth is that it has recently reached an agreement with the United States on the limitation of strategic arms, so that it is reviving the old Khrushchevite dream of Soviet-United States collaboration for world domination to maintain nuclear monopoly and nuclear superiority, and to carry out nuclear blackmail and nuclear threats against the peoples of the world. Actually, this is trying to keep the world under Soviet-United States control in the name of maintaining world peace. To use Khrushchev's words, 'If any madman wanted war, we' - the Soviet Union and the United States - 'would but have to shake our fingers to warn him off'.<sup>42</sup>

Thus while Ye and Li made no attempt to differentiate the motivations of the two superpowers in 'contending and colluding' with each other, Qiao apparently laid all the blame on the Soviet Union, and accused the Soviets of trying to put the 'collaboration' to their own end of realising 'the old Khrushchevite dream'. But what was an 'old Khrushchevite dream?' Who was that 'madman who wanted war?' If one goes back to the polemics between Moscow and Beijing during the mid-1960s, one finds these expression abundant there. Clearly, contention or collusion, a hidden fear in the minds of the Chinese leadership was that the Soviet Union might use the SALT talks to weaken the US and eventually subdue China.

Two developments account for the resurgence of the collusionist influence. First, the signing of the SALT agreements worried the Chinese leadership, and boosted the morale of the collusionists. Secondly, Nixon's dramatic visit to China and the successful conclusion of the Shanghai communiqué, which had several anti-hegemony and 'anti-collusion' clauses, might have overshadowed the immediate impact of SALT 1, but the lack of progress in Sino-American relations six months after the announcement of the communiqué inevitably made the

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<sup>42</sup> Text of Qiao's speech in BR (Ibid.), 5-6.

Chinese impatient. The majority - if not all - of the Chinese leadership, including the contentions, would have seen the decision of the US to enter into the SALT 1 agreements with the Soviet Union as a 'flagrant' violation of the spirit of the Shanghai communiqué.

The United States, naturally enough, took great pains to deny that the SALT 1 agreements had any 'anti-China' purpose, or that the US policies toward the two communist giants had intended to set one against the other.<sup>43</sup> Kissinger went as far as claiming that: 'We [the US] did not discuss the Soviet Union in Beijing and we did not discuss the People's Republic [of China] in Moscow'.<sup>44</sup> But one dedicated student of Chinese affairs who visited Moscow in the aftermath of the SALT summit offers a more objective and realistic observation:

To arrive in Moscow as a China specialist in the aftermath of Soviet-American summitry could not, at first glance, have seemed more inappropriate. On one hand, President Nixon had succeeded in convincing the Russians his trip to Beijing really had no immediate implications for Sino-Soviet relations. On the other hand, the contrast between the vague atmospherics of the Shanghai communiqué and the concrete compromises hammered out in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) reassured the participants in superpower diplomacy that the magic of Chinese hospitality could not change the message: Moscow, not Beijing, will still determine the shape of peace for at least another generation or two.

But like Banquo's ghost, China was very much the absent guest at Kremlin banquets ....<sup>45</sup>

Only against such a background can one appreciate the embattled position of the contentions and the firmness of Zhou's determination

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43 See 'Quotations by Senator Percy and Replies by Secretary of State Rogers on the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreements, 19 June 1972', in Strategic Arms Limitation Agreements: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations (US Senate, 92nd Congress, Second Session), 51-53. Partial record of this hearing can be seen in Documents on Disarmament 1972, (DOD 1972). (Washington, D.C.: ACDA, 1972), 318-322.

44 Ibid.

45 Allen Whiting, 'SALT on the Dragon's Tail', The New Republic (Washington), 9 Sept. 1972, 11-3.

in holding to his policy of Sino-American rapprochement. But in no way did Zhou and the other contentionists condone the Moscow summit and the SALT agreements. The Chinese remained hostile to SALT negotiations and agreements. The difference of opinion between the contentionists and the collusionists was in fact over the choice of strategy to deal with the problem, not over the existence of such a problem.

#### SALT 1 AND CHINA - AN ASSESSMENT

Why were the Chinese against SALT? A ready answer is that they were against it because produced no 'genuine' disarmament. In other words, SALT had not reduced, destroyed, or abolished nuclear weapons, and therefore could not qualify as 'sham' disarmament. However, beneath this simple explanation lies a more complex set of issues. China would have opposed SALT, even if SALT had been able to achieve a certain degree of 'genuine' disarmament. The fact that it had failed merely provided extra ammunition and camouflage with which to attack this superpower strategic dialogue. For China, the crux of the matter was not that SALT as a major international ACD instrument was somehow faulty, but that its entire purpose was repugnant and must be opposed in every way.

SALT generated mixed opinions in China about the nature of superpower strategic relationship, some 'contending', some 'colluding'. Whether leading to a 'fiercer struggle' in the future or not, the immediate reality of SALT activities meant that there was a certain degree of esprit de corps between Washington and Moscow - much to China's abhorrence. For obvious historical and practical reasons, the PRC has always considered an estranged relationship between the two superpowers to be a basic guarantee for the security of China, and has sought to prevent any amelioration in the present (mid-1980s)

predominantly adversary Soviet-American relationship. In other words, with or without SALT, Chinese foreign policy at any time opposes Soviet-American détente. Furthermore, it would have been difficult to convince Beijing that the esprit de corps between the two superpowers in the SALT talks would never be directed against China, let alone would never unintentionally undermine China's strategic interests. There existed an informal report suggesting that a senior Soviet official at the SALT talks had, in July 1970, 'broached' the idea of a Soviet-American agreement against unspecified Chinese 'provocations'.<sup>46</sup> Allegedly that attempt did not produce anything because the US refused to treat it seriously. But with the PRC determined to continue to develop its nuclear capability, it was bound to become a focus of concern for the two parties in the SALT negotiations.

The term - 'SALT 1 agreements' - is generally considered to include the following documents: 1) the ABM treaty limiting the construction of ABM systems to only two sites in each of the superpower's territories; 2) an 'interim agreement' on the limitation of offensive strategic missiles freezing the total number of each of the superpower's strategic launchers; 3) a protocol defining the effect of the interim agreement upon submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs); and 4) a memorandum of miscellaneous 'agreed interpretations', 'common understandings' and 'unilateral statements'. Also directly related to these documents are the 'Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Outbreak of Nuclear War', signed on 30 September 1971, and the agreement signed on 21 December 1972 establishing a Standing Consultative Commission for SALT.

All these agreements have either in theory or in practice, or

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<sup>46</sup> John Newhouse, Cold Dawn, The Story of SALT (N.Y.: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1973), p.189.

both, adversely affected China's politico-strategic interests, although the ABM treaty and the 'interim agreement' can be seen as in some measure aiding them. This latter view holds that the limitation of the construction of ABM systems would enhance the 'value' of each Chinese missile, because 'the greater probability of China's warheads hitting undefended targets' would add 'measurably to their deterring effect'.<sup>47</sup> Halperin in particular suggests that the ABM treaty 'eliminates the possibility of the US maintaining a credible first strike capability which would provide a damage-denial capability against China'.<sup>48</sup> However, Gelber argues persuasively that both the US and the Soviet Union retained considerable technical leeway under the treaty, and thus could effectively stave off any advantage China was expected to extract.<sup>49</sup>

The ABM treaty also worried China because the two superpowers could continue to use SALT as an easy channel to 'trade off' undesired armament projects. Thus, both superpowers were uncertain about the effectiveness of ABM systems and understandably reluctant to invest heavily in them. They realised during the SALT talks that they both could benefit by limiting the construction of these systems through a mutual agreement, and so worked such an agreement out. This was ostensibly a bona fide ACD achievement. But the Chinese would see the hidden connotation behind the achievement. Such limitations concerned only armament projects not likely to be implemented in the first place, and they would never reduce the military expenditures of the two super-

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47 This is Halperin's view. In Halperin, 'The Perspective from China and Japan', Mason Willrich and John Rhineland, ed., SALT: The Moscow Agreements and Beyond (N.Y.: Free Press, 1974), p.215.

48 Ibid.

49 H. Gelber, Nuclear Weapons and Chinese Policy (London: ISS, Adelphi Papers No.99, 1973), pp.29-30.

powers in real terms, because the money saved from (in this case) the ABM projects would be reallocated to other armament projects which would not only be more desirable to each of the superpowers, but probably also more sophisticated and more destructive.

This was obviously part of the rationale behind the Chinese accusation that SALT was a 'disarmament fraud' which would only bring 'new rounds of arms race'. That accusation could also be based on the fact that the two superpowers have adopted a so-called 'bargaining chips' approach in the SALT game, whereby both sought to arm themselves with either overwhelming military power or with menacing new armament projects before even coming to the negotiation table, in order to gain a stronger bargaining position. In the case of SALT 1, for instance, the 'freeze' in the number of the ICBM and the SLBM launchers would in fact impel the two superpowers to increase their R&D efforts with regard to MIRV technology, since the number of warheads was not limited by the 'interim agreement'. Only by doing so would the two superpowers be confident that their bargaining power in the following rounds of negotiation could match that of the opponent. Thus it is logical to argue that SALT as such would actually encourage the two superpowers to develop more arms, for the more powerful in arms development, the more powerful each would be in the SALT negotiations.

It seemed that the PRC could benefit from the fact that the Soviet Union agreed to count all its SS-11 missiles against the permitted ceiling of ICBM-SLBM launchers. During 1969-70, the Soviet Union reportedly dismantled some seventy of its older SS-4 and SS-5 IRBMs based in the Soviet maritime provinces, and left the Chinese targets of these IRBMs to be 'covered' by about one hundred and twenty of the then newly-engineered, dual-capable SS-11s deployed in European Russia.<sup>50</sup>

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50 William Beecher, 'Soviet is Said to Dismantle Some of its Older Missiles', NYT, 3 Mar. 1972, 1 and 4.

Thus the PRC appeared to benefit from the 'interim agreement' in that more than a hundred Soviet missiles targeted upon its cities and installations were counted in the overall Soviet-American strategic package, and not reserved for the sole consideration of Soviet-Chinese strategic balance. But, again, this 'benefit' was largely illusory. The numerical superiority in the 'freeze' of strategic launchers gained by the Soviet Union through the agreement - approximately 2358 versus 1700 - easily compensated for the Soviet 'loss'. It is quite possible that, after SALT 1, the USSR still considered that it would have sufficient margin of numerical superiority in ICBMs to wage a limited nuclear war against the PRC without sacrificing rough parity with the USA.<sup>51</sup>

The 1971 'Agreement of Measures to Reduce the Outbreak of Nuclear War' was also of strategic concern to China because it obliged the two superpowers to inform each other if their missile early-warning systems detected any unidentified missiles or other flying objects, or any unexplained nuclear accident.<sup>52</sup> Such an obligation was tantamount to the coordination of mutual warning in case of an anonymous third party attack, or the possibility of such an attack. For the PRC, the meaning of such a stipulation was precisely that if China were ever in conflict with one of the superpowers, the other would have the 'obligation' to help in monitoring the movement of China's nuclear forces. However, as this agreement had been reached before the signing of the Shanghai communiqué, it did not 'violate' - thus Beijing's perception - the spirit of the communiqué. And yet, in 1973, another agreement of similar nature was achieved between Washington and Moscow - the

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51 See William Garner, 'SALT II: China's Advice and Dissent', Asian Survey (AS) XIX/12, Dec. 1979, 1231-2.

52 For the full text of this agreement, see Survival (Dec. 1971), 425.

'Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War' - and in it the two super-powers are asked to enter into 'urgent consultations' if any dispute between them, or between either one of them and 'a third party', might involve 'the risk of nuclear war'.<sup>53</sup> Qiao attacked this stipulation on the need of 'urgent consultations' as an 'excuse' for the two super-powers to 'interfere at will in the relations among all countries on the strength of the huge number of nuclear weapons in their possession'.<sup>54</sup> The PRC seems to have been irritated for both strategic and political considerations. According to Lieberthal, it may have regarded the 1973 agreement as an American action which went against the 'anti-hegemony' clause of the Shanghai communiqué. In his words, the American acceptance of the 1973 agreement was an action 'chipping away the underlying premises of China's rapprochement with the United States'.<sup>55</sup>

The statement of 'Basic Principles' which explicitly encouraged 'third parties' to make their views on the SALT agreements known and perhaps to participate in a broader discussion on SALT in the future must have also annoyed the Chinese immensely.<sup>56</sup> The PRC has always been sensitive to such 'random' calls, fearing that they might lead to pressure from the Third World, urging China towards SALT. In this case nothing of that sort ever happened. During the 27th General Assembly, a draft resolution concerning SALT that was submitted by twelve

53 See Article IV of the 'Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Nuclear War'; full text in Robert Pfaltzgraff, Jr., ed., Contrasting Approaches To Strategic Arms Control (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1974), pp.325-6.

54 'Chairman of Chinese Delegation Chiao (Qiao) Kuan-hua's Speech', BR, XVI/40, 5 Oct. 1973, 16-7.

55 Lieberthal, Sino-Soviet Conflict in the 1970's: Its Evolution and Implications for the Strategic Triangle (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corp., R-2342-NA, July 1978), pp.99-100.

56 Gelber discusses this point in Gelber, op.cit., (above fn.49), p.29.

non-aligned states appealed simply to the two superpowers 'to make every effort to expedite the conclusion of further agreements including important qualitative limitations and substantial reductions of offensive and defensive strategic nuclear-weapons systems'.<sup>57</sup> Although the tone of this resolution was similar to Chinese demands, the PRC still decided not to participate in the vote on it. That decision could have only been made with the aim of laying down an absolute denial of the value of SALT, while also signalling that the resolution would never have any binding force on China.

#### AT THE UN AFTER SALT 1: More Anti-Soviet Determination

Judging by the 27th General Assembly, the conclusion of the SALT 1 agreements, with its far-reaching consequences, did not cause any wholesale readjustment in Beijing's overall ACD posture. If anything, perhaps, Beijing grew even more determined in its ACD battle against Moscow. Kim reveals that the Chinese were so anxious to defeat the Soviet WDC proposal that, probably during late 1972, Ambassador Huang Hua paid two secret visits to US Ambassador Scali to make sure that the US would 'stand firm' in its refusal to support such a conference.<sup>58</sup>

Beijing became somewhat less intransigent, however, on certain ACD issues. Not only did it soften its attitude on the issue of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, it was also relatively more active and assertive during 1972 in terms of its voting behaviour with regard to ACD resolutions.<sup>59</sup> The relationship between China and the Treaty of Tlatelolco

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57 For reference to this resolution, consult: Appendix 128, SIPRI 1972, p.412.

58 Kim, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.13), p.135. The date of Huang's visit to Scali was not specified, but it probably took place in the second half of 1972.

59 Above fn.57, pp.412-7, for a quick reference to China's voting record in 1972.

will be discussed in detail later. Here it is necessary to note briefly that, while still not signing it formally, the PRC declared on 14 November that they would undertake obligations similar to those implicit in Additional Protocol II of the Treaty.<sup>60</sup> Such a declaration in effect left France and especially the Soviet Union in the cold, as they became the only two nuclear powers not to have committed themselves to the Treaty by then. However, when a draft resolution urging China, France and the Soviet Union to formally 'sign and ratify' Additional Protocol II was put to the vote on 29 November, the PRC again opted for nonparticipation.<sup>61</sup>

There were nineteen resolutions during the 27th General Assembly which can be said to have involved ACD or related matters, and the PRC took part in the voting on fourteen of them.<sup>62</sup> This gives a non-participation rate of about twenty-six per cent, a remarkable drop from the seventy per cent of the year before. Of the fourteen votes cast by China, one was an abstention on a resolution on chemical and biological disarmament; four negative, with three on the test ban issues and one on a Moscow-sponsored resolution on the 'non-use of force' (NUF) in international relations; the remaining nine were positive. These included one, as in 1971, on the declaration of an Indian Ocean peace zone, two on napalm and other incendiary weapons, another 'yes' to the further postponement of the convening of the WDC, and five on resolutions that were 'adopted without vote' dealing respectively with the issues of atomic radiation, nuclear safeguards, outer space arms control, UN peacekeeping operations, and the definition of aggression. It became clear a few years later that the PRC tended to go along with the majority when a resolution was voted on the basis of consensus,

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60 See 'Note from Foreign Minister Chi [Qi] to the Mexican Ambassador in Peking (Anguiano), November 14, 1972', in DOD 1972, 785-7.

61 See PRC's voting record in 1972 in SIPRI 1972, 415.

62 Ibid. 412-7.

i.e., adopted without vote, or by acclamation, and not to take the initiative to request a roll-call or recorded vote. But it must be stressed that such a 'positive' vote by China did not necessarily carry Chinese approval on the resolution. Had the resolution been put through recorded voting, the PRC might have acted differently.

The 'Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) - a multilateral ACD agreement - was achieved in late March 1972 and opened for signature from 10 April that year. During the 27th General Assembly, a draft resolution was submitted to stress 'the importance of working towards the complete realisation of the objective of effective prohibition of chemical weapons' and to reaffirm 'the hope for the widest possible adherence' to the BWC. The draft resolution was adopted on 21 November with 113 in favour and no opposition. China and France were the only two states that abstained,<sup>63</sup> China indeed hinting that, had it not been for the 'consideration of the good-will of the people of all countries for the true prohibition of biological and chemical weapons', it might have voted against the draft resolution.<sup>64</sup>

China also found France sharing its negative stance on test ban issues. In 1971, China and Albania were the only two states which voted against all test ban resolutions. The following year they were joined by France and Portugal. During the 27th General Assembly, Beijing's near-isolation extended from the test ban issues to a new draft resolution proposed by Moscow. This was on the 'renunciation of the use or threat of force and the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons' - generally known as the 'non-use of force' resolution - and was adopted by the Assembly on 29 November. Although the

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<sup>63</sup> SIPRI 1972, p.412.

<sup>64</sup> Text of Lin's speech 'China's Stand on Prohibition of Chemical and Bacteriological Weapons Expounds', BR, XV/48, 1 Dec. 1972, 9-10. Also in DOD 1972, 817-8.

resolution was far from being overwhelmingly supported (forty-six abstaining and nine absent), China found itself casting one of the only four negative votes, again alongside Albania and Portugal, plus South Africa. Beijing's position on this issue was first spelt out by Qiao on 3 October:

The non-use of force in international relations can only be conditional ... The condition is to realise peaceful coexistence through mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and equality and mutual benefit. And in order to realise this, it is imperative to oppose the policies of aggression and expansion of any imperialism. When imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism ... are still using force to enslave, commit aggression against, control and threaten a majority of the countries of the world, it is a betrayal to the people of the world to advocate non-use of force in international relations indiscriminately.<sup>65</sup>

Dealing with the part headed 'permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons', Qiao claimed that it 'sounds so nice and looks so much like China's proposition, but in fact it is completely different'. The difference was, as Qiao put it, that Beijing had matched its proposal with a public declaration that 'at no time and in no circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons', while the USSR not only refused to offer a similar pledge, but also continued to develop their nuclear weapons and deployed them 'at the gate of other countries'.

The debate on the NUF proposal lasted between 2 and 15 November, and Qiao spoke again on the 13th, supported by the Chinese press. On the 12th an article in the People's Daily described Moscow's action in introducing this draft as 'an inglorious performance', while on 13 and 24 November NCNA issued commentaries calling the proposal a 'fraud' and emphasising that the proposal had been coolly received in the UN because, during the two-week debate, 'only 32 of the representatives

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65 Above fn. 39.

from 130-odd member states had taken the floor'.<sup>66</sup> Speaking moments before the voting, Huang criticised the draft resolution for its failure to mention either 'the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons' or to ask the nuclear countries to undertake the NFU 'obligation'.<sup>67</sup> Then he argued:

In our opinion, such a draft resolution, if adopted, ... would be detrimental to the people's cause of safeguarding and winning national independence and detrimental to international security and world peace; ... Therefore, the Chinese delegation will have to vote against the present draft resolution.

The fact that this Soviet proposal was adopted by a lop-sided margin represented a major Soviet triumph in the battle with China over ACD issues. Moscow had intended to use the NUF proposal to undercut Beijing's insistence upon the NFU pledge as a precondition for the convening of a world disarmament conference, and Beijing's opposition to the Soviet motion must have taken some Third World countries by surprise, prompting them to wonder if Beijing would ever attend any such conference at all.

To avoid further unpopularity in the Third World, Beijing was anxious to work out an acceptable formula to provide itself with a chance to vote for the WDC proposal without formally committing itself. Hence Chen Zhu gave assurances, during the debate on the WDC question on 24 October, that his government was ready 'to promote actively the convening and smooth progress' of a WDC.<sup>68</sup> But with a few conditions: nuclear powers, 'particularly' the two superpowers, should undertake the NFU obligation and to 'withdraw from abroad all armed forces and dismantle all military bases including nuclear bases set up on foreign soil'.

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<sup>66</sup> Commentator, 'An Inglorious Performance', PD, 12 Nov. 1972, in BR, XV/46, 17 Nov. 1972, 6-7. Also see Qiao's speech in above fn.42.

<sup>67</sup> Text of Huang's speech in DOD 1972, 828-30.

<sup>68</sup> Text of Chen's speech in Ibid., 716-9.

Beijing's unremitting insistence on these two preconditions wiped out any possible benefit that its assurances on the active promotion of the 'convening and smooth progress' of a WDC might have won. It even led an observer of Chinese foreign policy to argue that Beijing had not then been 'very honest' with its UN audience, since it was known 'beyond doubt' that 'China actually prefers to see a continuing American presence in Asia and Western Europe'.<sup>69</sup> However, a number of Third World countries, including Argentina, Zambia, and Yugoslavia, were determined not to let China's negative position slow the momentum in the WDC effort. A Contact Group was formed to deal with both China and the United States, the two nuclear powers that had been most 'unco-operative'. The work of the Group produced considerable 'consultative pressure' on the PRC and eventually committed it to a draft resolution.<sup>70</sup> In place of the originally proposed 'preparatory committee' for the WDC, this proposed a so-called 'Special Committee' consisting of thirty-five member states, 'to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly after consultation with all the regional groups and taking due consideration of the necessity to ensure adequate political and geographical representation'.<sup>71</sup> The tasks of this committee were to examine 'all the views and suggestions expressed by Governments on the convening of a World disarmament conference and related problems and to submit, on the basis of consensus, a report to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session'.<sup>72</sup>

It was obvious that Beijing did not wish to let its endorsement of this resolution create an impression that it had changed its position

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69 Zheng Huan, 'China's Wavering Line', FEER, 2 Dec. 1972, 26-7.

70 See Kim, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.13), pp.171-2. The term 'consultative pressure' is borrowed from Kim.

71 See The United Nations and Disarmament ... (above fn.15), p.32.

72 Ibid.

on the issue. Chen Zhu, speaking after the voting, reiterated the importance of the two preconditions his country had previously put forward and warned that if these preconditions were not met: 'The Chinese delegation categorically cannot agree to, nor will it ever participate in, such a world disarmament conference and its preparatory work'.<sup>73</sup> This of course ruled out the possibility of Beijing being involved in the work of the committee. But Zhen went on unsparingly to reveal that 'many times during the consultations on the draft resolution' China had made it clear that it would not serve as a member of the committee. Nevertheless, he promised that China would 'maintain contact' and 'exchange views' with it.<sup>74</sup>

The PRC was visibly unhappy about the adoption of this resolution. Its media noted only in passing that the Soviet insistence on 'fixing the date, venue and preparatory set-up' for a WDC had been 'refuted by representatives of many countries' - it was no longer seen as a 'frustration' of a Soviet conspiracy like the year before.<sup>75</sup> In fact what the Chinese press was trying to say was that any hope for an early realisation of a WDC could only be premature. Beijing Review discussed the implications of this resolution and claimed that the resolution had 'stressed', that member states involved in the debate for that resolution were convinced, that 'substantial progress in the field of disarmament can be achieved only by ensuring adequate conditions of security of all states'.<sup>76</sup> The same article also quoted Zambia's representative as saying (and the journal emphasised that he was

73 Text of Chen's speech in DOD 1972, 822-3.

74 Ibid.

75 See 'The First Committee Adopts 52-Nations Draft Resolution', BR, XV/48, 1 Dec. 1972, 8-9.

76 Ibid. (Emphasis added).

speaking 'on behalf of the 52 co-sponsors') that the report to be prepared at the end of the work of the Special Committee would be 'merely a report of views and expressions of different delegations' and would 'not be binding at all'.

