



From Moscow to people's war to Peking turkey

David Milton, co-author of **The Wind Will Not Subside**, a study of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, argues that China's latest foreign policy gambit has failed. Unwilling to anger Moscow, Carter and Vance have declined China's offer of an alliance.

Above: Sec. of State Cyrus Vance and Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua at a welcoming dinner for Vance in Peking Aug. 22.

Right: Chou-en Lai flanked by Anastas Mikoyan and Nikolai V. Podgorny at 1964 Moscow parade marking the 47th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution.

By David Milton

In the past few weeks Chinese leaders have expressed their dissatisfaction with the results of the official visit to Peking by American Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Peking has good reason for its present mood of frustration over Sino-American relations. For more than five years China has forfeited much good will in Asia, Africa and Latin America in pursuit of a Sino-American unified front directed against the Soviet Union.

The hoped for alliance has proved to be a will-of-the-wisp, as the Carter administration has come to believe that China needs the U.S. more than the U.S. needs China. Washington feels no urgency in resolving the Taiwan question, and policy makers in the State department are now convinced that the U.S. can dictate the terms of the relationship with Peking.

The recent cooling of the American establishment's ardor for China is a result of a fierce bureaucratic struggle fought out over the past year in the National Security Council, the Pentagon and the State Department. Essentially, that policy struggle was between hawks who wished to forge a quasi-military alliance with China in order to tip the world balance of power against the Russians and those who believed that such a policy was extremely dangerous and might well lead to nuclear war.

The advocates of massive arms aid to China went to great lengths to persuade their opponents that there was little that the Soviet Union could or would do to counter an American-sponsored modernization of the Chinese armed forces. This was a miscalculation leading to a major foreign policy crisis for the inexperienced and inept Carter foreign policy team.

Soviet rebuke.

On May 14 of this year, during the middle of the major American strategic policy debate in Washington, the Soviet Union threw its own cards on the table in the substance of a major commentary in *Pravda* signed I. Aleksandrov, a pseudonym used by the Soviet Politburo. The Aleksandrov commentary was a tough warning from Moscow to Carter that the U.S. was playing with fire. Moscow charged that Peking was preparing for war against the West as well as against the Soviet Union and charged that "China is today the only country in the world whose official circles advocate publicly without any camouflage a new world slaughter." The Russian message stated that any military aid sent to China would eventually be used to launch a new world war.

The meaning was loud and clear—the Russians would not stand idly by while the U.S. prepared to weight the world military balance against them. The Aleksandrov commentary was significantly timed to appear one week before the opening in Geneva of Soviet/American talks seeking a new accord limiting strategic weapons.

Carter and his National Security advisor Abigniew Brzezinski, amateurs at the game of nations, were faced with the textbook executive crisis options—war, surrender, or present policy. Carter took the traditional executive choice of going down the middle, continuing the present policy toward China plus giving Peking a restricted amount of military-related technology. Apparently, they reasoned that China, through weakness, would be forced to accept some military-related aid as a trade-off for the non-resolution of the Taiwan question, and that the Russians would be placated by the knowledge that the plan for a Sino-American military alliance had been shelved. The hawk faction in the Pentagon was, no doubt, stroked with the assurance that the China card would be held in reserve to play against the Soviets should any new compelling contingency arise.

Chinese failure in Washington.

China's new regime learned through the Vance visit that the Chinese gamble to play off Washington against Moscow was not paying the dividends that had been expected.

Both Mao and his successors had tried to influence American politics in the hope that anti-Soviet hawks would come to power in Washington or at least have a major influence over policy. The Chinese leaders had sent a special plane to San Clemente to bring Nixon back to Peking; they had given special privileges to the American former Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger, who had toured Chinese military bases; and a month before the Vance visit they had invited retired Admiral Elmo Zumwalt for high level discussions devoted to the forging of joint Sino-American efforts to deal with the Soviet "polar bear." After all this effort, the Peking leaders were faced with a new American President who was not particularly interested in China and even showed contempt for her.

On Sept. 14 the newly rehabilitated Vice Premier, Teng Hsiao-p'ing showed his pique over the failure of the Chinese strategy. Teng, in his usual acerbic style, told an eight-member Japanese delegation from the newly formed Conservative party that while the Russians were prepared to fight a third world war, the Americans did not have the will to do so. After informing the Japanese delegation that the 30-year-old Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Aid would expire in 1980 and would not be renewed, Teng suggested that Japan should bolster its armament and defense capacity to meet the Russian threat in Asia.

