Abstract for *Contending with Contradictions: PRC Policy towards Soviet Eastern Europe with Special Reference to Poland, 1953-1960*

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Submitted for the Degree of D.Phil.
Trinity Term 1999

This doctoral thesis examines the objectives, consequences, and significance of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) policy towards Soviet Eastern Europe with special reference to Poland from 1953 to 1960.

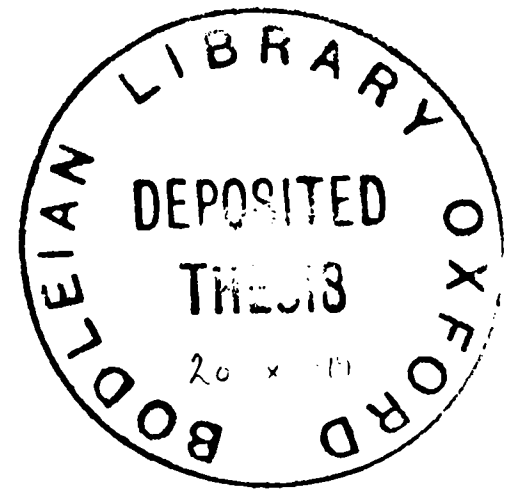
The most significant finding of this thesis is the confirmation of the close collaboration between the Chinese and Poles in the events surrounding the Polish October in 1956. This study argues that the Chinese Communist leadership played a decisive role in preventing Soviet military action in Warsaw during those few critical days in October, 1956. In successfully defusing the tension between Moscow and Warsaw, the Chinese reached a parity of prestige in which the PRC could duly consider itself equal with the Soviet Union. With the restoration of its "rightful" place in the postwar world order as the ultimate aim of the Chinese revolution, the PRC forged relations with the Soviet bloc holding the view that equality with the Soviet Union was a crucial prerequisite in recovering its global position. The PRC's Soviet East Europe policy, namely in its relations with Poland, paved the PRC's road toward reaching equality with the Soviet Union, but at the same time exposed the contradictory nature of bloc unity, the weak foundations of Soviet authority, and the deep-seated belief of the Chinese leadership in the PRC's sovereign position as the centre of the world Communist revolution.

Thus, contending contradictions in intra-party relations between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) formed the crux of the intra-bloc imbroglio which threatened Soviet authority in the bloc and led to the Sino-Soviet split in 1960.

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A dissertation submitted at the University of Oxford in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
(74, 681 words excluding the bibliography)
Trinity Term, 1999



To my beloved grandmothers,

Elizabeth Mei-Pe Chiang for her fighting spirit

and

Lena Shu-lan Liu Kuo for her enduring faith

"That which hath been is now;
and that which is to be hath already been;
and God requireth that which is past."

- Ecclesiastes 3:15

Acknowledgements

This thesis is the culmination of a journey which entailed traversing three continents, collecting a plethora of unique, priceless experiences, and meeting various individuals whose help, kindness, insight, and support were indispensable along the way. In the use of library resources, my appreciation is extended to the librarians at the following institutions: St. Antony's College Library, the Bodleian Library and the Library of the Institute for Chinese Studies, all at the University of Oxford, Green Library at Stanford University, and Honnold Library at The Claremont Colleges.

At St. Antony's College, two sources of financial support funded travel for archival research: the Louis Cha Fund, granted by the Asian Studies Centre, and the Stahl Fund, administered by the Senior Tutor. The Louis Cha Fund provided the means to meet representatives from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Institute of World History, the Institute of Contemporary International Relations, and the Centre of International Strategic Studies of the Party Academy of the CCP, all in Beijing. The Stahl Fund supported travel to Warsaw, Poland to access archives at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Modern Records Office.

During my visit to Beijing in March-April 1997, I had the opportunity to meet the following specialists at the Institute of Russian and East European Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences: Zhang Wenwu, Zhao Naibin, Zhang Yongyong, Cheng Guangshi, Liu Binyan, Ma Xipu, and Zhu Xiaozhong. Most of them represent the first generation of Chinese students sent to different Eastern European countries during the 1950s and 1960s. I am grateful to all of them for lending their observations and sharing with me personal recollections of their experiences in Eastern Europe. I wish also to express my appreciation to Prof. Jiang Changbin and Dr. Qi Chengsheng of the International Strategic Research Centre of the Party Academy of the CCP Central Committee in Beijing. Interviews with them rendered invaluable insight which enhanced

the content of this study. I am grateful to Prof. Rosemary Foot of the Asian Studies Centre, St. Antony's College for her assistance in opening the way for my visit to the Party Academy.

In Poland, I deeply appreciate the support system provided by members of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Political Studies—Prof. Andrzej Paczkowski, Director of Science and Studies, Dr. Ryszard Zelichowski, Director of Promotion and International Relations, and Ewa Balcerek, Chief of the Secretariat, who kindly made available the Institute's resources and facilities. Two members of the Institute to whom I am especially indebted are Prof. Krzysztof Gawlikowski and Krzysztof Persak. Prof. Gawlikowski's support allowed me to access archives at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Modern Records Office, and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Library and Reading Room. Without Krzysztof Persak's guidance on locating archival documents and generosity in providing his time, advice, and incisive comments on drafts of this work, this thesis would have been quite limited in content. At the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, Marek Sender, Director of the Department of Archives, most graciously accommodated my daily visits and requests. I am also thankful to Zbigniew Stanczyk, curator of Polish materials, for his assistance with the Stanisław Mikołajczyk Collection at the Hoover Institute Archives.

In an academic exercise of this nature, I was quite fortunate to have the right mentor, whose conscientious supervision, critical guidance, and unflagging support challenged me to settle for nothing less than quality. For this, I express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Steve Tsang of St. Antony's College. Throughout the course of my educational career, my parents have been a source of strength and encouragement. Their vision and faith have been a blessing upon me. To them, I am eternally grateful.

M.A.K.
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List of Abbreviations

AAN KC PZPR	Archiwum Akt Nowych Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej (Archives of Modern Records, Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party)
CC	Central Committee
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CPVA	Chinese People's Volunteer Army
CWIHP	Cold War International History Project
FRUS	*Foreign Relations of the United States*
GMD	Guomindang
ILD	International Liaison Department
MZWW	*Mao Zedong Waijiao wenxuan* (The Selected Diplomatic Writings of Mao Zedong)
NTDA	New Technology Defense Agreement
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PMFAA	Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives
PPR	Polish People's Republic
PUWP	Polish United Workers' Party
PRC	People's Republic of China
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

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Regarding Romanization

There are two primary systems of Chinese romanization: Wade-Giles and *pinyin*. I have chosen to use the latter. Therefore, proper names according to the Wade-Giles systems, such as *Kuomintang* or *Chou En-lai*, have been rendered *Guomindang* and *Zhou Enlai*, according to *pinyin*. However, where authors of sources cited have used Wade-Giles or other forms of Chinese spelling, I have retained the original spelling.

A Word on Translation

Unless otherwise indicated, all cited texts—Chinese and Polish—have been translated into English by this author.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The history of Sino-Soviet East European relations is a burgeoning area of Cold War history studies. Until the 1990s the subject of Sino-Soviet East Europe relations was subsumed under the rubric of Sino-Soviet relations. Because Sino-Soviet relations stood as the paramount political entity in the communist world throughout the Cold War period, the People's Republic of China's relations with Soviet Eastern Europe largely remained in the background, not yet ripe for academic attention. However, beginning from 1989 the demise of communism throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union not only signified the denouement of the Cold War but also opened up storehouses of heretofore classified information, which could shed much needed light on the newly-emerging aspects of the Cold War .

With the ongoing declassification of archival documents throughout this first post-Cold War decade, reams of information, translated and examined by scholars, such as Leo Gluchowski, Chen Jian, Mark Kramer, and Vladislav Zubok, just to name a few, at the Cold War International History Project, have provided essential insight and analysis of what Cold War actors thought, did, and said. General literature addressing the subject under review include Hemen Ray's *China and East Europe* and Zbigniew Brzezinski *The Soviet Bloc, Unity and Conflict* coupled with articles by Alyson Bailes, Lowell Dittmer, Karel Kovanda, Edwina Moreton, and Robin E. Remington in English, and Krzysztof Persak and Andrzej Werblan in Polish. Regarding Polish primary sources, two accessible archival bodies in Warsaw, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives (Department 5), and the Archives of Modern

Records (Archiwum Akt Nowych), hold documents, such as ministry and embassy reports, correspondences, letters, meeting minutes, and dispatches, which are invaluable to research on this particular topic.

In the case of Chinese archives, Sino-Polish specialist Dr. Qi Chengsheng of the International Strategic Research Centre of the Party Academy of the CCP, Central Committee in Beijing, confirms that detailed records of information on Sino-Polish relations exist, but are restricted. In interviews with both first-generation (1950s and 1960s) and contemporary East European specialists at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, scholars attribute the paucity of Chinese literature on this particular topic to the fact that the PRC's relations with Eastern Europe have dramatically shifted from a politico-ideological emphasis to a predominant focus on trade policies and transitional reforms.[1] Until more detailed Chinese-language documents are declassified and made accessible, the understanding of Chinese policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe remains largely based on educated conjecture according to available information. Thus, this study attempts to contribute an interpretation that can only be confirmed or disaffirmed as the history of this period continues to unfold.

As a field still in its embryonic stages, the study of Sino-Soviet East European relations can be likened to an iceberg, where touching the tip is but the beginning of unearthing the depths and breadth of a topic, which has been subsumed for so long. Attempts by scholars in the past to place Sino-Soviet East European relations in some kind of comprehensible context have been helpful in providing a factual record of dates, names, and

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[1]Interviews with East European specialists, Institute of Russian and East European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Beijing, PRC, April 1997. See bibliography for a list of names.

events. But, few have attempted to provide an interpretation of why these relations were crucial to the developments in Sino-Soviet relations and explain the significance of these relations in the Cold War context. One major reason for this can be attributed to the restriction of classified information from various foreign ministries, party organs, government bodies, and policy institutions during the Cold War period. Based on the small corpus of literature on this topic and the recently declassified archival materials in the Russian and Polish languages, and to a lesser extent, Chinese language, the unique contribution of this study offers a preliminary interpretation of Chinese policy towards Soviet Eastern Europe from the period 1953 to 1960. Such an interpretation begins by asking the following fundamental questions: 1) What factors brought China and Eastern Europe together?; 2) Why were such relations formed at this particular time?; 3) How did China's perception of Eastern Europe correlate to the Chinese worldview?; 4) Who were the important players in forging such relations?; and 5) What is the historical significance of these relations?

Answering these questions necessarily entails delving into the deeper complexities of this topic, which by virtue of its historical period, the 1950s, cannot be approached solely as a historical study, but commensurately as a study of political science and international relations. Before applying a certain methodology, be it Samuel Kim's behavior-centred approach, Zhao Quansheng's micro-macro linkage approach, James Rosenau's adaptation model, or some other approach, it is essential to realize that because the nature of this topic is multi-faceted, its scope international, its political parameters multilateral, its principal players multicultural, and its data sources multi-archival, an appropriate approach may only be found beyond the boundaries of traditional methodology and historiography. Since this subject is after all an episode of Cold War history, the approach chosen to deal with the

subject at hand is based on what John Lewis Gaddis has designated as the "new" Cold War history.

In his latest contribution to the field, *We Now Know, Rethinking Cold War History,* John Lewis Gaddis outlines the structure of the "new" Cold War history approach,[2] which, as I have paraphrased below, functions in the following ways:

1. Treats subject as a discrete episode, with a beginning and an ending, not as a permanent condition.
2. Places Cold War within the stream of time and does not confuse it *with* the stream of time.
3. Acknowledges alternative ways of organizing international relations other than those practised after World War II.
4. Places subject in broader comparative framework than the "old" Cold War history did.
5. Is multi-archival and multidimensional
6. Is international, embracing the "second" as well as the "first" and "third" worlds.
7. Takes into account both interests and ideas—what people believed, or wanted to believe.

By examining the PRC's policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe according to the "new" Cold War history approach, the topic gains significance in light of what we are learning with regard to how the Cold War ended. With the crumbling of communism in Europe heralding the demise of the Cold War, the PRC's Soviet Eastern Europe policy deserves considerable scrutiny in that the roots of communism's fall in Eastern Europe were sown in the 1950s at the height of the PRC's involvement with the Soviet bloc. To be sure, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe was fueled by numerous domestic factors, such as anti-Soviet and anti-Russian sentiment, nationalism, political disaffection, and economic hardship. But, these factors alone were not sufficient to raze an entire ideological and political system.

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[2]John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know, Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 282-283.

External factors embodied in the protracted tension between the communist and free world, ebb and flow of global confrontation, heightened international concern over nuclear arms build-up, to name a few, only contributed to the contractions within the communist system.

As the title of this study suggests, the PRC's policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe centred on contending with contradictions, the source of contractions within the communist system. Two lines of analysis run parallel throughout this study. The first is the PRC's policy toward Eastern Europe with special reference to Poland. In this study, policy can be understood as "a program of actions (be they of omission or commission) chosen to achieve particular goals during a particular time period. The actions envision the use of particular capabilities to affect specific actors in a specific situation."[3] The emphasis of the first line is the designated time frame, 1953 to 1960, within which PRC's policy toward Eastern Europe was conceived and carried out. The PRC's motives and perceptions toward Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, were critical in light of the time factor.

The second line of analysis embraces a broader context of Chinese foreign policy in the first decade of the Cold War. Foreign policy, for the present purposes, refers to "concrete plans and commitments which decision-makers develop for achieving certain objectives abroad that are consistent with their basic orientation[4]."[5] By examining the PRC's foreign policy

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[3]David B. Bobrow and Steve Chan, "On a Slow Boat to Where? Analyzing Chinese Foreign Policy," Samuel Kim, ed. *China and the World, Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Mao Era* (Boulder, CO & London, UK: Westview Press, 1984), p. 36.

[4]Orientation means a state's basic attitudes, values, perceptions, and goals toward its salient external environment. Rosenau as cited by Sanqiang Jian, *Foreign Policy Restructuring as Adaptive Behavior, China's Independent Foreign Policy* (New York and London: University of America, Inc., 1996), p. 21.

[5]Ibid., p. 22.

during this particular historical period, the goal is to determine the impact of the PRC's perceptions, objectives, and behaviour on the perpetuation of the Cold War.

Joining the two lines of analysis is the notion of contradictions. The thrust of this study is to show how the multi-layers of contradictions plaguing not only the PRC's relations with Soviet Eastern Europe, but more importantly, the PRC's relations with the Soviet bloc constructed a fragile political structure that was bound to collapse. Inherent in Chinese foreign policy during this period was Mao and the CCP leadership's constant contending with contradictions whether they appeared as factionalism within the CCP, class contradictions, or intra-bloc differences. The process of contending with differences or in Maoist theory, "a constant process of change," characterized Chinese foreign policy throughout much of the Cold War.

In his article," The Role of Ideology in Chinese Foreign Policy: The Theory and Practice of the Three Worlds," Young Mun Kim asserts, "Today, Chinese foreign policy makers attempt to utilize the concept of 'collusion and contention' in formulating relations with the superpowers which will take advantage of the inherent competition between these two Chinese enemies."[6] The implication is that the Chinese deliberately exploited differences and capitalized on conflict in order to realize their program of objectives and actions. This pattern of behaviour resonates in Chinese policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe. By exploiting the inherent contradictions in Poland's relations with the Soviet Union, the Chinese attempted to aggravate the deep-seated differences between the two countries. The result, however, backfired on the Chinese and instead, caused greater damage to the bloc than they

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[6]*Journal of East Asian Affairs*. Vol.1, No. 1, January 1981, p. 186.

had expected.

In addition to addressing how the concept of contradictions operated in Chinese foreign policy, this study considers the reasons behind the PRC's decision to side with the Soviet bloc and by extension, the socialist camp. Insofar as the distinction between the two entities are concerned, the *Soviet bloc* refers to the USSR along with its East European satellites—Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania—as a specific political, ideological, and socio-economic entity in which the preponderance of Soviet authority and force dominated the functioning of the satellites. By implication, the term *intra-bloc* used throughout this study refers to the political, economic, strategic, ideological, and cultural ties that bound the USSR and its satellites together. In a broader context, the *socialist camp* includes not only the Soviet bloc, but also all other countries which adhered to, promoted, and aligned themselves with Marxist-Leninist ideology, "anti-imperialist" policies, and the world Communist revolution in the Cold War period; some of the key countries in the socialist camp include the PRC, Yugoslavia, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Cuba. Thus, reference to socialist camp denotes the broader, ideological parameters of the communist cause in the postwar period as the backdrop of the PRC's relations with the Soviet bloc.

The PRC's formative years of transition from adolescence to maturity took place throughout the Cold War period. It was particularly during the early 1950s that China sought to find a niche for itself. In its quest to regain its "rightful" place in the postwar world order, China chose to side with the Soviet bloc. The PRC's policy toward Soviet East Europe can be characterized by the following five elements: 1) perpetuating an ideology, 2) shaping a modern identity, 3) strengthening national security, 4) securing legitimacy, and 5) striving

for political authority. In its first decade of existence, the People's Republic of China, guided by these five factors, identified itself with the socialist community.

This study offers the hypothesis that as the 1950s unfolded, the matter of authority, which is intrinsically linked to legitimacy, became the focal point of the PRC's Soviet East Europe policy. Upon Stalin's death in 1953 Soviet authority within the socialist camp diminished considerably. With the belief that only he could be the true heir to Stalin as the ideological, and thereby authoritative leader of the socialist camp, Mao Zedong set out to achieve this aim. More than anything, PRC involvement with Soviet Eastern Europe, and by extension, Poland set out to elevate Beijing's stature in intra-bloc politics and challenge Moscow's authority in the socialist camp with leadership of the world communist movement as its ultimate goal. Following more a grand vision, rather than a master plan, Mao with the CCP in tow clearly envisaged the PRC's central position in the socialist camp, but, as in many other instances, focused only on short-term gains, did not fully understand the other actors with whom they were dealing, and at times, acting on timely opportunities, failed to set out clear measures and objectives toward making their vision a reality. As a consequence, the more the PRC challenged Soviet legitimacy, the more bloc unity was weakened. As bloc unity eroded, the PRC's bloc policy shifted from bloc-building to intra-bloc polarization. In the end, the CCP's leftist policies only alienated the PRC from bloc members and paradoxically, reinforced the Soviet Union's primacy in the socialist camp.

If politics of the socialist camp could be seen as a drama with the PRC and the USSR as the two main protagonists and the USA as the principal antagonist, then the Soviet satellites could be considered the supporting actors. Their role centred on accentuating the distinctions between each of the main actors. Without the supporting cast, the interaction

between the principals would have had less impact. Without doubt, the real life drama of Sino-Soviet relations was anything but theatre. Yet, the analogy serves to emphasize the critical role of the Soviet satellites in exposing and magnifying the real intentions of the principal players.

As the supporting cast, the countries of Soviet Eastern Europe[7]—Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania—individually, perhaps with the exception of East Germany, which was fully pro-Soviet, at different times and in different ways interacted with the PRC either at the expense of the USSR or in defence of mutual interests throughout the Cold War period. It should be noted that although Yugoslavia resisted becoming a Soviet satellite, its vocal presence, namely in the leadership of Josef Tito, and impact on intra-bloc politics proved to be a constant thorn in the side of the body Soviet.

Determining how Beijing's involvement and degree of authority in Soviet Eastern Europe counterbalanced Moscow's supremacy in intra-bloc affairs therefore requires understanding the perceptions of the PRC and the countries of Soviet East Europe toward one another and concomitantly, how these perceptions stemmed from Soviet influence. Simply put, Sino-Soviet East Europe relations cannot be understood without seeing the primacy of Sino-Soviet relations. Conversely, Sino-Soviet relations cannot be fully delineated without defining the Sino-East European dimension within these relations.

In defining the Sino-East European dimension, this thesis has focused primarily on the political mechanisms and structures upon which Sino-East European relations were built and sustained. Although literature related to the trade and economic aspects of Sino-Soviet East

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[7]Throughout this study the terms "Soviet East Europe," "Soviet Eastern Europe," "Central East Europe," "Eastern Europe," and "Soviet satellites" all refer to the above-listed countries. Where appropriate, specific mention will be made to Yugoslavia.

Europe relations exists and could be relevant for studies pertaining to intra-bloc trade relations, I have chosen to concentrate on delving deeper into the politico-ideological elements which composed Chinese policy toward Soviet East Europe.

The main argument of this thesis is set up in six chapters. Following a thematic sequence each chapter explores the central aspects of this topic. Beginning from chapter two which describes the theoretical framework of this work, the primary aim is to define the main concepts, structures, and processes which guided and shaped the PRC's Soviet East European policy. This chapter examines the different ways in which ideology, embodied in and expressed through language, terminology, propaganda, and polemics, not only characterized intra-bloc relations but also shaped the PRC's strategic perception of Soviet Eastern Europe. It also addresses the PRC's security concerns, strategy, and objectives in the postwar bipolar world order. Central in this section is the correlation between the PRC's perceptions of equality and how it influenced its policy-making, the theory of the "intermediate zone," and the Beijing-Warsaw-Moscow triangular relations. The third key concept is contradictions, what they were, how they functioned in intra-bloc relations, and how they effected decision and policy-making. This chapter furthermore describes the structure of Chinese and intra-bloc foreign policy-making in terms of apparatus, key individuals, channels of communication, and decision-making. The chapter ends with a summary of processes that occurred during this period in Chinese foreign policy-making, intra-bloc relations, and international relations of this period.

Chapter three focuses exclusively on the PRC's post-Stalin foreign policy agenda. It charts the course of PRC foreign policy beginning from the death of Stalin in 1953 to the eve of the 20th Soviet Congress in 1956. This chapter sets the background for patterns,

tendencies, and activities of the PRC that shape and emerge in intra-bloc affairs from 1956 to 1960.

Probing the peak of PRC involvement in intra-bloc affairs in 1956, chapter four describes in detail the sequence of events that had resounding consequences throughout the Soviet bloc. Starting from Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Soviet Congress through the Poznań uprisings in June to the events in Poland and Hungary toward the end of 1956, this chapter explores Chinese, Polish, and Soviet intentions, how they influenced decision-making processes and determined the planning and implementation of measures, policies, and strategy.

The repercussions of PRC involvement in Soviet Eastern Europe continued to reverberate during the last few years of the 1950s. Chapter five evaluates the consequences of the 1956 events on PRC policy. The main thrust of this section is an analysis of the PRC's misdirected aims in forging relations with the Soviet bloc, particularly in its dealings with Poland. It explains how the PRC's dealings with Poland, though mutually, albeit ephemerally beneficial, eventually contributed to the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations and weakening of the bloc as a whole.

Chapter six encapsulates the essence of the arguments propounded in the preceding chapters. This chapter presents a panoramic view of how Sino-Polish relations contributed to the unraveling of intra-bloc and Sino-Soviet relations. Its aim is to explain the significance of how the PRC's involvement in the Soviet bloc changed the composition, content, and configuration of the communist world. This chapter ends by placing this topic in the larger context of Cold War history.

As a concluding word, chapter seven argues that the PRC's involvement with the Soviet bloc, though short-lived in terms of geopolitical significance, nevertheless proved to

be a watershed period in the evolution, aberration, and eventual demise of the communist system in Europe. The first decade of postwar communism represented not only a fleeting, yet unique period on the continuum of human history but also stood as a critical juncture for the further spread of democracy. The PRC's involvement with the Soviet bloc in the 1950s invariably influenced the course of democracy's stride, as marked by the ultimate collapse of communism throughout Eastern Europe.

CHAPTER II

Concepts, Structures, Processes

The crafting of a suitable framework for this particular subject requires three fundamental components: concepts, structures, and processes. Concepts refer to the central ideas, modes of thought, rationale, and perspectives that penetrated and characterized the thinking of individual actors, guided the policy formulation of nation-states, and set the tone of this particular historical period. Structures can be understood as the institutional, governmental, and party apparatus which embodied, propagated, and translated concepts into actual policies, produced, perpetuated and reinforced political mechanisms, and provided a formalized political arena in which policies could be implemented. Processes in this context mean the evolution of the interaction between concepts and structures, in specific, the ongoing development of the relationship between ideas and actions, strategy and tactics, policy-making and policy-implementation, actors and institutions. Processes are composed of phases or stages in which thinking undergoes transformation and shifting unfolds to produce new ideas and perceptions, which in turn lead to change.

Examination of the PRC's policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe within the above framework finds its starting point by probing the key underlying concepts—ideology, security, contradictions—and ascertaining how they characterized this historical period. Following identification of the main concepts is understanding how structures of Chinese and intra-bloc policy-making engendered the involvement of the PRC in intra-bloc affairs. Determining the underlying concepts and structures in which they acquired institutional shape and form lays the foundation for explaining the different processes that evolved alongside the framing and implementing of the PRC's policy in Soviet Eastern Europe.

The first central concept to be grasped is that of ideology. Ideology played a fundamental and crucial role in Chinese policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe. Examination of ideology in the development of Chinese foreign policy-making during this period reveals three central strands of the thought process that guided policy objectives: 1) shaping China's modern identity, 2) identifying with a greater community, and 3) building solidarity as the basis of spreading influence. These three strands signify the considerable degree to which the PRC was occupied with defining itself in the first decade of its existence. In a sense, the Chinese Communists bore the burden of explaining and legitimizing the existence of this "new China." Whether or not they succeeded is subject to debate. Nonetheless, relevant for the present purposes are the various stages in this process of moulding a modern identity and cultivating relations with a community based on common ideological proclivities and political interests.

CENTRAL CONCEPTS: IDEOLOGY, SECURITY, CONTRADICTIONS

Ideology as a Prism: Interpretation, Identification, and Implementation

There are two sides of ideology, 'pure' and 'practical', both of which are essential in understanding the role of ideology in Chinese foreign policy-making. "Pure ideology is a set of ideas designed to give the individual a unified and conscious world view; practical ideology is a set of ideas designed to give the individual rational instruments for action."[1] Pure ideology is subject to correct interpretation, whereas practical ideology is the basis of application. Both

[1]Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley, CA: University of

are needed in justifying and achieving foreign policy objectives. Indeed, the absence of pure ideology deprives practical ideology of content and vision. Yet, without practical application, pure ideology remains confined to the realm of theory, lacking an effective plan for its realization. One of the fundamental problems that beset the PRC's relations with the USSR, Poland, and the other satellites countries was the discord among bloc leaders over the correct interpretation and proper application of Marxism-Leninism.

For CCP foreign policy-makers, the viability of policy was rooted in the correct interpretation and proper application of ideology. Foreign policy was a construct of ideas that were not only theoretically based in Marxist-Leninism, but also formulated with a view to achieving concrete objectives. Ideas were expressed through the language of communism. CCP policy-makers had to be well-versed in communist jargon as the nature of communist theory dictated the parameters within which ideas were conceived and formulated in policy and implemented through diplomacy. Each idea functioned as a part of a whole ideology. Thus, ideas "are like the differently shaped parts of a machine. Each idea is different, but is shaped by a uniform language. Together these ideas constitute the structure of ideology."[2]

California Press, 1968), p. 22.

[2]Ibid., p. 19.

In the early postwar years, Mao and the CCP chose to align with the Soviet Union. For the CCP, induction into the Socialist fraternity entailed adopting the Stalinist application of Marxist-Leninist ideology. The CCP's embracing of Stalinism influenced its formulation of foreign policy and leadership style. For Mao, Stalinism in large part reinforced the foundation of his own legitimacy. The cult of personality and absolute loyalty to Mao were essential to Mao's basis of power and authority. Thus, having Marxism-Leninism as a source of ideology and Stalinism as a means of application was what Mao needed to define and exercise his and the CCP's legitimacy. Marxist-Leninist ideology served a two-fold purpose for the PRC as a bond linking the PRC with the socialist community "through multiple ties of interest, affect, symbol, political ritual and political language."[3] Commensurately, it served to demarcate the border between two ideological adversaries: the socialist and imperialist camps.

The first step Mao took in ensuring the CCP's legitimacy was to forge relations with the Soviet Union and Soviet Eastern Europe. With Moscow as the undisputed leader and the beacon of communist ideology and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe as the many brethren bound together by a common ideology, the PRC found its niche in the early years of its international relations. Under Stalin's leadership and the support of its socialist counterparts, the CCP grew in confidence on both the domestic and international fronts. During the years before Stalin's death, Mao and the CCP sought to improve their image by forging an alliance with the Soviet Union. They needed relations with the Soviet bloc countries to become "one of many equals," to raise their status in the eyes of their East European counterparts. The PRC's status was steadily improving. "The Chinese Communist Party, which ranked third after the Polish Party at the Nineteenth Congress of the CPSU in

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[3]Steven I. Levine,"Perception and Ideology in Chinese Foreign Policy," Thomas Robinson and David

1952, was after Stalin's death raised to second place."[4] In parallel, references made to the PRC always preceded those of the "people's democracies."

Born out of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements, the people's democracies emerged as the compromise between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. An abstract attempt by the West to preserve some semblance of democracy in the countries of Eastern Europe, the people's democracies quickly evolved into Soviet satellites where the degree of democracy was determined by the Soviet Union. For the CPSU, "these new democracies at best represented a preliminary stage in the progression towards a socialist democracy of the Soviet and—by definition—superior type."[5] The people's democracies of Eastern Europe were characterized by the predominant ideology of Marxism-Leninism, democratic centralism and dependence upon the Soviet Union. The political institutions of people's democracies were composed of multi-party systems, political coalitions, the central role of workers and peasants, and the hegemony of the Communist party. In addition, the political system of the people's democracies "permitted some recognition of the national component in the new regimes and the need to adapt policy to suit specific social and historical circumstances."[6] The nationalist

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Shambaugh, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 38.

[4]David Floyd, *Mao Against Khrushchev* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), p. 19.

[5]Sten Berglund and Jan Ake Dellenbrant, eds., *The New Democracies in Eastern Europe Party Systems and Political Cleavages* (Hants, England, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1994), p. 15.

[6]Paul G. Lewis, *Central Europe since 1945* (London and New York: Longman, 1994), p. 69.

element appropriated the specificity of each country's circumstance. Although this type of popular democracy in Soviet Eastern Europe stemmed from a Soviet-sanctioned form of democracy, it eventually developed into a vehicle for the satellite countries to demand greater autonomy and sovereignty tailored to their particular historical and cultural context.

Similarly, in the Chinese case, the PRC's "New Democracy" resembled the people's democracies of Eastern Europe in terms of political structures and the primacy of the Communist party. In the Chinese context, the national component, embodied in Maoist policy, eclipsed the hegemonic presence of the Soviet Union as had existed in the people's democracies. Nonetheless, maintaining close relations with the Soviet Union was definitely a fundamental factor that linked the people's democracies with the PRC's "New Democracy". As the 1950s unfolded the undercurrents of the PRC's own brand of democracy coupled with the people's democracies in Poland and Hungary challenged the Soviet Union's authority and threatened the unity of the Soviet bloc, issues which will be explained in later chapters. Nevertheless, at the outset of Sino-Soviet East European relations the priority of the People's Republic of China was first to raise its status among the other people's democracies in the socialist community.

Status was directly linked to position in the PRC's ideological community. It legitimized the Chinese leadership's policy and authority. Being able to secure status meant solidifying a position of equal footing on which to exert influence. Position was therefore integrally tied into power[7], and power was the engine of performance. Performance signifies the playing out of an actor's role.

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[7]In this context, power refers to 'normative power', which is the ability to define, control, and transform the agenda of world politics and to legitimate a new dominant paradigm. Samuel S. Kim, ed., *China and the World, Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Mao Era* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1984), p. 20.

In the years before Stalin's death, Mao and the CCP leaders were concerned with defining a role for itself and performing this role in the Soviet bloc and on a larger scale the communist movement. National identity-building is a prerequisite for defining a national role. As Michael Ng-Quinn argues, "A role is an identity fragment mobilized for a specific occasion. National roles, like their individual counterparts, perform the functions of mobilizing, testing, and validating an identity through interactions with other players in the same arena."[8] It was precisely in the Soviet bloc that the CCP had a forum in which to mobilize, test, and validate its identity.

For the Chinese leadership, identity required being linked to a group based on ideological solidarity, a "united front" model. Mao and the CCP leaders clearly realized that standing alone was not an option in a bipolar world, where the essence of revolution called for collective struggle with the party in the lead. What the PRC was seeking was in essence referred to by Dittmer and Kim as an "international reference group" and defined as:

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[8]Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim. eds., *China's Quest for National Identity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 15.

> An international reference group contributes to national self-definition in two ways. First, it provides legitimacy. Discovering like-minded significant others allows a regime to maintain that its domestic social and political order has international validity. This is particularly important for revolutionary or freshly minted nation-states without ready resort to the sanction of a domestic tradition, which more established orders can rely on to bolster them. Second, it provides leadership. Once a state assumes ideological kinship with a chosen reference group, members will welcome its suggestions, even its vigorous leadership, in the pursuit of joint international objectives beyond realistic hope of attainment by one state alone.[9]

Identifying with an intimate "ideological kinship" was especially central to the implementation of Maoist foreign policy, which in essence embodied the revolutionary nature of the Chinese revolution. Therefore, ideology functioned as the sinews of intra-bloc unity, the life-line that bound the bloc states together as a viable political entity in the first decade of the Cold War. Without an identity, the PRC leadership could not fashion an international role for itself. The dynamics of the bloc contributed to China's finding a role in the international arena, which first and foremost meant regaining national sovereignty. This process also entailed strengthening the socialist camp whether by supporting national liberation movements, descrying imperialist incursions, or participating in any other cause which would help define the PRC's role.

The ideological core of the PRC's early postwar identity was composed of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, the same brand that had been imposed onto the East European bloc states. For the socialist camp, Marxist-Leninism provided answers for the unresolved issues left by the war. Marxist-Leninism compounded with Stalinism was the ideology that rationalized the existence of the Soviet bloc. Stalinism added another dimension to bloc politics in that it created the extremist nature of intra-bloc relations. Marxist-Leninism engendered a polarized view of the world where class struggle propelled a world-wide revolution, whilst Stalinism

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[9]Ibid., p. 16.

intensified the concept of polarization and struggle by adding the element of totalitarianism. The nature of Stalinism could be thus characterized as,

> Stalinism was not simply nationalism, bureaucratization, absence of democracy, censorship, police repression, and the rest in any precedented sense...Instead, Stalinism was excess, extraordinary extremism, in each. It was not, for example, merely coercive peasant policies, but a virtual civil war against the peasantry; not merely police repression, or even civil war-style terror, but a holocaust by terror that victimized tens of millions of people for twenty-five years; not merely Thermidorian revival of nationalist tradition, but an almost fascist-like chauvinism; not merely a leader cult, but deification of a despot.[10]

In Soviet East Central Europe Stalinism was reproduced on a smaller scale and functioned as a style of rule that became a hallmark of intra-bloc political culture. Rooted in the cult of personality, Stalinism in Eastern Europe thrived with the embodiment of ideology in party leaders and their leadership style. The Polish first secretary, Władysław Gomułka, described national communist leaders as "satellites of the supreme body, illuminating their societies only with the reflected light of the Soviet power-source."[11] Stemming from the Soviet source, leaders of the bloc satellites such as Poland's Bierut, East Germany's Gottwalk, and Hungary's Rakosi likewise became the centre of the cult of personality, though on a smaller-scale when compared to Stalin or Mao. Nevertheless, the fact is that leaders under the Stalinist system in turn perpetuated the Stalinist style of rule in which exercise of power meant excessive control, and surreptitious scheming. The tendency toward policy being formulated in secrecy by one strongman reflected Stalin's overall perception of how power should be exercised in achieving goals. As Zubok and Pleshakov state,

> Stalin was the first statesman to grasp the notion that promoting world revolution was not a goal in and of itself, but rather it provided the rationale for building a strong Soviet Union...The logic was beyond criticism: if the world revolution was to happen, the Soviet Union must become invincible; in the meantime, ideology, winning souls and space, would strengthen the USSR as

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[10]Stephen Cohen, "Bolshevism and Stalinism," Paul Lewis, ed., *Central Europe since 1945* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 78.

[11]Ibid., p. 86.

a state.[12]

Such was Stalin's plan behind state-building. A trait of Stalin's foreign policy-making style was to promote a grand plan expressed through lofty language, while translating realpolitik intentions into actual implementation of policy. By putting such policies into practice, Stalin's motives in his dealings with the PRC and members of the Soviet bloc served a two-fold purpose.

Firstly, under the guise of promoting world revolution and combatting the imperialist aggression of the capitalist camp, Moscow rallied the socialist camp behind a masthead of socialist unity and solidarity. Promulgating a globalist view of spreading world revolution, Moscow promoted itself as the leader of the communist cause. Secondly, the element of internationalism in Moscow's rallying cry was in substance a means to fulfill the Soviet Union's nationalist agenda, namely building a strong Soviet state through the propagation of Stalinist tendencies. As an indispensable uniting factor, ideology played the role of legitimizing Moscow's aims whilst simultaneously culling East Europe into the Socialist fraternity by sovietization.

As the totalitarian leader of the Soviet bloc, Stalin employed ideology as a tool of achieving foreign policy objectives. An ideological component gave legitimacy to Moscow's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and in Soviet foreign policy. In addition to appropriating legitimacy in foreign policy, ideology served a personal purpose—preserving absolute power. "His [Stalin's] yardstick for measuring ideological purity had no ticks for Marx and Lenin, only for obedience to himself. Stalin had absolute power and designed his

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[12]Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 13.

policies to perpetuate it."[13] Under Stalin ideology was deliberately used for obfuscation, a pattern of communication which was perpetuated in the bloc states, including the PRC.

Ideology tied the CCP into intra-party relations. It was the language of commonality and unity between the CCP and the Communists parties in Soviet Eastern Europe. To a significant degree, ideology defined bloc solidarity. Ideology encouraged economic and technical exchange and military support between the PRC and the Soviet East European countries. It also justified CCP involvement in intra-bloc politics.

Ideology defined the purpose of the CCP's relations with the other Communist parties in the Soviet bloc. For the Chinese Communist leaders, Marxist-Leninist ideology was a tool of empowerment. It gave CCP leaders an understanding of foreign relations and a view of how to construct and conduct foreign policy, both of which were matters of pressing concern in the early years of the PRC. Ideology afforded the CCP leaders a foothold into international politics and, through the brokerage of Moscow, access into the centre of the communist world. Alignment with the Soviet bloc meant being at the core, not periphery, of the world communist movement—a position that was of utmost significance for Mao and CCP leaders.

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[13]Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Litai Xue, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 26.

The Making of a Modern Identity: The PRC's Path towards Self-Definition

Constructing China's modern identity was the primary precondition for achieving legitimacy in the world's eyes and for China itself. Recognition by other nations of the PRC's equal standing engendered legitimacy. For Mao, legitimacy of the Communist leadership of the People's Republic of China was achieved domestically with the CCP's leadership in the victory in the war of Japanese resistance during World War II and internationally with the official recognition made by Stalin's Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc. Within days of its official declaration of statehood, the PRC received cables requesting the establishing of diplomatic relations with the Soviet East European bloc countries: Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. As a political and ideological entity, the Soviet bloc played a crucial role in shaping China's modern identity and building the base of its political legitimacy on the world stage during the 1950s.

Gaining international recognition of its legitimacy was the first step towards laying the foundation of the PRC's authority.[14] Having overtaken the Guomindang (GMD) in the civil war on the mainland and sustained armed resistance against American forces in Korea, the CCP gained power on the homefront, but had yet to legitimize their rule internationally. Beijing's support of Moscow's plans in the Korean War were driven considerably by the CCP's need of Soviet military and financial support to build its legitimacy in a tangible way.[15] Tsui emphasizes that "the Soviet factor proves to be more decisive than the American

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[14]"In political theory, the concept of 'legitimacy' is associated with 'rightfulness' and involves the leader's cultivation of acceptance among those subject to his rule. Legitimacy thus conveys authority, a property of immense importance in Chinese political culture," William F. Dorrill, "Transfer of Legitimacy in the Chinese Communist Party: Origins of the Maoist Myth," in John Wilson Lewis, ed., *Party Leadership and Revolutionary Power in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 71.

[15]See C.W. David Tsui, "Chinese Military Intervention in the Korean War" (Oxford University Ph.D. thesis, Bodleian Library, 1998), p. 26. My thanks to David Tsui for allowing me to benefit from his doctoral research

factor,"[16] in Beijing's decision to cooperate with Moscow and Pyongyang in the Korean War. As the 1950s continued to unfold, the primacy of the Soviet Union as a critical factor in the PRC's securing its legitimacy most clearly manifested itself in the PRC's relations with the Soviet bloc. The absence of basic recognition in the early 1950s hindered the CCP from duly gaining and exercising authority in world affairs. Even in its alliance with the Soviet Union headed by Stalin, the PRC was still perceived by the rest of the world and to a certain degree, in its own eyes, as a junior partner. Under the tutelage of the Soviet Union, the PRC would one day reach an equal stature with the Soviet Union.

From 1949 to 1953, Beijing's alliance with Moscow was a period of building authority through the recognition and support of the Soviet Union and cultivation of their ideological partnership. However, after 1953 with the absence of Stalin as the ultimate arbiter of Marxist-Leninist ideology, it was in the sphere of ideology that Mao and the CCP actively sought to fuel the communist debate over the interpretation and application of Marxist-Leninism in intra-bloc polemics. Had Mao and the CCP kept the ideological debate in the socialist camp exclusively between Beijing and Moscow, the CCP would not have been able to sustain any degree of influence. However, by drawing the Soviet East European Communist leaders into the ideological discourse, the Chinese leadership found a fitting context in which to exercise its authority.

The Soviet East European bloc was a testing ground for the CCP's budding authority. The degree of influence that the CCP held among its Eastern European counterparts indicated

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before its publication.

[16]Ibid.

the extent of its authority in the socialist camp. The CCP leadership treated the Soviet East European bloc as a gauge to measure its progress in reaching a "parity of prestige" with the Soviet Union. For Mao and the CCP, membership in the Soviet bloc was not simply the end of their struggle but rather a new phase, intensified in nature and more focused in direction. Although Mao was willing to play second string to Stalin's primacy in the early years of the Sino-Soviet alliance, he had no intentions of remaining in second-class status for long. Hence, he sought to build and spread influence on a broad scale beginning from the Soviet bloc and spreading to what Mao would later call the Third World.

The goal of building influence was to acquire and wield power. In real terms, the CCP's influence in Poland was a test of how much power it had achieved and to what extent such power could be used to bolster its authority and commensurately, its role in the Soviet bloc. To a significant degree, as will be explained later, Beijing succeeded in emerging as an alternative centre of power and authority for the Polish Communist leadership. The CCP's interpretation of communist ideology provided Polish Communists with an alternative basis of justification for their own national reforms and policies. But, due to the tumultuous domestic situation in the PRC in the late 1950s and the Chinese leadership's overestimation of Poland's willingness to cooperate in undermining Moscow's authority, the CCP's attempts at acquiring a significant degree of power in Eastern Europe and Poland were short-lived. Throughout 1956 and 1957, the PRC's increasing involvement in Soviet Eastern Europe provoked the Soviet Union and undeniably exacerbated the tensions that plagued Beijing's relations with Moscow. These circumstances in turn created a crisis in communist confidence during the latter half of the 1950s which irreversibly altered the nature of intra-bloc relations by weakening bloc unity. Let us now examine from an ideological perspective the complex

process which the PRC went through in marking out its position and role in the Soviet bloc and socialist camp during the 1950s and particularly from 1953 to 1960.

Ideology in the PRC's Policy towards Soviet Eastern Europe

The death of Stalin on 5 March 1953 marked a turning-point in the course of Soviet bloc history. For the Soviet bloc, Stalin's death left a power vacuum in bloc leadership which concurrently initiated a new stage in the history of the world communist movement. Having held the mantle of authority in the Soviet bloc and the socialist camp, Stalin was the centre of political leadership and embodiment of ideological authority. So intermingled was the person of Stalin with the Soviet system and communist ideology, that the death of Stalin signified the uprooting of authority. If the person of Stalin could be considered the source of Soviet authority in the communist world, then his absence signified the loss of Soviet authority in the socialist camp. Stalin's death naturally ignited an ensuing struggle between Mao Zedong and the collective leadership of the Kremlin to fill the central leadership position in the socialist camp. This struggle unfolded in the realm of ideology. The nature, language, actions, and consequences of this power struggle found their roots in Marxist-Leninist ideology. Yet, the aspirations of this ideology were of little or no consequence to the contenders. Victory was measured in terms of tangible gains toward national interest and individual power. Ideology was but a tool to achieve political aims and further national objectives.

Fought on an ideological battlefield, the struggle for preeminence in the leadership of the socialist camp was not solely a battle for control and power-wielding. For Mao and the leaders of the CCP, at stake was the consolidation of power, a fundamental requirement for moulding and crafting China's modern identity in order to restore China to its "rightful" place in the world order. This colossal task was not so much a political prerogative, as it was a duty that bore the burden of history. Mao possessed a profound sense of history which deeply influenced his view of how China should be perceived by the postwar international community. This notion is attributed to his own studies of Chinese history coupled with the Marxist notion of man as an active agent of history-making.[17] In order to forge a new stage of history, participation in the great Communist revolution was not enough. Mao held the view that the PRC had to play a key role[18], if not a leading role, in consummating the Communist revolution. A position of preeminence in the world was for Mao a vindication of China's greatness in the face of forces contending against the Chinese revolution in particular and the world Communist revolution in general.

The formulation of CCP foreign policy was thus an opportunity for the leaders of the fledgling PRC to seek retribution for what they saw as the injustices that history had exacted against China.[19] The CCP's setting straight the historical record took place in the sphere of ideology with its particular language, signs, symbols and innuendos. As the prime means of

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[17]John Cranmer-Byng's "The Chinese View of Their place in the World: An Historical Perspective," *China Quarterly 1973*, p.73; Peter Van Ness, *Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy, Peking's Support for Wars of National Liberation* (Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1970), p. 45; Karl Marx, "The Materialist Conception of History 1844-47," in *Karl Marx Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 160-165.

[18]An extract from Edgar Snow's interview with Mao Zedong, 23 July 1936, as cited by Stuart Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 374.

[19]Chen Jian, "The Myths of America's 'Lost Chance' in China: A Chinese Perspective in Light of New

communication in the communist world, the language of ideology set the tone and influenced the course of intra-bloc politics. At issue is how Mao Zedong and the CCP's belief in the rhetoric of revolution and the ideology they propounded correlated with how they employed the language of Marxist-Leninist ideology to fulfill the greater responsibility of recovering China's global stature and defining its modern identity.

The context within which the CCP's utilization of ideology proved to be most conducive to advancing Chinese interests was in intra-bloc relations. As Mao saw it, the Soviet bloc could be a vital instrument for "New China" to secure a place in the postwar world order. Involvement in intra-bloc politics brought the PRC into closer contact with the satellite states, which paved the way for increased partnership with the Soviet Union. In this way, the Chinese leadership could simultaneously acquire more authority to achieve its objectives both domestically and globally.

Evidence," *Diplomatic History,* Vol. 21, No. I, Winter 1997, p. 81.

Ideology in Building Bloc Solidarity: The Concept of "Two Camps" and Community Identity

The ideological strands that constituted bloc solidarity were vital to the bloc's operation and image that it projected to the non-communist world. There are two lines of thought that deserve attention. The first refers to the concept of "two camps," the brainchild of Stalin and his most favoured ideologist, Andrei Zhdanov. Given at the conference to initiate the birth of the Cominform at Szlarska Poręba, Poland on 25 September 1947, the speech on the "two camps," marked the consolidation of the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe[20] and the capstone of Soviet foreign policy under Stalin. "The most famous thesis of the report was that the world was now divided into two camps—which was an objective fact by that time, ... The phrase strongly implied that there would be no neutral parties in the Cold War."[21]

In a telling piece of evidence, the original drafts of Zhdanov's "Two Camps" speech did not contain the words *two camps*. Although it has yet to be verified, the addition of this notion was most likely made by Stalin. The most plausible explanation is that Stalin introduced this concept—thereby giving a required rigidity to the future structure of the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe.[22] To be sure, Stalin's imposition of rigid control, centralization of authority, use of repressive tactics and fomenting a workstyle of distrust, suspicion, and absolute loyalty to him engendered the bloc's "institutionalized

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[20]Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlinqs Cold War*, p. 111.

[21]Ibid., p. 132.

