

FACTORS BLOCKING DEMOCRATIC REFORM IN THE PRC

By Donald J. Senese

The current control exercised by Deng Xiaoping over China's economic development is a reflection of his strong control over the Communist Party, the dominant element in the governance of China. Considering Deng's age, at eighty-two, speculation is constant about his health, his willingness to step down from leadership and, most important, the question of succession. If Deng has placed his imprint on China's economic development, he has also placed his imprint on the Chinese political system, and the kind of "democracy" to be found in China. That type of democracy is closer to the pattern of totalitarian democracy than to the liberal democracy we know, which emphasizes individual rights, rule under law, limitations on the executive, an elected parliamentary body with law-making power, and a recognition of the rights of both the majority and the minority. Under Deng, the Chinese Communist Party remains just as securely in power as before, and the Party can alter all aspects of the Constitution, all procedures, and all rights freely and at its own discretion.

Deng's actions and activities have made clear that he supports one party monopoly rule in China. While economic modernization has relaxed state control over the economy, and the importation of foreign technology has brought new ideas and new contacts to sections of the Chinese bureaucracy and Chinese people, the realization remains that any concessions in the direction of liberal democracy would undermine the power of the Chinese Communist Party and threaten its control over China.

When Deng first came to power, observers of the China scene speculated that following the brutal regime of Mao Zedong, Deng's new role would bring productivity as well as improved justice and a more open system of government to China. Government publications started discussing individual rights; a draft codifying the laws (especially criminal law) also gave impetus to the prospect of a more free and liberal democratic China. Even the discussion of these issues raised hope among optimists who had witnessed the excesses of the Cultural Revo-

lution, which had swept aside all considerations of codified law in favor of decisions based purely on political attitudes, e.g., during the Cultural Revolution murderers could go free if the victims were deemed to be counter-revolutionaries, and individuals were summarily shot by the decision of local political factions. One issue of Beijing's *People's Daily* in 1979 even called for consideration to be given to the introduction of a Western style electoral system. Yet realists even at this time recognized that despite such press statements, and despite criticism of the Cultural Revolution and the "Gang of Four" by China's new leaders, the latter retained the power to run roughshod over all legal codes in what was still a one-party state. (1)

Deng's view of democracy in China can be readily interpreted from his speeches, and more specifically from certain actions which he has taken, notably in regard to the controversy over Democracy and the "Fifth Modernization" call made by Wei Jingsheng, the campaign against "spiritual pollution," and the punishments meted out for violations of party policy.

The framework in which China's modernization will take place has been clearly defined by Deng Xiaoping, and reaffirmed by him on numerous occasions. His opening speech at the Twelfth National Congress (September 1, 1982) described this framework:

In carrying out our modernization programme we must proceed from Chinese realities. Both in revolution and construction, we should also learn from foreign countries and draw on their experience. But the mechanical copying and application of foreign experience and models will get us nowhere. We have had many lessons in this respect. We must integrate the universal truth of Marxism with the concrete realities of China, blaze a path of our own and build a socialism with Chinese characteristics — that is the basic conclusion we have reached after summing up long historical experience. (2)

The key to modernization in China remains "the leadership of the Party," the Communist Party of China. The ideological basis of historical materialism, namely that economic and social forces provide the base for everything, remains unchallenged. The power of the Party extends to all aspects of Chinese society— law, culture, beliefs, and even the state machinery itself. Thus, any state ruled by a Marxist party is viewed as nothing more than a machine at the service of the Party, and so it is

with Deng's China — a machine at the service of the Chinese Communist Party. Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy remains supreme within the Chinese Communist Party, whatever elite may be in control.(3)

The Chinese Communist Party retains control by ensuring that the power of the state remains unchallenged. It achieves this through three mechanisms: explicit provisions in the Chinese constitution and the Chinese Communist Party statutes; institution of Party groups in the leading body of all central regional and local state organs making sure that the guidelines and policies of the Communist Party are put in effect at every level; and the interlacing between Party organs and the personnel of institutions in the state administrative machinery which ensures that all the leading officials in the state organs are Communist Party members. The Communist Party participates heavily in the upper echelons of the People's Liberation Army, thereby combining civilian with military control. Thus, despite changes at the top of the Party, and the modernization achieved in key economic areas by Deng, the Chinese Communist Party is able to prevent the evolution of any competing elite or power group among the ranks of those who hold positions in the administrative machinery of government. In the words of Sinologist Jürgen Domes, "The Party indeed commands the state." (4) Since he came to power, Deng has further strengthened the role of the Communist Party in China by placing his own supporters in key positions in a move euphemistically known as "party consolidation." Bo Yibo, who served as Vice-Chairman of the Party Consolidation Guidance Commission of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, noted at the end of 1984 that party consolidation was going well. The tasks involved in party consolidation, he said, included unifying the thinking, rectifying the style, strengthening the discipline, and purifying the organization. He praised two aspects of party consolidation: the combining of politics and the economy and avoiding the "leftist" tendency involved in previous political movements.(5) Rather than loosening party control, Deng has strengthened the Chinese Communist Party's monopoly over the mechanisms of government by placing his own supporters in charge. Overall, the 12th National Party Congress marked a decisive defeat for the Maoist faction within the central body of the Chinese Communist Party. Deng has consolidated his own and the Party's power, but he has not yet decisively eliminated

the possibility of conflict between his own supporters and the remnants of Maoism within the Chinese Communist Party.(6)

Democracy Wall and the Fifth Modernization

The real test for any inclination by Deng Xiaoping to permit a drift toward a more liberal democratic system in China came with the Democracy Wall issue. Deng's closing down of Democracy Wall marked the end of any such experiment. When faced with the choice between encouraging democratic reforms or preserving rigid Communist Party control, Deng came firmly and emphatically down on the side of Communist Party control.