What was generally agreed between the PRC and the Contact Group was probably to the effect that the final report of the committee would not have any binding force; that Beijing's emphasis on certain conditions for genuine progress on disarmament should be noted, however indirectly or even vaguely, in the resolution; and that China would 'maintain contact' with, but not be asked to participate in, the Special Committee. On 20 December, however, came a surprising turn. The President of the General Assembly informed the Secretary-General that he had appointed only thirty-one of the thirty-five members of the committee, and had reserved the four remaining seats for four of the five nuclear powers that had not already been appointed - i.e., France, UK, the US and China.<sup>77</sup> The Chinese reacted angrily to such an unexpected development. On 10 January 1973 a formal statement was issued by the PRC delegation stating that China would not have voted in favour of the resolution had it known that a country would be involuntarily named a member of the committee.<sup>78</sup> The statement also accused the President of the 27th General Assembly of abusing his function and authority, and then announced that the PRC would still not involve itself with the work of the committee. In the end, none of the reserved seats was taken up by any of the four powers, and the significance of the Special Committee was reduced to 'an informal exchange of views', by a consensus reached among the members of the committee

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77 The United Nations and Disarmament ... (above fn.15), p.32.

78 'China Not to Take Part in World Disarmament Conference Special Committee', in BR, XIV/3, 19 Jan. 1973, 8-10.

before its first meeting on 26 April 1973.<sup>79</sup>

#### THE KUNMING DOCUMENT AND DISARMAMENT: An Internal View

Although the resurgence of collusionist influence noted during October-November 1972 did not make any further headway in public, it continued to plague the PRC leadership. There was an apparent failure to agree on a proper interpretation on the superpower strategic relationship at the beginning of 1973. The New Year Message refrained from dwelling on this sensitive topic. Avoiding the controversial terms of 'contention' and 'collusion', it characterised the two superpowers as continuing to 'scheme and plot'.<sup>80</sup> China was not to return publicly to the use of the two earlier terms until late August 1973, when the 10th Party Congress of the CCP met.<sup>81</sup> However, later evidence, generally referred to as the 'Kunming Document', reveals that by March-April 1973, considerable efforts from Beijing were underway to preach contentionist views in the PLA, down to the company level.<sup>82</sup> While this suggests a central leadership under firmly contentionist control, it also implies a persistence of collusionist thinking right at the grass roots of the PRC's military establishment.

The 'Kunming Document', in its formal title an 'Outline of Education on the Situation for Companies', is one of a series of PLA political education materials. It was originally issued by the Political Department of the Kunming Military Region on 30 March 1973,

<sup>79</sup> The United Nations and Disarmament ... (above fn.15), p.33.

<sup>80</sup> Reprinted in English in FBIS, 25 Jan. 1973, B1-B5.

<sup>81</sup> This is Sargent and Harris' finding. See their op.cit., (above Ch.4 fn.162), pp.IV2-IV3.

<sup>82</sup> Kunming Document appeared in English originally in Issues and Studies, X/9, June 1974, 90-108 (Part I), and X/10, July 1974, 94-98 (Part II).

and reprinted by a regimental unit of the Yunnan Production Construction Corps on 20 April 1973. Classified as 'confidential', this document was made available to the West via Taiwan during June-July 1974. It included a 'general programme' and five 'lessons'. Of the three lessons dealing with external issues, one was on the situation in Vietnam in the aftermath of the signing of the Vietnam armistice agreement earlier that year; the second explained why the Soviet Union had become China's 'most dangerous and most important enemy'; and, the third discussed Nixon's visit to China.

The general theme running through all the three lessons was to warn about the expansionist policy of Soviet 'social-imperialism' and to justify Beijing's opening to the United States; but in terms of the contentionist-collusionist debate, the document was clearly one-sided. Not denying that American involvement in Vietnam had been an act of collusion with the Soviet Union, it argued that the end of that involvement - symbolised by the conclusion of the armistice agreement - had terminated that collusion and set the stage for a more intensified contention between the two superpowers in other parts of the world. In particular, the document specified that the Soviet Union was 'contending' with the United States 'for the control of the whole of Europe' and for the 'oil and strategic position' in the Middle East.<sup>83</sup> This did not mean, however, that China was not involved in the contention between the superpowers. When analysing why the Soviet Union was China's 'most threatening enemy', it was claimed that Moscow's intention was 'to relax the situation in Europe and to stabilise the Western front so that it may spare both hands for fully opposing China'.<sup>84</sup>

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83 Ibid. (Part I), p.99.

84 Ibid., p.102.

The document also devoted about one-third of a lesson (Lesson Two) exclusively to the subject of disarmament. This was necessary because, in its words, 'some comrades are not clear as to what is meant by Soviet revisionism's extravagant talks about disarmament. This problem must be properly solved'.<sup>85</sup> Then followed a point-by-point attack on the SALT, the Soviet NUF proposal, Moscow's initiative on the permanent banning of nuclear weapons, and the question of a nuclear test ban. The SALT agreements were again declared a 'fraud', because the two superpowers were merely turning from a quantitative arms race to a qualitative one, focusing on MIRV technology. The NUF concept had little value because it failed to distinguish between just and unjust wars, and Moscow's action in making such a proposal was contradicted by its own behaviour in invading Czechoslovakia and supporting India's war against Pakistan. Moscow's call for the banning of nuclear weapons was not the same as what Beijing had called for, and it could not work, because it did not insist upon a vital preliminary agreement on the NFU of nuclear weapons. Lastly, the 'ban of all nuclear tests' was proposed because 'Soviet revisionism has had enough testing and because now it wants to limit the development of nuclear weapons by countries without nuclear weapons, especially by our country [China]'. In concluding, the document warned the PLA soldiers that 'We must fully realise that Soviet revisionism's so-called "disarmament" is false, while its frantic expansion of armed forces is true'.

At least on these disarmament issues, this 'confidential' internal document faithfully recited what the PRC had been saying in public. The only difference, if any, was that Beijing was even more explicit in bringing to light its profound distrust in the sincerity of the Soviet Union in making any ACD proposals. Indeed, by then it was clear that

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p.100.

all ACD proposals with Soviet sponsorship would automatically trigger off fierce Chinese opposition, and conversely, that ones not actively supported by the Soviet Union might escape China's attack. Thus China might actually support an ACD initiative if by its doing so a situation detrimental to the politico-military interests of the Soviet Union could be created.

#### CHINA SIGNS THE TREATY OF TLATELOLCO

China's announcement in April 1973 that it intended to sign the Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco provides an excellent opportunity of watching this process occur. Since the early 1950s the PRC had always endorsed the concept of NFZs and had taken the initiative to propose the establishment of an Asian-Pacific NFZ. However, when the first sign of the denuclearisation of Latin America became visible in 1966, it responded by saying it was 'in no position' to support the NFZ because the treaty had been negotiated within the UN framework and China was not then a UN member.<sup>86</sup> When China did become a UN member in 1971, it still declined to support the Latin American NFZ, claiming that 'the present difficulties obstructing the establishment of nuclear-free zones ... do not come from the Chinese side'. It hinted, as noted earlier, that a NFZ would not work unless a few difficult preconditions were first fulfilled.<sup>87</sup> Then on 14 November 1972 came the crucial change of policy. In a letter addressed to the Mexican Ambassador in Beijing, Foreign Minister Qi Pengfei announced that the Chinese Government had decided to 'respect and support' the establishment of a Latin American NFZ and to abide by the

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<sup>86</sup> NYT, 2 Oct. 1966, 27.

<sup>87</sup> Cited from Jack, op.cit. (above fn.14), p.6. Jack indicates this remark was made by Chen Zhu, but he gives no source.

obligations prescribed by Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. However, Qi went on to stress again that China was 'in no position' to formally sign the Protocol because the preambles of both the Treaty and Protocol referred favourably to UN resolutions on the NPT and the PTBT, and China had always been opposed to those treaties.<sup>88</sup> Interestingly, Qi also proposed an addition of two more provisions to the Protocol: one was the 'dismantling of all foreign military bases in Latin America', the other the 'prohibition of the passage of all means of transportation and delivery carrying nuclear weapons through the territory, territorial sea or territorial air space of Latin American countries'. It appeared that Qi, after he had committed China informally to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, was hinting that it would sign the Protocol formally only if these provisions were added to the treaty.

A commentary in the People's Daily three days after the announcement of Qi's letter offered a partial explanation. It ignored the provision on the 'dismantling of foreign military bases' and portrayed Qi's proposal on the other provision (dealing with the prohibition of the passage of nuclear vehicles, etc.) as a 'good-will' gesture, in that Beijing was voluntarily extending its commitment to the cause of a Latin American NFZ into areas which went beyond those covered by the Protocol.<sup>89</sup> Such a 'good-will' gesture should prove how 'vigorous' Beijing's support for the NFZ really was. But Beijing must have known that, in order to please the Latin American countries, it need do no more than what was asked of it, i.e. sign Protocol II. To propose additional provisions complicated the matter and might even irritate

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88 Above fn.60.

89 Commentator, 'Latin American Countries' Will Should be Respected', PD, 17 Nov. 1972, in BR, XV/47, 24 Nov. 1972, 8.

these countries. So it is likely that Beijing had intended to use these additional provisions either as a sine qua non for its formal signature on the Protocol, or more importantly, as an extra barrier to prevent a possible Soviet adherence to it. For one thing, the 'dismantling of all foreign military bases in Latin America' would immediately threaten Soviet military presence in Cuba. And this was precisely why Qi quietly opted for a new formulation of 'foreign military bases', in clear contrast to what Chen Zhu said a year earlier at the UN on basically the same issues. Chen had referred then to the dismantling of superpower 'nuclear' bases, but this form of words would not cover Cuba for there was no Soviet nuclear base there or elsewhere in Latin America.<sup>90</sup>

By the beginning of 1973 it was no secret that Beijing was concerned about the growth of Soviet influence in Latin America. Beijing Review referred to the situation in Latin America as one in which the Soviet Union was attempting to 'infiltrate and expand ... by taking advantage of United States imperialism's shaky position there.'<sup>91</sup> These attempts, though not specified in the Chinese press, included the visible increase of Soviet influence in Peru and in Chile, and the greater control over Latin American communist parties.<sup>92</sup> The PRC on the other hand, had not even one foothold in Latin America.

This is why the visit of Mexican President Luis Echeverria to China during April 1973 was bound to prove important. In the course of it, clearly in a bid to cement its friendship with Mexico and to promote its popularity in other Latin American countries, Beijing

90 Chen's remarks cited from Jack, China's Disarmament Policy at the United Nations (N.Y.: World Conference on Religion and Peace, 1976), p.17.

91 'Latin American Struggle to Safeguard Marine Resources', BR, XVI/3, 19 Jan. 1973, 6-8.

92 This is an observation made by Sargent and Harris, op.cit., (above Ch.4 fn.162), p.IV-6.

agreed formally to sign Additional Protocol II. That was a very significant development in the PRC's ACD policy. A process which had lasted just short of two years had drawn China step by step into an ACD commitment which it had originally not been prepared to support, and the role of Mexico had been crucial.

Mexico indeed had been a leading figure in the UN Latin American regional group, and as such had played a major role both in the establishment of a Latin American NFZ and in other general UN disarmament activities. It was largely a Mexican initiative which produced a substitute resolution acceptable to both the PRC and the Soviet Union in 1971, when a Sino-Soviet stalemate on a Soviet WDC proposal was obstructing the Third World efforts in pushing for a WDC at the UN.<sup>93</sup> The Chinese would have appreciated that initiative from Mexico, since they claimed that the adoption of the substitute resolution had 'frustrated' the original Soviet WDC proposal. After such an auspicious beginning, Mexico went on to cultivate China's friendship in what was probably a two-way process, for on 14 February 1972 the two countries announced that they were establishing formal diplomatic ties through their UN representatives.<sup>94</sup> In a Sino-Mexican joint communiqué issued that day, the PRC acknowledged for the first time that:

The Chinese Government supports the just position of Mexico and of other Latin American States regarding the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free zone in Latin America and considers that all nuclear-weapon States should assume the obligation of not utilising such weapons against that zone or those States.<sup>95</sup>

That was a major reward for the consistent Mexican efforts, but the Mexicans did not stop there. During the following session of the

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93 The United Nations and Disarmament ... (above fn.15), pp.27-8.

94 These statements on the establishment of diplomatic relations have been included in DOD 1972, 49.

95 Ibid.

UN General Assembly, Mexican representative Garcia Robles on 6 November 1972 expressed gratitude for Beijing's verbal support as stated in the Sino-Mexican joint communiqué earlier that year and indicated that Mexico would interpret such verbal support as 'a promising sign' with which Mexico could 'in the near future look forward to the valuable co-operation' of the PRC with the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which 'would be implied by its signing and ratification of Additional Protocol II'.<sup>96</sup>

In fact while Garcia Robles was speaking, Beijing was already in the process of making a decision to further clarify its position on the matter. That further clarification was required by a letter of 5 October 1972 from the new Mexican Ambassador to China to the PRC's Foreign Minister. Presumably the letter again urged the Chinese to formally sign Additional Protocol II. On 14 November Beijing replied that the Chinese would informally commit themselves to the principles of the Treaty. That informal commitment, though probably not completely satisfying Mexico, drew China and Mexico yet closer together in opposition to the Soviet stance on Tlatelolco. While the Chinese press acted promptly in exploiting Moscow's refusal to support the Latin American NFZ, in contrast to Beijing's willingness to at least informally commit itself, Mexican representatives also mercilessly assaulted the Soviet position at the UN. A Chinese press report, for instance, triumphantly quoted the statement of a Mexican representative in declaring that the Soviet position on the issue 'has been consistent but has been one of consistent error, in open contradiction to the position of enthusiastic theoretical support for the establishment of nuclear-free zones reiterated disgustingly by the Soviet Government'.<sup>97</sup>

By the end of the 27th General Assembly, Beijing must have

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<sup>96</sup> Text of Robles' speech in DOD 1972, 766-771.

<sup>97</sup> 'Soviet Double-Dealing', in BR, XV/48, 1 Dec. 1972, 11.

realised at least two things. One, that the Latin American countries led by Mexico were not to be satisfied with an informal Chinese commitment to the treaty; and two, that a formal commitment might further improve China's image as against that of the Soviet Union not just among Latin American countries, but perhaps among all developing countries. After all, to commit China formally to the establishment of the Latin American NFZ was not likely to produce any conceivable adverse effect on China's political-strategic interests, except that it might lead to an unwanted impression that China was softening its opposition on the NPT and the PTBT. Therefore, when the Chinese finally bowed to the personal diplomacy of President Echeverria in announcing that they were about to 'make arrangements' to sign Additional Protocol II, they also specifically stressed that such an action should 'not prejudice' China's 'consistent opposition' to the NPT and the PTBT.<sup>98</sup>

The PRC's ambassador to Mexico formally signed the Protocol on 21 August 1973. In an official statement after the signing, Beijing re-emphasised that its signature would neither 'imply any change whatsoever in China's principled stand on the disarmament and nuclear weapon issue' nor 'affect the Chinese Government's consistent stand' against the PTBT and the NPT.<sup>99</sup> In addition, the statement insisted that, in order to make Latin America 'truly' a NFZ, 'all nuclear countries, and particularly the superpowers', must inter alia 'be asked to undertake to observe and implement' the two extra conditions proposed by Qi on 14 November 1972, i.e. the 'dismantling of all

98 'Quarterly Chronicle and Disarmament', CQ 54 (April-June 1973), 608.

99 'Statement by the PRC Government on Signing Additional Protocol II to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, August 21, 1973', in DOD 1973, 542-3. Also in BR, XVI/35-36, 7 Sept. 1975, 38.

foreign military bases in Latin America' and the 'prohibition of the passage of any means of transportation and delivery carrying nuclear weapons' through Latin America.

Such insistence left no doubt that Beijing was bent on substantiating its claims that its ACD positions remained unchanged with its signature on Additional Protocol II; the wording of the insistence also strongly implied that the Chinese were reserving an option in insisting upon these conditions when necessary. This option was designated, in all probability, for a situation in which the Soviet Union was to become too actively involved in the Latin American NFZ affairs. In any case, Beijing ratified the Protocol on 23 August 1974.<sup>100</sup> After 1973 Beijing altered its previous policy of not participating in the voting on UN resolutions dealing with Latin American NFZ issues. Between 1973 and 1978, indeed, Beijing voted positively on almost all UN resolutions on the NFZ subject.<sup>101</sup> This remarkable record becomes even more interesting if one takes into account Kim's finding that, during this period, ACD resolutions were the area where Beijing's negative votes most often fell.<sup>102</sup> One asks why it is that, among all ACD arrangements, Beijing has shown a specific preference for the establishment of NFZs?

The most essential yet often overlooked factor for Beijing's support for the establishment of NFZs was that, unlike the test ban or the WDC proposals, it posed no apparent or possible threat either to China's security in general, or to China's nuclear weapon development programme in particular. China was neither a global power, nor had it

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100 'Latin America Nuclear-weapon-free Zone Supported', BR, XVII/25, 21 June 1974, 3-4.

101 See SIPRI yearbooks during these years for a quick reference to the record of the PRC's votes on the issue.

102 Kim, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.13), p.126.

any detectable intention of using its nuclear capability in any situation other than for self-defence. Therefore the establishment of NFZs in various parts of the world could not much hinder the implementation of Chinese foreign policy. Beijing could furthermore assume an increase in the number of NFZs to mean a decrease of superpower influence. To say the least, the establishment of NFZs in various parts of the world would by definition reduce the possibility of (in Chinese parlance) 'superpower nuclear blackmail'. It is therefore logical to argue that the PRC would have perceived the proposals for establishing NFZs as doing China no harm while being only detrimental to the two superpowers, particularly to the one that had expansionist ambitions.

There was also inevitably a consideration of political popularity. The Chinese knew that their image had been damaged by some of their uncompromising ACD positions, and were aware of the need to improve that image. The NFZ issue therefore presented a well-timed opportunity, albeit one to be approached with caution. But once across the threshold and formally committed to the Latin American NFZ, there was no conceivable reason why China could not extend such support to the establishment of NFZs in other parts of the world. After all, the NFZ proposals often represented the aspirations of various groupings of Third World countries from whom China could garner political and diplomatic support, and whom China claimed always to have cultivated in its relations with the outside world.

It has also been suggested that, after the conclusion of SALT 1, a segment of the Chinese leadership, namely the contentionists, tried to build a case that superpower interactions in the strategic-weapon arena, i.e. SALT, masked the true nature of the superpower strategic relationship. Instead, that relationship could best and only be seen

in superpower struggles for 'spheres of influence', in traditional geopolitical competition for territorial control and influence.<sup>103</sup> During late 1972 and early 1973, it became obvious that the Chinese press was giving increasing space to the discussion of superpower struggles for influence in specific geographical areas such as the Middle East, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, Europe, and Latin America. Hence the fact that Beijing's commitment to the Tlatelolco Treaty was progressing from being informal to formal may not only prove that the contentions were indeed building up their case as described above, but may imply that, during the period in question, the case itself was beginning to sway the Chinese leadership.

#### AN EYE ON EUROPEAN SECURITY: A 'Feint' to the East?

A central feature of the case we have been examining was its concentration on the European scene. Before 1972, Europe received little attention in either the Chinese press or other official Chinese statements. From late that year, however, there was first a noticeable increase in Chinese comment on the European situation, and then in 1973 an escalation in diplomatic activities between Beijing and European capitals. The background to these developments was set by the 1972 PRC National Day editorial of 1 October. While resurrecting Mao's 1964 concept of the 'second intermediate zone', a theme which had not been mentioned in the Chinese press for more than seven years, this editorial for the first time identified Europe as the 'main point' of Soviet American contention. Beijing made no attempt to conceal at least one of the reasons for its concern over the European situation - the possibility of the convening of the 'conference on European security and cooperation' (CESC). When Qiao addressed the UN General

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<sup>103</sup> Sargent and Harris, op.cit., (above Ch.4 fn.162), pp.IV1-IV2.

Assembly on 3 October, only two days after publication of the National Day editorial, he expressed explicitly the fear that such a conference might 'only be another name for the division of sphere of influence' between the two superpowers and should thus be more aptly called 'the European insecurity conference'.<sup>104</sup>

What Qiao did not reveal was that Beijing was also monitoring the possible opening of negotiations between NATO members and Warsaw Pact countries on the reciprocal reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe, negotiations later to be known as the 'mutual and balanced force reduction' (MBFR) talks. Indeed, with the notable improvement in the European political climate by the end of 1972, marked by the announcement on 16 November of the NATO proposal for 'exploratory talks' on MBFR in the following January, by the start on 21 November of the second phase of the SALT talks in Geneva, by the opening on the 22nd of the 'consultative' meetings for the preparation of the CESC in Helsinki, and by the signing on 21 December of the Treaty on the Basis of Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, it became common knowledge, at least in European diplomatic circles, that Chinese diplomats were much exercised by the way in which the CESC and MBFR negotiations were developing.<sup>105</sup>

Nevertheless, Beijing remained reluctant to discuss the MBFR issue publicly. Not until April 1974 did Beijing Review first briefly acknowledge the existence of the MBFR talks as one of the 'two deadlocked conferences' - the other being the CESC.<sup>106</sup> And it was early 1975 before full-length Chinese commentaries dealing specifically

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104 Above fn.39 for the text of Qiao's speech.

105 Edith Lenhart, 'Peking's Interest in Europe', FEER, 2 Dec. 1972.

with MBFR began to emerge.<sup>107</sup> Even those suggested that Beijing was rating the MBFR talks as less important than the CESC; China's views on the European situation were to continue to be elaborated primarily with reference to CESC developments.

The central theme of Beijing's view on these two conferences was that they served as two interrelated instruments of Soviet expansion and aggression, primarily in Europe, but with inevitable adverse consequences for China and other parts of the world. In the spring of 1973, the 'Kunming Document' offered an analysis of Moscow's intention with the CESC (the document failed even to mention the MBFR initiative), which claimed that Moscow intended as follows:

1. To consolidate its spheres of influence in Europe as far as possible;
2. To divide NATO and expel American influence from Europe;
3. To maintain temporary stability in Europe so that Moscow could concentrate upon China.<sup>108</sup>

Such an analysis tended to confirm that Beijing was indeed worried by the possibility of a relaxation of tension, for that would give the Soviet Union a freer hand in confronting China. However, in August that year Beijing revealed a public stance towards European détente which was entirely opposite to that expressed privately in the 'Kunming Document'.

The occasion was the 10th Party Congress of the CCP held between 24 and 28 August 1973, and the statement came in Premier Zhou's Political Report. In his report to congress Zhou introduced the famous argument that the Soviet were 'making a feint to the East while

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106 'Two Dead-locked Conferences', BR, XVII/16, 19 Apr. 1974, 30-31.

107 This is an observation made by Harris, in his monograph: China, MBFR and the New American Targeting Doctrine (Final Report) (MacLean, Va.: The BDM Corp., 15 Oct. 1976); see especially pp.43-50 and B1-B9.

108 Kunming Document, Part I, (above fn.82), 99 and 102.

attacking the West':

The West always wants to urge the Soviet revisionists eastward to divert the peril towards China, and it would be fine so long as all is quiet in West ... At present the Soviet revisionists are making a feint to the East while attacking in the West, and stepping up their contention [with the United States] in Europe and their expansion in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and every place their hands could reach.<sup>109</sup>

The sense of Zhou's argument was clear: the more immediate intent of Soviet 'expansionism' was the military subjugation of Western Europe, and Moscow's public enmity to Beijing was, in this regard, merely a pretence. Such a view, as noted earlier, contradicted sharply what was offered for internal reading. Furthermore, Zhou was self-contradictory. Despite arguing that the Soviets were 'making a feint to the East while attacking the West', he reiterated a slogan of Mao's current since the beginning of the year that the Chinese must 'dig tunnels deep, store grain everywhere, and never seek hegemony', and urged his countrymen to 'maintain high vigilance and be fully prepared against any war of aggression that imperialism may launch and particularly against surprise attack on our country by Soviet revisionist social-imperialism'.