[22]Ibid.

unity."[23] "The steel discipline of the communist movement came to be applied to the relationships among states. Thereby Stalin's doctrine became a truly international phenomenon that would soon become encrusted in the Soviet bloc."[24]

The ideological nature of the Kremlin's attitude toward the rest of the Soviet bloc produced the rigid structure that characterized intra-bloc relations. As a way of thwarting what he perceived as the encroachment of Western influences, such as the Marshall Plan, Stalin, through the creation of the Cominform in 1947, found a way to incorporate the Eastern European states, excluding Yugoslavia, into the Soviet orbit with a view of imposing a structure of rigidity under a common ideology. However, at Szklarska Poręba, many of the conference participants were not aware of the real agenda of the conference. A defiant Polish contingency argued against the creation of the Cominform and instead, advocated maintaining national People's Fronts, alliances with Social Democrats and Labourists. "Zhdanov snapped back: we in Moscow know better how to apply Marxism-Leninism."[25]

Stalin's political bifurcation of the postwar world order into two camps—Socialist and Capitalist—carved out two corresponding ideological camps as a result—Communist and Imperialist. From the communist perspective, the imperialist camp with the US as the leader of the free world embodied imperialist aims of colonizing and exploiting poorer and underdeveloped countries. The ideological rationale behind the communist camp thus focused on waging war against various forms of imperialist incursions. In some measure, the

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[23]J.F. Brown, *The New Eastern Europe, The Khrushchev Era and After* (London: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1996), p. 184.

[24]Ibid., p. 133.

[25]"Recollections of Jakub Berman," Teresa Torańska, *Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets* (New York: Harper &Row, 1987), pp. 283-4.

Communist revolution was a war of ideology and fought with the language of ideology as its weapons. The primary objective was to undermine the legitimacy of the enemy through the propagation of ideology, which in practical terms meant rallying support among communists in other countries and supporting national revolutionary movements.

The leadership of the world Communist revolution held the responsibility of not only displaying mastery over strategy and tactics but also being a paragon of political purity and ideological rectitude. Under Stalin's leadership, strategy was based on terror tactics and repression. Moreover, because of Stalin's paranoic distrust of others, he demanded unquestioning loyalty to himself, not to any ideology. Stalin's severe suspicions, which thrived on people's fears and distrust, generated pervasive tension in the Kremlin as well as in intra-bloc relations. Enshrouded in secrecy, the Stalinist system created an ideological camp propagating the notion of a bipolar world where no middle ground was to be found, where relations were formed on a "friend or foe" basis, with the status of "friend" itself being dubious, and where players were confined within ideological straits. The extent to which these tensions permeated the socialist camp was immense. Conveyed through the usage of communist ideology, tensions fueled fermentation of antagonism which ultimately disrupted in discord.

The Chinese Communists justified the presence of antagonism by identifying it as a natural issue of contradictions that exist in dialectics. The Chinese Communists divided internal contradictions into two groups. The first group included contradictions between enemies of the Chinese and the Chinese themselves, which was based mainly on the conflict of opposing class interests. In dealing with such contradictions, there was no room for compromise. The second group was "internal conflict between class interests." Such

contradictions could be resolved to produce "new consolidation under new conditions." "Internal contradictions of the people," however, could be transformed into "a part of the contradictions between our enemy and ourselves;" in that case, struggle should continue.[26] For the CCP, antagonisms fueled struggle, and struggle shaped policies. In adopting the "two camps" as a component of their worldview, CCP leaders saw the importance of preserving unity within their own camp. Without this unity, this dissolution of the camp would bring grave consequences to bear on the legitimacy of CCP authority.

The CCP's legitimacy was further bolstered by sharing a common identity with the other socialist states. Sharing an ideological link with the East European countries constituted the main relationship in which the PRC could form its identity. "An identity is defined not in psychological terms, but as a *relationship* between self and others—and may hence be applied to any entity, individual or collective."[27] The relationship among the socialist states was vital to their political and economic survival in the postwar period. As separate and lone entities without identification with any ideological group, they would function as outcasts, as with the case of Yugoslavia. Stigmatized, yet vocal, Tito remained on the extreme periphery of the Communist fold. PRC leaders were all too aware of the detriments of remaining an independent, yet detached, floating power. Considering Mao's globalist view of China's role in the Communist revolution, self-imposed isolation was not in line with Communist orthodoxy. For the CCP, membership in the socialist camp called for active participation, particularly in the ideological debate.

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[26]Chen-Tsai Wu, "The Moscow-Peking Dispute and Its Impact on Eastern Europe," David S. Collier and Kurt Glaser, eds., *Elements of Change in Eastern Europe: Prospects for Freedom*, Vol. 12 (Chicago: Henry Regenery Company, 1968), p. 71.

[27]Dittmer and Kim, *China's Quest for National Identity*, p. 4.

Chinese attempts[28] to expound Marxism-Leninism were an indication that the Chinese contingent in the socialist camp was not going to remain a passive player. In the Chinese understanding of theory and practice there existed a "correct ideology," which operated in accordance with the Maoist interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. By propounding a Maoist or sinocentric interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, the Chinese Communists used ideology to define the PRC's identity as well as legitimacy, "evidence of the process of national-identity formation evolving into national-identity implementation."[29] Why did Mao and CCP leaders expend effort in attempting to elevate Maoist interpretations of Marxist-Leninist theory?

The CCP's attempt to promote Maoist interpretations of Marxism-Leninism was an expression of Beijing's view of itself as an authority on communist ideology. During the 1930s, specifically at the Zunyi conference in 1935 and continuing into the Yenan period (1935-1947), Maoist interpretations of Marxist ideology emerged as the predominant interpretation among the Chinese Communists. Although other high-ranking CCP members, such as Wu Liping and Zhang Wentian studied Marxism in Moscow during the 1920s, Mao possessed the dexterity to expound Marxism in a way which gained ideological adherents. In 1937 Mao gave two lectures at the Anti-Japanese Military and Political College in Yenan

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[28]See Philip Bridgham, Arthur Cohen, and Leonard Jaffe, "Mao's Road and Sino-Soviet Relations: A View from Washington, 1953," *China Quarterly*, October-December 1972, No. 5, pp. 670-698.

[29]According to Dittmer and Kim, "One way of analyzing a particular foreign policy line is to conceive of it as a form of national identity implementation, that is, a specification of roles for the People's Republic based on a given Chinese self-image. It is important, however, to distinguish between national-identity implementation and national-identity formation. For example, during Mao Zedong's rule in the People's Republic, he took upon himself almost exclusively the prerogative of defining China's official national identity. Implementation inevitably involved the entire official PRC apparatus as they attempted to turn the collective image of China into viable political action, both domestically and internationally." Dittmer and Kim, *China's Quest for National Identity*, p. 200.

which were eventually published as two essays, "On Practice" and "On Contradictions".[30] These two essays set Mao apart from others as an authority on Marxism and formed a base of popular support in the Yenan years. It was during the Rectification Campaign (1942-1944) that Mao clinched the leadership of the CCP in the face of opposition from Wang Ming, who had spent the 1930s in Moscow. By securing political authority in the party, Mao fortified his ideological authority over Marxist interpretation.

Once Mao secured his position both politically and ideologically, the CCP made every effort to add to the communist discourse Mao's notion of the peasantry as the main ingredient of revolution-making as a unique and valid rendering of Marxist-Leninist ideology. Moscow was willing to play the game only to a certain extent. Moscow needed Mao's political support, and Beijing needed Moscow's economic and technological aid. But, how far was Moscow willing to lend a hand to Beijing until the PRC would outgrow Soviet tutelage and stake out a place for itself? This notion stirred in the minds of the Kremlin leaders:

> If Mao's utterances were to become part of the "treasure-house" of Marxism-Leninism—the all-inclusive, universally applicable doctrine for the world revolutionary movement which Lenin and Stalin alone had "enriched"—then Moscow's claim to absolute leadership over world communism would be weakened.[31]

The Kremlin's speculation, though hypothetical, was more real than imagined. As the events throughout the period in review show, the CCP interpretation of Marxism-Leninism did not simply stand as another contribution to the exegesis of Communist ideology, but was a means of spreading its influence as an alternative authority on Marxist-Leninist ideology and by implication, exerting a form of ideological leadership. Taking an authoritative stance on

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[30]Laszlo Ladany, *The Communist Party of China and Marxism 1921-1985, A Self-Portrait* (London: C. Hurt & Company, 1992), p. 80.

[31]P. Bridgham, A. Cohen, L. Jaffe, "Mao's Road and Sino-Soviet Relations: A View from Washington, 1953," *China Quarterly,* October-December 1972, No. 52, p. 671.

ideological interpretation was the CCP's way of shaping its identity at different stages in its relations with the Soviet bloc.

The PRC's Security Interests: Perception, Position, and Purpose

Whereas analysis of the use of ideology provides a glimpse into the thought process of the Chinese Communist leadership, understanding the rationalization of the PRC's security concerns shows how this thought process was translated into cognition. During this period the formulation of the PRC's security strategy was integrally linked to the PRC's perception of itself in the spheres of the postwar bipolar world order, the socialist camp, the Soviet bloc, and the Communist revolution.

In substance this perception was shaped by both geopolitical concerns and ideological identification. The PRC's security interests must be examined in the light of its ideological links with the Soviet bloc and more specifically, its position and role in the socialist camp. The key to understanding the PRC's security strategy during this period is to consider the degree of interaction between Chinese perceptions and the actual state of intra-bloc affairs. To what extent did Chinese perception both clash and coincide with reality? In large part, Chinese perceptions of Soviet Eastern Europe were tinted by Chinese experiences with and attitudes toward the Soviet Union.

However, the Chinese did not treat the Soviet bloc as a monolith in the sense that the Soviet satellites were simply non-descript appendages of the Soviet organism. On the contrary, the Chinese actively pursued relations with those satellites willing to reciprocate.

It was only when Chinese perceptions clashed with those of the satellites that problems arose. The emergent conflict in turn signified how little the Chinese understood their East European counterparts and how much the presence of the Soviet Union permeated Sino-Soviet East Europe relations. Thus, understanding the dimensions of ideology and security in PRC intra-bloc policy is crucial to ascertaining the significance of PRC involvement in intra-bloc affairs.

The PRC's Perception of Eastern Europe in the Postwar Security Structure

The end of World War II raised two paramount concerns—the re-emergence and re-arming of Germany and Japan. In Europe the potential of a resurgent Germany threatened postwar peace and security, however tenable it was. For Stalin, Soviet domination of Poland stood as a key element in the USSR's overall security strategy. Protecting its western border along the Polish-German demarcation line of the Oder-Neisse, the USSR not only set up a buffer zone, but also secured leveraging power with the Poles as their defence against German incursions into Polish territory. By creating a western defence belt, Stalin incorporated the countries of Eastern Europe into one security bloc bound together by Soviet military force, legitimated by Marxist-Leninist ideology, and sustained by intra-bloc economic integration.

For the Chinese leadership, pressing security concerns, namely strong American anti-communism and staunch support of the GMD leadership on Taiwan, on the eve of the PRC's founding led the PRC to form an alliance with the Soviet Union and by extension, Soviet

Eastern Europe. The PRC's alliance with the Soviet bloc concentrated on Sino-Soviet relations as the core of the alliance, whilst the peripheral position of the Soviet East European countries extended an entrance for the Chinese into Europe, a region that fit strategically into the PRC's postwar worldview. As a gateway into Europe, Soviet East Europe, specifically Poland, became a conduit for the PRC to extend its influence beyond traditional zones of influence, for example hitherto in East Asia.

Involvement with Soviet East Europe reflected Mao's understanding that the postwar bipolar configuration of the socialist and capitalist camps opened up a political terrain in which the PRC could play a critical role. This strategy evolved from Mao's recognition of the intermediate zone as the geopolitical sphere within which China could achieve its "rightful" place in the world. Chen Jian pointedly argues, "As China occupied a crucial position in the intermediate zone, Mao and his comrades believed that China would play a central role in determining the result of the Cold War."[32] In the first decade of its existence, the PRC's foreign policy reflects the view of restoring China's stature in the global arena and fortifying its security zones. This objective could be realized within the context of the *intermediate zone* (zhongjian didai):

> Put forward by Mao in the 1940s, the 'intermediate zone' and other related concepts highlighted the role of the national liberation movement—and the role of the Chinese revolution in particular—in contributing to the international Communist movement. How to evaluate the importance of the national liberation movement in fighting against the imperialist bloc headed by the United States became a central issue in the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute. But the 'intermediate zone' notion in the 1950s was still confined within the broader conceptual framework of the 'two camps.'[33]

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[32]Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 19.

[33]Jisi Wang, "International Relations Theory and the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy: A Chinese Perspective," David Shambaugh and Thomas Robinson, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy, Theory and Practice*, p. 484.

In terms of security importance, the intermediate zone was not so much an actual military defence demarcation as it was a politico-ideological map drawn up according to the postwar global configuration with the socialist camp and capitalist-imperialist camp as the two foci. In his attempt to sinicize the Marxist-Leninist conception of the intermediate zone, Mao believed

> that before the imperialist states could attack the socialist states the imperialists needed to consolidate their control over the intermediate zone made up of colonial and semi-colonial, developing, or Third World countries. It followed, according to Mao, that the best way to defend the socialist states was by strengthening the anti-imperialist struggles of the intermediate zone. The revolutionary struggles of the intermediate zone thus constituted the first line of defense of the socialist countries.[34]

In a 1946 interview with Anna Louise Strong, where he attempts to link a common cause between the Soviet bloc and the non-aligned countries in the struggle against imperialism, Mao made the following observation: "It is impossible to believe that the people of the USSR and East Europe will not resist US imperialism when the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and even in the big capitalist countries are doing so."[35] The intermediate zone in large measure engendered a theoretical playingfield to define the parameters of the bloc's security strategy, designate the bloc's opponents and proponents, and elucidate the

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[34]John Garver, "Little Chance," *Diplomatic History,* Vol. 21, No. 1,1996/7, p. 90; see also, Mao Zedong Waijiao wenxuan [Selected Diplomatic Writings of Mao Zedong], (hereafter *MZWW*), People's Republic of China Foreign Ministry and the Central Party School Documents Research Section, (Beijing: Central Government Document Press and World Knowledge Press, 1994), p. 59.

[35]Tracy B. Strong and Helene Keyssar, "Anna Louise Strong: Three Interviews with Mao Zedong," *China Quarterly,* September 1985, No. 13, p. 503.

objectives of forming alliances. "In reality, the zone was not a fixed geographical base but a shifting and fluid 'ideological and political battleground' in which China sought to isolate her main enemy while joining forces with all nations who are willing, for whatever motive or reason, to make common cause with her."[36]

Understanding the Chinese concept of security during this period requires explaining the PRC's position in the postwar world order, its perception of Soviet Eastern Europe, how this perception shaped PRC foreign policy toward Poland and the rest of the Soviet satellites, and its implications in intra-bloc politics. The PRC's process of finding its proper place in the socialist camp, and more specifically in its alliance with the Soviet bloc, was appropriated in the context of the intermediate zone. Mao never had any intention of permanently submitting himself, the CCP, and the PRC to Soviet leadership in the bloc and the communist movement. Hence, Mao's objective in framing a policy towards Eastern Europe found its roots in the necessity to identify with a community of ideological counterparts. Identification with such a community was motivated by the following national interests: 1) preserving the PRC's sense of peace and security, 2) gaining financial assistance, historical experience, and technical expertise in building a socialist society, and 3) fostering political ties to increase the PRC's influence in the international arena and the world communist movement.

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[36]Joseph Camilleri, *Chinese Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1980), p. 19.

From a sinocentric viewpoint, belief in China's centrality[37] underpinned the PRC's intention of playing a preeminent role in the politics of the intermediate zone. In traditional China's view of the world, its "rightful" position should be one of centrality vis-a-vis its neighbours. Centrality implied an inherent sense of supremacy and control in ruling over the kingdom as well as unity and stability in maintaining internal order. These were the elements of authority which Chinese rulers needed to secure their mandate of heaven.[38] Furthermore, the concept of centrality also shaped the nature of China's dealings with its tributary states.

For Mao Zedong, centrality guided his thinking and perception of the world. Mao's understanding of the notion of centrality is most clearly revealed in an essay written on 27 June 1958 entitled, "Commentary and Annotation on the article 'In defence of the philosophical theory of 'the central position'[zhongjian lichang]'." The original article "In defence of the philosophical theory of the 'central position'" was written by Mao and published by the Propaganda Department of the CCP Central Government on 24 June 1958. In this article, Mao comments[39] on centrality,

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[37]See William C. Kirby, "Traditions of Centrality, Authority, and Management in Modern China's Foreign Relations," Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy, Theory and Practice*, pp. 13-29.

[38]Concerning self-perception and by implication, the notion of centrality, Samuel Kim argues, "What is so striking about the Chinese image of world order is the extent to which it was colored by the assumptions, values, and beliefs of the Confucian moral order. Indeed, the traditional Chinese image of world order was no more than a corollary of the Chinese image of internal order, and thus really an extended projection of her self-image. Hence, the chief concern of China's traditional foreign policy centred upon the ways and means of making diplomatic practice conform to that idealized self-image. Even when the empire was weak and lacked the power to translate her image of world order into a political reality, China persisted in acting out her self-image in international relations...The essence of the traditional Chinese world order was Sinocentric cosmology. China perceived herself to be the centre of human civilization—hence the name Middle Kingdom (*Chung-kuo)*—and the Chinese emperor, the Son of Heaven (*t'ien-tzu*), had *de jure*, if not always *de facto*, the right to reign and rule over all human affairs." See Samuel S. Kim, *China, the United Nations and World Order*, pp. 19-20.

[39]*Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao*[Mao Zedong's manuscripts since the founding of the country], vol. 7, (Beijing: The Central Press of Historical Documents, 1987, 1989), pp. 292-295.

> (1) Objectively speaking, everything in the world has a two-sided nature, a contradictory nature. If you have two extremes, then you have the middle ground. For example, top, centre, bottom; left, centre, right; front, centre, back; thin, medium, thick. The centre is just the balance of contradictions, the unity of a dual nature.
>
> (3) Between two extremes there is also a centre; the central line which I take is in the middle of the centre; this is the most objective, the most reliable, the most thorough, the most dialectic.

Considering Mao's far-reaching influence on the nature and direction of modern Chinese politics, his perception of the central position not only reflected the traditional view of China's centrality in the world but also the belief that the attaining of modern China's position of preeminence was altogether related to its centrality in global politics. It could reasonably be inferred from Mao's comments that in between the two extremes of socialism led by the Soviet Union and capitalism headed by the United States, the PRC's function in global politics would be optimally defined by its position in the centre of the two ideological extremes.

In the PRC's view of the postwar world order, the concept of centrality is reinterpreted by CCP leaders as the dual notion of power and position. Defining power in the Asian context, Chih-yu Shih asserts, "In Asia, power is associated with social status. Power will be granted by the subordinate to whoever occupies the right position."[40] For CCP leaders a properly-positioned China was a powerful China. A powerful China was a China wielding influence in the affairs of its allies, commanding a distinct presence in the world, and most of all preserving the domestic stability essential for state-building.

The PRC's role was shaped and substantiated by the CCP's concentrated use of Marxist-Leninist ideology to justify the CCP's revolutionary strategy in the scope of the intermediate zone. In line with the Maoist view, the PRC's central position was key to

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[40]Chih-yu Shih, "The Decline of a Moral Regime, China's Great Leap Forward in Retrospect," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, July 1994, p. 274.

promoting revolution along the Asian periphery and advocating more autonomy in the countries of Eastern Europe. With the United States perceiving the spread of the communist threat towards the West and into Asia, American policy of containment further isolated the PRC, giving it no alternative but to shore up support along its periphery for security purposes.

A ubiquitous notion in CCP foreign policy fundamentally related to China's national interest is the preservation and fortification of security zones. Inasmuch as the CCP was concerned with achieving political legitimacy in its first few years as the ruling authority in China, Mao and the CCP were equally intent on securing strategic allies in the face of future threats of aggression from the Western imperialist camp. Indeed, as Chen Jian argues, "... Mao and the CCP leadership were convinced that Communist China's security would be guaranteed only when the outside world was no longer dominated by hostile capitalist-imperialist forces."[41]

The short-term span of such a policy was limited to a scope of involvement which revolved around superficial perceptions of the other country's internal dynamics and an emphasis more on building ideological solidarity, rather than cultivating state-to-state relations. The caveat in such a policy is that as ideological interpretation changed, as it often did during this period, so also did the nature of the relationship. Because the PRC's foreign policy during this period was so heavily-laden with ideology, the vicissitudes in ideological interpretation and application by definition dictated the capricious nature of such a policy and lacked the roots of rational policy-making. The fruits of such a policy attest to the shortage of critical circumspection and long-term projection in the PRC's Eastern Europe policy.

Nevertheless, placing mutual gains and cooperation as a top priority, the PRC's

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[41]Ibid., p. 26.

security strategy was imbued with the concept of achieving equality. Equality was the basis upon which to form a strategic alliance. Without recognition of its equality, the PRC's footing in any particular strategic relationship would remain fragile. Such a concept was applicable during the Stalinist period and became even more so in the post-Stalinist period in Sino-Soviet relations. One of the main factors causing the Sino-Soviet split can be attributed to what Mao perceived as Stalin's paternalistic attitude towards the Chinese which spawned a relationship more of "Soviet superiority-Chinese inferiority" rather than a political parity of partners. Although the Sino-Soviet relationship reached a greater equilibrium towards the latter half of the 1950s, the friction between the Chinese and Soviets deepened when it became apparent to the Chinese that Soviet interests ultimately took precedence over equality in intra-bloc relations, an issue further explained in chapter five.

Achieving Equality: The Pretext for a Greater Purpose

Recognition of the PRC's equality with other states stood as the precondition for mutual gain and cooperation. Addressing this matter in 1954, Mao stated,

> Regarding the aspect of cooperation, we have gained a particular experience: Regardless of people-to-people, party-to-party, and country-to-country cooperation, all must be mutually beneficial and moreover, cannot cause harm to any one side. If any one side suffers harm, cooperation cannot continue to be maintained. For this reason, equality and mutual benefits is one of our five principles.[42]

The normative feature of CCP foreign policy-making expressed in Mao's remark is the dichotomy of expectation-obligation. In its approach to cultivating relations with other states,

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[42]Mao Zedong, "The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence should spread to all International Relations," 21 October 1954, *MZWW*, p. 167.

the PRC expected recognition of its equality. If the expectation is met, the PRC fulfills its obligation by granting its support in varying degrees to the other state. Conversely, if the PRC recognized another state on equal standing, the PRC expected cooperation from the other side.

> Recognition of equality was thus mutual...not one-sided. It was not the 'bestowing of a favour', neither was it a mere 'declaration'. The implication of recognition is that the governments of the recognizing and recognized states are both willing to preserve and build a principle of proper diplomatic relations. Both sides have a kind of expectation which guides the building of diplomatic relations.[43]

In this paradigm of reciprocity, the Chinese leadership placed recognition of the PRC's equal standing as the primary condition for further engagement. Such a recognition on the part of foreign powers legitimized the PRC's authority and its struggle to redeem China from the humiliations and unequal treaties of the previous century. Bearing the burden of history, it was the duty of the CCP leadership to demand recognition of equality. Addressing the issue of the CCP's authority, Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue point out, "The authority of any legitimate government required the abrogation of the [unequal] treaties and a firm stance on the principle of equality.[44]

The substance of equality correlated considerably with the disparity between perception and reality. How the PRC perceived political power configurations in and outside

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[43]Huang Jiahua, "Mao Zedong guanyu xinzhongguo jianjiao yuanze yu chuangjian xinxing waijiao de zhongda sixiang juece," [The Crucial Decisions in the mind of Mao Zedong on laying down New China's principles for establishing diplomatic relations and founding the new pattern of diplomacy], in Pei Jianzhang ed., *Mao Zedong waijiao sixiang yanjiu* [A Study of Mao Zedong's diplomatic thought], (Beijing: Shijie zhishi, 1994), p. 155.

[44]Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War*, p. 47.

of the bloc did not always correspond with reality. The PRC, like the USSR, or any other country formulated policy based primarily on its perception of itself and its relationship with other countries. On the following page Table A, entitled "Perceptions of Equality," provides a graphic representation of Sino-Soviet relations.

Table A **Perceptions of Equality**

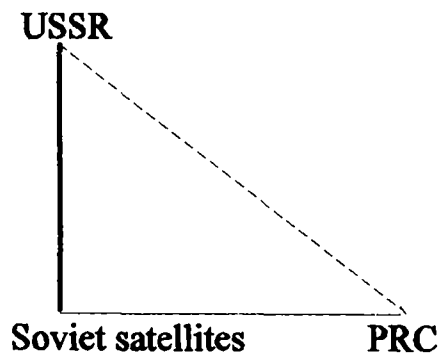
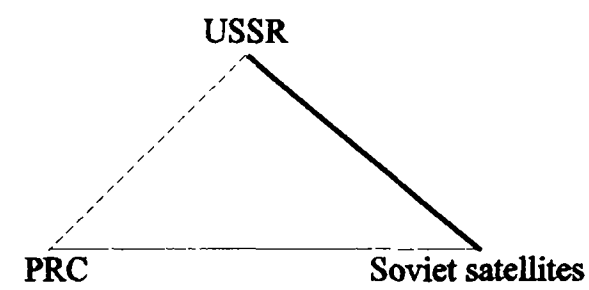
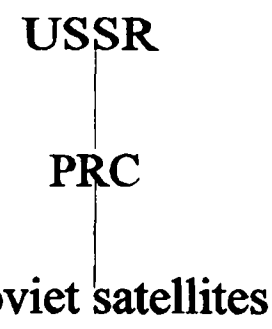
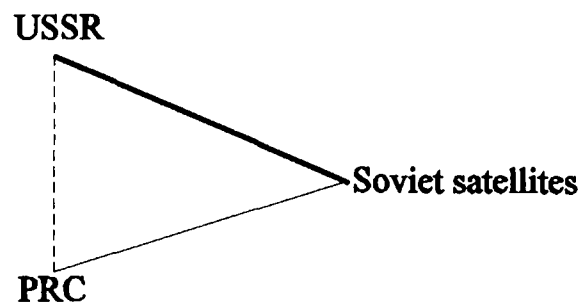
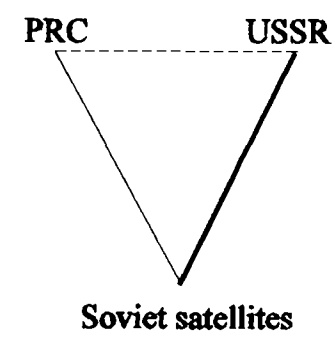
Period	USSR	PRC
1949-1953 Founding of the PRC to the death of Stalin		
1953-1956 Post-Stalin period to the events in Poland and Hungary		
1956-1959 Conference of Communist Parties in Moscow to the eve of the open Sino-Soviet split		

Table A contains three sets of diagrams[45] showing the different perceptions of the PRC and USSR with regard to their positions of power in the Soviet bloc during three consecutive periods from 1949 to 1959. Each diagram is a visual representation of the contrast in perceptions of equality between the USSR and PRC in terms of positions of leadership and domination. The perforated line (---) signifies who held the position of leadership in that particular relationship. The bold line (—) indicates the dominator and dominated in the designated relationship. The third line (—) refers to a status of relative equality between the two designated entities. Equality in this context refers to the similar stature of influence and authority upon which countries are recognized by others in their international reference group, as defined earlier by Dittmer and Kim.

Perceptions of equality are formed based on positions of leadership and domination. Being in a position of leadership—political and economic independence—affords a country a certain stature which differs from that of being dominated or oppressed—political and economic dependence.[46] The disparity in stature therefore solicits contrasting perceptions of who is equal to whom. In the case of the PRC's perception of equality with respect to its stature vis-a-vis the USSR, the practice of equality stood as a source of contention between the two sides throughout Cold War history. Although Mao held the mutual recognition of equality for big and small countries alike as a special feature and objective of Chinese foreign

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[45]Peter Berton also uses the triangular-diagram model in a comparative strategic analysis of Sino-Soviet-US relations from 1945-1984. Although the diagrams in this study are similarly modeled, their theoretical and interpretive content were solely conceived by this author. See Peter Berton, "The Asian Strategic Balance in China," James C. Hsiung, ed., *Beyond China's Independent Foreign Policy, Challenge for the U.S. and Its Asian Allies* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1985), pp. 7-33.

[46]Valerie J. Bunce, "Neither Equality nor Efficiency: International and Domestic Inequalities in the Soviet Bloc," in Daniel N. Nelson, ed., *Communism and the Politics of Inequalities* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1983), pp. 5-31.

policy[47], the application of equality also bore discrepancies:

> ...each side talked about 'equality' with an assumption that they were superior to the other. For Mao and his Chinese comrades, talking about 'equality' meant that they occupied a position from which to dictate the values and codes of behavior that would dominate relations between communist parties and states.[48]

Likewise, the same case could be made of the Soviets. Because the Soviet gestures of recognizing the PRC's equality did not match up to Chinese expectations, Mao had a basis for criticizing Soviet chauvinism in 1956. But, the issue of equality went deeper than the failure to meet expectations. Recognition of equality was altogether a matter of establishing legitimacy and exercising leadership.

In the first period from the founding of the PRC in 1949 to the death of Stalin in 1953, the perceptions of the PRC and USSR differed only slightly. In both cases the USSR maintained a position of supremacy at the top of the bloc hierarchy. The perceptions differ in the USSR's relations with the Soviet satellites. From the USSR's viewpoint, the Soviet satellites were directly subject to the Soviet Union's authority, influence and control, whereas the PRC, still relatively new to the bloc, remained at a distance, though clearly subordinate to the USSR. This position can be explained partially by the PRC's unexpectedly impressive performance in the Korean War, which put it on a slightly different footing with the USSR—that of an ally—than the Soviet satellites—that of the subjugated, and partially by Stalin's reluctance to acknowledge the PRC as an equal partner in the leadership of the Soviet bloc. In the same period, the PRC's perception differs from that of the USSR in that the PRC

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[47]Huang Jiahua, "Mao Zedong guanyu xinzhongguo jianjiao yuanze yu chuangjian xinxing waijiao de zhongda sixiang juece," [The Crucial decisions in the mind of Mao Zedong on laying down New China's principles for establishing diplomatic relations and founding the new pattern of diplomacy], in Pei Jianzhang ed., *Mao Zedong waijiao sixiang yanjiu* [A Study of Mao Zedong's diplomatic thought], p. 159.

[48]Chen Jian, "Deng Xiaoping, Mao's 'Continuous Revolution', and the Path toward the Sino-Soviet Split: A Rejoinder," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 10, March 1998, p. 163.

perceives itself not only on equal standing with the Soviet satellites but also its positioning shows that its contact with the USSR is commensurate with that of the Soviet satellites.

In the second period beginning from post-Stalin 1953 to the dramatic events of 1956 in Poland and Hungary, perceptions of equality shared by the USSR and PRC indicate a continued recognition of the USSR's primacy in the bloc. However, during this period, the shift from relationship of relative equality between the PRC and Soviet satellites to one in which the PRC is first among equals shows the PRC as second to the USSR and above the Soviet satellites. The shift indicates the PRC's new-found influence after its participation in the Polish and Hungarian incidents and the USSR's recognition of the PRC as a primary player in the intra-bloc affairs.

The third period encompassing the Communist Workers' Parties Conference in November 1956 to the eve of the Sino-Soviet split represents the sharpening divergence of views between the USSR and the PRC. During this period, as will be further developed in subsequent chapters, the acceleration of the Sino-Soviet schism could be attributed to the widening disparity of perception that the USSR and PRC held toward one another. For the USSR, though the PRC continued publicly to recognize Soviet headship in the bloc, it was making every effort to reach out to the satellites, whose position changed after 1956. With destalinization issuing in the decentralization of Soviet authority, the Soviet East European countries achieved a certain degree of elasticity, which no longer confined it to a strict relation of subservience to the USSR.

Coupled with the relative relaxation of Moscow's control, the PRC's presence as an alternative source of ideological leadership put the Soviet satellites in a middle position, where on the one hand, they were still dependent on the USSR, yet on the other hand, they found some leeway in which to play the two "big brothers" off one another. From Beijing's

perspective, the PRC had reached a parity of prestige by the end of the 1950s and contention for primacy in the bloc leadership and the world communist movement only escalated with the Soviet satellites fueling the struggle for supremacy between the USSR and PRC. In Mao's eyes, equality was won, but it would come at a great price, which could potentially mean war, a possibility that was not beyond Mao's realpolitik reasoning.[49]

Recognizing the PRC's position in the world stood as both the focal and departure point of its foreign policy. Any alliance which could help the PRC recover its "rightful" place in the world was an alliance worth pursuing. Restoring its central position on the world stage thus became the foremost priority of Chinese foreign policy in the 1950s. From the perspective of the CCP leadership, this policy could best be realized in the politics of the intermediate zone.

In the PRC's self-perceived central role and position in the intermediate zone, the struggle between the leaders of the two camps, the USSR and the USA, over which camp would prevail in the intermediate zone, would "ultimately be determined by the result of the struggles between China and the United States, and that the 'main contradiction' in the postwar world was thus of a Sino-American nature."[50] Arguably, the PRC was not just seeking equality but ultimately, the spreading of worldwide influence.[51]

In order to achieve this aim, peace and security had to be secured. For the PRC in particular, and the socialist camp as a whole, the most viable mechanism to preserve postwar peace and security in the face of Western imperialist incursions and the threat of war, was unity. Unity called for a central authority, an undisputed leader, a uniform political language,

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[49]"Zai di shiwu ci zuigao guowu huiyishang tan guojixingshi," [Discussing the International Situation at the 15th Session of the Supreme National Policy Council's], 5 September 1958, *MZWW*, p. 347.

[50]Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation*, pp. 20-21.

[51]Ibid.

and the presence of a singular enemy—the capitalist, imperialist West. It was the attempt at unification of thought, perception, interpretation, and purpose.

Unity fostered a sense of security to thwart the imperialistic threat, created an environment conducive to domestic development and prosperity, and served as a rallying point for centralized leadership within the camp. Unity within the Soviet bloc was crucial to maintaining peace and security, two components vital to postwar national reconstruction and development. Indeed, for the Chinese, the unity of the socialist countries in Europe was "the most powerful guarantee of world peace as a whole."[52] For the Chinese, achieving a sense of peace and security as vital conditions to building a modern China was altogether related to finding the PRC's position in the bipolar postwar world order, where the PRC's central role in the intermediate zone could determine the outcome of the dialectic between the socialist and capitalist camps.

The PRC's belief in its centrality in the intermediate zone correlates to its determination in playing a distinct role in intra-bloc politics and on a larger scale, striving to achieve a position of leadership in the world communist movement. Throughout the period under review, the Chinese leadership's overriding foreign policy objective focused on the legitimation of the PRC's "rightful" place in the postwar world order; that place was in the centre of the intermediate zone. Moreover, steering the course of the PRC's foreign policy was the CCP. For the CCP, playing a central role in the intermediate zone meant playing a greater role in the politics of the Soviet bloc and by implication, the socialist camp.

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[52] *People's Daily*, 3 November 1956.

Contradictions: The CCP's Capitalizing on Conflict

Contradictions, or objective, incompatible differences, functioned as a crucial component in the construct of Sino-Soviet East Europe relations. The PRC's policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe evolved from and revolved around constant contending with contradictions in domestic as well as intra-bloc politics. Utilizing Marxist-Leninist ideology Mao exploited natural contradictions inherent in its relations with the Soviet bloc. The fundamental contradictions which plagued the PRC's policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe can be defined as the following:

1) **Head vs. Centre:** PRC perception of itself as the *centre* of the intermediate zone and the Communist revolution clashed with its official pronouncements of the USSR as the *head* of the Soviet bloc and the world communist movement. The disparity between Chinese self-perception and how this perception was projected onto reality created the contradiction between two sources of communist authority—the PRC as the centre and the USSR as the head. Though publicly playing a supporting role to the headship of the Soviet Union, the PRC sought to undermine the USSR's authority by empowering Poland to test the limits of socialist solidarity.

2) **Equality vs. Individuality:** The PRC's perceptions of equality indicate its failure to reconcile its political objective of reaching a parity of prestige with the Soviet Union and its historical duty of vindicating China's unique position—its individuality—on the world stage. Ultimately, the pursuit of equality, even the status of being "first among equals" represented steppingstones towards achieving supremacy. In truth, Mao was no different from his predecessors nor his successors in that he, along with the rest, shared one quest—the restoration of China to its "rightful" place in the world. Every step of this process was a declaration of China's uniqueness and importance. Although the ideology which drove the

restoration of China's greatness was foreign, the way in which it was interpreted and implemented was Chinese.

3) **Complicity vs. Cooperation:** Sino-Polish cooperation contributed to the Sino-Soviet schism and the irreversible propagation of polycentrism throughout the bloc. Chinese support of Polish aspirations for national independence, autonomy, and sovereignty undermined Soviet authority, bolstered Chinese influence among the satellites, and paved the way for the PRC's active political and alternative ideological leadership in the bloc, which as a consequence dismantled the mechanisms of monocentrism and released the diversifying effect of polycentrism. Cooperation however turned into complicity as the Poles and the Chinese began to lose trust in one another and realized that both were using the other for the furtherance more of national, rather than fraternal gain. The complicity was sustained until it was no longer in Poland's interests to support both the Chinese and the Soviets. Ultimately, for the advancement of Poland's national interests, Polish support of the Soviet line towards the PRC outweighed Chinese radicalism and self-alienation in the face of increased dialogue between the US and the USSR.

4) **Partner vs. Pawn:** Poland was a partner to the USSR, the PRC, and the US. In its own way Poland helped to accelerate the process of the Sino-Soviet split, the consequence of which was a divided leadership in the socialist camp and the bolstering of US leadership of the free world. By lending its support to the USSR at the height of Chinese radicalism, Poland deprived the PRC of the political support it needed to spread its influence in the bloc. In cooperating with the Chinese from 1956 to 1957, Poland appeared to be the key factor in boosting Chinese confidence as a contender for bloc leadership. As a partner to the US, anti-Soviet and anti-communist Polish elements in the top echelons of the Polish leadership sent out clear signals to Washington that Poland was not willing to be subjected to Soviet

domination. By linking itself to all three major powers, Poland helped pave the way for the PRC's falling out of the Soviet bloc. In so doing, it also opened the way for the US, Great Britain, and the rest of the free world to forge, in a more active way, ties with individual members of the bloc. 5) **Confusion vs. Construction:** Chinese policy toward Soviet East Europe was based on misdirected aims. Formulated with the view of bloc building and solidarity strengthening, the policy ended up causing more confusion than construction in the Soviet bloc. The source of this confusion stemmed from ambiguous intentions interwoven into the various layers of contradictions plaguing the communist movement. As the contradictions multiplied and magnified the intrinsic differences held by the different communist party leaders, the test of ideology as a political panacea showed how much words contradicted with actions. Communism created a culture of calculated chaos and a political construct of confusion. The aim of the game was not so much to win but to beguile friends and foes into a realm of constant doubt, distrust, and deception, the very fibers of the communist fabric. Communist leaders, including Khrushchev, Mao, Gomułka, Tito and the others in the satellite states followed an agenda of ambiguity in which policies were formulated not only for the purpose of implementation but also to obfuscate opponents and disenfranchise detractors.[53]

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[53]William C. Wohlforth, "New Evidence on Moscow's Cold War: Ambiguity in Search of Theory," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Spring 1997, pp. 229-242.

STRUCTURES: THE INSTITUTIONAL LINKS OF INTRA-BLOC RELATIONS

The Making of Chinese Foreign Policy in the 1950s: Apparatus and Actors

Fundamental to understanding the substantive issues of Sino-Soviet East European relations from 1953-1958 is acquaintance with the Chinese foreign policy[54] apparatus—structure, channels, and personnel—of the 1950s. The foreign policy apparatus was formed simultaneously with the new Chinese Communist government structure and gradually came under the direct supervision of the party leadership. The first formal trappings of a CCP foreign ministry emerged during the Yenan period (1935-1947). Beginning in the late 1930s, the coalescing of a definitive CCP foreign policy apparatus transpired as Mao sought to wean the CCP off Comintern directives, even though the CCP continued to maintain its "special relationship" with the USSR. In so doing, Mao intended to immobilize Soviet-trained CCP members, such as Wang Ming, who posed a potential challenge to Mao's leadership. The turning-point of this strategy came with the rectification campaign from 1942 to 1944 in which authority on local levels shifted to party committees. As a way of flushing out anti-Maoist elements, the rectification campaign "stressed independence, self-reliance, and a synthesis of the Marxist-Leninist tradition with the concrete problems of China to create a new and uniquely Chinese form of Marxism."[55] In fact, the campaign signified a decisive step in the CCP's consolidation of a national power base and the sealing of Mao's authority.

During this period, CCP policy formulation was based on "a process of decision-making by general consensus among the key Politburo members supplemented by *ad hoc*

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[54]In Chinese, the term *waijiao*, or "foreign policy," refers primarily to the intergovernmental, diplomatic aspects of foreign relations. Doak Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China: Structure and Process* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co, Ltd., 1985), p. 67.

[55]James Reardon-Anderson, *Yenan and the Great Powers, The Origins of Chinese Communist Foreign*

central work conferences."[56] The Yenan model of decision-making became the pattern for foreign policy decisions made by the Politburo after 1949. The Politburo played a central role in foreign-policy formulation from 1949 to 1955.[57] Composed of the "Big Five"—Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Chen Yun—and eight other members, the Politburo stood as the highest intersection of party and government officials. As the centre of concentrated power, the Politburo in effect joined the processes of policy-making and policy implementation, thereby eliminating the distinction of duties between the party hierarchy and the government.[58] Owing to the preeminence of the Politburo in the party apparatus, it follows then that foreign policy reflected the priorities of the party's agenda and in fact became the main vehicle for CCP diplomacy. In reality, PRC diplomacy was shaped and governed by the CCP.

Government involvement in the making of foreign policy was headed first and foremost by the main governmental body, the State Council—composed of the premier, vice-premiers, state councillors, and heads of all ministries and commissions[59]—and implemented by the Foreign Ministry. As Prime Minister of the State Council, Zhou Enlai headed the government's foreign affairs apparatus. Within the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs existed six divisions based on area: 1) West European, 2) USSR and East European, 3) West Asian and African, 4) American and Australian, 5) First Asian, and 6) Second Asian. For a period in 1958, the USSR and East European Affairs Division was known as the Socialist

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Policy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 17.

[56]Kuo-kang Shao, "Neutralization of Indo-China, 1954-55," *China Quarterly*, September 1986, No. 107, p. 484.

[57]Ibid., p. 483.

[58]Ibid., p. 484.

[59]Doak Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China: Structure and Process*, p. 52.

States Affairs Division.[60] When dealing with major, problematic issues, requiring a collective decision, Zhou referred them to three other key individuals involved in the policy decision-making process: Liu Shaoqi, vice chairman of the party in charge of the day-to-day work of the Politburo; Deng Xiaoping, general secretary of the general secretariat; and Peng Zheng, mayor of Beijing and *de facto* deputy general secretary of the party.[61] Under the jurisdiction of the State Council, the Foreign Ministry's function centred on formulating recommendations, a very integral part of a consultation mechanism which assessed suggestions from various ministerial departments, sent them to the vice minister who then submitted them to Zhou Enlai for final recommendation on how to handle the issue.[62]

Party control over foreign policy-making and implementation did not operate exclusively out of the Foreign Ministry. As a department of the Central Committee (CC), the International Liaison Department held the primary responsibility for relations with other communist parties.[63] As a matter of Party protocol, the role of the International Liaison Department (ILD) and the Foreign Ministry intersected depending on the nature of communication, be it classified, confidential, or urgent, and on the scope of communication, i.e. party-to-party, state-to-state, or institution-to-institution.[64] The ILD also informed the Chinese leadership on the policies of other Communist parties. Two departments working closely with the ILD include the CC's propaganda department—its main organs being the New

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[60]Donald Klein, "Peking's Evolving Ministry of Foreign Affairs," *China Quarterly,* October-December 1960, No. 4, p. 32.

[61]Barbara Barnouin and Yu Changgan, *Chinese Foreign Policy During the Cultural Revolution* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1998), p. 55.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Ibid., p. 46.

[64]"Chinese-language document sent to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs," Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, Zespół [Collection]12, Teczka [Folder] 74, Wiązka [Binder] 3, 1956, pp. 1-8.

China News Agency, the *People's Daily,* and the Foreign Language Publication Bureau—and the CC investigation department (Zhonggong zhongyang diaochabu*)*, which was an intelligence agency. Though little is known of its activities and structure, the Foreign Affairs Small Group (waishi xiao zu) of the CC, established in 1958 in the party apparatus, coordinated, and supervised international affairs.[65]

Party domination of Chinese foreign policy was directly linked with the leaders who held the highest positions of power in the government and the CCP. As the Chairman of the Central Committee, Mao was not only the Party Chairman, but also a member of the Secretariat—the inner circle of the Politburo and top party body[66]—and the National Party Congress. In the government structure, Mao held preeminence as the chairman of the republic in addition to membership in the Supreme State Conference and National People's Congress. Closely in coordination with Mao on matters of foreign policy, Zhou Enlai also belonged to the same top party and governmental bodies, with the exception of the chairmanship. As one scholar of Chinese foreign policy explains,

> The most important feature of such a governing system was that the Party and the government were interlocked through influential personalities of the Party who were to be found at all intersecting points. This interlocking mechanism was intended to institutionalize the primacy of the Party and its highest instrument of power, the Politburo.[67]

As the leading party members in key government positions, Mao and Zhou, were the main engineers of Chinese foreign policy.

Although Zhou carried the most weight in the administrating of the foreign affairs apparatus, it was Mao who wielded enormous power in crafting Chinese foreign policy.

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[65]Barnouin and Yu, *Chinese Foreign Policy During the Cultural Revolution*, p. 56.

[66]Doak Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China: Structure and Process*, p. 34.

[67]Kuo-kang Shao, "Neutralization of Indo-China, 1954-55," *China Quarterly*, September 1986, No. 107, p. 484.

Given the highly personalized nature of the Chinese foreign policy apparatus in the 1950s, sycophancy, conformity, and loyalty were the hallmarks of Mao's power base. Mao wielded power by using various institutional devices and party regional conferences to propound policy initiatives.[68] In contrast to Zhou the administrator, Mao could be perceived as a foreign policy innovator. Parris Chang describes Mao's role as an innovator, "...Mao determined the nature of a given period, identified different social forces and contradictions in society, and defined problems in the political arena at each important turning point."[69]

Whereas Mao generated the ideological direction, Zhou was able to translate it into concrete diplomacy, strategy, and tactics. In the formulation of intra-bloc policy, coordinating with Mao and Zhou were Deng Xiaoping and Peng Zhen. As two of the main strategists in constructing the CCP's Soviet policy, Deng and Peng throughout the 1950s directed the polemic against the Soviet Party in accordance with the guidelines established by Mao.[70] With regard to the PRC's Soviet East Europe policy, Zhou sought to link the cause of Chinese independence to that of Poland and the other satellites. The PRC's ambassador to Poland, Wang Bingnan, also played a crucial role in facilitating dialogue between the two parties' senior leadership. It was Mao who understood how to play the Soviet satellites against the USSR. Because both Mao and Zhou were realists, they realized "power politics meant having fluid interstate relations, shifting alignments, and above all, the primacy of national interests."[71] Both believed in the PRC's co-leadership of the socialist camp and worked

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[68]Parris Chang, *Power and Policy in China* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), pp. 176-196.

[69]Ibid., p. 188.

[70]Barnouin and Yu, *Foreign Policy During the Cultural Revolution*, p. 56.

[71]Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), p. 261.

together in achieving this end politically, diplomatically, and ideologically.

Because intra-bloc policies superseded state-to-state relations, and were furthermore treated as a branch of inter-party politics, the Politburo mainly conducted and dominated intra-bloc talks. Hence, as a rule, the PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs representatives in bloc countries generally possessed mediocre credentials, whereas the most qualified of the PRC's diplomatic corps were most often sent to non-communist countries.[72] The rationale was that the bloc was used as a "testing ground for diplomats"[73]; a diplomatic blunder in Bucharest would not less likely cause as much damage as one in New Delhi or London. It could also be surmised that posting the PRC's diplomatic best in non-communist countries reflected Beijing's view of the need to glean as much information as possible about these countries with the understanding that political relations were not one-dimensional, but rather ever-evolving and therefore subject to change. The implication is that by sending more qualified diplomats to the non-communist countries, Beijing did not want to send those who would just "toe the Party line," but rather ascertain the real attitudes of these countries toward the PRC. The only important exception to this pattern was Wang Bingnan, who served concurrently as ambassador to Poland (1955-1964) and the senior Chinese representative in the Sino-US talks in Warsaw. At the founding of the PRC in 1949, Wang was appointed director of the Foreign Ministry's Staff Office and for the next five years, served as Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai's administrative chief.[74] It can thus be inferred that Wang's ambassadorial post in Warsaw confirms Poland's political importance not only in intra-bloc affairs but equally important in

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[72]Donald Klein,"Peking's Evolving Ministry of Foreign Affairs," *China Quarterly*, October-December 1960, p. 34.