In contrast to Mao, whose actions stamped him as an anti-intellectual (through the persecution of intellectuals following the Hundred Flowers Campaign and more especially the Proletarian Cultural Revolution), Deng's exaltation of the role of intellectuals and of the need to encourage their participation in China's modernization gave some hope that a more liberalized system involving some recognition of basic freedoms would be adopted. Deng pledged in a speech of March 18, 1978 that intellectuals would not be discriminated against as they were in the days of Mao (e.g., through a distinction between "mental" and "manual" work); he declared that intellectuals were actually part of the proletariat and that any distinction between workers and intellectuals had meaning only with regard to the division of labor. All who labored, whether by brain or hand, were to be considered workers in a socialist society.(7)

The words of Deng, his opposition to the excesses of the "Gang of Four" and the "Cultural Revolution" (under which he himself had suffered), and promises made in the preamble to the Chinese Constitution, encouraged intellectuals to think that a new day for a more liberalized society was coming. The Communist Party had pledged to seek a political situation where both centralism co-existed with democracy, discipline co-existed with freedom, and unity of will co-existed with individual ease of mind.(8) Steeped in historical tradition and analogies, Chinese intellectuals started to compare this new period with the outburst of freedom and activity that followed the May Fourth Movement of 1919, rather than with the disappointments of the Hundred Flowers Campaign of 1957.(9)

Actually, Deng had encouraged the hope of Human Rights

and Democracy proponents in November of 1978. His promotion of the slogan that individuals should “liberate thought” gave further encouragement to such tendencies in 1979 and 1980.(10) Spontaneous assemblies took place in that part of Beijing known as Democracy Wall, to which posters were affixed, small journals and newspapers appeared calling for changes in Chinese society, and debates over the role of Mao and the future of Chinese society became more open.(11) But the die was cast when Wei Jingsheng, a twenty-nine year old electrician working at the zoological gardens in Beijing who had been a member of the Red Guards, tried to practice the freedoms which were being discussed and suffered arrest, trial, and imprisonment.

Wei’s challenge was direct and to the point: if China had any chance of giving real meaning to the “Four Modernizations,” a “Fifth Modernization” needed to be added — liberal democracy. Wei was arrested on March 30, 1979, for a variety of charges, including passing secrets to foreign newsmen. His trial took place in October, when he was accused of villifying Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. Speaking in his own defense, Wei experienced the meaninglessness of the promises made in the Chinese Constitution. Citing the Chinese rights of speech, assembly, publication and association guaranteed in the Chinese Constitution, he defended his right to criticize the leaders of China if China was to be spared going down once again the path of the “Gang of Four.” His appeal was to no avail. Wei received a sentence of fifteen years, and China’s high court turned down his appeal for leniency (November 6, 1979).(12)

An understanding of what type of democracy the present leadership of China favors can best be obtained by examining the document entitled “The Fifth Modernization,” the publication of which led to Wei Jingsheng’s imprisonment.(13)

Wei began by setting the context in which the “Four Modernizations” debate was taking place. The Chinese people had followed the lead of Mao Zedong, who preached that Communist ideology would benefit China, and that China had followed this program over thirty years with poor results. He noted that “some people” asserted that Mao had brought about a “new China,” that this China needed dictatorship, and that the only democracy China could have would be “democracy under collective leadership.” Deng had raised the hopes

of the people with his promises but these promises — the prosperity of Communism and the Four Modernizations — were proving to be an illusion as well. People were told merely to be obedient. Then Wei issued his critique and challenge:

I advise everyone not to believe such political swindlers anymore. Knowing that we are being deceived, we should implicitly believe in ourselves. We have been tempered in the Cultural Revolution and cannot be that ignorant now. Let us find out for ourselves what should be done.(14)

Wei calls for democracy rather than autocracy for the Chinese people. The people's call for democracy, Wei comments, is merely a call for what is rightfully theirs and for what will allow them to become masters of their own destiny. Although China was promised democracy when the Communist triumphed over the Kuomintang, the slogan "people's democratic dictatorship" was replaced by the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and even this small amount of democracy was abolished and replaced by the autocracy of the "Great Leader." The leadership of the Communist Party then held a new promise: the leader is great and faith should be placed in him. This faith in the leader, rather than democracy, will bring happiness to the people. The Chinese people, he concluded, were deceived by Mao in following the "socialist road" which brought to the Chinese people a "Chinese socialist autocracy."

This young thinker then presented a definition of what type of democracy China needed:

What is democracy? True democracy means the holding of power by the laboring masses . . . What is true democracy? It means the right of the people to choose their own representatives to work according to their will and in their interests. Only this can be called democracy. Furthermore, the people must also have the power to replace their representatives anytime so that these representatives cannot go on deceiving others in the name of the people . . . In China, however, if a person even comments on the already dead Great Helmsman Mao Zedong or the Great Man without peers in history, jail will be ready for him with open door and various unpredictable calamities may befall him. What a vast difference will it be if we compare the socialist "exploiting class!"(15)

He called on his fellow Chinese to rally under the banner of democracy and not to rely on the promises of mere "stability

and unity” and asserted that prosperity can best be brought about if the people make their own decisions under democratic rule: “Abandon our democratic rights and we will be shackled once again.”(16)

Observing that public opinion in Western capitalist democracy influenced governments and led to social prosperity that benefitted the people, he noted that if problems developed, the people could make mistakes and have the ability to correct them. The Western nations, thus, had many freedoms and saw that the safeguarding of the citizen’s human rights was one of the main functions of government; the Chinese people labored under many disciplines and its citizens were submissive to a small group of rulers. He pointed out “the seamy side of socialism” where many of the Chinese people suffered under man-made disasters created by Mao. In returning to the basic question of the type of political system best for the Chinese people, Wei commented:

Totalitarianism regards suppression of individuality as its basic condition of survival; essentially, this is a form of enslavement. Democracy regards harmony with individuality as its basic condition of existence; essentially this is a form of cooperation. Nobody can find any form of totalitarianism without suppression of individuality and enslavement of people. Similarly, nobody can find any form of democracy without a foundation of harmony of the individuality of the majority of its citizens. Totalitarianism is distinguished by its suppression of individuality, while a special feature of democracy is the preservation of the harmony of individuality. The main difference between totalitarianism and democracy, therefore, lies in the two different and exactly opposite forms of existence for human individuals as well as two vastly different living conditions for people. Do you like freedom or enslavement; This question is unnecessary for most people, except, of course, the lackeys.(17)

Wei discusses the relationship between socialism and democracy, modernized production and democracy, human rights and democracy, equality and democracy, the rule of law and democracy. For the latter he called for the rule of law which was conducive to guaranteeing equal rights for all. Democratic rights for the Chinese people must not be infringed upon.(18) He concluded with a ringing call for the adoption of the “Fifth

Modernization” of democracy to replace China’s years of autocracy:

Indeed, China has experienced something the nation has not seen for thousands of years. Our wise and intelligent people must not fall back into the fraudulent trap set by ruthless adventurers. We must never be enslaved again.(19)

During the trial, Wei Jingsheng, as his own counsel spoke of his right to speak under the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China. The State Prosecutor stated that freedom of speech in China had to be based on four principles, insisting on: the socialist road; the dictatorship of the proletariat; the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party; and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. The citizen in China thus had the “freedom” to support these principles and not the freedom to oppose them. Wei was accused of trying to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat under the guise of democracy.(20)

Wei failed in his bold bid to incorporate democracy as part of China’s modernization program. He received a sentence of fifteen years and has now disappeared from sight. Deng Xiaoping, who appeared to support the human rights and democratic movement when it opposed his enemies, began his crackdown. The right to hang posters on Democracy Wall was abolished. The clause in the Constitution of China which had guaranteed the right of hanging wall posters would, announced Deng, be withdrawn at the next appropriate occasion.(21) China’s flirtation with freedom was short-lived and died quickly under Deng’s assault.

Restrictions Impeding Democratic Development

The insistence on the monopoly role of the Chinese Communist Party and blind adherence to its directives by all Chinese people remains the leading and most significant obstacle to the development of democracy in China.

The “opening” of China by Deng Xiaoping in order to bring modernization to China has brought in not only new products and technology but also new ideas to China. The Mao-imposed isolation has given way to a new openness which has brought knowledge of the world outside of China — particularly the United States — to the attention of the Chinese.

The young Chinese have been particularly interested in Western goods and in living conditions in the West. The many

Chinese who have gone abroad to study have brought back direct knowledge of the rest of the world; the circulation of Western publications and direct contact with visiting businessmen, scholars, scientists, etc. brought additional information to the Chinese. The Chinese Communist Party leadership has feared a discontent resulting from a realization among the people of how far behind they are compared to the rest of the world, even to many of the nations of Asia. The Communist Party has revived an old slogan of Mao Zedong, namely "Use foreign things to serve China." The message is to bring foreign science and technology to China, but *not* foreign thought.(22)

Concern with growing foreign influence led Deng's leadership group to launch a movement against the "pollution" of ideas in ideology, literature and art in order to build a "socialist spiritual civilization by emphasizing the Five Stresses, Four Beauties, and Three Ardent Loves." A national committee was formed to promote this spiritual renewal.(23) China came under increasing scrutiny as a result of this movement, since Western and Asian political leaders feared that the Chinese leadership was preparing for another crackdown which would seriously impede the opening of China and resulting trade exchanges. Recognizing this threat to its new program, the Chinese leadership under Deng's direction placed a priority on the economic program and checked the "spiritual pollution" or "cultural pollution" campaign. Yet, such a crackdown in the name of political thought control can be revived at anytime the Party might consider it to be desirable in the interest of protecting its own power and influence.(24)

Specific examples of the readiness of the Party to resort to crackdowns or "tightness" occur when the leadership discovers any appreciable movement toward freedom of thought. While there have been signs of change in the fields of art and literature, as compared to the close and narrow restrictions imposed on these activities during the Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the latter part of 1985 saw an increase in articles in the official Chinese press stressing the need for Chinese writers to "follow the socialist road" and foster socialist and communist ideals in their work. The National Party Conference held in September of 1985 highlighted the insistence of longtime Communist Party official Chen Yun that more attention be paid in China to political and ideological work.(25)

The lessons of Wei Jingsheng and the "Spiritual Pollution"

campaign — both indicating that the “liberal” Deng Xiaoping would not tolerate any weakening of the State or of the control of the Party over the loyalties and minds of the people have registered with Chinese intellectuals. Although Deng has called for “freedom of creation,” his key address delivered in 1979, which has been looked upon as a charter and guide for writers and artists in post-Mao China, stressed that the Communist Party reserves the right to criticize writers whose works are not considered correct, and asserted, like Mao Zedong before him, that writers have a mission to perform.(26)

True freedom to write, discuss, and debate is essential to any development of democracy in China and under the current guidelines this remains clearly restricted. Observers of the China scene point out that at the very time Deng Xiaoping spoke of promoting the “freedom of creation,” criticizing the persecution of writers and artists during the Cultural Revolution in his address to the Fourth Congress of Writers and Artists (October 30, 1979), he authorized the closing down of Democracy Wall and democratic expression, to be followed — just a few days later — by the trial at which Wei Jingsheng received his fifteen year prison sentence.(27) Even while praising the changes the Deng had brought to China, *Time* magazine, which for the second time had named Deng Xiaoping its “Man of the Year” (1979; 1985) admitted that: “China is still a one-party dictatorship and Deng has no intention of letting it become anything else.”(28)

