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COMMUNIST CHINA'S MILITARY DOCTRINE AND STRATEGY

Alice Langley Hsieh

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Peking's pronouncements in the course of the ongoing Sino-Soviet polemic and its references to the United States and other Western powers have left the public with an image of a Communist Chinese regime characterized by recklessness and bellicosity. This image has been reinforced by the Soviet Union, which has exaggerated the Chinese statements and their significance with a view to painting an oversimplified contrast between Chinese addiction to war and Soviet dedication to peace.

Far from conforming with this public image of a militant and adventurous regime, China's external military policies have been characterized by a very considerable degree of caution. These policies in part reflect a realistic assessment of the military situation and the careful calculation of risks that dominate Chinese military doctrine. This last, in turn, is responsive to a number of interacting factors affecting the development of China's military posture. Current military doctrine is an outgrowth of

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traditional Chinese Communist doctrine on the use of force. Since the 1953-54 period it has been influenced by developments in Soviet doctrine on modern warfare. More recently it has felt the impact of cutbacks in Soviet military assistance and other difficulties engendered by the deterioration in relations between Peking and Moscow. Similarly, Chinese doctrine has been influenced by military thinking in the United States, but probably has been more powerfully stimulated by the specific military deployment of U.S. forces in the Western Pacific and by the U.S.-USSR military balance. Equally important, Chinese doctrine reflects Peking's military weakness, its lack of advanced weapons, and the economic underdevelopment of the mainland.

Further confirmation of earlier hypotheses that the Chinese recognize the key implications of nuclear weapons for modern military operations is provided in the twenty-nine issues of the military publication of the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Kung-tso T'ung-hsun (Work Report), which were recently released by the U.S. Government and cover the months January into August 1961.<sup>1</sup> While this material produces

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<sup>1</sup> According to the General Political Department, Kung-tso T'ung-hsun is an irregular, confidential publication produced by the Party for the armed forces. It is distributed at or above the regimental level and is to be read only by officers who are Party members. (See General Political Department's Notification on Distribution and Safekeeping of Kung-tso T'ung-hsun, December 20, 1960, in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun (hereafter cited as KTH), January 1, 1961.) This publication contains speeches by top military leaders, the resolution and work reports of the Military Affairs Committee of the Central Committee (hereafter cited as MAC), as well as reports from the

no sensational or dramatic revelations concerning Chinese military doctrine or strategy which were not previously available to the careful reader of Chinese military literature, it does offer a few new insights into the thinking of China's military leaders, permits assertions about Chinese doctrine to be made with greater assurance, and establishes a useful yardstick whereby future developments in Chinese doctrine can be evaluated, particularly as China progressively moves toward the acquisition of a nuclear capability.<sup>2</sup>

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various general departments and branches of the PLA. The subjects touched on include information on doctrine, strategic concepts, military policies, training objectives, military leadership and organization, political work in the army, the nature of the political-economic-morale problems that have plagued the PLA, and the role of the militia. Because the 1961 material includes some earlier documents and references to previous policies, the collection provides an important guide to Chinese military thinking since 1958. In this material, China's armed forces are subjected to an almost brutal self-criticism. In order to avoid an erroneous interpretation of developments, it is necessary to bear in mind, first, that KTTH is a publication of the PLA's General Political Department and is designed to expose political and technical weaknesses in the armed forces; second, that corrective steps have been continually taken, as far as technical limitations would allow.

<sup>2</sup>The reader who is primarily familiar with the vast amount of Soviet literature on the subject of military doctrine and strategy is cautioned that the availability of material on the Chinese side remains comparatively limited and that, consequently, the analyst is left with many more unanswered questions than in the Soviet case. It is possible that the Chinese have an extensive body of restricted literature on the subject, but it would appear more likely that, because of their lack of advanced weapons and their admitted technological inferiority to the West, they simply have not had the motivation to explore many of the problems that concern Soviet military policy makers.

TYPES OF WARS ENVISAGED

Chinese military doctrine, as revealed in the 1961 issues of Kung-tso T'ung-hsun, took into account several types of war: surprise strategic air attack with nuclear weapons against the Chinese mainland;<sup>3</sup> invasion of the mainland by ground forces armed with conventional weapons;<sup>4</sup> chemical/bacteriological warfare, both strategic and tactical;<sup>5</sup> and lower-level conflicts, such as local wars in contiguous areas.<sup>6</sup>

Chinese doctrine, at least on the basis of the available 1961 material, appears to be marked by major gaps and unresolved problems. Chinese thinking concerning a nuclear war with the United States is entirely defensive. There are few indications as to how China might constructively prepare to reduce the impact of a surprise nuclear attack and respond to it. The phases of a nuclear war are only sketchily treated. No particular attention is given to the question of high-level conventional war, while political-military activities at a lower level appear to be considered primarily in the context of operations in Tibet and on the Sino-Indian border.

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<sup>3</sup> Resolution of the Enlarged Session of MAC Concerning the Strengthening of Indoctrination Work in Troop Units, October 20, 1960, in KTTH, January 7, 1961; Yeh Chien-ying, speech at MAC Conference on Training, late January 1961, in KTTH, February 20, 1961.

<sup>4</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Resolution of the Enlarged Session of MAC Concerning the Strengthening of Indoctrination Work in Troop Units, October 20, 1960, in KTTH, January 7, 1961.

Since China does not possess a nuclear delivery capability, there is perhaps little reason for her military leaders to deal with such questions as a strategic nuclear exchange or the role of future long-range delivery systems, whether aircraft or missiles. But this reasoning would also seem to preclude the discussion of tactical nuclear weapons, the use of which on occasion is in fact mentioned. The discussions of tactical nuclear weapons also refer to the employment by the Chinese of chemical/bacteriological warfare, though in no case is it clear in what context any of these weapons would be used.<sup>7</sup>

#### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A FUTURE WAR

Likelihood of war. Chinese military doctrine, as voiced by leading military figures in 1961, leans toward the conclusion that there will be no war within the next several years unless the enemy acts like a madman. On the likelihood of war, as on other aspects of doctrine and strategy, Marshal Yeh Chien-ying, a member of the Standing Committee of the Military Affairs Committee of the Central Committee and Chairman of the Regulations and Ordinance Study and Acceptance Committee of the Military Affairs Committee, appears to have been at least in 1961 the leading spokesman, if not the person primarily responsible for implementing the Party's basic military policies.<sup>8</sup> In

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Important Discussion Records of the Army Training Forum on Thoroughly Fulfilling the Policy of "Fewer in Quantity but More Refined in Quality" -- The Year 1961, in KTHH, July 25, 1961.