[73]Ibid.

[74]Donald W. Klein and Anne B. Clark, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism 1921-1965*, Volume II, Harvard East Asian Series 57 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 921-923.

acting as the PRC's conduit to closer contacts with the West.

During the period from 1953-1960, the fundamental principles of the CCP were based on Marxist-Leninist ideology with a sinocentric outlook. Inherent in this ideology was continuous revolution through socialist construction as the means to reach the ultimate goal, the communist utopia, a classless world society. By virtue of this struggle communist parties throughout the world were called to join the greater struggle led by the Soviet Union, in the early years under the leadership of the Comintern, and after its dissolution in 1943, the Cominform (1947-1956), an organ for Soviet consolidation of power in East Central Europe. Bonding among the various communist parties revolved around the shared principles of ideology and was built through intra-party networks which consummately formed the socialist camp.

Pulled into the Soviet orbit in the aftermath of Yalta, the countries of Eastern Europe, excluding Yugoslavia, became individual Soviet satellites and collectively, the Soviet bloc. Moscow's dealings with each of its satellites was usually through the communist leaders in each country either supported or installed by Moscow. Between the CPSU and the communist party of each satellite, the nature of relations were bilateral. Upon its founding in October 1949, the PRC immediately requested recognition of its legitimacy by the USSR and the other Soviet bloc countries. The successive and swift recognition of the PRC's statehood initiated it into special relations with the Soviet bloc.

In the PRC's involvement with the Soviet bloc countries, inter-governmental relations were built primarily on party-to-party relations[75]. In specific, Soviet relations with bloc

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[75]Refer to Mark Kramer's comments on Zimyanin's Report and Soviet Policy-Making in *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 176.

countries were conducted on a bilateral rather than multilateral basis.[76] For the Soviet East Europe countries, inter-governmental relations functioned according to the Soviet pattern "which subordinated the satellite countries to Soviet control and in practice denied the independent, sovereign and equal status of the Central European states."[77] Lacking their own identity under the Soviet shadow, the socialist countries of Eastern Europe conducted intra-bloc politics in a way that such relations "took on the form of an extension of Soviet *domestic* politics."[78] With party-to-party relations directing country-to-country relations, the party ideology—Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism—embraced by bloc members was inculcated into intra-bloc and international relations,[79] which in effect engendered ideology as a tool of political power.

Control over the interpretation and application of ideology afforded the CCP, and indeed the CPSU and other communist parties, the political clout to establish their legitimacy, wield power, and exercise authority. Adherence to party principles meant obedience to the party, and commensurately, the party ideology. By implication then, recognizing the source of party ideology called for obedience to "the author of the correct ideology—in other words, to the leader."[80] The party leader played a key role in shaping the nature and orienting the direction of party-to-party relations as well as intra-bloc relations. The extent to which sovietization permeated the Soviet satellites lay in direct, albeit not singular, correlation to how effectively, whether by choice or force, the party leaders in the

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[76]Paul Lewis, *Central Europe since 1945*, p. 147.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Interviews with CASS scholars: Zhang Yongyong, Cheng Guangshi, and Zhu Xiaozhong, Beijing, PRC. March 1997.

[80]Stuart Schram, "The Party in Chinese Communist Ideology," *China Quarterly*, April-June 1969, No.

satellites followed Kremlin directives. To complicate matters, obvious tensions arose between Moscow-installed satellite leaders and nationalist communist leaders in these satellites. Both were fighting for the communist cause, yet determining the source of authority, be it Moscow or home communists[81], within the satellite communist parties created contention within the communist ranks.

PROCESSES: THE EVOLUTION AND REPERCUSSIONS OF CHINESE POLICY AND STRATEGY TOWARDS SOVIET EASTERN EUROPE FROM 1953 TO 1960

From the death of Stalin in 1953 to the open rift in Sino-Soviet relations in 1960, the PRC underwent a multi-faceted process in which its international role and identity became more defined. Its intentions and behaviour as an international state-actor became more global, and its foreign policy and decision-making became more independent-minded and self-reliant.

In this period, several processes occurred simultaneously, though not independently of one another. In the unfolding of each process, specific events, persons, and/or ideas acted as a catalyst in releasing a subsequent chain of reactions, which issued in further change. Analyzing the evolution of Chinese policy and strategy towards Soviet Eastern Europe requires seeing China from three different angles, namely as a modern state, a key actor in intra-bloc relations, and a member of the socialist camp.

38, p. 3.

[81]Bogdan Szajkowski, *Marxist Governments: A World Survey*, Volume 3: Mozambique-Yugoslavia (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1981), p. 559.

As a modern state, the PRC underwent the process of shaping a modern identity. In this process, the language and symbols of communism functioned as the main tools of constructing a particular image of how the PRC wanted to be perceived. This process also required being integrated into a politico-ideological community in which the common language of ideology helped the PRC calibrate political objectives according to national interests. Shaping a modern identity could be practically realized through building a socialist state, which necessarily involved seeking technological, financial, and military aid from fellow socialist countries. One paramount task of any modern state is the formulation of foreign policy and strategy. In setting out its foreign policy objectives, the CCP held the responsibility of defining the PRC and its actions to the rest of the world, a process which entailed building relationships with other states.

In its involvement with the Soviet bloc, the CCP ignited the process of altering the political composition of intra-bloc relations. This process originated from Mao's fundamental disregard for authority. In the CCP's relations with the CPSU and other bloc Communist parties, the Chinese continually challenged Soviet authority by justifying the existence of contradictions and advocating greater diversity of voice and actions in bloc affairs. The consequence of this policy issued in a shift from monocentrism to polycentrism. The unleashing of polycentrist forces set off a wave of reactions that even the Chinese could not reverse or control. In the process, the fragile unity of intra-bloc relations and deep discord between the Chinese and the Soviets fully manifested itself.

As a member of the socialist camp, the PRC's desire to recover its "rightful" place in the world took ultimate precedence over Sino-Soviet relations and the unity of the socialist camp. For Mao, restoring China's preeminent position in postwar global politics could be achieved by exerting authority and influence in bloc affairs. The CCP's demonstration of its

leadership abilities in bloc affairs laid the basis for reaching and maintaining its equal standing with the Soviet Union. Equality with the Soviet Union was the key condition for the PRC to secure co-leadership in the world communist movement. In such a position, the PRC could then play a central role in the intermediate zone, where, according to Mao's understanding, the ultimate victory in the struggle between the socialist and capitalist camps would be decided.

In these different processes, the evolution of CCP policy and strategy reveals a multitude of elements, such as modes of thought, changes in outlook, personal motives, lack of understanding, misconceptions, to list a few, which may fully or partially explain why Chinese policy was formulated the way it was and the impact that it had on the Cold War. The importance of probing these processes lies not solely in whether the objectives of such policies were realized, but more notably, in discerning the patterns of the PRC's rationalization and representation of its role in the international community.

CHAPTER III

Constructing a Post-Stalin Foreign Policy Agenda

The PRC's relations with Soviet Eastern Europe were fraught with contradictions. Born out of a marriage of ideology and realpolitik, Sino-Soviet East European relations operated on, struggled against, and were ultimately undermined by the very contradictions that brought these relations into being. From its inception, the PRC's relations with the Soviet East European bloc were a byproduct of Sino-Soviet relations. In forging relations with the USSR, the newly-founded PRC gained not only an ally of global stature, but also an alliance with its satellites: Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Albania, and Bulgaria. The creation of this political configuration was at best a triumph of socialism as a unifying bond joining together unlikely partners, the PRC and the Soviet East European countries, and at worst, an artificial union based on a problematic ideology, power politics, deep-seated distrust, and divergent interests.

Though the focus of this work is the PRC's policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe with a particular emphasis on Poland, the PRC's relations with the Soviet East European bloc cannot be thoroughly examined without understanding the Sino-Soviet factor. To be sure, one of the main sources of the contradictions that plagued the Soviet bloc as a whole can be attributed to the complex and dubious factors that brought Mao and Stalin together in the first place. Because the roots of Sino-Soviet relations were contradictory[1], the fruits of discord and discontent manifested themselves in the PRC's relations with the socialist East European

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[1]Mao Zedong, Speech, "On Sino-American and Sino-Soviet Relations," 27 January 1957, *Mao Zedong waijiao wenxuan* [Selected Diplomatic Papers of Mao Zedong] (hereafter *MZWW*) (Beijing: The Central Press of Historical Documents, 1993), pp. 280-283.

countries. Even though the Mao-Stalin relationship does not exclusively account for the PRC's short-lived involvement in Soviet Eastern Europe, its rocky foundation formed on mutual suspicion, disparate motives, and starkly contrasting dispositions doubtlessly coloured the CCP's view of the CPSU and the East European Communist parties.[2] Adding to Mao's unsatisfactory visit to Moscow from December 1949 to March 1950, the death of Stalin in 1953 and the events of 1956 served as foreboding indicators of the fermenting discord underlying the rhetoric of bloc unity.

Seeing then how intricately intertwined the USSR was in Sino-Soviet East European relations, its influence invariably penetrated the formulation of Chinese foreign policy toward Soviet East Europe in general and Poland in specific. The goal of this chapter is firstly to examine the PRC's perception of its position in the postwar world order, secondly, review the critical junctures in the development of post-Stalin Chinese foreign policy from 1953-1955, and lastly, probe the nature of Sino-Soviet East European relations under the rubric of Sino-Soviet relations with the PRC and Poland as the two main foci.

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[2]Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Litai Xue, *Unequal Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean*

The PRC's Perception of its Position in the Intermediate Zone

The period 1953 to 1955 encompasses pivotal events in the early years of CCP foreign policy-making. Given the significance of each year's developments, this chapter focuses on the immediate impact of Stalin's death on the direction and scope of CCP foreign policy from 1953 to 1955. In these three years CCP foreign policy increasingly adopted transnationalist, even internationalist tendencies. Behind the policy of transnationalism was the CCP's desire to consolidate its power internally and spread its influence externally. It was during this period that the concept of the intermediate zone provided the framework of Chinese foreign policy.

Scheme 1 on page 71 illustrates the PRC's self-perceived central position in the intermediate zone. The PRC leadership oriented the aims of Chinese foreign policy toward cultivating diplomatic relations with nations in which it could concurrently build up and exert its own influence. These relations can be categorized on three levels as indicated in scheme one. Since 1949 the PRC's most important diplomatic relation was with the Soviet Union. Resulting more from necessity than preference, the PRC forged an alliance with the Soviet Union on the assumption that such an alliance would produce additional allies. In a bipolar postwar world order, the PRC's decision to "lean to the side" of the Soviet Union set the scale by which the PRC's relations with other countries would be measured.

War (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 222.

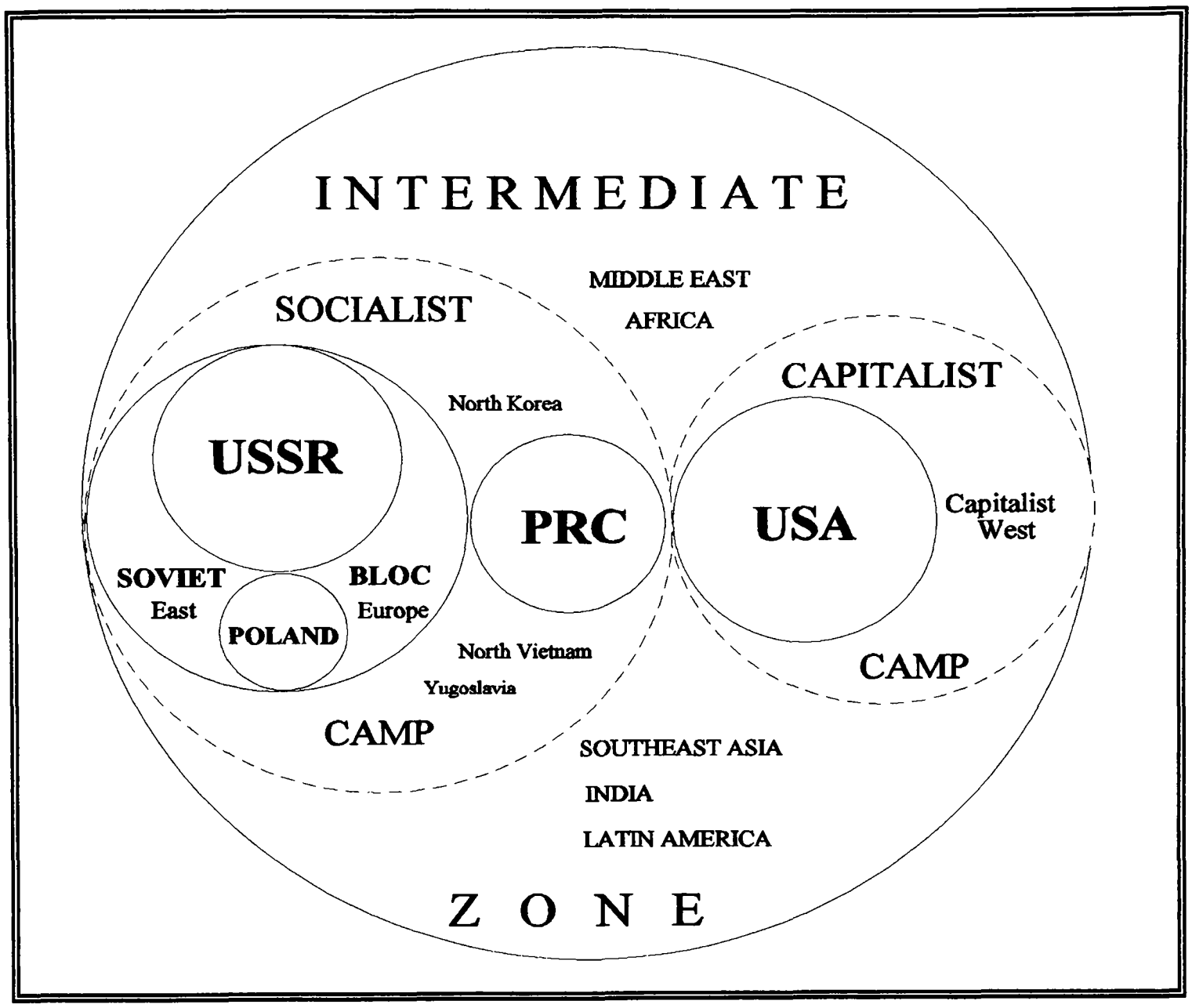
The theory of the intermediate zone revealed a basic tenet of the PRC's security strategy. Self-defence began with and to a great extent hinged on unifying forces, be they in the form of alliances, military power, or authority. "The concept of the intermediate zone had substantial significance for the PRC's foreign relations. It meant that by helping foreign revolutionary movements and states in the intermediate zone, the PRC was defending itself."[3] Identifying with and supporting revolutionary movements or states who advanced the PRC's interests became a viable way of building solidarity. Hearkening to the notion of a "united front" strategy, it was in the interest of the CCP to rally behind those who directly and indirectly championed the Communist revolutionary cause.[4] A strand that runs consistently throughout the PRC's security strategy can be encapsulated in the notion that temporary alliances, though expendable, were essential to realizing present political priorities, rather than long-term policy objectives. The Chinese leadership believed as long as a country did not overtly oppose the Chinese revolutionary movement, even if it took a neutral stance, that country could be won over. Such a relationship was fostered with the view of mutual gain and cooperation.

In establishing relations with the countries of Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia, the PRC cultivated its peripheral relations. In its dealings with the countries of Eastern Europe, the PRC sought to gain a foothold in countries such as Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia,

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[3]John Garver, "Little Chance," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 21, No. 1 1996/7, p. 91.

[4]According to John Garver, "this theme of the 'intermediate zone' runs like a red thread through Mao's thought. It emerged during Mao's 1940 debates with the Comintern over the efficacy of a tighter CCP-KMT united front and large-scale offensives by the Eighth Route Army against Japanese forces in China; it figured prominently in Chinese foreign policy in the early and late (though not mid) 1950s, was enshrined in Lin Biao's 1965 essay on People's War, and reemerged in Mao's waning years in his Three Worlds Theory. Even after Mao had concluded that the USSR was not socialist and lumped Soviet revisionism together with U.S. imperialism in the superpower 'First World,' he still saw the revolutionary struggles of the 'Third World' as constituting the cutting edge of world progress." John Garver, *Diplomatic History,* Vol. 21, No. 1, 1996/7, p. 90; see also G. Segal, "China and the Great Power Triangle," *China Quarterly,* September 1980, No. 83, p. 494.



Scheme 1: Beijing's view of its position in the intermediate zone

Romania, Albania, Bulgaria, and East Germany for the purpose of identifying itself with its ideological counterparts in Europe.

Ideological identification with the countries of Eastern Europe rendered the PRC immediate access into an already existing community. By joining itself to such a community, CCP policy-makers found a platform on which to define itself to its neighbours and the rest of the international community. In line with this strategy, PRC influence in North Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, furthered the communist cause along East Asia. The basic premise was to enlist either explicit or implicit support from active and passive players in the communist camp and non-aligned countries of the intermediate zone.

On the third front, with regard to the PRC's relations with the countries of Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, the PRC cultivated these relations throughout the 1950s. The PRC's exerting a leadership role through diplomacy throughout the 1950s in Africa and the Middle East through economic investment, technological assistance, training programs and even moral support, as exemplified by its criticisms against Anglo-American role in the Middle East Crisis of 1958, shows a consistent pattern in PRC diplomacy—cultivating peripheral relations even in some cases with ideologically non-aligned countries to advance its own standing. Thus, Mao's view was that the PRC would become an international actor, active not only in regional affairs, but also in the international arena. The opportunity for such involvement emerged in intra-bloc politics.

An Overview of Key Developments in PRC's Post-Stalin Foreign Policy

After the PRC's founding in 1949 and the armistice in Korea in 1953, the PRC in the early post-Stalinist years had seemingly shed the shadow of Soviet tutelage. Indeed, as more archival materials concerning the Korean War are analyzed, the more it becomes clear that Chinese participation in the Korean War marked the decisive point at which the last chance of Sino-American cooperation was extinguished and the PRC emerged as an independent player. Debunking the traditional interpretation that the PRC entered the Korean War mainly out of national security concerns, Chen Jian argues, "Mao and his associates aimed to win a glorious victory by driving the Americans off the Korean peninsula."[5] Although final victory in the Korean War is a moot point, the Chinese in the face of Stalin's unreliability pointedly realized the PRC's need to become as self-reliant as possible. With the well-received promulgation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in 1953 and the diplomatic kudos Zhou Enlai garnered at Geneva in 1954 and Bandung in 1955, CCP foreign policy seemed to be riding on a crest of confidence in its influence-spreading efforts.

However, from its founding in 1949 the PRC's involvement with the Soviet East European bloc manifested a foreign policy plagued with contradictions. Among its major and minor contradictions, the PRC's greatest contradiction—sharing with the Soviet East European countries their desire for independence and autonomy, yet wanting to maintain bloc unity at all costs[6]—set Chinese policymakers on a course of striving for consolidation, containing crisis, and fueling confrontation, which finally led to the cooling of Sino-Soviet East European relations and the open Sino-Soviet schism in 1960.

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[5]Chen Jian, "China's Road to the Korean War," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995-1996, p. 41.

[6]Developed from interview with Zhang Wenwu, Director of the Institute for East European and Russian Studies, CASS, Beijing, 9 April 1997.

For the Chinese, independence and equality coupled with autonomy and sovereignty stood as the cornerstones of a country's right to exist.[7] However, given the dynamics of the Soviet bloc, these fundamental rights were threatened by the crucial need to preserve bloc unity as the mainstay of the socialist camp. In trying to reconcile this formidable dichotomy, other differences—political, personal, ideological, social, cultural and regional—further enervated the PRC's attempts to build a semblance of unity on the frail foundation of Sino-Soviet East Europe relations.

The PRC's policy toward Soviet East Europe is most clearly delineated in the PRC's dealings with the two main East European countries of this particular period and region: Yugoslavia and Poland. Of all the Soviet East European countries, the policies of Yugoslavia's Tito and Poland's Gomułka on maintaining respective degrees of autonomy during the 1950s stood as a fitting counterbalance to Soviet policies for the satellites, and thereby provided a clear contrast of alternative roads to socialism. Although Czechoslovakia, Romania and Albania in different degrees also sought their own brand of socialism, it was not until the 1960s that their attempts became more defined and bore some impact on intra-bloc relations. However, it is the attempts of Yugoslavia and Poland at alternative paths to socialism in the 1950s that bear the most relevance on the topic under review. Even though Yugoslavia was not a formal member of the Soviet bloc, its irremovable presence in the Soviet domain lay as an open wound and thus remained a vulnerable spot in Soviet East European

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[7]Han Nianlong, "*Heping gongchu wuxiang yuanzi yongfang guangmang—Zhou Enlai dui zhongguo waijiao de juda gongxian*," [The Everlasting Radiance of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence—Zhou Enlai's great contribution to Chinese diplomacy], *Yanjiu Zhou Enlai—waijiao sixiang yu shiyan* [Studying Zhou Enlai—diplomatic thought and practice] (Beijing: Shijie zhishi, 1989), p. 33.

politics. The importance of Yugoslavia should be viewed with particular reference to the effect of Tito's leadership and policies on the PRC's perception of its role in intra-bloc affairs. Tito's Yugoslavia, as will be addressed later in the chapter, serves to magnify key preliminary developments which helped define the PRC's role in the Soviet East European bloc during this period.

Among the countries of the Soviet bloc, Poland's strongly independent-minded, yet staunch Communist leadership stood as the best gauge of satellite response to the PRC's presence in intra-bloc affairs. Throughout the 1950s even though Polish leaders closely followed Moscow's leadership in bloc affairs, they did so as much for the furtherance of national interest as for survival under Soviet domination. The reasons for Poland's importance are multi-fold. In terms of geopolitics, Poland's position along the Soviet Union's western border provided a counterbalance to Stalin's most pressing postwar concern—"the recrudescence of Germany in the West and Japan in the East."[8] Intent on securing a western buffer zone, Stalin could not allow an independent Poland acting as a gateway for potential German resurgence and Western hegemony.

Sealing off the western border by the sovietization of the East European periphery happened as a consequence of Stalin's lack of a coherent strategy.[9] In essence, other than sovietization there was no alternative plan to absorbing the East European periphery. The imposition of Stalin's totalitarian system on this region was integrally linked to propagating Soviet political and economic power. The lasting importance of this region to Moscow is aptly underscored in a National Intelligence Estimate:

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[8]Melvyn B. Leffler, "Inside Enemy Archives, The Cold War Reopened," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1996, Vol. 75, No. 4, p. 125.

[9]Ibid., p. 134.

> The military, political, and economic significance of the Satellites to the USSR is so great that Moscow almost certainly regards the maintenance of control over the area as an essential element of its power position. The Satellites provide the Soviet Union with a defense in depth and an advanced position for launching attacks on western and southern Europe. The Satellite regimes themselves are valuable to the USSR as instruments in the conduct of Soviet foreign policy, propaganda, and economic and subversive operations. The Satellites represent an important element of over-all Bloc economic strength. The total gross national product (GNP) of the Satellites is roughly two-fifths that of the USSR and includes significant production of certain key materials and heavy manufactures.[10]

Poland's geographical location in this new political configuration bolstered its political position. The importance of Poland's political status corresponded to the potential influence its own policies had on neighbouring satellite countries and the region as a whole.

As a source of anti-Soviet sentiment and nationalism, Poland's most threatening form of influence was maintaining its independence, that is, an independent policy in domestic affairs and expressing its own voice in matters of bloc foreign policy.[11] Carving out a place for itself within the bloc construct posed potential problems for Moscow. Unlike Yugoslavia which had fallen out of the socialist fold, Poland attempted to reach an operable degree of autonomy within the bloc while supporting the ideological principles and goals of the socialist camp. Taking such a stance, however, heightened the risk of unleashing the undercurrent of dissidence "widely prevalent in the Satellites."[12] According to the US Central Intelligence Agency's assessment,

> Poland's success in maintaining its present limited degree of independence is a key factor affecting the future political developments in Eastern Europe. Should the USSR succeed in reimposing its complete control over Poland, it could more easily check dissident elements in other Satellites, particularly disruptive forces in the other Satellite Communist parties. If the USSR does not achieve its aims in Poland, its problems elsewhere will probably worsen.[13]

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[10]"National Intelligence Estimate, Probable Developments in the European Satellites Through 1960," Washington, 10 January 1956, *FRUS 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, pp. 115-118.

[11]"Memorandum from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs to the Secretary of State," Washington, 23 March 1957, *FRUS 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, p. 593.

[12]"National Intelligence Estimate," Washington 10 January 1956, *FRUS 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, pp. 115-118.

[13]"National Intelligence Estimate," Washington, 19 February 1957, *FRUS 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV, Eastern

The struggle to maintain national independence within the socialist camp linked Poland to China. This relationship tested the bloc's ideological bonds of unity, the viability of Moscow's post-Stalin intra-bloc policy, the motive behind Beijing's overtures toward the satellite states, and the tenuous loyalties of satellite leaders towards Moscow.

Before delving into the complexities of this period, it is befitting to note the effect which Stalin's purging of East European Communist leaders had on the PRC's East European policy. In the immediate postwar politics of the Soviet bloc, the purging of these communist leaders, namely Yugoslavia's Tito, Poland's Gomułka, and Hungary's Rajk, clearly signalled Stalin's intolerance of independent leadership among the Soviet satellites, refusal to support nationalist aims, intention to tighten control over Eastern Europe, and intention to suppress any element threatening Moscow's authority in the bloc. The repudiation of these three, who incidentally were joined by the Czechoslovakian leader Slanski and Bulgaria's Kostov, indicated to Mao and CCP leaders that an alliance with Stalin required recognition of the Kremlin's primacy as the undisputed source of authority in the Soviet bloc.[14] On the eve of declaring the PRC's statehood, Mao, for short-term gains, had no intentions of jeopardizing Soviet recognition of the PRC's and CCP's legitimacy. Nonetheless, in the long term, Stalin's purges of the East European Communist leaders raised broader implications in Mao's mind.

Europe, p. 579.

[14]Interview with Sino-Polish specialist Prof. Qi Chengsheng, International Strategic Research Centre, Central Party School of the CCP, Beijing, 1 April 1997.

The expulsion of Tito from the Soviet bloc in June 1948 by the Cominform raised two crucial issues: 1) who was to control Yugoslavia, Tito or Stalin? and 2) would the people of Eastern Europe be able to develop their own systems of socialism, or would they become colonies of the new Soviet empire? From a Chinese perspective, the Tito-Stalin conflict centred on autonomy and independence, two elements with potential power to undermine bloc unity.[15] Seeing this threat, the Chinese in 1948 published articles criticizing Yugoslavia and tacitly approving the Cominform resolution condemning Yugoslavia. At the time, topmost in Mao's mind was the ignominious label of being a "half-hearted Tito". Indeed, the PRC could not afford to be beset by doubts in the socialist camp concerning the authenticity of its revolution and motives of Mao's leadership. In a conversation with a Yugoslavian Communist Union Delegation in September 1956, Mao admits the CCP's wrongful treatment of Yugoslavia and reveals Mao's dilemma of having to absolve himself from any streak of Titoist tendencies to prove his legitimacy in Stalin's eyes, whilst at the same time lead the PRC as a newly-emergent, independent state.[16]

The ostracizing of Tito by the international communist movement in 1948 had considerable impact on the PRC's East European foreign policy. In principle, the PRC had no reason not to identify with Yugoslavia, considering the fact that Yugoslavia's desire to maintain its autonomy and national integrity did not contradict Chinese aspirations. Yet, for the sake of dispelling any suspicions harboured by Stalin and to win Soviet support in the face of irreconcilable tensions with the United States, the Communist Chinese leadership rejected

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[15]"Minutes, Mao's Conversation with a Yugoslavian Communist Union Delegation," Beijing, September 1956, *MZWW*, pp. 251-262.

[16]Ibid.

Yugoslavia's recognition of the PRC's statehood in 1949.[17] As Michael Yahuda asserts, "The Tito episode brought out the complex relationship between strategic imperatives and ideological positions."[18] What makes this relationship complex was the PRC's treatment of the countries of Eastern Europe as expendable alliances conducive to achieving short-term strategic priorities as opposed to cultivating long-term political relations.

Tito's expulsion from the Soviet bloc also pointed to the controlling nature of Stalinism. Under the Stalinist model, there existed in form and to a certain extent in substance, monolithic unity where the centre of authority—Stalin—determined how relations between bloc states should operate and dictated which direction the satellite states should take in building such relations. It was as though these nine countries—the Soviet Union plus the countries of Eastern Europe, excluding Yugoslavia—were incorporated into a system where under the leadership of an undisputed head, little room was left for independent policy-making and diversity of ideological application. In truth, because he had no definitive strategy for Eastern Europe, maintaining this kind of political structure was the only way Stalin knew how to sustain his power and perpetuate Soviet influence. Based on his probe into the recently declassified materials of the Soviet archives, Melvyn Leffler argues,

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[17]Ibid.

[18]Michael Yahuda, "China and Europe: The Significance of a Secondary Relationship," *Chinese Foreign Policy, Theory and Practice*, eds., Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 276.

> As for Stalin, he had no desire to change the totalitarian system he had established before World War II. In fact, the Cold War played into his hands, enabling him to perpetuate the system. But the evidence does not show that Stalin initially thought it would be in the Soviet Union's interest to have a cold war. Nor did the Soviet leader seek unlimited expansion. Western actions, though prudent, intensified his suspicions. Meanwhile, the presence of Soviet armies in Eastern and Central Europe created a dynamic of its own, fostering the replication of the Soviet totalitarian system in the satellites even in the absence of a grand strategy.[19]

Such was the facade that Stalin sought to erect and preserve and the legacy that he left after his death. In Stalin's eyes there was no room for dual leadership, two headships.[20] The structure of bloc leadership was built on Stalin's preeminence and satellite subservience. For Mao, subservience to Stalin was not without reservation. Although the CCP policy of "leaning to one side" entailed CCP deference to Moscow's leadership, Mao always insisted on the principle of equality as essential to intra-bloc relations. However, equality enshrouded in distrust and suspicions was a fleeting attainment for China in this period. Stalin's suspicions of Mao as a "Chinese Tito" carried the fear of "China's third way,"[21] yet another threat to Stalin's totalitarian rule. Thus, even if Mao entertained such ideas during the early years of the PRC's formation, he had to allay Stalin's suspicions for the sake of validating CCP legitimacy and sustaining socialist construction.

In Mao's conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, P.F. Yudin, on 31 March 1956, Mao made a concerted effort to discredit any notion of his being a "Chinese Tito."[22] The label of Mao as "Chinese Tito," which in essence meant Mao and the CCP following the Yugoslav

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[19]Melvyn P. Leffler, "Inside Enemy Archives, The Cold War Reopened," *Foreign Affairs,* July/August 1996, p. 134.

[20]Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 61.

[21]"Ambassador Yudin's Record of Conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong, 31 March 1956, from the Journal of P.F. Yudin "5" April 1956, No. 289," *CWIHP Bulletin,* Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 165.

[22]Ibid.

path of defecting from the bloc, carried a degree of validity depending on whose viewpoint it was. From Mao's perspective, although he may have shared similar tendencies—pursuing national independence and advancing the Chinese revolution, he differed from Tito in that he realized how crucial the Sino-Soviet alliance was to the furtherance of Chinese national interests. For Stalin, Mao's "Titoist tendencies" only deepened existing suspicions and distrust between the two leaders. From the view of the West, any proclivities of Titoism on the part of Mao only helped to magnify Sino-Soviet differences.

Within the parameters of the bloc, it can be argued that the PRC posed a "third way." In fact, throughout the 1950s, the PRC became increasingly recognized as an "independent factor"[23] in the sense that at certain junctures in intra-bloc developments, the PRC developed the capacity to offer its own brand of bloc leadership. If one were to speculate concerning Mao's motives for accusing Stalin of stigmatizing him as a "Chinese Tito," one can only wonder whether Mao was testing Ambassador Yudin and indirectly, Stalin, to see where Mao stood in Stalin's perceptions of intra-bloc power relations. It should be noted that while this particular conversation between Mao and the Soviet Ambassador took place in 1956, Mao was referring to events in 1947 when Stalin insisted that Mao agree to a peace with Jiang Jieshi. Mao's dredging up of the past with particular reference to Stalin's lack of belief in the Chinese revolution and labelling of Mao as a "Chinese Tito" indicates how the festering of Mao's feelings and grievances against the Soviet leader considerably shaped his own view of the intra-bloc politics.

How much then was Chinese foreign policy moulded by personal as opposed to political motives? As one who was undoubtedly conscious of his place in history and role in

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[23]Richard Lowenthal, "China's Impact—The Evolution of the Alliances in Europe," *Adelphi Papers*, No.

the Chinese revolution, Mao could not help but be concerned about how Stalin's view, like his own, influenced the development of Sino-Soviet relations. Although Ambassador Yudin denied the existence of "such moods and conversations in our Party,"[24] subsequent events manifested the real attitude of the Soviets towards the Chinese. Indicative of a pattern in Sino-Soviet and indeed, intra-bloc relations, constant testing by both sides exposed in these relations in one regard a considerable degree of distrust and in another, an intense insecurity which communist rhetoric and political posturing could conceal for a time but ultimately fail to remove.

Although Mao realized that "Titoist tendencies" of striving for independence and autonomy were a threat to bloc unity, Chinese foreign policy during the 1950s did not veer away from the ultimate objective of gaining greater independence in Sino-Soviet relations and preserving its autonomy in bloc relations. However, for the fledgling PRC in the early 1950s, bloc unity was of utmost importance to the PRC's identification with an ideological community and economic trading entity. Existing outside of the bloc was not an option for the PRC because of strategic, ideological, political and economic reasons. Strategically, the PRC had to be allied with the socialist camp to bolster national security,[25] because of its perceived threat from the US. Ideologically, the CCP had to attach itself to an ideological counterpart for its own legitimacy as well as for the identity of the PRC as a nation-state. Politically, Mao needed international support in eradicating the vestiges of Guomindang presence in China and sending a clear message to Washington that a failure of Sino-American

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33, March 1967, p. 20.

[24]"Ambassador Yudin's Record of Conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong, 31 March 1956, from the Journal of P.F. Yudin "5" April 1956, No. 289," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 165.

[25]Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy*, p. 158.

cooperation was a fait accompli. By signalling Washington in such a way, the PRC sought to dispel any doubts Stalin bore concerning the PRC's intentions and thereby ensure its cooperation with the USSR, and furthermore, show the US that the CCP had fully wrested authority on the mainland. Lastly, in economic terms, the PRC depended on Soviet and East European military and technological aid and expertise to expand infrastructure and develop agriculture.

The repercussions of the repudiation of Poland's Gomułka and Hungary's Rajk in 1948 do not find their full impact until 1956. It is clear however that in 1948 Stalin would not tolerate obstruction to sovietization and his consolidation of power in the satellites. Those communist leaders who were not willing to pay full allegiance to Moscow thus had to be purged.

1953: CCP Consolidation and the Beginnings of Bloc-building

Stalin's death in March of 1953 changed the course and composition of intra-bloc politics.[26] For Soviet Eastern Europe, Stalin's death signified the possibility of change to something other than the monolithic repression of the Stalinist system. For Moscow and Beijing, the Soviet leader's death left a power vacuum in the leadership of the Soviet bloc and the world communist movement. For Mao and the CCP, the bloc's leadership vacuum was theirs to fill and thus marked the initial stages of CCP consolidation and concerted efforts

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[26]David S. Collier and Kurt Glaser, eds., *Western Policy and Eastern Europe* (Chicago: Henry Regnery

in formulating a foreign policy strategy.

Timing demanded circumspection. In 1953 the PRC began to stake a claim on the world stage as a major player. Emerging out from under Stalin's shadow, and having fought the US to a standstill in Korea, Mao and the CCP were predominantly concerned with preserving national unity and independence[27] and re-shaping its role in the Soviet bloc. The PRC's concerns paralleled and accentuated those of Poland and the other bloc countries. The implications of Stalin's death, as Donald Zagoria notes, raised a gamut of issues affecting all bloc members:

> 1. How much independence can each Communist Party have in formulating its own domestic policies?
> 2. Are all parties equal or are some "more equal than the others"?
> 3. How much of Soviet experience and of the Soviet model is universally valid and how much is a historical peculiarity that need not be repeated elsewhere?
> 4. Are there multiple paths to socialism?[28]

Underlying these questions was the understanding that diversity within the bloc and all that it embodied—equality, independence, autonomy, and sovereignty—represented the greatest threat to bloc unity. Stalin clearly ascertained this fact and made every effort to suppress its full manifestation.

Company, 1966), p. 3.

[27]Joseph Camilleri, *Chinese Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1980), p. 21.

[28]Donald Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 50.

Within the Soviet bloc diversity emerged most formidably in the form of the PRC. Although Chinese evidence has yet to confirm or disaffirm Mao's intentions in unseating Moscow's primacy in the bloc, the CCP's actions conveyed bolder steps towards marking its own independence and autonomy. Beginning in 1953 the CCP embarked on a course of consolidating its power and spreading its influence by promoting a "united front" strategy in the face of a "main threat," which in the 1950s was the United States.[29] In this period CCP foreign policy took on a transnationalist focus.[30]

A salient characteristic of Chinese transnationalist foreign policy in the post-Stalin years was preserving its independence and autonomy. Maintaining the PRC's independence signified not being dependent on another power for basic sustenance and guidance. For CCP leaders, autonomy meant China was its own master, not subservient to external rule. As the cardinal executor of CCP foreign policy, Zhou Enlai in close coordination with Mao indefatigably insisted on steering China clear of dependence and subjugation.[31] The lessons of history were still fresh in his mind. So crucial was delineating a definitive position in the postwar world order that "national independence meant more to Zhou than self-identity; it also meant freedom from foreign control."[32]

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[29]Doak *Barnett, The Making of Chinese Foreign Policy* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 1985), p.138.

[30]Bailes defines the notion of socialist 'transnationalism' as the idea that common internal policies would bind states together in an external 'community' handling its affairs by distinctively socialist rules. See Alyson J.K. Bailes, "China and Eastern Europe: A Judgement on the 'Socialist Community'," *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 222.

[31]Zhou Enlai's "Political Report" October 23, 1951 and February 4, 1953, as cited by Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy*, p. 266.

[32]Kuo-kang Shao, ibid, p. 264.

This strain of thought ran parallel with Zhou's attitude toward Soviet Eastern Europe. The PRC's independence was integrally linked with that of Soviet Eastern Europe. As Shao contends, "More important, independence for Eastern Europe countries would be the best insurance of China's independence vis-a-vis the Soviet Union."[33] The reasons for the PRC's advocating this line were deliberate and strategic. Firstly, the independence of Soviet Eastern Europe, particularly countries like Poland and Hungary, diluted the potency and efficacy of Moscow's authority. Whereas at one time all currents of real power were concentrated in the person of Stalin, his absence and the lack of an equally central authority created a confluence of influence, flowing from Beijing and Moscow, and potentially, albeit on a lesser scale, from Warsaw.

Secondly, in Stalin's absence the relative independence of the Soviet satellites allowed the PRC more room for manoeuvring to shore up support for its own independence. Because the PRC had no intentions of becoming a Soviet satellite, it used every means in intra-bloc relations to curtail Moscow's influence. Most important, by restricting or undermining Moscow's authority in supporting Eastern Europe's independence, Beijing sought to enhance its own standing among the satellites. The consequences of this policy, however, opened the way to a diversity of views, which were not in accord with those of the Kremlin.

Under Stalin diversity was not tolerated. After Stalin's death, diversity's emergence paved the way for the surfacing of intra-bloc contradictions. The foregoing questions Zagoria raised reveal the irreconcilable, contradictory nature of bloc relations. Stalin's absence called into question the viability of the Soviet experience in the satellite states without a leader such

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[33]Ibid., p.165.

as Stalin. These doubts opened up possibilities of finding an alternative centre of authority. In striving to maintain its own unity and independence whilst seeking equal status with the Soviet Union, the PRC was challenging the Soviet model of national revolution and command economy. How was it possible that the PRC's independence could bolster bloc unity?

In the intra-bloc context, unity implied being subject to one authority, one headship. Diversity on the contrary inferred the manifestation of many heads—a multiplicity of opinions, views and voices—that necessarily challenge the status quo, the orthodoxy. One of the PRC's major contradictions in this period was calling for bloc unity under the Soviet masthead, Moscow's leadership, whilst fighting to maintain its own independence through policies divergent from Moscow's interests. In a word, the PRC promoted unity in official posturing, though in reality its actions were directed toward gaining its own independence, which essentially called for a greater degree of autonomy. As a result, the PRC opened the way for the East European satellites to demand more vocally their own independence and autonomy. A potential challenger to Moscow, Beijing through its actions consequently nurtured the seeds of discord that already existed between the satellites and the Soviet Union.

After Stalin's death, Mao and the CCP leadership began to shed Soviet (Stalinist) tutelage and more aggressively forge a distinctly Maoist path.[34] However, in attempting to craft its own foreign policy framework, the CCP could not and did not completely discard old patterns and deep-rooted tendencies inherited from Stalin's leadership style. In particular, Mao, possessing his own authoritarian tendencies, perpetuated the deficiencies of the Stalinist system, because he in part identified so much with what Stalin represented—communist revolution, command economy, socialist construction, class struggle along with

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[34]Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, From Stalin to Khrushchev*, p. 215.

institutionalized ruthlessness, terror, betrayal, and secrecy—and in part, he realized the Soviet model was the only viable pattern the CCP could follow in building socialism.[35] On a more personal level, Stalin's legacy confirmed in Mao the cardinal role of the leader in influencing the course of revolutionary history and construction of a communist state. "Indeed, he [Stalin] built the state as a tool for his own hands; he doubted anyone could manage it properly without him. His personality became the single most important factor in the decision-making process in the USSR: a guide and a beacon for unwieldy bureaucracies."[36]

Parallel to Stalin's USSR, Mao's personality[37] manifested itself in PRC policy towards the Soviet satellites. Many of the contradictions and inconsistencies in Mao's work style were reflected in the diaphanous policy toward Soviet East Europe. In short, Stalin's legacy seeped into the CCP leadership apparatus. Its validity would become a major source of contention in the aftermath of Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Soviet Congress in

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[35]Michael Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996) p. 218.

[36]Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, From Stalin to Khrushchev*, p. 10.

[37]"The impact of individual personality depends on the political system in which that particular individual functions. In a system in which power is effectively shared or in which there are effective institutional checks on the power of individual leaders, the impact of individual personality may be limited. Where power is highly concentrated and unchecked, individual idiosyncrasies may have a direct and substantial effect on national policy. This was the case in the early PRC. At the Seventh CCP Congress in 1945, that party was 'Bolshevized' with Mao Zedong serving as China's 'Stalin.' Factions were finally suppressed and, a cult of personality was fostered around Mao." John Garver, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 88.

1956.

1954: Formal Foreign Policy Formulation—Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence

In April 1954 the PRC promulgated the policy of "peaceful coexistence"[38] at the signing of the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India. This agreement stipulated: 1) mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; 2) mutual non-aggression; 3) non-interference in each other's internal affairs; 4) equality and mutual benefit; and 5) peaceful coexistence. After the conclusion of the Korean War, Beijing put increasing stress on the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence," which implied using diplomatic means to improve China's international standing.[39] Frequently invoked as the cornerstone of CCP foreign policy, the five principles of peaceful coexistence set the parameters in which the PRC carried out Chinese diplomacy initially among PRC allies, but eventually became policy toward non-socialist camp countries.

As the CCP's official foreign policy, the five principles of peaceful coexistence were applied in the PRC's international relations, and particularly intra-bloc relations. Authored by Zhou Enlai, the "peaceful coexistence" policy sought mutual benefits in bilateral relations.[40] The theme of equality runs throughout the bloc's ideological and diplomatic discourse of this period. Equality fits in as one of four concepts with which the socialist camp had to grapple, the other three being independence, sovereignty, and autonomy. As the central thought

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[38]Also referred to as the "Principles of Pancha Shila."

[39]Qiang Zhai, "China and the Geneva Conference of 1954," *China Quarterly*, March 1992, No. 129, p. 107.

[40]Mao Zedong, "Cooperation between countries should be mutually beneficial." *MZWW*, p. 167.

behind the policy of peaceful coexistence, these four lines ran parallel and often intersected with actual policy implementation.

In Mao's view, the principle of *equality* (pingdeng) bore a strong historical connotation. In essence, it carried the weight of a history of unequal treatment against China. As Chen Jian argues, "equality" was a historical problem, "pointing out that Sino-American relations had been dominated by a series of unequal treaties since China's defeat in the 'Opium War' of 1839-1842."[41] Directed against the United States' unequal treatment against China, " 'equality' meant a total negation of America's roles in China's modern history and also posed a crucial challenge to the existing principles of international relations followed by the United States and other Western countries."[42] Implicit in this interpretation is China's identification with the community of the "weak and oppressed," the familiar mantra of how China repeatedly suffered humiliation at the hands of Western imperialist powers. Though the potency of this truth remains moot, its staying power throughout modern interpretations of Chinese history attests to the internal conflict that beset the CCP of trying to redeem China's greatness in the wake of a century of defeat, oppression, and weakness.

The historical connotation that Mao's "equality" carried bespeaks a history of seeing China's plight in parallel to

> that of other peoples pressed to the edge of extinction by the great powers. Turkey was Europe's sick man, whose internal turmoil had left it easy prey. Egypt revealed the dangerous political consequences of letting foreigners seize financial control. Poland was a sad illustration of the perils of territorial dismemberment at the hands of cynical statesman.[43]

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[41]Chen Jian,"The Myth of America's 'Lost Chance' in China," *Diplomatic History, A Chinese Perspective in Light of New Evidence,"* Vol. 21, No. 1, Winter 1997, p. 81.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Michael Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*, p. 115.

Bearing the weight of history, the CCP's demand for equality vis-a-vis the United States would find redemption in other ways. Aware of the US State Department publication of the *China White Paper* in August, 1949, Mao personally directed an anti-American propaganda campaign in the CCP media, a central theme of which was that it did not matter if the Americans were unwilling to treat China and its people as equals because the Chinese people would gain their equality in the international community through their revolution.[44]

In Zhou Enlai's expounding of the policy of "peaceful coexistence," regardless of size or capacity, countries had to be treated equally.[45] In other words, equal treatment called for recognition of stature, capacity, and influence of that particular country. Equality was not unequal treatment—a system of hierarchy, determining superior and inferior status based on size, resources, and population. Equality assumed the independence and ability of other countries to make their own decisions and bear responsibility for them. It precluded one country from interfering in the national agenda of another country . Equality implied non-interference on the part of two countries in each other's domestic affairs. Seeing the historical consequence of weak countries' vulnerability to imperialist powers, namely the United States, Mao and the CCP firmly fought for equality in the international arena. Ishwer Ojha offers the following insight on the PRC's motives behind attaining equality:

> A major difference from the past is that China's search for influence is not regional but world-wide. The Chinese no longer want the rest of the world to come to them. Indeed, they will go anywhere their resources and their imagination permit. They do not seek a new form of tribute system, nor do they wish to withdraw to the company of satellites. Instead of isolated superiority they want participatory equality with the great powers. They want full membership in the club

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[44]Chen Jian, "The Myth of America's 'Lost Chance' in China: A Chinese Perspective in Light of New Evidence," *Diplomatic* History, Vol. 21, No. 1, Winter 1997, p. 81.

[45]Han Nianlong, "The Everlasting Radiance of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, Zhou Enlai's Great Contribution to Chinese Diplomacy," ed. Pei Jianzhang, *Yanjiu Zhou Enlai—waijiao sixiang yu shiyan* [Studying Zhou Enlai—Diplomatic thought and practice] (Beijing: Shijie zhishi, 1989), p. 33.

of status quo powers.[46]

Mao urged his comrades not to be in a hurry to gain diplomatic recognition from the "imperialist countries" but to be willing to establish relations with all countries on the principle of equality. For this reason, the PRC's alliance with the Soviet bloc bore not only political but also historical import.

Equality was closely tied to independence. Behind the principle of equality, CCP foreign policymakers wanted to make known that the PRC was an independent state, neither subservient to nor dependent upon the great postwar powers. As an independent entity the PRC saw participation in the global community and in particular intra-bloc affairs as a legitimation of its equal status. The PRC sought acknowledgment that its international and regional presence counts.

