

CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

45

EXEMPLAIRE N°
COPY

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH
14th March, 1953

NATO SECRET
DOCUMENT
AC/34-D/12

WORKING GROUP ON TRENDS IN SOVIET POLICY

THE ROLE OF CHINA IN SOVIET POLICY

Note by the Secretary

Attached hereto is the text of the document on "The Role of China in Soviet Policy" prepared by the experts, and which will be studied by the Working Group at its next meeting on Wednesday afternoon, 15th April.

(Signed) P. ANNINOS

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THE ROLE OF CHINA IN SOVIET POLICY

Evidence of Past History (1921-1949)

The Chinese Communist Party was founded in 1921 under the direct inspiration of the October Revolution. During the 1920's the Central Committee of the Chinese Party operated under close directives and guidance from the Comintern. Appointments to the key positions in the Chinese Party were made and revoked on direct instructions from Moscow.

2. The policy of the Comintern during this period (1921-1927) was to direct the revolution in China by controlling the Kuomintang. Chiang Kai-Shek was sent to Moscow in 1923 for 6 months' training, and Borodin and other leading experts from Russia were attached to the KMT. The Chinese Communist Party, which counted less than 1,000 members in 1925, was a special instrument to be used inside the Kuomintang for carrying out this policy. The first united front between the KMT and the CCP lasted from 1923-1927. Stalin was the chief proponent of this policy during this period, and his support for it was the more vehement because it was opposed by Trotsky. The breach came in 1927 on Chiang Kai-Shek's initiative. The CCP and the Comintern continued to cling vainly to the figment of the alliance for months after the rupture.

3. It was however in an area remote from the control of the Central Committee of the Chinese Party, and as the result of policies not in accordance with the precepts of the Comintern, that the essential features of Communism in China were developed which led directly to its eventual victory. The theory and tactics of the Red Army base (emphasising close political association between the Army and the peasants) and the particular Chinese form of guerrilla warfare were evolved by Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh between 1928 and 1933 in rural areas in the remote hinterland. In November 1931 the "Chinese Soviet Republic" was set up with Mao Tse-tung as Chairman.

4. During the same period, the Central Committee of the Chinese Party, continuing to act under direct instructions from the Comintern, attempted to base its revolutionary action on an urban proletariat; this action proved disastrous and led quickly to the almost total extinction of Communism in the Chinese cities. Stalin continued to be personally associated with the direction of Comintern policy in China at this time. In 1931 the remnants of the Central Committee escaped from Shanghai and took refuge in the Red Army base under Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh.

5. The control of Mao Tse-tung over the Central Committee and over the leading positions in the party was definitely established during the "Long March" in 1935 and has never since been disputed. Since 1938 there have been no important changes in the leading figures in the Chinese Communist Party.

6. After the eclipse of the Central Committee of the Chinese Party in Shanghai in 1931, the Comintern appeared to have paid markedly less attention to the Chinese Party than hitherto. It is a moot point whether the impulse towards the "second United Front" with the Kuomintang (1938 to 1940) was an initiative of the Communist Party inside China or was rather the decision of the 7th World Congress of the Comintern in 1935.

7. It is also a disputed point whether the Chinese Communist Party or the Kuomintang was the more to blame for the deterioration of relations which began in 1941 and led to the renewal of the civil war in 1946.

8. While the headquarters of the Chinese Communist Party were established at Yen-an (1937 to 1945), visits from the outside world to the Communist areas were frequent; but there are no reports of the presence of Soviet advisers or any evidence of Soviet material assistance.

9. The course of Soviet policy from 1945-1949 is obscure and difficult to interpret. It is possible that there were hesitations and uncertainties.

10. In 1945, as a consequence of Yalta, the Soviet Government and the National Government of China signed a Treaty of Alliance, under which the Soviet Government agreed to give moral support and aid in military supplies only to the National Government. At the beginning of 1946, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Manchuria was postponed for one month at the request of the Nationalist Government. As late as February 1949 the Soviet Government negotiated an agreement on trade in Sinkiang with the Nationalists. Of all the diplomatic envoys accredited to China, the Soviet Ambassador was the only one to follow the National Government from Nanking to Canton and he was not formally recalled until October 1949, when he was transferred to Peking.

11. On the other hand, on withdrawing from Manchuria in 1945, the Soviet Army left behind surrendered Japanese arms and equipment which proved of great value to the Chinese Communists. (The removal of industrial equipment from Manchuria, as from Eastern Europe, does not provide any clue to the Soviet attitude to the civil war in China.)