If Zhou's stance represented a genuine change of perception on China's part, then the contradiction within his report is strange, unless of course the Chinese were simply hoping for the best and preparing for the worst. It remains an open question whether the Chinese truly believed that the more immediate target of Soviet military 'expansionism' at this time was Europe rather than China. Hinton, for instance, is convinced that the change of perception was genuine and argues that it was partly motivated by Beijing's own

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109 Text of Zhou's report in BR, XVI/35-36, 7 Sept. 1973. Quotation taken from 22-3.

assessment that it had acquired 'what it considered a second-strike deterrent against the Soviet Union' at about that time.<sup>110</sup> Garner, on the other hand, endorses the view contained in the 'Kunming Document', and claims that the real Chinese perception still held Soviet military ambition as primarily aimed at China.<sup>111</sup>

Hinton never adequately substantiates his conviction. Harris, however, whose view is similar, suggests that the Chinese might have suspected that the Soviet Union, caught between two powerful probably adversaries, was acting in a manner analogous to the German Schlieffen Plan of World War 1: by first concentrating its forces on the faster-developing and more immediate threat (Europe) and then turning to the slower-developing, less imminent threat of China.<sup>112</sup> However, if this was the case, then, Zhou would not have stressed the imminence of a surprise Soviet attack on China and thus contradicted himself. Garner's view is somewhat more realistic because it reflects the heart of the Chinese concern - that the rapid progress of détente in Europe, even were it not to mean a total subjugation of the NATO forces or even their neutralisation, would still seriously worsen a Sino-Soviet military balance already then substantially unfavourable to China. Europe was vital to China's security calculation as a 'second front', and developments since April 1973 (the time when the 'Kunming Document' was published) made it imperative for China to attempt to dissuade the West from further détente with Moscow. These development included Brezhnev's visit to Washington and the signing of the superpower agreements on basic principles of negotiation, on the further limitation of strategic offensive arms, and on the prevention of nuclear war; a satisfactory ending of the MBFR preparatory consultative meeting on 28

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110 Hinton, The Sino-Soviet Confrontation: Implications for the Future (N.Y.: Russak, 1976), p.34.

111 Garner, op.cit. (above fn.51), 1230-1.

112 Harris, op.cit. (above fn.107), p.1.

June which proposed the initiation of MBFR talks in October; and the convening between 3 and 7 July of the first stage of the CESC conference on the foreign-minister level at Helsinki. Hence the contradiction in Zhou's report can be seen as reflecting both Beijing's apprehension of a growing Soviet threat facing China and its determination to awaken Western European countries to their own predicament.

On a further level, the contradiction may also have reflected the unsettling effect which the contentionist-collusionist debate had on the Chinese leadership. As read by Lieberthal, Zhou's report bore 'all the earmarks of an artful compromise' which allowed various factions of the Chinese leadership to 'derive satisfaction' from its different aspects.<sup>113</sup> Apparently the efforts of early 1973 aimed at silencing the collusionists were not a total success, for even Zhou himself had to pay lip service to the theme of collusion by acknowledging that the two superpowers 'contend as well as collude' with each other. Nevertheless, Zhou succeeded in formulating his speech in such a way that his report, on closer examination, showed ample signs of repudiating the collusionist argument. Despite the fact that the collusionists were perceiving events in Europe as extremely disturbing and as further vindications of their theory, Zhou was able to proclaim that: 'Relaxation is a temporary and superficial phenomenon, and great disorder will continue' and that 'collusion [between the superpowers] serves the purpose of more intensified contention. Contention is absolute and protracted, whereas collusion is relative and temporary'. Zhou also obviously had some message for a particular section of his audience, since he pointedly told the Congress: 'When a wrong tendency surges towards us like a rising tide, we must not fear isolation and must dare to go against the tide and brave it through'. In the context of Zhou's speech, it must surely be that the 'wrong tendency' he was

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113 Lieberthal, op.cit. (above fn.55), p.105.

referring to was the trend of East-West détente, and that those who feared 'isolation' were the collusionists. One is therefore tempted to argue that Zhou's assertion which made Europe now the 'focus of superpower contention', at a time when general understanding supported the opposite view of it as the focus of superpower 'collusion', was stated to cancel out any ground the collusionists may have gained.

The feeble result of the collusionists' attempt to cite the progress of European détente in support of their theory, as witness Zhou's report, pushed the collusionist camp one step closer to elimination. The theory was to be briefly resuscitated on only one further occasion, when the 1973 October War in the Middle East broke out. Claiming that the two superpowers were trying to maintain tension and prevent a Middle East settlement, the collusionists interpreted Kissinger's urgent visit to Moscow on 20 October and the adoption of the UN Security Council ceasefire resolution two days later as further evidence of Soviet-American 'collusion'.<sup>114</sup> However, the US worldwide military alert declared on 25 October in reaction to the threat of Soviet fighting forces in the Middle East drastically altered the picture and utterly destroyed the collusionist argument. On 31 October, in a speech welcoming Australian Prime Minister Whitlam, Premier Zhou resumed his exclusively contentionist position with the words 'The essence of the Middle East issue is the contention of the superpowers for hegemony over this region'.<sup>115</sup> Since then, superpower 'collusion' has been longer a valid interpretation of the superpower relationship. Although the term 'collusion' did not vanish completely from the Chinese political literature until 1974, its few remaining

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114 Initial reaction of the Chinese press to the October War, with regard to the 'contention-collusion' debate, has been summarised and analysed in: Sargent and Harris, *op.cit.*, (above Ch.4 fn.162), pp.VI1-VI4.

115 Text of Zhou's speech in *BR*, XVI/45, 9 Nov. 1973, 4-5.

appearances were only abstract, devoid of any positive meaning or significance.<sup>116</sup>

Even without the October War and subsequent US worldwide military alert, the contentionists would probably still have achieved exclusive control of the interpretation of the Soviet-American relationship. This was demonstrated by Beijing's first official comment on the 'Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War' signed by the superpowers in June 1973. On 2 October, i.e. four days before the outbreak of the October War, Qiao told a plenary meeting of the General Assembly that the Agreement was a product of superpower 'rivalry for hegemony'.<sup>117</sup> Asserting that 'The contention between the Soviet Union and the United States now extends all over the world', he predicted that the arms race between the superpowers would continue because 'the desperate struggle for nuclear superiority and world hegemony still goes on'. Nowhere in his speech, a general statement of China's position on all major international issues, was the word 'collusion' ever mentioned or even implied. This could mean that by then the collusionist argument was already doomed, only to be briefly and vainly revived by the initial stage of the October War.

Qiao's speech also discussed the problem of European détente and certain other ACD issues, including the WDC question and a new Soviet ACD proposal for a ten per cent cut in the military budgets of the five

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116 See Sargent and Harris, op.cit., (above Ch.4 fn.162), pp.VI1-VI6. Accordingly, Chinese internal politics could no longer be seen as a debate between the contentionists and collusionists. The new constellation of political factions in China since mid-1973, as proposed by Lieberthal, should be viewed as an interplay between three major groups, namely the 'radicals', the 'moderates-soft', and the 'moderates-hard'. See Lieberthal, op.cit. (above fn.55), pp.73-95. It seems that the 'moderates-soft' was what was left of, or transformed from, the 'collusionists', and the 'moderates-hard' was the new shape of the 'contentionists'.

117 'Chairman of the Chinese Delegation Chiao [Qiao] Kuan-hua's Speech'; above fn.54.

permanent members of the Security Council. On the problem of European détente, Qiao described Europe as the 'focus' of superpower contention and the CESC as 'nothing but one of the forms of contention'. Qiao stopped short of repeating the phrase 'making a feint to the East while attacking in the West',<sup>118</sup> but in at least two other respects his speech was uninhibited. First, despite the fact that he had referred to Europe as the 'focus' of contention between the two superpowers, he mentioned only the Soviet ambition in seeking to 'divide and disintegrate' Western Europe. The US was conspicuously spared from sharing the blame. Secondly, he surprised his audience by directly acknowledging that 'even Western Europe is inadequate in defence capabilities'. That was the first time a Chinese delegate had ever publicly stressed the inadequacy of Western European defence capabilities, implying that Beijing might not in future insist upon any commitments from the Western European countries on actual arms reduction or other ACD matters.

#### ON THE REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS: Opposing an Equal Treatment of the Big Five

The overall Chinese performance with regard to ACD affairs during the 28th General Assembly varied little from what it was the year before. The nonparticipation rate increased slightly to thirty-seven per cent, caused mainly by the fact that, in 1973, four resolutions dealing with atomic radiation issues were subject to a recorded vote, and Beijing chose to opt for nonparticipation. In 1972 and again between 1974 and 1977, each year saw a resolution dealing with the issue of atomic radiation adopted without vote, China always joining in

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118 Qiao's omission of the phrase 'making a feint to the East ...' can be seen as an indirect corroboration of Garner's view that Beijing still perceived itself as the primary target of Soviet expansionism.

the consensus. In other words, had all the four resolutions in 1973 not been put to a recorded vote, China would probably have gone along with the majority. Hence the high non-participation rate in 1973 (the highest between 1972 and 1977) was not as meaningful as it seemed to be.

On resolutions dealing with chemical and biological weapons, China's voting pattern posed an interesting question. In 1972, the PRC abstained on a resolution on this issue, but in 1973 changed from abstention to non-participation. The difference between China's 'non-participation' and abstention is significant, the former (as noted earlier) suggesting a higher degree of opposition. Representative Lin Ping spoke on 26 November 1973 before the voting on this resolution. His speech hardly offered anything new from PRC statements on the same issue the year before, except that a part of his message could be seen as referring to the restated Soviet-American determination to reach an international ACD agreement with respect to chemical weapons which the joint Soviet-US communiqué at the end of Brezhnev's 1973 visit to Washington had proclaimed.<sup>119</sup>

1973 also saw the tenth anniversary of the signing of the PTBT, and on the eve of that anniversary, NCNA released a lengthy analysis criticising the treaty's failure.<sup>120</sup> By the end of the year Beijing and Moscow were again engaged in verbal battles on test ban issues at the UN. Moscow's representative Roshchin accused the PRC of 'resisting all measures and proposals designed to solve this [test ban] problem'

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119 Lin stated that 'We deem it necessary to point out that the super-powers are now using the question of prohibiting chemical weapons to peddle the fraud of sham disarmament'. See 'Statement by the PRC Representative [Lin] to the First Committee of the General Assembly: Chemical Weapons, November 26, 1973', DOD 1973, 828-9.

120 'Ten Years of "Disarmament" Ballyhoo, Ten Years of Frenzied Arms Expansion', BR, XVI/32, 10 August 1973, 5-7.

and of 'poisoning the atmosphere of the earth with radioactive fall-out'.<sup>121</sup> However, the PRC knew clearly that the real pressure for a comprehensive test ban, indeed for any kind of limitation on nuclear testing, came from Third World countries. Beijing's representative Zhuang therefore had to address those countries directly on the matter. He claimed: a) that China's nuclear tests had been carried out 'in the deep interior' of its territory; b) that 'The weather, wind direction and other conditions had been taken into full consideration, and effective measures had been adopted to prevent contamination'; and c) that 'China is ready at all times to stop nuclear tests, but never before the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons by the super-Powers and all the nuclear countries'.<sup>122</sup> Yet China had not changed its policy of voting against all test ban resolutions, nor did Zhuang's statements of reconciliation improve its position of being in an absolute minority in this regard.

Nowhere was the PRC's enmity toward Soviet ACD initiatives more vividly demonstrated during the 28th General Assembly than in its voting record on the four resolutions dealing with the issue of reducing military budgets. Most notable of the four was that introduced by the Soviet Union, which recommended that all permanent members of the Security Council should reduce their military budgets by ten per cent from the 1973 level during the next financial year and allot the ten per cent saved for developmental assistance to Third World countries.<sup>123</sup>

The Chinese reaction was predictable. Being a permanent member of the Security Council, Beijing felt that it was directly implicated by

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121 Text of Roshchin's statement in DOD 1973, 778-783.

122 Ibid.

123 Text of this resolution, Resolution 3093A (XXVIII), is in The United Nations and Disarmament ... (above fn.15), pp.212-3.

the Soviet proposal. Qiao, in his 2 October speech, at once mocked this proposal as 'Khrushchev's old ware' which had been 'peddled for more than a dozen years' but which had 'not deceived many people'. He also accused the proposal of being impractical: 'How are military budgets to be assessed? To study this problem alone, a committee will have to be set up and work for many years'.<sup>124</sup> His view was amplified the next day by a NCNA commentary, which characterised the Soviet proposal as 'cheap propaganda' and quoted 'a Western diplomat' as saying: 'How in the world will we be able to find out how much the Soviets are spending for defence?'<sup>125</sup> It then went on to cite a number of Soviet statements on the need for a defence build-up and the figures of such a build-up, and concluded that part of Moscow's motivation in putting forward such a proposal was to whitewash [its] ugly features already revealed to the Third World, in order to veil [its] penetration and expansion there'. On 21 November, Zhuang added another ingredient to that motivation. Refuting what the Soviets had called an 'equal responsibility' of the five permanent members of the Security Council, he first argued that one could not realistically conceive of the five states reducing their military budgets 'in the same proportion', because there was 'a great disparity' in their armament and military budgets. He went on: 'Evidently, the true intent of the Soviet proposal is to cover up its own obstinate position of opposing genuine disarmament and to shift the responsibility for what it calls rejecting disarmament on to other countries'.<sup>126</sup>

This analysis of the Soviet motivation was echoed in the West. An American commentator believes that Moscow initiated this proposal to

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124 Above fn.117.

125 'Cheap Propaganda', BR, XVI/41, 12 Oct. 1973, 11-2.

126 Zhuang Yen, 'Soviet Proposal for So-called Military Budgets Reduction Exposed', BR, XVI/48, 30 Nov. 1973, 19-20.

embarrass Beijing. 'By stressing equal Great Power responsibility and voluntarism and virtually assured of PRC opposition', as it has been suggested, 'Moscow could count on nonimplementation in the likely event of adoption and embarrassing Beijing for its opposition to windfall Third World development aid'.<sup>127</sup> However, Moscow perhaps did not entirely bring off this stratagem. During the debate, a number of Third World states voiced their doubts as to Soviet sincerity in implementing such a 'cut'.<sup>128</sup> When the voting on the resolution took place on 7 December, although China and Albania were the only two countries casting negative votes, no less than forty-eight other states, most of them from the Third World, abstained.<sup>129</sup>

The PRC was deeply annoyed by the Soviet proposal which placed an equal demand on all five permanent members of the Security Council, and went as far as voting against a Mexican draft resolution dealing mainly with its procedural aspects. The Mexicans had submitted their draft on the grounds that unless such problems as definition and verification were first solved, it would be impractical to consider the Soviet proposal. They therefore asked the Secretary-General to prepare a report for the 1974 General Assembly on these questions, in the hope of avoiding a head-on clash between Moscow and Beijing over this issue.<sup>130</sup> However, despite the close link between Beijing and Mexico on other ACD issues, representative Zhuang, in his speech of 7 December, could still describe the Mexican proposal as 'inappropriate', arguing that it would

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127 Feeney, 'Sino-Soviet Competition in the United Nations', AS XVII/9, Sept. 1977, 816.

128 Doubts from the Third World countries were quoted in a Chinese press commentary: 'Soviet Resolution for 'Reduction of Military Budgets' - A Mere Scrap of Paper', BR, XVI/51, 21 Dec. 1973, 8-10.

129 The voting result was 85-2-38, with ten absent or nonparticipating. See SIPRI 1974, 8-10.

130 The United Nations and Disarmament ... (above fn.15), p.212.

be used by Moscow 'to serve its fraud of sham disarmament'. Furthermore, he flatly announced that he would vote against the Mexican draft resolution, because it made 'an indiscriminate and sweeping demand for all the five ... permanent members of the Security Council to reduce their military budgets'.<sup>131</sup>

The dramatic debates on the resolutions proposing reductions in military budgets did not stop Beijing and Moscow from their annual engagement over the WDC question. At the 28th session, many Third World representatives expressed disappointment at the lack of progress on the WDC question and alleged that this stemmed from the lack of enthusiasm shown by the nuclear powers.<sup>132</sup> PRC representative Wang Mingxiu, speaking on 6 November at the First Committee, quickly utilised this mood and urged the Assembly neither to take 'a concrete decision' on the convening of, nor to 'proceed with the preparatory work' for, any WDC, 'since the super-Powers have refused to set clear aims for the conference and refused to undertake the ... obligations set forth by us'.<sup>133</sup> In the end, the Chinese succeeded in making sure that the 1973 Assembly did neither of these things, but in return they had to accept the adoption of a draft resolution that replaced the impotent 1972 Special Committee with an Ad Hoc Committee. This draft was introduced by Algeria, Argentina, India, Mexico, and Yugoslavia, and the Ad Hoc Committee it established consisted of forty non-nuclear-weapon states, with the five nuclear powers invited to 'cooperate or maintain contact with the Committee'.<sup>134</sup> The Chinese were prudent

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131 Zhuang's statement has been reprinted in: DOD 1973, pp.867-70.

132 For a summary of these expressions, see The UN and Disarmament (above fn.15), pp.35-7.

133 Text of Wang's statement in DOD 1973, pp.733-7.

134 This is Resolution 3183 (XXVIII). See The UN and Disarmament (above fn.15), pp.36-7.

enough to stress, before voting on the resolution, that whatever Ad Hoc Committee was established, it should not be a 'preparatory organ' of the WDC. They also warned that any attempt to make it this would be 'in total violation of the letter and spirit of the resolution'.<sup>135</sup> However, the fact that the five nuclear powers had agreed to 'maintain contact' with this Ad Hoc Committee, meant that for the first time all five were involved, however indirectly and implicitly, in an effort of manageable size directed towards achieving a WDC. The implications of such a development were not then appreciated. But in retrospect it was perhaps the most crucial breakthrough in the long and slow process which eventually led China into the 1978 UN Special Session on Disarmament.

#### THE 'THREE WORLDS' THEORY: An Anti-Soviet Call?

In 1974 and 1975, a number of interesting trends could be distinguished in Chinese arms control policy. The most obvious was, of course, the total disappearance of 'collusionist' expressions. Secondly, Beijing became far more active and positive regarding ACD resolutions at the UN. Lastly, in contrast to their reluctance to elaborate on SALT throughout 1973, the Chinese now brought to the subject more vigour and enthusiasm.<sup>136</sup> By late 1975, moreover, Beijing's disquiet at the possibility of Washington falling behind Moscow in the strategic arms competition was clear. It was a concern that fitted in with Beijing's original perception of SALT.

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135 Text of Zhuang's speech in DOD 1973, pp.885-6.

136 There were, throughout 1974, at least twelve major press comments on SALT. This was an impressive increase in quantity. For a summary of these statements, see Pillsbury, op.cit. (above Ch.4 fn.44), pp.49-64.

These were changes to expect, once the 'contention-collusion' debate was over. Nevertheless the contentionists did not automatically gain total control of the Chinese political arena. Premier Zhou himself, probably the most eminent contentionist, became the target of a domestic political attack, the so-called 'anti-Confucius' or 'anti-Lin Biao anti-Confucius campaign' of 1973-74.<sup>137</sup> In it Zhou was challenged by a group of 'radical' leaders who later formed the backbone of the 'Gang of Four' faction. The stakes involved were no longer the proper interpretation of the superpower relationship, but instead the succession to Mao.

The concentration of political attention upon this question of succession, a basically domestic matter, did not mean that Zhou's group and its 'radical' opposition largely agreed on matters of foreign policy. There were conflicting signals. On one hand, Beijing's perception of the superpower relationship did indeed emerge as a less controversial subject. The Chinese leadership was apparently united over the surprise attack launched against the South Vietnamese forces on the Hsi-sha (Paracel) Islands in January 1974. Yet elsewhere signs of serious disagreement within the leadership over foreign issues could be seen. Sino-Soviet relations, for example, suffered considerably during 1974-75, as a result of inconsistent Chinese actions.<sup>138</sup> The

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137 For details of this campaign, see e.g., Merle Goldman, 'China's Anti-Confucian Campaign, 1973-1974', CQ, July-Sept. 1975, 435-62; P.R. Moody, Jr., 'The New Anti-Confucian Campaign in China: The First Round', AS XIV/4, Oct. 1974, 307-324; and, Zhou Zhu-chiang, 'Observations on the Chinese Communists' Anti-Confucian Campaign', Issues and Studies, Feb. 1974, pp.18-43.

138 This included Beijing's behaviour related to a number of Soviet 'spy' incidents and the capture of a Soviet helicopter crew in China's territory. See e.g., John B. Starr, 'China in 1974: "Weeding through the Old to Bring Forth the New"', AS XV/1, Jan. 1975, 1-19; and by the same author, 'China in 1975: "The Wind in the Bell Tower"', AS XVI/1, Jan. 1976, 42-60. See also Franz Michael, 'China and the Soviet Union: Waiting for Mao to Die?', Current History, Sept. 1975, No.408, 65-6 and 104.

proclamation of the 'three worlds theory' also hinted that the PRC's leaders were substantially divided on the question of overall Chinese foreign policy strategy.

This 'three worlds theory', as enunciated by Deng, left Beijing's policy of Sino-American rapprochement alone. Its objective seems to have been to reassure the Third World that China, while moving closer to the US, belonged unshakeably to the Third World. Only after that did the theory seek to justify Beijing's policy of continuing to improve its relations with the Second World countries. But, as the core of the theory was its call on the countries of the Third World to unite with one another, and with those of the Second World, in struggling against the big two of the First World, did not the 'theory' itself still pose, at least in strict logical terms, an 'anti-thesis' to whatever rationalisation Beijing could publicly offer for its move to reconcile with the Americans?

One must examine the essence of the theory in order to answer this question. In the words of Deng:

As a result of the emergence of social-imperialism, the socialist camp which existed for a time after World War II is no longer in existence. Owing to the law of uneven development of capitalism, the Western imperialist bloc, too, is disintegrating. Judging from the changes in international relations, the world today actually consists of three parts, or three worlds, that are both connected and in contradiction to one another. The United States and the Soviet Union make up the first world. The developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other regions make up the Third World. The developed countries between the two make up the second world.<sup>139</sup>

He went on at length to explain that:

- a) the two superpowers were 'vainly seeking world hegemony' they were 'the biggest international exploiters and oppressors of today', and 'the source of a new world war'. Moreover, each of the two

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139 Text of Deng's speech can be found in King C. Chen, ed., China and the Three Worlds (London: Macmillan, 1979).

superpowers, 'in its own way', attempted 'to bring the developing countries ... under its control and ... to bully the developed countries that are not their match in strength'.

b) the developed countries were in a 'complicated' situation. Some of them retained 'colonialist relations' with Third World countries, and 'an end must be put to this state of affairs'. On the other hand, all these developed countries were also 'controlled, threatened or bullied by one superpower or the other'. Thus, they all wanted to 'shake off' superpower 'enslavement or control', in order to safeguard their 'national independence and the integrity of their sovereignty'.

c) the developing countries in the Third World had 'long suffered from colonialist and imperialist oppression and exploitation'. However, after winning political independence, these countries were still left with 'the historic task of clearing out the remnant forces of colonialism, developing the national economy and consolidating national independence'. Because they had suffered 'the heaviest oppression', these countries should have 'the strongest desire to oppose oppression and seek liberation and development'. They should therefore constitute 'a revolutionary motive force propelling the wheel of world history and are the main force combating colonialism, imperialism, and particularly the superpowers'.