In the same way as equality was linked with independence, independence in turn had everything to do with autonomy. The CCP was not willing to be ruled by any imperialist or foreign power. Autonomy was an expression of the PRC's sovereignty. Suzanne Ogden explains the significance of sovereignty in Chinese foreign policy:

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[46]Ishwer Ojha, *Chinese Foreign Policy in an Age of Transition* (London: Crown Helm Ltd., 1980), p. 144.

> "Sovereignty, with its implied sovereign equality, has in the Chinese view been central to nearly every issue of international law: it is fundamental to "peaceful settlement of disputes, observance of treaties, special privileges and immunities in foreign relations..." 1) and it is basic to the concepts of non-interference and mutual non-aggression."[47]

Sovereignty for any country is the inherent right to determine its own destiny, not to be subject to the dictates of an external hegemon, and to pursue its own course of development. As the empowerment of one nation to function as an equal in a "society of nations,"[48] sovereignty is the inherent right to belong out of free will and not out of subjugation. Following this rationale, Zhou implemented CCP foreign policy with the PRC's own at the core of all its external relations. Explaining Zhou Enlai's approach to framing the PRC's foreign policy, Kuo-kang Shao writes,

> Among the operational principles significant to Zhou's conduct of foreign relations, first and foremost was national independence. This involved, on the one hand, the basic notion of national sovereignty—that, within the territorial confines of an internationally recognized state, the power of the legitimate authorities were supreme—and, on the other hand, the concept of freedom of action, which claimed that the state must be permitted a certain scope within which to pursue its objectives in representing the national interest. Therefore, Zhou believed, China must always be free to act in what it viewed as its best interests.[49]

In achieving equality, maintaining its independence, exercising autonomy, and determining the degree of sovereignty it possessed while yoked to the Soviet bloc, the PRC's dilemma more acutely underscored the similar struggle of bloc countries. Sharing the same aims as the

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[47]Suzanne Ogden, "The Approach of the Chinese Communists to the Study of International Law, State Sovereignty and the International System," *China Quarterly*, June 1977, No. 70, p. 315.

[48]"Memorandum of Discussion at the 285th Meeting of the National Security Council," Washington, 17 May 1956, FRUS 1955-1957 Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, pp. 163-167.

[49]Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy*, p. 260.

Soviet East European countries, the PRC identified with Poland. This kind of identification in the early post-Stalin years paved the way for direct intra-bloc involvement in 1956 and thereafter.

The Geneva Conference represented another major steppingstone in the CCP's foreign policy advancement. Supporting a peace initiative launched by the communist world in late 1953 to early 1954[50], the Soviet Union proposed a five-power conference to include the United States, France, Britain and the PRC to address the Indo-China conflict and tense international mood. On 25 January, the Soviet foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, proposed at the Berlin Conference that a five-power international conference be convened to deal with tensions in Korea and Indo-China.[51] From 26 April to 21 July 1954 the Geneva Conference heralded the PRC's new status of an emerging great power. Not only were Chinese negotiators instrumental in brokering a settlement in the Vietnam conflict, moreover, the fact that the Soviet Union made efforts to consult with the Chinese on withdrawal of troops from Korea and communist policy in Asia[52] substantially boosted China's new-found prestige. The emergence of the PRC as a power with which to be reckoned did not however escape Soviet admonition. In a comment made by the Soviet Foreign Minister, Molotov, to US Under-Secretary of State, Walter Bedell Smith, in Geneva, Molotov cautioned that China "was still a very young country, and you must also remember that China is always going to be China, she is never going to be European."[53]

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[50]Qiang Zhai,"China and the Geneva Conference of 1954," *China Quarterly*, March 1992, No. 129, p. 107.

[51]Ibid.

[52]Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power, U.S. Relations with China since 1949*, p. 123.

[53]*FRUS, 1952-54*, 14:366, 26 Feb. 1954, as cited by Foot, *The Practice of Power: U.S. Relations with*

Molotov's rather prescient comment revealed Soviet perception of China as at best a junior partner and at worst, a potentially untameable ally. For the time being, Soviet cooperation was imperative to sustain the stature of the Soviet bloc, but by 1954 the signs of potential conflict between the two were already apparent to any shrewd observer. In the following year, the PRC's stride toward achieving greater global status made greater inroads as the Chinese built up support along the periphery by reaching out to the Third World.

1955: The Spirit of Bandung in Advancing Chinese Foreign Policy Objectives

In February 1955 at a meeting of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow, speaking on Soviet foreign policy, Foreign Minister Molotov recognized the PRC as the Soviet Union's equal in the world camp of socialism and democracy.[54] As a seal acknowledging the PRC's growing global stature, Soviet recognition only fueled further developments in Chinese foreign policy. The Bandung conference in April 1955 stood as a landmark in the history of Chinese diplomacy. Leading the 29 participant countries in a re-affirmation of the struggle against colonialism and imperialism, Zhou Enlai—the leading representative of the Chinese delegation—successfully clinched the support of the Asian-African world by uniting these countries under the auspices of common interests and similar struggles. Zhou's consistent rallying call was unity among the Asian-African countries through the recognition of equality

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China since 1949, p. 123.

[54]Document of the Supreme Soviet, 8 February 1955, in Appendix, David Floyd, *Mao Against Khrushchev, A Short History of the Sino-Soviet Conflict* (London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 221.

and independence.[55]

As two pillars of Chinese foreign policy objectives, equality and independence embodied the spirit of Chinese attitude and outlook. Desiring equal treatment and recognition of its independence—the right to make its own choices, the PRC equally promulgated and propagated this theme in intra-bloc relations. By projecting the principles of peaceful coexistence onto the Asian-African world and the socialist camp, the PRC in many ways sought to be a unifying factor in a style and way independent of the Soviet Union. In other words, each major conference and political pronouncement represented one step forward in the realization of Chinese foreign policy aims. The pace of such diplomatic advances held importance for the Chinese as there was a constant consciousness within the Chinese leadership that prolonged dependence on Moscow for direction would only deprive the PRC of its own identity and independence.

Winning support along the political periphery in the Asian-African world points to the importance of establishing a range of manoeuvrability in Chinese diplomatic strategy which allows for the shifting of political alignments and expendability of short-term alliances, as in the case of Sino-Polish relations. As a means of securing support along the sidelines, "Chinese leaders described the Afro-Asian aspect of their foreign policy as an addition to the 'camp of peace and democracy' and therefore as an adjunct to the socialist camp."[56] With the eventual worsening of Sino-Soviet relations toward the end of the 1950s and into the 1960s, the PRC, having already established a foothold in relations with the Asian-African world,

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[55]Xie Yixian, ed., *Zhongguo waijioshi: Zhonghua renmin gongheguo shiqi, 1949-1979* [A diplomatic history of China: The PRC period, 1949-1979], (Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chuban she, 1988), p. 157.

[56]Michael Yahuda, *China's Role in World Affairs* (London: Redwood Burn Limited, Trowbridge & Esher, 1978), pp. 75-76.

shifted its foreign policy focus on the Third World.

Following the Bandung events in April of 1955, the May signing of the Warsaw Treaty signified another major juncture in the configuration of a post-war bipolar world. As a direct response to the establishment of NATO in 1949, the Warsaw Treaty's signatories included the countries of the Soviet bloc: Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and the USSR. A Chinese representative also attended the signing ceremony. Primarily a symbolic expression of unity, the Warsaw Treaty also formalized a legal formulation of the military alliance already established by bilateral agreements and legitimized the presence of Soviet troops in the satellite countries.[57]

By all appearances, the PRC's progress on all fronts in 1955 seemed to be advancing with an increasing international recognition of China's weight as a major global player. However, the events of 1956 would prove to be a rude awakening for the entire communist world and a test of Chinese diplomatic dexterity in European affairs.

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[57]H. Gordon Skilling, *The Governments of Communist East Europe* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1966), p. 218.

The Origins of PRC Foreign Policy toward Soviet East Europe: The Sino-Soviet Seed in Intra-bloc Relations

In many ways the Sino-Soviet context defined the scope, durability, tone, and intensity of Sino-Soviet East Europe relations. As a major ideological entity emerging in the immediate postwar period, the PRC and USSR were confronted with the task of preserving the momentum of the Communist revolution throughout fledgling communist countries whilst implementing socialist construction on the homefront. On the immediate intra-bloc agenda, the USSR with the cooperation of the PRC faced the new challenge of solidifying the leadership of the Soviet bloc and the world communist movement. The scope set by the Sino-Soviet context thereafter revolved around Beijing and Moscow as the main contenders for authority within the bloc and world communism.

In the early 1950s before Stalin's death, Moscow retained preeminence insofar as bloc authority was concerned, whereas Beijing was at best a junior partner.[58] However, after 1953 Mao was no longer content with playing a secondary role. He wanted the PRC to play a major, if not leading role in international affairs.[59] Consequently, the scope of Sino-Soviet relations changed from a relationship of Moscow's tutelage[60] of Beijing to one in which Beijing increasingly became an emerging equal. For Beijing, reaching an equal footing with Moscow raised concomitant issues of independence, sovereignty, autonomy, different paths

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[58]Ishwer Ojha, *Chinese Foreign Policy in an Age of Transition,* p. 144.

[59]See Michael Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*, p. 214.

[60]"You have greatly aided us but now we are criticizing you; perhaps this makes you feel uneasy. Our relationship resembles that between professor and student: the professor may have faults, is it not the student who should point them out? Pointing out mistakes does not mean that the [student] will drive the professor out. After all the professor is a good one." Mao Zedong, " Minutes, Conversations between Mao Zedong and Ambassador Yudin," 22 July 1958, *MZWW*, p. 330.

of socialism, matters which in effect emboldened the East European Communist leaders, namely Poland and Hungary, to contend for the independence of their own countries. Contention among equals for independence, autonomy and sovereignty thus set the scope of Sino-Soviet East European relations.

In theory, Beijing's struggle for recognition of its equal standing with Moscow fit in line with the policy of peaceful coexistence, but in practice, the ramifications of this struggle opened the way for Poland, Hungary, and the rest of the East European satellites to re-evaluate their own positions vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. In the years before Stalin's death, the PRC's secondary position in the Soviet bloc magnified the inherently unequal nature of the Soviet Union's relations with its satellites. In the post-Stalin 1950s the PRC's active presence—increasing involvement in intra-bloc affairs—exacerbated the inequalities existing in the bloc, thereby irreversibly altering the make-up of intra-bloc relations.[61]

PRC involvement in the Soviet bloc contributed significantly to changing the face of intra-bloc relations in the post-Stalinist period. In contrast to the monolithic unity that Stalin so ruthlessly enforced, the PRC in the post-Stalinist period opened the way for intra-bloc diversity by promoting national independence and autonomy in these countries. In the early post-Stalin years, PRC leadership also allowed for relatively liberal, country-specific interpretations of how to implement socialism in respective bloc countries. The PRC's presence also cleared a way for the emergence of a "socialist commonwealth"[62] by dissolving the centrist concentration of bloc authority. As an alternative centre of authority, Beijing initiated a polycentrist structure of bloc leadership; and the East European bloc countries,

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[61]Joseph Camilleri, *Chinese Foreign Policy*, p. 61.

[62]Robin Remington, "China's Emerging Role in Eastern Europe," Charles Gati, ed., *The International Politics of Eastern Europe* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976), p. 82.

namely Poland, welcomed an alternative centre to Moscow.[63] With Beijing and Moscow vying for absolute primacy in bloc leadership, East European countries, especially Poland could benefit from this struggle by supporting both Moscow and Beijing to the extent that it was conducive to carrying out the "Polish path to socialism."

The PRC's struggle for equality redefined the dynamic of intra-bloc relations by fostering the same spirit of struggle already pervading most of the Communist East European countries. To this extent, the PRC's influence in Soviet East Europe during the 1950s struck at the fundamentally weakly-rooted relations of the USSR with its satellites. In the case of Poland and Hungary, dissension and nationalism guarded against full acceptance of Soviet rule. In this context, of primary significance is how the PRC benefitted from and incorporated the nationalist sentiments of the East European countries into its East European policy.

If one of the PRC's intentions towards the Soviet bloc was to be a unifying factor[64], its actions on the contrary produced dissent and discord. Signs of growing discord in the bloc could always be ascertained from the tone of bloc discourse. The official tone of the PRC's relations with communist East Europe more often than not echoed the discourse between Beijing and Moscow. The language of communism, marked by the Marxist-Leninist dogma exhorting unity and struggle, served as a legitimating pledge, bonding together the socialist brethren. The tone of this rhetoric created a reality in which members of the socialist camp could identify with and relate to one another. It also sustained the existence of an otherwise artificial union.

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[63]Alyson J.K. Bailes, "China and Eastern Europe: A Judgment on the 'Socialist Community'," *The Pacific Review* Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 223; Robert C. Herber, "Mao and Polycentric Communism," *Orbis*, Vol. II, No. 2, Summer 1958, pp. 175-193.

[64]"Unite with fraternal countries, establish friendly relations with all countries," Mao Zedong, *MZWW*, p. 245.

Not only did the tone of Sino-Soviet East European relations echo that of Sino-Soviet relations, the intensity of these relations were fueled on different levels: ideologically, by the polemical nature of communist language[65]; personally, by deep-seated distrust, Stalin's suspicion toward Mao, Mao's pent-up grievances against Stalin[66], the mutual disrespect and dislike shared by Mao and Khrushchev for one another[67]; and politically, Mao's dislike of Stalin's patriarchal attitude, treating Sino-Soviet relations like "father-son" relations[68], his unequal treatment, though Mao could not deny that Stalin's stature in the bloc was peerless and thus added a personal prestige that Mao lacked.[69] With the Soviet marshal's death, no one in the Kremlin could replace or match Stalin's aura and personal authority. Khrushchev lacked both stature and ideological authority. Realizing this shortage, Mao challenged Khrushchev's legitimacy through the CCP's dealings with Poland.

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[65]Ishwer Ojha, *Chinese Foreign Policy in an Age of Transition*, p. 127.

[66]"Ambassador Yudin's Record of Conversations with Comrade Mao Zedong," 31 March 1956, *CWIHP Bulletin* Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 165.

[67]Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, *Uncertain Partners, Stalin, Mao and the Korean War*, p. 223.

[68]"Minutes, Conversation between Mao Zedong and Ambassador Yudin," 22 July 1958, *MZWW*, p. 324.

[69]Clement J. Zablocki, ed., *Sino-Soviet Rivalry: Implications for U.S. Policy* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), p. 17.

The degree of intensity in intra-bloc relations varied according to form. More often than not, polemics reflected attitudes and opinions, which in turn were translated into actual policy implementation. Vigorous, heated, and even combative language in the newspapers often veiled nuances in policy shifts and emphasis.[70] The intense nature of these relations, as captured in the language of policy-making, developed from a more basic source—Marxist-Leninist ideology—which in its Bolshevist brand sought to polarize, weed out, and exterminate deviants. Extremism was the normative feature of Bolshevist-styled Marxism-Leninism which eventually evolved into Stalinism, an form of political paranoia. The language and tone of Stalinism inexorably conformed communication and thinking in intra-bloc dealings to a Stalinist mould of rigidity, suspicion, secrecy, and ambiguity. A form of calculated chaos, Stalinism projected a false sense of order and security based on fear and uncertainty. For Mao, Stalin's style was exacerbating and unsettling.[71] Hence, the intensity of intra-bloc relations was simultaneously borne out of and fed by a system of language propagating a communist bipolar worldview, Stalinist extremism, power politics, and Cold War tensions.

The realm was one of high alert, war preparedness. The communist view that the postwar world order was bipolar and distinctly divided into two camps reflected a mentality in which deviants had to be found and extinguished, whilst the orthodox bore the duty of continuing the ultimate struggle to utopia. Indeed, with the spectre of the capitalist,

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[70]Jacob Karpiński, *Mowa do Ludu, Szkice o języku polityki* [A Speech to the People, Studies on the Language of Politics], (Warsaw: G. O. "Solidarni", 1989), p. 66.

[71]Goncharov, Lewis and Xue, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War*, p. 221.

imperialist West—led by the US—looming large, the Soviet bloc functioned in a world where there were only ideological friends and foes with no room for neutrality. Theirs was a vision of the world seen through the lenses of extremism, where absolutes only intensified threats and accelerated confrontation.

During the 1953-1955 period Mao Zedong sought to solidify his own position within the party, whilst Zhou Enlai, Mao's loyal executor, displayed his skills as a true diplomat winning proponents in Asian-African nations, thereby consolidating support among non-aligned countries in the intermediate zone. Within the Soviet bloc, Khrushchev went to considerable lengths in gaining Chinese support for his succession. Increasingly seeking CCP consultation on intra-bloc affairs, Khrushchev inadvertently paved the way for the PRC to reach its long sought after parity of prestige with the USSR. Gaining this recognition in one regard drove the CCP policy of bloc-building, and in another regard, was the fruit of the CCP's active transnationalism (Soviet East Europe) and internationalism (Asia, Africa, Latin America, Middle East). With this backdrop, Chinese diplomacy and in particular, policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe was eventually put to the test in the intra-bloc political structure.

CHAPTER IV

Commanding Authority: The Peak of PRC Involvement in Intra-bloc Affairs

The most significant year in intra-bloc politics was 1956. A year beset by crises in communist confidence, 1956 irreversibly altered the course and character of intra-bloc relations. As a pivotal point in the PRC's first decade of intra-bloc relations, 1956 marked the peak of PRC involvement with the Soviet bloc. At the same time, however, the events of 1956 set in motion the acceleration of divergence in Sino-Soviet cooperation, a process significantly propelled by the PRC's relations with the countries of Soviet Eastern Europe. The events of this year likewise alerted intra-bloc leaders to the undercurrent of discord and discontent permeating certain areas of socialist society as well as intra-bloc leadership. The significance of 1956 as a turning-point in the first decade of intra-bloc history can be attributed to five critical factors: 1) the weakening of supreme authority in the bloc, 2) eroding of the foundations of bloc unity, 3) growing demand for independence and autonomy among the Soviet satellites, 4) intensifying distrust between Beijing and Moscow, and 5) increasing complicity between Beijing and Warsaw. Each issue delineates a particular dimension of intra-bloc dynamics, and together all five compose a profile of how Sino-Polish relations contributed to the exacerbating of bloc discord and the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations.

The PRC's Position in the Soviet Bloc

The PRC's involvement with the Soviet bloc revolved around its relations primarily with the Soviet Union and secondarily with Soviet East Europe. In the minds of PRC policy-makers, since full trust could never be accorded the USSR, the PRC could not but cultivate ties with other fellow socialist governments. The rationale for establishing and developing intra-bloc relations is associated with a familiar pattern of Chinese diplomacy—consolidating power (united front) in order to achieve a position of power (preeminence). In the postwar period, the PRC could not remain a lone, independent state, yet at the same time, under Mao's leadership, it would not fully subject itself to the dictates of external authority.[1] Although Mao looked to Stalin for immediate ideological and financial support during the Chinese civil war and in the post-1949 period, Mao's main motive was consolidating his own power base, reconstructing the economy, ridding the new government of all GMD elements, and carving out a place for himself in shaping the history of modern China. This latter point finds particular relevance when considering the factors that shaped Mao's thinking.

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[1]"China and the Soviet Union were the closest of allies. But the relationship in reality, Mao said, was more like that of emperor and subject. "They're trying to eat us up," he said. Mao refused to be subject to anyone. History had taught him to befriend distant states and be wary of those that are near, and he continued to distrust Soviet expansionism...But Mao never allowed his complaints to become public. The legitimacy of his own revolutionary leadership was still too closely linked to Stalin." Observation made by Mao's personal physician Li Zhisui in his memoirs, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (London: Arrow Books Limited, 1994), p. 118.

Mao possessed a sense of destiny in leading China out of an ignominious past into a new phase of China under communism. The Marxist notion that man makes history and history is subject to the actions and ideas of man[2] corresponded with Mao's thinking and lent an ideological basis to Mao's view of his role in history and as the leader of his country. Under Mao's leadership, China in this period was caught in the throes of coming out of dependence and weakness and entering into a political reality that was predicated on pursuing a path of interdependence and nation-rebuilding.

The theoretical strands of Chinese foreign policy-making were oriented towards the importance of community, identification, strategy, and perceptions. As an already-formed community, Soviet Eastern Europe offered the PRC a basis on which to perpetuate and propound the shared ideology and language of socialism. As a source of identification, the countries of Soviet Eastern Europe shared with the PRC the Soviet system of government and central planning. In fact, the Soviet Union offered the only model for other socialist countries to emulate. Identifying with Marxist-Leninist thought and the international communist movement, the PRC and countries of Eastern Europe formed a socialist community by adopting Soviet ways.

As a part of the PRC's security strategy, Eastern Europe stood as a container for the USSR's authority in the bloc. Put differently, the Soviet East European bloc countries functioned as a platform of political power for the USSR. Surrounded by the Soviet satellite countries, Moscow yielded authority as the core from and around which communism evolved and revolved. As the first established socialist country—the prototype—the USSR sought

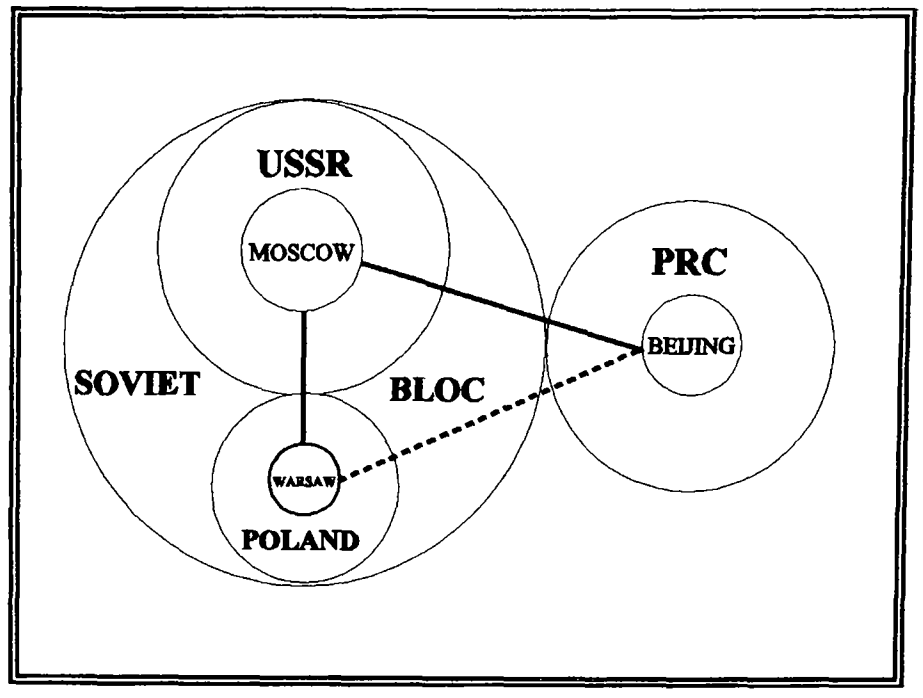
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[2]Karl Marx,"The Materialist Conception of History, 1844-47," in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 160-165.

to replicate itself in Eastern Europe. Without the Soviet East European dimension of intra-bloc relations, the impact of the Soviet threat in Europe would have been greatly limited. Fully conscious of Eastern Europe's importance to the Soviet Union, the PRC made inroads in developing its own relations with the countries of Eastern Europe. Although its primary relation was with the Soviet Union, the PRC's attention paid to its peripheral relations with the countries of Eastern Europe further confirms a deep-rooted pattern of Chinese diplomacy: engaging the centre—the central actor—whilst simultaneously cultivating the circumference—the supporting actors.

With reference to the PRC's perception of Eastern Europe, the Soviet East Europe bloc countries contributed to the PRC's process of shaping and solidifying its ideological identity. The CCP needed relations with these countries to form a community that shared a common historical past as well as similar view of revolutionary struggle against imperialism in the postwar period. In theory, this socialist fraternity helped to validate the CCP's mandate of leadership in proving that it had chosen the right ideological course paved for China's re-emergence as a powerful actor in global politics. In reality, the fact that reference to the PRC's relationship with the Soviet bloc bore a fraternal nature denoted the obligations and duties shared by brothers—trust, cooperation, mutual respect, mutual gain, and protection of mutual interests. The pivotal concept is that the PRC's security concerns embraced more than just military aid, it entailed building a relationship based on respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. The diagram on the following page not only shows how Beijing perceived its position in the Moscow-Beijing-Warsaw triangular relationship but also depicts Sino-Polish relations in terms of intra-bloc power relations.

The Moscow-Beijing-Warsaw Connection



Scheme 2: The PRC's position in intra-bloc relations

The relationship between Beijing, Moscow, and Warsaw is represented in Scheme 2 by a triangular construct with the solid lines (—) signifying key relations of authority, and the perforated line (---) denoting alternative power relations. In this scheme the circular configuration signifies the PRC's relation to the Soviet bloc in its "lean-to-one-side" policy. The positioning of each country is deliberate. The USSR's elevated position in the Soviet bloc represents its headship in the Soviet bloc and supremacy over Soviet Eastern Europe. From Moscow's perspective, the PRC, though holding a position higher than the satellites, was not on full equal standing with the USSR.

From Beijing's vantage point, Moscow was the head of the Soviet bloc and leader of the socialist camp. The CCP leadership recognized this fact partly as a matter of Stalin's stature and the Soviets' seniority in the socialist camp and partly as a means of furthering its own interests. According to records of the Polish embassy in Beijing on the deepening of Sino-Soviet relations, in response to the question of why the PRC formulated "the USSR at the head," the PRC reply[3] was as follows:

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[3]Prepared by A. Baroszek of the Polish Embassy in Beijing on 23 April 1957, these notes record reports

> In the opinion of the PRC, everything must have a head. The Soviet Union, in the PRC's opinion, is the head of the socialist camp because:
>
> a) it is the first socialist country
> b) it is the first military power of the socialist camp, whose might is feared by militarist imperialist circles
> c) it possesses the richest experiences

Recognizing the USSR's supremacy served to solidify Beijing's own standing vis-a-vis the other satellites states. Beijing's position in the bloc was advantageous in that while publicly recognizing Moscow's cardinal position in policy, the PRC in fact maintained its own independent standing subject to no authority other than its own.

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given as lectures at the Institute of Diplomacy by the director of the Department of International Relations on the guiding principles of the CCP, dedicated to the deepening of Sino-Soviet relations in relation to Voroshilov's visit to the PRC. Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives [hereafter PMFAA], Department V, Wydział [Division] I, Chiny 21, Zespół [Collection] 12, Teczka [Folder] 86, Wiązka [Binder] 4.

Joined to the Soviet bloc, yet not fully submitting itself to Moscow's authority, the PRC possessed a greater degree of independence than the satellites states to manoeuvre itself according to its own interests. It could cultivate links both in the Soviet bloc and the intermediate zone. Straddling different spheres, it accorded itself ample space for spreading influence. Unlike the Soviet satellites, the PRC was not restricted in terms of formulating an independent foreign policy, which ascribed primacy to the role of the Soviet Union but was not subject to its dictates. In this domain, Poland and the other satellites were confined within the boundaries of the Soviet foreign policy-making apparatus. Properly-positioned in the bloc, Beijing could function as an equal with Moscow while simultaneously support Polish claims for more autonomy. Towards the latter half of the 1950s, Beijing was considered an alternative centre of authority by Poland, as shown by the October 1956 events. Whether or not Beijing's standing was similarly perceived by the other satellites depends largely on the time period, a country's leadership, and the particular political climate. Sweeping generalizations would ignore the specificity of each country's policy objectives, but a pattern in actual foreign policy activities shows that during the period under review, the Polish leadership actively engaged the Chinese. In the early 1960s Albania's Enver Hoxha fervently promoted Chinese supremacy. East Germany remained a loyal Soviet ally throughout this period, whereas Romania's policy, though an irritant to Moscow, focused on exploiting Sino-Soviet differences for its own interests.[4] Moreover, when loyalties faced the real test, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia always sided with the Soviet Union.

The existence of alternative power relations were especially crucial for Poland and the PRC. For Poland, and similarly the rest of the Soviet satellites, prior to the PRC's

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[4]Edwina Moreton, "The Triangle in Eastern Europe," Gerald Segal, ed., *The China Factor* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1982), p. 135.

membership in the bloc, Moscow wielded the most influence by maintaining a centrist position of power. The PRC's involvement in the bloc, particularly after the death of Stalin, opened a new channel of authority, thereby diluting Moscow's heretofore undisputed position of preeminence. Having to contend with the added complexities that the PRC's presence brought into the socialist fold, Moscow's attention was partially diverted, consequently curtailing its influence in Poland. Poland's Gomułka and the other Soviet satellite leaders welcomed the shift to a polycentrist diffusion of power.

Equally beneficial for the PRC, relations with Poland, perceived by CCP leaders as third in the bloc hierarchy, confirmed the assumption that peripheral relations were necessary and served a particular function in PRC diplomacy. The value of such a strategy could be found on both sides. For instance, in exchange for Polish recognition of the PRC's standing as an alternative centre of ideological authority, Beijing officially recognized the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's western border. PRC acknowledgment of this geopolitical fact boosted Polish confidence in the Chinese.[5] Mao and CCP leaders perceived Gomułka's leadership as the most stable of all the other satellite countries.[6] Both countries benefited from increased trade and commerce, technological and academic and cultural exchange, and most characteristically, ideological support. Hence, the function of peripheral relations was to assure contending states that the PRC was not an isolated player, disconnected from a power

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[5]"Speech of Polish Premier Józef Cyrankiewicz in Warsaw on 12 January 1957 during the visit of Premier Zhou Enlai and Chinese delegation to Poland," PMFAA Zespół 12, Teczka 83, Wiązka 4.

[6]Roderick MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, Vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 175-176.

base, but a prominent political entity integrated into a community.

Of all the East European countries, Poland was a specific case in that the PRC and Poland shared a deep-seated streak of self-determination, characterized by repudiation of foreign authority[7] and expressed in the pursuit of independence and autonomy. For both countries national interest meant above all national independence and national security. The PRC sympathized with Poland in its pursuit of being free from Soviet dictates and governing based on Polish sovereignty. After all, the CCP leadership sought the same aims for the PRC.

From Beijing's vantage point, it was in its own interest to cultivate ties with Poland because both had something to gain from Khrushchev's weak bloc leadership; the CCP harboured designs on leading the world Communist revolution[8], and Poland sought greater independence to carry out its own socialist agenda.[9] An additional consideration for the CCP was that under the tenuous nature of its relation with the Soviet Union, the PRC could not afford to rely solely on the Soviet Union, and consequently worked on strengthening its relations with Poland and the rest of Soviet East Europe.

Even though Poland's stature in the global arena was not on par with that of the Soviet Union, its relations with the PRC nevertheless hindered the Soviet Union from achieving full supremacy and exercising absolute authority within the socialist camp. In describing the rationale behind China's interest in Soviet East Europe, Hemen Ray

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[7]Stanisław Mikołajczyk Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, "Naród Polski w Walce o Ważność i Niepodległość 1956-57'Leninowska taktyka: Jeden krok w tył—dwa kroki naprzód' " [Leninist tactics: One step backwards—two steps foward], (Naczelny Komitet Wykonawczy Polskiego Stronnictwa Ludowego, październik, 1957), Box 136, Folder 1, Mimeograph, p. 121.

[8]J.F. Brown, *The New Eastern Europe, The Khrushchev Era and After* (London: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1966, p. 165; Richard Lowenthal, "China's Impact on the Evolution of Alliances in Europe," *Adelphi Papers*, No. 33, March 1967, pp. 20-29.

[9]Ibid., pp. 169-171.

underscores the fact that, "They [CCP] regarded East European demands for greater political, economic, cultural and ideological freedom as a fortuitous opportunity to strengthen and expand China's influence and reduce the Soviet position not only in East Europe but also in the world communist movement."[10] With the undermining of Soviet authority, the foundations of bloc unity were inevitably put to the test.

The sequence of events unfolding in 1956 were both cause and consequence of the extremely complex nature of intra-bloc relations. The nature of these relations is most clearly revealed in how bloc members responded to the following events and the subsequent impact of these events on intra-bloc politics: in February, Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Soviet Congress and the destalinization campaign; in April and May, the promulgation of the Hundred Flowers movement; in June, the Poznań riots; in October, Gomułka becomes First Secretary of the PUWP and revolt breaks out in Hungary; in November, the presence of Soviet troops in Budapest ignites Hungary's Revolution of 1956, Tito's Pula speech; and in December, the Chinese rebuttal to Tito's Pula speech appears as an editorial in the *People's Daily* entitled, "More on the historical experience of the proletarian dictatorship." These particular events occurred at crucial junctures throughout 1956 as listed in Table I on the following page. The way in which the CPSU, CCP, and PUWP reacted shows the extent to which preserving national priorities decidedly influenced foreign policy-making.

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[10]Hemen Ray, *China and East Europe* (London: Sangam Books, 1988), p. 8.

Table I: Sequence of Relevant Events in 1956

Date	Event
25 February	Khrushchev's Secret Speech at the 20th Soviet Congress, Moscow; promulgation of the destalinization campaign
27 February	Mao's speech 'On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People' at the meeting of the Supreme State Conference, Beijing
5 April	In response to Khrushchev's secret speech, publication of *People's Daily* editorial 'On the Historical Experience of the Proletarian Dictatorship
25 April	Mao's speech 'On the Ten Great Relationships' and proposed policy of 'Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend.'
27 April	The CCP CC issues a directive to launch a rectification campaign against bureaucratism, sectarianism, and subjectivism in CCP
1 May to 7 June	The climax of the 'Hundred Flowers' movement
27 June	Petofi group of Hungarian intellectuals openly attacks the government of Matyas Rakosi, leader of Hungarian Communists
28 June	Workers' uprising in Poznań, Poland
18 July	7th Plenum of the Polish Communist Party; Rakosi resigns, and replaced by Ernest Gero
19-21 October	Gomułka admitted to 8th Plenum; Khrushchev delegation to Warsaw failed to prevent Gomułka's becoming First Secretary; Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in Moscow secretly conferring on Poland
23-24 October	Revolt breaks out in Hungary; Nagy becomes prime minister; Soviet troops invade Hungary
31 October	Soviet troops return again to Hungary to quell revolt
1 November	Nagy withdraws Hungary from the Warsaw Pact and declares its neutrality; new Soviet troops enter Hungary; Nagy replaced by Kadar; Chinese government issues statement supporting invasion
6 November	Zhou Enlai cables Kadar congratulating him on the establishment of his Hungarian Worker-Peasant Revolutionary government and announcing that China will send him material aid
11 November	Tito's Pula speech attributes revolts in Hungary and Poland to fundamental defects in the Soviet system
10-15 November	Central Committee's second plenum: Liu Shaoqi reports on Eastern Europe
2 December	People's Daily editorial 'More on the Historical Experience of the Proletarian Dictatorship,' first exposition of theory of contradictions between leaders and led in a socialist state

Although bloc unity was one of the main priorities in intra-bloc relations, for individual bloc states, it was not the most fundamental issue. Preservation of bloc unity led by Soviet leadership was crucial only to the extent that it served the furtherance and realization of Chinese and Polish national interests. Throughout 1956 the main challenge for the Chinese and the Poles was reconciling national interests—independence and autonomy—with bloc unity. Bloc unity was desirable only because it was a vital condition for the fulfilling of respective national interests, and not simply for the sake of maintaining socialist camp solidarity.

Moreover, the unfurling of events throughout 1956 in many ways served to peel away the multiple layers of political rhetoric to expose the motives and intentions that lay at the heart of Chinese foreign policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe. Without the catalytic sequence of events, it is doubtful whether the Sino-Soviet split would have occurred when it did, instead of later. All the essential factors of an impending split were present, though it was only a matter of sooner or later before the development of Sino-Soviet relations would face some major trials. As such, a catalyst was needed to set the process of the rupture into motion. 1956 demonstrated that it was impossible to reconcile national independence with the maintaining of bloc unity. At the root of this irreconcilable imbroglio lay the matter of authority in the bloc, for it was only a Stalinist brand of authority that could act as a cohesive element in joining the CCP together with the CPSU, PUWP, and the other Communist parties.

The Question of Authority: Lack of Leadership Leads to Lack of Authority

The death of Stalin in 1953 diluted the potency of totalitarian rule in the bloc. Stalin stood as the sole authority in bloc leadership, the axis around which intra-bloc affairs revolved. Stalin's death left his successors in the Kremlin as well as Mao and the CCP leadership with the task of re-defining authority in post-Stalin intra-bloc relations. The vacuum of bloc leadership had to be filled. The question was could it be filled, and if so, who could fill it?

On 14 February 1956 the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union convened in Moscow. In this session of the Congress, CPSU First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev took decisive steps in articulating the goal and direction of Soviet and bloc foreign policy in addition to setting a new post-Stalin course in the Soviet leadership. Khrushchev began with a report stating the principle of peaceful coexistence as the "fundamental principle of Soviet foreign policy," and declaring that "war is not fatalistically inevitable."[11] On 25 February at a closed session of the Twentieth Congress, Khrushchev launched the destalinization campaign by exposing Stalin's treachery and denouncing the cult of personality. Khrushchev's speech—a watershed event—sent shockwaves throughout the communist world. Initially, most of the bloc communist parties did not know how to react, and in the case of the Chinese and Polish parties, the secret speech only sharpened already-existing internal rifts in these parties. Some even questioned the legitimacy of the communist cause.[12] For Mao and the CCP, Khrushchev's denigration of Stalin had grave and far-reaching

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[11] Khrushchev's 20th Soviet Congress Report, Appendix, David Floyd, *Mao Against Khrushchev, A Short History of the Sino-Soviet Conflict* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 228.

[12] Donald Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 43.

implications for the international communist movement in general and for the CCP in particular. With regard to the socialist camp, nullification of Stalin's leadership called into question the foundations of communist authority and leadership, strategy and tactics, policy and implementation. It was furthermore a direct attack against Stalinist-style politics, a model that in differing ways, shapes, and forms was already ingrained in the Soviet satellite leadership structure and likewise heavily influenced Mao's leadership style.

The reaction of the Chinese Communist Party focused first and foremost on the position of Mao and the repercussions of Khrushchev's secret speech on Mao's leadership style.[13] If distinct parallels could be drawn between Stalin and Mao, Mao's standing could seriously be threatened. The CCP was well aware of this, and therefore handled the policy of destalinization with utmost discretion, keeping Politburo discussions strictly behind closed doors, and waited until 5 April to release their response in the form of a theoretical analysis of the Stalinist period entitled, "On Historical Experience Concerning the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." In this editorial the Chinese leadership appropriated destalinization in the context of the history of mass struggle and the need to learn from past mistakes.

The CCP's official stance could not veil the reeling effect that Khrushchev's speech had on the CCP's internal reactions. The speech raised various issues ranging from the ideological implications of destalinization to a "Khrushchevian" direction in bloc leadership to the manner in which the Soviets handled the matter without consulting the Chinese, a move that dealt the strongest blow to an already fragile relationship. This started a gradual erosion of authority in the bloc from what the Chinese perceived as a serious *faux pas* committed by the Soviets— Khrushchev's failure to consult with Mao and the CCP before

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[13]Roderick MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution,* Vol. 1, p. 44.

openly exposing Stalin. The point of contention lay firstly in recognizing, even if only as a matter of formality, the equal standing which Mao and the PRC had, albeit according to Chinese perceptions, achieved vis-a-vis the Soviet Union since Stalin's death. The Soviets' oversight was taken by the Chinese as a failure in recognizing Chinese equality in making major leadership decisions related to intra-bloc affairs.

The Chinese grievance, one of many, against the Soviets in the handling of the secret speech stemmed from the problem of perception and assumption. Perceiving themselves as equals, the Chinese assumed and even expected that the Soviets would treat them accordingly. However, for the Soviets, the Chinese were still a junior partner, not yet mature enough to be included in such a critical leadership decision. Besides, what Mao perceived of himself and the CCP at this stage could hardly have made a difference to the Kremlin.[14] It is no wonder that in 1958 one of the grievances Mao levelled against the CPSU was the "paternalistic attitude" and the "father-son relationship" that so characterized Sino-Soviet relations.[15] The Soviet response, however, was that such a relationship was "not of European but of Asian style."[16] It is clear then that perception played an integral part in shaping attitudes for both sides. In failing to meet the Chinese on a most basic level, each subsequent move made by the Soviets only added to the accumulation of grievances the Chinese already

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[14]Ishwer Ojha, *Chinese Foreign Policy in an Age of Transition* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 123.

[15]"Minutes, Conversation between Mao Zedong and Soviet Ambassador Yudin," 22 July 1958, *Mao Zedong waijiao wenxuan* [Selected Diplomatic Writings of Mao Zedong] (hereafter *MZWW*), p. 324.

[16]Ibid.

harboured against them.

Khrushchev's handling of the secret speech not only offended Chinese sensibilities, but also lacked full support within the CPSU. What was perceived as a Soviet affront against the Chinese could also be counted as one against the Kremlin leadership. Caught in the midst of a power struggle, Khrushchev had to forge a new leadership path for himself by clearly distancing himself and the bloc leadership from the Stalinist past.[17] In so doing, he sought to legitimize not only his own authority but more importantly, to return power back to party leadership from one-man rule. By so openly and explicitly denouncing Stalin, Khrushchev opened up to discussion and criticism the Soviet system as a whole and set in motion systemwide processes of political conflict and organizational change.[18]

By exposing the Stalinist nature of the Soviet system, Khrushchev placed the bloc in a very vulnerable situation, where the foundations of ideological and political leadership could be undermined. In attacking Stalin, Khrushchev exposed the vulnerabilities of the Soviet system, the very system upon which the Soviet bloc existed and functioned, and by implication, the Stalinist element in Marxist-Leninist ideology, if not Marxism-Leninism itself. It raised questions as to the proper model of leadership, the socialist struggle, the international communist cause, and the future of the socialist camp vis-a-vis the capitalist West. The crucial issue in all of this is that the mechanisms of political control and ideological inculcation in large measure lost their validity and viability. Authority within the camp no

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[17]Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 187.

[18]Mark Lupher, *Power Restructuring in China and Russia* (Oxford: Westview Press Inc., 1996), p. 145.

longer remained an indisputable fact. It was subject to open criticism, challenge, and contention. The totalitarian nature of authority embodied in Stalin and then denigrated by Khrushchev lost its potency as a source of consolidation. Politically and ideologically decapitated, the bloc had lost its nerve centre, the effects of which were irreparable. The Chinese realized this, and the Polish response to a certain degree fulfilled Chinese fears of impending dissolution.

Concerning the Polish reaction to Khrushchev's secret speech, Edward Ochab, who from March to October 1956 served as first secretary of the Central Committee of the PUWP, recounts the following:

> It was like being hit over the head with a hammer. We'd already been aware of various deformities or crimes, but not on such a scale, and not such outrageous ones. Khrushchev's speech was a sudden blow for everyone, and required a decision: do we support the general trend of resolutions of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, or do we opt for passing over in deathly silence the crimes of Beria and Stalin? The cost of revealing them was obviously great in the Soviet Union, and in Poland it could be even greater. The question was whether our leadership had the right to pass them over in silence, rather than shooting those rapids as quickly as possible, telling the bitter truth the way we saw it and not losing hope of emerging into clear waters...I thought we had no right to conceal those crimes and no right to conceal what had happened at the Twentieth Congress, in spite of the complications that would inevitably ensue and the shock for the Polish party, indeed not only for the party, but for the whole of society.[19]

Shortly after the Twentieth Congress during which time all Communist parties received copies of the speech, the Polish party decided—alone in the bloc—to disseminate a text [of Khrushchev's secret speech] locally.[20] However, not long after an official printing of 3,000 copies, numerous private duplicates reached press organizations, such as *Le Monde, Herald*

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[19]Edward Ochab in an interview with Teresa Torańska, in her book, *Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets* (New York: Harper &Row, 1987), p. 55. For Polish reactions to Khrushchev's secret speech, see also L. Gluchowski, "Khrushchev's Secret Speech," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 10, March 1998, pp. 44-49.

[20]Tony Kemp-Welch, "Khrushchev's 'Secret Speech' and Polish Politics: The Spring of 1956," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 1996, pp. 181-206.

Tribune, and *New York Times*.[21] Copies of the speech could also be found on the Polish black market. At a Comecon meeting in Moscow in June of the same year, Ochab was strongly rebuked by Soviet officials for allowing publication of the speech.

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[21]Ibid.

Whatever intentions the Poles may have had in publicizing the speech, the act in itself shows the lack of control that already seeped into communist channels of communication. By publicizing the speech in Poland, the Polish leadership spread on a large-scale the uncertainty and questions raised by the secret speech. Instead of bolstering bloc solidarity by confining the contents of the secret speech within party ranks, the Poles instead, contributed to the erosion of Soviet authority in Poland by sowing the seeds of doubt. Discussing the impact of Khrushchev's secret speech on the Polish Communists, Tony Kemp-Welch reveals that, "Confidential reports from the provinces now available in archives show a picture of growing confusion and doubt."[22] Polish activity in this incident propagated the shockwaves of the secret speech and disseminating doubt. The move on the part of the Poles exposed the fragility of bloc solidarity, and even in the Polish Communist ranks, called into question the authority of the PUWP.[23]

The repercussions of Khrushchev's secret speech left the socialist camp devoid of any direction in terms of how to proceed in step with the destalinization campaign. It was one thing to cleanse the past of Stalinist iniquities, but it was yet another task to articulate a new leadership path and direction for the bloc. Mao and the CCP attempted to fill this void by regaining control over the ideological direction of bloc leadership. On 5 April the *People's Daily* published Mao's "On the Historical Experience of the Proletarian Dictatorship," the CCP Politburo's response to the destalinization campaign. The contents of this editorial are as important as the intent behind it. With respect to content, the focus of the editorial concentrated on combatting the re-emergence of the "cult of the individual" in party life. The

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[22]Ibid., p. 189.

[23]Paweł Machcewicz, *Polska rok 1956* [Poland 1956] (Warsaw: Mówią wieki, 1993), p. 20.

Chinese praised the "courageous self-criticism" of the CPSU of "its past errors"and recognized it as a "demonstration of the high level of principle in inner-party life and the great vitality of Marxism-Leninism."[24] The article elaborates on the historical struggle against the creation of a "cult of the individual" as a process that demands cooperation between the leaders and the masses based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and democratic centralism.

The way and timing in which the CCP made public its reaction to the secret speech shows a three-fold intent: 1) carrying out damage control, 2) filling in the ideological vacuum, and 3) demonstrating leadership skills. As three aspects of a desperately needed face-saving strategy, each one points to the Chinese intention of publicly salvaging the severely damaged appearance of bloc unity and privately, shoring up support and stature among the bloc countries by restoring some sense of order and ideological guidance. In carrying out damage control, the first step taken by the CCP Politburo was to show public support for Moscow by withholding an official pronouncement for two months. It was Mao's view that the Chinese had to display some degree of public support for Khrushchev, otherwise not only would the PRC's public opposition possibly cause dissension with the communist camp, it would make the bloc even more vulnerable to the speculation of the West, a point that was deliberately mentioned in the editorial. Behind closed doors, however, the Chinese made their objections known in inter-Party discussions.[25] As more archival evidence comes to light, it is clear that the seeds of the Sino-Soviet split were sown during

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[24]"On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", *People's Daily*, 5 April 1956, Appendix, David Floyd, *Mao Against Khrushchev, A Short History on the Sino-Soviet Conflict*, pp. 231-234.

[25]Strong and Keyssar, "Anna Louise Strong: Three Interviews with Mao Zedong," *China Quarterly*, September 1985, No. 13, p. 503.

this time. In a secret letter to the Soviet Party dated 10 September 1960, the Chinese Communists are alleged to have stated that the "real differences" between themselves and Khrushchev began when, in his secret speech to the 20th Congress, Khrushchev denied Stalin's positive role without any previous discussions with the other Communist parties.[26]

A major blow to bloc unity, the secret speech not only stirred up contention between Beijing and Moscow, it created an ideological gap in bloc leadership. Exposing Stalin in some ways constituted exposing the dearth of ideological authority both in the Kremlin and the bloc. The *People's Daily* editorial tried to put into proper ideological context the role of Stalin in the development of the international communist movement. The CCP attempted to assign meaning to Khrushchev's speech by adjusting the ideological framework of Marxist-Leninism to explain major mistakes made by leaders such as Stalin. As a means of justifying Stalin's mistakes, the ideological postulate propounded by the Chinese granted political redemption for Stalin's sins and more importantly, restricted Mao from wielding his own Stalinist tendencies.