<sup>8</sup> Yeh Chien-ying is also a member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), a member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and Vice Chairman of the National Defense Council. In 1954



late January 1961 Marshal Yeh raised two possibilities: (1) that there would be no war for several years and that the longer the United States waited the more difficulty it would have in starting a war; and (2) that economic and political factors might lead the United States to lose its sanity and to engage in military adventures.<sup>9</sup> In view of the numerous admissions of China's technological-military inferiority to the United States contained in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun, it is far from clear from Yeh's remarks why he thought that the United States would be deterred from a war with China or why it would be adventurous for the United States to engage in such a war. Despite indications in the material that the Chinese have little reason to rely on Soviet support or assistance, Yeh here may have been reflecting a latent belief that Soviet nuclear power deters the United States from an unprovoked attack on China<sup>10</sup> and a confidence that if China avoids provocation of the United States a direct military confrontation with U.S. forces can be averted.

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he was appointed Director of the Inspectorate of the Armed Forces and, in 1958, President and Political Commissar of the Academy of Military Science of the PLA. In 1955, Yeh was one of two Chinese generals who openly admitted the implications of nuclear warfare. At that time he advocated the purchase of modern equipment from abroad.

<sup>9</sup>Yeh Chien-ying, op. cit.

<sup>10</sup>It should be noted that, despite Soviet distortion of the Chinese position on war, particularly in the July-September 1963 exchanges, the Chinese position on the possibility of avoiding a world war is in fact not very different from that of the Russians. This strongly suggests that the Chinese believe that the Soviet nuclear shield does deter an unprovoked U.S. attack on China. The Sino-Soviet argument on war and peace centers more on the degree of support the Soviets should give to China's external objectives and the extent to which revolutionary activity should be encouraged in underdeveloped areas.

As to its becoming more difficult for the United States to start a war in the future, Yeh may have been basing his prediction on an exaggerated notion of the development of the so-called "forces of peace." At the same time, however, he may have been looking forward to a day when China would have nuclear weapons of her own, at which time the United States might be restrained from opposing Chinese military activities or limited in its freedom of action in a military engagement with the Chinese.

Outbreak of war. While they do not seem to regard the likelihood of war as high, the Chinese apparently believe that, if war should occur, it might well take the form of a surprise nuclear attack against the mainland.<sup>11</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, in a speech to a Military Affairs Committee Conference on Training in late January 1961, referred to "strategic bombing" attacks by an enemy using nuclear weapons.<sup>12</sup> Liu Ya-lou, Commander of the PLA Air Force, insisted, at an Air Force Conference on Training and Operations in early 1961, on the need to improve defense against low-altitude attacks, and called for increased training in mobility and for dawn and dusk flights, in

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<sup>11</sup> Most Chinese public statements have, as a matter of policy, disparaged the impact of nuclear weapons on modern military operations and strategic concepts. However, as early as July 1955 concern over the danger of a sudden nuclear attack was voiced by Generals Yeh Chien-ying and Liu Po-ch'eng. Again, in October 1957, the publication Fang-k'ung Chün (Air Defense troops) assessed the main threat as that of a surprise attack from the air. (See A. L. Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1962, pp. 34-36, 70-71.)

<sup>12</sup> KTTH, February 20, 1961.

order to increase the capability for coping with "any surprise attack."<sup>13</sup> Deputy Chief of the General Staff Yang Ch'eng-wu, who in 1957 was identified as Commander of the Air Defense Command and who in the spring of 1961 co-chaired a conference on communications and cryptographic work, insisted that China's signal troops must be capable of responding to a surprise enemy attack.<sup>14</sup>

China's military leaders appear to be particularly aware of the danger of a strategic surprise attack for a country with no strategic or retaliatory capability of its own.<sup>15</sup> They have little to propose to meet such a contingency except the improvement of air defense capabilities and a proliferation of targets through the dispersal, hardening, and camouflage of military installations and military industrial sites.

Chinese doctrine, as reflected in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun, tends to concentrate on a U.S.-initiated war. Like the Russians, the Chinese believe that the Americans may use maneuvers and troop rotations as a camouflage in order to

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid. It should be noted that dawn and dusk flights are a World War II technique that loses much of its significance as a result of the use of radar.

<sup>14</sup> Yang Ch'eng-wu, speech before the All-Army Communications Specialty Conference, in KTH, May 22, 1961.

<sup>15</sup> Chinese officers, like most military men, place a high value on the element of surprise and expect an enemy to do the same. It is no accident that in tactical-conventional and tactical-nuclear operations Chinese training manuals continue to emphasize the element of surprise in offense. See, for example, Academy of Military Science, "Our Armed Forces' Combat Laws and Ordinances are Products of Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking," in KTH, August 1, 1961.

be able to shift suddenly from an exercise posture into a war situation.<sup>16</sup>

From the 1961 material it would appear that the Chinese expect surprise attack to take the form of a bolt from the blue. There are no references to strategic warning or to the possibility of a surprise attack developing from a crisis situation. There is a suggestion, however, in Chinese references to the need to avoid the "strengths" of the enemy<sup>17</sup> that Chinese doctrine recognizes the possibility that limited political-military activities or a local conflict may escalate into a larger war, particularly if the United States chooses to intervene.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Yang Ch'eng-wu, op. cit. For similar Soviet views on this subject, see Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii, ed., Soviet Military Strategy, translated and annotated by H. S. Dinerstein, L. Gouré, T. W. Wolfe, The RAND Corporation, R-416-PR, April 1963, p. 390.

<sup>17</sup>Yeh Chien-ying, op. cit.

<sup>18</sup>In their more open statements the Chinese have taken exception to the Soviet public position on local war -- the Soviet position being that it is almost inevitable that local wars involving the nuclear powers will escalate into general war. (See Leon Gouré, Soviet Limited War Doctrine, The RAND Corporation, P-2744, May 1963.) A Hung Ch'i article on April 1, 1960, admitted that it is possible that local wars will escalate into general war, but cited instances where U.S. aggression had been smashed -- Korea, Egypt, Hungary, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Cuba -- and from this argued that "the great force for safeguarding world peace can put local wars started by imperialism to a prompt end, and thus thwart imperialist plans for enlarging local wars." More recently, in its letter of July 14, 1963, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) the Central Committee of the CCP again took exception to the Soviet view when it charged that "in recent years, certain persons have been spreading the argument that a single spark from a

Image and phases of future war. The nature of a future war, the weapons likely to be used, and the phases of the war were considered by Yeh Chien-ying when, in a speech to a Military Affairs Committee Conference on Training in late January 1961, he pointed out:

If there is a war within the next few years, what kind of weapons shall we principally rely on to defeat our enemies? Here we are confronted with a question concerning the relationship between regular weapons and special weapons. Some of the foreign military theorists, including some U.S. military theorists, consider regular weapons as the final means to solve the problem of future world wars. Although atomic bombs are very powerful they can only be used to destroy centers and the economic reserves of the opponent during the strategic bombing phase. After that, they are used principally as fire-power preparations for assault. However, the army and regular weapons are necessary to terminate war, to destroy the enemy, to occupy positions, and to win a victory. To rely on the army and regular weapons is to rely primarily on man. The final conclusion thus rests on man.... Although some military experts of U.S. imperialism have theoretically reached such a conclusion, they cannot really put it into practice. They recognize that they cannot rely on manpower to win a victory over China and the Soviet Union. They have to rely on nuclear weapons. They also recognize that they cannot deal with China only by using nuclear weapons, because China possesses a large territory and lots

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war of national liberation or from a revolutionary people's war will lead to a world conflagration destroying the whole of mankind." In its September 1 statement, Peking argued that the United States could not use nuclear weapons in civil wars and wars of national independence because of the political costs of such use, the destructiveness of such weapons, and the close combat nature of military operations. At the same time the Chinese contradicted their 1960 analysis by depreciating the role of Soviet nuclear weapons in limiting local conflict.

of people, plus its complicated terrain. They consider using biological weapons which are the most effective way of harming farm products. They think China would be thrown into disorder if she had no food to feed her people. They are now secretly preparing a biological war.<sup>19</sup>

Here, in effect, Yeh admitted that a strategic air attack could be enormously destructive to urban, military, and economic targets -- a point that will be discussed further when we are considering the vulnerability of Chinese targets. The significance of the initial phase of the war was likewise recognized by Yang Ch'eng-wu when, in discussing vulnerabilities in command-control, he pointed out that "the effectiveness of our defense against a surprise enemy attack is the key to how effective we will be in the next phase."<sup>20</sup> Yet, as implied by Yeh in the paragraph quoted, Chinese military doctrine also presupposes the possibility of a protracted war on China's soil, requiring large conventional ground forces. It insists that nuclear weapons cannot be the means of achieving victory against a country with a large territory and population. Victory is said to require an army, regular weapons, and occupation. It is further asserted that the United States must rely on nuclear weapons rather than manpower to win a victory over China and the Soviet Union. But because nuclear weapons alone cannot defeat China, the United States must contemplate the use of biological warfare.

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<sup>19</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, op. cit. For similar Russian views on the importance of the initial period of a war and on the need to occupy enemy country in order to achieve final victory, see Sokolovskii, ed., Soviet Military Strategy, pp. 308 and 302.

<sup>20</sup> Yang Ch'eng-wu, op. cit.

In brief, the Chinese envisage a protracted war, in which the enemy's position is weakened by time and space,<sup>21</sup> but tacitly recognize that this strategy is vulnerable to chemical/bacteriological weapons.

It is not clear whether Yeh was referring to a possible strategic use of chemical/bacteriological weapons in combination with a nuclear attack or to their tactical use in conjunction with an invasion. While the former cannot be ruled out, it is more likely that Chinese concern about the possibility of chemical/bacteriological war stems from their belief that, because their natural advantages in terms of manpower and territory impose important obstacles to the success of any invasion attempt based on the use of nuclear or conventional weapons, it is only logical for the United States to consider chemical/bacteriological warfare. That this fear is real is witnessed by training programs that mention the use of chemical and bacterial weapons but give particular emphasis to training in defense against these weapons.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>This concept of a "broken-back" war is to some extent similar to that voiced by Senior General Su Yü, then Chief of the General Staff, in mid-1957, though Su did not mention the possibility of bacteriological warfare. It differs from that presented in Fang-k'ung Chün (Air Defense Troops), a publication issued in October 1957, which emphasized the destruction of military areas, industrial complexes, and communication centers by surprise attack from the air and ignored the threat of invasion and of a counteroffensive carried out mainly by infantry. (See A. L. Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era, pp. 64-67, 70-71.)

<sup>22</sup>Important Discussion Records of the Army Training Forum on Thoroughly Fulfilling the Policy of "Fewer in Quantity but More Refined in Quality" -- The Year 1961, in KTHH, July 25, 1961. These programs also mention the use of atomic weapons, but in similar fashion place emphasis on training in defense against these weapons.

Chinese capabilities. As to the position of the Chinese in the event of war, Marshal Yeh in his statement of late January 1961 following his remarks on the nature of a war, readily admitted:

In accordance with our situation, if there is a war within three to five years, we will have to rely on hand weapons. As to how to defeat the enemy with hand weapons, Chief Lin [Piao]<sup>23</sup> has found a way, and it has to do with the question of distant war or close war. Distant war means to fight at a distance of several tens, several hundred, or even several thousand kilometers. Close war means to fight at a distance between several meters and two hundred meters, or face to face. The enemy is stronger than we are in a distant war, but short distance fighting, and especially face to face fighting, is where our strength lies. We have to avoid the strengths and take advantage of the weaknesses of our enemy. In face to face fighting, there can only be used hand grenades, bayonets, or flamethrowers. We have to use close fighting, night fighting, or trench warfare to defeat the enemy....

In the event of war within the next few years we can defeat the enemy by using close combat although we have no special weapons.<sup>24</sup>

Though Yeh also insists that China needs to "walk on two legs," that in addition to emphasizing training in close

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<sup>23</sup> Lin Piao was elected Vice Chairman of the Central Committee of the CCP and a member of the Standing Committee of the Politbureau in May 1958. In September 1958 he succeeded P'eng Teh-huai as Minister of National Defense. It was at that time that Lin probably became First Vice Chairman of MAC. In the reference to "Chief Lin" (Lin tsung), "Chief" (tsung) is used here as a traditional, popular, and respectful form of address to a ranking military officer regardless of his official title or rank.

<sup>24</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, op. cit. (Emphasis supplied.)



combat efforts must be made toward "specialization" (including probably the development of "special" or advanced weapons), the remarks quoted would seem to imply that in 1961 the Chinese did not expect to acquire nuclear weapons or advanced delivery systems before the 1964-66 time period. In view of the known delays in the Chinese nuclear weapons program arising from the deteriorating economic situation after 1959, the discontinuation in mid-1959 of whatever assistance the Soviets had agreed to earlier, and the withdrawal of Soviet technicians in mid-1960, Yeh's statement may well have reflected a rough estimate of the time period within which the Chinese expected to detonate a nuclear device and perhaps begin to acquire a few nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, the Chinese had little alternative but to emphasize the role of their conventional forces, particularly their ground forces, in frustrating an enemy invasion or in defeating the enemy in limited war -- a point which will be discussed further in connection with the role of the Chinese ground forces.

