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8 April 1966

A MILITARY STRATEGY FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AS A NUCLEAR POWER

By

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JUL 13 1966

U. S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE



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A Military Strategy for the People's Republic of China
As a Nuclear Power

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8 April 1966

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SUMMARY

To most Americans the emergence of Communist China on the world scene was almost as unpredicted and dramatic as their first nuclear detonation on 16 October 1964.

Each time that Peking was heard from it was in the context of belligerency and militancy. The vast numbers of Chinese soldiers which seemed to be sent against the United Nations Forces in Korea in 1950 in human waves reinforced the thought that Communist China was an aggressive, militant nation. The subsequent conduct of the Peking representatives at the Korean truce conferences appeared to confirm the popular conception of China as a militant nation.

The fact that this apparently underdeveloped country could largely through her own efforts successfully conduct a nuclear test was a cause for concern by all nations of the world.

The accomplishment of a second nuclear test detonation only seven months after the first one and the use of uranium 235 in both devices were clear indications of the extent of China's technical development. Considering this technological accomplishment it appears appropriate to investigate how this power factor might be employed by China to achieve her national objectives.

Investigation indicates that China's nuclear development has been given a high priority. This desire to achieve a nuclear power status brings conflict of interest to the fore. This conflict evolves when the United States, a major nuclear power, is ready and willing to oppose overt aggressive Chinese actions. This opposition by the United States leads Peking into a risk assessment in consideration of pursuing her national objectives.

This thesis concludes that the People's Republic of China will not, in the foreseeable future, take actions in pursuit of their national objectives which raise the risk of a direct military confrontation with the United States. China will continue to pursue her objectives by proxy methods. Peking's strategy as a nuclear power will be held in check as long as the United States maintains the ability and determination to prevent overt use of Chinese military power.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Our knowledge of that nation (China) is very little, and that little too obscure to be trusted.¹

The above observation was made in 1798 and the situation today has not improved significantly. This paucity of reliable information may be attributed to Mao Tse-tung who said that it is important to keep the enemy in the dark. He wrote, "In order to win victory we must try our best to seal the eyes and the ears of the enemy, making him blind and deaf, and to create confusion in the minds of the enemy commanders driving them insane."²

In the United States, we find military strategy defined as, "the art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy by the application of force or the threat of force."³

To determine the military strategy of the People's Republic of China it is necessary to look at her actions and words as indicators of her policies.⁴ Most writers on the subject of Peking's

¹Samuel B. Griffiths, "The Military Potential of China," China and the Peace of Asia, ed. by Alastair F. Buchan, p. 65.

²Mao Tse-tung, On the Protracted War, pp. 99-100.

³US Dept of Defense, Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage, p. 92.

⁴Davis B. Bobrow, "Peking's Military Calculus," World Politics, Vol. 16, No. 2, Jan. 1964, pp. 287-288.

military strategy agree that there are few public studies of Chinese military policy and the reasoning on which it is based.⁵

The general image of Red China's leaders held by the Western public, particularly the press and editorial writers in the United States, is characterized as dangerous, reckless, and bellicose. This view has evolved largely as the result of the Sino-Soviet dispute. It has been strengthened by pronouncements from the Soviet Union which tend to portray the Chinese as being bent on war while the Russians are dedicated to peace.⁶

The Chinese military actions have not conformed to this public image of a reckless and adventurous regime. Her external military policies have been characterized by a very considerable degree of caution. This restraint was exemplified in the attack on the Sino-Indian border of October, 1962, which was limited in scope and in time, and was withdrawn once the political objectives of the attack had been achieved.⁷ These actions reflect a realistic assessment of the military situation and a careful calculation of the risks involved. It appears that the interaction of situation analysis and risk calculation dominates Chinese military doctrine.

Chinese Communist doctrine on the use of force evolved over a long period of strife on the mainland of Asia and therefore

⁵Ibid.

⁶Rand Corporation, Communist China's Military Doctrine and Strategy, by Alice Langley Hsieh, pp. 1-2.

⁷John Gittings, "China's Military Strategy," The Nation, 18 Jan. 1965, p. 45.

developed characteristics which were essential to meet the requirements of the land, the foe, and the political-military objectives of the Party.

The developed strategy which successfully blunted the offensive of the Nationalist's attacks in 1946 and 1947 is outlined by Mao Tse-tung in the following principles of operation:

1. Attack dispersed, isolated enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces later.
2. Take small and medium cities and extensive rural areas first; take big cities later.
3. Make wiping out the enemy's effective strength our main objective; do not make holding or seizing a city or place our main objective. Holding or seizing a city or place is the outcome of wiping out the enemy's effective strength, and often a city or place can be held or seized for good only after it has changed hands a number of times.
4. In every battle, concentrate an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), encircle the enemy force completely, strive to wipe them out thoroughly and do not let any escape from the net. In special circumstances, use the method of dealing crushing blows to the enemy, that is, concentrate all our strength to make a frontal attack and also to attack one or both of his flanks, with the aim of wiping out one part and routing another so that our army can swiftly move its troops to smash other enemy forces. Strive to avoid battles of attrition in which we lose more than we gain or even break even. In this way, although we are inferior as a whole (in terms of numbers), we are absolutely superior in every part and every specific campaign, and this ensures victory in the campaign. As time goes on, we shall become superior as a whole and eventually wipe out all the enemy.
5. Fight no battle unprepared, fight no battle you are not sure of winning; make every effort to be well prepared for each battle, make every effort to

ensure victory in the given set of conditions as between the enemy and ourselves.

6. Give full play to our style of fighting--courage in battle, no fear of sacrifice, no fear of fatigue, and continuous fighting (that is, fighting successive battles in a short time without rest).

7. Strive to wipe out the enemy through mobile warfare. At the same time, pay attention to the tactics of positional attack and capture enemy fortified points and cities.

8. With regard to attacking cities, resolutely seize all enemy fortified points and cities which are weakly defended. Seize at opportune moments all enemy fortified points and cities defended with moderate strength, provided circumstances permit. As for strongly defended fortified points and cities, wait till conditions are ripe and then take them.

9. Replenish our strength with all the arms and most of the personnel captured from the enemy. Our Army's main sources of manpower and material are at the front.

10. Make good use of the intervals between campaigns to rest, train, and consolidate our troops. Periods of rest, training and consolidation should in general not be very long, and the enemy should so far as possible be permitted no breathing space.⁸

These principles were developed over the full span of the Chinese Communist battle experience. Since they are quoted by Mao and reiterated in summary as late as September 1965 by Lin Piao, they should be considered as currently applicable.

Lin Piao credited Mao with continuously summarizing the experience gained in overcoming the Japanese and with developing new sets of principles as a result of this correlation.

⁸Mao Tse-tung, "Present Situation and Our Task," in Selected Works, Vol. 4, pp. 161-162.

Significant to this study are several of these principles:

3. As far as military strategy was concerned, our policy was to be guerrilla warfare waged independently and with the initiative in our own hands, within the framework of a unified strategy; guerrilla warfare was to be basic but no chance of waging mobile warfare was to be lost where the conditions were favorable.

4. In the struggle against the anti-Communist diehards headed by Chiang Kai-shek, our policy was to make use of contradictions, win over the many, oppose the few, and destroy our enemies one by one, and to wage struggles on just grounds, to our advantage, and with restraint.

5. In the Japanese occupied and Kuomintang areas our policy was, on the one hand, to develop the united front to the greatest possible extent, and on the other, to have selected cadres working underground. With regard to the form of organization and struggle, our policy was to assign selected cadres to work under cover for a long period, so as to accumulate strength and bide our time.

7. As for the anti-Communist diehards, we followed a revolutionary dual policy of uniting with them, in so far as they were still capable of bringing themselves to resist Japan, and of struggling against and isolating them, in so far as they were determined to oppose the Communist Party.⁹

The Chinese military strategy evident in these policies recognized the need for both guerrilla and conventional types of warfare to achieve victory over the invader. It also postulates a plan for advancing the Communist Party by both military and political maneuvering. The united front endeavor was to be a vehicle for expanding Communist influence in China.

⁹Lin Piao, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," Daily Report, Supplement, Far East, No. 171(4S), 3 Sep. 1965, pp. 8-9.

These policies may be viewed as containing the blueprint for Chinese military strategy. This strategy was to apply both overt and covert military force to gain and consolidate Communist power on the mainland. It stressed caution and restraint in regard to overt action and organization and subversion in regard to covert action.

While the objective of this applied strategy was to be eventual control of mainland China as a Communist state, it would also be the basis for achieving other objectives after the primary one was obtained.

This thesis examines the development of China's military strategy and looks at the threat posed by the United States as viewed by Peking. Next, the present status and possible future progression of China's nuclear development are considered in relation to the country's economic and industrial potential. Finally, China's considerations of the importance of nuclear power is analyzed in relationship to her national objectives. Based on investigation of the above factors conclusions are reached concerning the military strategy of China as a nuclear power.

CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE MILITARY STRATEGY UP TO 1964

The exercise of caution and the dynamic drive for survival are two characteristics which appear to be the mainstay of Chinese military strategy. These characteristics are found in Mao's admonition to despise the enemy strategically but to respect him tactically and in his advancement of the theory of protracted war.

The development of this strategy was the reflection of the historical background of China and its people. The application of this background to the particular situation in China and the ability to evolve applicable doctrine is a characteristic of Chinese Communist leadership. Mao's statement that "all laws of war-directing develop according to the development of history, and of the war itself. Nothing in the world remains changeless," exemplify this blending of history and the current situation.¹

Is war the obsession of the Peking leadership? Mao has written widely on other subjects and has directed the development of mainland China in the economic and technological fields. The extent of this development in the nuclear field will be covered later. What then is the view of the People's Republic of China on war? For a reply to these questions we turn to Mao.²

¹Mao Tse-tung, Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War, p. 4.
²Ibid.

War, that monster of human fratricide, will inevitably be wiped out by man's social progress and this will come about in the near future. But there is only one way to do it--war against war, revolutionary war against counter-revolutionary war, national revolutionary war against national counter-revolutionary war, and class revolutionary war against class counter-revolutionary war.

There are only two kinds of war in history, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary. We support the former and oppose the latter, only a revolutionary war is holy. We support holy national revolutionary wars and holy class revolutionary wars.

The reasoning reflected in the above statements of Mao are indicative of the emphasis which he places on armed struggle. One visualizes a picture from these statements of a country continuously committed to support some form of fighting. While these thoughts were written in the 1930's for the Red Army Academy, they reflect a Communist projection of support for wars of revolution in the future.

The projected support for revolutionary war poses a constant threat to the peace of the world. This dogma is also one which may bring China into conflict with the United States when we are supporting countries being threatened by Communist subversion. Only a brief reference to a recent pronouncement from Peking is necessary to substantiate and update Mao's thoughts expressed above.

We are optimistic about the future of the world. We are confident that the people will bring to an end the epoch of wars in human history. . . . But there is only one way to eliminate it and that

is to oppose war with war, to oppose counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war.³

THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD

Germane to an appreciation of the development of China's military strategy is an awareness that Communist China took strength and guidance from the Russian revolution. Equally important to note is the fact that while Mao drew support, both spiritual and material from Communist Russia, he realized that the basis and characteristics of the Russian revolution were different from the conditions which China faced. Mao reasoned that the difference in the circumstances of wars determines the difference in the guiding laws of wars: the difference of time, place and character.⁴

To amplify this thought Mao advocated a careful study of the lessons which were learned in past wars. More important than studying these lessons he stressed the need to compare conclusions drawn from such studies with the experience gained by the Red Army (Chinese) and to "absorb what is useful, reject what is useless, and add what is specifically our own."⁵

³Lin Piao, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," Daily Report, Supplement, Far East, No. 171(4S), 3 Sep. 1965, p. 31.

⁴Mao Tse-tung, "Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War," in Selected Works, Vol. 1, p. 178.

⁵Ibid., p.186.

Mao also applies and blends into his experience the wisdom of an ancient Chinese writer Sun Wu Tzu, "Know your enemy and know yourself, and you can fight a hundred battles without disaster."⁶

The military strategy of the civil war was based on the principal characteristics of the revolutionary period. Mao Tse-tung considered these characteristics to be the following:

The first is that China is a politically and economically unevenly developed semi-colonial country of great expanse and bountiful resources which has gone through the Great Revolution of 1925-27.

The second characteristic is a powerful enemy.

The third characteristic is the weakness and small size of the (Chinese) Red army.

The fourth characteristic is the leadership of the Communist Party and the Agrarian Revolution.⁷

The first characteristic, which referred to the uneven political development of China, considered the coexistence of the Central Army under Chiang Kai-shek and the various troops under the war lords in the provinces. The reference to uneven economic development considered the coexistence of industrial and commercial cities and vast expanses of rural areas; the several million of industrial workers and the hundreds of millions of peasants. Mao's consideration of the size of the country and its resources

⁶Ibid., p. 187.

⁷Ibid., pp. 18-21.

led him to the assertion that it was possible for the revolutionary forces to develop and to attain victory.⁸

The second characteristic, a powerful enemy, is a recognition by Mao Tse-tung of the superior arms, equipment, and numerical strength of the Kuomintang Army. It recognized the control held by the Kuomintang over politics, economy, communications, and culture of China. This characteristic exemplifies the doctrine, "Know Your Enemy!"

The third characteristic, weakness and small size of the Red Army, reflects the small, isolated, guerrilla units which comprised the Red Army. It was an assessment of their small numbers, poor arms and limited and difficult access to food, clothing, and other supplies. This characteristic, which is a self-analysis or application of the historic doctrine to "know yourself" reveals the Red Army in sharp contrast to the Kuomintang Army as described by the second characteristic. Mao said that this sharp contrast between the two forces is the basis for strategy and tactics of the Red Army.⁹

The significance of the fourth characteristic, leadership of the Communist Party and the agrarian revolution, is that Mao felt that the leadership of the Communist Party and the support

⁸"A Research on Mao Tse-tung's Thought of Military Insurrection," Asian People's Anti-Communist League Republic of China, 7 Oct. 1961, pp. 49-54.

⁹Mao Tse-tung, "Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War," in Selected Works, Vol. 1, p. 196.

of the peasantry gave the Red Army superiority over the Kuomintang. He reasoned that the Red Army had its basis in the agrarian revolution and that the officers and men were united politically, therefore, this combination gave the small Red Army great fighting power. These points of strength were in contradistinction to the Kuomintang. The Kuomintang had no peasant support, although large in size, Mao felt that because of its source it could not obtain voluntary effort. He felt that the Kuomintang was weakened by the difference in political opinion between the officers and the men.¹⁰

From these characteristics of China's Revolutionary War, Mao evolved his strategy.

From the first and fourth characteristics ensue the possibilities for the Red Army to develop and defeat its enemy. From the second and third characteristic ensue the possibilities of the Red Army's slow development and delayed victory over its enemy. This means the possibility of a protracted war, and, with bungling, there is the possibility of failure.¹¹

The strategy developed from the characteristics outlined above was stated by Mao in a series of tactical do's and don'ts.

It is very clear that our correct strategic direction lies in the opposition to adventurism during offensive operations, to conservatism (or simple defense) while on the defensive and to flight while redisposing our forces. We are against guerrilla-ism of the Red Army yet we must admit its guerrilla character. We are opposed to protracted campaigns and a strategy of quick decisions, while we believe in a strategy of protracted war and campaigns of quick decision. As we

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 21.

are opposed to fixed operational fronts and positional warfare, we believe in unfixed operational fronts and a war of manoeuvre. We are against simply routing the enemy, and believe in a war of annihilation. We are against two-fistism in strategic directions and for one fistism. We are against the institution of a big rear and believe in a small rear. We are against absolute centralised command and believe in a relatively centralised command. We are against a purely military point of view and the principle of roving bands, but consider the Red Army as a propagandist and organism for the (Chinese) soviets. . . . We are against isolationism and believe in winning over all possible allies. Finally, we are against the Red Army's stagnation at its old level and believe in a struggle for its development and advancement into a new stage.¹²

The strategy as described by Mao was to utilize the Army as the means of achieving the objective of attaining control over all of China. It also contained the provisions for uniting with allies, that is, all partisans who were not actively opposed to the Communist Party and all those who could be convinced of the Soviet cause. In this period of the civil war Mao reasoned that by the time he was militarily stronger than the Kuomintang his political control over the country would be extensive enough to deny popular support for the Kuomintang. Thus Chiang Kai-shek could not successfully adapt the tactics of people's war.

THE EXPANSION PERIOD

The Japanese invasion of Mainland China (1937-1945) weakened the Nationalist Government. This factor gave the Communist Party

¹²Ibid., pp. 21-22.

time to recover from setbacks inflicted by the Kuomintang. The Nationalist Army, beset with internal difficulties of morale, nearly exhausted from fighting the Red Army, and lacking the comparative modern equipment of the Japanese Army, was not capable of defeating the invader. The Kuomintang's limited effective control over all of China was further reduced by the Japanese invasion.

This situation created the ideal climate for the emergence of the Communist Party and the expansion of their influence. This was the opportunity for Mao to apply his previously evolved principles of winning over all possible allies.¹³

Throughout this period Mao placed the struggle for national survival ahead of all other objectives. He proclaimed that total national resistance to the Japanese invaders would be necessary to save the "motherland" from peril and subjugation.¹⁴ While willing to cooperate with Chiang Kai-shek he nevertheless insisted that political reforms be carried out simultaneously with military operations. Mao then offered the Kuomintang a combined military-political program designed to defeat the invader and to institute political reform. This proposal was called "The Ten-Point National Salvation Programme."¹⁵ These ten points called for

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Mao Tse-tung, "Struggle to Mobilize All Forces for Winning Victory in the Armed Resistance," in Selected Works, Vol. 2, pp. 68-69.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 69-70.

reforms within the military and within the government. They included provisions for making the resistance a total war effort. This called for complete mobilization, total arming of the people, and solidarity among the existing factions to join in the common fight.