Then Deng vowed: 'China is a socialist country, and a developing country as well. China belongs to the Third World ... China is not a superpower, nor will she ever seek to be one'.<sup>140</sup> To conclude, he urged that 'unity' must be attained within the Third World, while 'alliances' must be formed between the Third World and 'all forces that can be allied with', so that 'Third World countries and people' may

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140 Deng went even as far as asking the 'people of the world' to 'expose ... [and] oppose' China, if China ever became a superpower. This is clearly intended to dispel any doubt of China seeking a greater-power status by playing the game of 'triangular politics'.

'persist in a protracted struggle' and be sure of winning 'continuous new victories'.

For a speech that was publicly to lay down the theoretical cornerstone of what was generally perceived as a new phase of Chinese foreign policy, this was notably vague on the definition of an 'ally' of the Third World. Deng repeatedly urged the Third World countries to unite with one another and then form an alliance with the Second World. But toward the end of his analysis, he subtly broadened the basis of that 'alliance' by calling on the Third World states to ally with all possible forces. Why? Deng would probably say that he was merely trying to form the broadest possible 'united front' against the two superpowers, and that included, as he specifically pointed out in the speech, uniting with even the people of the United States and the Soviet Union against their governments. Perhaps so! However, in my opinion another explanation could be that Deng was doing the best he could to ensure his speech would in no way be interpreted as seeking to block the progress of Sino-American détente. The 'radicals' might have demanded the theory to serve as a bugle-call for an 'anti-superpower' united front, but Deng was only concerned with the construction of an 'anti-Soviet' front.

It is in this context that the theory must be symptomatic of a major policy struggle within the Chinese leadership. Despite the fact that in every sense it carried a strong flavour of radicalism, it was not without ingredients that the 'radicals' would find objectionable. According to Harding, these included the fact that a) in denying the existence of the socialist camp, the theory no longer recognised the contradiction between socialism and imperialism as the principal contradiction in the international system; b) it proposed in effect an alignment of socialist states with not only Third World non-socialist

countries, but also with Western capitalist ones; and c) it presented a world-view that considered only the states as actors in an international system, but assigned no roles for revolutionary forces and national liberation movements.<sup>141</sup> As the theory received almost no subsequent official Chinese endorsement for a period of three-and-a-half years after its proclamation, Harding's reasoning seems confirmed.<sup>142</sup>

#### CHINA BECOMES MORE ACTIVE AND POSITIVE

Whatever implications the new policy controversy between the 'radicals' and the 'moderates' might have had, it appeared that Chinese ACD policies suffered less 'spill-over' from it than had occurred previously from the 'contention-collusion' debate. After 1974, Beijing's non-participation rates for voting on ACD resolutions dropped to an average of about twenty per cent - a steady reduction against 1971-1973. Also clear was the increase in Beijing's positive votes on ACD resolutions. Before 1974, Beijing never cast a positive vote on more than half of the ACD resolutions. After 1974, this was reversed.<sup>143</sup>

The sudden increase of Beijing's positive votes was brought about by the renewed interest of Third World countries in establishing NFZs

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141 Harding, op.cit. (above, fn.1), p.99.

142 The 'theory' was not formally endorsed by the PRC media until the publication of 'Chairman Mao's Theory of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds Is A Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism', in Nov. 1977, after Mao's death. (See BR, XX/45, 4 Nov. 1977, 10-41). An interesting point is that if it was the 'Gang of Four' which refused to endorse the 'theory' publicly, why did the official endorsement come still one year after the arrest of the 'Gang of Four'? (The same could also apply to Mao.)

143 Non-participation rate of the PRC'S vote on ACD resolutions during 1971-1973 were, respectively, 72%, 26%, and 37%. Between 1974 and 1977, it became, respectively, 19%, 20%, 18%, 19%. The rates of positive votes during the entire period of 1971-1977, were, respectively, 11%, 47%, 67%, 65%, 59%, and 64%.

in several parts of the world. Previously there had been at most two resolutions each year on this subject. But in 1974 there were ten, of which China supported nine. The one exception for the PRC was an Indian proposal for a South Asian NFZ, on which it abstained. This was not to suggest that Beijing did not like the idea of a South Asian NFZ, for immediately after abstaining on this draft the PRC voted for a Pakistani draft with similar substance. Chinese representative Lin Ping explained that this difference of treatment arose from the Indian draft's making reference to the question of general and complete disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation,<sup>144</sup> a cosmetic explanation, because the Pakistani resolution also mentioned these taboos.<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, when parallel proposals of the same nature returned to the 30th General Assembly in 1975, again sponsored respectively by India and Pakistan, China went along with the consensus when both were adopted without a vote.<sup>146</sup>

The NFZ resolutions adopted by the 29th General Assembly dealt with wide-ranging issues such as the commissioning of a formal study on all aspects of the concept of NFZs, the strengthening of the security of non-nuclear states, and the establishment of peace or nuclear-free zones in the Indian Ocean, Latin America, Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. During the 30th General Assembly, in addition to repeats of many of the NFZ resolutions of the previous year, there were two fresh ones involving respectively the definition of NFZs and a South Pacific NFZ. All these were promoted by various groupings of Third World states and Beijing's steady support contrasted vividly with the

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144 Text of Lin's speech in DOD 1973, 685-6.

145 For the wording of the two resolutions, see The UN and Disarmament (above fn.15), pp.106-7.

146 See the voting record in SIPRI 1976, p.352.

generally unhelpful attitude toward them of other nuclear powers.<sup>147</sup> Beijing seized the initiative as early as 2 October 1974, when Qiao, in his opening speech to the General Assembly, pledged that his country would never use nuclear weapons against countries in the South Asian and the Middle Eastern NFZs, hence making China the first nuclear power to have voluntarily made such an undertaking.<sup>148</sup> But Beijing maintained its insistence upon its familiar 'pre-conditions' for the NFZs. In 1975, contrary to its affirmative position on a similar resolution the year before, Beijing refused to take part in the voting on a subsequent resolution regarding the 'comprehensive study' of NFZ questions, on the grounds that none of these 'pre-conditions' were mentioned in that study's report<sup>149</sup> (a line repeated by the PRC in 1976).

With its support for the various peace and nuclear-free zones. Beijing also gained an extra edge on Moscow in their ACD polemics. During the 1975 General Assembly, Moscow accused Beijing of 'clearly conducting a policy aimed at blocking all disarmament measures', because China a) refused to become a party to any international ACD agreements concluded since 1949; b) rejected all ACD proposals and had never made any itself; and c) engaged in 'all kinds of manoeuvres in order to avoid any normal discussion of the questions of dis-

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147 During 1974-75, Beijing was the only nuclear power to have voted positively on a number of major ACD resolutions, including those on the South Pacific NFZ, on the South Asian NFZ (proposed by Pakistan, Resolution 3265B), on the definition of NFZs, and on the Indian Ocean Peace Zone. See the voting record in SIPRI 1976, p.352.

148 'Chiao [Qiao] Kuan-Hua's Speech to the Plenary Meeting of the 29th UN General Assembly', BR, XVII/41, 11 Oct. 1974, 9-16.

149 SIPRI 1976, p.341.

armament'.<sup>150</sup> The PRC replied by quoting its support for the various NFZ proposals and challenged the Soviet Union to follow suit. For instance, on 14 November 1974 representative Lin told the First Committee:

Whether a country is truly for disarmament does not hinge on how many proposals it makes or [in] how many conferences it participates; rather this depends on what concrete disarmament measures it adopts. When China expressed support for ... the establishment of peace-zones and nuclear-free zones, we undertook due obligations with regard to these zones. When we set forth two prerequisites for the convocation of a world disarmament conference ... China has done exactly what it advocated. We have declared that we will not be the first to use nuclear weapons, and we do not have a single soldier or a single base abroad. Facts have shown that China's attitude on the disarmament questions is serious and earnest, and that its deeds match its words.

It is true that the Soviet Union has put forward many proposals, but what has it done? ... What the people of the world want is not empty talk but concrete action.<sup>151</sup>

Lin's rebuttal showed how China believed itself to be in the right and would persist with its 'pre-conditions' on both the NFZ and the WDC questions. In 1974, Beijing categorically stated at the UN that it was not going to recognise the value of any WDC, unless Moscow would 'first of all' commit itself to the Tlatelolco treaty.<sup>152</sup> Since there was then no prospect of Moscow doing so, one may justifiably doubt if Beijing, at that point, had any real wish to see a WDC convened. Of course, Beijing had repeatedly claimed that it was in favour of a 'genuine' WDC. It had also kept its promise to 'maintain contact' with the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the WDC question during 1974, and had gone along with the consensus in adopting a resolution at the 29th

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150 Sino-Soviet polemics on ACD issues in 1975 has been summarised by Jack, op.cit. (above fn.90), pp.5-9.

151 Text of Lin's statement in DOD 1974, 638-641.

152 Above fn.148.

General Assembly on the continuation of the work of that Committee. But Beijing's real assessment of the usefulness of a WDC was in fact less benign. In mid-1974, a Chinese broadcast had this to say:

Actually, so-called disarmament meetings of various kinds are being held in different environments, with the Soviet representatives playing the title role in all these meetings. Leaving others aside, the 25-state disarmament conference, which has been going on for 13 successive years in Geneva, had to adjourn its 629th session on 23 April, 30 seconds after its opening because no one spoke at the session. The Mexican representative stated frankly at the April 16 session that since the two superpowers only paid lip service to disarmament ... so 'the road to the C.C.D.'s grave is paved'. Knowing very well that the 25-state disarmament conference is forlorn and on the verge of death, what is the purpose of the Soviet revisionists in putting forward the proposal for a world disarmament conference in all seriousness if not for fooling others by false propaganda?<sup>153</sup>

Similar scepticism was heard in the UN in 1975, when Chinese representative Huang Hua stated in so many words that 'at the present juncture, a disarmament conference in whatever form will ... do no good, but harm' since it would become 'a mere forum for propaganda or misleading utterances made in order to camouflage the arms race and thus deceive the people of the world'.<sup>154</sup> With this, Huang virtually admitted that Beijing was applying a 'delaying' tactic, already seen in Beijing's different voting postures on three resolutions involving the WDC issue during the 29th General Assembly. First, Beijing had continued to support the consensus in renewing the mandate of the WDC Ad Hoc committee - an act by now virtually a ritual to postpone the issue for another year. Secondly, it had not participated in the vote on a resolution calling for the convening of the WDC as one of the 'urgent measures to stop the arms race and promote disarmament' - this meant that Beijing was in passive disagreement with the resolution.

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<sup>153</sup> Xiang Ming, 'A Swindler's Motto', FBIS, 17 May 1974, A11-A12.

<sup>154</sup> Text of Huang's speech in DOD 1975, 604-610.

And thirdly, when a draft resolution had emerged, urging inter alia 'all governments to take effective measures towards bringing about ... [the] convening the World Disarmament Conference as soon as possible', Beijing had voted against it.<sup>155</sup> This, while the only negative vote that Beijing ever cast on a resolution involving the WDC question, produced little damage to Beijing's image because it did not deal directly with the WDC issue and was promoted by the Soviet bloc (nearly fifty other countries also declined to render support).

On the other hand, the years of 1974 and 1975 were similar to preceding ones in the sense that Beijing still often ended up in near-total isolation on a number of ACD issues. There was, to begin with, the resolution on the sea-bed Treaty review conference, on which China did not vote and to which China was opposed on the ground that the Treaty was not consistent with its position on disarmament and on the law of the sea.<sup>156</sup> Then there were three other issues introduced by the Soviet Union, and on at least the first two Beijing's position was awkward.

The first one was the resolution 'Banning New Weapons of Mass Destruction'. Beijing did not participate in the vote, but the resolution was adopted by a large majority.<sup>157</sup> Secondly, the issue involving 'environmental warfare'. This emerged from initiatives at the 1974

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155 For a brief reference to all three resolutions, see SIPRI 1976, 348-9 (Emphasis added).

156 See Jack, op.cit. (above fn.90), p.20. For previous Chinese statements in this regard, see Shen Wailiang, 'Refuting Superpowers' Sophistry at the Sea-bed and Ocean Floor Committee's Meeting', in BR, XV/13, 31 Mar. 1972; 'Chinese Representative Speaks on Preservation of Marine Environment, Prohibition of Nuclear Testing', in SCMP, 15 Aug. 1972, 93-5; and, 'Superpowers' Maritime Hegemony Opposed', BR, XVI/15, 12 Apr. 1973, 13-6.

157 For a brief summary of the Chinese statements, see Jack, op.cit. (above fn.90), p.23. Also, consult The United Nations Yearbook (UNYB), 1975, pp.68-72, for text of the Resolution.

sessions of the CCD, taken up by the two superpowers at the Moscow summit in July 1974. The USSR pursued the matter to the UN with a resolution calling for an international ban. Beijing showed little interest during the debate. It simply dismissed the draft resolution as, again, a 'cheap fraud', only to face in the end the unpleasant reality of the resolution being adopted with near-unanimity.<sup>158</sup> All the more irritating was the fact that when the issue returned in 1975, it commanded even bigger popularity and was adopted without vote.

The third issue was the reduction of military budgets. When the draft resolution on this subject was introduced to the UN in 1973, Beijing fiercely contested it for its indiscriminate singling out of the five permanent members of Security Council. During 1974-75, the Chinese elaborated their argument, saying that a) it would be wrong to impose equal obligation for disarmament on all countries 'without distinguishing the aggressor from the aggressed'; b) disarmament should only be implemented, 'first and foremost', with disarmament by the superpowers, and not a general disarmament by all countries; and that c) Third World and 'medium-sized' countries should have the right to build up their defence capabilities in order to 'resist and prevent foreign aggression and expansion'.<sup>159</sup> This still did not dissuade the General Assembly from accepting the Soviet 'fraud', and during these two years, China and Albania remained the only two countries voting against the resolutions. However, Beijing's position was less adverse than it appeared, for the attitudes of the other four nuclear powers were also far from being consistent and positive. Thus, while the Chinese attitude remained invariably negative, of the other four only

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158 UNYB 1975, 72-5. Lin's speech can be seen in DOD 1974, p.737.

159 See 'Statement by the Chinese Representative to the First Committee of the General Assembly: Environmental Modification, November 22, 1974', in DOD 1974, p.737.

the USSR in 1973, and the UK and the USA in 1974, actually voted for the related resolutions. Particularly ironic was the fact that even Moscow, which had initiated the issue, decided to abstain after 1974 when things got out of control and began to backfire.<sup>160</sup>

Lastly, there were three other ACD issues toward which Beijing's hostility had been traditional and predictable: the test ban, nuclear proliferation, and SALT. In the case of the test ban, Beijing lost France as an informal, though important, ally. During 1972 and 1974, France stood side by side with China in voting against all test ban resolutions. But in September 1974 it announced a plan to cease soon all atmospheric testing, and from 1975 stopped casting negative votes on nearly all test ban resolutions. In addition, on 17 October 1975 it issued a joint declaration with the Soviet Union confirming a 'mutual determination' in supporting the concept of 'general and complete disarmament' and the early convening of a WDC with the participation of all nuclear powers.<sup>161</sup> Such developments not only further isolated Beijing in its fight against test ban initiatives, but also gave the USSR a resounding propaganda victory in the Sino-Soviet battle over ACD matters. As though to retaliate, Beijing voted in 1975 for a resolution expressing 'deep concern' at French nuclear testing in the South Pacific.<sup>162</sup> Although Beijing did this in the form of going along with the consensus, it is still doubtful if it would have done so had not France, in the eyes of the PRC, veered publicly toward the Soviet position. The significance of the matter is that Beijing, from other political considerations, could relax its persistence on an issue as important as the test ban.

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160 For texts of the Soviet and the Chinese statements during the debate, see DOD 1974, 734. For a description of the situation, see Feeney, op.cit. (above fn.127), p.816.

161 See SIPRI 1976, 481.

162 Resolution 3433 (XXX), 8 Dec. 1975, text in SIPRI 1976, 340.

On the question of nuclear proliferation, China again found France a strange bedfellow. They were the only two nuclear powers not adhering to the NPT, though France's position was much the milder. Beijing was renowned for its 'pro-proliferation' argument which served so well, firstly against the Soviet bomb, and secondly for its own. However, the Indian nuclear explosion in May 1974 subjected that argument to a hard test. Strictly speaking, Beijing should have come out praising the Indian move, because, according to the logic of the Chinese argument, it would have broken 'superpower nuclear monopoly' and thus increased the prospect for 'the complete banning and complete destruction of nuclear weapons'.<sup>163</sup> And yet the Chinese were silent, indicating disapproval, but providing no definite evidence for the argument that Beijing had begun to accept the further spread of nuclear weapons as detrimental to its own security. Beijing continued to vote against all resolutions supporting the NPT, and during 1975, in the aftermath of the Indian test, even cast its first negative vote on a resolution dealing mainly with peaceful nuclear explosions.

In what way, then, did the Indian test affect Beijing's 'pro-proliferation' stand? During the mid-1960s, the Chinese position on this question entailed, as already shown, three main elements. It was essential for more states to possess nuclear weapons, so that they could break the 'nuclear monopoly', free themselves from 'nuclear blackmail', and then increase the prospect for genuine nuclear disarmament. China expected all states to achieve nuclear capability on a 'self-reliance' basis, i.e. without any help from China (which they are not to expect). And finally, China would consider assisting other states 'only' in the development of peaceful nuclear energy. In

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163 This is a more or less 'traditional' position of China on the question of nuclear proliferation. See discussions in Chapters 3 and 4, passim.

1975, this position appeared to have been subtly modified. In an interview with a visiting US Congressional delegation, Deng declared that, still recognising the right of every country to decide if it should 'go nuclear', China would and could not do anything to interfere with any such acts.<sup>164</sup> Missing from this statement were the militant elaboration on the merits of nuclear proliferation and the promise of helping other states to develop peaceful nuclear energy. Most of all, Deng demonstrated a clear reluctance even to pay lip service to the cause of nuclear proliferation, a reluctance which must surely have been connected with the Indian test.

#### RETURNING TO THE SALT FRONT: On the Vladivostok Accord

Beijing's sparse comments on SALT throughout 1973 failed to note the apparent inability of the two superpowers to transform their 1972 'interim agreement' into a permanent treaty. One is not sure if the Chinese just decided to turn a blind eye to that phenomenon. If they did not, then the 'contentionists', moving ahead to their triumph, could easily have cited it as concrete proof of 'superpower contention'. In any case, from 1974 Beijing began to draw widely on Western reports of a 'stalemate' in the negotiations, adding its own verdict that SALT was 'more dead than alive'.<sup>165</sup> The Chinese went energetically about displaying a renewed and no longer inhibited

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164 This was revealed by the seventh U.S. Congressional delegation to the PRC, in Senate Foreign Relations Comm. and House International Relations Comm. Seventh Congressional Delegation to the People's Republic of China, 69th Cong., 1st Session, The United States and China 25 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1975). Cited from John Lewis, 'China's Military Doctrines and Force Posture', in SJIS (above fn.1), p.136.

165 'Two Superpowers: Nuclear Arms Race Intensified', BR, XVII/3, 18 Jan. 1974, 21; 'Soviet-USA: Nuclear Arms Race Intensified', BR, XVII/6, 8 Feb. 1974, 20; and, 'Two Superpowers: Wild Nuclear Arms Race', BR, XVII/9, 1 Mar. 1974, 23.

concern with SALT, in 1974 alone issuing a dozen or more major comments on it, all invariably under the 'contentionist' flag and prophesying that the two superpowers would never reach any agreement.<sup>166</sup> This pessimistic prophecy was jeopardised by the Vladivostok accord of November 1974, which left the Chinese commentators in a perhaps embarrassed silence on the subject of détente for over a month.

During that month, at the peak of 'contentionist' propaganda, Beijing again demonstrated its tendency to ignore publicly those parts of Soviet-American strategic relations that it deemed inconsistent with its propaganda line. This was how it treated the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the Protocol to the ABM Treaty, both concluded at the Moscow summit in July 1974, with the former establishing a five-year renewable ban effective from 31 March 1976 on all Soviet and American tests exceeding a yield of 150 kilotons, and the latter reducing the number of ABM sites each of the superpowers could at any one time have from two to one.<sup>167</sup> Yet, with the exception of a brief attack on the Threshold Test Ban Treaty made by a Chinese representative at the 29th General Assembly (four months after the conclusion of that treaty), Beijing's media simply acted as if the two agreements did not exist.<sup>168</sup> The world was therefore never given a chance to hear how the Chinese had received, in particular, the Protocol to the ABM Treaty. That would be exceptionally interesting to know, because the Protocol could be said to have increased at least theoretically the vulnerability of the two superpowers in the event of a Chinese missile attack. It may well have been that the Chinese consider that such a theoretical,

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166 Above fn.136.

167 For the texts of these two agreements, see SIPRI 1975, Appendix 14A and Appendix 14C.

168 Lin Ping attacked the Threshold Test Ban Treaty on 14 Nov. 1974. See the text of his speech in DOD 1974, pp.638-41.

peripheral advantage would never outweigh the potential damage from a spirit of cooperation between Moscow and Washington, such as would accompany an agreement of 'superpower collusion'. But, silent there, was Beijing ever going to comment on Vladivostok?

The 'Vladivostok accord', to describe the joint communiqué issued at the end of the summit, was intended to serve as a guideline for a formal SALT II treaty which would run until 1985. In it a ceiling of 2,400 for total strategic launchers, and a subceiling of 1,320 for MIRVed launchers were agreed by the two parties.<sup>169</sup> Hailed as a 'dramatic breakthrough' at the time, in retrospect it had little impact on the Soviet-American strategic equation. But its political significance, especially to the Chinese, must not be underrated. Coming quickly after the sudden resignation of Nixon, this summit focusing on SALT and bringing together Brezhnev and the newly-nominated President Ford was a timely reassurance for the SALT talks then facing 'perilous uncertainty'.<sup>170</sup> Important as it was to the continuation of Soviet-American détente (and to SALT), it inevitably affected Beijing's opening toward Washington. Beijing must surely have hoped that nothing would be achieved at Vladivostok; it was perhaps no coincidence that Beijing should reveal to a prominent Western journalist, just before the summit started, that it had received clandestine warnings from a 'third power' (i.e. the US) on three separate occasions during 1974 regarding imminent Soviet attacks on China.<sup>171</sup> This probably was a bid by Beijing to thwart all possible progress of further Soviet-American détente by embarrassing the US and heightening Moscow's suspicion

<sup>169</sup> For the text of this joint communiqué, see SIPRI 1975, 460.

<sup>170</sup> This observation was made by Strobe Talbott, in his book Endgame: The Inside Story of Salt II (London: Harper and Row, 1979), pp.31-5.

<sup>171</sup> N. Maxwell, 'U.S. Said to Warn China on Soviets', Washington Post, 25 Nov. 1974, A1 and A17.

toward Washington with publication of the item.

A number of reports said that Beijing was particularly touchy about the choice of Vladivostok as the venue for the summit.<sup>172</sup> Vladivostok is located at a strategically-significant corner of the Soviet Far East which was taken by the Tsars from the Chinese Empire in the nineteenth century, through imperialist unequal treaties, and to hold a SALT summit at such a place was, for Beijing, adding insult to injury. But perhaps even more 'insulting' was Brezhnev's visit to Ulan Bator, immediately after the summit, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Mongolian independence from Chinese rule, and while there to reject Chinese proposals for a border agreement. It has been suggested that, because of the Vladivostok summit and Kissinger's impending seventh visit to China after it, both Beijing and Moscow had tried to suggest a possible rapprochement between them in order to solicit a more receptive attitude from Washington.<sup>173</sup> Hence during the latter half of the year Sino-Soviet relations appeared slightly improved, with many exchanges of views, all of them quite positive, on the border question. Nevertheless, this slight improvement of Sino-Soviet relations soon proved to be merely superficial. Irritated by the result of the summit and Brezhnev's rejection of its proposal, Beijing could not have any more appetite for further dialogue with the Soviets on the border question, not for a while at least. Sino-American relations likewise seemed impaired. Kissinger failed to charm his hosts during his visit to China after Vladivostok. Although he did manage to obtain an invitation for Ford to visit China, Kissinger was coolly received and was not even taken to see Mao.