This was not a proposal likely to be received with enthusiasm by the smaller nations of Southeast Asia, by the Japanese people, or even, perhaps, by the Chinese people themselves. While the Peking leaders are correct in denouncing as a sham current Soviet-American disarmament efforts, massive new armament programs launched by Washington and Tokyo are hardly rational solutions for



the arms race. Peking's proposals are, at least, embarrassing to the dignity of a leading socialist nation, and, at the most, irresponsible.

The monotonous Cassandra-like warning from Peking that a third world war is inevitable falls on deaf ears throughout the world, except for the rightwing American, West German and Japanese politicians who have beaten a path to the Chinese capital to listen to it. Chinese leaders now state that a Soviet attack on China is unlikely. However, high Chinese officials continue to irritate Westerners by lectures on the failure of the West to prepare for an imminent Soviet attack on Europe.

Out of a bi-polar world.

How has it come to pass that People's China, once the hope of the oppressed peoples of the world, is now so hopelessly divorced from the main popular currents flooding the international arena? The background history is complex, but risking oversimplification, it might be argued that China's foreign policy over the past 20 years has been shaped by Mao's efforts to break out of the confines of a bi-polar world controlled by Washington and Moscow decision-makers.

Mao's efforts were crowned with success when both the Russians and Americans were forced to treat China as an independent great power. A triangular system of world power then began to eclipse the old bi-polar system. However, the U.S. and the Soviet Union are still the only two powers capable of destroying the entire globe and the emergence of China has not altered the special relationship between the two superpowers.

Given the configuration of the international system during the last 30 years, China has been confronted with three basic strategic options—alliance with the Soviet Union and the socialist camp, alliance with the third world nations, or, when the possibility arose, alliance with the U.S. During different periods, China has pursued all three options. Each strategic shift has had profound effects on Chinese domestic policy and the course of China's revolution.

In the early '50s, in the face of an American economic blockade and unofficial war with American armies in Korea, Mao advocated "leaning to one side," signed a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union and joined the socialist bloc. During the late '50s Mao had good reason to suspect Soviet-American collusion to divide the world up between the two great super-powers. At that point, Mao decided to guarantee China's independence by the development of her own nuclear weapons program. This was a course previously pursued by British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan and French President Charles De Gaulle.

Mao's decision to initiate a go-it-alone defense policy resulted in a power struggle within the Chinese leadership. Mao won the struggle by deposing the Russian-backed Minister of Defense, Peng Teh-huai. Peng was replaced by Mao's ally

Marshal Lin Piao who then began to rebuild the Chinese army as a Maoist political instrument. However, although Mao won the decision on Peng, he was unable to win a majority for his position on the Central Committee.

China's Krushchev overthrown.

During the early '60s Liu Shao-ch'i, the Chairman of the People's Republic in control of the party organization, attempted to establish Peking as the center of a new international communist movement. Mao was apparently lukewarm towards this policy and waited to see what its outcome might be. After the explosion of China's first atomic bomb in the fall of 1964 Mao began to prepare for the struggle that would return him to power.

The total annihilation of the Indonesian Communist party one year later signalled the collapse of the world communist movement. China was faced in the fall of 1965 with American intervention in Vietnam and the bombing of her border areas. Liu then reverted to a strategy of "joint action" by China, the Soviet Union and other Asian communist parties to counter American aggression in Vietnam. Liu Shao-ch'i never broke with the concept of the socialist camp whether led by Moscow or Peking.

Mao denounced Liu's policy of "joint action" and countered with the publication of Lin Piao's historic article, "Long Live the Victory of People's War." Lin called for the revolutionary people of the third world to conduct armed struggles, with or without communist leadership, so that the revolutionary countryside of the world might surround its imperialist city—the U.S. These revolutionary movements were urged by Lin to follow a policy of self-reliance rather than depending on outside aid from the socialist countries. The American Secretary of Defense, unable to cope with revolutionary warfare in Vietnam, panicked at the new Chinese manifesto and labeled it "Mao's Mein Kampf." Dean Rusk, then Secretary of State, took a more sanguine view of the Lin Piao thesis, referring to it as a "do it yourself program."