12. Mao Tse-tung's own speeches and articles during this period provide interesting evidence of the CCP's change of attitude towards the Soviet Union. During the "second United Front" period Mao, as did many communist leaders in western Europe, emphasised the national character of the revolution. By 1949, there was a change, and the emphasis was on the Chinese revolution's debt to the Soviet Union. This pro-Soviet phase was intensified, notably towards the end of 1952, and continues to the present day.

Evidence of events from 1949 to the death of Stalin

13. After the establishment of the new government in Peking in 1949 there was a great display of solidarity between the Soviet Union and China. In 1950, a new treaty of friendship was signed between the Soviet Government and the Peking Government replacing the Treaty of 1945 with the Nationalists (see para.10) Agreements governing economic and technical assistance were signed at the same time and further agreements with much publicity in September 1952.

14. The new Chinese Government set out to free China from Western influences and to re-orientate the economy of the country towards the Soviet Bloc.

15. The administration and social changes which were being made in China were, for the most part, modelled closely on the precedent of the Soviet Union.

16. China played an important part in the "Peace Campaign" and in the cold war generally. Far Eastern Regional Conferences of WFTU and of the "Peace Movement" were held in Peking in 1949 and 1952, and on both occasions permanent Liaison Bureaux were set up in Peking. - The Soviet Union in return gave vigorous support to China's cause in international affairs (e.g. over representation in the United Nations).

17. There appeared to have been some recession of Soviet influence in Sinkiang. In many small ways the Soviet Government showed in their actions a careful concern for Chinese susceptibilities.

18. In the Indo-Chinese operations, the Vietmin provided and still provide the fighting manpower and China gave and still give considerable help with supplies, advisers and training. The Soviet contribution seemed to be relatively unimportant.

19. Winning Japan to the Communist side is a major long-term communist objective in the Far East. The Soviet Union and China both showed obvious concern at Japan's rebirth as a great power, within the western orbit. The Japanese Communist Party was supported by both the Soviet Union and China. Programmes and directives seemed to have come from Moscow, while Peking's contributions were under the guise of a strong fraternal interest rather than direction.

20. At the end of 1952, the first Chinese Five Year Plan for economic construction was announced. This implied increased help from the Soviet Bloc, in the shape of technical advisers and capital equipment. Soviet military supplies and advisers required both for current operations in Korea and for the long-term modernisation of the Chinese armed forces, provided another important opportunity for the extension of Soviet influence in China.

21. The course of the Korean war provided a demonstration of the close coordination of policies between China and the Soviet Union. The Korean war contained many factors which still remain obscure to the West, but offer no indication of any important divergence between Chinese and Soviet intentions and methods. China provided the manpower for the fighting, the Soviet Union the arms and equipment (particularly the air power) and technical advice and training. The two States shared an interest in exploiting the opportunities of the Korean war for spreading doubt and dissension among Western Nations and in Asia.

Events from the Death of Stalin.

22. As part of the reorganization of the hierarchy in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, KUZNETSOV was appointed a vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and concurrently Ambassador to China. He has experience in Trades Union affairs and economic planning. His appointment is considered as a new evidence of the importance attached in Moscow to Sino-Soviet relations.

23. On March 26th, three new agreements between China and the Soviet Union were announced regarding (1) Sino-Soviet trade during 1953, (2) Soviet credit to China and (3) Soviet help in the construction of hydro-electric works in China.

24. On March 25th, the Chinese and North Korean Commanders agreed to the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners of war, and on March 30th the Chinese Prime Minister announced a formula for the repatriation of prisoners of war which appears to be in conformity with the declared principles of the UN and so to offer a basis for a solution of the last difficulties in the way of an armistice. This was immediately supported by a statement by Molotov.

25. Apart from the offer on prisoners of war, Chinese policy, both internal and external, has not changed since Stalin's death. Anti-Western propaganda continues with the same virulence.

Problems which may face the Sino-Soviet Alliance

26. Differences between the Soviet Union and China might develop:-

- (a) over the economic development of China
- (b) over territorial problems
- (c) over the leadership in Asia
- (d) in the doctrinal field

(a) The economic development of China

27. China attaches prime importance to the successful implementation of its Five-Year Plan for economic construction. For this, supplies and technical help are essential. The Soviet Union, for its part, may be unwilling or unable to give the necessary assistance. If Soviet help fails to come up to China's requirements, this might seriously weaken the Alliance.