The effect of purporting this ideological justification for Stalin's mistakes and the CPSU's decision to expose them boosted Beijing's stature as a potentially new source of ideological authority and bloc leadership. As Odd Arne Westad argues, to Mao,

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[26]Donald Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1960*, p. 42.

"Khrushchev's speech was a golden opportunity not only to restate China's past and present relationship with the Soviet Union, but also to sanction his and the party's turn to more radical policies since the start of 1955."[27] Ideological authority legitimized political leadership within the bloc. After all, the existence of the bloc was fundamentally based on ideology as the uniting bond of bloc fraternity. In the Chinese view, the leader who possessed command over the ideological leadership of the bloc, likewise possessed the authority to lead the bloc. It was therefore in Beijing's interest at the time to follow a dual policy of supporting Moscow publicly and criticizing it privately. Beijing's public support of Moscow on the one hand helped to maintain some degree of solidarity in the face of the West and the international communist movement. Its private criticisms against Moscow, on the other hand, elevated its own position in the eyes of the Soviet satellite leaders, and forced Moscow to treat the PRC as an equal. This goal—Moscow's treatment of Beijing as an equal—governed the PRC's Soviet East European policy throughout the second half of the 1950s. The adverse effect of this policy, however, would eventually manifest itself as the year progressed.

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[27]Odd Arne Westad, "Mao on Sino-Soviet Relations: Conversations with the Soviet Ambassador," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995-1996, p. 157.

The Direction of Domestic Policy: A Hundred Flowers Blooming on the Homefront

Riding on the progress made in the first Five Year Plan (1952-1956), in early 1956 Mao's plans to continue with uninterrupted collectivization and industrialization were scaled back to make way for a period of political consolidation.[28] The process of consolidation was directed at the increased recruitment of intellectuals into the CCP as a way of rejuvenating a sense of party unity for the purpose of accelerating the collectivization campaign in the rural areas. By adding intellectuals into the party ranks, the party apparatus gained not only technical know-how, but also increased control of any forms of opposition toward the party's policies. Handling the intellectuals proved to be a task requiring time and tact. At a conference on intellectuals from 14-20 January 1956, Zhou gave a speech signalling a new attitude of relaxation towards intellectuals. In February at a conference in Yinian Tang, Zhou's speech took on more tangible form when "Let a hundred schools contend" initially became the CCP's science policy. It was on 25 April in a speech "On the Ten Great Relationships" that Mao publicly proposed the policy of "Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools contend." Shortly thereafter, on 2 May in a speech to the Supreme State Conference, Mao reiterated the call for greater intellectual and artistic freedom in order to launch this policy. Three weeks later on 25 May the director of the CCP's propaganda department, Lu Dingyi publicly enunciated the Hundred Flowers policy.

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[28]Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 284.

From its inception the Hundred Flowers campaign was a way of separating the "wheat from the tares," discerning those who were or were not pro-CCP. The backlash of the campaign caught Mao off guard by exposing how much he had underestimated his critics and the feeble public base upon which the CCP was standing. The campaign gained even more importance in the backdrop of the 20th Soviet Congress and its residual effects on intra-party morale and unity. As consolidation was needed in the case of intra-bloc politics, the CCP likewise had to further consolidate and even expand its power domestically.[29] With unity as a central factor in the Chinese power structure, absorbing or disenfranchising all forms of opposition was a top priority in the process of spreading CCP influence. Another important result of this process was the phasing out of the system of one-man management and emergence of party control over China's industrial system.[30] In principle, under the auspices of the "factory-manager (director) responsibility under the leadership of the Party committee,"[31] party control was consolidated in factories, plants, and other areas of the industrial sector, a deliberate move in extending influence and control over plant administration down to labor unions, workers and their off-work activities. However, as the Hundred Flowers campaign unfolded, criticism of the party by intellectuals dealt a severe blow to party morale. The issue of the Hundred Flowers campaign struck at the heart of CCP authority and indeed, that of Mao. Coming under fire, the CCP's image, authority, and leadership were tarnished. The sleight against the CCP gains even more significance when

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[29]Peter R. Moody, *The Politics of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party in China* (Connecticut: The Shoe String Press Inc., 1973), p. 101.

[30]Ibid., p. 285; see also Shiping Zheng, *Party vs. State in Post-1949 China, The Institutional Dilemma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 84.

[31]Ibid., p. 286.

seen in the sequence of incidents that afflicted the bloc as a whole in the following months.

Unlikely Partner: Poland's Pivotal Role

The destalinization campaign set the bloc on an irreversible course toward fragmentation. Among the Soviet East European countries, the effects of destalinization most clearly and swiftly manifested themselves in Poland. The conditions allowing the immediate impact of destalinization to occur in Poland were already in place before Khrushchev released his secret speech in 1956. To begin with, stalinization never thoroughly penetrated Polish society. The height of stalinization emerged in the immediate post-war period from 1948 to 1954. During this time, "home communists," (nationalist communist) such as Władysław Gomułka, Zenon Kliszko, and Marian Spychalski were purged from power, and replaced by Stalinist "puppets," the foremost being Bolesław Bierut, who came to power by the machinations of Moscow. Holding the title of President and PUWP First Secretary, Bolesław Bierut did Moscow's bidding in tandem with Hilary Minc, the chief of economic planning, and Jakub Berman, the ideological specialist.[32] Under the leadership of Muscovites, the Polish people were subject to Stalinist tactics with a Polish face—police terror and political purges. However, though such Stalinist tendencies existed, sovietization of Poland never fully found roots in Polish soil.

On a fundamental level, Poles have historically possessed a deep-seated distrust

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[32]Bogdan Szajkowski, *Marxist Governments, A World Survey.* Vol. 3 Mozambique-Yugoslavia (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1981), pp. 559-560.

toward Russia and Soviet ways. On an economic level, although the Polish leadership followed a policy of massive development in heavy industry, the Soviet policy of agricultural collectivization was never wholly embraced nor implemented by the Polish leadership. On a political level, Polish Muscovite communists had to contend not only with "home communists" but also with the Roman Catholic Church, a visible and active bastion of anti-communist sentiment. As to control over the military, Konstantin Rokossovskii, a Polish-born Russian, was the USSR's pointman in the Polish military leadership. With Moscow-supported Poles holding positions of power, resistance against Soviet control by the Polish people was staunch. After Stalin's death in March 1953, this resistance continued to ferment from the undercurrent of dissidence that grew with the curtailing of police terror after Stalin's death.

Signs of dissidence did not go unnoticed by the West. In fact, recognition by the US and Great Britain of a slight change in Poland's post-Stalin political climate contributed to increased American and British overtures toward Poland. The British Ambassador to Warsaw, Sir Andrew Noble, held that a definite Polish policy was emerging in Warsaw, and the Western powers, particularly the United States and United Kingdom, should take advantage of the post-Geneva Conference relaxation of East-West tensions to support and encourage Warsaw's independent policy, thus weakening Soviet domination of Poland.[33] In response to Noble's observations, the US State Department expressed the following:

> The Department feel with Sir Andrew that the overwhelming majority of Poles are still anti-Communist and deserving and potentially very useful allies of the Free World (although continued Communist rule may change this situation more rapidly than the Ambassador now foresees). Moreover, not only is Poland the Soviet Union's most important East European satellite, politically and strategically, but it is also clear that American policy towards the Warsaw regime is closely linked to our relations with the USSR and can affect and influence these relations in many ways. For exactly this reason it is essential that the shadow of the recent

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[33]"Instruction from the Department of State to the Embassy in Poland, American Relations with Poland," Washington, D.C., 26 March 1956, *FRUS 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe (Washington, D.C.: US GPO, 1990), p. 26.

"thaw" in Poland not be accepted as the substance of a genuine Soviet withdrawal.[34]

The State Department's recognition of Poland as the USSR's most important political and strategic satellite confirms two issues. Inasmuch as Poland was in a position to influence Soviet-US relations, it was also a foothold for Western infiuence in the Soviet bloc, be it through diplomatic, charitable, commercial, or other channels. Being the focus of attention by the West and the PRC, Poland was a decisive factor in tipping the balance of power in the East-West relations. Though functioning under Moscow's dictates, Poland still proved to be an independent player when compared to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, or Bulgaria. As an independent player, Poland did not cling to binding loyalties. As long as the "Polish road to socialism" could be realized, a relation advantageous to Polish national interests was a relation worth cultivating. Both the Chinese and the Americans realized that gaining the Poles meant gaining key access to Moscow.

For the US, access to Moscow via Poland meant availing the American government of a way to implement incremental forms of democraticization in Poland through diplomatic, commercial, and cultural channels with the intended effect of pulling Poland out of the Soviet fold as a way of undermining Moscow's authority. In so doing, the Americans would not only gain an ally in the socialist camp, but also secure more influence in the rest of the Soviet East European countries in order to exploit existing dissidence, anti-communist sentiment, and economic instability. For the Chinese, gaining Poland meant finding a willing partner within the bloc to play a supporting role in Beijing's bid for more influence in bloc affairs. Winning over Poland represented a significant step in spreading its influence throughout the rest of the Soviet East Europe. When expounding on China's attitude toward the Eastern European

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[34]Ibid.

countries, Mao quite often mentioned the Polish situation and recommended to the other fraternal countries to "do the work of Poland,"[35] in other words, to follow the Polish pattern. For the USSR, without Warsaw's support Moscow would not be able to forge a partnership of such strategic and political importance with any of the other satellites. Thus, for the Chinese and Americans alike, any attempt at dislodging Moscow's power could not be effectively achieved without first winning over the Poles.

Second, given Poland's crucial position in the Soviet bloc, it served as a gauge of shifting tendencies in intra-bloc politics. In fact, Poland's reactions to changes in bloc leadership clearly affected intra-bloc dynamics as was to be the case in October and November of 1956. Realizing Poland's importance, Allen Dulles stated, "...Poland has been most seriously affected by the development of the destalinization campaign. This campaign had gone to greater lengths there than in any other satellites, ..."[36] What the CIA could accomplish through Poland as the aperture into the underside of intra-bloc relations in an indirect way, it could not do so in a direct way in its relations with the Soviet Union. The US rationale hedged its strategy of exploitation on the realization that Poland was a key player in intra-bloc relations and in US-Soviet relations and on the assumption that Poland would be open to Western overtures.

The Poles were open. In spite of the Polish leadership's proclivity toward Moscow, there were still many Poles within the leadership ranks who supported dialogue with the West. With independence and autonomy outweighing loyalty to Moscow as a primary

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[35]Luo Yisu, "1956 'Bolan shijian' he zhongguo de zhengce" [1956 'The Polish Incident' and Chinese Policy], *Waijiao xueyuan xuebao* [Journal of the Institute of Diplomacy], Beijing, March 1997, pp. 37-44.

[36]"Memorandum of Discussion at the 285th Meeting of the National Security Council," Washington, 17 May 1956, *FRUS 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, pp. 163-167.

objective of Polish leadership in general, certain levels of the Polish leadership were keen on improving relations with the West, especially the US. As one dispatch from the US Embassy in Poland to the State Department reveals, the Polish Ambassador to the US, Winiewicz, in a dinner conversation conveyed the following:

> During the conversation, Winiewicz remarked that the "trouble" with Westerners, especially Americans, is that they rarely, almost never, appreciate the fact that the regime is not composed entirely of "agents of Moscow" who do only Moscow's bidding. He said that there are official elements, one hundred percent Polish, who felt that, regardless of the complexion of the regime, they, as patriotic Poles, must do what they can in existing difficult circumstances for the good of the Polish people...He went on to say that the Polish people are not completely pawns of Moscow and that a similar situation exists in other Soviet bloc countries, mentioning Communist China particularly. He said there was an awakening in Moscow to the fact that Moscow must give more consideration to the nationalist aspirations of the various "so-called" satellite peoples.[37]

Polish openness toward the West continued and even grew more direct in the first half of 1956 as evidenced by US Embassy observations in Warsaw,

> Despite his protest and objections as reported in separate messages, themes of Winiewicz's remarks were: Great changes are taking place in Poland, other Soviet orbit countries which the West and particularly USA should recognize as warranting adjustments in their policies and attitudes toward Poland; that Polish government is sincerely desirous improving relations with USA; that Poland cannot and should not sever its friendly ties with the USSR; and that there can be no return to status quo ante conditions in Poland. These are not new themes with Winiewicz, but he belabored his points stronger than ever. He has been talking in similar vein with some other Chiefs of Mission.[38]

In sending out clear signals to the West that Poland welcomed improved relations with the US, the Polish Ambassador's comments confirmed the existence of differing views within the PUWP. Split mainly into two groups, the Natolin (Stalinist) group and the Puławy

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[37]"Dispatch from the Embassy in Poland to the Department of State," Warsaw, 25 July 1955, No. 27, *FRUS 1955-1957,* Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, p. 50.

[38]"Telegram from the Embassy in Poland to the Department of State," Warsaw, 18 May 1956, Telegram 60, *FRUS 1955-1957,* p. 168.

(reform/nationalist) group, the PUWP in mid-1956 was faced with an internal power struggle, the outcome of which did not become clear until October. Amidst the backdrop of relaxation in Poland's political climate, different sectors of Polish society found ways to express their discontent with the harsh realities of daily life as well as the government.

The Jolt in June: Poznań Uprising

In June 1956 in the western city of Poznań the unleashing of unrest among workers served as a catalyst for anti-Soviet, anti-regime, and anti-communist demonstrations. In response to sudden price increases of food and other consumer goods and wage cuts, workers of the Zispo (J. Stalin Metal Factory) sent a delegation to Warsaw to make their grievances and demands known to the central authorities. The delegation allegedly delivered an ultimatum that continuation of the status quo would result in demonstrations in Poznań,[39] and if the Polish authorities did not respond by 28 June, the workers would begin strikes.[40] Strikes and demonstrations were planned with the full knowledge of a large foreign presence attending the International Poznań Fair taking place in June. It was the intention of the strikers to bring their grievances to the attention of the visiting foreigners.

In the early morning of 28 June at approximately 6:30 am, the main siren of the Zispo

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[39]"Telegram from the Embassy in Poland to the Department of State," Warsaw, 2 July 1956, *FRUS 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, pp. 185-186. See also, Flora Lewis, *The Polish Volcano* (London, 1959) and for a well-detailed account in Polish, Paweł Machcewicz, *Polska rok 1956* (Warsaw: Mówią wieki, 1993).

[40]Paweł Machcewicz, *Polska rok 1956*, p. 83.

blared, signalling the beginning of the workers' protest. Workers of the Zispo were joined by workers from other factories as the protestors moved toward the centre of the city. According to some reports, the workers demanded freedom for Zispo delegation and leaders who led the strike which had been planned a few days earlier and as a result were reportedly imprisoned.[41] Among the demonstrators could be heard such slogans as: "We are hungry," "We want bread," "Down with the red bourgeoisie," "Down with the Bolsheviks," "Freedom," "Down with the Russians," etc.[42] Along the way red flags and flags of the USSR were destroyed and trampled on. The mood of the demonstrations swelled to religious proportions as cries of "We want God, "God in school," and religious songs were sung and heard by the main group of protestors when passing the Church of St. Marcin along Red Army St. A large number of students and children were among the crowd of several thousands.

The mood of the demonstrators grew visibly tense as they approached the building of the PUWP Voivodeship Committee. Vincent Kraska, the secretary of the Committee, tried to calm the protestors down but to no avail.[43] As the crowd of protestors grew (estimates of up to 20,000[44]), it began to proceed toward the prison building on Młyńska St. in order to release the Zispo delegation leaders. From there the protestors headed directly to the Voivodeship Department of Public Security (known in Polish as UB[45]) on Kochanowski St.

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[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid., p. 88.

[43]Ibid., p. 94.

[44]Ibid.

[45]UB (Urząd Bezpieczeństwa) is the Polish term for "Secret Police."

to demand the release of the delegates. At a certain point explosive rifleshots rang out and thus began a siege of the UB building which lasted several hours. Secret police had openly fired on the demonstrators, who had erected barricades in front of the UB building. Polish military forces—10th and 19th tank divisions, 4th and 5th infantry divisions, over 400 tanks and 10,000 soldiers—were eventually brought in to quell the uprising.[46] According to official Public Security reports, the clashes in Poznań left more than 70 dead, over 200 wounded, and nearly 250 were arrested.[47]

Taking measures to shift the focus of the riots away from the regime, Polish officials later that day blamed imperialist elements for inciting agitation and acknowledged the clashes as yet another display of imperialist tactics to divide the socialist camp.[48] Although the Polish leadership was able to contain the unrest that day, the Poznań incident stirred up much uneasiness in Poland and the bloc. At the general session of the seventh plenum of the PUWP from 18 to 28 July, the official statement attributed the uprising in Poznań to bureaucratism as the source of the government's mishandling of the workers' demands. Internally, the power struggle between the Natolin and Puławy groups grew even more intense.

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[46]Paweł Machcewicz, *Polska rok 1956*, p. 101.

[47]Ibid., p. 102.

[48]Liu Zhuyan and Liu Bangyi, *Three Occurrences of Threat in Post-war Poland* [Bolan zhanhou de sanci weiji], (Beijiing: World Knowledge Press, 1992), CCP Internal circulation, p. 71.

Within the bloc Moscow watched with anxiety the growing instability and mood of rebellion in Poland. The Poznań incident signified not only the Polish people's dissatisfaction with working conditions and the difficult economic situation in the country as a whole, the violent nature of the clashes exposed the degree of anger Poles bore toward the ruling regime, the Soviet Union and its influence in Poland, and most of all, their desire for independence. It also convinced many Poles that the only effective response to all that had happened was to maintain a hard and uncompromising stance toward the authorities whose only argument was the use of force.[49] The message to Moscow hence conveyed that the Polish people were not willing to tolerate excessive Soviet control. The fact that the mood and tone among the demonstrators contained a religious, almost messianic element bespoke a collective desire of Poles that Poland as a country would no longer remain an "isolated society," insulated from the outside world.[50] The atmosphere enshrouding the Poznań demonstrations emerged from a growing polarization of *us* versus *them*, as if the objective of the demonstrators had transcended the obtaining of tangible demands to a realm of releasing Poland from political and spiritual bondage. The residual effect of the Poznań demonstrations lingered well into autumn and decidedly set the stage for the impending emergence of a strong, pro-Poland communist leadership.

The Poznań incident also confirmed and contributed to the effects of destalinization on the decline of authority as a totalitarian tool. Division within the Polish leadership ranks mirrored the situation in Moscow and Beijing. Division bred fragmentation. Khrushchev's

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[49]Paweł Machcewicz, *Polska rok 1956*, p. 134.

[50]Ibid., p. 89.

initiation of the destalinization campaign was aimed at consolidating his own power base. Similarly, in the Chinese case, criticism from the Hundred Flowers campaign and Mao's reaction to it in the form of the Anti-rightist campaign served to weed out anti-party elements, a necessary step for the CCP and its head, Mao Zedong, to buttress their power. Unable to avoid the rippling effect, the Polish leadership in the wake of the Poznań revolt was headed for an impending, open power clash. Propelled by destalinization and compounded by domestic factors, such as poor living conditions, discontent with the government, deep-seated anti-Soviet sentiment, a strong streak of independence, Polish resentment and resistance toward communist control continued to brew throughout the summer until it boiled over into the fall of 1956. As a clarion call throughout the bloc, the events that occurred in October and November of 1956 brought intra-bloc leadership to a critical turning-point at which lines of division grew more pronounced and motives manifested themselves more clearly.

The Bonds of Bloc Brotherhood: A Closer Look at Sino-Polish Relations

From the official establishment of Sino-Polish relations in 1949 to the events leading up to Poland's October Revolution, the PRC, for the Poles, potentially represented an independent factor. From the beginning of its absorption into the Soviet orbit, Poland was subject to Moscow's dictates and therefore restricted to a relationship of animus-dependence in which Poland was an unwilling partner forced to be dependent on the USSR. Whereas Poland relied on the Soviet Union in the preservation of its western border, conversely, the

Poles, an extremely nationalistic people, harboured deep-seated animosity toward things Soviet, especially domination.

As an independent actor, the PRC's presence in Soviet-Polish relations provided an outlet for fervent Polish nationalism and more importantly, autonomy, the foremost priority of Polish foreign policy.[51] The Chinese sympathized with Polish aspirations for independence and autonomy.[52] The desire of the Poles reflected that of the Chinese. Chinese support of Polish independence effectively meant the furtherance of its own independence and autonomy. In their respective perceptions of and attitude toward Moscow, Beijing and Warsaw shared a common creed—nationalist interests took precedence over bloc unity, and the only redeeming value of bloc unity was that it provided the conditions conducive to achieving national interest. With a view to advance their own interests, Beijing and Warsaw utilized one another vis-a-vis Moscow.

Whereas Poland accommodated China for the purpose of achieving greater independence, the Chinese view was much broader, encompassing the entire configuration of the bloc, the socialist camp, and the international communist movement. According to Waldemar Dziak, "The 'Polish matter' was only a pretext, an opportunity, that appeared to the Chinese leaders at a favourable moment. It was a signal to actively join in the events and changes taking place in the Soviet bloc."[53] The way in which the PRC took definitive steps

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[51]"Minutes from an executive session of the Basic Party Organization, Polish Embassy in Beijing," 29 October 1956, Achiwum Akt Nowych [Modern Records Office] (hereafter AAN) 237/XXII-696.

[52]Interview with Zhao Naibin, Chief of East European Section, Institute for East European and Russian Studies, CASS, Beijing, 31 March 1997; Han Nianlong, *Heping gongchu wuxiang yuanzi yongfang guangmang—Zhou Enlai dui zhongguo waijiao de juda gongsian* [The Everlasting Radiance of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence: Zhou Enlai's great contribution to Chinese foreign policy], *Yanjiu Zhou Enlai—waijiao sixiang yu shiyan* [Studying Zhou Enlai—diplomatic thought and practice], (Beijing: Shijie zhishi, 1989), p. 36.

[53]Waldemar J. Dziak, *Albania między Belgradem, Moskwą i Pekinem*, [Albania between Belgrade, Moscow, and Beijing], (Warsaw: Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Social Sciences, 1991), p. 90.

in these events was, as Dziak asserts,"..clearly striving to create such a perception of political reality in which the PRC was perceived as the main spokesman of equality of rights of socialist countries and the sole defender of their national sovereignty."[54] By fashioning such a role for itself, the PRC found a way to curtail bloc disintegration in order to protect its national interests.

Though sympathetic and even supportive of Soviet satellite claims to national independence, in the final analysis, the Chinese had more to lose than the Poles. Firstly, the PRC's need for economic, technological, and industrial assistance was greater; secondly, the Chinese were dependent on the USSR for assistance in developing nuclear weapon capabilities; and thirdly, given the Soviet Union's international stature and leveraging power in international politics, any attempts by the PRC to proceed down a "Chinese road to socialism" would have been anathematic and Titoist. Yet, throughout the 1950s, the path which the PRC followed was directed toward independence and autonomy. Put differently, there was no need for the PRC to declare its independence and autonomy in an open way, stirring up open contention between itself and the Soviet Union. Rather, the best way was to proceed down its own path of socialist construction by benefitting from the USSR's resources, whilst all along setting its own political agenda. It was the PRC's close involvement with Poland in October of 1956 that exposed the PRC's political agenda as one of undermining Moscow's authority by placing itself in a position of leadership and decision-making. The PRC's intervention on behalf of Poland in October 1956 in essence signified the critical moment in which the USSR had no choice but to recognize the PRC's equality not only in rhetoric but in actual decision-making. By complying with Chinese resistance to the

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[54]Ibid.

use of military force in Poland, the Soviets were acknowledging Beijing's authority. As a well-known Polish scholar on this topic asserts:

> The policy motives of the PRC were essentially power politics. The Chinese leaders were not interested in democracy and destalinization in Poland, though they were inclined to look at it as a partial process of becoming independent from the USSR. Above all, the Chinese took advantage of the situation in order to force the Soviet leadership into treating the CCP and the PRC as partners and equals.[55]

For the Poles, Beijing became a counterbalance to Moscow's authority after Khrushchev's secret speech. Although Warsaw's relationship with Moscow still remained central to Poland's foreign and domestic policy, the Poles began to pay more attention to developments in China, particularly with regard to the Chinese prescription for democratization. Polish interest in the PRC's social developments stemmed from the existence of different and country-specific ways of setting up a socialist society. Although the Soviet model was the most predominant, the Poles emphatically and consistently advocated the specificity of building socialism in the Polish context. The PRC's process of socialist transformation therefore stood as a confirmation to the Poles that a variety of viable paths to socialism could coexist. In correspondence with the Polish Foreign Ministry, the Polish Ambassador to the PRC, Stanisław Kiryluk reported the following observations on 24 September 1956:

> At present the People's Republic of China has serious achievements both in the development of theoretical thought and in the practical realization of the principles of Marxism-Leninism in the conditions of Chinese life. The People's Republic of China is drawing attention from our entire bloc, including Poland, with regard to the development of the internal situation in the country. In relation to this, interest in information of the country's socialist transformations and

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[55]Andrzej Werblan, "Chiny a polski październik 1956" [China and the Polish October 1956], *Dziś*, 1996, No. 10, p. 123.

PRC life, especially in the process of democratization in China, is growing.[56]

Closely watching China and considering the tensions that had arisen in the aftermath of Poznań between Moscow and Warsaw, the Poles, sought support and justification for making changes within the Polish leadership without Moscow's consultation and consent, while maintaining the socialist cause. It was with this intention that Edward Ochab, first secretary of the PUWP, Franciszek Jóźwiak, and Oskar Lange, went to Beijing to attend the CCP's Eighth Congress from 15-27 September.

[56]PMFAA, Zespół12, Teczka 83, Wiązka 4.

In his conversations with Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Liu Shaoqi, Ochab made it clear that the Poles wanted to manage their own affairs and to allow Gomułka back into the leadership in order to strengthen and consolidate the party.[57] Ochab also stressed that Poland's alliance with the Soviet Union should be an "alliance of equals," a fraternal relation, and made reference to the words of one Polish poet: "For he who is not a brother in his heart will not come to know the soul."[58] The allusion was no doubt directed just as much towards the Chinese as it was toward the Soviets. As a way of justifying the policy that would be carried out in October, Ochab gained Chinese support for Gomułka's return in the following way:

> I explained to Chu Te [sic] that while it was true there were signs of an anti-Soviet mood in Poland, visible also in Poznań this did not mean that we wanted to disturb or break off the alliance. The only thing we wanted was for the Poles to manage their own affairs at home within the general socialist framework, just as you, I added, want to manage yours. I also explained about Gomułka, saying that the charges against him of taking part in an international conspiracy were unfounded, that he had been wronged and that we were dismissing those charges, particularly since as we now, after Khrushchev's speech, knew and understood the roots of this "conspiracy". I also said I was in favour of Gomułka's membership in the Politburo, ...and that on the basic issues Gomulka's views coincided with ours.[59]

By stating that the Polish leadership had no intentions of breaking away from the bloc, yet at the same time wanted to govern Poland as they saw fit, Ochab spoke to Chinese intentions. As if reflecting Chinese motives, the Poles, though concentrating more on their own affairs, worked in tandem with the Chinese in terms of testing how far national independence could be attained without sacrificing bloc unity. Allowing Poland to be a measuring stick, the Chinese could measure the degree of manoeuvrability that they

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[57]Ochab Interview, Teresa Torańska, *Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets*, p. 68.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Ibid. p. 69

themselves needed in their relations with Moscow. Although records of the Chinese response are not available, the events that followed give some indication that the Chinese did not oppose Gomułka's reinstatement. In the *New York Times* of 15 October 1956, it was reported that Mao Zedong had told Ochab that "the Poles should go ahead in their efforts to obtain internal independence and develop their own socialist system as the Yugoslavs had done."[60] As a seal of support, Ochab's conversation with the Chinese availed the Poles a basis on which to proceed independently of Moscow's approval. For Moscow, if Gomułka's took control in Warsaw and removed the most orthodox (and pro-Soviet) members of the Polish leadership, Poland might then seek a more independent (i.e. Titoist) course in foreign policy.[61]

One could speculate that if the Poles sought such an independent course as in the case of Tito—the likelihood of which was minimal—the Chinese would have vehemently opposed such a move, as was evidenced in the case of Hungary. If however the Poles pursued such a course in alignment with the Chinese, as the Chinese had expected, Beijing would have achieved a major foreign policy coup. History shows that by choosing the middle ground, Poland's balancing act between seeking Chinese support for greater Polish autonomy and upholding Soviet-Polish relations brought Sino-Soviet relations one step closer to

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[60]Sydney Gruson, "Red China Supports Poles Against Moscow Dictation," *The New York Times*, 15 October 1956.

[61]Mark Kramer, "Hungary and Poland 1956, Khrushchev's CPSU CC Presidium Meeting on East European Crises, 24 October 1956," (hereafter "Hungary and Poland, 1956") *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, Spring 1995, p. 50.

confrontation.

The October Revolution: Poland's Defiance in the face of Kremlin Confrontation

Towards the end of 1956 lack of leadership was leading to lack of authority. The absence or weakening of leadership in the Soviet bloc had a debilitating effect on bloc morale and unity. The remedy for such a condition was to find a strong leader. In 1956 Poland needed such a leader. The events that precipitated Poland's open defiance toward Moscow—the reinstatement of Władysław Gomułka as first secretary of the PUWP, despite Moscow's objections—pointed to the need not only for strong leadership within the PUWP, but also a strong personality in articulating Warsaw's position vis-a-vis Moscow. The PRC's instrumental role in supporting the emergence of such a leader—Gomułka—represented a major achievement for Chinese leadership in intra-bloc affairs.

The background of Gomułka's return to power was coloured by a crisis in PUWP leadership. In July 1956 the Soviet Premier, Nikolai Bulganin's, visit to Poland coincided with the VII Plenum of the PUWP Central Committee. In a speech at the plenum Bulganin warned against "attempts at weakening the international bonds of the socialist camp in the name of national specificity."[62] Reinforcing the sentiments of the Stalinist faction in the PUWP, the impact of Bulganin's speech fed the paralysis of authority[63] that plagued the PUWP leadership. It was in early October at a Politburo meeting after the return of First

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[62]*Trybuna Ludu*, 22 July 1956.

[63]Krzysztof Persak, "Kryzys stosunków polsko-radzieckich w 1956 roku," [Crisis in Polish-Soviet Relations in 1956], *Polska 1944/45-1989, Studia i Materiały III-1997*, p. 20.

Secretary, Edward Ochab, from China that steps taken to facilitate Gomułka's return began to materialize. On 8 and 10 October the Politburo outlined four reasons for the crisis in the PUWP[64]: 1) lack of unity in the Politburo; 2) lack of connections between the leadership and the Party activities; 3) lack of authority among the leadership; and 4) with regard to the spreading of anti-Soviet tendencies there is,...an unfair situation in the relations between the PPR [Polish People's Republic] and USSR.[65] Upon Ochab's invitation, Gomułka attended the Politburo on 12 October. At this meeting Gomułka criticized the degree of Soviet control over the Polish leadership, namely that Soviet control of the Polish military was "not an example of normal relations," that "Polish-Soviet relations is a great problem" which had to be "normalized" in order to "forestall anti-Soviet manifestations."[66] Although Ochab agreed to nominate Gomułka for first secretary, debates in a Politburo meeting on 15 October continued over when to formally nominate Gomułka. After a subsequent Politburo meeting,

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[64]L.W. Gluchowski, "Poland, 1956 Khrushchev, Gomułka, and the 'Polish October'," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, Spring 1995, p. 38.

[65]"Unfair situation" refers to the price of coal, the highest officer cadres not knowing the Polish language nor having Polish citizenship, and the Soviet ambassador's interference in the country's internal affairs. Ibid.

[66]L.W. Gluchowski "Poland, 1956 Khrushchev, Gomułka, and the 'Polish October'," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, Spring 1995, p. 35, translated excerpts from Polish version, "Nieautoryzowane Wystąpienie tow. Wiesława na posiedzeniu Biura Politycznego w dniu 12 październik 1956r..." [Unauthorized speech of Comrade Wiesław at a meeting of the Politburo on 12 October 1956...] AAN, KC PZPR, paczka 12, teczka 46a, str. 29-36; Protokół z posiedzenia Biura Politycznego z dnia 12 X 1956 r. [Minutes of Politburo meeting on 12 October 1956], nr. 125," AAN, KC PZPR, paczka 15, tom 58, str. 187-188.

party leaders agreed to convene the 8th Plenum on 19 October at which time along with his allies, Marian Spychalski, Zenon Kliszko, and Ignacy Loga-Sowiński would be formally inducted into the party leadership.

News of Gomułka's return to the leadership post in the PUWP already reached the Soviets before the actual convening of the 8th Plenum of the PUWP Central Committee on 19 October. On the eve of the plenum, the Soviet Ambassador to Poland, Panteleimon Ponomarenko, contacted Ochab to express opposition toward convening the plenum. Ochab informed Ponomarenko that the Politburo had already approved such a move and that Gomułka would be nominated for the position of first secretary. Ponomarenko tried to dissuade Ochab from going forward with the plenum and warned him of an imminent arrival of Moscow's contingent.[67]

On 19 October as Gomułka was being admitted to the 8th Plenum of the PUWP Central Committee, a delegation of top Soviet officials arrived Warsaw. The delegation included Khrushchev, Molotov, Bulganin, Kaganovich, and Mikoyan, as well as the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact, Marshal Ivan Konev, and 11 other high-ranking Soviet military officers.[68] The size and members of the delegation attested to how urgent and potentially volatile the state of affairs had become in Soviet-Polish relations. The ensuing exchange between the Poles—represented by Ochab, Gomułka, Cyrankiewicz, Zawadzki, and Zambrowski—and the Soviet delegation only worsened the unprepared Polish reception of the hastily-planned arrival of the Soviet contingency during the open session of the Polish

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[67]Interview with Edward Ochab, Teresa Torańska, *Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets*, p. 75.

[68]Mark Kramer,"Hungary and Poland, 1956," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, Spring 1995, p. 50.

plenum.

Talks between the Soviet delegation and Polish leadership began immediately after the 8th Plenum at 11 am in the Belvedere Palace. In essence, the CPSU delegates expressed anxiety over upcoming personnel changes in the PUWP and urged the Poles to strengthen their political, economic, and military ties with the Soviet Union.[69] Mikoyan attempted to prevail upon Ochab by friendly persuasion, saying that the Soviet delegates came as friends, not as enemies. However, Ochab replied that the Poles 1) did not use such methods toward their friends; 2) would not back down; 3) would not call off the plenum; and 4) Polish affairs would be decided by their Central Committee.[70] At one point Mikoyan accused the Poles of starting what the Yugoslavs have finished, referring to the Polish press' unrestricted campaign against the Soviet Union.[71] The broader implication could be understood as following in the path of the Yugoslavs, the Polish insistence on maintaining its autonomy, as seen through their rejection of Marshal Rokossowskii, was a blatant affront to Polish-Soviet relations. Gomułka demanded that Soviet officials pledge not to interfere in Poland's internal affairs, repeatedly emphasized that Poland "will not permit its independence to be taken away," called for the withdrawal of all or most of the Soviet Union's 50 "advisors" in Poland, and insisted that Marshal Rokossovskii be removed along with other top Soviet officers who were serving in the Polish army.[72] Visibly provoked, Khrushchev threatened the

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[69]Ibid.

[70]Interview with Edward Ochab, Teresa Torańska, *Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets*, p. 76.

[71]"Aleksander Zawadzki's Notes, Meeting with Comrades Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Molotov Kaganovich on 19 X 56," Zawadzki Papers, AAN, KC PZPR, trans. by L.W. Gluchowski with Jan Grabowski, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue Spring 1995, p. 42.

[72]Mark Kramer,"Hungary and Poland, 1956," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, Spring 1995, p. 50.

Poles with military intervention, specifically Soviet army divisions already advancing towards Warsaw. Standing his ground, Gomułka insisted that Soviet forces be pulled back, and Khrushchev, after some hesitation, complied with the request, ordering Konev to halt all troop movements.[73]

The details surrounding Khrushchev's decision to halt the troop movements raise speculation as to the extent of Chinese influence. News concerning movement of the infantry units of the Southern Group of the Soviet Army in Poland toward the capital reached Belvedere Palace during the talks on the morning of 19 October. The main forces of the Soviet army reached the environs of Łódź and Wrocław, where they probably stopped in the late evening of 19 October upon orders to halt the advance (some units did advance still further to □owicz and Sochaczew); at the moment of ceasing the advance the units were no further than 150 kilometers from the capital.[74] Khrushchev's orders to suspend further military movement resulted from consultation with Moscow and almost certainly Beijing. Mao made his opposition to Soviet intervention in Poland known to Khrushchev as talks were being held in Warsaw. Based on a report given by Chen Jian, which cites the recollections of Wu Lengxi, the editor-in-chief of *Renmin Ribao* in 1956 and an attendant at the CCP Politburo session, after discussions at the session of the CCP Politburo, Mao by means of Soviet Ambassador Pawel Yudin reportedly warned Khrushchev that in the case of Soviet military intervention, China would use the severest language to protest such a move.[75] Wu's account is substantiated by Andrzej Werblan, a Polish specialist on Sino-Polish

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[73]Ibid.

[74]Krzysztof Persak, "Crisis in Polish-Sino Relations in 1956", *Studia i Materiały III-1997*, p. 28.

[75]Chen Jian, *Beijing and the Hungarian Crisis of 1956*, a paper presented to the International Conference on "Hungary and the World 1956: The New Archival Evidence," Budapest, September 1996, as cited by Krzysztof

relations, who has long asserted that the turning-point in talks at Belvedere came after an intermission, during which time Khrushchev telephoned Moscow and was able to learn of Chinese opposition to intervention.[76] Although Chinese and Russian sources have yet to confirm this interpretation, it seems highly probable and logical that the Chinese had a direct role in diffusing the situation in order for the Poles to make their case against Soviet bullying.

In the early morning of 20 October, in the face of Polish unwillingness to yield, the Soviet delegation returned to Moscow having made no progress. After the Soviet delegation's departure from Warsaw, the 8th Plenum reconvened to formally elect Gomułka as first secretary and oust Rokossovskii along with a few other Stalinist officials from the PUWP Politburo. Although military confrontation had been averted, anti-Soviet sentiment swelled as tensions between the CPSU and PUWP worsened. In the few days following Gomułka's election, anti-Soviet/Polish national unity demonstrations and pro-Gomułka rallies were carried out by hundreds of thousands of Poles in cities such as Gdańsk, Szczecin, Poznań, Lublin, Łódź, Bydgoszcz, Kielce, Wrocław, and Warsaw.[77]

Persak, p. 32.

[76]Andrzej Werblan, "Czy Chińczycy uratowali Gomułkę?" [Did the Chinese rescue Gomułka?], *Polityka*, 26 October 1991, as cited by Krzysztof Persak, *Studia i Materiały III-1997.*

[77]Mark Kramer, "Hungary and Poland, 1956," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, p. 50; "Record of a Meeting of the Policy Planning Staff, Department of State," Washington, 23 October 1956, *FRUS 1955-1957,* Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, p. 259.

During this time Liu Shaoqi and a Chinese delegation had been in Moscow for the purpose of defusing the situation. In talks with the Soviets, Liu stated the Chinese view,

> We feel the post-Stalin treatment of the fraternal parties is a bit imposing, wanting others to be obedient, and if they aren't, then they are punished. This way of resolving problems is not good enough; it is not real discussion. In the internal matters of the socialist camp, there must be an acknowledgment of the principle of independence and equality between countries and parties.[78]

The implications of Liu's visit to Moscow and a subsequent visit made by Zhou Enlai to Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest, confirm Chinese opposition to Soviet intervention in Poland. Mao and the CCP's political support for the Poles by encouraging them to pursue a Polish path of independence, and their dissuading Moscow from the use of military force in Poland attests to the degree of authority and power the Chinese gained in and as a result of the crisis situation in Poland. Without Chinese assistance to the Poles and insistence against Soviet intervention, intra-bloc relations would have indubitably fallen into disarray, an outcome least desired by the Chinese. Chinese support was further confirmed by articles in the *People's Daily* during the days following Gomułka's official rise to power, in particular the appearance of Gomułka's speech given on 20 October at the 8th Plenum of the PUWP Central Committee in the *People's Daily*, 21 October 1956.

With Chinese backing, Gomułka reiterated the notion of "different roads to socialism" in his speech at the 8th Plenum in the following way:

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[78]Pei Jianzhang, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaoshi 1949-1956*, [The History of the PRC's Foreign Relations, 1949-1956], (Beijing: World Knowledge Press, 1994), p. 62.

> What is immutable in socialism can be reduced to the abolition of the exploitation of man by man. The roads of achieving this goal can be and are different. They are determined by various circumstances of time and place. The model of socialism can also vary. It can be such as that created in the Soviet Union; it can be shaped in a manner as we see it in Yugoslavia; it can be different still.[79]

Gomułka 's speech re-affirmed the Polish position and alluded to Chinese intentions. Chinese motives for supporting the Poles would not become evident until 1960, but to be sure, in the midst of mounting tensions in October and November of 1956, the main aim of the Chinese was to keep bloc unity intact. Even the semblance of unity would give the Chinese scope to solidify and spread its influence. Solidarity afforded bargaining power and position. In defusing the potential military confrontation between the Soviet Union and Poland, the PRC's power to leverage and political stature increased considerably.

At the centre of contention was Poland's desire to maintain a "Polish road to socialism" within the parameters of the Soviet bloc, which in effect meant not severing ties with the USSR. By refraining from use of military force, Khrushchev, eventually, though reluctantly, allowed the Poles more leeway in exercising their independence. At a mass rally in Warsaw on 24 October, Gomułka's taking on a more conciliatory tone in his speech," emphasized the need for strengthened political and military ties with the Soviet Union..."[80] It was not until 27 October that Gomułka learned of the PRC's direct intervention on 19 October. In a cyfrogram from the Polish Ambassador in Beijing, Stanisław Kiryluk, to Gomułka, Kiryluk recounts being asked to meet with the CCP leadership—Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Chen Yun, and Zhang Wentian at 2:00 am on 27 October. In these talks, Kiryluk

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[79]"Address by Władysław Gomułka before the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party," 20 October 1956, Paul E. Zinner ed., *National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe, A Selection of Documents on Events in Poland and Hungary, February-November 1956* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 226.

[80]Mark Kramer,"Hungary and Poland, 1956," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, Spring 1995, p. 51.

recorded the following:

> The Chinese comrades think our [Polish] way is right and they approve of it with full conviction. When asked by the Soviets comrades, the Chinese stated that they approve of the changes in Poland...Between 19 and 22 October the CCP Politburo received a series of communications from the CPSU Politburo indicating that the Soviet comrades did not approve of the program of the 8th plenum of the PUWP and negatively regarded the changes in Poland. The CCP Politburo addressed the CPSU Politburo about revising their [CPSU] position. The CPSU Politburo asked that a CCP delegation come to Moscow and perhaps a possible Chinese delegation would go to Warsaw. On 23 October a CCP delegation composed of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Wang Jingxian, and Hu Qiaomu went to Moscow. From these talks, Khrushchev was persuaded as to the validity of the political changes in Poland and expressed support for the PUWP and its leadership...Mao presented the position of the CCP Politburo in the following way: The matter of Poland's independent actions cannot be questioned despite the reservations of the CPSU Politburo, which has grown accustomed to methods and forms of actions, which have to be eliminated from the relations within the socialist camp.[81]

From the Polish Ambassador's record, it is clear that the CCP's unequivocal support of the Poles in the face of Soviet disapproval and ability to convince the CPSU to change their position towards the Poles elevated the PRC's position of authority in the bloc. By exerting leadership, the Chinese achieved a degree of authority that the Soviets had lost in this situation. For the Chinese, Moscow's ultimate compliance with the CCP's opposition to the use of force against the Poles sealed the PRC's equality with the PRC. In effect, the Soviet Union lost its mandate with Khrushchev's destalinization speech, and its lack of leadership in the Polish incident only confirmed it. For Mao and the CCP, the mandate—leadership of the world communist movement—now belonged to them in theory, but had to be substantiated in fact.

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[81]"Coded message No. 17599 sent from Beijing on 27 October at 1300 and received on 27 October 1956 at 1215 and submitted to the deciphering department on 27 October 1956 at 1410," in Andrzej Werblan, "Chiny a polski październik1956" [China and the Polish October 1956], *Dziś*,1996, No. 10, pp. 124-126.

Fissures in the Facade: Uprisings in Hungary

No sooner had the crisis in Poland somewhat subsided, when revolts in Hungary protracted the crisis in Soviet Eastern Europe, the consequences of which only accelerated the enervation of bloc unity and triggered a marked shift in Chinese foreign policy. Hungarians' deep-seated hostility toward communism and fierce spirit of independence proved to be the final straw that broke the back of the Communist camel. The Hungarian people were galvanized by the events in Poland to demonstrate their own anti-communist sentiments, the consequence of which has come to be known as the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Official US perception of Hungary was described in the following way: "Hungary has in recent years shown consistent evidence of political disharmony and economic dislocation, accompanied by popular unrest, and will probably continue to be the most troublesome of the East European Satellites."[82]

The sequence of events surrounding the Hungarian Revolution and the Soviet response thereof is the subject of numerous studies. Because the scope of the Hungarian Revolution deserves more than just a few paragraphs, for the present purposes, analysis of the events in Hungary will strictly focus on the PRC's involvement in these events and its impact on intra-bloc affairs. Keeping in mind the East European context, however, it is important to note that the 1956 events in Poland and Hungary in many ways shared the same causes: "an affronted nationalism, an economy in which all effort was directed towards infrastructure and heavy industry with little thought for the consumer, a challenging intelligentsia, and ruling party which was more and more divided and disoriented at all

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[82]"National Intelligence Estimate: Current Situation and Probably Developments in Hungary," Washington, 29 March 1955, *FRUS 1955-1957, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe*, pp. 16-23.

levels."[83]

Partly an expression of solidarity with the Poznań uprisings in June and reinstatement of Gomułka as first secretary and partly a manifestation of accumulated grievances harboured against Soviet-backed Hungarian communist leaders, such as Rakosi and Gero, the Hungarian Revolution was spawned by discontent among the Hungarian people, particularly intellectuals and students, towards Soviet domination and its inept leadership. The outpouring of this discontent came on 6 October at the ceremonial reburial of Laszlo Rajk, which brought 200,000 people onto the streets of Budapest. A prominent leader of Hungary's "home communists," Laszlo Rajk was arrested as a "Titoist," subject to a show trial, and executed in 1949. Rajk's execution along with the imprisonment of Cardinal Jozef Mindszenty in 1948 fell in the wave of Stalinist purges which "set out to eradicate local nationalism and to inculcate a sense of Soviet patriotism..."[84] The overwhelming attendance at Rajk's reburial in 1956 proved to be an ominous sign for the Hungarian communist leadership for it "dealt a massive blow to the party leadership, whose authority was not all that high to begin with."[85]

Rescuing and reviving authority, as with the case of the October events in Poland, also emerged as an underlying issue in the Hungarian Revolution. The contention among the leaders of the Hungarian Workers Party, Rakosi, Nagy, Gero and Kadar ultimately centred

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[83]R. J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century--and After*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 288.

[84]Ibid., p. 269.

[85]Communication from Ernest Gero to Yuri Andropov, "Shifrtelegramma," 12 October 1956 (Strictly Secret—Urgent—Special Dossier), from Yuri V. Andropov to the CPSU Presidium, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 64-75, in Mark Kramer, "New Evidence on Soviet Decision-making and the 1956 Polish and Hungarian Crises," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 8-9, Winter 1996-1997, p. 365.

on acquiring authority. The problem however was who granted this authority—Moscow or the Hungarian people? Whereas the Hungarian people supported the leadership of Imre Nagy, Moscow ultimately backed Rakosi, Gero, and eventually Kadar.

On the afternoon of 23 October 1956 a large crowd of tens of thousands which included students, workers, and sympathizers gathered in front of the statue of General Joseph Bem, a Polish officer who had joined the Hungarians in 1848 in their revolt against the Habsburg domination, to express their solidarity with the recent events in Poland.[86] During the rally, Peter Veres, president of the Writers' Union, called for political changes and the reinstatement of communist Imre Nagy, the former prime minister, to head the government.[87] As the Parliament Square, which faced the Bem monument, began to fill up, the crowd began shouting slogans ('If you're Hungarian, you're with us!' and 'Out with the Russians!').[88] At approximately 9:00 pm that evening, Imre Nagy appeared at the balcony of the Parliament building and attempted to quell the unrest of the demonstrators. But the crowd remained frustrated and disappointed. As the protestors began to disperse, word spread that shots were being fired near the Kossuth Radio building which was located approximately one mile away from the Parliament.[89] The efforts of a delegation of demonstrators who had intended to air their demands from the Kossuth radio station were met by open gunfire of secret policemen, stationed inside the building.[90] The rally quickly turned into violence and

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[86]Gyorgy Litvan, *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956* (London and New York: Longman, 1996), p. 55.