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172 D. Bonavia, 'Why Peking is Touchy about Vladivostok', The Times (London), 22 Nov. 1974; also Yahuda, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.17), pp.249-51.

173 Starr, 'China in 1974 ...' (above fn.138), 17-9.

Then, on 27 December 1974, Beijing began its assault on the Vladivostok accord. The People's Daily denigrated the new 'ceiling' restrictions as 'nothing but the new 'emulation rules' for the next round of nuclear arms race', since they allowed the two superpowers a) to 'build their MIRVs en masse'; b) to 'improve effectively the quality of their strategic missiles to better suit their needs in their contention for nuclear superiority'; c) to 'enhance the size of the throw-weight of missiles and to make them more weighty'; and d) to 'design and produce new ground and air mobile ICBMs without limitations to replenish and replace their respective arsenals'.<sup>174</sup> During the first half of 1975, Beijing issued numerous reports which either concentrated upon the development of nuclear and conventional armament projects of the two superpowers, or else quoted militant, uncompromising remarks of leading American or Soviet military and political figures, as support and emphasis for its own argument.<sup>175</sup> When the 30th General Assembly met in September 1975, Qiao declared firmly that 'facts are at hand' to prove the Vladivostok accord an agreement not on strategic arms limitation, but on 'expansion'.<sup>176</sup>

This time Qiao's cynicism was shared by most of his audience, for the general mood of the Assembly towards SALT - unlike the year before

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174 Ren Guoping (Jen Ku-ping), 'Limitation of Nuclear Weapons or Contention for Nuclear Superiority?', PD, 27 Dec. 1974. Cited from Pillsbury, op.cit. (above Ch.4 fn.44), p.63.

175 These reports were abundant in BR, e.g., 1. 'Soviet-U.S. contention for Hegemony Intensifies', XVIII/3, 17 Jan. 1975, 6-8; 2. 'Nuclear Arms Race Intensifies', XVIII/6, 7 Feb. 1975, 20; 3. 'Disarmament Fraud Betrayed by its Architects', XVIII/10, 7 Mar. 1975, 28; 4. 'Vienna Talks: No Concrete Agreement', XVIII/22, 30 May 1975, 23; 5. 'The Two Superpowers Rival for Nuclear Supremacy', XVIII/29, 18 July 1975, 13-14; and, 6. 'USSR-USA: Disarmament is a Myth', XVIII/30, 25 July 1975, 20.

176 Speech by Chiao Kuan-hua, Chairman of the Delegation of the People's Republic of China, at the Plenary Meeting of the 30th Session of the UN General Assembly, 26 September 1975 (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1975), p.5.

when the Protocol to the ABM treaty was widely welcomed - was one of disenchantment and criticism. A resolution was overwhelmingly adopted towards the end of the session, expressing: 1) regret as to the lack of positive progress in SALT; 2) concern for the very high ceilings and total absence of qualitative limitations in the Vladivostok accord; and 3) the popular wish for an early Soviet-American agreement on 'important qualitative limitations and substantial reduction' of their respective strategic arms. Its harsh language led the two superpowers to vote against this resolution, producing the first-ever negative votes of the two superpowers on a SALT resolution. The Chinese, while they must have been pleased with such a negative response to the accord, held to their 'non-participating' voting policy on this issue.

Another meaningful development during the immediate post-Vladivostok period must be the abandoning of Beijing's previous equidistant posture towards the two SALT partners. Comments in the style of reminders to the US of the growth of Soviet military strength began as early as 1973. In his speech to the UN General Assembly on 2 October that year Qiao, while pointing out that the US was 'more frank' about the significance of the 1973 Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War than was the Soviet Union, dropped the first hint that his country might no longer score the two SALT partners equally.<sup>177</sup> A month later, a Chinese press comment offered an interesting analysis: 'It is plain that the Soviet Union has gained time through various agreements on false disarmament and is trying to catch up with and surpass the United States in both quality and quantity of strategic weapons'.<sup>178</sup> This was as much an indirect warning to the US as a

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177 Above fn.54.

178 Xiang Ming (Hsiang Ming), 'Are They Preventing Nuclear War, or Contending for Nuclear Superiority?', BR, XVI/48, 16 Nov. 1973, 17-8.

direct reflection of how Beijing had begun to assess SALT from a new perspective. The real concern had become that Moscow might use SALT to strengthen itself, weaken the US and then pose an even bigger threat to China.

But this anxiety was never fully brought out by the Chinese. During the first half of 1975, they appeared content just to quote 'hawkish' remarks of American leaders, most notably Secretary Schlesinger, who were urging the US to maintain strategic superiority. But the US debacle in Vietnam during May-June 1975 evidently disturbed the Chinese tremendously, since they then became much more outspoken. With little reservation, their media placed the blame for the arms race squarely upon the USSR, arguing that it was Moscow that was generally 'on the offensive' in 'madly' expanding its strategic and conventional arsenals, while the US was merely 'responding' to the Soviet challenge 'on the receiving end'.<sup>179</sup> Top Chinese leaders were also said to be so alarmed by the weakening of American influence and military power that they specifically told President Ford and ex-President Nixon, when they visited China in December 1975 and February 1976 respectively, that SALT might make the US strategically inferior to the Soviet Union.<sup>180</sup>

That Beijing's attitude towards SALT could shift from a point of absolute hostility to one of partial accommodation within a short span of six years may seem extraordinary. But it did not indicate the PRC's endorsement of the value of SALT as a politico-diplomatic institution of whatever stripe. The change was rather in Beijing's attitude

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179 This view has been expressed by a number of Chinese publications. See e.g., 1. 'Winds Blowing Strong in Europe', BR, XVIII/32, 8 Aug. 1975, 7-9; 2. Huang, 'Statement of Chinese Representative ...', DOD 1975, 604-10; and, 3. Fan Xiuzhu (Fan Hsiu-chu), 'Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty: A Scrap of Paper', BR, XVIII/24, 13 June 1975, 20-21.

180 Hinton offers this piece of information in Hinton, op.cit. (above fn.110), p.27. The original source has not been indicated.

toward one of the SALT partners, not toward SALT as such. In China's parlance, its opposition to SALT was principal and fundamental, and its desire for the US to maintain a tougher stand was only secondary and transient. It may, in retrospect, be found that the Vladivostok accord played something of a unique role in re-shaping Beijing's position towards the two superpowers. In 1979, when the Chinese were energetically promoting a global anti-Soviet framework, they singled out the Vladivostok accord from all other SALT agreements and changed their judgement on it, describing the 'ceiling system' as 'a legal disguise covering the vicious expansion of the Soviet nuclear arsenal'.<sup>181</sup>

#### CHINA WITHOUT MAO - THE END OF AN ERA?

1976 was an extraordinary year for China. Within the first nine months, the senior trio of the CCP leadership, Mao, Zhou, and Zhu De, all passed away. Zhu De died as chairman of the NPC and China's nominal head of state, though age and illness had prevented him from being active during his last years. The departures of such towering and still potent figures as Mao and Zhou, on the other hand, inevitably brought fresh contortions to Beijing's bewildering political process, setting the stage for the long-delayed climax of the succession struggle. Zhou, the PRC's premier since its founding in 1949 and the most powerful mentor of the 'moderate' leaders, died on 8 January. A little over a month later, Deng, now exposed as the leading 'moderate', became the target of a vicious propaganda attack. He was clearly on the defensive, still perhaps with considerable popular support but lacking the crucial blessing of Mao. Eventually he became unable to withstand the advancement of the 'radicals'. During early April, a

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<sup>181</sup> Feng Zhidan, 'Illusion and Reality', PD, 14 May 1979, in FBIS, 24 May 1979, A1. Cited from Garner, op.cit., (above fn.51), 1228. (Emphasis added)

spontaneous, unofficial mass rally mourning the death of Zhou turned into a major riot exceptional both for its cause and its scale in Beijing, with tens of thousands of the city's residents shouting anti-Party and anti-Jiang Qing (to a lesser extent, anti-Mao) slogans. The 'radicals', with the help of certain military-security power holders in the capital, ruthlessly suppressed the riot and named Deng as its instigator.<sup>182</sup> Two days after the riot, Deng was dismissed from all his positions and Hua Guofeng, then Minister of Public Security and believed to have supported the suppression of the riot, was appointed premier and the 'first vice-chairman' of the CCP. Although now the heir apparent, Hua surprised Western observers by steering a neutral course between the two factions, siding neither with the 'radicals' nor with the 'moderates' - an attitude which showed that, despite the death of Zhou and the second downfall of Deng, the feud between the two groups was far from being resolved. By the same token, Hua's position as a successor to Mao was perhaps not entirely free from challenge.

The real test of claimants began after Mao finally died on 9 September. The official announcement was lengthy but made no mention at all on the question of succession. For over a month after Mao's death, an air of uncertainty hung over Beijing, the succession struggle certainly the stronger for being secret. Then, on 12 October, came the news that Hua had assumed Mao's former posts as both the chairman of the CCP and of the Military Affairs Commission, while retaining his position as premier. Hua thus became the new master of China, occupying the three highest posts in the PRC's political system. On the same day, information emerged that Mao's widow, Jiang Qing, and

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182 See Lieberthal, Strategies of Conflict in China During 1975-1976 (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corp., P-5680, June 1976), P.14. Lieberthal provides a detailed description and analysis of the twists and turns in Beijing's domestic politics during 1975-76 in this volume.

several other 'radical' leaders had been purged on 7 October. This was not confirmed by the Chinese until about 19-22 October, a week after Hua's elevation, when Beijing media admitted that Jiang Qing, Wang Hungwen, Zhang Chunqiao, and Yao Wenyuan, the four 'radical' leaders collectively known as the 'Gang of Four', had been arrested for attempting to 'usurp party and state power' via a bloody coup.<sup>183</sup>

The enigma that is Chinese politics seems perfectly expressed by the situation during September-October 1976. Little can be known of what actually took place in the succession struggle fought out behind the walls of the Forbidden City. Even less is certain about the implications of the outcome of that struggle. For nearly three decades Mao and Chinese politics were two sides of a coin. Now not only was the 'Great Helmsman' himself gone, but so too were the prominent leaders of both the 'moderates' and the 'radicals', i.e. Zhou, Deng, Jiang, Wang, Zhang, and others, who only recently had still fiercely contended with each other in Beijing's political arena. Moreover, no one seemed familiar with the new ruler of China himself, nor of his political orientation on either domestic or international issues. Whether or not his personality would be as crucial a factor in Chinese politics as that of Mao's had been was also unknown. Reassurances came repeatedly from Beijing, claiming that the PRC would 'continue to carry out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and policies in foreign affairs', but it was only realistic to expect that. And the reassurances themselves begged questions. Mao had played a unique role in Chinese politics and

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183 Attacks on the 'Gang of Four' are readily available in all forms of Chinese media during this period. See e.g., BR. For cogent analysis on the nature and implications of the incident, see Jurgen Domes, 'The "Gang of Four" - and Hua Kuo-feng: Analysis of Political Events in 1975-76', CQ 71 (July-Sept. 1977), 493-7; and Andres D. Onate, 'Hua Kuo-feng and the Arrest of the "Gang of Four"', CQ 75 (July-Sept. 1978), 540-65. Domes' article also contains a useful study on 'fractional politics' in China.

left an ambiguous legacy: a strange amalgam of radical ideology and pragmatic practice. As he himself had been a contradiction, so were his 'revolutionary line and policies' a mass of contradictions. Could the post-Mao leadership, therefore, accept such a dialectical, if not esoteric, legacy without any distortion or revision? Could it perceive external conditions as Mao did or would have done? In short, would Chinese foreign policy ever be the same without Mao?

The first major review of Chinese foreign policy after the death of Mao was presented by Qiao Guanhua in his speech to the 31st General Assembly nearly one month later, on 5 October.<sup>184</sup> If the time were too short for any fundamental change to have taken place, Qiao seemed confident in dispelling any doubts that a post-Mao China would not uphold the major tenets of Mao's world view. Indeed, if Chinese positions on various ACD issues were any indication, it showed that at least during the immediate post-Mao years Beijing would do nothing to contravene Mao's teachings. Even the decision to take part in the 1978 UNSSOD 1 could be argued as continuing previous Chinese ACD policies. Although for a long time Beijing had appeared uncertain about the WDC question, its participation in the UNSSOD 1 was not made possible simply as the result of Mao's death.

The greater vigour and positiveness in Beijing's voting pattern, which had been evident since 1974, remained in its actions on ACD resolutions at the UN during 1976-77. The general rule persisted whereby Beijing voted for those resolutions dealing with NFZ questions, and against those either concerning a test ban and NPT or sponsored and propagated by Moscow. But there were a few exceptions. The Chinese again (as in 1975) abstained on the report of the NFZ study, on the

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184 'Chiao Kuan-hua's speech to the Plenary Meeting of the 31st Session of the UN General Assembly', BR, XIX/42, 15 Oct. 1976, 12-5.

same grounds that it failed to mention their 'pre-conditions' which they considered crucial. They also did not participate in the voting for resolutions on 'banning new weapons of mass destruction', and on the new convention prohibiting 'environmental means of warfare', both of these being sponsored and strongly advocated by Moscow. Beijing had from the start showed little interest in stirring up a major debate with the Soviets on these two issues, arguing that it was impractical to consider these 'futuristic' issues when nothing had yet lessened the existing menace of nuclear weapons. The PRC probably thought that these issues were too irrelevant to deserve its negative votes.

Five issues prompted negative votes from China, and three of them need detailed attention. These were a new Soviet proposal for a draft world treaty on the 'non-use of force' in international relations; the 'reduction of military budgets'; and SALT.<sup>185</sup>

The 'non-use of force' was not a new concept; various resolutions on it had been adopted at the UN in 1961, 1966 and 1972. When it returned in 1976, it was brought back by Moscow with a call for the conclusion of a world treaty. Beijing spoke against the call, arguing that the use of force should not be prohibited, 'as long as there exists imperialism, colonialism and super-Power hegemonism'.<sup>186</sup> But the General Assembly accepted the Soviet proposal, and the PRC and Albania were the only two countries voting against it. A year later, during the 32nd General Assembly, another resolution was adopted to establish a 'Special Committee' working towards the drafting of such a treaty. Although the US and the UK, and not merely the PRC and

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185 The other two issues were, predictably, 'nuclear test ban' and 'non-proliferation'.

186 See 'Statement by the Chinese Representative [Huang] to the First Committee of the General Assembly: Non-Use of Force in International Relations, Oct. 27, 1976', DOD 1976, pp.698-702.

Albania, voted against this resolution, it secured considerably more popular support than that of the year before, and gave the USSR a clear propaganda success.

On the issue of reducing military budgets, a report entitled 'Measurement and international reporting of military expenditures' was submitted to the 31st General Assembly by the Secretary-General.<sup>187</sup> The reporting instrument which it proposed met with the satisfaction of most of the member-states, and therefore in 1977 the general feeling at the UN was that practical steps should be taken to test and improve the reporting instrument. Mexico, speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the related resolution, called in particular on 'the five permanent members of the Security Council', and those 'other states with comparable military expenditure', to give 'a clear indication' that they would be prepared to carry out reductions in their military budgets.<sup>188</sup> The Big Five took three different stands on the issue. Beijing continued to vote negatively. France, the UK and the US voted in both 1976 and 1977 for the new instrument. Moscow still abstained and claimed that it was doing so because the implementation of its 1973 proposal was being delayed by the reluctant and hostile attitude of other permanent members of the Security Council, and diverted by unnecessary 'abstract' research in constructing such a reporting instrument.<sup>189</sup> To prove its sincerity on the 1973 proposal, Moscow repeatedly stressed its willingness to cut military budgets by an agreed figure of around ten per cent, as soon as other permanent

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187 Reduction of Military Budgets. Measurement and International Reporting of Military Expenditures: Report Prepared by the Group of Experts on the Reduction of Military Budgets. Report of the Secretary-General, (A/31/222/Rev.1), (N.Y.: UN, 1977, Sales No. E.77.1.6). A summary of this report can be seen in UNYB 1976, 47.

188 For the text of this resolution, Resolution 32/85, and a summary of Mexico's statement, see UNYB 1977, 54-7.

189 For the voting record and Moscow's remarks, see Ibid., 56.

members showed a similar readiness. Few could be certain if Moscow were genuinely willing to do so, but even if it were, Beijing would definitely not follow suit. The PRC remained deeply suspicious of Moscow's motivation, not accepting even the principle (regardless of the proportions) of a reduction by all five permanent members of the Security Council, and believing that true disarmament must start from the two superpowers, and should not involve other powers until a later stage.

One can argue that the Chinese had contradicted themselves. If they wanted the superpowers to start disarming first, they should not have opposed SALT but should have supported it and appreciated whatever the two superpowers were able to achieve, no matter how little. To berate it indiscriminately and rule out any positive outcome seemed an odd way to encourage the superpowers in moving in a direction conducive to genuine disarmament. Moreover, if the Chinese were right that seeking strategic superiority and world domination belonged to the very nature of the two superpowers, then the Chinese themselves must have known that their calls for the superpowers to start disarming first were simply superfluous.

Most other countries welcomed SALT and were quick to exert pressure or to offer blessing at appropriate junctures. The change of mood toward SALT within the General Assembly from 1976 to 1977 bore this out. During 1976, as in the year before, a resolution critical of the performance of the two superpowers in SALT was adopted. It expressed dissatisfaction with the negotiations and urged the two to speed them up. The superpowers and China voted exactly as they did in 1975, i.e. the two repeated their negative votes and China remained nonparticipating. In 1977, however, things altered dramatically when a SALT resolution was adopted that noted with satisfaction the two

superpowers' declared intention to pursue nuclear disarmament. The superpowers were delighted by this encouragement and cast their first-ever positive votes for a resolution on the subject. The Chinese, on the other hand, were not amused. They voted against the resolution, thereby breaking the tradition of never having voted on a SALT resolution. Why was there such a sharp change of mood with a concrete SALT II agreement still not at hand?

1977 was a crucial year for SALT. The Moscow SALT 1 'interim' agreement was to expire by 3 October, unless already replaced by a permanent agreement. The two superpowers realised that they had little time to play with if they wanted SALT to survive. Nonetheless, the Kremlin was being slow in testing out the new man at the White House. Despite a surge of high-ranking diplomatic activities since the beginning of the year, with US Secretary of State Vance visiting Moscow in March and attending the Geneva SALT talks in May, it was apparent that there had been a further deterioration of the Soviet-American relationship. As the expiry date approached, many more than just the Americans themselves must have been anxious and a great number of countries must have shared America's relief when the 'September breakthrough' finally came. As though timed by Moscow to come on the eve of the expiry date, the breakthrough was a major compromise reached during Gromyko's visit to Washington in late September.<sup>190</sup> It was not substantial enough to lead immediately to a permanent SALT II treaty, but it did enough to mend fences and bring the two parties together in exchanging statements of intent to abide by SALT 1 even after 3 October.

This September meeting between Carter and Gromyko was seen by the Americans as 'highly productive and promising' and 'certainly the best

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190 For the 'September Breakthrough', see Talbot, op.cit. (above fn.170), pp.120-32.

SALT meeting since Vladivostok'.<sup>191</sup> Indeed, the new President and his foreign policy team, beleaguered on one hand by their earlier inability to come up with a SALT formula acceptable to the USSR, and on the other by the hostile Soviet response toward Carter's 'open-mouth' policy on human rights, in their euphoria missed the true implications of their first successful encounter with the Soviets. They did not appreciate that, although the breakthrough produced many important concessions from both sides, which were to serve as guidelines for a possible SALT II treaty, it also left many obstacles unresolved. The two governments found they could not iron these out until May 1979, approximately twenty months later. Even then, President Carter was incapable of obtaining Congressional ratification for the treaty. With hindsight, therefore, Carter's public announcement during October 1977 that SALT II was to be consummated 'within a few weeks' was strangely premature.

The 32nd General Assembly had no reason to question Carter's optimism. Most countries greeted it with relief and applause. They had been seriously alarmed by the severe chill in Soviet-American relations earlier that year and therefore approached the SALT issue in a much wider context of improved superpower relations that had been taking shape during the second half of the year. The signs of this improvement had been there in plenty since the end of August. First the US representative told the CCD in Geneva on 30 August that Washington and Moscow were making 'definite progress' towards a treaty banning chemical weapons.<sup>192</sup> On the same day, unofficial reports also disclosed that the two superpowers had worked closely together earlier

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191 Ibid., p.131.

192 The Times (London), 31 Aug. 1977.

in the month to head off a South African bomb test.<sup>193</sup> Then, in addition to the 'September breakthrough', there was Carter's sensational address to the General Assembly on 4 October, in which he promised that he would be willing to reduce America's nuclear arms, on a reciprocal basis, 'even by fifty per cent'.<sup>194</sup> Equally striking was Brezhnev's offer, on 2 November, to suspend peaceful nuclear explosions 'along with a ban on all nuclear weapon tests for a determined period', to which the US warmly responded.<sup>195</sup> The significance of this offer was that it would effectively remove one of the major stumbling blocks in the Geneva talks for a test ban treaty to bar all forms of underground testing, namely, that Moscow had until then always insisted upon the exclusion of peaceful nuclear explosions from any total test ban.

Notwithstanding the fact that the winter of 1977-78 was actually a long and cold one in terms of Soviet-American SALT relations, at least as seen by American SALT negotiators, the sudden warmth of these promising items created an impression of a general thaw in the super-power relationship.<sup>196</sup> It was as though agreements on chemical weapons, a comprehensive test ban, and SALT were suddenly all on the way. This was why the General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a SALT resolution which oddly juxtaposed regret at the lack of progress in SALT with praise for the two superpowers' ACID efforts involving mainly non-SALT issues. The Chinese made their own feelings plain. They explained that their negative vote was cast because the resolution contained an 'assessment' of the 'recent statements' of the two superpowers which was unacceptable to them. Since voting for or against the

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193 The Times (London), 30 Aug. 1977.

194 Ibid., 5 Oct. 1977.

195 Ibid. 3 Nov. 1977.

196 Talbott, op.cit. (above fn.170), pp.133-46.

1977 SALT resolution was in fact voting for or against détente, not just SALT itself, the Chinese obviously would not hold back from demonstrating their disgust for détente.

#### CHINA AND THE UNSSOD

It may seem odd that, after years of deliberations on the WDC question, the UN should convene instead, in 1978, a Special Session on Disarmament. Some clarification is needed. First, a UNSSOD was not a WDC, at least it made no claim to be one. The support for a WDC had been strong and persistent, and a UNSSOD would not have been possible if it had been offered openly as a substitute for the WDC. Indeed, some of the countries who had always firmly espoused the idea of the WDC, especially the USSR and many of its Eastern European satellites, had insisted that the UNSSOD could only be accepted as an 'interim' step leading eventually to a WDC. And even after the decision on a UNSSOD was reached, the UN continued its deliberation on the WDC issue. Secondly, the decision to hold a UNSSOD resulted from a major compromise between those who had been advocating the WDC and those who had been opposing such a conference. This compromise was ably engineered by a group of Third World countries, which had by then realised that a UNSSOD would be the only way out of the impasse over the WDC question. In 1975, Garcia Robles, a Mexican delegate, proposed the move as he spoke to the 30th General Assembly with an unofficial brief on behalf of those Third World countries campaigning for a fresh global disarmament effort. He warned that if the UN could not in 1976 achieve more 'tangible progress' on the WDC question, a UNSSOD would become 'necessary'.<sup>197</sup> In other words, the seemingly permanent inability of the UN to achieve a general consensus on the WDC issue -

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<sup>197</sup> Text of Robles' speech in DOD 1975, p.507.

mostly as a result of disagreements among the five nuclear weapon states - when put with the consequent impatience of many of the Third World countries to go on waiting for that consensus, produced a massive change of opinion at the UN during 1976. This it was which brought the decision to hold a Special Session in 1978.