They also included the requirement for a coalition government to the exclusion of pro-Japanese elements. Additionally, items to improve the people's living conditions were part of the proposed program.

The line of a resistance by the government alone must be abandoned, and the line of a total national resistance must be carried out. The government must unite with the people, revive fully the revolutionary spirit of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and put into effect the above mentioned Ten-Point Programme in order to win complete victory in the anti-Japanese war. The Chinese Communist Party, together with the masses of the people and the armed forces under its leadership, will adhere resolutely to the above mentioned programme and go to the front line of the Anti-Japanese War and defend the motherland to the last drop of its blood. The Chinese Communist Party, adhering to its consistent policy, is willing to form a common front with the Kuomintang of China and other parties and groups throughout the country, unite with them hand in hand and build a solid Great Wall of the national united front to defeat the infamous Japanese invaders and strive for a new China of independence, freedom and happiness.¹⁶

These proposals leave one with the impression of Mao, and his Chinese Communist Party, as being strongly nationalistic but none-the-less intent on Communist domination of their country.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 72-73.

While offering to fully cooperate with the nationalists, Mao is advocating freedom for political prisoners. One can imagine this as a hedge for the release of Communists captured by the Nationalist Army.

The Ten Point Salvation Program and other offers were made to the Kuomintang to enter into an anti-Japanese agreement. Each offer was counterweighed with proposals that would have advanced the Communist Party. In general, these proposals included conditions that the Kuomintang stop attacks on the Red Army, that freedom be granted to the people, and that the people be armed.¹⁷

Finally, in 1937 Chiang Kai-shek recognized the Communist Party and thus opened the door for a bi-partisan united front.¹⁸ The factors of resistance to the Japanese and cooperation with the Nationalists in that instance led to some changes in the Communist Party's military strategy.

The strategy employed during this period is described as guerrilla warfare. This is guerrilla warfare carried out by the regular Communist forces. The Eighth Route Army was employed to carry out in dispersion the task of guerrillas.¹⁹ This type of strategy was proclaimed for the early stages of the Anti-Japanese

¹⁷Mao Tse-tung, "The Urgent Tasks after the Announcement of Kuomintang-Communist Co-operation," in Selected Works, Vol. 2, p. 77.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 79-81.

¹⁹Mao Tse-tung, "Problems of War and Strategy," in Selected Works, Vol. 2, p. 275.

War. During the latter stages of this war, more up to date equipment was anticipated. This refurbishing would change both the army and its operation. The army was to achieve a high degree of centralization and organization. The operation would deemphasize guerrilla operations and achieve a high degree of regularity. Mao predicted that this phase of operations would change from the Chinese type to the world-wide type. These changes in strategy were to take the Red Army from guerrilla warfare to regular warfare in both directions in order to meet the requirement of the situation.

The Red Army went from guerrilla warfare to regular warfare in the Civil War. To conduct the initial opposition to the Japanese Army, the Red Army changed from regular warfare to guerrilla warfare. As the war with Japan progressed the third change took place, that is, from guerrilla warfare back to regular warfare.²⁰

It is significant to note that while the Communist Party was committed to a united front for the avowed purpose of defeating the Japanese invader, they continued to advance the Party as the dominant force in China. The Communist Party objective, of seeking to become the dominant force in and gaining control of China, evolved three principles. These principles had a direct influence on military strategy. They are indicative of the persistence,

²⁰Ibid., pp. 275-276.

resilience, and flexibility of the Chinese Communist mind. For this reason they are noteworthy of attention by any party, country, or organization which contemplates association with the People's Republic of China.

The first principle was described as self-defense. This was directed toward those elements of the Kuomintang who remained anti-Communist and were described by Mao as "die-hards." This principle called for restraint unless attacked and then complete military annihilation of the attackers. Mao said that "we must never attack others (the die-hards) without provocation; but once attacked we must never fail to return the blow."²¹

While this principle describes a defensive attitude, it also indicates conditions for switching to an offensive one.

My view of the subtle significance of this principle turns on the word provocation. The Communists are capable of producing a provocation whenever the military situation is favorable to them. This was evident in the 1965 Sino-Indian border dispute.

The second principle was called the principle of victory. This was defined as the theory of fighting only when sure of victory. This principle cautioned against lack of preparation for battle. That is, attack only one part at a time. Attack the most reactionary part first. This describes the limited nature of the struggle.

²¹Mao Tse-tung, "On the Protracted War," in Selected Works, Vol. 3, p. 199.

The second principle viewed in light of the first one (self-defense) may be taken to indicate that while a defensive posture is assumed it does not preclude changing to an offensive one. The second principle describes the method in which the offensive is to be conducted.

The current significance of this principle is to pinpoint the country which is the objective. Since the United States is the country most resolutely opposed to the People's Republic of China, it becomes the most reactionary part of the world in the eyes of Mao.

The third principle was described as that of truce.²² This principle cautions against continuing the battle after a victory and suggests that further gains, both political and military, may be achieved through the medium of truce talks. This is not capitulation but rather application of the fight-talk, fight-talk theory which was applied by the Chinese in Korea in 1951. This principle directs that truce talk should begin after a military victory has been achieved. Mao expressed the thought that the temporary nature of every particular struggle is contained in this principle.

In Mao's words the three principles are "justifiability, expediency, and restraint."

Persisting in such justifiable, expedient and restrained struggles, we can develop the progressive forces, win over the middle-of-the-road

²²Ibid.

forces, isolate the die-hard forces and make the die-hards chary of heedlessly attacking us, or heedlessly compromising with the enemy, or heedlessly starting a large scale civil war. And we can in this way win a favorable turn in the situation.²³

THE MILITARY STRATEGY DEVELOPED BY MAO

In the post World War II period, the strategy of the People's Republic of China has undoubtedly been influenced by developments in the Soviet Union's doctrine on modern warfare and by the military assistance rendered by the Soviet Union.²⁴ Similarly, the deterioration of relations between China and the Soviet Union has resulted in a reduction, and in some instances in elimination, of Soviet military assistance.

The increase of United States military strength and the use of that strength in the western Pacific must have had a profound effect on Chinese strategy.

The key internal factors which appear to influence China's military strategy are its military weakness, lack of advanced weapons, economic underdevelopment of the mainland, and the ardent desire to become recognized and treated as a world power.

Mao's changing military strategy during the Civil War period and on through the expansion period indicates his ability to apply

²³Ibid.

²⁴A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia; Challenge to American Policy, p. 117.

the experience of past campaigns modified as considered necessary to meet the requirements of new situations. He developed his guerrilla war tactics when the opposition was stronger and better equipped. When his strength became dominant and his army better equipped he placed emphasis on mobile warfare. At this point of development he formed regular units and used more conventional methods of tactical employment operating under centralized command. He continued to stress careful planning of every campaign.

The flexibility shown by Mao in changing his military strategy to meet changing conditions is an indication of intelligent employment of forces, careful analysis of the enemy, and application of the correct strategy for the given situation.

The Chinese recognition of the implications of modern war may be found in Mao's constant reminder to the party that the Army must seek improvement in every way as the war goes on.²⁵

The Chinese reference to the atomic bomb as a paper tiger should not be interpreted as indicating a lack of understanding of the bomb's destructive power. This seeming disregard for nuclear weapons as an influence on military strategy was undoubtedly based on the Chinese lack of these weapons. This led to an apparent overemphasis on use of manpower.

You fight in your way and we fight in ours; we fight when we can win and we move away when we can't. In other words, you rely on modern

²⁵Center of International Studies, Chinese Communist Revolutionary Strategy, 1945-1949, by Sin-ming Chiu, p. 48

weapons and we rely on highly conscious revolutionary people; you give full play to your superiority and we give full play to ours; you have your way of fighting and we have ours. . . . Fighting is the pivot of all our strategy and tactics. . . . This strategy and these tactics can be applied only when one relies on the broad masses of the people, and such application brings the superiority of people's war into full play.²⁶

Thus we find the current military strategy, recognizing the strength of the enemy and the weakness of China. In this case, that weakness is a lack of modern, particularly nuclear, weapons. This leads to neither a course of action which tends to develop a requirement for immediate modernization nor to one which seeks conciliation. It does express the concept of devising the means to defeat the enemy who has modern weapons based on the available resources. The challenge to submerge the United States, a recognized nuclear power, with a "vast ocean of several hundred million Chinese people," is the application of this concept to Peking's military strategy.²⁷

²⁶Lin Piao, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 30-31.

CHAPTER 3

THE THREAT POSED BY THE UNITED STATES

In assessing the US threat as viewed by the rulers in Peking, consideration has been taken of the military strength of the United States, particularly, that part of the armed forces which has the present apparent capability to oppose Chinese action.