Military weaknesses, risk calculation, and nuclear weapons. In his January statement Yeh readily admitted China's lack of nuclear weapons and the superiority of the United States in advanced weapons and in "distant war." On April 15, 1961, in a report to the first session of the Regulations and Ordinance Study and Acceptance Committee of the Military Affairs Committee, Yeh again referred to China's lack of "atomic weapons and space ships" and indicated that the ordinances of the PLA, while they recorded the political superiority of the PLA, also confessed to its technological inferiority. The ordinances were also said to "suggest clearly that consideration

should be adequately given to difficulties and unfavorable situations encountered in any combat action." In this report, Yeh emphasized the need to "understand our own situation as well as our enemy's" and insisted on the principle of self-preservation:

The objective in a war is primarily to annihilate the enemy, but attention should also be paid to the theme of self-preservation. Particularly under the present circumstances, weapons causing casualties on a large scale and mass destruction have appeared in use. We cannot annihilate our enemy unless we pay enough attention to the preservation of our lives and strengths. We should not only prepare ourselves against the use of such weapons by our enemy in a sudden attack, but also safeguard ourselves from disaster when we ourselves employ them.<sup>25</sup>

This statement, along with Yeh's earlier directive in January "to avoid the strengths and take advantage of the weaknesses of our enemy," underlined the continuing weakness of China's armed forces, the caution that continued to dominate her external military policies, and her intention to avoid a direct confrontation with U.S. forces. Yeh's April statement was also an argument for both active and passive defense against nuclear attack, and it suggested that even when the Chinese have nuclear weapons of their own they will be aware of the consequences of their use and will take measures to ensure survival in the face of retaliation to a possible Chinese first strike.

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<sup>25</sup>Yeh Chien-ying, Summation Report, delivered at First Session of the Regulations and Ordinance Study and Acceptance Committee of MAC, April 15, 1961, in KTTH, July 13, 1961. (Emphasis supplied.)

Statements of this kind do not suggest that the Chinese are likely to become reckless or incautious as they progressively move toward a nuclear delivery capability. Self-preservation is likely to remain an important element in China's risk calculations. Nor is there any illusion on the part of the Chinese that the mere acquisition of nuclear weapons will ipso facto provide them with a military status equivalent to that of the United States, or for that matter, the Soviet Union.

The Kung-tso T'ung-hsur material makes no reference to the use of large-yield nuclear weapons by the Chinese, though it does refer to the future use of tactical nuclear weapons. Tactical training directives emphasize the use of advanced weapons and defense against such weapons. Defense against atomic, chemical, and bacterial weapons is to be universally given and is stated to be the key task for units below the battalion level. Units above the regiment level are instructed not only in defense but also in the principles of using atomic and chemical weapons, and even in methods of exploiting the results of Chinese-initiated surprise attacks with atomic and chemical weapons.<sup>26</sup> Consequently it must be assumed that the Chinese are already considering the battlefield use of nuclear weapons. As will be noted later, the Chinese may view the equipping of their ground forces with tactical nuclear weapons as one way of deterring U.S. intervention in local

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<sup>26</sup> Important Discussion Records of the Army Training Forum on Thoroughly Fulfilling the Policy of "Fewer in Quantity but More Refined in Quality," -- The Year 1961, in KTTH, July 25, 1961; Academy of Military Science, "Our Armed Forces' Combat Laws and Ordinances are Products of Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking," in KTTH, August 1, 1961.

conflicts, or of keeping U.S. intervention at a non-nuclear level, thus compelling the United States to fight at the conventional level to Peking's advantage.

Lack of Soviet support. Just as the Chinese calculate the risks involved in a confrontation with the superior armed forces of the United States, so they appear to calculate the degree of assistance and support they can expect from the Soviet Union. By 1961 Chinese military doctrine, as revealed in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun, reflected the growing deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations and in particular the implications of the Soviet Union's refusal to use its nuclear deterrent in support of China's external objectives in Asia, to make nuclear weapons available to China, or to continue after June 1959 an agreement on "new technology for national defense," which had been concluded in October 1957.<sup>27</sup> There were also Soviet cutbacks in aircraft deliveries in 1959, and the withdrawal of Soviet technicians and military advisers in mid-1960.

The general tenor of the 1961 material strongly suggests China's acceptance of a policy of self-reliance or of "going-it-alone." This is revealed indirectly in a number of statements by military leaders, quoted above, to the effect that China does not possess nuclear or other

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<sup>27</sup> On August 15, 1963, Peking declared that "as far back as June 20, 1959...the Soviet Government unilaterally tore up the agreement on new technology for national defense concluded between China and the Soviet Union on October 15, 1957, and refused to provide China with a sample of an atomic bomb and technical data concerning its manufacture." (Statement by the spokesman of the Chinese Government (a comment on the Soviet Government's statement of August 3), August 15, 1963, NCNA, Peking, August 14, 1963.)

advanced weapons, that the PLA is technologically inferior, and that China must avoid the strengths of the enemy and rely on ground combat. Moreover, there is the practical complaint that PLA training programs suffer from lack of POL as well as "shortages of goods from abroad."<sup>28</sup>

It is also important to note that in the compilation of China's combat laws and ordinances (said to have been proposed by Mao Tse-tung in July 1958 at the Enlarged Session of the Military Affairs Committee) revived emphasis was given to the military writings of Mao Tse-tung and to learning from China's own experience.<sup>29</sup> In April 1961, Yeh Chien-ying underlined a policy of self-reliance when he pointed out:

The birth of our military regulations and ordinances is the realization of the idea of using ourselves as a pivot. This is to say that we must use ourselves as the prime guiding factor in building our forces and in combat.<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, in the extensive and probably exaggerated criticism directed at P'eng Teh-huai and Huang K'o-cheng (dismissed respectively as Minister of National Defense and Chief of the General Staff in September 1959), some

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<sup>28</sup> MAC Rectification and Dispatch of August 17, 1961, on General Rear Service Department's "Report on Rear Service Work Conference of Entire Armed Forces," in KTHH, August 26, 1961.

<sup>29</sup> Academy of Military Science, "Our Armed Forces' Combat Laws and Ordinances are Products of Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking," in KTHH, August 1, 1961.

<sup>30</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, Summation Report, delivered at First Session of the Regulations and Ordinance Study and Acceptance Committee of MAC, April 15, 1961, in KTHH, July 13, 1961. (Emphasis supplied.)

of the chief alleged faults appeared to be "following a purely military view,"<sup>31</sup> overreliance on foreign countries and foreign experience, and failure to pay enough attention to one's own experience.<sup>32</sup>

In sum, from a number of hints it can be inferred that by early 1961 the Chinese were well aware that they had little reason to expect any extensive Soviet assistance in the modernization of China's armed forces or Soviet military backing in support of China's external objectives. It should be noted, however, that China's "go-it-alone" policy may not have been solely the result of Soviet military sanctions on China; it could also have been the outcome of a positive decision made by Peking in the period between early 1958 and mid-1959, in response to Moscow's unwillingness to grant enough military assistance or support to enable China to achieve her objectives, particularly in relation to Taiwan. Such a decision by Peking may also have been the Chinese answer to the price required by Moscow for military and scientific assistance of an advanced character -- a price that may have included Russian demands for

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<sup>31</sup>Resolution of the Enlarged Session of MAC Concerning the Strengthening of Indoctrination Work in Troop Units, October 20, 1960, in KTTH, January 7, 1961.