The willingness to borrow certain aspects of the Western economic system (e.g., incentives in production, importation of technology) while maintaining unyielding resistance to the Western political system (e.g., liberal democracy) has given rise to a new drive in Deng’s China: a crackdown on so-called “economic crimes.” In order to combat the undesired consequences of “capitalism” termed “economic crimes,” (e.g., smuggling, speculation, theft, acceptance of bribes), China raised the penalty for such crimes in March of 1982 to a minimum of ten years in jail and a maximum sentence of life imprisonment or execution. The list of crimes eligible for a death sentence was expanded in September of 1983 to include (along with kidnapping and the luring of women into prostitution) “feudal superstitious act” and “counter-revolutionary activities.”(29)

An estimated 48,400 cases of economic crime were tried in the courts in 1985, which does not include an additional 8,000

other crimes tried in the courts. Questions have been raised over how well the rights of those individuals were protected, whether they were adequately defended, whether there was substantial evidence to convict them, and whether the law has been applied appropriately. By the time a case comes to trial in China, the real issue appears not the question of guilt but the length and type of sentence. Despite the right of appeal for "criminals" sentenced to death, executions are usually carried out summarily right after sentencing. Although China has not publicized the number of executions, one estimate determines a figure of around 10,000 since 1983.(30)

These executions serve to strengthen the control of the Communist Party and the Chinese government and indicate no move toward democratic freedoms or guarantee of rights: an employee of one of the state-owned companies was executed in April of 1986 for revealing "important state secrets" concerning the import and export of automobiles to foreign businessmen; another was sentenced to seventeen years in prison for taking bribes and leaking secrets to foreign businessmen.(31)

Efforts made to promote open discussions or to adopt liberal democratic reforms have resulted in strong warnings being issued against such activities. In December 1985 students at Beijing University were given severe warnings that protests would affect their job placements after graduation. The Chinese Communists officials have referred to the Western style of liberal democracy, involving free elections and an independent press, as a form of "bourgeois liberalism" unsuited for China's socialist system. The official theoretical journal, *Red Flag*, in December of 1985 criticized those in China who yearn for bourgeois liberalism, and Li Peng, a Vice Premier of China, just recently stated in an address to a meeting of thousands of university students that the capitalist concept of value and the decadent way of life of the capitalist world must not be allowed to enter China, and they must reject bourgeois liberalism which would only make a mess of China's affairs.(32)

While not as radical in approach as Mao Zedong, Deng has made it clear that political democracy is unwelcome in China and that the Communist Party monopoly will remain firmly in control over China's affairs, both now and in future years.

Democracy and China's Future

The National Party Conference which convened in

Beijing in September of 1985 focused on two major issues: the drafting of the Seventh Five Year Plan continuing Deng Xiaoping's road of the "Four Modernizations," and the replacement of older officials in the leading units or organs of the Chinese Communist Party by a younger group more committed to the goals of Deng's program.

Deng has made clear that he supports a strong role for the Chinese Communist Party. He has not deviated from the four cardinal principles laid down in his 1979 address setting forth a guide to Party workers. His aim, re-stated on many occasions since that time, is to achieve the modernization of China and to make China a powerful nation. The four principles which Deng viewed as the prerequisites for modernization include: keeping to the socialist road; upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat; upholding the leadership of the Communist Party; upholding Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.(33)

Notably, Deng emphasized that without the Chinese Communist Party there would be "no socialist new China." He explained that no other Party in China had integrated itself with the workers as had the Chinese Communist Party, and that China "pins all its hopes for the future on leadership by the Party." He then stressed the essential role of the Communist Party in China:

In reality, without the Chinese Communist Party, who would organize the socialist economy, politics, military affairs and culture of China, and who would organize the four modernizations? In the China of today we can never dispense with leadership by the Party and extol the spontaneity of the masses . . . Our Party has made many errors, but each time the errors were corrected by relying on the Party organization, not by discarding it. If today we tried to achieve democracy by kicking aside the Party committees, isn't it equally clear what kind of democracy we would produce?(34)

These principles were included in the Constitution adopted in 1982;(35) and the document adopted by the Chinese Communist Central Committee officially endorsing Deng's "Four Modernizations" (October 20, 1984) stresses the need to strengthen the Communist Party leadership in order to ensure the success of the economic reforms.(36)

Deng's reliance on the Party became clear at the September

Party Conference as he strengthened his power base in China — “socialism with Chinese characteristics.” During what was mainly a discussion of the economic plan, Chen Yun, a veteran economic planner, raised some doubts as to Deng’s economic plan and urged a strengthened Party organization. Deng urged a policy of persuasion and education, rather than of political movements and mass criticism but supported greater ideological and political work. Chen was practising democratic centralism (e.g., debate within the Communist Party).⁽³⁷⁾ This brand of democracy provides for neither consultation nor influence on the part of the mass of Chinese people.

Deng’s new administration contains a number of rising stars, as a result of the replacement of many older Communist leaders by younger ones allied to Deng. However, if a leadership struggle should develop in China, over the question of a successor for Deng, China could be thrown into turmoil again, as in the post-Mao Zedong and “Gang of Four” period. If that happens, the success of Deng’s new economic policy may help determine from which group successor will emerge.⁽³⁸⁾ Deng has made clear that economic construction — making China a strong nation — is central of his supporters’ policies.