UNITED STATES MILITARY STRENGTH

The recognition of United States strength may be seen in Lin Piao's reference to the "Colossus of U.S. Imperialism."¹

This colossus maintains general and limited war forces to include a large nuclear arsenal, internal defense forces, and has deployed to the Pacific area a sizable strength of its Army, Navy, and Air Force. This strength is reinforced by collective defense pacts between the United States and Asian Countries.²

¹Lin Piao, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," Daily Report, Supplement, Far East, No. 171(4S), 3 Sep. 1965, p. 26.

²In assessing the US military strength as viewed by the PRC, it is assumed that for their own analysis the PRC leaders use the best possible source material. This assumption is not confirmed but it appears reasonable to ascribe maximum capability to a foe as intelligent as the Chinese. Therefore, for this part of the paper the source document is "United States Defense Policies in 1964," dated 4 Jun. 1965, prepared by the Library of Congress at the request of the Hon. Melvin Price. It is recognized that pronouncements from PRC officials may not always be in consonance with these data but this disparity is attributed to the fact that much of the content of the PRC announcements are for internal consumption. The cited publication is unclassified and available from the US GPO, therefore, it is presumed to be available to and used by the PRC in their analysis of US military strength. The source document is hereafter referred to as United States Defense Policies.

The United States maintains and modernizes its bomber forces consisting of B-52's and B-58's. A part of the strategic bomber forces are kept on both ground and air alert at all times.³

The formidable threat posed by the Polaris submarines consists of a program for 41 of these vessels. This threat is heightened by the US announcement that some of these ballistic missile submarines were being deployed to the Pacific.⁴

The large number of intercontinental ballistic missiles includes 950 Minutemen and six squadrons of Titan II missiles. This missile force is capable of reaching the heartland of China.⁵

The United States has and employs high flying reconnaissance aircraft. Additionally, there is a program which further develops this capability with an advanced, long-range strategic reconnaissance aircraft, superior to the present U-2.⁶

The announced official policy pertaining to the use of nuclear weapons is that the United States would use them if the survival of the country is threatened.⁷ There is a further indication that the United States will use tactical nuclear weapons if the situation requires them.⁸

³US Defense Policies, p. 21.

⁴Ibid., p. 25.

⁵Ibid., pp. 25-36.

⁶Ibid., pp. 24-25.

⁷Ibid., p. 28.

⁸Ibid., p. 30.

The deployed force which threatens the People's Republic of China includes three army divisions, an airborne brigade, a Special Forces group, and the Seventh Fleet reinforced by the First Fleet. This Navy force includes the deployed ballistic missile submarine force mentioned previously. The Air Force includes the Fifth and Thirteenth Air Forces, a combat cargo air division and a division of the Strategic Air Command located on Guam. The strength of the aforementioned force has been increased by numerous augmentations to all services in Vietnam.⁹ While the official announced strength increases do not include specific unit deployments, it is assumed that this exact information is as available to the planners in Peking as in the Pentagon.

Cognizance must also be taken of the emphasis placed on efforts to counter "wars of liberation," this includes training, funds for development of hardware and a considerable research effort directed toward the environments in which United States forces may have to operate.¹⁰

In addition to the actual US strength facing China, there is the very substantial series of collective defense programs which encompasses India, Pakistan, Philippines, Laos, Thailand, and the Republic of Vietnam.¹¹

⁹Ibid., pp. 34-37.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 41-42.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 49-64.

This impressive array of US strength is not considered a dormant force by Peking. Lin Piao credited the United States with strengthening the state machinery and especially the armed forces.¹²

UNITED STATES OPPOSITION TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The hostility and mutual distrust existing between the People's Republic of China and the United States may be traced to America's support of Chiang Kai-shek during World War II.¹³ Although the United States was active in trying to bring about a coalition regime in China, there was never much doubt in the minds of either the Chinese Communists or United States officials that American sympathies were with the Kuomintang.¹⁴ The direction of the Peking movement toward the Soviet Bloc further increased this hostility. Mao Tse-tung, in July 1949, made clear his direction in a speech commemorating the twenty-eighth anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party, now referred to as the "leaning to one side" speech.¹⁵

Since 1949 the clashes of the People's Republic of China and American interests all along China's periphery have been bitter and violent.¹⁶ This conflict of interest is based on fundamental

¹²Lin Piao, op. cit., p. 20.

¹³Tang Tsou, America's Failure in China, 1941-1950, pp. 128-175.

¹⁴Morton H. Halperin, China and the Bomb, pp. 1-2.

¹⁵Mao Tse-tung, "On The People's Democratic Dictatorship," in Selected Works, Vol. 4, (Peking edition), pp. 411-424.

¹⁶A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia; A Challenge to American Policy, pp. 1-7.

issues. Peking's leaders continuously stress their determination to liberate Taiwan, to force the West to accept China as a great power, and to promote and support the spread of communism. They regard the United States as a hostile power intervening in their domestic affairs, as the symbol of hated "capitalism" and "imperialism," and as the basic obstacle to achieving their major objectives mentioned above. The United States is making every effort to deter Communist aggression and to block the expansion of Communist influence. The announced United States objectives are to prevent the domination of Asia by any single state, to support the principles of independence and self-determination in the area, and to encourage the political and economic growth of democratic, non-Communist Asian states. The United States views Communist China as the principal threat to these basic American aims and interests in Asia.

The dispatch of the Seventh US Fleet in June 1950 to neutralize the Formosa Straits thwarted Peking's plan for an early invasion of Formosa.¹⁷ The reaction from Peking was immediate and strong. They viewed this as active intervention in the Chinese Civil war. The United States was supporting with aid and defending with Naval power the regime which had been defeated on the mainland.¹⁸

This hostility toward the United States was reinforced by the crossing of the 38th Parallel in Korea. Within a few months,

¹⁷Tang Tsou, op. cit., pp. 558-564.

¹⁸Ibid.

the Armies of the United States and China clashed in that country.¹⁹

Subsequently, the two countries saw themselves on opposing sides in a number of military encounters, including those in the Taiwan Straits, on the Sino-Indian border, and in Vietnam. The involvement of China and the United States in these and other postwar military clashes in the Far East has varied enormously-- from the direct confrontation of their armed forces to the providing of diplomatic support to opposing forces. No matter what form the engagement has taken, in every major diplomatic or military crisis in Asia since 1949, China and the United States have viewed each other as being on opposite sides.²⁰ Thus, Peking has taken upon herself the role of the most uncompromising enemy of the United States in the Communist Bloc.²¹

PROJECTION OF US OPPOSITION TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The United States has declared its broad objectives in Asia as:

First, that the nations of the Far East, of Asia generally, should develop as free and independent countries, according to their own views of how they should develop, although we would hope with increasingly democratic structure.

¹⁹John Gittings, "China's Military Strategy," The Nation, 18 Jan. 1965, pp. 43-44.

²⁰Halperin, op. cit., pp. 1-6.

²¹Tang Tsou, op. cit., pp. 589-591.

Second, that the nations of the area should not threaten each other, or outside nations.

Third, that no single Asian nation should either control or exert dominant influence over other nations in the area, either in the area as a whole or in any significant region of it.

Fourth, that we would hope that the nations of the Far East and Asia would maintain and increase their ties to the West, in trade, in cultural respects, in education particularly to the maximum extent possible as a major means of knitting together a peaceful and stable world.²²

United States policy and moves in the Far East have been likened by Lin Piao to the empire building of pre-world war II Germany, Japan, and Italy.²³

The United States ability to oppose the People's Republic of China is reduced, in their view, to a reliance on nuclear weapons.²⁴

The Chinese view the relation of force to policy in terms of the Maoist doctrine that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun. Force, in the minds of the Peking leaders, is an inevitable and necessary instrument of foreign policy.²⁵

The force projected against the United States is described by Lin Piao as the "waging of people's wars by the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America."²⁶

²²William P. Bundy, "The United States and China," in China and the Peace of Asia, ed. by Alastair Buchan, pp. 15-16.

²³Lin Piao, op. cit., p. 24.

²⁴Lin Piao, op. cit., p. 26.

²⁵Halperin, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁶Lin Piao, op. cit., p. 25.

Both the United States and the People's Republic of China recognize that Vietnam represents the locale of the current clash of objectives, that is, the "war of National Liberation" versus self determination of an Asian nation free of outside aggression.^{27,28}

In spite of the vitriolic denunciations of American support to the Republic of Vietnam, China has continued to avoid policies which might result in direct military confrontation with the United States. This action is entirely compatible with the policy of carefully controlled sub-limited war and conventional military pressure on China's borders. Escalation is not in the Chinese interest.²⁹

The fundamental principle of Maoist military doctrine is the notion of going from a very weak position to the ultimate accomplishment of one's objectives. This doctrine holds that with a very small force one can triumph ultimately against overwhelming odds by a policy of gradual increase in one's strength while cutting down the strength of the opponent. The statements calling the United States a paper tiger must be viewed in this light. It does not mean that nuclear weapons cannot destroy China, if

²⁷Lin Piao, op. cit., p. 26.