<sup>32</sup>Summary of Telephone Conference held by the Regulations and Ordinance Study and Acceptance Committee of MAC, March 3, 1961, in KTTH, March 10, 1961. While the subject of differences in the Chinese military leadership is beyond the scope of this paper, the KTTH material gives further support to the hypothesis that the reasons for the dismissal of P'eng included his questioning of the regime's challenge of the Soviet Union, his awareness that the modernization of China's armed forces depended on continued Soviet military assistance, and his possible willingness to pay a price (for example, joint military control arrangements) for such assistance.

the joint control of nuclear weapons and advanced delivery systems on Chinese territory.<sup>33</sup>

It is not clear from the material in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun whether the Chinese believed that Soviet support would be denied them only in the event of aggressive action on their part, to what extent they believed the Soviet deterrent shield was operative as regards attacks on the mainland retaliatory to Chinese external military activities, or at what point in a possible Sino-U.S. confrontation of forces they felt they could expect some kind of Soviet assistance or support. In any event, China's military caution has been and remains in part a function of its military dependence on the Soviet Union. So long as China's military power, even when it includes some kind of nuclear capability, falls short of parity with that of the United States, China will remain dependent on Moscow in any overt military action where American interests are involved. Hence, for a long time to come, the degree and nature of Soviet help, both political and military, or lack thereof, will remain an essential component in Chinese doctrine and risk calculation.

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<sup>33</sup>In the article, "The Origin and Development of the Differences between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves -- Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU," published by Jen-min Jih-pao and Hung Ch'i on September 6, 1963, the Chinese asserted: "In 1958 the leadership of the CPSU put forward unreasonable demands designed to bring China under Soviet military control. These unreasonable demands were rightly and firmly rejected by the Chinese Government."

IMPACT OF MODERN WEAPONRY

In the 1961 material, the Chinese insist that they have adequately estimated the ability of modern technology to influence battles and war, that they have assessed the influence of atom bombs and guided missiles. They admit that the development of modern techniques of military science and the appearance of new types of military weapons will undoubtedly have great effects on the progress of warfare operations. Yet in making such statements, they inevitably conclude that the final resolution of war is made by human beings and their political system, not by techniques or material equipment.<sup>34</sup> This reiteration of the "man-over-weapons" theme, however, cannot disguise Chinese recognition of the key implications of nuclear weapons for modern military operations and strategic concepts. Pending their own acquisition of an effective nuclear delivery capability, the Chinese have little alternative but to repeat this formula. At the same time, reiteration of the "man-over-weapons" theme bolsters internal morale, serves to reinforce Party leadership over the military, and rationalizes the emphasis accorded to a capability for and training in ground operations.

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<sup>34</sup> See Yeh Chien-ying, Summation Report, delivered at the First Session of the Regulations and Ordinance Study and Acceptance Committee of MAC, April 15, 1961, in KTHH, July 13, 1961; MAC Instructions Concerning Execution of Armed Forces Combat Regulations and Training Directives, in KTHH, August 1, 1961; Academy of Military Science, "Our Armed Forces' Combat Laws and Ordinances are Products of Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking," in KTHH, August 1, 1961. For similar Soviet statements on the role of morale in the armed forces, see Sokolovskii, ed., Soviet Military Strategy, pp. 123-128.



Vulnerability of Chinese targets. As already indicated, most of the important military speeches in the 1961 issues of Kung-tso T'ung-hsun contain references to the danger of surprise attack and to the destructiveness of long-range nuclear weapons. Moreover, a close reading of these military statements indicates that the Chinese acknowledge the vulnerability of their military targets, industrial complexes, and communications centers to destruction by nuclear attack. In the January 1961 statement by Marshal Yeh Chien-ying, referred to earlier, he stated: "Although atomic bombs are very powerful they can only be used to destroy the centers and the economic reserves of the opponent during the strategic bombing phase...."<sup>35</sup> This is a very big "only." That the Chinese are not minimizing its importance is evident in an instruction on construction policy issued by the General Staff Department, the General Political Department, and the General Rear Service Department on June 9, 1961, and approved by the Military Affairs Committee.<sup>36</sup> This instruction gave as one of the reasons why the construction policy of the Military Affairs Committee was not being strictly enforced: "A lack of knowledge or realization of the sudden nature and destructiveness of modern warfare and a lack of understanding of the tactical nature of this important construction policy." The instruction then went on to state:

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<sup>35</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, speech at MAC Conference on Training, late January 1961, in KITH, February 20, 1961. (Emphasis supplied.)

<sup>36</sup> Instruction on Strictly Enforcing the Construction Policy Established by MAC, in KITH, July 25, 1961.

For strategic requirements, new barracks, warehouses, and factories must be built in locations far from large and medium-sized cities, communication and transportation centers, large manufacturing and mining districts, large reservoirs, and densely populated areas. They should be built near and into hills, on hillsides, and be properly dispersed according to topographic and terrain conditions. Furthermore, they should be properly camouflaged.

From such remarks it may also be concluded that the Chinese, like the Russians, do not expect a purely counterforce campaign and are making some attempt at dispersal by locating their war-making capability (both military installations and military industrial sites) at some distance from cities, communication and transportation centers, and other vulnerable targets, and are taking measures to harden and camouflage these facilities.<sup>37</sup>

#### VULNERABILITIES IN AIR DEFENSE

Chinese recognition of the danger of sudden nuclear attack is likewise reflected in their very considerable concern over the vulnerabilities in their air defense. Though it is far from clear what the Chinese would do about such an attack in the absence of adequate dispersal and air defense, specific vulnerabilities mentioned in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun include the delay in the construction of airfields deeper in the interior, defects in night and all-weather flying, limitations on pilot training because

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<sup>37</sup> For Russian doctrine on this subject, see Sokolovskii, ed., Soviet Military Strategy, pp. 449-458; and Leon Gouré, The Role of Civil Defense in Soviet Strategy, The RAND Corporation, RM-3703-PR, June 1963, pp. 17-20.

of shortages of equipment and fuel, poor maintenance and repair of aircraft, numerous accidents, radar shortcomings, weaknesses in defense against low-altitude attack, and lack of intelligence about the enemy.<sup>38</sup>