The question of Deng Xiaoping’s successor remains a key issue, but whether Deng’s group continues, or a group more aligned with the Maoists takes over, each must inevitably use the Communist Party structure as its main instrument of control and must oppose any reforms which would bring liberal democracy to the People’s Republic of China — whether this might take the form of Western style democracy or Sun Yat-sen’s Three Principles of the People. This type of liberal democracy threatens the control exercised by leaders of the Communist Party, who do not have to be responsible to the people through elections or to a representative body elected by those people. China is likely to continue in the near future along the path of economic modernization, freeing some aspects of economic planning from central control. However, it is certain that with the continuation in power of the Chinese Communist Party, meaningful progress toward liberal democracy for the Chinese people stands little chance of accomplishment. In his address to the Twelfth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, Deng noted that China would follow a policy of opening to the outside world, but made clear his rejection of

any reforms in the direction of liberal democracy:

At the same time, we will keep clean heads, firmly resist corrosion by decadent ideas from abroad and never permit the bourgeois way of life to spread in our country. (39)

Totalitarian Democracy and Democratic Centralism

Like Mao Zedong before him, Deng Xiaoping regularly includes discussions of democracy in his speeches, writings, and pronouncements. However, "democracy," like other terms such as "freedom," "justice" and "equality," can have different meanings in different historical, socioeconomic and political settings, and a view of what non-Communist nations define as "democracy" may be very different from the meaning given to this term in socialist/communist states. (40)

Deng sought to establish his ties to Mao Zedong in a speech made early in the history of his rise to power in 1977. He used the speech to criticize the "Gang of Four," seeking to associate his own views on how to strengthen the Chinese Communist Party with those of Mao. Deng stressed the importance of the relationship between democracy and centralism and between freedom and discipline. He stressed Maoist origins for the principles he was advocating:

How can we create the political situation advocated by Comrade Mao Zedong? By earnestly studying his thinking on Party building. That thinking encompasses a great many fundamental principles. These include: combining a high degree of democracy with a high degree of centralism; distinguishing between the two different types of contradictions (those among the people and those between the people and the enemy) and handling each correctly; applying the formula "unity-criticism-unity"; "learning from past mistakes to avoid future ones and curing the illness to save the patient"; giving full scope to democracy in order to unite more than 95 per cent of the cadres and the masses; following the mass line and trusting the masses; and acting on the four-character slogan Comrade Mao Zedong wrote for the Central Party School in Yan'an, "Seek truth from facts." (41)

This emphasis on democracy, as will be discussed shortly, is linked with the principle of centralism — "democratic centralism." The Twelfth Party Congress in 1982 adopted a statute

in the party constitution which regulated the tasks and organization of the Chinese Communist Party. The statute was similar to earlier ones adopted in 1956, 1969, 1973, and 1977, and reflected a definition of “democracy” which conveniently fitted the Communist Party organization and program. The statute proclaimed:

The individual Party member obeys the Party organization, the minority obeys the majority, the organization of the lower levels obey those of the upper levels, and all organizations as well as all members of the whole Party obey the Party Congress and the CC. (42)

Thus “democratic centralism” was deemed to safeguard democracy by requiring that all leading party organs or units are to be elected. There is a heavier emphasis on “centralism” rather than “democracy” by requiring the full attention to Communist Party discipline and unconditional obedience. It is required that every Communist Party member consider himself or herself part of the vanguard fighting for the working class and conscientiously studying Marxism-Leninism and the Thought of Mao Zedong. The individual must remain loyal and devout to the Communist Party and must actively carry out all Party tasks. These members must maintain the unity of the Party since factions within the Communist Party are strictly forbidden. (43)

While Marxism-Leninism can shift in emphasis depending on circumstances, the role of the Party and of democratic centralism in maintaining absolute monopoly control of the Communist Party over the Chinese nation never changes. A current discussion of the situation in China requires an understanding of the “democracy” endorsed by the Communist Party – totalitarian democracy for the nation and democratic centralism for the Party.

The Rise of Totalitarian Democracy

The Western tradition witnessed the evolution of a system of government or rule by the people known as democracy. Generally, it represented a form of government in which the major decisions of government and the direction of the policy behind these decisions rests either directly or indirectly on the freely given consent of a majority of the adults governed. This consent may be through institutions of government selected in some form by those who are governed. Modern concepts of demo-

cracy have been associated with a philosophical theory of human rights (primarily from the writings of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke) which interpreted democracy as implying majority rule as a necessary but not sufficient condition, with limits being set on the right of those in power to inhibit the rights of those not in power. Thus, majorities could do almost anything except deprive minorities of their basic freedoms (e.g., the freedoms of speech, press, assembly and fair trial), so that those who were not in power might one day come to power by peaceful means. Minorities, in turn, had to abide by the principle of majority rule and democratic behavior.

Scholars such as J.L. Talmon recognized at least two different types of "democracy" which arose within the Western tradition. He specifically noted the emergence of a variant known as "totalitarian democracy," as part of an identifiable trend originating in the French Revolution. Although the origins of this totalitarian democracy predate Marxism, Marxism did — and does — represent one of the most vital of the various versions of this totalitarian ideal. (44)

It is remarkable that this totalitarian variant arose at the same time that democracy was emerging as a system of government based on the consent of the governed. Totalitarian democracy was justified in terms of the idea of a 'general will' of the people, but actually rested too often on a clear pattern of coercion and centralization for government. Professor Talmon noted how the concept of man became central to the philosophy of totalitarian democracy, the goals of which went beyond merely freeing mankind from restraints:

All the existing traditions, established institutions, and social arrangements were to be overthrown and remade, with the sole purpose of securing to man the totality of his rights and freedom, and liberating him from all dependence . . . To reach man per se all differences and equalities had to be eliminated. And so very soon the ethical idea of the rights of man acquired the character of an egalitarian social ideal. (45)

The emphasis in theories of totalitarian democracy is always on the sweeping away of all inequalities. The privileged in society are to be brought down to the level of common humanity. All intermediate centers of power (e.g., social classes, corporations, professional groups) are to be swept away in the

process, so that nothing can stand between Man and the State. The result is clear: the State, unchecked by any of these intermediary agencies, acquires and possesses unlimited power over the feckless individual who is reduced to becoming a faceless and powerless member of a general proletariat.