The call for a UNSSOD was not new. It came simultaneously with the original appeal for a WDC in the declaration of the 1961 Belgrade Conference of the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries. That declaration explicitly recommended the convening of either a WDC or a UNSSOD.<sup>198</sup> But the former proved to be more popular than the latter, and calls for holding of the WDC were repeated at all subsequent Non-Aligned Conferences, receiving global support. The Chinese, too, responded with their own WDC proposals on various occasions during the 1960s. From 1971, the UN had also regularly discussed and passed resolutions on this issue. The UNSSOD option, on the other hand, only regained its attraction after some of the Third World states, who had been vigorous in their support for the WDC, lost their zeal for it and went back to the UNSSOD alternative which Garcia Robles spoke of in 1975. However, despite Robles' indication that this alternative would be taken up only if no progress on the WDC issue were made by the end of 1976, the Fifth Non-Aligned Conference at Colombo in August 1976 jumped the gun by proclaiming that, pending the convening of the WDC, the members of the non-aligned movement should request the

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198 It is difficult to ascertain when the idea of a WDC originated. One may go as far back as the Hague Peace Conference of 1899 and 1907, or the League of Nations Conference for the Reduction and Limitations of Armaments in 1932. In 1951, Moscow proposed at the UN a 'world conference' on the questions of 'a substantial reduction of armed forces and armaments, practical measures for prohibiting the atomic weapon and establishing international control over the observation of such prohibition'. However, the UN official account has it that the idea of a WDC 'originated' at the 1961 Belgrade Conference. (The UN Disarmament Yearbook [UNYB], Vol.1, 1976, p.25).

UNSSOD 'as early as possible and not later than 1978'.<sup>199</sup>

The Colombo Declaration thus gave the UNSSOD option a decisive push. It carefully distinguished between the WDC and the UNSSOD, claiming that the former was designed 'to promote the solving of basic issues of general and complete disarmament under strict international control', and the latter only seeking 'to review the problems of disarmament and to promote the elaboration of a programme of priorities and measures in this field'. By not challenging the more basic, essential, 'problem-solving' role of the WDC, this Declaration managed to solicit endorsement for the role of the UNSSOD as a limited, preliminary, 'priority-setting' exercise through which an overall strategy might be worked out. Moreover, it stressed that a UNSSOD, if held, should include in its agenda an item on the convening of the WDC, thus offering an additional hint that the UNSSOD could well be a prelude to a WDC. Along these lines the Non-Aligned countries successfully pushed through the 31st General Assembly a resolution sponsored by seventy-two states for the opening of a UNSSOD. This resolved that a UNSSOD should be held in New York in May/June 1978 and that a fifty-four-member Preparatory Committee should accordingly be appointed.<sup>200</sup>

The inevitability of the UNSSOD, which must have become apparent even before the voting took place, led to a hardening of Beijing's position. The Chinese might have nothing new to say in opposing the WDC/UNSSOD question, but their announcement of non-participation in the vote before the draft resolution on UNSSOD was even adopted in the First Committee was unprecedented.<sup>201</sup> Never before had Beijing gone as far as refusing to support a resolution which was bound to be adopted

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<sup>199</sup> UN Document, A/31/197, 8 Sept. 1976, p.127.

<sup>200</sup> Text of this resolution in UNDYB 1977, pp.41-2.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., p.42.

consensus. Beijing thus not only showed its initial unwillingness to recognise the differences between the WDC and the UNSSOD, but also revealed that it took the UNSSOD decision as a rejection of the delaying tactics which it had adopted on the WDC question since the early 1970s. More significantly, the decision not to participate in the vote also implied that Beijing was reserving its 'right' not to attend the UNSSOD, on the grounds that it was not part of the 'consensus' on which the decision to hold the special session was based.

However, when the UNSSOD met in May 1978, the Chinese arrived with a delegation headed by Foreign Minister Huang Hua and took part with obvious vigour in the work. This might have been a change of policy on the part of Beijing, but possibly too it had all along planned to attend the UNSSOD and its act of dissociation was merely a matter of principle. However, there had been plenty of ACD resolutions incompatible with Beijing's main stands (those regarding the WDC, or nuclear safeguards, or atomic radiation, for example) from which Beijing had not publicly dissociated itself. Spurning a consensus cost popularity, and Beijing had no reason to bear that cost if it had already decided to attend the UNSSOD.<sup>202</sup> In fact, Beijing's behaviour during 1977 suggested that, at least until the end of that year, it remained uncommitted to the UNSSOD. In February China excluded itself from the fifty-four-member UNSSOD Preparatory Committee, in spite of the fact that all the other four nuclear weapon states had agreed to

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202 This seems to be why Beijing announced its dissatisfaction toward the draft resolution in the First Committee, before it was submitted to the General Assembly, for this reduced the need of Beijing to clarify its negative position in the General Assembly, especially if the draft resolution were to be adopted by consensus. In 1977, Albania was the only member-state to state publicly in the General Assembly that it would not participate in the vote on the resolutions dealing with the UNSSOD issue.

join in. And furthermore, when the 32nd General Assembly adopted, again by consensus, another two resolutions on the UNSSOD issues late in the year, Beijing again openly dissociated itself from the consensus.<sup>203</sup>

Perhaps no one outside the Chinese leadership knows precisely when and why Beijing decided to attend the UNSSOD. However, remembering that the latest announcement of its dissociation from the consensus on a UNSSOD resolution was made in mid-November 1977, and that Beijing came to the UNSSOD with well-prepared amendments to the conference documents and a detailed working paper on disarmament, one is inclined to accept that that decision was made some time between December 1977 and February/March 1978, i.e. almost on the eve of the opening. The question of why Beijing should have changed its mind and attended with enthusiasm is even more intriguing. A number of factors could have gone toward this change.

First one must assume a persistent lobbying by certain of the Third World states. Secondly, there was the shift of the US position (likewise under Third World pressure) from steady hostility to the WDC over to enforced support for the UNSSOD. Thirdly, Beijing, by now the only major power opposed to the whole idea of a universal forum on disarmament, had little to gain by staying away from the UNSSOD, once it was clearly going to be held. And lastly, but perhaps most significantly, came Beijing's belated recognition of the fact that the UNSSOD was neither the WDC nor any part of the Soviet 'fraud of sham détente and sham disarmament'.<sup>204</sup>

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203 These are Resolutions 32/88A and 32/88B. For texts of these resolutions, see UNDYB 1977, pp.24-6. The PRC stated its dissociation on both draft resolutions at the First Committee.

204 This was never directly admitted by the Chinese, but revealed in the course of UN debates during November 1977, when China's representative accused Moscow of trying to bring the UNSSOD 'into its own orbit'. See UNDYB 1977, 62.

In the event, the UNSSOD was not to be dominated by anyone, and its decisions were all taken on the basis of consultation and consensus. It turned out to be the largest and highest-level gathering of its kind. It was mainly characterised by the fact that: a) it aroused a great deal of interest and attention from the media and political circles in many countries, and also attracted the personal participation of many important heads of state who had never before spoken before the UN; that b) for the first time, the five nuclear powers were all present at such an international ACD meeting; and that c) it had no treaty to be negotiated or binding resolutions to be adopted. Its one aim was to bring all states together to discuss vital ACD questions in greater depth than at regular UN General Assemblies, and to try to find a common denominator for all diverging and conflicting points of view. The UNSSOD was therefore not so much an effort in 'putting a brake on the arms race' (as the media liked to describe it), but more an attempt at putting all the states into a better position for a more organised and effective offensive against that race.

As to what it achieved, the UNSSOD was a worthwhile exercise, doing no ill and a fair amount of good. To begin with, to have some one hundred and forty participating states all agreed on a single statement, i.e. the 'Final Document', was in itself an achievement. Until as late as 26 June, two days before the meeting was due to close, it was still not clear whether such a document could result. The session had to be extended for two days so that the precise content and wording of the Final Document could be hammered out. Otherwise, the UNSSOD could well have gone down in history as the 'largest and highest level' ACD fiasco.<sup>205</sup>

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205 A brief description of this 'drafting marathon' in C. Mallaby, 'Results of the UN Special Session on Disarmament', NATO Review, 5 Oct. 1978, 12-15. A useful evaluation of the achievement of the UNSSOD can be seen in William Epstein, 'UN Special Session on Disarmament: How Much Progress?', Survival (Nov./Dec. 1978), 248-54. For a complete text of the 'Final Document', see Results of the General Assembly Session on the Question of Disarmament (N.Y.: UN, 1978).

Regarding the content of debate, despite the fear that a serious confrontation might break out between the non-aligned states and the two superpowers and their allies, a real dialogue developed and encouraging compromises were reached. Most encouraging of all was the revision of disarmament machinery, which resulted in the participation of China and France in the work of the new CCD in Geneva. Moreover, both superpowers were impelled to offer further and somewhat improved assurances regarding the 'no-first-use' pledge and the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.<sup>206</sup>

Although nuclear disarmament was of main interest, the subject of conventional disarmament was not brushed aside. The Final Document demonstrated how the General Assembly could unite, for the first time, to call for the reduction of conventional weapons and their transfer. The general success, or, for some, the 'non-destructiveness', of the UNSSOD led to the decision to hold a second one during 1981-82. This would not only help to keep the momentum generated by the first UNSSOD going and provide an opportunity to review the adopted 'programme of action'. It also implied that those who were initially apprehensive of the UNSSOD concept now had fewer misgivings or else lacked the power to express their doubts as disruption.

Lastly, certain decisions made individually by a number of states within or even outside the UNSSOD were also of great consequence. Although the heightened prospect, during late 1977, of the two superpowers nearing the conclusion of agreements on a comprehensive test ban, on banning chemical weapons, and on SALT did not eventually materialise, the fact that UNSSOD was about to open did produce considerable stimulus for many states to take last-minute action to reduce

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206 See Epstein, Ibid.

the vulnerability of their ACD positions. Most notable here was Moscow's decision to hasten its signature onto the Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 18 May, less than a week before the opening of the session. The USSR had been reluctant in signing the Protocol, presumably because of Cuba's objection. But delegates must have realised that their position would be very exposed if they walked into the UNSSOD as uncommitted as ever to the Tlatelolco arrangement, given in particular that the US had signed the relevant protocol a year earlier, which left Moscow as the only nuclear power not to honour the arrangement. The USSR no doubt also perceived that its adherence to this Treaty would remove one of the most powerful weapons the PRC could employ against it at the UNSSOD.

Other moves toward the full application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco prompted by the atmosphere of the UNSSOD included France's announcement that it was to sign the Additional Protocol I (which it did in March 1979), the promise of the US that it would speed up its ratification of the same protocol, and Argentina's indication that it had started the procedures necessary for ratification of the Treaty. All these overdue moves were widely welcomed. A voluntary commitment that was also applauded was made by India's Prime Minister Desai in his address to the session, when he pledged that India would not manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons 'even if the rest of the world did so'. He also promised that India would no longer undertake any peaceful nuclear explosions.

However, it must be stressed that the success of the UNSSOD was very limited. The marked deterioration of Soviet-American relations cast a shadow over the entire session. Real attempts appear to have been made by both superpowers to produce some concrete ACD agreements before the convening of the UNSSOD. Yet they failed, and that failure

cost the UNSSOD not just the personal appearances of Carter and Brezhnev, but also the effective leadership and fresh initiatives that those two leaders could have brought to the session. The Final Document was considered by many, perhaps unavoidably, as unbalanced. General criticisms included the charge that there was too much stress on nuclear disarmament and relatively too little on measures to limit conventional weapons; that its references to the need to curb nuclear proliferation were too brief, weaker even than previous UN resolutions of the same nature; that its passage on the reduction of military budgets was too vague and omitted to call for the testing of a means of comparing budgets so that fair and proper reductions could be planned; and that it concentrated almost exclusively on the more idealistic aspect of arms reduction, and gave little recognition to the vital role of 'confidence-building' measures.<sup>207</sup>

There is also the more extreme view, which holds that the UNSSOD neither brought all states closer together nor formulated any coherent strategy.<sup>208</sup> This comprises several elements. First, no state emerged from the UNSSOD with its position meaningfully altered, as it might have been from bridging a gap between opposing stands. Second, some of the voluntary commitments were fugitive. In August 1979, for instance, Desai retracted India's unconditional pledge to the UNSSOD and warned that if Pakistan persisted in its efforts to achieve nuclear weapon capability, India would have to reconsider its earlier decision not to produce the bomb. Third, the Final Document suffered from the fault of dealing with the whole ACD question 'in a piecemeal manner', in that the measures which it suggested were not necessarily related to each other and did not always follow in a logical sequence.<sup>209</sup> Hence the

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207 Ibid.

208 This is SIPRI's view, in SIPRI 1979, pp.519-20.

209 Ibid.

UNSSOD did not, as the Final Document itself admits, find the strategy it had set out to search for. At best it only laid a foundation to that strategy, a foundation that would hopefully provide a better-formulated frame of reference than had previously existed, and a fresh starting point for the negotiators.

For all that, it must be doubted if the PRC attended the UNSSOD willing and happy to join in the search for that strategy. Its prime purpose was undoubtedly to turn the UNSSOD into an 'anti-Soviet' and, more in an ideological sense, an 'anti-superpower' forum. In almost all of their speeches, Beijing's representatives singled out Moscow for hostile criticism. On at least four occasions, general debates in the session went over into verbal wrangles between the Soviet and Chinese delegates, reminiscent of the first few years after Beijing took its seat in the UN. While jointly blaming the two superpowers for the arms race, the PRC repeated its analysis that Moscow was the one 'bent on expansion' and Washington merely trying to 'protect its vested interests'. The label of 'the most dangerous source of a new world war' was again reserved exclusively for Moscow.

These wrangles should never be allowed to obscure the fact that the 'anti-superpower' mentality was still the intrinsic and long-term basis of the Chinese approach to ACD issues. In Huang Hua's major speech to the UNSSOD on 29 May, he drew three lessons from 'the long struggle around disarmament'. First, the key reason why there had been no progress in disarmament for a long time was 'the lack of sincere desire on the part of the superpowers'. Secondly, a necessary task was to expose constantly their disarmament hoaxes, so that the real issue of genuine disarmament would not be confused. And, thirdly, one should not entertain illusions about disarmament, because the superpowers

would not accept in good faith any proposal for genuine disarmament.<sup>210</sup>

The implications of these lessons were clear. In Huang's words: 'As long as imperialism and social-imperialism exist, general and complete disarmament is an even more impossible goal. Hence we must not pin our hopes for the maintenance of world peace on disarmament'. This being the crux of his message, he then continued to call on all states other than the two superpowers to 'be prepared materially and organisationally to resist a war of aggression' and to 'strengthen anti-hegemonist struggles in all spheres'.<sup>211</sup> Ultimately stressing that 'to oppose' was a more 'necessary' step in postponing the outbreak of a world war than 'to appease', Huang was in fact urging that there should be no disarmament for states other than the two superpowers, and no more disarmament agreements between these states and the superpowers.

The Chinese saw the risk in preaching a single theme which denied the existence of a positive link between disarmament and world peace, and so they supplemented it with ample elaborations of the kind of disarmament initiatives which they desired to see. If it sounded contradictory to both reject and advocate disarmament at the same time, their argument was that they were opposing 'sham' disarmament and supporting 'genuine' disarmament. Such a dichotomy had long been employed by them, but it was not until the UNSSOD that they spelled out the difference between the two terms. Huang stated in his speech of 29 May: 'Any measure that helps to safeguard international peace and security and postpone the outbreak of a war' would be 'genuine'

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210 For Beijing's position at the UNSSOD, see: Huang Hua, 'Superpower Disarmament Fraud Exposed', BR, XXI/22, 2 June 1978, 5-13. This is the text of a speech of Huang at the UNSSOD, see also UN Document, GA35607, takes 15-23.

211 Ibid. (Emphasis added).

disarmament, and 'any measure that serves the interests of either superpower in seeking hegemony and preparing for war' would be 'sham' disarmament.

According to this logic, the superpowers could not possibly have avoided being the main culprits of 'sham' disarmament, and to be held responsible for the state of 'genuine' disarmament. In both Huang's speech and the PRC's Working Paper on Disarmament, the Chinese maintained it was a 'fundamental principle' that 'disarmament must start with the two superpowers'. However, the extent to which the two superpowers could actually achieve 'genuine' disarmament should be 'a yardstick of real progress in disarmament'.<sup>212</sup> Consequently, the PRC laid down five conditions for the superpowers, if they wished to prove that they were 'really sincere about disarmament':

1. Declare the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states and NFZs.
2. Withdraw all forces stationed abroad and dismantle all foreign military bases.
3. Stop the arms race and destroy by stages their nuclear weapons and 'drastically' reduce their conventional weapons.
4. Undertake 'not to station massive forces or stage military exercises near the borders of other countries' and 'not to launch military attacks, including surprise attacks, against other countries on any pretext'.
5. Undertake not to transfer arms to other countries 'for the purpose of bringing them under control or for fomenting wars or abetting threats of war'.

The PRC then reaffirmed its part of the bargain by promising that, 'when major progress has been made in the destruction of Soviet and US nuclear arsenals and in the reduction of their conventional armaments',

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212 Text of China's Working Paper on Disarmament in BR, XXI/24, 16 June 1973, 22-4.

China, along with other nuclear weapon powers, would join the superpowers in destroying all nuclear weapons.

Some of these conditions bore familiar elements. The first two, for instance, had been repeatedly stressed by China since the 1960s. However, in the first one there lay a subtle variation. Instead of demanding that the two superpowers should offer a NFU pledge and undertake not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states and NFZs, China was only asking for the latter. The former was dropped because China appreciated that NATO forces were relying on a possible first-use of their nuclear weapons to deter an overwhelming conventional attack from the Warsaw Pact countries, and to demand an unconditional NFU pledge from both superpowers would only serve Soviet interests. In his speech of 29 May Huang explicitly condemned the Soviet Union for its earlier NFU proposal at the European Security Conference. This was a plot which 'aimed at facilitating its blackmail and eventual invasion of Western Europe by means of its predominant conventional forces'. Such remarks belonged among the very rare indications of China's recognition of the deterrence value of nuclear weapons.<sup>213</sup>

The new element in the third condition was conventional disarmament, a subject to which the PRC had seldom paid much attention previously. At the UNSSOD, however, as China was discussing the conventional threat posed by the Warsaw Pact forces, it also began to insist that 'nuclear disarmament alone cannot eliminate the danger of a world war', and that 'Equal importance should be attached to the

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213 The Chinese do not normally admit the deterrent value of nuclear weapons. On 10 April 1978, Chinese broadcasting still contended that: 'To say war can be prevented by a balance of fighting power is groundless', and that: 'The assertion that the balance of terror can prevent war is nothing but an excuse fabricated and used by some people in Western countries in order to pursue an appeasement policy toward the Soviet Union'. See 'The US-USSR Balance of Terror Theory Viewed as "Erroneous"', FBIS, 12 April 1978, A1-A4.

reduction of conventional armaments as that of nuclear armaments, and the two should proceed in conjunction'.

The fourth and fifth conditions were both new in Beijing's ACD statements and related more to Soviet behaviour than to that of America. The Chinese had frequently complained about massive Soviet troop concentrations near Sino-Soviet borders, out of the fear that Moscow might launch a surprise attack against them. They of course did not know that they themselves would mass troops along the Sino-Vietnamese border and launch their very own surprise 'punitive' attack on Vietnam less than a year later. By then it was also certain that, in putting forward the fifth condition, the Chinese had been referring primarily to Soviet military aid to Hanoi and its abolition.

It must be emphasised that these items were not put forth as 'pre-conditions'. They approximated to China's own brand of 'programme of action', based on the assumption that 'genuine' disarmament must start with the superpowers. To introduce and insist upon 'pre-conditions' had been a favoured practice of China, especially on the WDC question. But when the UNSSOD became a certainty during 1976-77, China gave up this practice and opted for 'dissociation'. Its subsequent participation in the UNSSOD would have been difficult and embarrassing if it had continued to insist upon specific 'pre-conditions'. In any case, it turned out that the PRC's initial decision to attend the UNSSOD carried an endorsement of the role of the UN. When Huang spoke on 29 May, he assured his audience that his delegation was ready to join the representatives of other countries in discussing disarmament, and went on:

Questions of disarmament and international security, which concern the interests of all countries, should be deliberated by an international organ with the participation of all countries under the auspices of the UN.<sup>214</sup>

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214 Above fn.210.

This immediately raised the hope that China would agree to become involved in the work of the CCD. But it was not to offer any further hint. And that hope became slim when China criticised the Final Document for its failure to ensure that the 'Committee on Disarmament', a new negotiating body reconstituted from the old CCD, 'could further remove and weaken the control and influence of the super-Powers and really accomplish anything'. On the other hand, at least China did imply that it was prepared to support the UN and its related ACD organs in order that Moscow be prevented from 'peddling the hoax of a world disarmament conference which would brush aside the United Nations'.<sup>215</sup> Indeed, when the Committee on Disarmament met for its first session in January 1979, the Chinese were there.

The Chinese were there because, as they themselves put it after the UNSSOD, 'The struggle must go on!'<sup>216</sup> They were generally not pleased with the results of the UNSSOD, as emerged after the adoption of the Final Document when China's delegate Chen Zhu rose to give his response. He started by acknowledging that the 'main accomplishment' of the UNSSOD was its positive effect 'in alerting the people of the world to the ever-increasing threat of war and in consolidating the struggle to safeguard world peace'.<sup>217</sup> But his following remarks soon showed that this initial acknowledgement was more ceremonious than sincere. He regretted the absence of any mention in the Document of either the 'anti-Soviet' or the 'anti-superpower' theses so loudly and actively propagated by the PRC. Instead, there was only a vague

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215 Beijing's initial reaction to the Final Document was given by Chen Zhu on 20 June 1978, after the Document was adopted. See UN Press Release, GA5804, 30 June/1 July 1978, takes 21-23.

216 'The Struggle Goes On', BR, XXI/28, 14 July 1978, 29. This is a shortened version of the text of Chen Zhu's speech at the UN on 30 June.

217 Above fn.215.

reference to the threat to mankind posed by 'the arms race among states' and 'the massive accumulation of weapons', with the implication that all states were involved in the arms race and all should share the blame. 'This', in Chen's words, 'would only make it easier for the super-Powers to confuse the issue'.

Chen also reiterated the view that it would be 'unfair and unreasonable' to put the two superpowers on the same footing with 'other countries which lag behind them in armaments'. China had been extremely sensitive to any proposal which called indiscriminately on a cluster of states - thus, as 'all states', or 'the nuclear weapons states', or 'the permanent members of the Security Council', or 'militarily significant states' - to take similar disarmament actions. Yet these indiscriminate terms were exactly those that appeared in the Final Document. This was why Chen lamented that the 'unassailable' principle that disarmament must start with the superpowers was not 'explicitly' written into the Document.

Some other elements that were written into the Document also upset China. These were statements covering ACD measures and agreements related mainly to the test ban and non-proliferation. Describing them as the 'nuclear hoax' of the superpowers, Chen announced that he found those parts of the Document which contained them 'totally unacceptable', and that his country would have 'absolutely' nothing to do with them. His clear intention here was to ward off any speculation of China moving closer, after a 'successful' UNSSOD, to the NPT and/or possible test ban agreement. However, it was significant that he did not declare that he would vote against the Document, if it were put to a vote, nor did he explicitly register Beijing's dissociation from those 'unacceptable' parts when the voting procedure took place. This looked considered. Such a move would not have been too isolating for the PRC, as Israel did the former and France the latter.

The need for China to make sure that it was not being perceived as moving closer to the NPT came mainly from the fact that it had considerably moderated its 'pro-proliferation' stand. Since India's nuclear test, China had refused to approve acts of proliferation. During the 1977 General Assembly, perhaps under Third World pressure, it had even openly condemned the possibility of South Africa going nuclear, though in a carefully-worded manner keeping away from the general question of non-proliferation.<sup>218</sup> At the UNSSOD, this trend continued. Huang's speech of 29 May offered no encouragement for the further spread of nuclear weapons. Even when attacking the PTBT and the NPT, Huang limited himself to the argument that the right of non-nuclear countries to the peaceful use of atomic energy was threatened. Moreover, when outlining point by point China's position on ACD issues, he had this to say regarding non-proliferation:

We had always held that all countries have the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and we are firmly opposed to the attempt of the superpowers to hamper on nuclear non-proliferation the development by other countries of their own nuclear industry.