Training directives of the Air Force in 1961 emphasized the need to correct these deficiencies, and in particular to strengthen air defense combat capabilities against low-altitude attack. Training in low-altitude night combat, air raid warning, and emergency assembly was to be intensified. Similar emphasis was placed on exercises in takeoff from and landing on narrow, short runways, and on rotation of airfields, suggesting contingency plans for use of alternative airfields, dispersal sites, and damaged fields. Radar units were required to improve their low-level scanning and range detection. AAA units were instructed to improve their low-altitude capabilities in order to force enemy aircraft invading at low altitude to a medium altitude where the Chinese appeared to believe their aircraft would be more effective,<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> See Air Force Party Committee Report to MAC, General Staff Department, and General Political Department on its Eighth Plenary Session, December 16, 1960, in KTHH, January 3, 1961; Liu Ya-lou, speech on Training and Operational Problems of the Air Force at the Air Force Conference on Training and Operations, in KTHH, February 20, 1961; Lesson Learned from Failure in Air Warfare Engagement by Antiaircraft Artillery Group in a Certain Position, in KTHH, March 10, 1961; Yeh Chien-ying, report to MAC on Problems of Military Training, June 22, 1961, in KTHH, July 25, 1961; Summation of Anti-Air Raid Maneuvers in Shenyang Military Region, issued by the Shenyang Military Region Command Headquarters, May 23, 1961, in KTHH, June 28, 1961.

<sup>39</sup> Air Force Party Committee Report to MAC, General Staff Department, and General Political Department on its Eighth Plenary Session, December 16, 1960, in KTHH, January 3, 1961; Liu Ya-lou, op. cit.

probably because their radar could track the invading aircraft and vector Chinese defensive fighters into an air-to-air combat position.

Similar concern was reflected in continual criticism of communication units. The point was made time and again that under existing conditions (1961) the communications system was unlikely to survive a surprise enemy attack and that, once communications were paralyzed, command would be paralyzed.<sup>40</sup>

#### THE ROLE OF THE AIR FORCE

Chinese military doctrine assigns to the Air Force the chief role in resisting the enemy and in protecting essential targets. As to the means and points of resistance:

In accordance with the present situation and the strength of our armed forces, we must concentrate our power on putting up a resistance at points of optimum effectiveness and protect essential targets of optimum effectiveness. For this reason, the deployment of our defenses must comply with the arrangements of "depth, stagger, and at points of optimum effectiveness." The building of the air force bases, in particular, should meet this requirement.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Lin Piao's Major Points on Signal Communications, March 17, 1961, in KTHH, May 22, 1961; Lo Jui-ch'ing, speech opening All-Army Communications Specialty Conference, in KTHH, May 22, 1961; Yang Ch'eng-wu, op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> Summation of Anti-Air Raid Maneuvers in Shenyang Military Region, issued by the Shenyang Military Region Command Headquarters, May 23, 1961, in KTHH, June 28, 1961. This same role was assigned to the Air Force in the October 1957 publication, Fang-k'ung Chün (Air Defense Troops).

While the foregoing statement leaves much uncertainty, it would appear that Chinese doctrine calls for the active defense not only of cities but also of vital military installations and military industrial sites.

As in the Soviet Union, Air Force training directives emphasize the principle of mobility, in order, according to PLA Air Force Commander Liu Ya-lou, to cope with any surprise attack.<sup>42</sup> However, it is surprising to note that "training in mobility for encountering enemy surprise attacks" was said by an Air Force Party Committee Report, dated December 16, 1960, to have commenced as late as 1960.<sup>43</sup>

According to this same Air Force Party Committee Report, certain non-operational units of the Air Force were subjected to a 50 per cent "selective reduction" in 1958, while a 10 to 20 per cent reduction in some organs and units was to take place in 1961. The 1958 "selective reduction," which appears to have been limited largely to staff and administrative functions, may simply have been an attempt to reduce unnecessary overhead. The 1961 retrenchment, which may have included both operational and non-operational units, can very easily be explained by the cutoff in Soviet deliveries of aircraft in 1959, by the attrition of operational aircraft in the Communist

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<sup>42</sup>Liu Ya-lou, op. cit. "Mobility," as used here, would appear to mean ability to use alternative airfields, dispersal sites, and damaged fields.

<sup>43</sup>Air Force Party Committee Report to MAC, General Staff Department, and General Political Department on its Eighth Plenary Session, December 16, 1960, in KTH, January 3, 1961.

Chinese Air Force (CCAF), by the deteriorating economic situation, including setbacks in national defense production, and by the need to economize wherever possible. Neither the 1958 nor the 1961 retrenchment would appear to merit undue attention except for a reference in the Air Force Party Committee Report, already cited, to three enlarged sessions of the Military Affairs Committee held in late 1959-60, which were said among other things to have "resolved properly a series of important problems involved in the reconstruction of our Air Force."

The several references to developments in the CCAF should be viewed in the light of Khrushchev's remark to Harriman on June 23, 1959, that Russia had shipped numerous rockets to China<sup>44</sup> and other reports that Moscow has supplied Peking with short-range missiles<sup>45</sup> and that the Chinese are testing missiles over ranges of five to seven hundred miles.<sup>46</sup>

Viewed as a whole, the evidence permits one to suggest that at some point in 1958-59 the Chinese, so far as offensive delivery systems were concerned, may have decided to give priority to the development of a missile capability and to downgrade the development of an advanced aircraft delivery capability. At first this decision may have been predicated on the receipt of Soviet assistance.

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<sup>44</sup> Life, July 13, 1959, p. 36.

<sup>45</sup> Allan Nanes, "The Armies of Red China," Current History, December 1960, p. 342; Harold C. Hinton, "Communist China's Military Posture," Current History, September 1962, p. 153.

<sup>46</sup> Statement made by Robert Hotz, editor of Aviation Week, on television program "China and the Bomb," recorded May 27, 1963.

In 1960 it may have been confirmed on the grounds of expediency.<sup>47</sup>

#### THE ROLE OF GROUND FORCES

While admitting that China must avoid the "strengths" of the enemy, that is, that China must avoid a direct confrontation with U.S. military forces, Chinese military doctrine in 1961 emphasized the important asset that China possessed in her capability for ground combat. Doctrine insisted that by way of this capability, and particularly of the tactics of close combat and night fighting, China could and must take advantage of the weaknesses of the enemy. According to Yeh Chien-ying:

We have to use close-fighting, night fighting, or trench warfare to defeat the enemy. Therefore, we must pay special attention to

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<sup>47</sup> For what light it may cast on the question of delivery priorities, it should be noted that there is no evidence in the available issues of KTHH that the Air Force was receiving any preference in the allocation of very scarce resources in early 1961. Like the other branches of the armed services, the Air Force was clearly suffering, particularly as regards maintenance of aircraft and training, from the failure to obtain equipment abroad and from cutbacks in indigenous production for national defense. Because of the lack of equipment, fuel, and other materials, Marshal Yeh in June of 1961 reported to MAC that "XX" (the XX's appear in the original Chinese) per cent of the aircraft in the Air Force were grounded, that pilot flight-training hours had been cut to less than half, and that each pilot could fly "XX-XX" hours on an average. These unspecified figures were contrasted with the number of hours flown by Soviet and U.S. pilots. It was at this time that Yeh urged the Air Force to engage in simulated training on the ground in order to save wear and tear on available equipment. (KTHH, July 25, 1961.)