(b) Territorial problems

28. (i) Korea

Korea was a vassal of the Chinese Empire until the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-5; it was eventually annexed by Japan in 1910. From 1945-48, North Korea was occupied by the Soviet Armed Forces, and the present North Korean administration was set up. In 1950 hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops came to the support of the North Korean aggressors. Consequently Chinese influence in Korea must have developed at the expense of Soviet influence. A successful conclusion of the armistice negotiations at Panmunjom will of course pose a series of most difficult and complicated problems in the communist camp, not only in Korea but in the Far East generally. Any discussion of these problems is beyond the scope of this paper.

(ii) Manchuria

In accordance with the 1945 Treaty with the Chinese National Government, the Soviet Government pursued a

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forward policy in regard to Manchuria. They have now, under the terms of the agreements of 1950 and 1952 with the Peking Government, handed over control to the strategic East-West railway to the Chinese Communists, though the naval base at Port Arthur is retained. Despite the presence of large numbers of Soviet technicians and advisers, Chinese influence in Manchuria appears to have asserted itself generally since 1949. Manchuria's raw materials, industrial capacity and strategic position are of immense importance and cannot be regarded with indifference either by China or by the Soviet Union.

(iii) Mongolia

The separation of part of Mongolia from the Chinese State was first formally recognised by the Chinese Communists in 1950. There is no evidence of Chinese Communist interest in Outer Mongolia before that date. After the second Sino-Soviet agreement of September, 1952, a Chinese agreement with the "People's Republic of Mongolia" (i.e. Outer Mongolia) was announced in general terms and the holding of a Chinese industrial exhibition in the Mongolian capital is an indication of increased Chinese interest in the area.

(iv) Sinkiang

Evidence is scanty, but it appears that there has been no further extension of Soviet influence in Sinkiang and that the present Chinese Government exercise more effective control there than the Nationalists ever did. In the event of deterioration in Sino-Russian relations, Sinkiang might again become a point of friction.

(c) The Leadership in Asia

29. This problem, which is latent in the Sino-Soviet Alliance may become more serious in the future. Events in Asia since 1950 demonstrate that Peking is becoming the centre of Communist activity in that part of the world. There appears to be no open friction up to the present, but the political and economic interests of the two parties may diverge later on. Rivalries may arise over the direction of certain revolutionary movements abroad, particularly the activities of the Japanese and Korean Communist Parties, leadership of which might be claimed by either Russia or China. Chinese policy in the Far East may not continue to evolve within the framework of Soviet

strategy. Chinese Communism may have ambitions of national expansion on its own account, particularly in the countries of the Far East, which may not always coincide with the plans of the Soviet Union.

(d) Doctrine

30. It has now become an axiom in the Communist world that "the thought of Mao Tse-tung is the integration of the theory of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete experience of the Chinese Revolution". Mao Tse-tung is allowed by Soviet commentators a special position as exponent of Marxism-Leninism in the Chinese context. Mao's treatise "On New Democracy" (1940) was indeed put forward as a new Chinese contribution to the theory of Marxism-Leninism, but its ideas can be traced back to earlier orthodox pronouncements. Mao's originality appears in fact to lie more in the field of practical statesmanship than of doctrine. Nevertheless, his unique position among non-Soviet exponents of Marxism-Leninism is a potential cause of friction. Though it seems unlikely that Mao should have any idea of succeeding to Stalin's position in the world Communist movement, he may on doctrinal Marxism be less ready to accept the authority of Stalin's successors than he was to accept that of Stalin himself.

Conclusion

31. The Chinese Communist Party achieved power in China largely by its own efforts. China is now a world power in its own right. China and the Soviet Union, pursue similar aims by similar methods. While potential areas of difference exist, and may acquire more importance later, any differences which occur are likely to be submerged now in the dominant identity of interests. The accession of China to Communism has increased the strategic strength of the Soviet bloc but must also have put a strain on its economy. The relationship of China to the Soviet Union is rather that of a junior partner than a satellite. Chinese policy evolves at present without apparent strain or friction within the framework of Soviet world strategy; Soviet policy must take into account the factor of Chinese power and influence.

32. So many forces contribute to the strength of the Sino-Soviet alliance, and the personal relations between Mao Tse-tung and Stalin seem to have played so minor a part, that the death of Stalin in itself should have little immediate effect on China's internal and external policy. This does not, however, preclude a mutually agreed change of tactics or attitude to any particular problem which may arise. An example of the latter is the new Communist approach to an armistice in Korea.

33. Stalin's death could, however, have important effects in the longer term. If in the future, the unifying forces between the two countries were to be weakened or if stresses and strains developed in the Alliance, the absence of Stalin's prestige and experience might make a major difference.