The relationship between Man and the State in the theory of totalitarian democracy implies conformity. In contrast to theories of democracy based on freedom and human rights, totalitarian democracy eliminates the possibility of diversity in society, whether it be diversity of social and ethnic groups or the diversity which arises from human spontaneity and empiricism. Thus the idea of democracy based on free popular self-expression gives way to the ideal of a "general will," embodied in the minds of a few leaders who conduct the affairs of society with the support of a tightly organized body of loyal supporters.⁽⁴⁶⁾

The end of the eighteenth century saw an emerging pattern of philosophical development from a concept of democracy embracing extreme individualism to one endorsing a collective pattern of coercion. The nineteenth century saw the evolution of the fully developed philosophy of collectivist totalitarian political philosophy which we know as Marxism.

Thus, despite a common origin, "totalitarian democracy" stands in sharp contrast to the concept of "liberal democracy" which took hold in the United States and Britain. Totalitarian democracy was based on the assumption of a sole and exclusive truth in politics, a form of "political Messianism" to which individuals are preordained to serve as parts of a perfect scheme, and which widens the scope of politics to embrace the whole of human existence. All aspects of human thought and action are looked upon as having social significance and are regarded as falling within the orbit of political action. Political ideas become part of an all-embracing whole and aspects of a single coherent philosophy. Politics is defined as the application of this philosophy to the organization of society, and the final purpose of politics is to arrive at a condition in which totalitarian democracy reigns supreme over all fields of life.

In contrast, the liberal democratic view looks upon politics as not all-encompassing but as a matter of trial and error, and individual political systems are looked upon as something pragmatic and developed by human ingenuity and spontaneity. It recognizes, in addition, a variety of levels of personal and

collective endeavors altogether outside the sphere of politics. In a much different way each affirms the supreme value of "liberty." Liberal democracy looks upon liberty as developing from spontaneity and the absence of coercion while totalitarian democracy views liberty as being realized only in pursuit and attainment of an absolute collective purpose. In the liberal democratic system the power of the State is limited and beliefs are upheld in the absence of coercion; in the totalitarian democracy the State is precisely defined and treated as a matter of immediate urgency, an instrument for direct action in order to achieve an imminent event. In the modern State, totalitarian democracy is a system of government, ideally based on popular enthusiasm, but in reality constituting a dictatorship directing — by manipulation and coercion — the ideology and enthusiasm of the masses. (47)

In his analysis of totalitarian governments, social philosopher and economist Ludwig von Mises noted that despite the pretensions of Marxists to support democratic institutions, this supposed support for democracy represented a mere strategem to deceive the people, since within their own community, no room was left for freedom. He noted that there could be no freedom of speech or conscience in a society wherein the government could suppress its opponents; there could be no freedom of scientific research if the government controlled all libraries, museums, and archives; there could be no freedom in works of art or literature when the government could determine who could create these. The control of a socialist government over society is total, since it cannot be checked by any parliamentary body or controlled by its own citizens. In the economic field, when economic enterprise and investment becomes a socialist monopoly, the prospects for the re-emergence of liberal democracy are doomed. (48)

The type of totalitarian democracy represented by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, despite differences in economic policies, eliminates the conditions essential to the development of the liberal type of democracy, and makes this an impossibility unless the whole system changes (e.g., by the abandonment of the Communist ideology and of the monopoly role of the Communist Party in government). In his examination of the genealogy of ideas, J.L. Talmon notes that the most important lesson drawn from his inquiry is the incompatibility between the idea of an all-embracing and all-solving creed and

the idea of personal liberty. In a direct reference to the Communist ideology which dominates the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and all other Communist nations, he describes the overriding principle of a State based on Communist ideology: "This is the curse of salvationist creeds: to be born out of the noblest impulses of man, and to degenerate into weapons of tyranny." (49)

The Development of Democratic Centralism

Just as totalitarian democracy is a political philosophy concerned with the technique of controlling the people, so "democratic centralism" is the key by which a tightly and effectively organized Communist Party dominates every aspect of a Communist nation's government and the people over which it rules.

An earlier reference has been made to the role that democratic centralism presently plays in China. An understanding of its origins provides a greater understanding of why the continued existence of this principle prevents the development of a liberal democracy within the Party structure and within any nation under Party control.

Despite different manifestations in the various totalitarian democratic states of today, the two major founders of modern-day Communism remain Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin. Karl Marx contributed the theory of historical materialism or "historical science" which predicted the inevitability of an eventually worldwide social, economic, and political order called Communism. He outlined the essence of this philosophy in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), which became an essential document for varying groups of socialists, ranging from those who sought to achieve socialism by democratic means, to those who believed that violent revolution was desirable to speed up this "historical process." V.I. Lenin, who rose to power through the Communist Revolution in Russia, equipped Marx's philosophical doctrines with a system or political machinery which converted it into a powerful organ for revolutionary change.

According to Lenin, Communist revolutions required leadership and this leadership was to be provided by a small vanguard of men and women who would correctly interpret history and organize themselves to act on it. The organization comprising these activists was the Communist Party. After its victory over the capitalist forces, the Communist Party would bring

about a state of socialism as an initial stage toward the introduction of true communism.(50)

Lenin's Communist Party was organized in a way which precluded any form of real democracy. He made the Soviet Communist Party the dominant political group; the Politburo being the font of authority within the Party. The General Secretary of the Party became the sole source of legitimate writ. Lenin imposed his brand of "democratic centralism" on the Bolshevik faction in Russia and also upon the Third International. His views on this system of organization can be read in his famous pamphlet, *What is to be Done?*.(51) One writer goes as far to assert that Lenin was at no time very deeply interested in the fundamentals of Marxist thought, but was only interested in building a strong political party which could inspire and harness discontent for the sole purpose of placing him and his party in power by a process of controlled and bloody revolution.(52)