²⁸William P. Bundy, op. cit., pp. 27-31.

²⁹Davis B. Bobrow, "Peking's Military Calculus," World Politics, Vol. 16, No.2, Jan. 1964, pp. 249-301.

the United States uses them now. This view holds that by the proper strategy, the United States can be defeated in the long run.³⁰

The United States deterrence to China will be found in increasing stability in Asian countries by the use of aid, assistance, and the commitment of conventional military support to countries threatened by Communist subversion. This deterrence will be further supported by the existing regional security arrangements. These actions should continue to keep over Chinese aggression within her own borders until China is ready to raise her level of risk of direct military confrontation with the United States. Some analysts in the United States feel that China will not change her risk level within the next ten years.³¹

The Chinese have argued with the Russians that wars of National Liberation are very unlikely to lead to large-scale conventional war or in particular to general nuclear war. They believe that the threat can be under control.³²

The imposing array of United States potential to conduct a pre-emptive nuclear strike against the Chinese nuclear capability will remain the greatest deterrent to overt Chinese aggression.

As long as the United States retains the determination and capability to make the risks of overt Chinese military operations

³⁰Morton H. Halperin, "China's Strategic Outlook," in China and the Peace of Asia, ed. by Alastair Buchan, pp. 100-101.

³¹Ibid., pp. 103-105.

³²Ibid., p. 105.

in the Far East extremely high, it is doubtful that China will believe that the options for offensive military action have increased, or that her military policies will become less cautious.³³

³³Rand Corporation, Foreword to Japanese Language Edition of Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Age, by Alice Langley Hsieh, pp. 20-22.

CHAPTER 4

THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF CHINA EVOLVES AS A NUCLEAR POWER

The development of nuclear weapons by the Peoples' Republic of China was a natural military evolution for a large nation. The fact that the first explosion occurred subsequent to removal of most Soviet assistance is significant.¹ Yet the tenacity of purpose to pursue a program once begun is continuously reflected in statements by Peking officials. Lin Piao quoted Mao, "We hope for foreign aid but cannot be dependent on it; we depend on our own efforts, on the creative power of the whole army and the people," in reference to the Chinese resistance against Japan.² This quotation expresses the Maoist theory of self-reliance which the Chinese apply to all fields of endeavor.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT

As of this writing China had exploded two nuclear devices. The first on 16 October 1964 and the second on 14 May 1965. The second detonation was reported in the New China News Agency Press Communiqué as follows:

¹Institute for Defense Analysis, Communist China's External Policy and Behavior as a Nuclear Power, by Harold C. Hinton, p. 82.

²Lin Piao, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," Daily Report, Supplement, Far East, No. 171 (4S), 3 Sep. 1965, p. 18.

China exploded another atom bomb over its western areas at 10:00 hours (Peking time) on May 14, 1965, and thus successfully concluded its second nuclear test.

Following on the explosion of China's first atom bomb on October 16, 1964, this nuclear test is another important achievement scored by the Chinese people in strengthening their national defense and safeguarding the security of their motherland and world peace.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese People's Liberation Army and China's scientists and technicians have wholeheartedly worked together to insure the complete success of this nuclear test. It is a great victory for the Party's general line of socialist construction. It is a great victory for Mao Tse-tung's thinking

China is conducting necessary nuclear tests within defined limits and is developing nuclear weapons for the purpose of coping with the nuclear blackmail and threats of the United States and for the purpose of abolishing all nuclear weapons

China is developing nuclear weapons solely for defensive purposes. China will never be the first to use nuclear weapons³

Further indications of the People's Republic of China's nuclear development is found in the type of material used for their first test device. While it was originally thought that plutonium would be used because of its availability, it was subsequently discovered that uranium 235 had been employed.⁴

This single factor, with all its inherent technological requirements, is a twofold indicator. First, it indicates the

³"China Successfully Explodes Another Atom Bomb," Peking Review, No. 21, 21 May 1965, p. 16.

⁴Morton H. Halperin, "Chinese Nuclear Strategy," Adelphi Papers, No. 18, May 1965, p. 1.

extent of China's technical developments. It reinforces the theory of self-sufficiency and reveals the progress China has made and is capable of making unaided. Second, it indicates anew the significance of a controlled society. The control of information coupled with the utilization of the length and breadth of mainland China resulted in a Western underestimation of Peking's ability in this field.

The fact that China's preparations for a test were known and made public by the United States undoubtedly forced the Chinese government to rationalize and explain their program.⁵

The Chinese government's statement announcing the first explosion carried this explanation:

. . . . China is developing nuclear weapons not because we believe in the omnipotence of nuclear weapons and that China plans to use nuclear weapons. The truth is exactly to the contrary. In developing nuclear weapons, China's aim is to break the nuclear monopoly of the nuclear powers and to eliminate nuclear weapons

The development of nuclear weapons by China is for defense and for protecting the Chinese people from the danger of the United States launching a nuclear war.

The Chinese government hereby solemnly declares that China will never at any time and under any circumstances be the first to use nuclear weapons.

The Chinese people firmly support the struggles for liberation waged by oppressed nations and peoples of the world. We are convinced that by relying on their own struggles and also through mutual aid, the

⁵Morton H. Halperin, China and the Bomb, pp. 83-84.

peoples of the world will certainly win victory On the question of nuclear weapons, China will neither commit the error of adventurism nor the error of capitulationism

The Chinese Government fully understands the good wishes of peace loving countries and people for the halting of all nuclear tests. But more and more countries are coming to realize that the more the U.S. imperialists and their partners hold on to their nuclear monopoly, the more is there danger of a nuclear war breaking out. They have it and you don't, and so they are very haughty, their policy of nuclear blackmail and nuclear threat would no longer be so effective, and the possibility for a complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons would increase

Before the advent of such a day, the Chinese Government and people will firmly and unswervingly march along their own road of strengthening their national defenses, and defending their motherland and safeguarding world peace.⁶

The thread throughout the above cited rationalization is one of deterrence. The breaking of nuclear monopoly applies equally to the Soviet Union as to the United States. This further supports Peking's contention for equal voice with major nuclear powers and recognition of China as a great power. Additionally, it indicates no deviation from an intensive program of development.

The effort of this nuclear development program is a sure indicator of the importance that China places on becoming a militarily effective nuclear power.⁷

⁶"China Successfully Explodes Its First Atom Bomb," Peking Review, No. 42, 16 Oct. 1964, pp. ii-iv.

⁷Halperin, Adelphi Papers, p. 1.

The more specific motivation of Peking's drive to achieve effective nuclear status may be summarized as follows: (1) the wish to exercise greater influence within the Communist world, (2) the desire for a more credible deterrent against an American attack, (3) the feeling that the Soviets (USSR) are not willing to capitalize on their capability to oppose the West and in particular are unwilling to support wars of liberation, and (4) the desire for an additional means of establishing Chinese hegemony in Asia.⁸

CAPABILITY OF PRC TO FURTHER EXPAND THEIR NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT

The economic strength of a country will have a deciding influence on that country's ability to produce and sustain an expensive military program. The problem facing China is whether its economic and technical capacities are sufficient to support the development of a major nuclear and missile delivery program.⁹

In viewing the economic capacity of Red China, one may compare their GNP in size to that of Germany or Japan in 1936, only a few years before those countries were to launch and sustain a major war for a number of years.¹⁰

The significance of this comparison is that the Chinese development capability, in spite of vast economic deficiencies, should not be underestimated.

⁸Morton H. Halperin, and Dwight H. Perkins, Communist China and Arms Control, p. 63.

⁹Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 30.

In the area of technical capacity the common fallacy is to couple a few key commodities with the number of technically trained people to evolve an equation for economic power in the technological field. This type equation may be upset by the combination of substitute material and concentration of available skills. An example of the former is found in the Germans' ability (WW II period) to reduce their copper and tin requirements while increasing their arms output.¹¹ A prime example of overcoming the constraint imposed by a shortage of technically trained people may be found in the current Chinese situation.¹² Compare the achievement of two atomic explosions seven months apart with the following educational inventory:

Today, China has only approximately 2,200 people who have received advanced degrees in the natural sciences, 700 trained in the West and 1,500 in the Soviet Union. This is out of a total number of college graduates in the natural sciences of about 65,000. In engineering sciences the total number of college graduates has reached 390,000.¹³

More significant than deficiencies and constraints imposed by economics is the direction in which these limited resources are to be expended. The actual achievement indicates what can be accomplished.¹⁴ The priorities established in present scientific fields indicates the emphasis and direction of future accomplishments.

¹¹Ibid., p. 31.

¹²"China Successfully Explodes Another Atom Bomb," Peking Review, No. 21, 21 May 1965, p. 6.