training in close combat... In the event of war within the next few years, we can defeat our enemy by using close combat although we have no special weapons.<sup>48</sup>

Again at a 1961 training conference, Yeh Chien-ying quoted Lin Piao as recently saying, "Pay attention to problems of training in night fighting and close combat," and added that "Lin's instruction forms a scientific conclusion which is drawn from three aspects of the actual situation: our armed forces, our allies, and our enemy."<sup>49</sup> Yeh's comment on Lin's instruction provides a further key to the major role that ground forces continue to play in Chinese military doctrine. The Chinese recognized that their armed forces lacked advanced weapons and were technologically inferior to the U.S. forces; hence they emphasized their considerable experience in ground combat, a form of warfare in which they felt they excelled and

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<sup>48</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, speech at MAC Conference on Training, late January 1961, in KTHH, February 20, 1961. An article prepared by the Academy of Military Science noted that "night and close combat are not only important means to annihilate the enemy under present conditions but also can greatly reduce the damage which may be caused by the enemy's atomic weapons." (KTHH, August 1, 1961.) This reference indicates that the Chinese appear to be relying on the standard techniques for ground warfare in the nuclear era. Lacking mobility and firepower, the Chinese, in order to safeguard their own troops from destruction, would have to depend on the prodigal use of manpower in close combat in order to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by the enemy in a given tactical situation. By close combat and night fighting the Chinese would "hug" the enemy, and thus make it impossible for him to use nuclear weapons without endangering his own forces.

<sup>49</sup> Yeh Chien-ying, speeches at Training Conferences of Land Force, Navy, and Air Force, in KTHH, June 28, 1961. (Emphasis supplied.)



had an advantage over the enemy. China's ally, the Soviet Union, had been reluctant to provide the Chinese with the type and amount of military assistance and support the Chinese felt they needed. In advanced weapons, in so-called "distant war," the United States admittedly possessed superiority. In other words, on the basis of these three assessments the Chinese prepared to do the best with what they had.

In considering the specific uses of the Chinese ground capability, it may be well to ask whether the Chinese regard this capability as a defensive or offensive one. From the materials available it is difficult to answer this question. Reference is made to the necessity of improving training in defense of islands, in defense against landing forces, etc. But according to the 1961 material the Chinese also insist, as do the leaders of most conventional forces, that equal time be given to offensive and defensive training.<sup>50</sup> The type of tactical training emphasized in effect provides a capability for both defensive and offensive ground operations.

China's military leaders clearly consider the capability for ground combat as a deterrent to invasion. Yeh said as much in his remarks on the phases of a war. But they recognize important limits to the offensive use of ground forces. They probably do not see these forces as enabling them to engage in prolonged high-level actions

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<sup>50</sup>Yeh Chien-ying, speech at MAC Conference on Training, late January 1961, in KTHH, February 20, 1961; Report of Hsiao Hua to Deputy Chairman Lin, Ho, and Nieh, and MAC following inspection of troops in Nanking area, in KTHH, June 1, 1961.

that would require extensive logistic support. As statements referred to earlier indicate, the Chinese can no longer count on the type of logistic support made available to them by the Soviet Union during the Korean War. Indeed, cutbacks in industrial production, including that for national defense, curtailment of deliveries of equipment from the Soviet Union, and shortages in fuel oil, had by mid-1961 seriously handicapped the development of China's ground forces.<sup>51</sup>

While it may be assumed that the situation has improved somewhat since June 1961, there probably still remain, in addition to the lack of effective tactical air support, important materiel restraints on the use of China's ground capability for any prolonged high-level

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<sup>51</sup>Yeh Chien-ying, in a report to MAC on June 22, 1961, insisted on the need to conserve equipment, material, and fuel, and noted that the Army had difficulties in obtaining vehicles, batteries, fuel, and ammunition. (KTTH, July 25, 1961.) In a series of speeches at training conferences that same month he revealed that materiel and equipment could not keep up with training needs. As one reason for this, he mentioned the low standard of national defense industry which, though rapidly expanded since 1949, could not satisfy the needs of national defense construction. (KTTH, June 28, 1961.) A rectification by MAC of a report by the General Rear Services Department in August 1961 noted the inability to meet steel, lumber, and cement allocations and the shortages of goods of domestic and foreign origin, of auto parts, weapons, and ammunition, and of fuel oil and petroleum. The production of weapons, munitions, and related items was said to have reached only 15.9 per cent of the plan scheduled by state factories in the first half of 1961. The document concluded with the injunction that the armed forces must firmly respect the year's reduced budget for national defense. (KTTH, August 26, 1961.)

operations. Rather this capability is probably viewed as a dual political/military instrument, enabling the Chinese, within limits, to pursue a "go-it-alone" policy and to make certain gains independent of Soviet support both today and later when they possess their own nuclear capability. More specifically, in view of China's long-range objectives in Asia, China's ground capability may be viewed as permitting the Chinese to seek gains by way of political, covert, and low-level military activities in contiguous areas.

On the political level, this type of capability, even in the absence of nuclear weapons, seems to be enough to influence China's weak neighbors in their relations with Peking and to encourage some of them, Burma, Cambodia, and Nepal, to conclude treaties defining their frontiers<sup>52</sup> or to follow policies not unfriendly to Peking. The existence of a large ground army thus exerts pressure on China's neighbors, intimidates governments in contiguous areas, keeps them "neutral," and prevents their "defection" to the West. Moreover, Peking may well calculate that the possibility of increased Chinese ground participation in certain crisis situations could deter U.S. intervention.

Aside from its deterrent value, a ground capability provides the Chinese with forces-in-being which can be used effectively in certain limited types of operations (limited in locale, time, objectives, level of violence,

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<sup>52</sup> Some study materials published in KITH, April 25, 1961, in referring to these border arrangements, pointed out that "we were successful because the United States had no part in this and had no way to exercise its pressure."

and risks) if the situation so warrants, as has been demonstrated in the suppression of the Tibetan rebellion and in the Sino-Indian border conflict.