[87]Andrew Felkay, *Hungary and the USSR, 1956-1958 Kadar's Political Leadership* (Westport, CN: Greenview Press, 1989), p. 60.

[88]Gyorgy Litvan, *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956*, p. 39.

[89]Andrew Felkay, *Hungary and the USSR, 1956-1958 Kadar's Political Leadership*, pp. 62-63.

[90]Ibid.

chaos.

At 10:22 pm the radio announced that the Political Bureau of the Hungarian Workers' Party had already convened to discuss the tense situation. Having transmitted an urgent appeal for military assistance to the military attaché at the Soviet embassy in Budapest, Erno Gero apprised Yuri Andropov, the Soviet Ambassador, of the situation.[91] Andropov then cabled Gero's plea directly to Moscow and followed up with an emergency phone call warning that the situation had turned desperate.[92] Because chaos was rapidly spreading throughout Budapest, Khrushchev on behalf of the CPSU Presidium, authorized the Soviet defence minister, Marshal Zhukov, to "redeploy Soviet units into Budapest to assist Hungarian troops and state security forces in the restoration of public order."[93] In total, approximately 31,500 Soviet troops, 1,130 tanks and self-propelled artillery, 380 armoured personnel carriers, 185 air defence guns, and numerous other weapons were deployed to Budapest.[94] By the morning of 24 October Imre Nagy and two of his supporters were inducted into the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Hungarian Workers' Party was reconstructed to include Imre Nagy as premier along with Apro, Gaspar, Gero, Kadar, Hegedus, Kallay, Kiss, Kobol, Marosan and Szanto.[95] Furthermore, on that day martial law had been declared and Soviet tanks had entered Budapest.

On 24 October representatives of the Soviet Politburo, Mikoyan and Suslov, arrived

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[91]Mark Kramer,"Hungary and Poland, 1956," *CWIHP Bulletin* Issue 5, Spring 1995, p. 51.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Ibid.

[94]Mark Kramer, "New Evidence on Soviet Decision-Making in the 1956 Polish and Hungarian Crises," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 8-9, Winter 1996-1997, p. 367.

[95]Andrew Felkay, *Hungary and the USSR, 1956-1958 Kadar's Political Leadership*, p. 64.

in Budapest to meet with the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party. At the meeting Mikoyan and Suslov criticized Gero for his ineptitude in handling the situation. By mid-afternoon, at least 25 protesters had been killed and more than 200 had been wounded.[96] In the few days that followed, unrest and fighting spread to other cities. At 12:32 pm on 25 October radio broadcasts announced that Gero had been relieved of his duties as first secretary and was being replaced by Janos Kadar.[97] Kadar's replacement of Gero and eventual appointment as chairman of the Presidium only temporarily allayed the political situation. Sporadic fighting between protestors and Soviet tanks continued throughout the critical period of 24-28 October. Moreover, the internal disarray of the Hungarian leadership remained steeped in confusion and polarization. On 29 October Soviet troops began withdrawal from Budapest, though fighting still continued in some places. The following day Nagy announced the setting up of an inner cabinet in the Hungarian government and that a request was made to the Soviet military command to withdraw its troops from Hungarian territory.[98]

Concerns in the Kremlin over Hungary's deteriorating political leadership grew increasingly grim. The most salient of concerns was the impact of Hungary's internal situation on the countries of the Warsaw Pact. Adding to the tension, the Suez crisis further magnified mounting suspicions of counter-revolutionary activities by the West. On 31 October news

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[96]Mark Kramer, "New Evidence...," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 8-9, Winter 1996-1997, p. 367.

[97]Andrew Felkay, *Hungary and the USSR, 1956-1958 Kadar's Political Leadership*, p. 68.

[98]Ibid., p. 73.

of new Soviet troops entering Hungary reached the Hungarian government. On 1 November Imre Nagy, disregarding Moscow's authority, declared Hungary's neutrality and the country's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. Three days later on 4 November, Moscow re-installed Matyas Rakosi as the leader of the Hungarian Communist party. Rakosi then asked that Moscow send 2,000 tanks and 150,000 infantrymen to subdue the protesting Hungarians; fighting continued until December and by January 1957, the revolution was over.

If the events in Poland can be considered a major turning-point of the Soviet East European bloc's perception of Moscow's waning authority in the Soviet bloc, then the Hungarian revolution represented a total rejection of Soviet rule, the Stalinist system, Moscow's interference, and the Kremlin's delegated authority in Hungary. The Hungarian opposition magnified not only the Polish desire for autonomy in working out Polish-style socialism in a Hungarian context, but also confirmed the deep-rooted aversion towards being deprived of freedom to follow their own path of independence. In an earlier assessment put forward by the CIA:

> Political developments in Hungary have been strongly influenced by the independent character and traditions of the Hungarian people. They have a deep-seated hostility toward Communism and toward the Slavs who have imposed Communism upon them. The Hungarians feel that their ancient parliamentary customs, Roman Catholic and Protestant heritage, and their cultural tradition bind them to Western Europe. These factors, coupled with the peoples' recollections of Hungary's earlier (1919) Communist dictatorship, increase the regime's difficulties in its efforts to bolster its limited popular support.[99]

Clearly, the events in Poland and Hungary were an indictment against Soviet hegemony.

In both the Polish and Hungarian crises, the Chinese leadership enhanced its authority and solidified its influence. If the events in Poland could be considered the juncture at which

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[99]"National Intelligence Estimate: Current Situation and Probable Developments in Hungary"' Washington, 29 March 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. XXV, Eastern Europe, p. 19.

Beijing reached a real parity of prestige and power with Moscow, then the PRC's involvement in the Hungarian events can be seen as the sealing of Beijing's equal footing with Moscow. Whereas Chinese support behind greater Polish autonomy exposed and restricted the reach of Soviet "great-power chauvinism," Chinese decision-making in the Hungarian crisis exposed the fragile core of Soviet leadership skills and style.

In the Hungarian crisis, Beijing initially advocated non-intervention. Between 24-30 October 1956 Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in constant radio communication with Mao in Beijing conferred with the CPSU CC Presidium in Moscow on how to handle the unrest in Hungary. In the 30 October session of the CPSU CC Presidium, Liu and Deng held the view that the Hungarian situation should be handled according to the principles of Pancha Shila.[100] Among the Soviet leaders—Bulganin, Voroshilov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Khrushchev, Saburov, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shepilov, Shvernik, Furtseva, and Pospelov, a consensus emerged concerning the need to issue a declaration for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. However, in the course of consultation with the Chinese, Liu Shaoqi indicated on behalf of the CCP Central Committee that troops must remain in Hungary and Budapest.[101] Although Chinese sources have yet to confirm the policy change, it is most probable that the Chinese, seeing the potential of Hungarian unrest intensifying and spilling over into neighbouring socialist countries, such as Romania and Yugoslavia, decided to support Soviet military intervention in Hungary for the sake of confining the chaos within Hungarian borders, keeping the bloc intact, and saving as much of socialism's face as possible.

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[100]'Document No. 7, Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 30 October 1956' in "The Malin Notes," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 8-9, Winter 1996-1997, p. 392. The five principles of Pancha Sila include 1) mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, 2) non-aggression, 3) non-interference in internal affairs, 4) equality and mutual benefit, and 5) peaceful coexistence.

[101]Ibid., p. 393.

In a broader context, it was in the interest of the PRC to support Soviet intervention, if Mao was seriously intent on taking over Stalin's mantle. Without the bloc, even in its unstable and wounded condition, Mao and the CCP would have no arena in which to enhance its socialist credentials. Under these circumstances, CCP support for national independence and autonomy in Hungary had to be sacrificed for the larger goal, co-leadership in the socialist camp.

On 31 October Soviet leaders, also bearing the burden of the Suez crisis, reconsidered their previous decision to withdraw troops from Hungary. To what degree the Chinese decision directly influenced the Soviets' ultimate decision is still open to speculation, but in any case, the convergence of Chinese and Soviets views on military intervention in Hungary reflected the view of the Chinese that events in Hungary and the Suez were not isolated events but rather an intensification of the dialectic between the socialist and capital-imperialist camps. For the Chinese, military intervention in Hungary was justified for two reasons. Firstly, the uprising in Hungary signified not only a reaction to the USSR's great power chauvinism, but manifested an undercurrent of anti-Soviet, anti-communist, and counterrevolutionary sentiments, which posed a grave threat to bloc unity. In a dispatch to Adam Rapacki of the Polish Foreign Ministry, the Polish Ambassador in Beijing, Stanisław Kiryluk, relayed Mao's comments on the Hungarian uprisings: "Errors were made by the CPSU and the bad policy of the Hungarian [Workers'] Party issued in the Hungarian tragedy and use of the Soviet military against the Hungarian people. The Hungarian comrades' duplication of the Soviet model took revenge on the Hungarian revolution."[102]

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[102]"Coded message No. 17831 from Beijing, 1 November 1956, 11:00, received 1 November, 08:13. Transmitted to decoding department 1 November, 9:30," PMFAA zespół depesz [dispatch collection], teczka 651, wiązka 31, k. 99-100.

Secondly, the Hungarian crisis stemmed directly from the Soviet-initiated policy of destalinization. In the eyes of the Chinese, the Hungarian uprising signified the fruit of the seeds sown by destalinization, a negative consequence which the Chinese attributed to Khrushchev's negation of Stalin's legacy and the CPSU's lack of an all-around analysis, self-criticism, and consultation with fraternal countries.[103] In spite of what the Chinese thought of the Soviets, Beijing publicly upheld Moscow's use of military force in Hungary in order to save bloc unity, for it was bloc solidarity that served the advancement of Chinese national interests. Dissolution of the Soviet bloc would bring in chaos, the last thing the CCP needed in the midst of fortifying its domestic legitimacy and international stature.

Containing the Crisis: Intra-bloc Reaction to Hungary

The point at which Nagy declared Hungary's neutrality and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact sparked off immediate and forceful opposition within the camp. Such a stance marked a direct challenge and blatant disregard for the Kremlin's authority. Moreover, Hungary's declaration of neutrality effectively confirmed its right to be independent, to function apart from Moscow's dictates and the restraints of bloc unity. Moscow and Beijing were united in condemning Nagy's announcement and held no hesitations in dealing swiftly and severely with the manifestation of any renegade tendencies. For the Chinese, the official

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[103] Vladislav Zubok, "'Look What Chaos in the Beautiful Socialist Camp!' Deng Xiaoping and the Sino-Soviet Split, 1956-1963," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 10, March 1998, p. 154.

assessment of the Hungarian incident was called an act of rebellion, incited by imperialist agents and anti-revolutionary elements. Shortly after the uprising in Hungary, on 30 October, the Soviet government published a "Declaration on the Principles of Development and Further Strengthening of Friendship and Co-operation between the Soviet Union and other Socialist States," which in essence called for an examination of intra-bloc relations in the wake of the events in Poland and Hungary. The CCP responded with a statement from which the following excerpt is taken,

> The government of the People's Republic of China notes that the people of Poland and Hungary in the recent happenings have raised demands that democracy, independence, and equality be strengthened and the material well-being of the people be raised on the basis of developing production. These demands are completely proper. Correct satisfaction of these demands is not only helpful to consolidation of the people's democratic system in these countries but also favourable to unity among the socialist countries...We note with satisfaction that the people of Poland and their leaders have taken notice of the activities and danger of reactionary elements who attempt to undermine the people's democratic system and unity among socialist countries.[104]

The language of the CCP's statement is well-worded to stress the matter of unity. While acknowledging the demands of the people's democracies on the one hand, the Chinese conversely and subtlety put the recent troubles in Poland and Hungary in the perspective of preserving bloc unity. In so doing, it was offering a distinct voice, apart from Moscow, in restoring order to the bloc. However, in private, the events in Hungary even more so than Poland's 'October 1956', exposed the acute differences that existed in the bloc and specifically between the Soviet satellites and the Soviet Union. According to Su Yan,

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[104]David Floyd, Appendix, *Mao Against Khrushchev*, p. 240.

> The events of Eastern Europe in 1956 sent severe repercussions through the relations of socialist countries by not only fully exposing the deep-seated contradictions existing in relations between the countries of East Europe and the Soviet Union which were precipitated by long-term Stalinist great-nation chauvinist errors, but also reflected how the Soviet leadership continued to commit these errors at the time.[105]

In the light of the uprisings in Hungary, the weaknesses of the Soviet bloc, namely the lack of unity, compounding contradictions, weak leadership, lack of ideological guidance and effective strategy, reigning confusion, and long-standing distrust, became manifest. As if taking the lid off Pandora's box, the multitude of hitherto suppressed differences, contentions, and contradictions were unleashed. The foremost consideration of many of the bloc leaders was how much impact the events in Hungary would have on the domestic situation in the bloc countries. Having the potential of a domino effect, the events in Poland and Hungary happened with such speed and intensity, that none of the bloc leaders could really retain full control over the entire situation. Considering Moscow's decision to invade Hungary which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Hungarians, Moscow's total control over the direction of the bloc was nearly lost. If the Chinese had sided with the East Europeans in supporting their demands for independence, the bloc would have faced its demise. However, in their calculations, the Chinese realized that official support for East European independence would only impede and even damage China's own path to progress. Hence, the CCP made every effort to bolster renewed support and recognition for Moscow's preeminence.

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[105]Su Yan, "Heping gongchu wuxiang yuanzi shi shehuizhuyi guojiaguanxi de jichu," [The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are the Foundation of Relations between Socialist Countries], —"Zhou Enlai guanyu shihuizhuyi guojia guanxi de sixiang chushen," [Zhou Enlai on the intellectual birth of relations between socialist countries], *Studying Zhou Enlai--Diplomatic thought and practice*, p. 159.

Restoring Confidence: Attempts at Retrenching Bloc Morale and Re-affirming Bloc Unity

The most pressing need for Moscow and Beijing following the Polish and Hungarian uprisings was to rescue bloc solidarity by re-affirming the Soviet Union's preeminence as the leader of the Soviet bloc, appropriating the events in Poland and Hungary in a suitable ideological framework, justifying the actions taken by the Soviet Union in both Poland and Hungary, and lastly, re-consolidating power relations between bloc leaders. Confidence-restoring measures were actively carried out in the last two months of 1956 and continued into 1957. Toward the end of 1956, responses from various leadership organs of the bloc countries focused on setting straight past mistakes in mutual relations between the socialist countries.

On 30 October 1956 the Soviet government published "Declaration on the Principles of Development and Further Strengthening of Friendship and Co-operation between the Soviet Union and other Socialist States."[106] In essence, the Soviet Declaration admitted the existence of past mistakes and unsolved problems and implied the willingness of the Soviet Union to reinforce its relations with the socialist countries. The Soviet Union had no choice but to extend some form of reconciliation to the Soviet East European countries, namely Poland and Hungary, as a way of redeeming its position and authority in intra-bloc relations. The drafting and issuing of the Soviet Declaration originated from suggestions made by the Chinese leadership during Liu Shaoqi's emergency visit to Moscow during the Polish events in October.[107] Although Chinese evidence has yet to confirm the degree of Chinese participation in formulating the Declaration, the speed with which the Chinese announced

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[106]Hereafter referred to as either "Soviet Declaration" or the "Declaration".

[107]*The Polemic on the General of the International Communist Movement* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1965), pp. 69-70.

their approval of the Soviet statement in a governmental declaration on 1 November suggests prior knowledge of what the Russians were going to say.[108]

Chinese involvement in influencing the timing and publication of the Soviet Declaration also infers the degree of influence the Chinese leadership had achieved by this time. The Chinese found themselves in an advantageous position in which they could set the post-Poland agenda whilst allowing Moscow to keep, at least in form, its leadership position. As J. Pietraś asserts,

> "... on the side of the Chinese, it [Chinese initiative] was an obvious attempt to define its specific global role, which was not fully in accord with the agreed interpretation in the USSR, where it was understood that relations between socialist countries have a new type of character, the result of which is that the principles of peaceful coexistence among them does not obligate, particularly in the realm of respecting the sovereignty and equality of [bloc] members."[109]

Weighed in the overall context of Chinese foreign policy, Pietraś's assertion of the PRC's attempt to define a new global role and its relation to a new type of character in intra-bloc relations parallels K.K. Shao's statement regarding Zhou Enlai's view of the PRC's Soviet East Europe policy,

> One of Zhou's main themes was that the leadership of the Soviet Union could not be accepted without qualification. He also wanted to seize the opportunity to form a new pattern of intra-bloc relations. According to Zhou, the basic formula should allow the Communist countries in Eastern Europe to enjoy a substantial degree of independence in managing their internal affairs, and at the same time they should strive to maintain the unity of the socialist camp. This new pattern of relations among socialist countries should restrain the tendency toward both "great-nation" chauvinism and excessive small-state nationalism.[110]

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[108]Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution,* Vol. 1, p. 170.

[109]J.Pietraś, *Międzynarodowa rola Chin* [The International Role of China] (Lublin, 1990), p. 118.

[110]Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), pp. 164-165.

The timing was unmistakable. Events in Soviet East Europe had developed to the point where the PRC found a golden opportunity to play a decisive role in intra-bloc politics and moreover, carve out for itself a larger role in the global arena. The PRC's emerging stature was heralded by one *New York Times* article,

> Communist China is no longer merely an Asiatic power. It is now directly involved in the problems of Europe and has, in effect, broken the former Soviet power monopoly over captive Eastern Europe. For the Chinese, who never forget that their country embraces one-quarter of the human race, this may be only the beginning toward far more ambitious future ends.[111]

The Chinese demonstrated skillful, political leadership by using both the Polish and Hungarian crises to strengthen and elevate their stature in intra-bloc affairs.

The Chinese understood and even sympathized with Polish insistence on greater autonomy and independence from the USSR. This understanding coupled with the unfolding of events in Poland provided the platform upon which the Chinese could fully display mastery of power politics. In the Hungarian crisis the Chinese ultimately perceived Hungary's aspirations as a threat to the unity of the socialist camp, and more specifically a liability to the PRC's growing authority in the camp. The Chinese therefore let armed force rather than the principles of peaceful coexistence prevail. In a word, the Chinese could only support the Hungarians to the extent that the Hungarians shared common interests with the them. Whereas in the Polish case, the Chinese had a platform on which to manoeuvre, such a platform was absent in their dealings with the Hungarians. Unwilling to support Hungarian independence and autonomy which directly defied Moscow's authority and threatened bloc unity, the Chinese allowed military force to be used against the Hungarian people.

Timing coupled with events opened the way for the Chinese to make authoritative

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[111]"Warsaw-Peiping Axis," *The New York Times*, 18 November 1957.

decisions in the Soviet bloc. Yielding the form of leadership in bloc leadership to the Soviet Union, Beijing in return acquired the substance of real leadership—influence and power—in having Moscow do Beijing's bidding. Beijing's intent may not have been so clear, but the effect bore fruit—a shift from the model of USSR preeminence in the Soviet bloc, as the nerve centre of the bloc, to a new model in which bloc countries were bound by mutual respect of equal rights. By reinforcing and making sure the other parties saw the importance of the Soviet Declaration, the Chinese government statement in effect sent a message that the power configuration within the bloc had shifted from monocentrism to polycentrism, the objective the Chinese intended to achieve—creating a new political reality through the perception of the PRC and USSR standing on equal footing.

In underscoring the ineptitude of the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav Communist newspaper *Borba* issued a comment on the Soviet Declaration on 1 November in which the following three points[112] were emphasized: 1) irregularities and mistakes in relations between the socialist countries, which diminished the principle of socialist equality, 2) the principles of full national independence and equality in relations between the socialist countries, and 3) socialist construction should be based on the specific conditions of each individual country. Though directly attacking the Soviet Union's scathed image in the aftermath of Poland and Hungary, the Yugoslav statement not only justified its own national stance of independence but more importantly, justified it in the light of Soviet hegemony. Reinforcing this view even more, President Tito's address on 11 November to the Yugoslav League of Communists at Pula was even more explicit. The crux of Tito's speech focused firstly on Yugoslav-Soviet relations in which Tito, although recognizing a certain degree of improvement, made it clear

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[112]David Floyd, Appendix, *Mao Against Khrushchev*, p. 241.

that the recent events in Poland and Hungary only confirm the defective nature of the Soviet system and are a warning that such tendencies may find expression in yet other socialist countries. Tito's exhortation only served to ignite the already volatile state of intra-bloc relations.

During this time (10-15 November) the Chinese leadership convened the CCP's 8th Central Committee second plenary session where the most urgent need was to contain the damage already done by Soviet errors. At this plenum Liu Shaoqi gave a report on the present international situation and Chinese policy on the Suez crisis, Poland, and Hungary. During the plenum Mao made the following remarks:

> I think there are two 'swords': one is Lenin and the other Stalin. The sword of Stalin has now been abandoned by the Russians...As for the sword of Lenin, has it too now been abandoned to a certain extent by some leaders of the Soviet Union? In my view, it has been abandoned to a considerable extent. Is the October Revolution still valid? Can it still be the example for all countries? Khrushchev's report at the 20th Congress of the CPSU says it is possible to gain political power by the parliamentary road, that is to say, it is no longer necessary for all countries to learn from the October Revolution. Once this gate is opened, Leninism by and large is thrown out.[113]

Mao's statement was made in the context of "peaceful transition" from monocentrism to polycentrism. Chinese reservations toward Soviet decentralization of power in the bloc were both ideologically and strategically-based. In terms of ideology, the Chinese saw that premature or excessive decentralization would lead to loss of control and authority not only for Moscow but also for Beijing. As Wu Chen-Tsai asserts, "Relaxation of doctrinal control is tantamount to giving up the reason for domination. Both ways lead to eventual collapse."[114] With regard to strategy, the Chinese could not afford to see its effort at building

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[113]'Leninism or Social Imperialism?' by editorial department of the *People's Daily, Red Flag,* and the *Liberation Army* on the centenary of Lenin's birth; trans. in *PR*, No.17, 24 April 1970, pp. 5-15, as cited by Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution,* p. 171.

[114]Wu Chen-Tsai, "The Moscow-Peking Dispute and Its Impact on Eastern Europe," Collier and Glaser, eds., *Elements of Change in Eastern Europe, Prospects for Freedom,* Vol. 12 (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company,

its own power base brought to nought in the face of Moscow's policy of relaxing controls over the Soviet satellites. If anything, it was a time to retrench bloc morale and gird up bloc unity with even more intensified measures.

With this in view, the CCP issued an article on 29 December in the *People's Daily* entitled, "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." As a rebuttal to the implications made by Tito in his November Pula speech and a clarification of all the confusion that had compounded for the nine months since Khrushchev's secret speech in February, the Chinese article intended to dispel the prevalent concept that not only was Stalin to be blamed for the deficiencies of the Soviet system but more pointedly, the system within which Stalin functioned had to be reassessed. Recognizing Stalin's mistakes, the Chinese attributed them not to the socialist system but rather to the shortcomings of Stalin as a leader in mishandling the complexities of the practical application of theory. Forging a definitive ideological postulate, the Chinese acknowledged the existence of "contradictions between the government and the people in socialist countries."[115] Referring to Tito's Pula speech, the Chinese pointed out that Tito had gone too far in his attacks against the Stalinist system and that in the final analysis, preserving bloc solidarity should remain the priority of all socialist countries. The Chinese concluded by emphasizing the need "to maintain an attitude of equality" in all relations between the socialist countries whilst upholding bloc solidarity.

By the end of 1956, the Chinese had temporarily succeeded in harnessing the tumultuous torrent of events unleashed that year. Publishing official statements in April,

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1968), p. 78.

[115]Stuart Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (New York: Praeger, 1963), pp. 93-95.

November, and December on the state of affairs in the bloc and the international communist movement, the Chinese pronouncements compensated for Moscow's lack of ideological leadership. Intervening in the Poland's October revolution and Hungary's uprisings, the PRC's direct intervention salvaged some semblance of order in the midst of disarray. For the Soviet satellites, the PRC's involvement in the affairs of Eastern Europe boosted its stature in the eyes of Soviet Eastern Europe and opened the way for more active Chinese involvement in 1957.

CHAPTER V

Internal Convergence, External Divergence

The years from 1957 to 1960 marked a period of trials and tests in the PRC relations with the Soviet bloc. As the latter half of the PRC's decade-long partnership with the Soviet bloc, this period brought to light the PRC's misdirected aims in attempting to build a long-lasting political and strategic relationship with the Soviet bloc. Instead of becoming a relationship from which the PRC could further its national interests, the PRC's relations with the Soviet Union and Soviet East Europe grew increasingly divergent and contentious on an ideological level, the foundation upon which Sino-Soviet bloc relations were established. Although diplomatic relations remained intact, allowing for continued cultural, academic, and trade exchange, CCP relations with the CPSU and indirectly, the Communist parties of Soviet Eastern Europe contracted with each passing year until the irreparability of discord became public in 1960. In tracing the course of the PRC's split with the Soviet Union, this chapter covers the the post-1956 repercussions of the PRC's involvement in the Soviet Eastern Europe on four intersecting levels: 1) increased Chinese diplomatic activity in intra-bloc affairs; 2) the Chinese domestic situation; 3) the impact of Sino-Polish relations on intra-bloc affairs; and 4) the events leading up to withdrawal of the Soviet advisors in 1960.

In itself each level partially explains the gradual change that occurred in the PRC's perception of Soviet Eastern Europe and its impact on intra-bloc relations. As a whole, all four levels produce a multi-layered view of the concurrent process leading to the rupture of relations between the PRC and the Soviet bloc. In designating the open rift between the PRC and USSR in 1960 as the terminus of the first stage of the PRC's relations with the Soviet

bloc, it should be understood that the Sino-Soviet split signified the splintering of the Soviet bloc, the process of erosion intrinsically plaguing communism as an ideological and political system until its ultimate demise in Europe in the early 1990s. Although the Soviet bloc continued to function as a stronghold of communism well after the PRC's falling out, its ideological foundation and political structure were decaying. Inasmuch as the Sino-Soviet rift alarmed the free world, it also marked the departure point of the Soviet satellites', particularly Poland's "usefulness" to the PRC.

Whereas the events of 1956 demonstrated the CCP's ability in playing a commanding role in intra-bloc affairs, 1957 saw the PRC taking visible and deliberate steps in building upon the authority gained in 1956 and exerting greater leadership in the bloc. With Soviet stature badly bruised as a consequence of the events in Poland and Hungary, the PRC took upon itself the responsibility of restoring order, direction, and unity in the bloc. In parallel, on the homefront the CCP embarked on the accelerated consolidation of its authority by launching the rectification campaign. On both fronts Mao and the CCP leadership intended to step up the pace of CCP power consolidation and socialist construction. The view all along was one of maintaining Chinese independence by benefitting from the technology of the USSR and other more developed socialist countries. Relentlessly intent on weaning the PRC from the Soviet bosom, Mao in one regard wanted to accelerate the process of modernization, disengaging the PRC from dependence on the Soviet Union, and in another regard, realized that the PRC's link with the Soviet bloc was essential to this process of modernization and therefore had to be preserved at all costs. Thus, 1957 was a year of the Chinese leadership's "rite of passage," emerging from the Soviet shadow to claim greater independence and autonomy for itself. However, the decision to take this way was not without consequences.

Striving toward greater self-reliance, the PRC struggled between shaping a distinct identity for itself and maintaining its relations with the Soviet bloc, a relation vital to the PRC's security and economic interests.

In the three years to follow, it became clear that this struggle revealed how much the Chinese had yet to come into a full understanding of what it meant to play an international role in which national independence and sovereignty could not be fully achieved outside of the greater community of nations. In other words, the more the PRC exerted its independence as seen throughout 1958, 1959, and 1960, the more it alienated itself from the support of the communist community. As a result, open schism erupted. The aim of this chapter is therefore to explain the process of how against the backdrop of the international situation coupled with the growing radicalization of the PRC's domestic situation, the PRC's dealings with Poland contributed to the open break between the Chinese and the Soviets and its ramifications for the Soviet bloc.

A Timely Tour: Zhou Enlai's Visit to Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest

At the beginning of 1957 the top priority for Moscow, Warsaw and Budapest was to restore order, regain control over the leadership apparatus, and accelerate socialist construction. For the Chinese leadership, in particular Zhou Enlai, executing foreign policy posed a new challenge. The timing could not have been better; the opportunity had come for the Chinese leadership to redefine the rules of intra-bloc affairs. In fact, based on his speeches and statements in Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest, Zhou's intention was to establish

communist interstate relations on a new footing of national independence and group identity.[1] Zhou sought to establish intra-bloc relations based on the recognition of each country's independence and sovereignty. In a sense, apart from its being another variation on the theme of the five principles of peaceful coexistence, there is nothing new in this approach. However, its importance is two-fold.

Firstly, as a new application of the five principles of peaceful coexistence the guiding view of PRC foreign policy toward the Soviet bloc can be found in Zhou's emphasis on the equal rights of each of the socialist countries beginning in 1957. A country's exercise of its equal rights signifies its independent standing and sovereign status. In the words of one Chinese scholar, "Respecting a country's sovereignty means respecting each country's independence, autonomy, and equal standing, because independence and autonomy are the rights and mark of a sovereign state."[2] Sovereignty here refers to the supreme authority that a state possesses within its boundaries and its freedom to act in external relations and foreign policy without being interfered with or manipulated by another state.[3]

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[1]Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy* (London: Macmillan Ltd., 1996), p. 165.

[2]Su Yan, "Heaping gongchu wuxiang yuanzi shi shehuizhuyi guojiaguanxi de jichu," [The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are the Foundation of Relations between Socialist Countries], —"Zhou Enlai guanyu shehuizhuyi guojia guanxi de sixiang chushen," [Zhou Enlai on the intellectual birth of relations between socialist countries], *Studying Zhou Enlai--Diplomatic thought and practice*, p. 161.

[3]Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy*, p. 264.

Secondly, the emergence of a definitive policy based on the recognition of equality indicates the weightiness of this issue in the minds of Mao and the CCP leadership. The fact that Zhou, the PRC's top diplomat, personally visited Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest in early 1957 signifies the considerable degree to which Chinese leadership intended to reinforce its position on recognition of sovereignty and equality. Furthermore, inasmuch as the political situation in Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest warranted the Chinese decision to supersede the normal party-to-party channels of communication, namely the CCP's International Liaison Department, and required the personal visit of the Chinese foreign minister shows not only that the Chinese took the initiative to survey the political climate in these countries but also to demonstrate the PRC's sovereignty in managing its own foreign relations.

Equally important, Zhou's visit sent a message to the Kremlin that the Chinese had attained a level of authority which boosted Beijing's credibility, an asset which Moscow lost in the wake of the Polish and Hungarian events a few months earlier. The circumstances could not have been more opportune. As one of the highest-ranking members of the CCP, Zhou's visit to Eastern Europe represented the strength, confidence, leadership, and vision of the Chinese leadership, a stark contrast to the morally-discredited and politically-damaged Soviet leadership. Commanding a considerable degree of authority, Zhou possessed the political weight to strengthen Chinese influence and propound PRC policy in Eastern Europe.

The subtle change in Chinese strategy focused now on equal rights of each state to exercise its sovereignty as it saw fit. The thrust of this policy was that external interference and manipulation by another state was not to be tolerated. By setting out such a line, Zhou raised the ante of determining who possessed sharper skills of leadership in bloc affairs. In this regard, Zhou's attempt to establish a new paradigm in intra-bloc relations changed the

direction and make-up of bloc relations. How the Soviet satellites would interpret and implement the Chinese line would prove to be contrary to Chinese interests.

From 7 to 17 January 1957 Zhou Enlai visited Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest. Spending most of his time in Warsaw and Moscow, Zhou acted as a mediator between the Poles and the Soviets. In his talks with the Poles from 11 to 16 January, Zhou made it clear that the October events of 1956 were correct and confirmed Chinese support for the decision of the Polish Party from the beginning, when the VIII Plenum reinstated Gomułka.[4] The timing of Zhou's visit to Poland was of particular importance to Poland's internal politics. Arriving two weeks before Poland's general elections held on 20 January 1957, Zhou's week-long visit bolstered Gomułka's and the PUWP's standing.[5] The Chinese show of support signified acknowledgment and approval of the "Polish path to socialism." It could also be perceived as the CCP's way of building on its new-found leadership role in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, Zhou stated, "The CCP simply played a stabilizing role...Relations between socialist countries ought to be based on equal rights."[6] In these talks, he also reiterated the leading role of the Soviet Union, a point of which the Poles still held some contention.

On 12 January in his speech to the Chinese delegation Polish Premier Cyrankiewicz re-affirmed the importance of Sino-Polish relations, Polish support for the PRC's aim in securing a permanent seat in the United Nations, Chinese recognition of Poland's western

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[4]"Talks between the Chinese and Polish delegations," 11-12 January 1957. AAN, KC PZPR 2541 pp. 51-81. See English version in L. Gluchowski, "Poland, 1956: Meeting between PRC and PPR delegates, January 1957," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 5, p. 44.

[5]"Report from S. Kiryluk, Polish Ambassador to Beijing to the Polish Foreign Ministry," 5 July 1957, Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives (hereafter PMFAA), Zespół [Collection]12, Teczka[Folder] 92, Wiązka [Binder] 5.

[6]Ibid.

border along the Oder-Neisse as just and inviolable, and Poland's continued support in finding a peaceful solution to resolve the Taiwan issue. Nowhere in his speech was mention made of the Soviet Union, nor the Soviet Union's leadership in the bloc.[7] The Poles sent out a clear message that although Poland had no intention of breaking away from the bloc, it was not going to pay obeisance to Moscow's preeminence. Gomułka was so adamantly opposed to Zhou's repeated attempts to induce him into recognizing the leading role of the USSR that he consistently sulked and scowled each time at the mention of this subject.[8] In the final communiqué signed by the Chinese and Poles, there was no mention of Soviet intervention in Hungary, neither of Soviet leadership in the bloc. Able to stand their own ground, the Poles demonstrated to the Chinese their will in exercising sovereignty and independent thinking.

Zhou Enlai's visit to Poland following the events in late 1956 held much importance for the Poles. The outcome of this visit in large measure determined the subsequent course of Sino-Polish relations. In a personal letter written by Witold Rodziński[9], a counsellor of the Polish Embassy in Beijing, Rodziński provides a glimpse into the nature of Sino-Polish relations. The main points of this letter are as follows: 1) not everything that the Polish side is doing reveals a full understanding of the politics of the PRC; 2) the Chinese are not 100% convinced that we [Poles] are people with whom it is possible to talk completely, concretely, and seriously; 3) there are many things related to our development which they [the Chinese]

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[7]"[Polish] Premier's Speech at the Congress Hall, " Warsaw, 12 January 1957," PMFAA , Zespół 12, Teczka 83, Wiązka 4, pp. 40-44.

[8]Waldemar Dziak's interview with Prof. Lao J-su [sic], personal translator to Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, concerning talks of the Chinese leaders with the PUWP leadership in the 1950s, Waldemar Dziak, *Albania między Belgradem, Moskwą i Pekinem* (Warsaw: Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, 1991), p. 89. For complete minutes, see Andrzej Werblan, "Rozmowy Gomułki z Zhou Enlaiem, 1957," [Gomułka's talks with Zhou Enlai, 1957] *Dzieje Najnowsze*, Vol. XXIX, NO. 4, 1997, pp. 119-144.

[9]AAN, KC PZPR, 237/XXII-780, k. 43-44. Witold Rodziński held of the post of Polish Ambassador to the

do not understand; 4) these relations will change with time; and 5) the importance of Zhou Enlai's visit in determining the future of Sino-Polish relations.

Written on 30 December 1956, Rodziński's letter is timely in that it gives a fresh view of Polish expectations and Chinese perception before the impending visit of Zhou Enlai and the Chinese delegation. More than anything Rodziński's observations show the tenuous and fragile nature of Sino-Polish relations on the eve of Zhou's highly anticipated visit. Neither side fully understood the other, yet both sides realized the importance of these relations. For the Poles, Zhou's visit could possibly provide more support for Polish independence and the "Polish road to socialism." If the Chinese re-affirmed agreement for the Polish way, the Poles, at least in theory, would not have to be so dependent on Moscow. Likewise, the Chinese stood to gain from this visit by shoring up support for its growing authority in the socialist camp and in intra-bloc affairs. If the Poles cooperated with the Chinese, it would be a confirmation to the CCP that its policy of building support along the periphery was on target and that the Poles could be counted on as a potential partner.

PRC from 1966-1970 and is a prolific writer on Chinese and international politics.

Following a brief one-day stay in Budapest on 16 January and a short return visit to Moscow, Zhou prepared a report on his observations of the Soviet Union in which he explicitly expressed criticism toward the Soviet Union in the handling of the incidents in Poland, on the state of Sino-Soviet relations, and on the international situation. Concerning the Polish question, Zhou's main criticism that the Soviets' were unwilling to admit to the practice of big-power politics points to the historical antagonism between the two nations and the patronizing attitude of the Soviets toward fraternal countries.[10] The latter point is related to a thought recurring throughout Zhou's report of an intractable Soviet-style paternalism pervading the CPSU's relations with the fraternal states. Statements such as, "They often set the interests of the Soviet Communist Party ahead of their brotherly parties; they often set their own interests as the leaders ahead of those of the party," and "they [Soviets] seem to recoil in fear when dealing with specific issues and tend to be inured to patronizing others and interfering with other brotherly parties' and governments' internal affairs,"[11] attest to how the Chinese perception of the Soviet Union was growing more critical and explicit.

Zhou's criticisms also focused on the Soviets' lack of long-term planning and concrete leadership initiatives on a global scale and as a result, he did not dismiss the possibility of future conflict on the international front.[12] Zhou concluded the report by placing the PRC and USSR on equal footing in matters concerning the bloc and reiterated the need of the Soviets to consult with the Chinese. If Zhou's report can be considered a prognosis of Sino-Soviet

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[10]"Zhou Enlai, 'My Observations on the Soviet Union,' Report to Mao Zedong and the Central Leadership," 24 January 1957, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995-1996, p. 153.

[11]Ibid., pp. 153-154.

[12]Ibid. Also confirmed by the Polish Ambassador, S. Kiryluk, in a report dated 5 July 1957 to the Polish Foreign Ministry, PMFAA, Zespół 12, Teczka 92, Wiązka 5, p. 18.

relations at the beginning of 1957, the conditions of these relations could hardly have been called friendly and at best, tolerable. Criticizing the Soviets' arrogance, lack of discipline and order, tendency to bluff and make empty threats, Zhou made it clear that persistence, patience, and long-term persuasion were necessary in bringing about any changes in Sino-Soviet relations.[13]

Zhou's criticisms are particularly relevant when considered in the context of the period in review. By this time the PRC, having outgrown its status of junior partner and speaking more as an equal with undertones of its own attitude of superiority, asserted its position accordingly. Pointing out Soviet weaknesses and defects, Zhou's comments stemmed from a burgeoning realization, shared by Mao, that in substance Soviet supremacy was eroding. As if building a case with a view to indict the Soviet Union for its political ineptitude and paternalistic treatment toward the fraternal countries and the PRC, Mao, Zhou, and the CCP leadership were becoming more pointed and pronounced in their private criticisms toward the Soviet leadership, though publicly, they made every effort to maintain the facade. The outcome of Zhou's visit to these three Soviet bloc countries left the Chinese more critical than ever towards the Soviets, and left the Poles willing to cooperate with the Chinese. For the Poles, Chinese support of Polish sovereignty, independence, and Gomułka's reinstatement in October 1956 was understood as a fraternal recognition of Poland's right to govern itself.

Although the criticisms levelled by Zhou against the Soviets are not surprising, considering the long-standing distrust and misunderstandings surrounding Sino-Soviet relations, it becomes clearer by this point in time, that the Chinese view of expending all

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[13]Ibid.

efforts in maintaining this relationship was motivated more and more specifically by the need to obtain technological and nuclear capability from the Soviets. Seen from this perspective, Chinese involvement in Poland takes on added importance. The PRC needed to gain a foothold in intra-bloc affairs to demonstrate to the Soviets that a Sino-Soviet partnership, and more pointedly, Sino-Soviet equality was an imperative condition in maintaining bloc stability and unity. As Andrzej Werblan asserts,

> "...their [PRC] ultimate goal was to force the USSR to divide the armaments, in order for the USSR to help them [PRC] become equal militarily. The first step was to create a situation in which nothing could happen without their [PRC] agreement. With Stalin it was not to be. Now the PRC was determined to take advantage of a situation and waited for an opportunity. It happened that it was the Polish incident."[14]

Given the timing of the October events in Poland, an opportune moment came for the Chinese to play a decisive role in arbitrating some kind of modus vivendi between the Poles and the Soviets. The fact that Mao waited until 27 October to openly express his support for Gomułka suggests that Liu Shaoqi's discussions with the Soviet leadership from 24-30 October 1956 reached some sort of compromise for the crisis to end peacefully. Soviet compliance came in the form of the "Declaration on Developing and Further Strengthening the Friendship and Cooperation between the Soviet Union and other Socialist Countries" on 30 October 1956. As a formal declaration agreeing to conduct intra-bloc relations according to the principles of mutual equality, respect for territorial integrity, national independence, sovereignty, and non-interference in a country's internal affairs, the Soviets sealed a major achievement for Chinese diplomacy. In his post-East European tour report to Mao, Zhou states, "...now the Soviet Union and China can sit down to discuss issues equally. Even if they

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[14]"Z Andrzejem Werblanem o Władysławie Gomułce," [With Andrzej Werblan on Władysław Gomułka], *Res Publica* 1990, nr 11, str. 34, as cited by Dziak, p. 90.

[Soviets] have different ideas on certain issues, they must consult with us."[15]

A critical foreign policy coup for the Chinese, the Soviet Declaration served Beijing's political agenda. One of the major motives behind Chinese participation in Poland and Hungary was to justify Soviet sharing of arms technology for the sake of maintaining order throughout the camp. With security as a topmost priority of Chinese foreign policy, the whole sequence of events in Eastern Europe could not have happened at a better time. The situation was ripe for Chinese initiative and leadership. Having played a crucial role in Poland and Hungary, the Chinese could afford to be more forthright with their criticisms against the Soviets, though at this point—early 1957—the ultimate goal had not yet been achieved.

Contending with Contradictions: The Ideological Re-arming of Chinese Foreign Policy

Two main strands appeared in Chinese foreign policy throughout 1957—evoking equality and contending with contradictions. Fundamentally intertwined, the CCP's evoking of equality between the socialist countries laid the theoretical justification for the specificity of socialist development in each country. With specificity denoting the particular historical experiences and cultural make-up of each country, the differences therefore had to be categorized in various forms of contradictions, be they between the workers and the bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, or imperialists elements and "the people." Labelled as contradictions, these differences possessed the potential to cause division and

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[15]"Report, 'My Observations on the Soviet Union,' Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and the Central Leadership,"

chaos, the greatest threats to the CCP's domestic authority and intra-bloc unity.

On 27 February 1957 Mao Zedong presented his speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" at the Eleventh Session (Enlarged) of the Supreme State Conference. The speech set the direction of CCP leadership on a course toward the radicalization of ideology on the homefront and in international affairs. Outlining twelve categories in which contradictions had to be resolved, Mao propounded two types of contradictions existing in all segments of the socialist struggle: "contradictions between ourselves and the enemy and those among the people. The two are totally different in nature."[16] He defined "the people" as the classes, strata and social groups which favour, support and work for the cause of socialist construction, whereas "the enemy" was designated as those who resist or are hostile towards socialist construction.[17] Explaining the difference in nature between these two contradictions, Mao identified the contradictions between the people and the enemy as antagonistic contradictions, and within the ranks of the people, contradictions among the working people as non-antagonistic.[18]

In terms of how to handle these contradictions, Mao made reference to his address at the Second Session of the First National Committee of the Political Consultative Conference in June 1950, where he stated two methods used by the people's democratic dictatorship,

> "Towards the enemy, it uses the method of dictatorship,...Towards the people, on the contrary, it uses the method of democracy and not of compulsion, that is, it must necessarily let them take part in political activity and does not compel them to do this or that but uses the method of democracy to educate and persuade. Such education is self-education for the people, and its basic

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24 January 1957, trans., *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995-1996, p. 154.

[16]*Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. 5 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1977), p. 384.

[17]Ibid., p. 385.

[18]Ibid.

method is criticism and self-criticism."[19]

Invoking Marxist philosophy, Mao elaborated on the validity of these two methods by pointing out that the law of the unity of opposites is the fundamental law of the universe, and that this law operates universally, whether in the natural world, in human society, or in man's thinking.[20] Based on this law, Mao advocated the method of "unity—criticism—unity" in which the simultaneous struggle between unity and criticism advances continuous change. Wrought in the resolving of antagonisms, the goal of the process is always criticism for the sake of unity.

Laying out a theoretical framework in his "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions..." speech, Mao formed a two-pronged outlook which linked the PRC's domestic and foreign policies. Addressing the domestic situation, Mao launched the "Hundred Flowers" and rectification campaigns for the purpose of detecting various sources of contradictions, criticism, and dissent in Chinese society. By targeting and categorizing these sources, the CCP could more effectively deal with their opponents, critics, and detractors. This strategy was applied to society at large in the "Hundred Flowers" campaign beginning from April to June 1956 and throughout the party ranks in the rectification campaign in April 1956. Based on the rationale of "unity-criticism-unity," these domestic campaigns—government-sanctioned campaigns of criticism—were needed to produce a strong sense of unity. After all, the formation of a "united front" stood as a prerequisite for confronting large-

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[19]Ibid., p. 392.

[20]Ibid.

scale conflict as in the case of the war of Japanese resistance or ushering in bold-sweeping changes, such as the "Three Red Banners": General Line of Socialism, the Great Leap Forward, and the People's Communes.

Echoing the same rationale in foreign policy, Mao could then justify the differences that existed among and between the socialist countries. If the events of Poland and Hungary 1956 confirmed anything, it was the existence of major contradictions between the satellite peoples and the respective ruling regimes, and differences between Beijing and Moscow. The necessity of spelling out in theoretical terms the existence of contradictions throughout the bloc indicated Mao's understanding of the real threat these differences posed in fueling the dissolution of the bloc and more importantly, the PRC's role in the bloc. Therefore, by legitimizing the need to recognize the contradictions of the socialist countries, Mao in essence was laying the basis for the CCP's actions at home and the PRC's independent policies vis-a-vis the USSR.

Such a policy did not go unheeded by the bloc countries. In a conversation between the Polish Premier Cyrankiewicz and Mao Zedong during a visit of the Polish Government Delegation to the PRC in April 1957, the matter of how to handle contradictions was one of several important matters highlighting the talks. In the meeting between Mao and Cyrankiewicz on 8 April 1957, Mao firstly expressed the Chinese interest in the "Polish road to socialism," its significance, and Poland's relations with the USSR and the other socialist countries; he added that the best argument against any doubts of what recently transpired in Poland is that in time, everything would be understood.[21]

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[21]"Conversation between the Leader of the Polish Government Delegation, Polish Premier J. Cyrankiewicz, and the Leader of the PRC Mao Zedong on 8 April 1957 in Mao Zedong's office," PMFAA, Zespół 12, Teczka 83, Wiązka 4, pp. 89-90.

Towards the midpoint of the talks, Mao asked about the overall economic coordination between the socialist countries. Cyrankiewicz replied,

> It's getting better. We made known to the Department of Economic Cooperation and the Soviet Union certain conclusions resulting from previous negative experiences. There was no division of production but task assignments, sometimes without any questions concerning specific countries...During our visit to Moscow in 1956 with Comrade Ochab, we raised the matter of proper cooperation. Today the matter looks better, but there is still a lack of a positive concept. We want cooperation to work based on the principle of partner equality. The matter is on a better road.[22]

Mao asked how the principle of equality in cooperation is to be understood. Cyrankiewicz stated that it should happen in agreement with specific countries and reiterated the lack of a positive concept. The latter half of the talks concentrated on strengthening ideological leadership in both countries. Cyrankiewicz elucidated the necessity of a strong working class party in Poland and at present all efforts were directed toward the ideological strengthening of the party. Mao expressed agreement by indicating that the Chinese were also presently working on bolstering the political work of ideological leadership among the workers, peasants, and young academics.[23] As attention on this issue developed, Mao and Cyrankiewicz exchanged the following thoughts:

Cyrankiewicz:	"Distinguishing contradictions is very important to building socialism."
Mao:	"In China considering the hundreds of millions of people, there is a need to resolve these contradictions in an especially cautious way."