¹³Halperin and Perkins, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁴"China Successfully Explodes Another Atom Bomb," Peking Review, No. 21, 21 May 1965, p. 6.

The following priority listing evolved during a ten-day (July 9-19, 1964) conference of Chinese affairs specialists convened at Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia:

1. Atomic energy.
2. Electronics.
3. Jet propulsion.
4. Automation and precision instrumentation.
5. Exploration for petroleum and other minerals.
6. Alloy and metallurgical processes.
7. Fuel utilization and heavy organic synthesis.
8. Power equipment and heavy machinery.¹⁵

These priorities indicate a considerable emphasis in the fields of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. They further indicate that the Chinese are prepared to devote a considerable part of their scarce resources to the development of a nuclear capability.¹⁶

The combination of qualified personnel, assigned priorities, materials and technology appear to give China a capacity for expanding her nuclear and missile development.¹⁷

¹⁵Halperin and Perkins, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

¹⁶Morton H. Halperin, China and the Bomb, pp. 72-76.

¹⁷Rand Corporation, Foreward to Japanese Language Edition of Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Age, By Alice L. Hsieh p. 19.

The Peking objective, within China's capability, appears to place emphasis on acquiring "post haste" the technology for credible threats of nuclear escalation.¹⁸

OPTIMUM LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT

The Chinese ability to achieve significant advances in the areas of priority development listed above will be related to their economic development.¹⁹ Determining the probable future course of Chinese economic development is extremely difficult. Predictions of economic development even for the United States often miss their mark by a large margin. For China, the forecasts are complicated by the short span of economic experience in which to acquire data, the apparent lack of institutional stability, and the lack of reliable statistics.²⁰ The optimum level of weapons development will undoubtedly be predicated on China's foreign policy objectives.²¹ The combination of desire for consideration as a world nuclear power and the determination to overcome the major foe, will ultimately lead Peking into a program to match the United States.²²

¹⁸Davis B. Bobrow, "Chinese Views on Escalation," Military Review, Vol. 46, Jan. 1966, p. 67.

¹⁹Halperin, China and the Bomb, pp. 72-74.

²⁰Halperin and Perkins, op. cit., pp. 31-33.

²¹Halperin, China and the Bomb, pp. 8-23.

²²Ibid., pp. 1-8.

The nuclear test detonations revealed China's technical development and the fact that uranium 235 was available to the Peking scientists. The combination of technical knowledge and possession of uranium 235 leads to the conclusion that China has the ability to produce a few atomic bombs a year.²³ The cost of producing enough plutonium for one or several bombs a year involves a capital investment of less than one hundred million US dollars and an annual fuel (uranium and heavy water or graphite) and operating cost of perhaps thirty million dollars per year; the cost of producing uranium 235 is somewhat higher. Allowances must be made for much higher costs for China in construction of reactors and a plant for separation of plutonium or a gaseous diffusion plant. Even considering such higher costs necessary annual expenditure constitutes less than one or two per cent of China's gross national product.²⁴

Given only the level of production indicated, China emerges as a nuclear power to be reckoned with. The nuclear test detonations alone catapulted China, in the eyes of most Asians, into the arena with four other nuclear powers.²⁵ The fact that the United States downgraded the importance of Peking's initial

²³Halperin and Perkins, op. cit., p. 34.

²⁴Halperin, China and the Bomb, p. 89.

²⁵Ibid., p. 94.

nuclear test cannot detract from the consideration that China's neighbors are now vulnerable to her nuclear power.^{26, 27}

The logical and apparent economically feasible progression from nuclear test is to a level which may be described as limited capability. The limited capability is defined as one able to deliver a small number of weapons (twenty or thirty) against China's neighbors.²⁸ This capability could be effectively used in a limited nuclear war in Asia. It would involve only medium-range missiles or even less sophisticated delivery means.²⁹ This objective is considered to be well within China's current economic and technological capacity.³⁰

The progression from this limited capability to one which would include either intercontinental bombers or ICBM is a much more expensive step. By way of comparison some US costs are cited. Development of an intercontinental bomber today costs the United States between five hundred million and one billion dollars. The cost of developing the Atlas or Titan ICBM is between one and two billion dollars each. The latter cost does not include the procurement costs, nor does it include the many billions of dollars that were needed to raise the American missile capabilities to a level necessary to develop an ICBM.³¹

²⁶Lyndon B. Johnson, "Johnson's Statement on China's Bomb," New York Times, 17 Oct. 1964, p. 10.

²⁷Halperin, China and the Bomb, p. 89.

²⁸Ibid., p. 129.

²⁹Ibid., p. 130.

³⁰Halperin and Perkins, op. cit., p. 35.

³¹Ibid., pp. 33-34.

Recognizing that China may be able to save time and resources by copying instead of by progressing thru the costly developmental stages, the handicap of moving from a less developed industrial base will probably raise the cost well above what it has been in the United States.³² The other and equally important factor is the time needed to train the number of technical and scientific personnel needed for an expanded program. It is one thing to concentrate resources and available, skilled, and knowledgeable scientists in order to produce a few weapons and a single delivery system. It is quite another to engage in development of many types of delivery systems.³³ The restrictions of time as opposed to cost may well force the Chinese to opt for a limited capability, at least during the 1970's.³⁴ It appears unlikely that China could attempt to match the United States developments in the field of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in quantity, quality, or variety, in the foreseeable future.³⁵

In his book, China and the Bomb, Morton Halperin discusses the possibility of China's achieving a major nuclear capability, which he describes as the capability of a force able to deliver a dozen or more fusion weapons at intercontinental range. He discusses the US tendency now to overestimate Chinese industrial

³²Ibid., p. 34.

³³Ibid., p. 35.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 38-39.

and scientific capability and the PRC emphasis on economic development vis-a-vis pure military development and concludes that China will not obtain nuclear parity with the United States in the twentieth century.³⁶

In considering the optimum level of Chinese weapons development within the near future, it is important to relate the limitations and capabilities already discussed to Peking's objective of joining the nuclear club. The specific motivating factors were presented in the beginning of this chapter.³⁷ The Chinese may achieve these objectives without severe strain on their economy. Indeed, the pursuit of a limited nuclear capability will allow for parallel development of their economy. Further, it will enhance their industrial and scientific base. This may come about through the expansion of research and production facilities associated with the nuclear and missile development field. It will also be accomplished through the medium of increased production of technicians and scientists. This increase in technology will tend to assist the economy directly. Moreover, it is a militarily convertible commodity.

The result of adopting this course of action, that is, building a limited nuclear and delivery capability, can be manifold achievements. First, her immediate objectives for becoming a nuclear power become feasible of attainment. Second, priority

³⁶Halperin, China and the Bomb, p. 157.

³⁷Halperin and Perkins, op. cit., p. 63.

economic development continues. Third, the industrial and technological base continues to grow. This growth and development considered over a period of ten years would enable China to compete with the United States in weaponry in the event such a competition is then considered necessary.³⁸ Alice Langley Hsieh, in a recent publication, indicates that the nature of the first nuclear device reinforced by the second uranium device, coupled with Peking's unwillingness to support any measures that might restrict its freedom to develop a missile capability, indicates that China's ultimate objective is to attain a thermonuclear capability.³⁹

³⁸Halperin & Perkins, op. cit., pp. 32-66.

³⁹Rand Corporation, op. cit., p. 19.

CHAPTER 5

PRC MILITARY STRATEGY AS A NUCLEAR POWER

The military strategy of the People's Republic of China as shown in chapter two evolved over a long period of time as a result of practical application. This strategy was tried, modified, and codified by its reputed author, Mao Tse-tung. It suited the terrain, area, and capabilities of the Chinese Communists and was oriented to accomplish an objective confined, if that word is applied in its broadest sense, to the land mass of China.¹

This strategy, considered in relation to military modernization by other major powers, left China in a militarily archaic state.

RECOGNITION OF NEED FOR MILITARY MODERNIZATION

This out of step strategy found its apologia in many remarks by Chinese officials on the nature of war. Marshall Yeh in 1961 indicated that in the event of war within the next few years China would rely on "hand weapons" and defeat the enemy by using close combat because they had no "special weapons."²

¹Institute for Defense Analysis, Communist China's External Policy and Behavior as a Nuclear Power, by Harold C. Hinton, pp. 5-6.

²Alice L. Hsieh, "China's Secret Military Papers: Military Doctrine and Strategy," The China Quarterly, No. 18, Apr.-Jun. 1964, p. 85.

This acknowledgement of lack of nuclear weapons with which to affect the outcome of a war did not inhibit Peking's consideration of the ramifications of the nuclear era. There is an indication that this consideration was reflected in the conflict of views between the Party and the professional officer corps in the late 1950's. Part of this conflict centered on the officers' attempts at a sweeping modernization of the army. The Party held the familiar line of "men over weapons."³ There are some indications that the "officers to the ranks" campaign directed in September 1958 in which a "major general sang songs to entertain the troops accompanied by another general on the fiddle," was the result of the Party's reaction to the growing professionalism of the Army officers.⁴ Notwithstanding this polemic between the professional officer corps and the Party, there are indications that China has conducted a program of modernization of the armed forces.⁵

The need for modernizing both the materiel and the training of the armed forces was recognized publically in 1956 by T'an Cheng, the vice-minister of National Defense. T'an Cheng is considered the main political link between the Party and the

³Ellis Joffe, "The Conflict between Old and New in the Chinese Army," The China Quarterly, Apr.-June. 1964, pp. 123-124.