In addition, it should be noted that the emphasis on training in ground combat provides the Chinese with a capability that can be used covertly in support of Communist-inspired uprisings in contiguous areas.<sup>53</sup>

As indicated earlier, however, there is implicit in Chinese military statements contained in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun, contrary to what Peking has said publicly, a recognition and concern that local conflicts or more limited forms of political-military activity might escalate to a higher level of violence, even to the nuclear level, if the United States chose to intervene. Consequently an important consideration in Chinese military thinking must be the question of how to prevent escalation, especially in view of the Soviet Union's reluctance to use its nuclear deterrent on behalf of China's external objectives. At present, and as long as they lack nuclear weapons, the Chinese can only hope to avoid the "strengths" of the enemy, to limit conflict to low levels of violence, and thereby to reduce the likelihood of large-scale conventional or nuclear intervention by the United States.

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<sup>53</sup> While more a question of foreign policy than of military strategy, the Chinese regard Mao's military thinking and their experience in close combat and night fighting as a model for national liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. According to Yeh Chien-ying, the Chinese were compiling regulations and ordinances based on their historical experience not only for themselves but also for the benefit of other nations still fighting for their national liberation. (See statement of Yeh Chien-ying

It is also possible the Chinese believe that even when China possesses nuclear weapons it may be in her interest to limit conflict to the conventional level in order to inhibit U.S. use of nuclear weapons. In this connection, it should be noted that the occasional references in Kung-tso T'ung-hsun to a future use of nuclear weapons are limited to tactical uses. It was earlier suggested that the Chinese may well be considering the battlefield use of such weapons. This is one of several non-exclusive options open to the Chinese (the development of a nuclear-missile capability being another) whereby they may hope to redress their marked military inferiority to the United States. While it is possible that the Chinese intend to equip their ground forces with tactical nuclear weapons for operations in contiguous areas, the over-all tone of the 1961 material gives the impression that conventional weapons will remain an integral part of the equipment of China's armed forces for a long time to come. In policy terms, the Chinese may calculate that, when the Americans are persuaded Chinese forces possess tactical nuclear weapons, the United States will be less likely to intervene in local crisis situations or to raise intervention to a nuclear level. Peking may believe that in this way the United States may be compelled to accept the level of violence chosen by China. In brief, the Chinese may hope that the acquisition of tactical nuclear weapons will enhance their advantage in the area of conventional ground forces and, at the same time, reduce the risk of

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during Telephone Conference held by the Regulations and Ordinance Study and Acceptance Committee of MAC, March 3, 1961, in KTHH, March 10, 1961.)

escalation to the nuclear level. This strategy, however, would confront the Chinese with the very problems of maintaining a dual-capability force that are currently plaguing other countries.

#### CONCLUSION

Pragmatic rather than theoretical considerations dominate China's military thinking. Chinese military doctrine, as reflected in the 1961 issues of Kung-tso T'ung-hsun, is based on four impressively realistic assessments: (1) of China's military capabilities and vulnerabilities; (2) of U.S. military capabilities and strengths; (3) of the extent of the assistance and support that China can expect from the Soviet Union; and (4) of the opportunities for exploiting China's limited military power. The evaluation of the military situation that emerges underlines the cautiousness with which China's military leaders calculate the risks of various military operations and emphasizes the responsiveness of Chinese doctrine to both internal and external conditions.

The material reveals the concern of China's military leaders about various contingencies. It also reveals that the military in most instances had little alternative but to discuss these problems in terms of the forces and equipment then available.

Chinese thinking concerning a nuclear war with the United States was entirely defensive. There were few indications as to how such a war would be fought. Apparently the only advance preparations the Chinese could make to reduce the impact of a U.S. surprise nuclear attack were the dispersal, hardening, and camouflage of targets.

and the strengthening of air defense capabilities. They viewed the role of the Air Force solely in terms of air defense. Naval doctrine was not even mentioned, at least not in the presently available material. The phases of a nuclear war were only sketchily treated. Though recognition was given to the importance of the first phase of such a conflict, China's only indicated response to a possible nuclear attack was that of relying on a protracted war in which the enemy's position would be weakened by time and space. And the Chinese recognized that even this strategy was vulnerable to chemical/bacteriological warfare.

Lacking a nuclear delivery capability, the Chinese military perhaps had little reason in 1961 to deal with such questions as a strategic nuclear exchange. While it is possible to surmise that the Chinese may have decided to give priority to the development of a missile delivery capability, the 1961 material made no claims as to the future roles of advanced delivery systems, whether aircraft or missiles. There was no mention of an offensive targeting concept or of the interaction of specific Chinese weapon systems with those of the United States.

As to conventional wars, China's military leaders, in order to compensate for technical deficiencies, continued to emphasize the role of ground forces and their training in close combat and night fighting. Air, artillery, armor, and other support missions were only vaguely dealt with in the available material. The question of high-level conventional war was avoided, probably because of materiel shortages and/or lack of intent to initiate such wars. Lower-level political-military activities appeared to be considered primarily in the context of operations in

Tibet and on the Sino-Indian border. Implicit in Chinese military thinking on low-level conventional operations in contiguous areas was the concern over the possibility of escalation to higher levels of violence.

While the 1961 material gives no attention to the strategic use of a Chinese nuclear-delivery capability, occasional mention is made of the tactical use of nuclear weapons. This suggests that the Chinese may envisage equipping their ground forces with such weapons for battlefield use.

While it is impossible at present to project future Chinese doctrinal developments, the Chinese evaluation of their limitations and opportunities in 1961 does not give the impression of being a short term one, or of having been formulated as an expedient to meet immediate difficulties. Rather the appraisal appears to have been formulated for a reasonably long period that would extend to a time when China begins to possess a nuclear capability of her own.

Translating these doctrinal concepts into policy terms, China's recognition of her military-technological inferiority to the United States, of her vulnerability to nuclear attack, and of her inability to count on Soviet military backing in support of her external objectives, is strongly reflected in Peking's expressed intention to avoid, at least for the time being, any provocation that might lead to a direct confrontation with U.S. forces, conventional or nuclear. At the same time, however, the Chinese show an awareness that in areas or situations where U.S. military superiority cannot be brought to bear, or where Soviet help is not an important factor, opportunities exist,



within limits, to exploit China's ground forces for the sake of local political-military gains.

From the Chinese doctrinal emphasis on self-preservation and the careful calculation of risk, it can be inferred that even when she has nuclear weapons of her own China is likely to be cautious in their use, or to attempt to manipulate the situation so as to inhibit the use or effective counteruse of such weapons by the United States. Indications that the Chinese may be planning to equip their ground forces with tactical nuclear weapons for operations in contiguous areas suggest that Peking may expect the United States, knowing about China's possession of such weapons, to refrain from intervention against China or to keep its intervention at a non-nuclear level.

In sum, the few new insights that can be gleaned from the 1961 material indicate that Chinese policy is based on a realistic assessment of the threat and of the risks involved in certain types of military operations. China's political and military leaders, however, are apparently aware that opportunities exist and may become greater in the future whereby China, though militarily inferior to the United States and probably unable to count on Soviet assistance or support, may be able to make gains through a cautious but astute use of its evolving military power.