After the publication of China's new strategy doctrine, Mao launched the Cultural Revolution, forestalling Liu's intention of using the Chinese army to back up the Vietnamese. Instead, Mao used the army as an internal political instrument to overthrow Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-p'ing who controlled the Chinese Communist party. On May 9, 1966, after overthrowing the Peking Party Committee and with the help of the army, who seized Peking's party newspaper, Mao launched the Cultural Revolution. On the same day China exploded her first hydrogen bomb. Liu Shao-ch'i was subsequently overthrown as a symbol of the Russian model of socialism and labeled "China's Krushchev."

China's strategic shift from alliance with the socialist camp to alliance with revolution in the third world lasted in theory

throughout the Cultural Revolution, but in practice Chinese foreign policy was inoperative during those stormy years. On March 2, 1969, Chinese soldiers opened fire on a Soviet patrol in disputed area in the Ussuri river region on the Sino-Soviet border, killing seven Russian soldiers and wounding 23. On March 15, the Soviets retaliated with a full-scale military engagement in the same area during which hundreds of troops on both sides were killed or wounded.

USSR becomes enemy

Two weeks later, on April 1, the 9th Congress of the Chinese Communist party opened in Peking. Deputy Party Chairman Lin Piao and the army dominated the leading bodies of the newly elected central committee and Lin was designated in the party constitution as Chairman Mao's legal successor. Lin Piao delivered the main political report at the 9th Party Congress in which he spelled out the third major shift in China's strategic view of the world.

For the first time in the history of the New China, it was officially proclaimed that imperialism and social imperialism—that is, the U.S. and the Soviet Union—had become for China equal enemies. The Soviet Union had been elevated to the position of a principal or main enemy, a position previously occupied solely by the U.S. Either during the Congress or immediately afterward, Chairman Mao, allied with Premier Chou En-lai, initiated a new power struggle directed against Lin Piao and his followers.

This struggle included Mao's insistence that the Soviet Union must be considered China's main enemy and the U.S. a secondary enemy. Within little more than a year Mao had won another major struggle over Chinese strategic policy. Lin Piao was killed under mysterious circumstances, and 40 top generals were purged from the Chinese army. In the last analysis, Liu Shao-ch'i had promoted an alliance with the Soviet Union, Lin Piao advocated opposing both superpowers, and Mao advocated an alliance with the U.S. against the Soviet Union. Mao won and Nixon was invited to Peking.

Great disorder under heaven.

Ironically, Mao Tse-tung's victory in the struggle over foreign policy resulted in the erosion and eventual collapse of his revolutionary domestic policy. In order to defeat Lin Piao, the Chairman was forced to ally himself with Teng Hsiao-p'ing and the very party leaders he had been fighting for so long on China's domestic front. In the end, Mao had to resort to a classical policy for power trade-off—Teng Hsiao-p'ing and other party leaders pledged to support Mao's foreign policy in return for reinstatement to leading positions in the party and government.

Teng fulfilled his part of the bargain by travelling to New York in the spring of 1974 to present China's new strategic world view to the United Nation's As-

sembly. In that speech, Teng announced to the world in almost casual terms: "The socialist camp which existed for a time after World War II is no longer in existence." The world situation, Teng said, was one of "great disorder under heaven." There was hardly anyone who could disagree with Teng's latter statement.

During the last few years of his life, Mao continued his private discussions with conservative world leaders like Franz Joseph Strauss of West Germany, former Prime Minister Edward Heath of Britain, and Nixon of the U.S., and supervised the translation and widespread distribution throughout China of Nixon's book, *Six Crises*.

At the same time, Mao became more and more unhappy with the erosion of his revolutionary domestic program. Finally, after the death of Premier Chou, "the gang of four" deposed Teng Hsiao-p'ing for the second time. The rest is history; after Mao's death, his widow and her friends were expelled from the Chinese Communist party, while Teng and his followers ended up in charge of the nation.

Most recently, the post-Mao regime has set into motion a broad and ambitious program to make China a first-rate scientific, technological and industrial nation by the year 2000. In a new strategic shift, China will no longer limit itself to Mao's policy of industrialization through self-reliance, but will "keep to the principle of learning from abroad." Advanced technology, including whole factories, will be imported from the advanced nations. China will borrow from international banks for this purpose if necessary, but Peking hopes its new immense oil discoveries will cover the balance of trade.

China has announced that it will not attempt to match the nuclear weapons systems of the two superpowers, and a recent proclamation that wage increases will be granted to a broad range of China's lowest paid factory workers, technicians and teachers indicates that the military has lost its first post-Mao battle over budget allocations. There should be nothing to prevent the industrious and intelligent Chinese people from accomplishing the national goals they wish to achieve.