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[22]Ibid., p. 92.

[23]Ibid., p. 93.

Cyrankiewicz: "The example of China within this scope, the activities and work of comrade Mao Zedong have much meaning for us."[24]

Mao commented that the difference between Hungary and Poland was that the Polish party was leading the process of socialist construction, whereas in Hungary the Petofi Club[25] was responsible for counterrevolutionary activities, revisionism, and undermining the party government.

The importance of these talks can be found firstly in Poland's looking to the PRC for political leadership and support. With consolidation of leadership as a top priority in intra-bloc affairs, the Poles were still open to see how far its relations with the PRC could be stretched without provoking Moscow. Secondly, if Beijing proved to be an ideological counterweight to Moscow, the Poles could operate along the same lines advocated by the Chinese—insisting on recognition of equality in order to maintain independence and autonomy. Identifying with the Chinese as an ideological counterpart, the Poles could both profit from Soviet industrial and technological aid and Chinese ideological independence. Thirdly, by acknowledging the importance and implications of the "Polish road to socialism," Mao in essence supported the Polish demand for independence within the parameters of the socialist revolution. In so doing, Mao was testing Soviet-Polish relations, Polish allegiance, and the viability of Polish path of independence. It was in the interest of the Chinese to let the Poles be the "guinea pig" in

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[24]Ibid., p. 94.

[25]Or, also known as the 'Petofi Circle'. Named after Alexander Petofi, a 19th century Hungarian hero-poet, and founded by communist students in the spring of 1956, the Petofi Club became with the help of the Writers' Union, a rallying point for the new, unofficial opposition to the government. Herbert Ripka, *Eastern Europe in the Post-War World* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1961), p. 154.

fighting for their independence and autonomy within the socialist framework. In a word, the Chinese were experimenting with the Poles by probing the political feasibility and viability of these particular relations in furthering the PRC's national interests.

The Chinese found in the Poles a complicity in which both sides, concerned about their own interests, worked together in diluting Soviet authority. Making more efforts to wave the banner of ideology throughout the camp, Mao and the CCP leadership were polarizing the camp, forcing Moscow to take a hardline on ideology, whilst privately supporting the Polish bid for greater political latitude. Gauging the Poles was important for the Chinese in determining the weight of the PRC's ideological authority and the range of its influence in the bloc. In the Sino-Polish communiqué signed at the end of Cyrankiewicz's visit, the omission of the Soviet Union as the leader of the Soviet bloc alluded to independent-mindedness of the Polish leadership, a factor that both helped and hindered Chinese interests.

CCP Consolidation through Radicalization: The Rectification and Anti-Rightist Campaigns

The Polish display of defiance and the Hungarian revolt in 1956 re-oriented the thinking of the CCP leadership. For the Chinese, the events in Eastern Europe raised three crucial issues: 1) the relationship between the Party and the people; 2) the role of intellectuals; and 3) the dilemma of inner-Party discord. Seeing the consequences resulting from the fermentation of these elements in the East European cases, the CCP had no choice but to re-assess its role in order to prevent similar manifestations on the homefront. Although a modus

vivendi was able to be reached in the Polish case, Hungary continued to loom large as a warning of how much damage could be incurred if the pent-up frustrations and criticisms of the people are fully unleashed against the government. The Chinese leadership had reason to be concerned as signs of unrest[26] and criticisms abounding from the Hundred Flowers movement could not be ignored.

Applying the policy of "unity—criticism—unity," the CCP embarked on a program of eliciting criticism from the people to pave the way for party rectification with the final goal of solidifying unity between the party and people. In essence, the events in Eastern Europe had alerted Mao and the CCP leadership as to the fallibility of their rule. If serious measures were not taken to counteract anti-revolutionary, anti-government, and anti-Party sentiments, the potential of another Polish October or Hungarian uprising occurring among the Chinese masses could stir up unwelcome trouble for the CCP leadership. Mao's "On the Correct Handling of Contradiction"' speech represents a more explicit development of what had been alluded to in his two previous writings, "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

In these two articles, the Chinese recognized the errors committed by Stalin and their implications in intra-bloc affairs. In his February 1957 speech on how to handle contradictions, Mao proposed a way to resolve and root out such contradictions. In explicating the concept of "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom, Let a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend," Mao identified "the existence of various kinds of contradictions in socialist society"[27] and the need to respond to them. Framing a historical justification for the Hundred Flowers campaign, Mao

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[26]In 1956, small numbers of workers or students in certain places went on strike. *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,* Vol. 5, p. 414.

[27]Ibid., p. 408.

asserted, "A period of trial is often needed to determine whether something is right or wrong. Throughout history, at the outset new and correct things often failed to win recognition from the majority of people and had to develop by twists and turns through struggle."[28]

As the clarion call for the politicization of government-sanctioned struggle, the Hundred Flowers movement was launched to pave the way for the campaign to rectify the ills of the party, namely subjectivism, bureaucratism, and sectarianism.[29] The height of the blooming occurred from 1 May to 17 June during which university students formed the thrust of the Hundred Flowers blooming. Students at Beijing University began to publicize their frustrations by putting up posters which attacked Party treatment toward intellectuals. Some of their complaints included "injustices committed during the campaigns against counter-revolutionaries, party rule in educational establishments, adherence to the Soviet educational model, excessive politicization of academic courses, the 'sectarian' attitudes of party officials towards non-party teachers and students."[30] Adding fuel to the fire, on 27 March portions of Khrushchev's 1956 secret speech were circulated among Beijing University students. Dissent was lingering in the air. It could be surmised that in the view of the Chinese leadership the student activities and criticisms were no doubt reminiscent of the incidences which precipitated the uprisings in Budapest.

As tensions grew the party leadership were faced with dissension within the party ranks. Not all members of the Politburo were in favour of such a campaign, namely Liu Shaoqi

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[28]Ibid.

[29]Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, Vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), p. 177.

[30]René Goldman, "The Rectification Campaign at Peking University: May-June 1957," *China Quarterly*, October-December 1962, pp. 143-8. See also Merle Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China, Political Reforms in the Deng Xiaoping Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

and Peng Zhen. Liu saw the solution to rectifying the party as one related to economic improvement, whereas Mao insisted on the political nature and process of party rectification. The disagreement between the two was an indication not just of two top leaders not seeing eye-to-eye, but rather of a growing rift within the CCP with Mao heading one group and Liu Shaoqi the other. It was at the height of the Hundred Flowers movement and into the Anti-rightist campaign that the rift grew wider.

The Anti-rightist campaign soon followed the Hundred Flowers movements. Throughout June 1957 a series of editorials appeared in the *People's Daily* decrying the negative outcome of the rectification campaign and even accusing participants of having abused the campaign to overthrow the communist cause.[31] The result of the rectification campaign was a clear indictment against the Chinese Communist Party. More than anything, it showed how much political and ideological elements in a policy were intertwined, and because of this, pursuing a radical ideological line led to the radicalization of politics. Two important implications can be drawn from the consequences of this policy: 1) the function of the Communist party was as an organ not only to carry out policy but more importantly, to preserve Mao's personal power and 2) Chinese foreign policy was integrally connected to its domestic policy.

With the CCP's coming under increasing attack domestically in 1957, it was seen within the CCP as a mirror of the crisis that had beset many of the other Communist parties throughout the Soviet bloc, namely public criticism toward the function of the party as the sole source and executor of ideological leadership and political power. At issue in the Soviet bloc following the events in Poland, Hungary, and the PRC was the contradiction between the

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[31] *People's Daily*, 8 June 1957.

concept of the party and the carrying out of its role in practice. In the case of the CCP, Stuart Schram asserts, "Obviously the conception of the Party and its role put forward in theoretical writings cannot be isolated from the reality of the Party, if only because ideology is shaped by practice and serves as a rationalization of practice."[32] The outcome of the rectification campaign attested to the failure of the party to rationalize the practice of communism. Though Mao and the CCP propounded and propagandized Marxist-Leninist ideology in writings and speeches, the practice of communism failed to find roots in Chinese society. The same case can be argued for the Poles and Hungarians. Dissidence was widespread in these two Eastern European countries and in the PRC, it had become visible.

In his speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work, Mao tried to tackle several issues varying from the problem of the intellectuals to rectification and the way to deal with criticisms. The underlying message of his speech was the urgent need for consolidation of the party's authority through the continued support of the revolutionary struggle. Encoded in fitting party rhetoric, the thrust of his speech sought to justify the party's role through the re-arming of the party's ideological arsenal. The more command Mao and the CCP held over the ideological direction and activities in Chinese society, the more consolidation would become a reality. Consolidation as it follows paved the way for more acceleration of industrialization and military build-up[33], two conditions essential to fulfilling Chinese national interests.

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[32]Stuart R. Schram,"The Party in Chinese Communist Ideology," *China Quarterly*, April-June 1969, No. 38, p. 1.

[33]Mao Zedong, "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work," 12 March 1957, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. 5 (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1977), p. 423.

Isolating the "isms": Dogmatism and Revisionism

On the ideological battlefield, Mao in the same speech identified the two-pronged battle against dogmatism and revisionism, the two "isms" which emerged from the myriad of criticisms during the Hundred Flowers campaign. In Mao's words, "It is dogmatism to approach Marxism from a metaphysical point of view and to regard it as something rigid. It is revisionism to negate the basic principles of Marxism and to negate its universal truth."[34] As is the tendency in communist polemics, polarization of thought perpetuated extremism in perception. In the case of the Chinese, mid-1957 marked yet another critical turning-point in the PRC's view of the Soviet bloc.

Chinese foreign policy particularly toward Soviet Eastern Europe shifted to a more radical stance in which the nature of alliances were fully put to the test. Spoken only a few months earlier, Mao's words, "A period of trial is often needed to determine if something is right or wrong,"[35] had come to pass. By mid-1957 the PRC's Soviet East Europe policy and specifically, Sino-Polish relations were being put to the test. As a reflection of the increasingly radical domestic climate, the PRC relations with the East European bloc countries commensurately grew more extreme, causing more gradual polarization within the camp, the effect of which was to be fully manifested in Sino-Soviet relations. In June of 1957 at the height of the rectification campaign and the beginning of the Anti-rightist campaign, Mao believed that the tide of revisionism not only permeated the ranks of the CCP, but also within the bloc with its main proponent being Yugoslavia.

Considering the state of fragile unity in intra-bloc affairs by 1957, the central issue

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[34]Ibid., p. 434.

[35]Mao Zedong, February 1957 'Hundred Flowers' Speech, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. 5, p. 408.

confronting the Chinese leadership was how to restrict the undercurrent of revisionism manifesting itself in bloc politics. In practical terms, the CCP leadership faced the decision of whether to abandon the policy of succouring and supporting the Soviet satellites' stride toward greater independence and more equality, or to re-align itself behind the Soviet Union for the sake of bloc unity, a condition essential to Chinese security and economic interests. For the Chinese, linking both priorities best served Chinese interests. Had events in Poland and Hungary not flared up so fiercely, it seems likely the Chinese would have maintained such a policy. However, the repercussions of the October 1956 events in East Europe made clear to the Chinese that in the long run a middle road could not be sustained, if the Poles would not cooperate with the Chinese.

Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, in many ways remained a "wild card." Mao was not as familiar with Gomułka and Polish ways as he was with Khrushchev and Soviet ways. Whereas Mao's relationship with the Soviets had already been formed over two decades, his relationship with the PUWP leadership faced its first, intensive encounter between 1956-1957. Poland was not the USSR, a concept that Mao, though fully aware of, had yet to fully learn and understand. Having to deal with still many unknown factors surrounding Polish intentions, Mao advised the Polish leadership in 1957 in the following way:

> Criticizing foreign parties requires prudence. Every party and nation is sensitive. If the criticism is wrong, then that's bad; if the criticism is right, this also is not good... In the midst of international tension, time is of necessity, there is a need to wait for the right person, and be prepared to be criticized...Regarding Gomułka's domestic leadership, before the entire country and party you[Gomułka] must prove that your way is right, this needs at least ten years until everything becomes stable.[36]

Though Chinese evidence has yet to prove whether Mao ever had any real intentions of

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[36]Luo Yisu, "1956 nian 'Bolan shijian' he zhongguo de zhengce," [1956 'The Polish Incident' and Chinese Policy], *Waijiao xueyuan xuebao* [Journal of the Institute of Diplomacy], Beijing, March 1997, p. 44.

visiting Poland, which incidentally would require a stopover in Moscow, Mao's final decision not to visit Warsaw in response to Polish Premier Cyrankiewicz's invitation a few months earlier could be interpreted as Mao's decision to take a "wait-and-see" approach with Poland, whilst simultaneously serving as the PRC's attempt to curb the manifestation of autonomist tendencies in Soviet East Europe. It is possible that Mao's intention was to send a clear signal to Warsaw that the Polish way of exercising its independence and equality was no longer amenable to Chinese interests. In the Chinese view, the Poles had pushed the five principles peaceful coexistence beyond the sphere of acceptable socialist conduct to a point of bordering on Titoist tendencies. Mao and the CCP would not tolerate any association with Titoism nor revisionism.

In relation to Poland's being a "wild card," the Chinese leadership had yet to acquaint itself with the person, leadership style, and psyche ofWładysław Gomułka. Perhaps, Mao's admonition to the Poles that at least ten years was needed to stabilize the Polish political situation stemmed from the fact that the Chinese needed more time to observe how Gomułka and the Polish leadership intended to generate and develop the "Polish road to socialism" and determine its impact on intra-bloc relations. Would Gomułka turn out to be a "Polish Tito" or would his "Polish road to socialism" successfully produce an alternative, yet viable way to create a non-Soviet socialist society. From 1953 to mid-1957 Mao and the CCP entertained and supported this possibility. However, as the Chinese gained more insight into their Polish partner, they began to sense that perhaps Gomułka had his own agenda. On Gomułka's intentions, Werblan posits,

> Gomułka 's most important political goal during this time was to gain autonomy from the USSR in the matters of domestic politics and the formation of a model of socialism. The independence of personal politics had crucial significance for him [Gomułka]; he was ready to count on the

opinions of the Soviet leadership, but not willing to submit to its dictates.[37]

If the Poles would not submit to Soviet dictates, what was the guarantee that they would wholeheartedly cooperate with the Chinese? Indeed, how reliable were the Poles in cooperating with the Chinese to further Chinese objectives? Somewhere in the midst of Mao's considerations, such issues had to be weighed.

By November 1957, the Chinese leadership became increasingly convinced that for Gomułka and the Polish leadership, Polish national interests took precedence over Sino-Polish cooperation. For the Chinese, the politics of equality in intra-bloc relations had developed to the point where Chinese had to choose whether or not to support greater satellite independence and autonomy at the potential cost of bloc unity and jeopardy to Chinese objectives. With the Polish leadership's misgivings about acknowledging the headship of the Soviet Union, the Chinese in their involvement with the Poles had come to a critical crossroad. It became increasingly evident that the Poles could not be treated as long-term partners, when considering Polish defiance in the face of Chinese insistence on Soviet headship.

Mao's insistence on the Soviet Union as the head of the Soviet bloc was motivated by domestic and international considerations. Domestically, Chinese endorsement of Soviet headship was based on preserving the political legitimacy of the Communist revolution, the basis of CCP authority, and Chinese dependence on the Soviet Union for nuclear weapons capability and technology. In the larger context of the socialist camp, the Chinese leadership's re-affirmation of the "Soviet Union as the head," was influenced first and foremost by the necessity of maintaining Soviet primacy in bloc leadership to prevent further fragmentation

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[37]Andrzej Werblan, "Gomułka i Październik " [Gomułka and October], *Dziś* 1996, No. 10, p. 61.

of bloc unity; secondly, the Chinese perception of the need to limit Poland and other Soviet satellites from propagating independent, nationalist tendencies, which would only further spread polycentric forces; and finally, bidding time for the PRC to solidify steps toward securing co-leadership of the socialist camp.

Salvaging the Communist Cause: Moscow Meeting in November 1957

If Khrushchev's secret speech of 1956 at the 20th Soviet Congress issued in the opening of the Soviet bloc's Pandora's box, Mao's role in the formulation of the Moscow Declaration in November 1957 signified the attempt to rein in all the evils spirits and seal the lid on the box. The meeting of the leaders of the Communist parties from 6-20 November 1957 was convened in Moscow in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Topping the agenda of this meeting were three main issues[38]: 1) the transition from capitalism to socialism; 2) the strengthening of the unity and fraternal cooperation of the socialist countries, the Communist and Workers' parties, and the solidarity of the international working-class, and 3) identifying the cardinal problems of the socialist revolution and socialist construction, i.e. revisionism.

The importance of the Moscow Declaration is two-fold; first, its formulation and wording showed a significant degree of compromise between the PRC and USSR and second,

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[38] 'Moscow Declaration', *Communist China 1955-1959 Policy Documents with Analysis*, foreword by Robert R. Bowie and John K. Fairbank, Harvard University under the Joint Auspices of the Center for International Affairs and the East Asia Research Center (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 410-416.

it demonstrated the effectiveness of the PRC's ideological leadership in defining bloc foreign policy and dealing with the bloc's internal problems. In some measure, the Moscow Declaration represented the last concerted attempt by the Chinese and Soviets to salvage cohesion in the socialist bloc, because any further erosion of bloc unity would be caused by the failure of the PRC and USSR to arrive at some kind of mutual cooperation. Hence, the striking of a compromise came with the PRC's renewed insistence of the Soviet Union as the head of the Soviet bloc. Though the PRC had hitherto been supporting greater independence and autonomy for the Soviet satellites, in November 1957 the PRC made it clear that Soviet satellites such as Poland could no longer depend on the PRC's ideological support for national independence and autonomy. By throwing its weight more fervently than ever behind the Soviet Union, the PRC in exchange obtained an agreement from Khrushchev to provide the PRC with assistance in weapons development and some aid in nuclear development.[39]

National security has always been the topmost priority of Chinese foreign policy. In the 1950s the Chinese leadership was constantly concerned about modernizing its military. The Chinese People's Volunteer Army (CPVA) ability to contain American forces at the 38th parallel in Korea was proof that what Chinese forces lacked in military arms, it could compensate with strategy and manpower. However, Mao and the Chinese leadership also realized that building up a world-class military arsenal required time, technology, and training. For the defence of China's borders and well-being, the PRC from the very beginning looked to the USSR and the Soviet satellites for military expertise. Although Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech in 1956 declared that "war was not an inevitability," at the same time, it did

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[39]Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy since World War II* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1986), p. 225.

not mean that war was impossible.[40] Based on the communist perspective of history, if a war were to occur, it would have to end with the destruction of imperialism and capitalism and the victory of communism.

For the Chinese, the threat of war could be theorized in rhetoric and even carried out through polemics, but in real terms, the Chinese leadership was well aware that there was no alternative to expanding weapons technology and building-up a trained body of military forces. For example, the Chinese had massive ground forces of 2.5 million organized into 150 divisions with support units.[41] When Mao learned of the Soviet scientific successes of the launchings of Sputnik on 4 October and an intercontinental ballistic missile on the previous 26 August, strategically speaking, Mao could not but support Soviet headship in the bloc. But, Chinese support for Soviet preeminence was not completely one-dimensional. Having emerged scathed by the blundering in Poland and Hungary and then beset by internal power struggles, Khrushchev needed Chinese re-affirmation of its leadership role in the bloc and the socialist camp. Moreover, having played a pivotal role in assuaging the volatile situation in Soviet Eastern Europe towards the latter half of 1956 and the first half of 1957, the Chinese leadership in fact bolstered its stature at the expense of Soviet lack of ideological and political leadership. Thus, by November 1957, the PRC and the USSR had no choice but to find some kind of compromise. Mao conceded to giving Khrushchev the recognition of Soviet primacy, while Khrushchev agreed to aid and assistance for China's nuclear weapons development.

Amidst this backdrop, Mao began his speech on 14 November by justifying the

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[40]David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 344.

[41]*United States Defense Policies in 1957*, report produced by Legislative Service of the Library of Congress for the House Armed Services Committee (Washington, DC: US GPO, 1958), p. 10 cited by Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power: U.S. Relations with China since 1949* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 149.

formulation of "the USSR as the head" of the bloc and then proceeded to explain why no other country but the USSR was qualified to take the lead in the Soviet bloc. In his remarks Mao eerily alluded to Soviet nuclear technology:

> Of course, it is not so obvious that without USSR all nations will be destroyed, but our enemies are well-armed, whereas among us only the USSR possesses full armament. We are glad that [the USSR] advanced and we congratulate it, because it holds in its hands the entire matter of defence. In the Soviet Union there is a moon-child, which weighs over half a ton. I would propose to everyone that we encourage the Soviet comrades to make an even heavier moon weighing 50 tons. And when this 50-ton sputnik floats in space, it would be very good. Then when you set off a sputnik of 50,000 tons, it will finally be possible to sign a treaty on universal disarmament.[42]

Mao's comments find even more significance when juxtaposed with the main points of the Moscow Declaration. Reference made to the first point of the transition from capitalism to socialism implies the threat of war triggered by imperialists ambitions. Although the preservation of peace and prevention of war was an official formulation, the implication in the Moscow Declaration is that Mao's concept of the process of transition differed considerably from that of Khrushchev.

Fully aware of the destructive consequences rendered by a nuclear war, Khrushchev was conscious of the limits of brinkmanship. Even at the peak of his euphoria about missile technology in late 1957-1958, he sharply distanced himself from Mao's view that nuclear weapons were just a paper tiger in the hands of American imperialists.[43] This realization explains why Khrushchev chose to maintain the policy of "peaceful transition" with the view of using Soviet nuclear capability as a political tool in its relations with the United States. In contrast, Mao and the Chinese leadership feared that any emphasis on on "peaceful transition"

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[42] AAN, KC PZPR 2508 "Communist Workers' Parties Conference," Moscow, 14 November 1957, p. 14.

[43] Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 189.

would weaken the unity of the socialist camp, and thereby undo the united front strategy of resisting the US through the extension of the vast zone of peace.[44]

For Mao, war was not only a necessary stage in the transition from capitalism to socialism, it was winnable and China could afford the potential loss of 300 of its 600 million population; this comment shocked Khrushchev.[45] Whether Mao really meant what he said or simply made an off-the-cuff remark to test Khrushchev, the comment left an unsettling feeling in Khrushchev, one of many which continued to raise doubts in Khrushchev's mind as to Chinese motives behind securing Soviet weapons technology.

Another angle of the Chinese rationale behind supporting Soviet nuclear weapons development was that war could not be carried out without the unity of the socialist camp. The unity of the socialist camp, and particularly the Soviet bloc, hinged on the leadership of the Soviet Union. In underscoring the importance of unity and centrality in the leadership of the bloc, Mao stated,

> Our way is to have both a centre and all of us, the unity of the centre and all others. If there is no centre, for example, if there is no CPSU, then the situation would turn into anarchism; [conversely] if the views of others do not exist, and there is only one view, then it would be incomplete. Presently, there is both a centre and all of us; in principle, it is possible to say that there is centralism and democracy. [46]

By publicly promoting the CPSU as the centre, the Chinese were clearly forcing the Soviets to take a tougher stance against the West and to supply technology for the sake of protecting bloc interests. Serving another strategic purpose, Mao's comments were aimed at testing the

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[44]Ronald Keith, *The Diplomacy of Zhou Enlai* (London: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1989), p. 104.

[45]Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (London: Arrow Books Limited, 1996), p. 262; Strobe Talbott, trans. and ed., *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 467.

[46]"Communist Workers' Parties Conference, Moscow, 14, 16, and 18 November 1957," *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Mao Zedong's manuscripts since the founding of the country], vol. 6, (Beijing: The Central Press of Historical Documents, 1987, 1989), p. 629.

Soviet Union's resolve in fulfilling the role of bloc centre. Mao reinforced his intentions by conveying them in his coining of the well-known phrase, "the east wind prevails over the west wind" in a speech to Chinese students and trainees studying in Moscow. In this November, 1957 speech entitled, "The International Situation has come to a New Turning Point," Mao enumerated ten areas in which evidence of the east wind was prevailing over the west wind, or put differently, the succumbing of Western imperialism to the ascendant force of socialism.

Being the enigmatic person that he was, Mao's comments could possibly have contained an ulterior meaning. From its prima facie meaning, the "east" could be understood as the Soviet bloc and the PRC rising up against the oppressive forces of the capitalist camp, symbolized by the "west." Taking one step further by reading between the lines, one could argue that the "east" (dongfang) signified the rise of the PRC, the Asian factor, over the "west" (xifang) the Western world. More an allusion to the re-emergence of China's once formidable global presence than to any jingoistic overtones, Mao was bold enough to speak in such a way, not only because he possessed the knowledge of the advances in Soviet weapons technology and the obligation of the USSR in sharing this technology with the other members of the Soviet bloc, but more pertinently, his ultimate goal of restoring China's greatness never wavered.

In theory the Chinese justified this line by invoking the principles of proletarian and socialist internationalism. As a Leninist conception, "Proletarian internationalism demands firstly that the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country be subordinated to the interests of the struggle on a world-wide basis..."[47] Proletarian internationalism addressed the broader issues of the world communist movement, whereas socialist internationalism, invoked

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[47]Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy since World War II*, 2nd. ed., (New

in the Moscow Declaration of 1957, meant "proletarian internationalism extended into the sphere of relations among sovereign socialist states."[48] By establishing the theoretical basis of a country's sacrificing its own socialist struggle for the greater struggle of the movement as a whole, the Chinese leadership was clearly motivated by preserving its own position vis-a-vis Moscow and willing to sacrifice its support of Polish autonomy in the process. The fact that Gomułka vigorously opposed Mao's formulation of the Soviet Union as the head of the socialist camp indicates how deep the forces of polycentrism had penetrated the bloc and thus, explains Mao's veering toward an extreme leftist, hardline policy.[49]

The case of Poland becomes significant when considering Chinese strategy and tactics in promoting its role and expanding its influence in the socialist camp. Poland's relevance for the Chinese was as a gauge of how far the Chinese could test the Soviets and a "sensitive seismograph"[50] of the political rumblings in Sino-Soviet relations. Just as Poland would not fully submit itself to the expectations of the Chinese in recognizing the primacy of the Soviet Union, likewise the Chinese would not fully submit themselves to the headship of the Soviet Union. The Polish Embassy Attaché J. Kołodziejczyk made note of the Polish and Chinese positions during the first visit of the Polish delegation to the PRC from 6-14 April 1957:

> The words "Unity of China and the Soviet Union, standing at the head of the camp of peace" spoken by [Soviet] Comrade Voroshilov to the public in Shanghai and his statement announced during a reception at the Soviet Embassy that "the 600 million Chinese people are presently one of the leading countries of the new world—the world of socialism." Also characteristic is that during the visit of our [Polish] delegation, in talks with representatives of the Chinese leadership, the words "with the Soviet Union at the head", with the exception of Premier Chou Enlai's words of greeting, were not mentioned. However, during the visit of Comrade Voroshilov, this wording

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York: Pergamos, 1989), p. 205.

[48]Ibid. p. 206.

[49]Robert C. Herber, "Mao and Polycentric Communism," *Orbis*, Vol. II, No. 2, Summer 1958, pp. 175-193.

[50]Hansjakob Stehle, *The Independent Satellite* (New York: Praeger, 1965), p. 29.

was mentioned more than once.[51]

The differences between Poland and the PRC arose when the PRC in rhetoric propounded the Soviet Union as the head, but in action promoted its own independent policies, whereas Poland, to the extent that it could, maintained its independence in word and in deed.

In the Polish view, Beijing's policy was duplicitous. For the Chinese, the Poles proved to be obstinate and unflinching. By November 1957 with the Declaration of the 12 Communist Parties in Moscow, signs of Chinese wariness towards the Poles became manifest. Specifically addressing Polish reluctance in officially recognizing Soviet headship, Mao stated,

> I am happy with what comrade Gomułka said yesterday; he said that he acknowledges the truth of the Soviet Union as the head, that it is not an artificial but rather natural evolution of history. However, there are those in his country who still have a problem with this, who for the time being are not willing to speak this, who want to change the description to, for example, the first and most powerful socialist country. There is a kind of contradiction that exists in his country; there is still no harmony between the progressive elements and many of the others. For this reason, they still need to work on it. I believe Gomułka is a good man. Khrushchev twice expressed to me that Gomułka is trustworthy. I hope Poland, the Soviet Union, China and the rest of the countries will be fully united and gradually improve our relations with one another.[52]

Mao's comments were a veiled admonition towards the "Polish road to socialism." In effect, the CCP expected the Poles to pay obeisance to Moscow's way by re-affirming the headship of the Soviet Union in the bloc, a move that the Poles were unwilling to make.

If Moscow perceived Warsaw as another Belgrade full of rebellious elements, Beijing's support of the Polish line could very well jeopardize its own relations with the USSR. Though the ultimate aim was the same—preserving the PRC's standing in the bloc as the USSR's equal—the way to its realization was better gained by supporting Moscow rather than

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[51]"Notes concerning the repercussions of the Polish government delegation visit to China," J. Kołodziejczyk, Beijing, 9 May 1957, PMFAA, Zespół 12, Teczka 83, Wiązka 4.

[52]"Communist Workers' Parties Conference, Moscow, 14, 16, and 18 November 1957," *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Mao Zedong's manuscripts since the founding of the country], vol. 6, (Beijing: The Central Press of Historical Documents, 1987, 1989), p. 639.

Warsaw. In any case, "for them [the Chinese] 'proletarian socialism' meant not a subordination to Moscow dictates, but a formal reconsolidation of the bloc under the Soviet *aegis*, perhaps with a *sous-entendu* for the future: '*Und der Koenig absolut wenn Er unseren Willen tut.*'"[53] The implication is that in manoeuvring itself vis-a-vis Moscow and Warsaw, Beijing's intention was to have others do its bidding. This kind of pattern in Chinese foreign policy in intra-bloc politics and in general points to the tendency of the Chinese to implement measures in order to save face even if it is at the expense of others. The downside of this policy is that it led to an outright confrontation with Moscow, the nature of which was acutely bitter and even bellicose.

By the end of 1957 tensions in the Soviet bloc were mounting. Although the Moscow Declaration stood as the official declaration of unity among the fraternal countries, discord continued to plague the bloc. Moscow's growing suspicions toward the Chinese undoubtedly influenced Khrushchev's entertaining thoughts of beginning dialogue with the West. As it became gradually evident that the CCP's East European policy failed to bring the CCP closer to co-leadership in the socialist camp, Beijing with its increasingly extremist tendencies injected a polarizing element into bloc politics. Władysław Gomułka saw that the PRC's presence in intra-bloc affairs curtailed Moscow's control, he realized that Chinese support was not motivated by a genuine interest in Poland but rather by power-political undertones.[54] Poland tried to straddle support for both the USSR and the PRC in order to maintain some degree of its own independence. Having tried to capitalize on its relations with the Polish Communist leaders, it was time for Mao and the CCP to confront the USSR directly.

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[53]Leopold Labedz "Poland: The Small Leap Sideways," *China Quarterly*, July-September 1960, No. 3, p. 99. The quote translates as "And the King is absolute, if he is doing our will."

[54]Marie-Louise Nath, *Communist China in Retrospect* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995), p. 84.

Taking the Leap: Revving up the Revolution, Speeding up the Split, 1958-1960

Timing can either be a leader's asset or enemy; it depends on the character of the leader. For Mao, direction of the domestic developments in latter half of the 1950s was charged by a "can do" mentality, which reflected Mao's increasing boldness in realizing his vision for China.[55] Clearly, Mao was growing impatient. Industrialization was not progressing as swiftly as Mao had intended; production levels were not as high as they could have been, and in bloc affairs, the PRC's relations with the Soviet Union growing more divergent, while the PRC's hitherto soft-line policy toward Poland and the other satellites backfired, causing Poland to stand its own ground and the PRC to embrace a hardline stance. It seemed that nearly one decade after the PRC established relations with the Soviet bloc, its position and prestige had improved only slightly. Reeling from the rude awakening of the Hundred Flowers movement, combatting the pervading presence of revisionism and internal-party power struggle, and desiring greater advances in industrialization, Mao sought to accelerate the pace of domestic reforms and take more initiative on the international front.

Beginning from the latter half of 1957, signs of renewed revolutionary tendencies manifested themselves in Chinese domestic and foreign policies.[56] Militancy, extremism, radicalization of economic policies, as evidenced in the Great Leap Forward, and politicization of daily life as seen in the setting up of people's communes and collectivization all pointed to Mao's increasing impatience with what he perceived as Soviet lukewarmness towards advancing the Communist revolution. It was in 1958 that the PRC's involvement in intra-bloc

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[55]Mao Zedong, "Shinian zhongjie," [10 year summary] 18 June 1960, *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian* [Selected important documents since the founding of the country], 1960, Vol. 13 (Beijing: The Central Press of Historical Documents, 1991), p.418-421.

[56]A.H. Halpern, "The Foreign Policy Use of the Chinese Revolutionary Model," *China Quarterly*, July-September 1961, No. 7, p. 7.

politics reflected a change in PRC perception where Poland and the rest of the Soviet satellites were relegated to a position of observer and the Soviet Union became the central focus of Chinese animosity. At this juncture, other than the continuation of economic and trade exchange between the PRC and Poland, Poland had little else to offer the PRC. With its ideological distancing from Beijing, Warsaw was not willing to lend any real support to Beijing's intensifying conflict with the Soviet Union. The Polish stance became a major point of contention in talks between the Poles and the Chinese in November 1960. In these talks Liu Shaoqi stated the following:

> The present good relations between Poland and the Soviet Union are the fruit of the Chinese position taken in 1956 toward the Soviet comrades. They [Chinese] firmly do not want that new difficulties would arise between Poland and the Soviet Union. Today, a similar kind of difficulties, as the ones between Poland and the Soviet Union which existed in 1956, exist now between the Soviet Union and China, and also Albania. As we[Chinese] helped you [Poland] in 1956, you should help us now in abolishing these difficulties...The Polish delegation should purpose to lessen our (Chinese) discrepancies with the CPSU and not increase them.[57]

As the talks progressed, Gomułka defended the PUWP's right to put forward a Polish position, and Liu Shaoqi retorted, "The Poles deepened the discord by bringing into the open the matters of the 20th and 21st Soviet Congresses."[58] In reality, the Poles contributed to bloc discord by seeking support from the Chinese for its own independent road to socialism, hailing Beijing as an alternative political authority, then ultimately supporting the Soviets in the Sino-Soviet split in spite of Chinese assistance in 1956. Gomułka's decision to fully side with the USSR was fundamentally motivated by Poland's national interests. Poland was much more dependent on the Soviet Union in terms of trade, technology, finances, and most of all, security. In contrast, apart from trade and ideological support, the Chinese had little else to

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[57]AAN, KC PZPR 2509, "Talks between Polish and Chinese Delegations in Moscow," 20 November 1960, pp. 68-73.

[58]Ibid.

offer Poland.

In a 1963 personal letter to Khrushchev, Gomułka, though critical of Moscow's failure to consult with the Chinese regarding nuclear weapons, explained that for the sake of preserving bloc unity, Polish support of Moscow's leadership was crucial. Gomułka expressed his view that the destruction of the socialist camp would in a significant way change the global power configuration between socialism and imperialism.[59] It is difficult to surmise how Sino-Soviet relations would have developed had the Polish position not been so staunch. As a thorn piercing the Soviet and Chinese sides, the Polish presence, in contrast to the other Soviet satellites, was an irritant in Sino-Soviet relations, exposing both sides at different, but key moments. Partly the consequence of Poland's intractable insistence on its independence and partly political machinations, Poland, as a significant, but not sole factor, fueled the acceleration of the Sino-Soviet split. Apart from Poland, the other Soviet satellites could not be used as a counterbalance by the Chinese to challenge, threaten or frustrate Moscow's policies, though Chinese support of Albania in the early 1960s managed to provoke bitter polemics in the socialist camp. One can speculate that Mao probably arrived at the conclusion that ultimately the Soviet satellites were far more dependent on the Soviet Union than had been perceived and that the PRC could hardly hope to reap any tangible fruits from these relations.

With the Soviet satellites gradually fading into the background, Chinese foreign policy focused on restrained confrontation with the Soviet Union. By 1958 the PRC's militant stance became fully manifest in the subsequent unfolding of domestic and international events. Domestically the Great Leap Forward and collectivization campaign represented a sharp break

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[59]Andrzej Werblan, "PZPR a schizma chińska, fragmenty wspomnień," [The PUWP and the Chinese Schism, Fragments of Recollections] *Dziś* 1991, No. 7-8, p. 69.

away from the Soviet economic model. Radical in its conception and disastrous in its outcome, the Great Leap Forward not only threatened economic growth in China, but also could potentially offer a new system of agricultural reform, the impact of which could threaten the Soviet model. In terms of tactics, the CCP's decision to implement such a policy sent clear signals to Moscow that Beijing was intent on exerting greater independence. This aim became even more pronounced in the PRC's foreign policy.

On the international stage, the crises in the Middle East and Taiwan Straits; Khrushchev's refusal to further share nuclear technology with the Chinese and the beginning of his overtures toward the United State; and the Soviet Twenty-first Congress in 1959 visibly affected changes in Sino-Soviet relations. The significance of the Communist Chinese artillery bombardment of Jinmen and Mazu islands, further explored in chapter six, though on the surface displayed Chinese displeasure at the failure of the Soviet Union to include India, instead of China, in a summit with the US, Great Britain, France,[60] in actuality represented a daring tactical move to use the spectre of conflict for political purposes. Furthermore, with regard to East-West relations, the Soviet Union's increasing openness to the US availed Mao all the more reason to confront Khrushchev.

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[60]J. P. D. Dunbabin, *The Cold War, The Great Powers and Their Allies* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 208.

Towards Confrontation: Chinese Chiding, Soviet Circumspection

One of the decisive blows to Sino-Soviet relations came with the Kremlin's decision not to supply a prototype nuclear bomb to the PRC. From the beginning of the PRC's decision in 1955 to develop nuclear weapons capability, the Chinese expected assistance from the Soviet Union. Throughout 1955 and 1956 the PRC and USSR signed "four preliminary agreements on bilateral cooperation in uranium mining, nuclear research, and uranium enrichment,"[61] which were then followed in October 1957 "by the signing of a New Defense Technology Agreement (NDTA), which provided for broader Soviet assistance to China in the development of nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles."[62] Approximately one year later, another Polish government delegation headed by deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers Piotr Jaroszewicz held talks with Zhou Enlai on 29 March 1958. The following excerpt reveals the complex motives of Chinese overtures toward Poland:

> Czou [sic] thanked the Polish government for the participation of the Polish representatives in the work of the Commission in Korea and Indochina[63] and he emphasized that the Polish activities in the international arena contributed to its popularity, and that its contribution in the defence of peace is highly appreciated. Czou used the formulation of Poland and China defending the socialist position at two ends of the world, Poland in the West and China in the East. The socialist camp wants to avoid war, but it is not afraid of it, because it is unanimous. However, in the bosom of imperialist nations political and economic contradictions are increasing. Capitalism is going through a recession, which will expand. The unfavourable situation in the capitalist countries is needed so that the strengthening of socialist construction may benefit.[64]

To what degree, if at all, Zhou Enlai seriously believed that Poland would play such a role is debatable. The significance of these conversations points first and foremost to the style of

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[61]Mark Kramer, "The USSR Foreign Ministry's Appraisal of Sino-Soviet Relations on the Eve of the Split," September 1959, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995-1996, p. 175. For a detailed study, see John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

[62]Ibid.

[63]Poland was one of three countries designated by the Geneva Conference (26 April-21 July 1954) Commission to monitor the process of settlement at the end of the war between France and Vietnam.

[64]"Notes from talks between the Polish Government Delegation and Zhou Enlai," Beijing, 29 March 1956, PMFAA, Zespół 12, Teczka 99, Wiązka 5, p. 18.

Chinese interaction with the PUWP. By 1958 the Chinese had to find an anchor of authority to stabilize the growing internal and external instability. Unsure of its future with the Soviets, it seems from these talks that the CCP leadership intended at least in word to elevate Poland's role in the bloc to test Polish loyalties in the event of future friction in the bloc.

From another angle, Zhou's statement can be taken as a confirmation of the CCP's realization that the PRC's relations with the USSR were indeed strained, and consequently, the PRC had to measure its own standing in terms of authority and influence vis-a-vis Poland and the other Soviet satellites. During these few years (1957-1959), the PRC increased trade exchange with Poland, in spite of Warsaw's speculation that the PRC desired "to further strengthen Poland's ties with the other socialist countries and in certain measure Poland's disengagement from its increase of trade circulation with the West."[65]

In 1959 due to intense border disputes between the PRC and India over Tibet, Sino-Indian relations worsened. In August 1959 an incident arose leading to clashes between Chinese and Indian troops. Unable to resolve their differences with the Indian government, the Chinese turned to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to "conduct propaganda measures against India."[66] Moscow declared neutrality on the issue, a move that outraged the Chinese and dealt yet another severe blow to socialist solidarity.

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[65]"Notes from talks of the Polish Government Delegation with PRC Vice premier Chen Yi," Stanisław Flato (member of Polish Embassy and Polish Intelligence), 25 March 1958, PMFAA, Zespół 12, Teczka 99, Wiązka 5.

[66]Mark Kramer, "The USSR Foreign Ministry's Appraisal of Sino-Soviet Relations on the Eve of the Split, September 1959, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995-1996, p. 176.

On 20 June 1959, Soviet leaders formally informed their Chinese counterparts that "no prototype bombs or detailed technical blueprints would be provided."[67] Not deflected entirely by the letter, Zhou Enlai in October made a formal request for Soviet aid in the development and production of nuclear-powered strategic submarines and longer-range, solid fueled SLBMs.[68] Khrushchev refused the request. His refusal doubtlessly expressed the heightening tensions in Sino-Soviet relations, and more importantly, the Soviet policy of alienating the PRC in bloc affairs. It also showed in the light of favourable steps toward detente with the US, Soviet unwillingness to continue pursuing cooperation with the PRC. Sino-Soviet relations decidedly took a turn for the worst with the withdrawal of more than 1,300 Soviet specialists from the PRC in 1960. The Soviet decision marked the opening salvos of what was to develop into an overtly bitter and volatile stage of Sino-Soviet relations.

With ideological identification as the most viable bond linking the PRC to the Soviet bloc in the early 1950s, by the end of the decade the undermining of the ideological link by the CCP's own machinations and lack of a comprehensive strategy towards Eastern Europe coupled with the dependence of Soviet Eastern Europe on the Soviet Union for security survival led to the PRC's cooling of relations with the Soviet bloc. The PRC had either miscalculated the extent of its influence in Eastern Europe or did not fully realize that for the Soviet satellites, such as Poland, severing ties with the Soviet Union in order to pursue independence and autonomy with the support of the PRC was in the final analysis neither

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[67]Ibid., p. 175.

[68]Ibid. SLMB stands for "submarine-launched ballistic missile."

feasible nor realistic considering the potentially detrimental measures with which Moscow would react.

The particular juncture at which the PRC's falling out with Poland and to a great extent, the Soviet bloc, became a fait accompli occurred at a point where the Chinese revolution lost its momentum. On the domestic front, the economic snafu caused by the Great Leap Forward not only left millions of Chinese dead from starvation, it inflicted tremendous damage on the moral leadership of the CCP.[69] In terms of intra-bloc relations, the perpetuation of the Chinese revolution depended considerably on the intensity and spread of the world Communist revolution. It follows then that a shift in the direction, strategy, and objectives of the world Communist revolution necessarily impacted that of the Chinese revolution, since the two were so intertwined.

As events in intra-bloc affairs unfurled themselves during the latter half of the 1950s, it became increasingly evident how Beijing and Moscow could no longer suppress the insurmountable discord that had been fomenting between them since the 1940s. In a sense, the fact that the USSR and PRC were able to sustain some semblance of mutuality and cooperation for roughly two decades suggests how many layers of tactics, pretense, manipulation, and manoeuvring had to be penetrated before the core of discord would be fully exposed. The "Polish October" as the harbinger of the Hungarian revolution and all other subsequent uprisings throughout Eastern Europe lured the PRC out onto the playingfield of real power. As a timely opportunity to exercise real authority in intra-bloc affairs, the PRC's

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[69]Chih-Yu Shih, "The Decline of a Moral Regime, China's Great Leap Forward in Retrospect," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, July 1994, pp. 272-301.

brief interlude in East European affairs showed how limited was the extent of the PRC's power and inflated was its authority. It was this "revelation" that stoked the gyration of events thereafter.

Although the PRC maintained diplomatic and trade relations with Poland into the mid-1960s, by the early 1960s it was clear that the PRC could no longer rely on fraternal reciprocity to challenge Moscow's position in the camp. Paradoxically, the PRC increasingly found itself on the periphery in its increasingly open and bitter contention with the Soviet Union. As if to worsen its position even more, the CCP's policy of politicizing ideology *in extremis* engendered a polarizing effect in the bloc.

The failure of the PRC's Eastern Europe policy resulted from the PRC's over-emphasis on ideology as the binding force of intra-bloc relations. Beijing essentially neglected state-to-state relations, and instead relied heavily on Marxist-Leninist ideology to to guide policy decisions. Ideology as the main premise for forming relations with the Soviet bloc was in the end not enough to sustain intra-bloc relations. Beijing's ideologically-based policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe proved too fragile a foundation on which to build long-terms relations. Once the severing of the ideological bond ocurred, the breakdown of bloc unity would ensue.

CHAPTER VI

All for One and One for All: The Impact of the PRC's Soviet East Europe Policy on the Communist World

The ascendancy of national interests magnified the scope of contention between the Chinese and the Soviets in their handling of the events in Eastern Europe. Gomułka's return to power in Poland and the uprisings in Hungary reflected the people's discontent towards inept Soviet-backed leadership in these countries. Popular anti-Soviet and anti-communist sentiment could be interpreted as a response to Soviet control in the leadership ranks and oppression over the societies of these countries. On a deeper level, the disparity of views between the national communist and Soviet communist leadership not only exposed Moscow's lack of authority but also its inability to recover this authority by any means other than military force. The fact that force was used in the case of Hungary signified the Soviet Union's virtual loss of political, if not moral authority in Hungary. To further complicate matters, the PRC's role in carrying out damage control in Eastern Europe throughout 1957 indicated the existence of two competing sources of authority. Out of this cradle of contention were born fissures and friction, the offspring of misconceived policies and misguided intentions.

Perception vs. Reality: A Rude Awakening for the Bloc

The period from 1957 to 1959 signified the intersection of perception and reality. The events that occurred during these three years were crucial in determining the future of Sino-Soviet relations and the extent to which Chinese involvement in Eastern Europe would either develop or diminish. The historical context of these events paints a picture in which the PRC's perception clashed with political reality. As was argued in chapter three, since time immemorial the Chinese have always held the perception that China lay at the centre of the universe in the imperial age and as the PRC in the modern age at the centre of the Communist revolutionary struggle in the intermediate zone. This perception was challenged when juxtaposed with the position of the Soviet Union as the head of the Soviet bloc and world communist movement. The existence of a "centre" and a "head" essentially created two contending sources of power in the world communist movement. In their own right, the PRC and USSR both functioned as legitimate sources of authority in their own respective spheres (the PRC in Asia; the USSR in Europe), but when it came to exercising the power of this authority beyond traditional political boundaries, the result was a clash of two political power sources. The "centre" and the "head" could not but contend for power. From the conference of the Communist Workers' Parties in Moscow in November 1956 and during Zhou Enlai's visit to Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest in early 1957, Chinese official pronouncements promoted the Soviet Union as "the head of the Soviet bloc." This gesture on the part of the Chinese was in itself a means of assigning self-importance. It seems that the more the PRC promoted the USSR as the head, the more this kind of posturing strengthened the PRC's central position in its own perception. The more the head (USSR) was strengthened, the more the centre (PRC) was empowered.

The contention between head and centre was played out in intra-bloc affairs. As evidence from Polish and *CWIHP* sources have shown, there existed an expectation on the part of the Chinese that the Poles would support them in the case of an open split between the PRC and USSR. When the Poles made it clear that it was neither in their capacity nor long-term interest to sever ties with the USSR, the Chinese essentially lost a key source of support in achieving their aspirations. Although Chinese evidence has yet to clarify Mao's intentions toward Eastern Europe vis-a-vis the USSR, one could speculate that the PRC's cultivation of relations with Soviet Eastern Europe signified a crucial step in recovering China's "rightful" place in the postwar world order, which for all practical purposes, could be understood as securing co-leadership in the socialist camp. In order to achieve this aim, the PRC needed a partner in the bloc. This partner was Poland, though more in complicity, than in camaraderie. From 1957 to 1959 Poland supported Chinese intra-bloc policies, while at the same time maintaining its links with the USSR. For the PRC, Poland was a means to an end—challenging Moscow's leadership of the socialist camp. For Poland, cooperation with the PRC was the most effective means of curtailing Moscow's control in intra-bloc affairs.