If this were not clear evidence of the PRC's abandonment of its 'pro-proliferation' stand, then one could turn to China's Working Paper on Disarmament. There, the whole subject of nuclear proliferation was omitted.

218 See 'Statement by the Chinese Representative [Yang] to the First Committee of the General Assembly: Comprehensive Test Ban and Nuclear Proliferation, November 18, 1977', DOD 1977, pp.789-91.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Of the many events behind the formulation of contemporary Chinese arms control policy, we have found three to be of overwhelming importance: the Sino-Soviet rift, the first Chinese nuclear test, and the PRC's entry into the UN. The first two produced immediate and conspicuous changes in China's orientation to ACD questions. The last one did not do so, as in the first two years after its entry into the UN the PRC showed no willingness to change on those ACD issues towards which it had been critical and hostile. It was not until 1973, when it made the surprising announcement that it would become a party to Additional Protocol II of the Tlatelolco Treaty, that it became active and positive on ACD matters. By 1974, its voting record on ACD resolutions at the UN also began to display less negativeness or passiveness, as viewed by those Third World countries supporting these resolutions, and its actions became similar to those of the other four nuclear powers in this respect. Eventually, in 1978, it participated in the UNSSOD.

China's participation in UNSSOD was the climax of a long process in which it learned to accept, or to live with, modern arms control activities. Like the relationship in a traditional Chinese 'arranged' marriage, acquaintance and understanding took place only after the wedding, not before. But how far has the PRC become reconciled to international ACD activities? Has China been a reluctant partner in this process? What is the future role of the PRC in such activities? To attempt to answer these questions, a number of points need to be clarified.

## CHINA'S BASIC APPROACH

It is difficult to ascertain Beijing's true attitude towards the concept of disarmament. The fact that the PRC has never explicitly challenged the desirability of disarmament does not mean that it is in full agreement with the rest of the world on what disarmament is, or ought to be. During the Sino-Soviet polemics of mid-1963, Beijing upheld Lenin's belief that 'Only after the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie will it be able, without betraying its world-historical mission, to throw all armaments on the scrap heap'.<sup>1</sup> In November 1976, Huang Hua reaffirmed this stand at the UN:

So long as social imperialism and imperialism exist, there will be no lasting peace in the world. The elimination of war can only happen after the elimination of imperialism, the exploitation of man by man and of one nation by another, and not before. The emergence of nuclear weapons has not solved, and cannot possibly solve, the basic contradiction of our time. The realization of a world 'without weapons, without armies, without wars' through general and complete disarmament' as preached by Khrushchev in the past is a fraud which has long been mercilessly repudiated by history ... The so-called world without weapons, without armies, without wars can only be a world without states'.<sup>2</sup>

Huang's pessimism was justified. Swedish Ambassador to the UN Alva Myrdal once admitted that she and 'many from the non-aligned countries' had 'listened with some understanding to the diagnosis made by the representative from China'.<sup>3</sup> However, most of the current ACD activities do not aim to create a 'world without weapons, without armies, and without wars'. The SALT talks, for instance, have never had the immediate aim of eliminating the strategic weapons of the two

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1 'A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement', in above Ch.3 fn.122.

2 'Statement by the Chinese Representative [Huang] to the First Committee of General Assembly', in DOD 1976, 754-63.

3 Myrdal's remarks cited from Jack, op.cit. (above Ch.5 fn.14), p.14. Original source not given.

superpowers.

China's declared pessimism on the future of disarmament must not be confused with its practical stand regarding contemporary arms control activities. Officially, the PRC does not accept 'arms control' as a valid concept. In practice, its policy has shown increasing flexibility. The PRC has long implicitly recognised the significance of what are now seen as 'arms control' activities. In the 1950s Beijing explicitly approved partial disarmament measures, in the belief that a step-by step approach could lead finally to comprehensive disarmament, and also acknowledged that confidence-building might result from partial disarmament measures. Even during the years between 1963 and 1971, when Beijing was explicitly critical and hostile to nearly all international ACD activities, it persistently asked the US to accept a bilateral NFU agreement. Such actions go to show that Beijing still believed in the value of arms control measures and was prepared to employ such measures for political and military purposes. More recently, China's adherence to the Tlatelolco Treaty and its participation in the UNSSOD again confirmed its de facto acceptance of the concept of arms control.

In sum, China has a two-level approach to ACD issues: the ideological and the pragmatic. This is of course not unique to China; all other, especially communist, countries also have a similar dichotomy between the ideological and the pragmatic in the general orientation of their foreign policies. However, this dichotomy is particularly pertinent in the analysis of China's ACD policy. Generally, speaking, the ideological level is more or less 'declaratory', or even 'aspirational'. Characterised by Beijing's obstinate propaganda on the desirability of 'genuine' disarmament, it is also uncompromising. The pragmatic level is more 'operational' in its concern. It is flexible,

and follows the dictates of what Beijing perceives to be its practical national interest.<sup>4</sup> An approach involving these two levels enables the two concepts of arms control and disarmament to co-exist, and is very close to what has been illustrated in Chapter One as the 'second approach', except that China still does not explicitly affirm the positive value of arms control activities.

A note of caution is necessary here. First, it is possible that the 'pragmatic' level reflects only the short-term, tactical perspective on pressing ACD problems. One should not overestimate the significance of these considerations and have them now overtaking the role of ideology as a fundamental, long-term guideline. After all, Beijing has indicated that the purpose of putting forward ACD proposals should be to cultivate international political support and sympathy, to isolate and deter the enemy, and to deceive the enemy.<sup>5</sup> Second, as this analysis of the 'purpose' of putting forward ACD proposals does not entail the actual performance of either arms control or disarmament, one cannot help but ask if the PRC 'genuinely' desires 'genuine' disarmament? That is, if the bourgeoisie (i.e. the social-imperialists and the imperialists) were to be disarmed, would the PRC be likely to follow suit, as promised by its own propaganda?

According to present CCP ideology, the prospect of a 'disarmed' China seems bleak, given Beijing's position on a number of related issues:

- a) On Arms: Mao's famous dictum that 'political power grows out of the barrel of a gun' symbolises the difficulty for any PRC leadership to give up its weapons, if only for internal political

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4 For discussions of the 'declaratory', the 'aspirational', and the 'operational' levels of foreign policy, see Joseph Frankel, National Interest (London: Pall Mall, 1970), pp.31-7.

5 Liu Zhangsheng, op.cit. (above Ch.3 fn.80).

considerations. The PRC has always urged that a 'class analysis' should be applied to ACD questions, in that weapons in the hands of certain countries should not be regarded as the same as those in the hands of other countries. Consequently, a notion of 'selective disarmament' has been devised by the PRC, i.e., that the two superpowers should start disarmament before any other countries do so. In the end, class analysis and selective disarmament may well be used by China to preserve and justify its advantage in any ACD process, and may become the major obstacle in any such process.

- b) On War: The PRC advocates that 'war is a phenomenon between two periods of peace when classes still exist in society'. It also espouses the principle of 'si vis pacem, para bellum'. Mao himself stressed that the only means of abolishing war is war itself. Therefore, China does not seem inclined to accept any possible reduction in - or even any limitation or restriction on - its armaments before an ultimate showdown takes place. After all, though Beijing has at times conceded that the 'inevitable' war might be 'postponed', it has never accepted that it could be avoided.
- c) On Arms and War: It is unlikely that Beijing would ever subscribe to the view that ACD achievements could prevent the war from happening. The Chinese believe that as long as there are classes, there will be exploitation. As long as there is exploitation, there will be war. And ACD measures certainly would not extinguish classes. Furthermore, the PRC has never endorsed the view that men and nations fight because they have arms, a view that is one of the major philosophical premises behind modern ACD activities.<sup>6</sup> In 1962, Beijing explicitly rejected the causal link between arms and war. It characterised the belief that 'arms

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6 For a more sophisticated view, see W.H. McNeill, The Pursuit of Power (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983). In brief, McNeill argues the modern state is, in its essence, largely the product of war and the need to be able to wage war.

lead to the danger of war' as a 'fallacy', and argued that 'arms are only tools of war, not the source of war'.<sup>7</sup>

- d) On Diplomatic Negotiations and Agreements: Behind its familiar arguments that 'world peace can never be achieved by negotiation alone' and that 'diplomatic negotiation must be backed up by the united struggle of the world's peoples', Beijing had implied that true disarmament could only be obtained through 'national liberation struggles'. It is true that China has not been seen, since the 1970s, actively promoting its 'revolutionary' image in the Third World, but neither has it demonstrated in the meantime any firm faith in the value of ACD negotiations. If anything, Beijing has actually revealed, albeit informally, that it could not rely 'on a piece of paper' for its security.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to these ideological considerations, there remains the more pragmatic side to détente and disarmament. The PRC has made it clear that it is opposed to 'sham' détente, but it has avoided taking a position on the question of 'genuine' détente. As 'genuine' détente between the Soviet Union and the United States would be seen by the PRC as a form of superpower collusion detrimental to its security, the Chinese are thus likely to hold that they would be better off when the Big Two are contending. Therefore, if the Chinese remain opposed even to 'genuine' détente, how can they support disarmament, be it 'genuine' or otherwise?

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7 Ren Guoping, 'The Tito Group', BR, V/41. 12 Oct. 1962, 12.

8 It has been reported that during informal exchanges between representatives from the PRC Institute of Foreign Affairs and Arms Control and Disarmament Programme, in the late 1970s, the Chinese indicated that they could not rely on a 'piece of paper' for their security. See Gloria Duffy, 'A U.S.-China Arms Control Dialogue', in Arms Control Today, X/7, July/Aug. 1980, 3-5. A more formal expression of China's distrust of the 'treaty craze' of the Soviet Union can be found in two publications. 'Hsinhua Correspondent's Commentary Exposes New Tsar's Sham Disarmament, Wild Military Expansion', NCNA, 23 Nov. 1976, 13-14, and 'The Kremlin's Treaty Craze', FBIS, I/229, 26 Nov. 1976, A4-6.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF CHINA'S ARMS CONTROL POLICY

It has been suggested, in Chapter One, that arms control activities have normally a three-fold objective: the avoidance of war, the minimisation of the costs and risks of an arms race, and the reduction of the scope and violence of war. Beijing's ACD policy has not visibly attempted to achieve any of these ends in a direct fashion. At best Chinese propaganda has attacked certain ACD activities, notably the SALT talks, because these activities would, allegedly, accelerate the arms race and lead to war. Such an allegation contradicts the popular belief that SALT was searching for a formula to control the arms race and hopefully to prevent the outbreak of war. In fact, because Beijing does not explicitly endorse the concept of arms control, it has also never acknowledged its support for any portion of the three-fold objective.

As mentioned earlier, the PRC itself has pointed out that the purpose of putting forward ACD proposals is to 'cultivate international support' and to 'isolate', 'deter' and 'deceive' the enemy. This view is significant, for it shows how China probably perceived the political and military instrumentalities of arms control activities. But, on the other hand, the 'purpose' revealed by this view is really a set of guidelines, each of which is too abstract to be treated as the specific objectives of China's ACD policy. One must therefore consider China's ACD policy as subordinate to the aims of overall Chinese foreign policy. The aim of Chinese foreign policy contains a wide spectrum of elements, from the traditional ones, such as preserving independence and sovereignty, advancing ideological influence, and protecting economic and security interests, to the more topical ones, such as assisting China's 'four modernisations' and opposing 'superpower hegemonism'. Of all these elements, the opposition to superpower

hegemonism appears at present to be the dominant theme in Beijing's approach to ACD issues.

But 'anti-hegemonism' must be understood in the context of China's defence and security considerations. Indeed, one can establish three specific objectives of China's arms control policy which are entirely consistent with Beijing's professed 'purposes for putting forward ACD proposals':

- a) To prevent China from undertaking any ACD commitments that could place an obligation upon it to participate in actual arms reductions, and to hinder any ACD negotiation which might damage China's strategic and political interests.
- b) To check the expansion, or to reduce the size, of the arsenals of the two superpowers, especially that of the Soviet Union. Or at least to embarrass the two superpowers, especially the Soviet Union, with regard to ACD and possibly other matters.
- c) To earn understanding, good-will and support from the Third World.

These three objectives are not equal in terms of priority. The prevention of actual arms reduction on the part of China remains paramount, followed by, in order of importance, actions relating to the two superpowers and the Third World. As shown in the cases of Beijing's response to the PTBT and the NPT, the weight of the primary objective has overruled considerations of the second and third ones. Also, according to Kim's observation, Beijing has used its position in the UN Security Council more as 'a sword to fight against the revisionist social-imperialists than as a shield to protect the interests of the Third World'.<sup>9</sup>

This is by no means to suggest that the nature of the function of China's ACD policy is different from that of any other major states.

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<sup>9</sup> Kim, op.cit. (above, Ch.1 fn.13), p.239.

The two superpowers, in particular, do not differ so much from the PRC in this regard. They may have claimed that their ACD efforts were attempting, for instance, to reduce the risks and the costs of the arms race. But it is obvious that in essence each of the superpowers would, like the PRC and probably most other countries, desire to minimise the possibility of actual arms reductions on its part while seeking to check the military expansion of other states.

#### FACTORS IN THE MAKING OF CHINESE ARMS CONTROL POLICY

Chapter One identified five such factors for consideration. We may now look at these in turn.

Historical and Cultural It is a commonplace that the word 'China' (in Chinese 'Zhong-guo') means the 'Middle Kingdom'. But, contrary to this popular usage, 'Zhong-guo' stands for the 'Central Kingdom', with the meaning that, for centuries, the Chinese have viewed themselves as the centre of the world and the basis of civilisation.<sup>10</sup> In other words, there has been a feeling of superiority in Beijing's attitude to the outside world.<sup>11</sup> A major factor contributing to the formation of this feeling was China's long period of isolation from other parts of the world. C.P. Fitzgerald this describes the stance of the Chinese toward the outside world: 'Living in their own world, in which they were long supreme, their relations with such other organised states as from time to time existed in their vicinity were either hostile or those of

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10 'Zhong-guo' is generally considered to mean 'the Kingdoms of the Middle', i.e. the states of the central North China plain; see, for instance, H.G. Creel, The Origin of Statecraft in China (Chicago, Ill.: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1970), p.196, fn.1. The Chinese themselves, however, tend to take the word 'zhong' to mean more 'central' than 'middle'.

11 For a description of China's feeling of superiority, see Hinton, Communist China in World Politics (London: Macmillan, 1966), p.5.

suzerain to tributary'.<sup>12</sup> No wonder, therefore, that the Chinese found it extremely difficult to cope with the intrusion of Western powers at the turn of the nineteenth century. For Imperial China had neither the experience to deal with these powers peacefully on an equal basis, nor the strength to compel them to become tributaries.

What the Qing rulers then resorted to was the tactic of 'playing off one barbarian against another'. They exploited the intention and might of one foreign power to check the threat and expansion of another foreign power. But this tactic had a disastrous shortcoming: it might result in an alliance of more than one, perhaps even all, foreign powers against China. This indeed happened during China's war against the joint Anglo-French expedition in 1858, and also during the Boxer Uprising in 1900. Even more recently, China's own allies of World War One ignored its protests at Versailles and gave the former German concessions in China to Japan. The same happened again after World War Two. The Yalta conference promised Moscow important military, political, and economic privileges in China after the war, all without prior consultation with the Chinese. One observer of Chinese politics makes the following observation on China's unpleasant experience in this regard: 'In sum, China was the object of international relations but seldom the subject. Acted on by others, she was unable to act in her own right'.<sup>13</sup>

The present regime in Beijing, too, has known this situation. For a long period after it had come to power, the government of the People's Republic remained unrecognised by the majority of non-

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12 C.P. Fitzgerald, The Chinese View of Their Place in the World (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964), pp.51-2.

13 Whiting, 'Foreign Policy of Communist China', in Roy Macridis, ed., Foreign Policy in World Politics (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p.321.

communist states, and it was not until 1971, more than two decades after its birth, that it was accepted by the UN. Before then, the PRC had been kept out of most important international activities, and there were clear indications that it was disturbed by the traditional fear that it might be victimised by alliances between the major powers, especially when these came in the realm of ACD affairs. But China's announcement in January 1960 that it was not to be bound by international agreements which it had not been involved in negotiating did little to prevent the PTBT from being concluded or to convince the major powers that China would never accept the Treaty. The revived traditional fear showed again in the late 1960s, with the outcry that there was a 'nuclear-military alliance' against China.

Even after its entry into the UN, Beijing still characterised international ACD activities as part of the 'Soviet-American disarmament fraud'. This appears to have been mainly motivated by military-security considerations. But the historical-cultural dimension must not be discounted, for although its influence tends to be always less conspicuous than that of other factors, it undoubtedly exists and is generally deep-rooted.

Ideological To some, a communist state like the PRC is, by definition, an 'ideocracy', in that its leaders base their claim to loyalty and obedience neither on ancient traditions nor on democratic institutions but on interpretations of Marxist-Leninist ideology. This ideology not only justifies the international posture of the country, it also motivates it on the international stage.<sup>14</sup> Few analysts endorse this

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<sup>14</sup> For the concept of 'ideocracy', see Morton Schwarz, The Foreign Policy of the USSR: Domestic Factors (Encino, Calif.: Dickenson, 1975), p.75.

extreme view, of course,<sup>15</sup> especially following the more pragmatic style adopted by the PRC in its relations with foreign countries since the 1970s. But the majority of China specialists agree nevertheless that ideology is generally the 'basic reference point' from which the Chinese 'understand world affairs, set policy goals, and define the legitimate means of pursuing these goals'.<sup>16</sup>

The present Chinese Communist ideology is an eccentric amalgam of the thoughts of Marx, Lenin, and Mao. One of its most outstanding features in terms of Chinese foreign policy is the identification and the exploitation of the 'principal contradiction of the present era'.

As Mao explained:

There are many contradictions in the process of development of a complex thing, and one of them is necessarily the principal contradiction whose existence and development determine or influence the existence and development of other contradictions ... Therefore in studying any complex process in which there are two or more contradictions, we must devote every effort to finding its principal contradiction. Once this principal contradiction is grasped, all problems can be readily resolved.<sup>17</sup>

Beijing has identified three different sets of contradictions since the 1950s:

1. Originally, the confrontation between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp was the principal contradiction, and hence the policy of 'leaning to one side'.
2. When Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated, Beijing produced an analysis identifying four 'fundamental contradictions', namely those a) between the socialist and the imperialist camps, b) between the proletariat and bourgeoisie in the capitalist

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15 John Spanier criticises the tendency of putting too much emphasis on ideology; see Games Nations Play (N.Y.: Praeger, 1972), pp.273-5.

16 Allen S. Whiting and Robert Dernberger, China's Future: Foreign Policy and Economic Development in the Post-Mao Era (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1977), p.38.

17 Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, I, (above Ch.1 fn.8), pp.331-2.

countries, c) between the 'oppressed nations' and imperialism, and d) among imperialist countries and among 'monopoly capitalist groups'.<sup>18</sup>

3. During the GPCR, this classification was recast into a different set of four fundamental contradictions, as contradictions i) between the oppressed nations on one hand and imperialism and 'social-imperialism' on the other, ii) between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist and the revisionist countries, iii) between the imperialists and social-imperialists and among the imperialist countries (i.e. internal contradiction within the imperialist camp), and iv) between socialist countries on the one hand and imperialist and social-imperialist countries on the other.<sup>19</sup>

Against the background of the radicalist approach of the GPCR it was the first of these, that between the oppressed nations and imperialism and social-imperialism, which came to be seen as the principal contradiction. This contradiction was later expressed in terms of the 'three worlds theory', as the relationship between the First World and the Third World, and also, to a lesser extent, as that between the First and the Second World. Finally, when 'superpower contention' became the major theme in China's perception of the international situation, the contradiction between imperialists and social-imperialists moved up to assume the role of the principal contradiction, although this was never admitted by the PRC.

Closely linked with the theory of contradiction is the concept of a 'united front'. First introduced by Lenin, and extended by Stalin, the concept was extensively discussed by Mao and has had a profound

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<sup>18</sup> This was first indicated in 'A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement ...', above Ch.3 fn.122.

<sup>19</sup> Lin first revealed this new classification in his report to the 9th CCP Congress in 1969. See above Ch.4 fn.171.

influence in China's domestic and foreign politics. The function of a united front is to bring together as many different forces as possible to oppose a common enemy, and its logic lies in the simple belief that 'my enemy's enemy is my friend - at least until my enemy is defeated'.<sup>20</sup> In terms of an operational code, the theory proposes that you a) win over and consolidate all possible elements that can become a part of your strength; b) neutralise those that cannot be won over and that might become the friend of your enemy; and c) that you isolate your enemy, both in physical and non-physical terms, in the hope of weakening him.

Taken together, the theories of contradiction, of the 'three worlds', and of 'united front' lead logically to major tasks for Chinese foreign, and ACD, policy. These are:

- a) To accentuate and enlarge the contradiction between the First and the Third World, and also that between the First and the Second World, while simultaneously making efforts to narrow the political and ideological gaps between the Second and the Third World.
- b) To stress China's membership of, and ideological and political commitments to, the Third World. There is no apparent intention that the PRC should become the leader of the Third World, but it has been anxious to act as a guardian of Third World interests.
- c) To label the First World as the common enemy of the Second and the Third World.

At this point a problem emerges. This analysis provides no philosophical basis for China's 'anti-hegemonism' onslaughts being directed not against both superpowers, but against the Soviet Union alone. For

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20 For the concept of 'united front', see Vincent Chen, 'Mao's "United Front" as Applied in China's Diplomacy', in James Hsiung, ed., The Logic of 'Maoism' (N.Y.: Praeger, 1974), pp.105-36. And, Lyman Van Slyke, Enemies and Friends: The United Front in Chinese Communist History (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1967).

it to use the 'three worlds' theory here would be difficult; significantly, China's ACD statements, most of them directed largely against Moscow, seldom refer to this theory. Hence the impression that the PRC's foreign policy has become more pragmatic (and by implication, less ideological) appears to have resulted from Beijing's preoccupation with an anti-Soviet united front. Kim explicitly states that, at times, 'political expediency, more than ideological purity, seems to dictate Chinese policy' at the UN.<sup>21</sup> His observation is sound, but it does not mean that ideology is no longer a valid factor in the formulation of Chinese foreign policy, especially with regard to ACD issues. Granted, the PRC has supported the rightist FNLA and UNITA movements in the Angolan civil war, instead of helping the progressive MPLA; has continued to recognise the Pinochet regime in Chile, instead of condemning the CIA-aided coup which overthrew the communist Allende government; and has attacked the socialist state of North Vietnam, while improving relations with reactionary regimes such as that of the late Shah of Iran. But China has never done anything in the realm of ACD affairs which could be said to have seriously contradicted its ideological stand. And it continues to reject the NPT, a treaty which would legitimise its status as a nuclear power and its 'right' to continue to develop nuclear capability.

In short, the field of ACD activities offers China no compelling gain from any sacrifice of ideological interests. If the temptation were to occur, it would be interesting to see how Beijing would react. But at present, though, China's manoeuvring in the international ACD arena stays within its ideological confines. Thus, there can be no peace until imperialism is destroyed, because imperialism will never change its aggressive nature. Imperialism will be overthrown either

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21 Kim, op.cit., (above Ch.1 fn.13), p.226.

through the 'resolute struggles' of the peoples in the world, or by an ultimate war. The two superpowers will continue the arms race in a bid for 'hegemony'. And finally, of the two superpowers it is the 'social-imperialist', the 'modern revisionist', which is the more ambitious and dangerous, and the one likely to become the source of a 'new world war'.