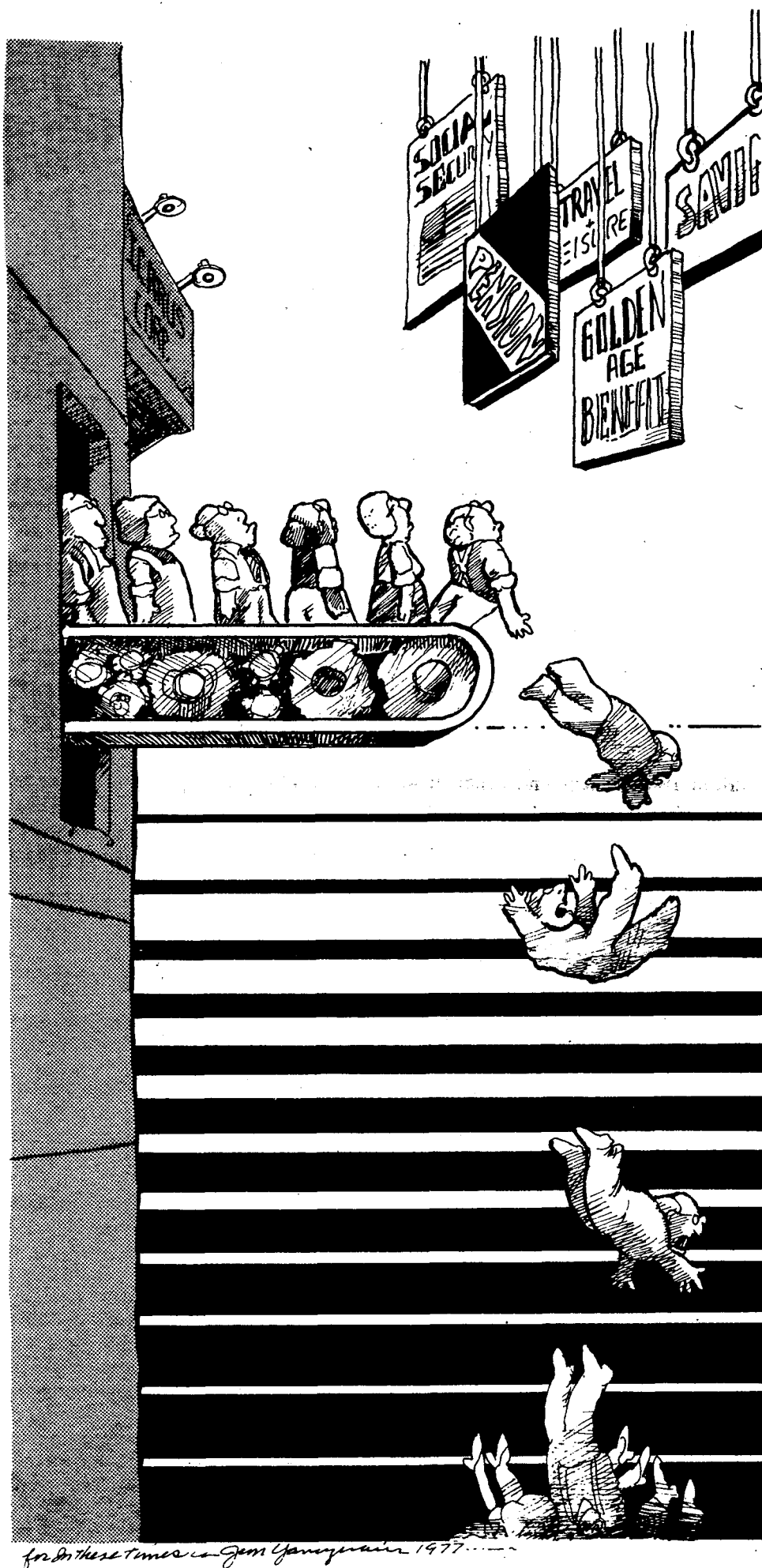
In the meantime, progressives throughout the world must hope that Peking's new leaders who have demonstrated such flexibility on China's domestic front may now initiate some constructive new proposals in international affairs. France, speaking for the minor nuclear powers, has recently announced the intention of advancing its own proposals on world nuclear disarmament. Perhaps China can do the same. The question of nuclear disarmament is too important a matter to remain under the exclusive monopoly and control of the two superpowers.