The "Head" vs. the "Centre": Who's Controlling Whom?

The real test of determining who was really in control of the bloc and by and large, the socialist camp, came in the second Taiwan Straits crisis in autumn 1958. The precipitation of events on the homefront and in bloc affairs leading up to the bombardment provided a rationale for the CCP's manoeuvres in the Taiwan Straits. Following the lengthy purging of Chinese

society and the rectification of the CCP in the Anti-rightist campaign throughout the summer of 1957, the radicalization of Chinese domestic politics reached new heights with Mao's proposal of the Great Leap economic plan at a meeting in Nanning in Guangxi with the party leaders of nine province leaders from 11-22 January 1958. At the second session of the Eighth Party Congress from 5-23 May 1958, Mao further propounded the Great Leap policy and in so doing, quelled his opposition in the party.[1] Mao was also able to muster support from the party leadership to launch the Great Leap Forward. The view and the rationale of accelerating the PRC's economic development in "faster, better, and cheaper" way, stemmed from the need for the PRC to become self-reliant and independent.

Shortly after the Eighth Party Congress Mao had two noteworthy meetings with Soviet leaders. One was with Soviet Ambassador Yudin on 22 July and the other was with Khrushchev on 31 July in Beijing. In the conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, Mao criticized Soviet leadership for its lack of respect towards the Chinese, complained about Stalin's distrust toward the Chinese, and portrayed Sino-Soviet relations as one "between father and son or between cats and mice."[2] In these talks he acknowledged the problems that existed between the Chinese and the Soviets, and stressed that political cooperation is vital for both sides. The underlying tone of these talks suggests Mao's intention of conveying to the Kremlin the PRC's insistence on maintaining its sovereignty in the face of growing discord between the two parties. The implication is that Mao, operating from the perspective of history and his own vantage point, would not tolerate Soviet control over the PRC in any

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[1]Laszlo Ladany, *The Communist Party of China and Marxism, 1921-1985, A Self Portrait* (London: C. Hurst &Company, 1988), p. 245.

[2]*Mao Zedong Waijiao Wenxuan* [Selected Diplomatic Papers of Mao Zedong], pp. 322-333. (Hereafter *MZWW*)

capacity.

Mao's attitude is underscored in his treatment of Khrushchev during the Soviet leader's visit about a week later. From 31 July to 4 August, Khrushchev spent time with Mao to probe the Chinese leader's thinking. In his memoirs Khrushchev recounts how Mao's nonchalant remark that "imperialism is a paper tiger" shocked Khrushchev.[3] Khrushchev also could not tolerate Mao's hyperbolic analysis of world events and recalled saying to his Soviet comrades after returning from China in 1954 that "conflict with China is inevitable."[4] During this 1958 visit, Mao gave Khrushchev every reason to feel that the Chinese were not being cooperative.

Mao's treatment of Khrushchev bespoke an attitude born not out of momentary whim but of a long-standing accumulation of grievances that originated with Stalin. Mao's resentment, in Li Zhisui's view, culminated in one underlying notion that the real purpose of the Soviets was to control the Chinese.[5]

Foreign control over the Chinese was an animus very much alive and fresh in the minds of the CCP leaders. The very hint of hegemonic intentions, whether real or imagined, could potentially put the Chinese on the defensive, thereby provoking an extremist, even radical backlash. But, Mao was thinking two steps ahead. Based on Mao's conversations with Soviets, it is clear that by 1958 not only did Mao not trust the Soviets, but he was also not going to wait for the Soviets to dictate China's course. In a sense, the Taiwan Straits crisis was an opportunity for Mao to steer China's course independent of Moscow's policy. As a display of self-will and bravado, the bombardment of Jinmen served the purpose of primarily

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[3]*Khrushchev Remembers*, trans. and ed., Strobe Talbott, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), p. 470.

[4]Ibid., p. 466.

[5]Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (London: Arrow Books Limited, 1996), p. 261.

legitimizing economic construction and militarizing the masses. Commenting on Mao's intention behind the bombardment, Thomas Christensen points out that, "Mao did not want war, just conflict. Conflict short of war would guarantee popular consensus for his broad economic strategy without wasting the mobilized resources on actual warfighting."[6]

Secondly, when considering the importance of the Taiwan Straits crisis in the context of intra-bloc affairs, the bombardment was a pretext to challenge the Soviet Union, its primacy, leadership, and authority. Putting Soviet policy to the test, Mao was not so much concerned with how the Soviets would respond, but rather more intent on "demonstrating his foreign policy independence from Moscow by attacking in the straits."[7] Paradoxically, in the midst of such tension, the PRC could rely on the US to retaliate in defence of Taiwan, but it questioned whether or not it could depend on Soviet support in this instance. In contrast to Moscow's wavering and at times weak support for Beijing, the Poles publicly expressed support for the bombardment:

> Even more pointed was the silence of Marshal Koniev, then Warsaw Pact Commander, at the occasion of ceremonies on October 10 in Warsaw commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the Polish Army. Koniev not only did not pledge support to the CPR[sic] (Chinese People's Republic), but did not even refer to the crisis—an omission all the more striking since the Polish chief of state, "taking the opportunity of the presence of the delegation of the CPR Army," denounced U.S. aggression and extended Polish "sympathy and solidarity."[8]

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[6]Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 219.

[7]Ibid., p. 235.

[8]Polish radio broadcast, October 10, 1958, as cited by John R. Thomas, "Soviet Behavior in the Quemoy Crisis of 1958," *Orbis*, Vol. VI, No. 1, Spring 1962.

For the Chinese, having lost trust in the Soviets in the face of the Kremlin's unreliable, shifting tendencies, Mao used the conflict surrounding the Taiwan Straits crisis to gain the upperhand in the CCP's internal power struggle, buttress the politicization of peoples communes and steel production, and recalibrate the PRC's foreign policy toward a less Moscow-dependent, more self-reliant direction.

Because Taiwan has always been perceived by the PRC as a domestic issue, the bombarding of Taiwan was a display of the PRC's sovereignty. In the face of Soviet disingenuousness, the bombing of Jinmen was essentially an act of defiance. The fallout of the Taiwan crisis and the subsequent contacts between the Chinese and the Soviets constitute a crucial chain of events leading up to the open fissures in the bloc.

1960: Countdown to the Recalling of the Soviet Advisors

1960 marked the point of no return in the PRC's ideological and political identification with the Soviet bloc. As the designated terminus of the first stage in the history of the PRC's intra-bloc involvement, the recalling of the Soviet advisors signalled the clear breakdown not only of relations between the CPSU and CCP but also of the PRC with the Soviet bloc. As a decisive policy shift, the Soviet decision to withdraw these advisors suggests the Soviet loss of trust, will, and interest in cooperating with the Chinese.

The fact that it was a Soviet decision shows that Khrushchev saw through Mao's real intentions of achieving supremacy in the leadership world communist movement and intended to curtail such efforts. Seeing the gravity of global contention in the nuclear age, Khrushchev

decided that detente with the US was more desirable and safer than having to tame a radical, revolutionary, and rebellious PRC. In this case, the decision to withdraw the advisors signified the end of the Sino-Soviet alliance as a powerful ideological and political entity. The Sino-Soviet divorce irreversibly changed the political landscape of the socialist camp, where polemics overshadowed policies, friction destroyed fraternity, and conflict replaced cooperation.

Depending on the political climate between the CCP and CPSU, Soviet advisors were perceived by the Chinese either as agents of control or envoys of aid. In the aforementioned talks between Mao and Soviet Ambassador Yudin in 1958, Mao refers to the issue of Soviet specialists during the Polish crisis in 1956. Although Mao did not specify the exact issues surrounding the Soviet specialists in China, he implied that the nature of it was such that it would raise Soviet suspicions:

> When Poland demanded that all of your specialists go home, Comrade Liu Shaoqi suggested in Moscow that you withdraw some. You accepted [Liu's] suggestion which made the Polish people happy because they then tasted some freedom. At that time we did not raise our problems with your specialists [in China] because, we believe, it would have caused you to be suspicious that we took the advantage [of your crisis situation] to send all the specialists home. We will not send your specialists home; we will not do so even if Poland does so ten more times. We need Soviet aid.[9]

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[9]"Minutes, Conversation between Mao Zedong and Ambassador Yudin," 22 July 1958, *MZWW*, p. 327. Translation by Zhang Shu Guang and Chen Jian, "The Emerging Disputes between Beijing and Moscow: The Newly Available Chinese Documents, 1956-1958," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 156.

One of the issues that Mao raised was the lack of limitation concerning the length of stay and the degree of access Soviet specialists had while working in China. This concern was valid given the fact that Soviet military advisors were sent to China to help modernize Chinese military forces. Soviet assistance helped the Chinese to produce MIG-17, MIG-19, MIG-21-F, and TU-16 airplanes, MI-4 helicopters, "air-to-air," "ground-to-air," "ground-to-ground," "air-to-ground," and "ship-to-ground," missiles, naval materiel, submarines, and cutters of various types.[10] Mao's main concern was that the more the Soviet specialists were integrated into the development of the Chinese defence industry, the more control they could exert over the Chinese. Arguably, in Mao's eyes, the Soviet advisors symbolized the extension of Moscow's control in China.

As a fixture secured in Mao's consciousness, aversion towards any form of control, especially in the case of the USSR, took a few years to manifest itself fully. It was towards the latter half of the 1950s that this aversion surfaced more frequently in different instances. Two significant instances occurred from April to July 1958 in separate discussions with Ambassador Yudin and later with Khrushchev about building a joint naval fleet and radio station off the coast of Dalian and Lushun. Khrushchev explains why such a proposition was made:

> According to a treaty, our planes were supposed to be able to use airfield in China for layovers and refueling. Then, when we put our long-range submarines into service, we needed a radio station in China to keep in contact with our fleet. The Chinese, by the way, had already asked that we turn over our submarine designs to them and teach them how to build submarines. So we felt justified in asking them for permission to build a radio station on their territory.[11]

The disputes between the Chinese and the Soviets over long-wave radio stations and the joint

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[10]"Stenogram: Meeting of the Delegations of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party," Moscow, 5-20 July 1963, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 10, May 1998, p. 179.

submarine flotilla shed much light on particular strands of Mao's thinking that could be used to explain why the PRC took the measures that it did in the events leading up to the withdrawal of the Soviet advisors.

For Mao, the Soviet request to build and retain joint ownership and operation of long-wave radio stations in Port Arthur and Dalian was a political issue. Although by this time the technology of Soviet nuclear submarines had been fully developed and the possibility of building a joint flotilla with the Chinese had already been discussed, the CCP leaders, particularly Mao, felt that the Soviet request for joint ownership and operation was reaching beyond the limit of the agreement. For Mao, it was the first of future steps toward complete control over the Chinese. What seemed a logical and reasonable request on the part of Khrushchev was for Mao an underhanded tactic in usurping control over the PRC's entire military force. Addressing Ambassador Yudin, Mao lodged the following complaint:

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[11] *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 472.

> Well, if [you] want joint ownership and operation, how about have them all—let us turn into joint ownership and operation our army, navy, air force, industry, agriculture, culture, education. Can we do this? Or, [you] may have all of China's more than ten thousand kilometers of coastline and let us only maintain a guerrilla force. With a few atomic bombs, you think you are in a position to control us through asking for the right of rent and lease. Other than this, what else [do you have] to justify [your request]?[12]

Clearly, Mao was provoking the Soviets. He was testing their true intentions. In fact, throughout the entire conversation, Mao was building his case against the Soviet Union. Making repeated references to Soviet control, Soviet disdain for the Chinese, Stalin's arrogance, and the lack of understanding toward the Chinese revolutionary experience shown by the Soviet advisors, Mao was laying the basis for the bombardment of Jinmen.

Because Mao perceived Soviet joint ownership and operation of the radio stations and submarine flotilla as a political ploy for increased Soviet influence in the PRC's military forces, Mao and the CCP leaders rejected the Soviet request saying, "Either way, however, we will not get mixed up with you: we must be independent from one another. Since we will in the end build our own flotilla, it is not in our interest that [we] play a minor role in this regard."[13] Mao's last sentence is surely telling. Mao was tired of playing a secondary role and was not willing to tolerate being subordinated to Soviet interests any longer.

In the case of Mao's talks with Khrushchev which followed soon after those with Ambassador Yudin, the matter of the radio station and joint submarine fleet had not fully been exhausted. In his memoirs, Khrushchev states that Mao flatly rejected the Soviets request. However, based on Li Zhisui's account of Mao's response to Khrushchev, Mao said the following: "I told him [Khrushchev] we could build a joint long-range radio station, but he has

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[12]"Minutes, Conversation between Mao Zedong and Ambassador Yudin," 22 July 1958, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issues 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 155.

[13]Ibid., p. 157.

to give us the equipment and technology. We could also create a joint fleet—with his ships and our captains. I told him that whether or not we attack Taiwan is our own domestic affair. He shouldn't try to interfere."[14] It seems that by this time, Mao was intent on raising the stakes with Khrushchev. The Taiwan Straits crisis provided the backdrop in the imminent showdown between Beijing and Moscow. By confronting the Americans on the Taiwan issue, the PRC not only exerted its sovereignty by acting in its own national interests without consulting the USSR, but it implicitly, tested the leadership of the Soviet Union in preserving bloc unity. Mao's brinkmanship in the Taiwan crisis manifestly re-affirmed Beijing's unwillingness to play a subordinate role in Sino-Soviet relations. It became more apparent that Beijing no longer considered itself bound to Soviet headship in the camp.

Shortly after the talks between Mao and Khrushchev during the CPSU First Secretary's visit to Beijing, the bombardment began on 23 August 1958. Provoking the second Taiwan Straits crisis, "Beijing certainly demonstrated its ability to manipulate tensions for political ends."[15] More a showdown of political, rather than military prowess, Beijing alerted the entire world to what, albeit outwardly seemed to be a potential PLA takeover of the island, was in reality an act of wanton political provocation against the Soviet Union and the US. In terms of how the second Taiwan Straits crisis altered Sino-Soviet relations, more than anything Mao's defiance raised serious doubts in Khrushchev's mind about whether a joint atomic program with the Chinese was worth pursuing. The rumination behind such a concern stemmed from the fact that the Chinese were not so willing to share with the Soviets samples

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[14]Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Mao Zedong*, p. 262. Mao also raised the issue of control in his conversation with Soviet Ambassador Yudin. See "Minutes, Conversation between Mao Zedong and Ambassador Yudin, 22 July 1958," *MZWW*, pp. 322-333; English version in *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 155.

[15]Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power*, p. 150.

of American air-to-air missiles that were launched during the Taiwan Straits bombing but failed to explode. It was only after much coaxing and even bullying that the missile was sent to a research institute in Moscow.[16] Khrushchev's doubts were not dispelled. If the Chinese acted in such an uncooperative way with one missile, what could insure that Chinese possession of an atomic bomb would not cause greater destruction and intensify international tensions?

Khrushchev was faced with a dilemma: maintaining bloc unity for the sake of socialist solidarity versus detente with the US with the view of precluding the potential of a nuclear war. The PRC's brinkmanship had ultimately prevailed. On 27 September Khrushchev on behalf of the Central Committee sent a letter to the CCP leadership which basically reaffirmed support of the Chinese and stated, "An attack on China is an attack on the Soviet Union. We also are confident that, in the event of an attack against the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China would also fulfill its brotherly revolutionary duty.[17]

When considered in the context of intra-bloc affairs, the PRC's provocation magnified what had already been manifested in Poland and Hungary in 1956, albeit on a smaller scale, namely the right for countries to exercise their own sovereignty and pursue independence. In their own way, Poland with the reinstatement of Gomułka and Hungary with its uprisings and short-lived declaration of neutrality represented small, but significant fissures that fueled the antagonistic rupture between the Chinese and the Soviets. Without the Soviet East European dimension, the Sino-Soviet split would have been the severing of ideological ties between two countries. However, with the Soviet East European factor, the Sino-Soviet conflict signified

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[16] *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes*, p. 151 as cited by Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, p. 222.

[17] *Sbornik dokumentov SSSR-KNR (1949-1983)* [USSR-PRC Relations (1949-1983)] Documents and Materials, Part I (1949-1963), Part I, pp. 231-233, Information and Documentation Administration, First Far Eastern Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 226.

the breakdown of an institutionalized ideology, a political system.

In the larger context of the socialist camp, Yugoslavia's ability to maintain its autonomy and independence represented a constant test to Moscow's resolve in preserving its primacy as the basis of control. Within the intra-bloc rubric, Poland was the first to fight for the right to exercise its sovereignty and independence. Hungary also tried but when it attempted to declare neutrality and withdraw itself from the Warsaw Pact, it met with harsh reproach and military reprisal from the Soviets. But, it was not until the Chinese openly defied the Soviets in the Taiwan Straits crisis, that the forces of national sovereignty and independence collided with the controlling nature of communist authority and power.

On Collision Course: The Clash of the Communists

Although the political crisis ended on 25 October 1958, the bombardment of Jinmen was reduced to alternate days. With the crisis' end, though the Soviets ultimately made a public declaration in support of the PRC, the Soviet leadership was faced with the greater issue of whether or not to continue its cooperation with the Chinese on nuclear development. The consequences were far-reaching. Aborting further cooperation with the PRC on developing nuclear arms would in many respects bring an end to the Sino-Soviet alliance, the outcome of which would be division within the Soviet bloc and the socialist camp.

Throughout 1959 unmistakable signs of the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations together formed a sequence of events that led to the withdrawal of the Soviet advisors. As described in chapter five, the first move came with the Soviet decision to halt nuclear

cooperation with the Chinese came in June 1959. In September, the decision by the Soviets to support India in the Sino-Indian border dispute showed that Moscow was alienating Beijing in a blatant way. Commenting on the Soviet decision in 1963, Deng Xiaoping stated that the TASS announcement "displayed bias in favor of the Indian reaction and [made] the disagreements between China and the Soviet Union clear to the whole world for the first time."[18] Deng went on to accuse the Soviets of portraying the Chinese as "looking for war, like cocks for a fight," and "wanting neither war nor peace."[19] As if adding insult to injury, Khrushchev's decision to hold talks with US President Dwight Eisenhower at Camp David from 25-27 September and then meet with Mao in Beijing from 30 September to 4 October only confirmed the major shift in Soviet foreign policy priorities.

By the beginning of 1960 two lines in the Soviet bloc were emerging. Khrushchev set the course for the expulsion of the PRC from the Soviet bloc, whereas Mao and the CCP leaders set out to take the ideological high ground in the face of Soviet attack. At the meeting of the Warsaw Pact states on 4 February 1960, Khrushchev used the conference to build support among the Soviet satellites for the Soviet Union's detente with the US. The CCP responded to the conference with a speech by Kang Sheng, the Chinese representative-observer, which in essence stated that "any international agreements which are arrived at without the formal participation of the Chinese People's Republic and the signature of its delegate cannot, of course, have any binding force on China..."[20] The statement was a warning to the Kremlin and the rest of the Soviet satellites that Beijing was speaking for itself and if

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[18]"Stenogram: Meeting of the Delegations of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party," Moscow, 5-20 July 1963, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 10, March 1998, p. 177.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Appendix, David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 265.

necessary, would act independently of Soviet foreign policy.

The more Khrushchev and the CPSU exerted their authority and even position in the bloc, the more the Chinese resisted. On 16 April *Red Flag*, the theoretical journal of the CCP, published "Long Live Leninism!" to mark the ninetieth anniversary of Lenin's birth. The *Red Flag* article signalled not only the opening salvos of the antagonistic polemical dispute that would ensue between the PRC and the Soviet bloc, but also Beijing's growing alienation within the bloc. The intent behind "Long Live Leninism" represented a tactical move on Beijing's part to gain the upperhand on the theoretical aspect of the split. By re-affirming its Marxist-Leninist creed, the CCP conveyed a deliberate provocation by claiming ideological legitimacy in the face of the Soviet Union's apparent "betrayal" of socialist values in seeking a dialogue with the US. Chinese resistance toward a shift in Soviet foreign policy aims signified resistance toward the loss of its own standing and power in the Soviet bloc and the world communist movement. For the Chinese, especially Mao, Soviet openness towards the US signified a direct response to what Mao perceived as "Dulles's idea of inducing peaceful evolution within the socialist world."[21] It was in 1957 that the Eisenhower administration introduced the strategy of "peaceful conquest" aiming to facilitate "changes inside the Soviet world," through "peaceful evolution."[22] Mao realized the threat of such a policy and its adverse effect on the unity of the socialist camp. As Mao observed, the more the unity of the socialist camp was being undermined, the more the PRC was losing its political footing.

The shifting of Soviet policy reflected a change in Khrushchev's thinking, which can

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[21]Qiang Zhai, "Mao Zedong and Dulles's 'Peaceful Evolution' Strategy: Revelations from Bo Yibo's Memoirs," *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 228.

[22]Bo Yibo, "To Prevent 'Peaceful Evolution' and Train Successors to the Revolutionary Cause," trans. Qiang Zhai, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 6-7, Winter 1995/1996, p. 229.

more adequately explain the CPSU's ultimate decision to withdraw its advisors from China. In January 1960 Khrushchev announced plans for a dramatic reduction of the CPSU's military troops. The rationale behind such a reduction resulted from Khrushchev's "attempt to replace the concept of a huge land army, which was in the foundation of the Soviet military buildup, with a technological force to ensure means of 'retaliation'."[23] The view behind such a strategy was "Khrushchev's desire to save resources for large-scale social and economic programs."[24]

When considering the political context of Khrushchev's decision, it becomes clear that Khrushchev was not solely concerned with the re-allocation of resources for the betterment of Soviet society but was ultimately driven by putting Soviet national interests above those of the Sino-Soviet alliance. Khrushchev's initiative marked his attempt to seal his position of undisputed leadership in the CPSU. Whereas Khrushchev's 1956 secret speech signified Khrushchev's thorough break with the Stalinist past, his 1960 troops reduction initiative availed him the opportunity to distance himself from anti-party elements by steering a clear and bold path for the "Soviet security doctrine and military make-up."[25] Furthermore, Khrushchev was fully aware that the Soviet Union's taking such an initiative would be hailed by the international community as a favourable step towards the reduction of international tensions. In his memo to the CPSU Presidium of 8 December 1959, Khrushchev wrote, "...this would have a large positive influence on the international situation and our prestige would grow enormously in the eyes of all nations."[26] By boosting its international image, the Soviet

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[23]Vladislov M. Zubok, "Khrushchev's 1960 Troop Cut: New Russian Evidence," *CWIHP Bulletin,* Issue 8-9, Winter 1996/1997, p. 416.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

[26]"Document 1: Khrushchev Memo to CC CPSU Presidium, 8 December 1959," *CWIHP Bulletin,*

Union's leadership in the socialist camp would likewise be strengthened and revitalized.

Lastly, in the same memo, Khrushchev struck against detractors of such an initiative by arguing from a higher plateau that even reactionary elements had no basis to argue against detente and tension reductions:

> The Soviet Union today has seized good positions on the international arena. The trip to the United States of America [and] our proposal in the United Nations Organization on general disarmament was well received in the world and cannot be simply rejected and neglected even by the reactionary circles of various countries. Even those who do not want a reduction of tension, much less disarmament, even they cannot oppose [it] openly in view of such a mood of broad circles of the public and desire for detente and reduction of armaments; they would probably use procrastination to find some arguments in order to turn this down, or in order to delay or disrupt decision-making on our proposals.[27]

Whether or not Khrushchev's statement was directed at the Chinese leadership is open to speculation, nevertheless, the message was clear: the Soviets were intent on pursuing detente with the US and re-directing the focus of the Soviet military's strategy on armed forces to missile forces. In so doing, the Soviet Union essentially challenged the aspirations of the Chinese by forwarding an ultimatum: either join in the efforts led by the Soviet Union to reduce international tensions or maintain a reactionary stance and suffer the consequences thereof. The penultimate blow to the PRC's position in the socialist camp came with Khrushchev's address at the Third Congress of the Romanian Communist Party in Bucharest from 20 to 25 June 1960. The following statement made by Khrushchev paved the way for the withdrawal of the Soviet advisors from the PRC approximately one month later:

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lssue 8-9, Winter 1996/1997, p. 418.

[27]Ibid.

> The Soviet Union and the United States are great world powers. History itself has assigned them such a place. On our two powers depends to a large extent how the international situation will develop in the future—along the road of strengthening peace or along the road of straining relations.[28]

During this congress, as Deng Xiaoping recalls, "the leadership of the CPSU mounted a sudden attack on the CCP, disseminated the Informational Note of the CC of the CPSU which contains an all-around attack on the CCP, and organized a campaign by a whole group of fraternal parties against us..."[29]

In its stride toward detente with the US, it was clear that the Soviets were no longer willing to keep up the facade of fraternal unity with the PRC, especially when unity meant supporting Beijing's misguided view of nuclear warfare. By openly promulgating the importance of the Soviet Union and the United States in deciding the future of global politics, Khrushchev was in essence relegating Mao to position of *persona non grata* in the leadership of the Soviet bloc and socialist camp. As if to dispel any trace of doubt, on 16 July 1960 the Soviet Union unilaterally withdrew "between 28 July and 1 September over 1,300 Soviet specialists working in China. Over 900 specialists were recalled from [extended] business trips and contracts and agreements were broken..."[30] Prompted by Khrushchev's re-orientation of the Soviet military defence policy which included troop reduction, the withdrawal of the Soviet advisors no doubt infuriated the Chinese.[31]

Throughout this dramatic episode of the breakdown in Sino-Soviet relations, Gomułka

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[28]Appendix, David Floyd, *Mao Against Khrushchev*, p. 279.

[29]"Stenogram: Meeting of the Delegations of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party, Moscow," 5-20 July 1963, *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue 10, March 1998, p. 178.

[30]Ibid.

[31]John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 65.

tried to strike a balance between supporting both powers. Gomułka fully supported Khrushchev on the main issues in the Sino-Soviet dispute—*detente* with the West, peaceful coexistence, non-inevitability of war, etc.[32] However, he chose not to support Khrushchev's policy of expelling the PRC if only for the fact that the PRC's presence acted as a counterbalance to Soviet domination. On Gomułka's rationale, Jan Rowiński speculates that Gomułka "was anxious to prevent a worsening of relations with Beijing and, resisting Soviet pressures, recommended maintaining all contacts in place."[33]

In time, however, lines of division were drawn and Poland had to choose one side or the other. During the Moscow conference of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties in November 1960, Gomułka made Poland's position very clear to Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Peng Zhen. Although it was not surprising that Gomułka ultimately re-affirmed Poland's ties to the Soviet Union, the Chinese rebuked the Poles for not siding with them and reminded him of the support they availed Poland in 1956. Drawing parallels between Poland in 1956 and Albania in 1960, the Chinese tried to admonish the Poles that the present tensions between the Albanians and the Soviets were an echo of those between the Poles and the Soviets four years earlier. Invoking the cause of the Albanians as a pretext to remind the Poles of their obligation to the Chinese for support rendered in 1956, the Chinese were no doubt trying to shore up renewed support from the Poles at a time when they needed it the most.[34] By the end of 1960, the game was over. Complicity between the PRC and Poland had

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[32]J.F. Brown, *The New Eastern Europe, The Khrushchev Era and After*, p. 166.

[33]Marie-Luise Nath, *Communist China in Retrospect East European Sinologists Remember the First Fifteen Year of the PRC* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995), p. 94.

[34]AAN, KC PZPR 2509, "Talks between the Polish and Chinese delegations," 20 November 1960, pp. 68-81.

come to a fruitless, but foreseeable end.

Although the actual break-up of the bloc as an ideological entity would not occur until the PRC's turn into self-isolation during the tumultuous years of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese involvement with Soviet Eastern Europe lost its most fundamental link with the dissipation of Sino-Soviet relations. As the polemics of Sino-Soviet relations grew more antagonistic and polarized, Eastern Europe's importance to the PRC quickly faded into the clamouring echoes of communist vitriol. Ideology—the hitherto uniting bond of socialist fraternity—was in the end used as a sword of personal politics, severing the PRC from the community into which it had long struggled to be incorporated and at the same time, forcing China to turn inward only to find itself alone and isolated once again.

The fissures in the Soviet bloc, caused by the PRC's active support of Polish independence and autonomy, represented the initial, yet decisive shifts which generated the lengthy process of communism's erosion. What seemingly began as a partnership between the PRC and USSR gradually evolved into an outright struggle between national interests. It is hard to imagine what the impact on the postwar world order would have been had the struggle been confined strictly to these two countries. Nevertheless, set in the backdrop of a bipolar world, where global politics was played out between two opposing camps, there was no room for individuality. The key to winning the game was consolidation. However, as a critical event in intra-bloc history, Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin—the symbol of bloc solidarity—decisively turned the tide of consolidation towards fragmentation.

On a fundamental level, trust, even the slightest shred of it, was lost in 1956. The events of 1956 showed just how little the Soviets trusted the Chinese, the Chinese the Soviets, Poland the Soviets, and the Chinese the satellites. On an ideological level, the efficaciousness

of Marxism-Leninism was lost in 1956. In the wake of Khrushchev's secret speech, doubts and disputes over the nature of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the scope of its applicability fostered contention within the ranks of bloc leadership. On a political level, Poland took the lead in forging its own application of socialist principles, thus paving the way for greater diversity and autonomy. What Yugoslavia tried to do alone, Poland attempted to do within the parameters of intra-bloc politics. Poland could only do this with support from the PRC. By all appearances, Sino-Polish cooperation seemed justified and acceptable. However, for the PRC, cooperation for the sake of cooperation was not the final goal. It was merely a steppingstone to equality with the USSR at a minimum, and supremacy in the world communist movement at its ultimate.

It did not take long before the Poles and the Soviets began to detect the real motives of the Chinese. The Poles began to question Chinese intentions after Zhou's visit in January 1957. For the Soviets, though distrust toward the Chinese existed from the inception of Sino-Soviet relations, it was not until Khrushchev's meeting with Mao in August 1958 that decisive steps were taken to restrict Mao's ambitions. Ironically, although the PRC's relations with Poland began as one of cooperation, then evolved into one of complicity in undermining Soviet authority, ultimately, it ended with Soviet-Polish cooperation and the PRC's isolation from the bloc. The result was division in the Soviet bloc.

In the Cold War Context: The Cracking of the Communist Carapace

The end of the Cold War saw the crumbling of the Communist carapace begin in 1989 with the collapse of communism throughout Eastern Europe and culminate in the demise of the Soviet Union.[35] These events found their roots at the beginning of the Cold War period. The cracking of the Communist carapace began in the initial stages of the formation of the Soviet bloc and gradually grew more pronounced throughout the four decades of the Cold War. The process of this cracking was fueled by internal factors, persons, and events within the communist world coupled with the external forces of the free world penetrating the socialist sphere. The Soviet bloc—the USSR, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Albania, and East Germany—in partnership with the PRC formed a fragile alliance that from its inception initiated its own demise.

From its birth, the Communist carapace was formed with fissures. This hard, ideological shell bore defects and weaknesses that grew more malignant through the years. The speed with which it was shattered testifies to the brittle construct of communism and fragile character of its unity. Unity, built on a common ideology and forged by a common struggle, was the fundamental prerequisite for achieving peace and security. However, history has shown that unity eluded the Soviet bloc. At most, a semblance of unity was fashioned out of military force embellished with communist rhetoric. Communist language however created a false and fleeting reality. The more the socialist camp called for peace, security, and unity, the more these things eluded them, because intra-bloc relations operated on many levels of

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[35]See David Wolff, "Cold War Endpoints?: Beginning the Debate";Thomas Blanton, "When did the Cold War End?", *CWIHP Bulletin,* Issue 10, March 1998, pp. 183-187.

variance. The element of diversity on these levels and the failed attempts to reconcile the central currents of contention to common bloc interests did more to erode than erect the construction of communism.

This process of erosion gained momentum after the death of Stalin in 1953. Stalin's death marked the erosion of totalitarian rule as a unifying factor among different nations. With the absence of a unifying mechanism, the diversity that had hitherto been suppressed, manifested itself on all levels of intra-bloc relations. The gamut of differences stretched from the top levels of leadership down to discontent among the satellite peoples. In the realm of intra-bloc politics, contradictions became the byword of the day, which on the one hand conveyed the recognition of differences that plagued bloc leadership and relations, and on the other hand, concealed the contending motives which ultimately led to an open clash not only between Moscow and Beijing, but also between Beijing and the Soviet satellites.

Contending with contradictions, the Communist leaders' differing interests undermined, even nullified one another. They called for unity based on independence, equality within a hierarchy, autonomy at the cost of decentralization, preserving peace while preparing for war. In the pursuit of an elusive peace and unattainable security, the socialist camp constructed the communist carapace whilst at the same time generated its process of erosion. It was a simultaneous process of building up and tearing down. Such a duality gradually unfolded in the PRC's relations with Poland.

The tenuous partnership between the PRC and Poland throughout the 1950s operated on different levels—diplomatic, economic, ideological, and psychological. The extent to which these levels intersected was integrally linked to the climate of intra-bloc politics. In the period under review the politics of intra-bloc relations set the tone and defined the direction of the

PRC's relations with Poland. United under the communist masthead—Moscow's leadership—the PRC's policy toward Poland was primarily formulated within the scope of intra-bloc relations and secondarily, as nation-states. Intra-party politics, more than diplomatic, state-to-state relations, predominately determined the nature of relations between the PRC and Poland.

Unlike the PRC's relations with the USSR where exchanges between the two powers were always central to developments within the socialist camp and at the focal point of Western concern, the PRC's relations with Poland, though not so relevant *prima facie*, nevertheless played a critical role in exposing the underside of intra-bloc relations as a whole and Sino-Soviet relations in specific. Alone Poland could not counterbalance the stature and weight of the USSR. In complicity with the PRC, Poland's insistence on maintaining the "Polish road to socialism" found justification and support. Polish perseverance in maintaining a certain degree of independence and autonomy was supported by the Chinese, because the CCP shared similar objectives. The two together, the PRC and Poland, fed the forces that both threatened bloc unity and magnified intra-bloc contradictions. Supporting each other's aim to maintain independence, autonomy, and sovereignty, the PRC and Poland from 1953 to 1960 fueled the forces that set the Soviet bloc on an irreversible course toward fragmentation.

Several major events occurred during this period, each of which signalled the accelerated cracking of the carapace: 1953—the death of Stalin; 1956—the 20th Soviet Congress and promulgation of destalinization, the Poznań riots, the return of Gomułka as first secretary of the PUWP in November, the uprisings in Hungary; 1957—Moscow Communist Parties and Workers' Conference; 1958—the Great Leap Forward and Taiwan Straits crisis; 1959—Soviet decision to withhold nuclear weapons prototype from the Chinese; and 1960—the open rupture in Sino-Soviet relations. As signposts marking the course of communism's

eventual fall, the events in each of these years ignited the initial tremors that would continue to reverberate throughout the communist world in different degrees of intensity during the Cold War period. The importance of these initial tremors cannot be overlooked if simply for the fact that the effects of each tremor paved the way for subsequent ones. With each shift, the fissures widened, bringing in greater instability and uncertainty. In and of itself a tremor could not generate large-scale damage, but over a span of more than four decades, constant shifting led to collapse.

Shifting as represented by a series of decisive and related events did not happen by themselves. The abovementioned major events were defined by the people involved. Whether representing countries, interests, or ideas, it was people who produced history. The burden of history in this period weighed heavily on the political players. This was a time when leaders such as Stalin, Mao, Khrushchev, and Gomułka possessed an acute consciousness of their personal as well as nation's place and role in human history. They followed the Marxist-Leninist notion of the centrality of man in shaping history and advancing its development. In their attempt to secure their place amidst the throes of history, communist leaders generated the very tremors that issued in the collapse of what they attempted to build.

When considering the leadership of Mao Zedong, it would be safe to say that Mao was a leader of great vision. He envisioned the re-emergence of a strong, stable, and self-sufficient China. Yet, the way in which he strove to realize this vision indicates the absence of a master plan. As attractive as a master plan might be, it is highly unlikely that Mao had a coherent strategy for the PRC's involvement with Soviet Eastern Europe. It is more probable that he took a step-by-step approach in his treatment of Eastern Europe, at times watching and reacting to external developments, and at other times, actively generating and capitalizing on

the capricious political climate clouding the domestic situation in the countries of Eastern Europe.

However, towards the end of the 1950s, as a reflection of Mao's growing restlessness with the pace of socialist transformation, failure of the PRC's East Europe policy, and deepening distrust toward the Kremlin, Chinese policy increasingly focused on exerting China's sovereignty and defending its national integrity in the face of bloc discord and international tensions. To regain its "rightful" place in the postwar global order, Chinese national interests ultimately could not be sacrificed for the sake of upholding Soviet leadership based on what Beijing perceived as the Kremlin's ideological deficit and betrayal of the communist struggle.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

The history of the PRC's involvement with Soviet Eastern Europe attests to the use of an ideology to justify and govern the union of partners who otherwise had hardly anything in common. Despite the differences, the essential factor in this mutual involvement was the recognition of the necessity for such a union. The PRC's joining the Soviet bloc was the first step towards consolidation of the bloc as a complete entity. The rationale for joining such an entity included security concerns, trading and economic support, technological development, and political identification. For the Soviet satellites, membership in the bloc was more a matter of Soviet domination than their own volition. The transplantation of the Soviet system onto the countries of Eastern Europe produced one entity in which the member-states were joined to an enlarged network and political system revolving around Soviet hegemony. For the PRC, the decision to link itself to the Soviet bloc was motivated not only by national interests but equally important, by identifying itself with political and military power, the two factors the PRC needed to legitimize and fortify its central position in the postwar world order.

During the years 1953 to 1960 the PRC's involvement in Soviet Eastern Europe and relations with Poland added a critical dimension to developments in the communist world. The two cornerstones of Chinese policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe were ideology and security. By adopting the ideology of Marxism-Leninism compounded with the Stalinist element, the Chinese sought to build a socialist society. Although Mao embraced Marxist-Leninist thought, it was really the factor of Stalinism that was most akin to his own brand of leadership. Mao fully embraced the cult of personality. It was only when others began to

question the parallels between the Soviet strongman and the Chinese leader that the aura of Mao's leadership began to be tainted. In spite of this, Mao used ideology in various ways to expand his power base, dispose of opponents, real and imagined, and challenge Moscow.

As a tool of political power, communist ideology was an instrument to manipulate words and people. Seemingly, the PRC supported Poland in the name of socialist fraternity and solidarity and the Poles responded in kind. Ultimately, however, when rhetoric intersected with reality, it was clear that national and personal interests were at the core of contention. What was supposed to be the cord that bound the socialist fraternity together ended up being the very weapon that divided the Soviet bloc. In the end, though ideology in many ways lent color, tone, and texture to intra-bloc relations, it failed to reap the fruits of peace and security that it sought to sow.

Whereas ideology afforded a political rationale for the PRC's involvement in intra-bloc affairs, the issue of security stemmed from national concerns over military defence, strategy, and development. Political power could not count for much without military might. For the Chinese, security concerns were decidedly shaped by the PRC's perceptions of its position in the intermediate zone. Perceiving itself in the centre of the struggle between the socialist and the capitalist camps, the PRC was strategically positioned to regain its "rightful" place in the world order and to influence the struggle between the forces of imperialism and communism. The position of centrality was key to the PRC's policy of securing primary and peripheral alliances.

The PRC's self-perception not only shaped its military strategy but also policy toward the Soviet bloc. Conscious of its position in the bloc structure, the PRC held high as a priority achieving a parity of prestige with the Soviet Union. Mao and the CCP leadership were not

merely content with equality among all other bloc members, but even more sought to be equal with the Soviet Union—the first among equals. Achieving such a stature was not the goal in itself but more importantly, the critical step towards restoring China's "rightful" place in the world. Throughout the period in question, the PRC's perception of equality underwent steady change. In the early years from 1949 to the death of Stalin in 1953, the PRC could be considered a junior partner, a new pledge in the socialist fraternity, trying hard to fit in and prove itself. Although the Chinese People's Volunteer Army's successful resistance of American forces in the Korean War was perceived by the Chinese as a significant boost to Chinese confidence, the Chinese leadership would not rest on what they deemed as both a major strategic and military postwar achievement and, in spite of limited Soviet aid, a demonstration of the PRC's ability to stand up for itself. For the Chinese, the Korean War symbolized the fortitude of Chinese resilience, willpower, and aspirations. Korea's importance lay in the fact that China's potential for renewed greatness was alive and active.

The PRC's foreign policy apparatus, structure, and actors, PRC foreign policy-making from 1953 to 1955 came under scrutiny. The nature of intra-bloc relations was predominantly characterized by party-to-party rather than state-to-state relations. Whereas the CCP formulated its own policy, the foreign policy of the Soviet satellites more often than not was framed as an extension of Moscow's policies. At the helm of CCP foreign policy-making was Mao Zedong. Able to target and expound on the central contradictions propelling the Chinese revolution, launch policies, such as the collective drive in 1955, and build up a powerful party system, Mao, like Stalin, made an indelible mark on the first decade of intra-bloc politics. In specific, inasmuch as Zhou sought to build relations with and strengthen ideological ties with the Soviet satellites, his interpretation and execution of policy reflected Mao's view of the

satellites as steppingstones to at least achieving equality with the Soviet Union, and at most securing co-leadership with the USSR of the international communist movement.

As if signalling a new stage in the Communist movement and likewise in the Chinese revolution, the death of Stalin (1953) and the participation in the Geneva (1954) and Bandung (1955) conferences marked a real blossoming period for the PRC international relations. In large measure, the PRC had not only proven itself in the international arena but also to the Soviet leadership. Soviet recognition of the PRC's importance in the Soviet bloc bolstered Chinese confidence to give the PRC the political standing that it needed to play a greater role in the socialist camp. It was eventually in the latter half of this period after the PRC's intervention in Poland that the PRC displayed its confidence in intra-bloc politics. In these few years leading up to the withdrawal of the Soviet advisors, Chinese confidence grew into a boldness that would wreak havoc domestically in the Great Leap Forward and politically, in Sino-Soviet relations.

The role of Poland in the PRC's Soviet East Europe policy was that of bellwether, gauge, and partner. Having the strongest leadership of all the other satellites, Poland's desire for independence, autonomy, and sovereignty echoed that of the PRC. By supporting the "Polish road to socialism," the Chinese were gauging the limits of the Polish cause within the boundaries of the socialist cause. The real test of Chinese support came in 1956, which marked the peak of PRC involvement in intra-bloc relations. As a key year in intra-bloc history, the events of 1956 ignited irreversible developments that changed the mien of intra-bloc politics. In 1956 any real trace of trust that existed between bloc members was irreparably damaged by the decentralizing effect of destalinization. Khrushchev's secret speech set in motion the forces of national independence struggles, anti-Soviet and anti-communist sentiments, and

polycentrism. However, though the potency of totalitarian rule was diffused as a result of the destalinization campaign, its repercussions released a current of contradictions that had been swelling up since the birth of Sino-Soviet relations.

From 1956 to the eve of the open Sino-Soviet split in 1959, the PRC contended with contradictions with the view of challenging the USSR for leadership of the world communist movement. Even though the Chinese leadership continued to insist in public on the headship of the Soviet Union, internal indicators showed that the PRC had reached a point of restlessness. The Moscow Conference of the Communist Workers' Parties in November , 1957 brought the PRC's involvement with Poland to a critical juncture. Poland's reluctance in recognizing the Soviet Union's headship stemmed not only from contrasting views within the Polish leadership on this issue, but also from an unwillingness to yield to undue Chinese expectations. Quite simply, the Chinese had underestimated the Poles. Gomułka realized that in the greater scheme of the PRC's contention with the Soviet Union, Poland for the Chinese was expendable, whereas for the Soviets, Poland's geopolitical position was of utmost importance to Soviet foreign policy. In having to choose between the "lesser of two evils", Poland ultimately had to side with the Soviet Union, for it was Soviet economic aid and technical support coupled with protection against potential German recrudescence that would more effectively contribute to the preservation and advancement of Polish national interests than the CCP's empty ideological haranguing. For Poland, it became increasingly clear that the PRC's bloc-building efforts were motivated more by Chinese interests and objectives than by mutual interests.

The PRC's actiinve bloc-building throughout 1957 in Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest by Zhou Enlai and Peng Zhen in Moscow, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and

Yugoslavia showed how much the Chinese sought to reinforce the fragile unity threatened by the Polish and Hungarian events and rally multilateral support for socialist solidarity. At the same time, the Chinese were cultivating support for their own authority in the bloc by spreading their influence among the satellite countries. Building direct links with the more conservative satellites, such as Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania, was an indirect way of strengthening Chinese influence in these countries. The CCP's solidarity-building campaign became a pressing priority in light of what Beijing perceived as the manifestation of imperialist forces in the Anglo-French-American retaliation against Nasser's attempts to nationalize the Suez Canal in 1956. For Beijing, because such acts could be seen as direct incursions against the Third World, strengthening solidarity on all fronts was duly justified.

On the domestic front, the rectification campaign was well under way. Recovering from the reeling effects of the Hundred Flowers movement, CCP leaders conducted the Anti-rightist campaign in the summer of 1957 in order to bolster party leadership and pre-empt any potential hindrances by anti-party factions that could frustrate future CCP policies. A large-scale weeding out of internal contradictions, as defined by Mao in his speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions," the Anti-rightist campaign was a measure taken by the CCP to define the elements undermining domestic unity. From 1957 onwards the chain of events in domestic and intra-bloc affairs confirmed the widening gap between Mao's perception of reality and reality itself. The repercussions of the rectification campaign showed how fallible the CCP really was. In spite of this, however, the CCP leadership ignored criticisms from different sectors of Chinese society and instead silenced the voices of opposition. Mao and his supporters saw and heard only what they wanted to see and hear. The real situation was but an impediment to realizing the ultimate goal.

Throughout 1958 the radical leanings of the CCP leadership were manifested in the implementation of the people's communes and the economic policy of the Great Leap Forward. On the one hand an economic disaster waiting to happen, and on the other hand, a calculated measure to circumvent Soviet economic planning, the Great Leap Forward was a demonstration of an extreme form of Maoist policy in finding a quicker and "better" way to achieve socialism. In repeated instances, Mao's bravado in displaying an independent will signified a veiled attempt at thwarting control from Moscow and from adversaries within the Chinese leadership. The height of such defiance came with the bombardment of Jinmen and Mazu in 1958. As the second Taiwan Straits crisis, these offshore bombings created conflict as the backdrop for a peculiar display of Chinese sovereignty.

In the short-term, the Soviets publicly supported the Chinese. But, in private growing doubts over the future of Sino-Soviet relations were being translated into tangible policy measures. When the Soviets informed the Chinese of their decision not to send a prototype of the atomic bomb and technical blueprints, the Chinese continued to keep communication lines open.[1] Taking a decisive step toward re-orienting their foreign policy focus on detente with the US and curbing nuclear proliferation, the Soviets withdrew over 1,300 Soviets specialists from China, thus marking the beginning of the end of Sino-Soviet cooperation.

The short span of Sino-Soviet East European relations can partially be attributed to the layers of contradictions that plagued these relations from the outset. But, in large part, these relations were forged and eventually functioned in the shadow of the Soviet Union. Without

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[1]John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 121.

the presence of the Soviet Union, Sino-East European relations might have endured longer. However, any potential of a lasting union was impeded by a mutual lack of understanding, Soviet interference or interlocution, the political tension of the times, and the gripping degree of distrust between both sides. Mao and the Chinese leadership may have had a general vision of the PRC's future, but when it came to setting out long-term policies, immediate results and short-term political gains won out. It is doubtful whether the Chinese perceived cooperation with the Soviet satellites as one requiring long-term investment and cultivation. The direction and duration of PRC policy toward Soviet Eastern Europe primarily hinged on the state of Sino-Soviet relations. As a consequence, the deterioration of Sino-Soviet East European relations in the 1960s occurred in direct correlation with the waning of Sino-Soviet cooperation, the result of which was a divided Soviet bloc.

Considering this period in the Cold War context, division in the Soviet bloc meant a weakened socialist camp. With conflict between the PRC and USSR intensifying in the subsequent years, the image of a once united communist world turned into one of chaos and belligerence. Generated by the divisive nature of Sino-Soviet antagonism coupled with the satellites' struggle for national independence and freedom, the crack in the Communist carapace widened with each passing decade, until the carapace completely shattered with the fall of Soviet Union in 1991.

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INTERVIEWS

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