Military-security The uniqueness of China's military, strategic and geopolitical position gives it an equally unique perspective onto international ACD affairs. China is the only nuclear power to be outside of both the Eastern and Western blocs, which means that it cannot claim protection from any nuclear 'umbrella' nor leave out the possibility of standing in conflict with both superpowers. Moreover, its long land frontier with the Soviet Union, a superpower with which its relationship has been hostile and unstable, makes it exceptionally sensitive to the shifts of Soviet military pressures between East Asia and Western Europe.

China's defence capability is largely underdeveloped in comparison with that of other major powers, and this it is more susceptible to the growth in international ACD activities, especially when this involves the two superpowers. Such underdevelopment, coupled with an equally problematical economy and industrial infrastructure, presents China with great difficulties in trying to keep pace with, or to protect itself against, the nuclear might of the two superpowers. Consequently, China's nuclear posture remains defensive, and seems only interested in achieving a 'second-strike' nuclear capability, as a credible deterrent against possible nuclear attacks. Beijing is finally the only member of the so-called 'strategic triangle' to have been left out of the main ACD negotiations such as SALT. Inevitably

this forces Beijing into suspicion of these activities, an attitude which could easily extend to other forms of international ACD.

China places great value on its nuclear capability, a fact obscured by Mao's famous remark that the 'atomic bomb is a paper tiger', and also by Beijing's propaganda which both disparages the significance of nuclear weapons and stresses the value of the 'people's war' tactic. The PRC does treasure its conventional forces, and may even genuinely believe that 'weapons cannot destroy men but will be destroyed by men'. However, it also considers its nuclear capability of the utmost importance. If it were not for China's unyielding determination to become a nuclear power, the Sino-Soviet rift might not have happened, China might not have become so hostile to ACD activities, and the international situation today might be very different. Clemens incisively sums up the connection between the PTBT and the Sino-Soviet rift:

If one sought to compare the importance of the nuclear test ban with other issues exacerbating Sino-Soviet relations prior to July 1963, it would be difficult to point to any other that so consistently gnawed at what both sides regarded as their vital interests, whose symbolic and material significance was so great in itself, or whose ramifications penetrated so many other areas of the dispute. The issue of the test ban - in form and in essence - drove to the very heart of the political, ideological, military, and even the economic factors in the rift.<sup>22</sup>

Beijing's determination in manufacturing its own nuclear weapons not only substantially contributed to the open break with Moscow, but also led to significant changes in its attitudes towards general foreign policy and specific ACD issues when it later became a nuclear power. This makes questionable Yahuda's argument that China's nuclear programme should be regarded as a 'supportive rather than a determining

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<sup>22</sup> Clemens, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.1), p.155.

factor' in the formulation of Chinese foreign policy.<sup>23</sup> At least in terms of the narrower confines of the making of China's ACD policy, a nuclear capability and its related development programme have been, and seem destined to remain, the most crucial factor.

In order to shield this nuclear capability from the influence of international ACD activities, and to safeguard its security in the broader context, Beijing has kept a close watch on the two superpowers, particularly in the arms race - nuclear and conventional - between them, and also on their territorial and naval expansion. China seems constantly disturbed by the prospect that the two superpowers might one day go to war with each other, and is thus concerned to know the most probably nature of that war, should it come, and its likely implication for China. As a corollary, it is imperative for the PRC to achieve a realistic and accurate assessment of the superpowers' relationship. It needs to know what the essence of this relationship (contention or collusion?) is; who is ahead; what the short-term trends and long-term implications are; and how China's security interests would be affected by all these.

In recent years it has become obvious that the less an ACD proposal involves Moscow, the more its chances of being supported by Beijing. Those strongly supported by the Third World but not the superpowers stand the best chance. This is not merely a reflection of ideological principles, it has practical military-security connotations. First, China has not supported any ACD proposal which could seriously affect its military-security interests, no matter how great the Third World support for that proposal. Secondly, Beijing's hostility towards an ACD proposal corresponds with its perception of the degree of military-security threat to China posed by the sponsor

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23. Yahuda, op.cit. (above Ch.1 fn.17), p.142.

(or sponsors) of that proposal. As Beijing feels most threatened by Moscow, it therefore is most hostile to those ACD proposals sponsored by Moscow; it is less so toward American ones because it perceives the US as a less immediate threat. It is benign to the Third World ACD proposals because it does not feel threatened by the Third World.

Any attempt to understand the dynamics of Beijing's ACD policy must be sensitive to the fact that Beijing approaches ACD matters from a position of definite inferiority. To Beijing, most international ACD activities can be reduced to a game of give-and-take between the two superpowers. And the PRC, with its determination to insulate its nuclear-military capability from direct involvement in international ACD agreements, considers itself as having nothing to 'give'. This is where the concept of 'selective disarmament' becomes relevant. Of course it is possible that Beijing has demanded selective disarmament because it knows that the two superpowers would never comply. But there is also the possibility that, before Beijing contemplates joining the 'game', it would like to see the gap between its armament level and that of the two superpowers narrowed.

To summarise, military-security considerations appear to be the most dominant factor in the formulation of Chinese ACD policy. It is about China's nuclear and military capability, it is about the Soviet military threat to China, it is also about the relationships between the two superpowers. Most of all, it is probably where the Chinese would feel most vulnerable. It has become visible recently that Beijing, by approving the plan to install Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Europe, seems to desire a strong US military presence in Europe. The logic is clear. Beijing is not likely to welcome any relaxation of tension in Europe which might allow Moscow to increase its military pressure on China, or lead to an increase of Soviet

military activities in other parts of the world, and thus worsen Beijing's fear of being encircled by the Soviet military power. Accordingly, Beijing is not likely to change its attitude towards ACD matters as long as it remains suspicious of Soviet military ambitions.

Diplomatic-Political This factor in policy is involved in three issues: a) arms control as a political problem between China and the two superpowers: b) arms control as a political problem between China and the Third World; and c) arms control and China's domestic politics.

Not all international ACD activities, not even the Antarctic treaty, the Tlatelolco treaty, and UNSSOD, are agreed as having strong political implications. However, certain other ACD negotiations and agreements, especially those involving the two superpowers, are generally seen as highly political events. The arms control specialist Colin Gray argues that 'SALT is about politics, and its currency is the detail of strategic technology'.<sup>24</sup> Harris agrees that SALT is 'a unique and powerful generator of political signals'.<sup>25</sup>

Beijing cannot have failed to perceive that superpower arms control, as symbolised by SALT, is intimately linked with détente, and through détente with almost every other aspect of East-West relations. This is a further reason for China's hostility towards superpower ACD activities. As seen earlier, traditional as well as contemporary factors lead China to assume that rivalries between the major powers are a basic guarantee of its independence and security, and it therefore seeks to prevent and deter any possible mellowing in a predominantly adversary superpower relationship. With or without the ACD dimension, China would be opposed to détente.

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24 Colin Gray, 'A Problem Guide for SALT II', Survival, Jan./Feb. 1976, 230.

25 Sargent and Harris, SALT and Post-Mao China (McLean, Va.: BDM, 1976), p.1.

In 1976, an article published in a Hong Kong Chinese periodical, which was generally considered a 'front' publication of the PRC, offered perhaps China's most elaborate and candid discussion of détente. It asked: 'Why would the two superpowers painstakingly create an artificial atmosphere of "détente", while in fact no real "détente" exists in today's international relations?' The answer it gives is that they are seeking several different things in 'staging such an act of détente'.<sup>26</sup> This article then lists separate objectives for each of the superpowers, while asserting that 'Moscow is more enthusiastic than the US, for Moscow has more to gain from this 'act' than Washington'.

Five main objectives are attributed to Moscow in this article. First, to reduce the possibility of facing two powerful enemies, the UN and China, at the same time. This could also mean that Moscow wants to secure a stable Western front if and when it decides to take military actions against China. Second, to weaken the 'vigilance' and 'cohesiveness' of NATO countries, eventually leading to the disintegration of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact Organisation. Although this looks like equal disarmament, it is argued in the article that, while the disintegration of NATO means actual disarmament, that of the Warsaw Pact Organisation would not affect the military strength of the Soviet bloc. Even if Moscow could not achieve the disintegration of NATO, it is further argued that détente would still weaken the American military presence in Europe, so that Moscow could then promote its foreign policy aims in Europe from a position of absolute military superiority. The third objective is to produce an atmosphere conducive to East-West

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26 Shi Hwa, 'Detente - To Whose Benefit?', Chi-shi-Nien-Dai (The Seventies Monthly, a periodical in Chinese published in Hong Kong), No.73 (Feb. 1976), 25-6. It is generally assumed that, at least then, this journal could realistically reflect Beijing's position on many issues.

trade exchanges and cooperation in other fields, allowing Moscow to purchase foods, acquire commercial credits and import Western technology. Fourth, to try to 'freeze' any further growth of American strategic superiority, so that Moscow can attempt both to catch up with the US and to cover up its arms race with the US. Lastly, to create a false impression that world tension has been relaxed, so that Western governments will find it hard to resist public pressure for reducing military spending and to maintain extensive overseas commitments. That will also provide Moscow with an opportunity to expand its influence and control, both politically and militarily.

As for the US, it is argued in the article that American gains in détente have only two purposes. First, to help reduce its overseas commitments 'with dignity'. This reduction is needed because of America's serious economic crisis combined with rising isolationism, and was inevitable once the US had withdrawn from Vietnam. Détente, however unrealistic, offers the US a timely justification for such a retreat. The second purpose is to make the best use of Moscow's desire for détente, in order to bargain for the preservation of the present arrangement of 'spheres of influence' and for other Soviet concessions which the US deems necessary and possible.

It would seem that, in opposing détente per se, China has become even more worried about the prospect that Moscow is using détente and various ACD baits to weaken America and the East. Beijing believes that the appeasing, defensive, and somewhat retreating attitude of the US not only hastens the defeat of the West, but also facilitates Moscow's ambition to bury the Chinese. Hence Beijing has been preoccupied with the task of exposing Moscow's plots of 'sham détente' and 'sham disarmament'.

Third World diplomacy has always been accepted as a very important

factor in the making of Chinese ACD policy, especially after the PRC entered the UN. Under 'consultative pressure' from the Third World, Beijing appears to have considerably reduced its hostility towards some ACD resolutions. Its adherence to the Tlatelolco treaty, and its participation in the UNSSOD, are relevant examples. However, one must not overestimate this Third World influence. Clearly, China is more concerned with, and more hostile towards, 'superpower arms control' than it is in favour of Third World arms control. The Tlatelolco treaty and, to some extent, the UNSSOD initiatives, are seen as part of 'Third World arms control' initiatives and have therefore been approved by Beijing. Conversely, SALT and the NPT definitely belong to the category of 'superpower arms control'. No matter how much the Third World has supported them, or how much pressure the Third World can exert on China, they are not likely to be endorsed by China.

In any case, there is no conclusive evidence that China's present ACD policy as such has significantly affected Beijing's relationship with the Third World. Occasionally there have been remarks of dissatisfaction against Chinese ACD positions from Third World delegates at the UN, but beyond that, no concrete damage has been done. After all, there are at least three developments which have lessened the possibility of China's ACD policy being negatively received by the Third World. First, some of Beijing's most intransigent ACD stances, such as that on the test ban and on SALT, have now been gradually accepted by Third World delegates as 'faits accomplis'. Second, there have also been occasions in which some of China's principled views on ACD matters have been echoed by other Third World delegates. Lastly, other nuclear powers have sometimes shown even more passiveness and intransigence than China.

China's unwillingness to undertake any disarmament obligations has

part of its root in domestic political considerations. In the first place, arms per se occupy a specific and respectable role in the present Chinese political-revolutionary philosophy, which upholds Mao's belief that one is not likely to gain and hold political power without them. Hence the very concept of disarmament is incompatible with Chinese political philosophy. Moreover, one must realise that China's military establishment is a crucial component of China's ruling hierarchy, and as such commands substantial political power. It would be quite difficult for any civilian leadership to overrule the wishes of the military and initiate ACD measures. In particular, at a time when the PRC is pursuing a policy of 'military modernisation' at the behest of the services, it would be even more imperative for Beijing to remain uncommitted, if not hostile, to most ACD activities. Finally, one must also remember that China has constantly urged its populace to be prepared for a surprise attack from the Soviet Union. Perhaps the fear of such an attack is genuine, or perhaps the propaganda which plays it up is being used to enhance internal unity and public discipline. By either consideration, or both, China's basic passiveness towards ACD activities is explicable.

Economic Cost considerations do not appear to have been potent in the formulation of Chinese ACD policy. None of the major international ACD achievements could be said to have been motivated by economic factors. Arms control and disarmament as a cost-saving measure remains as yet only a theoretical postulation in the case of China.

But China is still basically an underdeveloped country. Despite the belief that China's advanced military-scientific research has not been held back, not even by the trauma of the GPCR, the fact that military modernisation has become a major issue in present-day Chinese

politics clearly suggests that, in the past, financial pressure must have affected the development of China's armament projects. This is not likely to change in the foreseeable future. But there is no automatic link between a country's financial pressure on armament projects and its active involvement in international ACD affairs. In the case of China, particularly, the establishment of such a link is complicated by a wide range of ideological, political, military and security factors.

#### ARMS CONTROL AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

The role of arms control in Chinese foreign policy is ambivalent. In a narrow sense, the concepts of arms control and disarmament do not occupy any significant position in that policy. The PRC remains sceptical of the prospect of any achievement of 'genuine' arms control or disarmament. It has neither seriously considered, nor seemed prepared to be involved in, schemes of actual arms reduction. It is still 'underdeveloped' in terms of modern, sophisticated weaponry, and still not yet a fully-fledged global power. So long as these trends persist, ACD issues are likely to remain a peripheral concern of Chinese foreign policy. This is why China has shown relatively little interest in discussing the wide array of such issues, which ranges from chemical, biological, napalm and incendiary weapons to environmental warfare and other forms of conventional disarmament, and the establishment of NFZs in Africa and the South Pacific.

In a broader context, however, ACD matters can and at times do become the dominant issue of Beijing's foreign policy considerations, as in the case of at least the PTBT negotiation, the SALT talks, and the reduction of military budgets proposal. When this happens, it is because ACD matters have gone beyond the theoretical perimeter of pure

ACD considerations and instead relate to China's nuclear development programme, its military-defence planning, its assessment of the superpower relationship, and the calculation and adjustment of the PRC's role in the international power groupings. Strictly speaking, this then makes ACD policy into what Harding has aptly described as 'foreign military policy'.<sup>27</sup>

According to Harding, such foreign military policy tends to become controversial when the issues involved 1) produce 'opposing responses' within the Chinese leadership, 2) reflect 'conflicting concerns over related domestic issues, and 3) get entangled in China's internal 'political power plays'.<sup>28</sup> By this analysis, one may assume that an ACD issue, even originally a 'peripheral' one, may also become 'controversial' under these circumstances, and subsequently be elevated to a central position in general Chinese foreign policy. The strategic dialogue between the two superpowers, as symbolised by the 'contention-collusion' debate within China, has clearly been relevant in all these three regards, hence its controversial and dominant role in Chinese foreign policy. Unfortunately, though, the present state of our understanding of Chinese ACD policy does not let us identify any 'peripheral' ACD issue which has gained prominence because of being 'controversial' in any of Harding's three 'circumstances'. But the analogy remains plausible.

As it is, those ACD issues commanding a central role in Chinese foreign policy, and said to be intrinsically related to China's strategic-security considerations, are still dominated by the relationship between the two superpowers and China's own relations with these superpowers. The division between 'superpower arms control' and

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27 Harding, op.cit. (above Ch.5 fn.1), p.130.

28 Ibid., pp.130-37.

'Third World arms control' is thus again relevant, as it would seem to tie in with the division of 'central' and 'peripheral' roles of ACD issues in overall Chinese foreign policy.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

It may become easier to understand China's ACD policy if an approach is made via several sets (three at least) of overlapping two-tier perspectives.

First, the long-term and short-term perspectives. In the former the Chinese remain deeply pessimistic about the future of international ACD efforts. In the latter, they have gradually accepted the instrumentalities of, and have thus become involved in, contemporary ACD activities.

Second, the ideological and pragmatic perspectives. There tends to be a general belief that the latter perspective is more potent in short-term considerations, and the ideological one only so in long-term considerations. This is not correct. Although there have been cases in which an increased pragmatism in China's ACD policy was achieved seemingly at the expense of ideological principles, there are also instances where pragmatism fell victim to ideology. The PRC remains unlikely to support any future ACD issue unless it feels it is both ideologically congenial and diplomatically expedient to do so. In this same sense one may argue that the verbal aggressiveness in China's ACD statements and the expressed tenets that are carried in them do not really contradict China's actual practice in the international ACD arena.

Third, there seems to be the perspective in which an ACD activity is viewed as either a form of 'superpower arms control' or of 'Third World arms control'. The degree of involvement, or the role, of either

or both of the two superpowers in any particular ACD initiative substantially affects Beijing's response to that initiative.

It is therefore doubtful if Beijing has really recognised and accepted, to any meaningful extent, the essence of the present general conception of arms control and disarmament. Unlike the Soviet Union, which despite its distrust of Western intentions seems to have accepted the central value that ACD activities can help to promote international stability, the PRC has not yet offered any assurance to this effect. Moreover, Beijing has been extremely cautious and reluctant to be caught up into present international ACD activities, and there is as yet no reason to believe that China no longer considers ACD activities dangerous as a tactic and harmful as a strategy. In sum, China remains a very reluctant partner in international ACD activities.

But the fact that China is already a partner, be it reluctant or otherwise, in the game of international arms control, seems to confirm some of the optimistic expectations that China would eventually be fully integrated into the present international ACD efforts. This optimism was based on the belief that China, whether through a substantial improvement of its strategic status or through the gradual accumulated effects of its present involvement in international ACD affairs, would learn to play according to the rules of the arms race and arms control that have made sense to the Soviet Union and the US. The prevalent view is that Beijing would consider the acquisition of a 'reasonably credible deterrent' as a significant reduction of the military supremacy of the two superpowers vis à vis itself, and that then the PRC would become more confident and assertive, behaving like other nuclear powers in international ACD activities.<sup>29</sup> Yet this view

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29 This view is largely shared by specialists in the field. See, for instance, Ralph Clough, A. Doak Barnett, Morton Halperin, Jerome H. Kahan, The United States, China, and Arms Control (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1975), p.52. Also, John Lewis, 'China's Military Doctrines and Force Posture', in SJIS (above Ch.5 fn.1), 185.

has, implicitly, three flaws in it.

First, it assumes that Beijing would accept the Western criterion of what is generally considered a 'credible' deterrent capability. This neglects the fact that China's nuclear posture is based on a principle of 'strategic ambiguity', according to which the PRC seeks to maximise its strategic power by maximising 'the uncertainties of opponents about Chinese [strategic] intentions as well as [strategic] capabilities'.<sup>30</sup> The West will not easily establish if the PRC has accepted the Western criterion (which itself remains a controversial matter), nor when it has satisfied that criterion.<sup>31</sup> In any case, the preponderance of the strategic might of the two superpowers will make it difficult for the PRC ever to feel confident of having achieved a 'reasonable and credible' deterrence against either of them.

Second, it assumes that the Chinese ACD policy seeks only to maximise national security, defined in narrow military terms. This neglects the crucial role of ideology. It is possible that the PRC may become even more 'pragmatic' when it has achieved a so-called 'assured second-strike' capability. But, supposing that pragmatism were a sign of weakness, that the present Chinese pragmatism has been a reflection of the fact that the PRC has not yet achieved the deterrent capability, then is it not equally possible that China's ACD policy may become more 'ideological', once it has achieved such a capability?

Third, it assumes, even more implicitly, that the development of

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30 Gelber, op.cit. (above fn.49), 21-2.

31 It is difficult to determine the development of China's nuclear capability. In May 1980, successful testings of long-range missiles made China an ICBM power. But the development of China's sea-based deterrent remains obscure. A Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong reported in October 1981 that during August-September 1981, a Chinese G-class submarine had suffered an explosion when test-launching SLBMs. The Chinese, according to this source, refused to comment on this report. See Sing-Tao-Jih-Pao, 16 Oct. 1981.

nuclear capability may lead to 'maturity' in China's approach to the ACD questions. Such an assumption is misleading in the sense that the concept of maturity lacks both substance and precision, and that there is no evidence to suggest that other nuclear powers are more mature than China, whether because of their more advanced nuclear capability or for any other reasons. The fact that Beijing has not been 'co-operative' and 'constructive' in the international ACD arena cannot be seen as a sign of 'immaturity' on the part of China.

I hope that the present study has successfully demonstrated that Chinese ACD policy can be understood through, and justified by, the interplay of the set of factors that are also in operation in the formulation of the ACD policy of other nuclear powers. The PRC may have perceived ACD questions with an approach different from that of the majority of other nuclear powers, but that does not mean that it is dangerous, irrational, or 'immature'. Hence optimism should be more realistically based on the expectation that a more conformative Chinese ACD policy may, as suggested earlier, be achieved through the gradual, accumulated effects of the PRC's increasing participation in international ACD activities. The PRC's involvement in the formal and informal discussions of ACD affairs after its entry into the UN has clearly brought a realisation that its ideology, rigid as it is, does allow considerable flexibility in China's ACD posture. Ultimately, of course, it is to be hoped that the Chinese will go as far as accepting that ACD measures may reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation and nuclear war, may minimise the danger of conflict not only between the two superpowers, but also between China and either, or both, of them, and may contribute to regional stability in various parts of the world in ways that can serve the military and security interests of China as well as of other major powers. This does not necessarily mean that the

two superpowers have already explicitly achieved such an understanding, nor does it suggest that contemporary international ACD activities are already moving toward such a direction. It merely reflects the belief that if international ACD efforts are to succeed in the end, a positive and co-operative China is essential.

But are there grounds for confidence that present ACD efforts could achieve all, or any, of the objectives that the PRC is expected to accept? The meagre record of postwar ACD efforts, in terms of promoting international stability and controlling the arms race, does not offer any prospect of rapid improvement in the near future. Fifteen years after the initiation of the SALT talks, the strategic relationship between the two superpowers is as wretched and confused as ever. Worst of all, there is at present a general tendency to regard co-operation between the two superpowers as 'the chief embodiment' of arms control.<sup>32</sup> This in turn suggests that Soviet-American co-operation in arms control may 'legitimately' promote the security of these two superpowers at the expense of other states, and encourages the two superpowers to maintain, or to establish, a world order in which their privileged position is preserved.<sup>33</sup> If this trend continues, then, there is little chance of China's ACD policy becoming 'conformative' either in form or in substance, or both.

Moreover, there does not appear to be any sign of a consensus within the Chinese leadership that China can gain any significant advantage by becoming 'truly' involved in present international ACD activities. Those ACD activities not involving the two superpowers tend to be of more political than military significance. But to engage

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32 Bull, 'Arms Control and World Order', International Security, I/1, Summer 1976, 3.

33 Ibid.

in serious arms control negotiations with either or both of the superpowers could undermine China's position of never claiming the superpower status, and damage China's image as champion of the Third World. Because of its obvious inferiority in terms of strategic capability, China might have considered that it would reap more benefit by staying outside the framework of strategic arms control than by becoming a party to it. Above all, Beijing remains deeply suspicious of Moscow's sincerity in international ACD activities, and thus it would be extremely difficult for the Chinese to accept as reliable any agreement involving the Soviet Union.

This suggests that the PRC has never been firmly committed to that concept of a disarmament process through arms control which both the US and the USSR, in their very different ways, have accepted. Yet the Chinese have displayed considerable pragmatism in their ACD policy and have never actually been proven to have violated the terms of the main ACD agreements, even though they were not a party to them. But in this case practice does not prove the existence of theory or ideology: rather the reverse. The area of future uncertainty thus appears to be whether repeated practice through an increasing involvement in the UN disarmament negotiating machinery will feed back into the PRC policy process and lead to a more positive view being taken of international ACD negotiations. At the moment, it must be admitted, there is no pressing urgency for this to occur, and the policy of not believing in the objectives of international ACD negotiations while being prepared to participate in them seems likely to continue.

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