David Milton is the author with Nancy Milton of *The Wind Will Not Subside*, a study of the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

IN THESE TIMES

Editorial

Social insecurity and forced retirement



Under present circumstances, retirement for most means smaller incomes, less security, and no hope of a turn for the better.

What do Col. Sanders, Will Greer, Ruth Gordon and John Wayne have in common?

They are all over 70—in fact, their average age is 78—and they are all in agreement, in Col. Sander's words, that a person "will rust out quicker'n he'll wear out." These people, and many others like them, are actively working into their late 80s. They, and 70 to 80 percent of the American people, believe that mandatory retirement is bad. Like Will Geer, television's Grandpa Walton, who testified before the House Select Committee on Aging last May, many others believe that it is "absolutely criminal that old people should be put on the shelf," with "nothing to do but die."

For professionals, actors, business people and others whose life work has been creative, productive or challenging, retirement, even with sufficient income to be comfortable, is an unpleasant and sometimes unhealthy prospect. But for millions of others who might enjoy retiring from a lifetime of routine work and insecurity, the prospect of forced retirement is worse. It means living in increasing isolation and poverty on inadequate social security or private pensions. These people might look forward to retirement as a means to a more creative and interesting life—traveling or in second careers—if they could retire on secure and comfortable incomes. But under present circumstances retirement for most means smaller incomes, less security, and no hope of a turn for the better.

Blocked in the Senate.

In an attempt to do something about this situation, Rep. Claude Pepper (D-Fla.), a 76-year-old former New Deal Senator, introduced a bill, HR-5383, to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. ADEA permitted employers to force workers in private industry to retire at 65 and sanctioned a mandatory retirement age of 70 for federal employees. The Pepper bill, which passed the House by a vote of 359 to 4 on Sept. 23, would raise the permissible mandatory retirement age in private industry to 70 and would eliminate mandatory retirement at any age for most federal workers.

Although it passed the House overwhelmingly, both because of strong public sentiment against mandatory retirement, and because older people tend to hold their representatives more strictly to account, a Senate version is not given much chance to get through this session. The Business Roundtable, a business lobby, opposes it strongly, as do the School Administrators. The Senate Human Resources Committee, which reported the bill out on Oct. 1, permits teachers at all levels of education and also management personnel eligible for pensions of more than \$20,000 a year to be retired at 65.

Business is bombarding Capitol Hill with protests against the proposed ban on mandatory retirement, but labor lobbyists are "not lifting a finger" in opposition to the Pepper bill or the Senate version. The AFL-CIO, which

has traditionally pushed early retirement as a means of combatting unemployment among younger workers, now appears to be neutral on the question.

Traditional union view.

One reason for this is that the unions believe that most workers, particularly in unionized work, will choose to retire at age 65, even if they are eligible to continue working another five years. This seems to be borne out by the limited experience in Seattle, where mayor Wes Uhlman ended mandatory retirement of municipal workers (except for firemen and policemen) last May. A city survey and interviews conducted by the *New York Times* indicate that most workers will retire on schedule. Not surprisingly, those most likely to stay on the job were in executive or supervisory work. People in "routine" jobs generally indicated that they would retire when eligible.

The traditional union view in favor of early retirement still has strong appeal among working people and in many unions. One danger is that the administration, in order to solve the crisis in the Social Security trust fund, will attempt to raise the benefit age from the current 65 to 68, even though Pepper and the backers of his bill are strongly opposed to such a move. Commerce Secretary Juanita Kreps has already lofted a trial balloon to that effect. Another danger, probably more real, is that social security payments will continue to increase more slowly than the rate of inflation, forcing more and more people over 65 to continue working simply to survive.

In either case, the result would be both an erosion of the living standards of older workers and increasing competition between older and younger workers for the inadequate number of jobs.

Need: adequate social security.

To solve the problem in a manner satisfactory to all would require social security payments high enough to provide a comfortable and secure existence for working people who reach age 65 and a genuine program of full employment. Then most people reaching 65 would retire and workers of different ages would not be pitted against each other in a competition with no possible winners, except for corporate employers seeking inexpensive labor.

Realistically, however, the prospects for truly adequate social security payments are dim, at best. And the possibility of full employment within corporate capitalism is a dream that recedes ever further from view. On this issue, as on an increasing number of others, the only possibility of a solution that meets the needs of the competing groups of working people is a socialist society in which the human needs of economic security and a creative, productive and useful life can be met and in which workers could adjust their retirement according to their own inclinations, skills and means, and not according to an arbitrary chronological age. ■