Lenin saw the State not as a nation but as a political product and as a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonism. The very existence of the State proved to him the reality of this supposed irreconcilability. Lenin noted in a passage from his *Selected Works* that "the destruction of the state means also the destruction of democracy." (53) Lenin viewed "democracy" as a political situation which recognized the subordination of the minority to the majority. To his reasoning, democracy was no more than an organization for the systematic suppression of an exploited class of people by an exploiting class.(54)

Lenin talked of a "new democracy" being built by the revolutionaries (e.g., the Communists) to replace the regular Western-style democracies. In his work, written in 1917, *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*, he wrote that the term "democracy" remained scientifically incorrect when applied to a Communist Party, but in the context of the revolution in Russia the term "democracy" served as "a blinker covering the eyes of the revolutionary people," preventing them from seeing the need to build the power of the revolutionary soviets until they became the sole power in the State.(55)

After Lenin seized sole power in the aftermath of the 1917 revolution by overthrowing the government of Alex Kerensky and dissolving the elected Constituent Assembly (e.g., "Draft Decree on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly," January 19, 1918), he declared the Soviet power to have

created a new type of State in which the bourgeois democracy (e.g., Western type of liberal democracy) had been replaced by a new democracy — “a democracy which brings to the forefront the vanguard of toiling masses, turning them into legislators, executives and military guards, and which creates an apparatus capable of re-educating the masses.”(56)

Lenin defended this “proletarian democracy” made up of “the toiling and exploited masses” by excluding the bourgeoisie from it, and by eliminating all “bureaucratic formalism” so that the will of the masses might determine elections. His proletarian democracy was represented by an organized vanguard of toilers who would lead the exploited masses into their new role in society and educate them politically. He described his new higher type of democracy as “a rupture with bourgeois distortion of democracy.”(57)

The real meaning of democracy for Lenin — still shared by the varying Communist parties throughout the world — is totalitarian democracy rooted in democratic centralism, the key to which is a highly organized and severely disciplined political party. Lenin confirmed these conditions in 1920 when he defined the terms for affiliation with the Communist International, the organization which was designed to promote other Communist revolutions throughout the world. All Communist parties affiliated with the Communist International must be:

. . . built up on the principle of democratic centralism
 . . . the Communist Party will be able to perform its duty only if it is organized in the most centralized manner, only if iron discipline bordering on military discipline prevails in it, and if its party center is a powerful organ of authority, enjoying wide powers and the general confidence of the members of the Party.(58)

The close parallel between the ideas of Lenin in building the Soviet Russia Communist Party and Mao Zedong in building the Chinese Communist Party hinges on the rigid exclusion of all elements of liberal democracy within the Communist Party structure, which is totally founded in democratic centralism. (It is interesting to note that Lenin was among the earliest of Marxist leaders to reject Karl Marx’s centrist view that revolution must first occur in the industrial nations of Europe, suggesting that unindustrialized Asia could equally well provide a stage for Communist revolution). In an article written in Nov-

ember of 1920, commenting on the first anniversary of the Worker's Association, Mao Zedong placed emphasis on the importance of organization, a view very close to Lenin's view of democratic centralism. Mao borrowed from Lenin the concept that political consciousness does not manifest itself spontaneously among the proletariat, but must be instilled by an elite or vanguard; this elite or vanguard needed to be highly organized along the lines of democratic centralism. (59)

Mao Zedong expressed his views on "democracy" within the Chinese Communist context in his famous February 27, 1957 speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People." In this talk, reflecting ideas which extended decades back in Mao's thought, he portrayed the concept of democracy in China in terms of the people's democratic dictatorship, a concept similar to the "general will" theory by which totalitarian democracy is philosophically justified.

Mao's talk was delivered shortly after he launched the Hundred Flowers Campaign, inviting criticism in an apparent democratic mode to help probe and resolve problems in the economy, administration, and politics of China. In retrospect, it appears that Mao had thought that a liberalization of expression might lead the people to expose abuses without questioning the fundamental principles of the Communist regime. However, he soon discovered that this concession to freedom of expression was not controllable, and was leading to unacceptable freedom of expression by intellectuals. As a true Leninist and democratic centralist, he could not accept this course of development, and once again resorted to enforcing centralized discipline through a major crackdown on dissidents. In his 1957 address, he recognized that contradictions still existed in China and among these he included conflicts between the leadership and those who were led, as well as conflicts between democracy and centralism. Mao used his power to suppress opposition voices and then accelerated his push for the economic and cultural development of China — a push for the Great Leap Forward and the organization of communes. (60)

Democracy Definition Consistent in Policies

The speech made by Deng Xiaoping in 1977, and other public statements by Deng, reflect his strong support for the Leninist/Maoist view of the "proletarian" or "people's" democracy (the essential structure of totalitarian democracy) in

China and of democratic centralism as a basic principle for organization of the Chinese Communist Party.

Deng stresses the need for China to find its own way in the modernization process. Yet, despite changes in China's economic and international policies, involving the desirability of obtaining aid from other (particularly Western) nations, he remains firmly committed to certain essentials. During a major address in 1979, he noted that modernization could be achieved by China within the framework of four cardinal principles: adherence to the socialist road; upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat; upholding the leadership of the Communist Party; and upholding Marxism-Leninism and the Thought of Mao Zedong.(61) Deng made reference to the fact that the Communist Party had not practiced democracy adequately in China, but was quick to remind his colleagues of the proper definition of democracy:

However, while propagating democracy, we must strictly distinguish socialist democracy on the one hand and bourgeois, individualist democracy on the other. We must link democracy for the people with the dictatorship over the enemy, and with centralism, legality, discipline and the leadership of the Communist Party.(62)

The adoption of the 1982 constitution under Deng Xiaoping's leadership gave further evidence that despite administrative reforms within the Chinese Communist Party, the power of the Party and its tight control remained a reality of Chinese life. The 1982 constitution mentions the leadership by the Chinese Communist Party four different times and continues its definition of the "people's democratic dictatorship" in traditional Marxist terms. There is an impressive list of freedoms guaranteed to the Chinese people: equality of citizens before the law, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of publication, freedom of association, freedom of religion, and the freedom of academic research, literature and the arts. However, this list is limited by Article 51, which declares that these freedoms can be exercised as long as they do not violate the rights of "the state, the society, the collective or the legitimate freedoms and rights of other citizens." (63) The democracy thus defined in China by its constitution is totalitarian democracy rather than liberal democracy.