⁴Ibid., p. 125.

⁵Harold P. Ford, "Modern Weapons and the Sino-Soviet Estrangement," The China Quarterly, Apr.-Jun. 1964, pp. 160-161.

armed forces. In addition to asserting Party leadership in the Army, he endorsed the emphasis on post attack mobilization and priority of economic development.⁶ T'ian Cheng addressing the Eighth National Congress on 25 September 1956, stated the case for acknowledging the new role of technology:

In a modern war, the importance of technical conditions is considerably heightened. Without modern technical equipment and without combined operations of various arms with high technical level, the courage of men alone cannot achieve victory in war.⁷

While the program of modernization was indorsed, the Party line of "men over weapons" was maintained.

Technology is handled by men and no new technology can play its part unless it is combined with the factor of men. The activity in war and the coordination in operations also rests on the political unity of men. Otherwise, activity in war is out of the question and no real coordination can be achieved in operations.⁸

Many of the Chinese military training institutes had by 1961 adopted an essentially technical curriculum. At look at the new officers who have entered the service academies from civilian universities and the revised military training indicates the Chinese are creating a technologically modern officer corps.⁹

⁶Alice L. Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era, p. xiii.

⁷Ibid., pp. 56-57.

⁸Ibid., p. 57.

⁹Davis B. Bobrow, "The Good Officer: Definition and Training," The China Quarterly, Apr.-Jun. 1964, pp. 151-152.

NUCLEAR RISK APPRAISAL

Prior to modification of Military strategy to capitalize on their new stature, acquired by the nuclear detonations, the leaders in Peking would have to reappraise the threats facing them.

The Sino-Soviet split carried a clear message that the USSR nuclear umbrella was no longer available to the Chinese. The tone of statements from Moscow was to the effect that Peking's aims and interests were in conflict with those of the socialist camps.¹⁰ Lacking the nuclear shield, the Chinese had reason to think the United States would feel less restraint in opposing their aggressive support for wars of national liberation.¹¹ This feeling of being uncovered from the protective shield of the Soviet Union's nuclear power, coupled with the reported deployment to the Pacific area of such US weapons systems as the Polaris and the B-52, gave Peking cause for concern.¹²

This apprehension may be further supported by Peking's change in attitude concerning nuclear weapons. In 1963 China advocated a nuclear weapon-free zone in Asia and particularly in the Pacific area.¹³ The post-detonation announcements omitted reference to weapons-free zones. These announcements advanced the theory that

¹⁰Rand Corporation, Foreward to Japanese Language Edition of Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Age, by Alice L. Hsieh, p. 14, (referred to hereafter as "Rand Corporation, 3152").

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., p. 15.

¹³Ibid., p. 9.

all nations possessing nuclear weapons should immediately adopt a policy of "no-first-use" of these weapons.¹⁴ This changed attitude was undoubtedly the result of a twofold desire. First, to rationalize their test program for Asian consumption. Second, to establish in advance a deterrent against United States use of nuclear weapons.¹⁵

The effective blocking of US use of nuclear weapons would then leave China free to continue her program to use military force in a limited way for political purposes.¹⁶ This technique would return the initiative to Peking to pick the time, place, opponent, and degree of force to be employed.¹⁷ Further, it would lend credibility to her power and enable her to blackmail Asian neighbors as a means of extending hegemony.¹⁸

The Chinese military strategy continues to take cognizance of the United States nuclear power. They appear to be most concerned about an aggressive nuclear attack by the United States.¹⁹ While this concern has dominated Chinese thinking, they have shown equal sensitivity to United States tactical nuclear weapons

¹⁴"China Successfully Explodes Its First Atom Bomb," Peking Review, No. 42, 16 Oct. 1964, pp. ii-iii.

¹⁵Morton H. Halperin and Dwight H. Perkins, Communist China and Arms Control, p. 129.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 78-79.

¹⁷Rand Corporation, 3152, p. 15.

¹⁸Davis B. Bobrow, "Peking's Military Calculus," World Politics, Vol. 16, No. 2, Jan. 1964, p. 301.

¹⁹John Gittings, "China Military Strategy," The Nation, Vol. 200, No. 3, 18 Jan. 1965, p. 44.

development. This reaction was reflected in their 1963 opposition to the partial nuclear test ban.²⁰

NUCLEAR POWER CONSIDERATIONS

The following are considered the significant national objectives of the Peking regime: first, to maintain the mainland China area currently under Communist control; second, to restore to China territory and islands on or near her border which are included within the rightful claim (from the Chinese Communist viewpoint) of the People's Republic of China; third, to exercise her influence on border countries; fourth, to establish Communist China as a world power; fifth, to establish Communist regimes, influenced by China, throughout the world.²¹

Attainment of the first objective, control over China, does not appear to depend on the addition of nuclear power to Peking's military strategy.

The Chinese belief in the aggressive intention of the United States has been one of the primary points directing their military strategy.²² This assumed threat from the United States has led to their analysis that the picture of a future war would see strategic bombing of key military and industrial complexes,

²⁰Rand Corporation, 3152, p. 15.

²¹A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia, A Challenge to American Policy, pp. 8-13; and Morton H. Halperin, China and the Bomb, p. 9.

²²Gittings, op. cit., p. 44.

followed by a ground campaign to occupy the land, destroy the armed forces, terminate the war, and win a victory. This view of a future war recognizes that the United States will be capable of inflicting serious damage in the initial phase.²³ However, for the land campaign, Peking views the United States as being without sufficient manpower to overcome the people and territory of China. Lin Piao said, "the vast ocean of several hundred million Chinese people in arms will be more than enough to submerge your few million aggressor troops We will annihilate as many as you can send, and even give you receipts."²⁴

China's analysis of the ineffectiveness of nuclear weapons against a large and populous country and her conclusion that the United States does not possess sufficient man power to achieve victory has led to the consideration that biological warfare will be employed. The claim that this method will be used against crops, dispersed population, and troops probably results from the conclusion that the combination of US nuclear and military strength are inadequate to subjugate China.²⁵

Their rationale has been reflected in Chinese military training, which emphasizes defense against use of chemical, bacterial and nuclear weapons.²⁶

²³Rand Corporation, Communist China's Military Doctrine and Strategy, by Alice L. Hsieh, pp. 10-11, (referred to hereafter as "Rand Corporation, 3833").

²⁴Lin Piao, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," Daily Report, Supplement, Far East, No. 171(4S), 3 Sep. 1965, p. 31.

²⁵Halperin, China and the Bomb, pp. 25-26.

²⁶Rand Corporation, 3833, pp. 11-12.

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bases on their soil and that will in general accept Peking's lead in foreign policy.²⁹

The fourth objective, recognition as a world power, appears to be well on the road toward accomplishment. The worldwide recognition, resulting from the nuclear test detonations, has resulted in reconsideration of the role of Red China in world affairs.³⁰

It is difficult to assess the impact of China's current nuclear status, or even her projected status, on her ability to achieve the fifth objective, Chinese leadership of world communism. Two factors, the Sino-Soviet rift and Peking's emphasis on support for wars of national liberation, seem to have a significant bearing on this fifth objective. The Sino-Soviet split tends to divide the Communist world unequally. In spite of Peking's repeated charges that the Khrushchev revisionists are cooperating with the United States imperialists there has been no evident shift in allegiance among the Soviet bloc nations toward Peking.³¹ Indeed there are worldwide indications of a move in the direction of Moscow or toward neutralism. In regard to the Chinese emphasis on their support for wars of national liberation, the outcome is uncertain. It appears that while Peking will continue to advocate support for wars of national

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Halperin, op. cit., p. 99.

³¹Lin Piao, op. cit., p. 27.

liberation, the amount and type of assistance actually furnished may well fall short of that which the target countries feel is sufficient to warrant their moving into the Chinese camp. This thought is supported by the Chinese assertion that revolution or people's war in any country is the business of the masses in that country and should be carried out primarily by their own efforts.³²

The fact that China has moved into the nuclear club has undoubtedly increased her desire to provide psychological restraints to United States use of nuclear weapons. This is reflected in Peking's no-first-use proposals.³³ The no-first-use proposals coupled with the assertion that "the atom bomb is a paper tiger" contained in the same press release appears to have a twofold purpose:³⁴ first, a realization of the vulnerability of the Chinese nuclear industrial capacity and second, a tacit acknowledgement that the war of national liberation in Vietnam could escalate into the nuclear field. Both of these conditions would jeopardize China's fledgling nuclear and missile development.³⁵

The Chinese press communique which carried the announcement of the second nuclear test conducted on 14 May 1965, reiterated Peking's defensive doctrine.³⁶ The various press releases

³²Ibid., p. 17.

³³"China Successfully Explodes Its First Atom Bomb," Peking Review, No. 42, 16 Oct. 1964, pp. ii-iii.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Rand Corporation, 3152, p. 16.

³⁶"China Successfully Explodes Another Atom Bomb," Peking Review, No. 21, 21 May 1965, p. 6.

congratulating the Chinese leaders on this event stressed the defensive capability thus achieved. These messages allied the "weapon" to the 650 million Chinese people as the bulwark of defense against US aggression.³⁷

In light of this developing nuclear capability, what is China's military strategy? Peking's military strategy is and remains one of "active defense." This has been described by Lo Jui-ch'ing as protracted war against an invasion force in which the land mass of China would be traded for time.³⁸ It envisages employment of large ground forces and includes a counterattack and a strategic pursuit phase. The importance of close integration between the military and the civilian population is stressed. This is again the doctrine of "people's war" and it downgrades the importance of the new weapon. Lo further reviews the need for: a combined effort of the "people" at the front and in the rear; "the coordination of the battlefield at the front and the battlefield in the enemy rear; and close cooperation among the different armed services, among which the infantry should take precedence."³⁹

Announcement by a high level military figure, subsequent to the first nuclear detonation and just four days prior to the

³⁷"World Hails China's New Nuclear Test," Peking Review, No. 21, 21 May 1965, pp. 6-9.

³⁸Lo Jui-ch'ing, Chief of the General Staff of People's Liberation Army.

³⁹Lo Jui-ch'ing, as quoted by Alice Langley Hsieh in Rand Corporation, 3152, pp. 17-18.

second test, of a basically defensive military strategy for China, indicates Peking's continued reliance on land mass and conventional force to defend China.⁴⁰

The analysis which concludes that the People's Republic of China's military strategy has not adopted options other than "land mass and people" for defense against nuclear attack has a twofold significance. First and most important, it indicates vulnerabilities. Neither active nor passive defense measures receives public notice. There are, however, indications, that the PRC has begun a dispersal, hardening, and camouflage program to include industrial and military complexes.⁴¹ The second weakness indicated is in air defense, the responsibility for which is assigned to the Air Force. Deficiencies include: delay in construction of air fields dispersed in depth; lack of fuel, spare parts, and equipment, which limits pilot training; and radar deficiencies in low level scanning and range detection. Information is lacking on the current status of these deficiencies. The fact that they were recognized is in itself significant. The role of the Air Force is indicated in this summation:

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

⁴⁰Rand Corporation, 3152, p. 31; and Lin Piao, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴¹Rand Corporation, 3833, pp. 22-23.

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.⁴²

The second side of this twofold significance pertaining to the PRC military strategy is the type of training directed to be conducted. Technical training of officers has been mentioned previously. Units from the regimental level up have been instructed to study the offensive capability of nuclear weapons. Lower level units have been directed to concentrate on nuclear defense measures to include proper protective measures when their own weapons are being employed.⁴³ This training, at lower levels, emphasizes the need for training in close combat and night fighting.⁴⁴ The emphasis on close combat and night fighting is to overcome the lack of tactical nuclear weapons and to capitalize on the Chinese strength, by fighting so close that the enemy would be inhibited in the use of nuclear weapons.⁴⁵

Recognition of the importance of nuclear weapons, offensively and defensively, has served to alert the Chinese to the impact of these weapons on modern military operations and strategic concepts. It appears that China has considered nuclear

⁴²Summation of Anti-Air Raid Maneuver in Shenyang Military Region, issued by the Shenyang Military Region Command Hdqtrs., 23 May 1961, quoted in Rand Corporation, 3833, p. 25.

⁴³Ralph L. Powell, *Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China*, p. 20.

⁴⁴Rand Corporation, 3833, pp. 28-29.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 28-30.

power as a factor in her defensive strategy. Training has stressed defense, mostly passive, with infrequent mention and no clarification of offensive use of nuclear weapons. The man-over-weapons theme tends to point to their continued reliance on the most readily available commodity--manpower. This tends to support the option of developing a limited nuclear capability for strategic and political use as opposed to funneling resources into development of tactical nuclear weapons.

Thus China, even as a fledgling nuclear power, maintains its military strategy based on the immense weight of her manpower. In the words of Mao the decisive factor is man, not materiel. Therefore, belligerent though Communist Chinese leaders may sound, their military posture and strategy is and will remain essentially defensive.

The nuclear addition to Chinese power will lie primarily in the political and political-military spheres. The increase in strength and stature resulting from entry into the nuclear club will be used by China to make her voice heard on international issues and in international organizations. It will become an added factor with which she can intimidate her neighbors and will give increased strength to her support of low-risk, political-military probes.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 20-22.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Two broad areas of significant importance to this thesis, the military strategy of the People's Republic of China and the use to which Peking will put their developing nuclear power, are treated separately in this chapter. The analysis of the facts pertaining to these two areas leads directly to the conclusions drawn herein.

ANALYSIS

A military strategy which relies primarily on the sheer weight of manpower is the type best known by Peking's leaders. Although military modernization is apparently recognized by some Chinese leaders as a necessity to give China great power status, these same leaders are tied to their experience. This experience was acquired during the long struggle by the Communist Party for domination of the mainland, war against the Japanese, and subsequently the war against the United Nations forces in Korea. The experience thus acquired tends to support the theory of superiority of great numbers of disciplined men against modern armies. Notwithstanding the emphasis given to the theory of "men over materiel," apparently there is significant modernization of the armed forces taking place within China. The military improvement trend will continue but it will be balanced against the objectives of industrial and economic development. The balance of investment

may be tilted in favor of industrial and economic development as long as China's objective does not require projection of military power beyond the periphery of the mainland and as long as China's military strategy is basically defensive. A shift in the balance of investment in favor of military modernization may portend a change in military strategy.

China is presently engaged in producing a credible nuclear capability. Until this capability is developed to the degree necessary to threaten the continental United States, China's primary concern will be security of the homeland. The concern for security will entail actions to avoid giving the United States an opportunity to conduct a direct attack on mainland China. The fear of a United States attack and its effect on China's nuclear development will tend to keep a checkrein on aggressive Chinese tendencies. It is difficult to assess the depth of the expressed fear of United States aggression and to separate the real fear from that which is expressed for propaganda effects. In attempting to make a judgement on this point, it is well to view the threat as seen from Peking and not as considered by the United States. The deployed military strength of the United States which faces China is formidable. The determination displayed by the United States to resist and oppose Chinese or Chinese-supported military ventures in Korea, India, and Vietnam is a clear indicator to China that the United States is ready and willing to strike China's homeland. The restraint displayed by China in the Vietnam struggle indicates that the fear of United States power and the intent to

employ that power within China is real. While Peking supports the government of North Vietnam, overt military actions against US forces are being carefully avoided. This course of action does not indicate a change in Peking's objectives. It will, however, lead China's actions in pursuit of her objectives into other channels. We may expect to find more dialogue between China and nations outside the Communist bloc, the objective of which will be to muster world opinion against United States involvement in the Far East. China's no-first-use of nuclear weapons concept will be reannounced, expanded, and redefined with the objective of capitalizing on the world desire to avoid nuclear holocaust. The real objectives of these proposals will be to counterbalance the United States nuclear weapons superiority and thus free China from the fear of United States aggressive action against the mainland. With the fear of United States power removed China would then be free to pursue a more aggressive policy along her periphery.

CONCLUSIONS

The military strategy of the People's Republic of China stresses the dominance of men over materiel. The strategy of "protracted war" evolved by Mao Tse-tung was successful in securing the current territory under Communist control.

The reliance on "people's war" will continue for at least the next decade. This reliance ideologically supports Mao's teachings, but beyond that is forced upon China until her

technical and industrial base is expanded and her economy will support military modernization in competition with the armed forces of other major world powers.

Peking will avoid direct military confrontation with the United States at least until she is assured that US nuclear power has been neutralized. Until China's nuclear weapons inventory matches that of the United States, Peking will continue to press for the "no-first-use" of nuclear weapons as the means of neutralizing the US superiority.

China's support for wars of "national liberation" will continue to be short of furnishing overt regular military forces and modern armament. The theory of "self reliance" will be stressed. Thus the possibility of direct military confrontation with the United States will be further reduced, while China seeks her objectives by proxy methods.

China's primary use of her power factor resulting from nuclear development will be to make her voice heard on international issues and in international negotiations. This increased power will also be used as a psychological weapon to intimidate her Asian neighbors into accepting Chinese hegemony.

China will not capitalize on the nuclear addition to her power to achieve national objectives which require overt military actions as long as the risk of direct military confrontation with the United States remains high. This condition will continue

until US nuclear power has been neutralized or matched or the
risk lowered by some other method.


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