This article was extracted from *Democracy in Mainland China: The Myth and the Reality (Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies Monograph Series Number 16)* by Donald J. Senese (see page 316).

FOOTNOTES

(1) David Bonavia, "Hua spells out Deng's brave new world," pp. 1011; Derek Davies, "Putting people in the picture," pp. 11-13, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 6, 1979.

(2) Deng Xiaoping, "Opening Speech at the Twelfth National Congress of the CPC," September 1, 1982, in Robert Maxwell (General Editor), *Deng Xiaoping: Speeches and Writings*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1984, p. 86.

(3) Jürgen Domes, *The Government and Politics of the PRC: A Time of Transition*, Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985, p. 100.

(4) *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

(5) "One Year Party Consolidation," Excerpts from a speech by Bo Yibo, Vice Chairman of the Party Consolidation Guidance Commission of the CPC Central Committee at a forum sponsored by the CPC Central Committee with leaders of democratic parties and public figures, December 21, *People's Republic of China Yearbook 1985*, Beijing: Xinhua Publishing House, 1985, pp. 91-93.

(6) Wolfgang Bartke and Peter Schier, *China's New Party Leadership: Biographies and Analysis of the Twelfth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party*. A publication of the Institute of Asian Affairs in Hamburg, Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1985, pp. 75-77.

(7) Jonathan D. Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and their Revolution, 1895-1980*, New York: The Viking Press, 1981, p. 358.

(8) *Ibid.*

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 359. The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, adopted and promulgated for implementation on December 4, 1982 by the Fifth National People's Congress, lists these "rights." For example, "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration" in Article 35; "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief," in Article 36; "The home of citizens of the People's Republic of China is inviolable. Unlawful search of, or intrusion into, a citizen's home is prohibited," in Article 39; and "Citizens of the People's Republic of China have the right to criticize and make suggestions to any state organ or functionary" in Article 40. See "The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, *People's Republic of China Year Book 1985*, pp. 12-13. Wei Jingsheng found that these constitutional provisions had little substance in practice. Dr. King-yuh Chang, Director General of the Government Information Office of the Republic of China on Taiwan noted in a speech presented at the Mass Communications Research Institute in Tokyo, Japan, on November 11, 1985 that the government of the Republic of China followed Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People seeking to ensure expanding freedom, democracy and social well-being while the People's Republic of China remained dedicated to "pervasive controls and totalitarianism." In a direct reference to the situation in Mainland China, Dr. Chang noted that "if Chinese culture is destroyed; if the people's basic freedoms and human rights are trampled upon; and if the rulers see themselves as a privileged class, neither responsible for, nor responsive to the people's needs; and if violent political struggle becomes the only channel to develop one's talents and wisdom and gain due reward, then no matter how large the land area is or how plentiful the resources are that society is bound to be poverty-stricken, backward, and oppressed. Over the past thirty years, Communist China has been living testimony to this, as are other communist-ruled areas . . . Communism and communist parties have, so far, gained power in more than 20 countries in the world. But not a single communist regime has been able to provide its people with a lifestyle of freedom, democracy, and progress." "Peking at the Crossroads: Democracy or Communism," *The Free China Journal*, December 23, 1985, p. 2.

- (10) Domes, *The Government and Politics of the PRC: A Time of Transition*, p. 278.
- (11) Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, p. 359.
- (12) Ibid., pp. 359-364.
- (13) This document, "The Fifth Modernization," by Wei Jingsheng can be found in various publications. See James D. Seymour, *The Fifty Modernization: China's Human Rights Movement, 1978-1979*, Stanfordville, New York, Human Rights Publishing Group (Earl M. Coleman, Inc., P.O. Box T, Crugers, New York 10521), 1980, pp. 47-69.
- (14) Ibid., pp. 48-49.
- (15) Ibid., p. 52.
- (16) Ibid., p. 53.
- (17) Ibid., p. 58.
- (18) Ibid., pp. 60-69.
- (19) Ibid., p. 69.
- (20) Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, p. 363. An interesting account of the democratic experiment and the crackdown is to be found in Chapter 13, "The Noise of the Renegades," pp. 341-370. See also Chapter 19, "To Rebel Is Justified," pp. 406-434 in Fox Butterfield, *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea*, New York: Times Books, 1982.
- (21) Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, *Intellectual Freedom in China After Mao with a Focus on 1983*, New York: Fund for Freedom of Expression, 1984, pp. 22-23.
- (23) Ibid., pp. 24-25. The Five Stresses include civilization, courtesy, sanitation, order and ethics. The Four Beauties include those of the mind, language, conduct, and environment. The Three Ardent Loves include those of the fatherland, socialism and the party.
- (24) Ibid., pp. 25-26. The author's note: "In 1983, the intellectual liberalization that accompanied the economic responsibility system in the arts, and the unusually outspoken speeches and articles surrounding the 100th anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, were followed by one of the worst seasons for intellectual freedom China has seen in a long time." Ibid., p. 28. the authors detail the major events signifying the liberalization and the then suppression (pp. 28-30). They observed that "... the Chinese people were once again reminded to be careful in what they said and did. The fact that ideology, literature, and the arts are still said to be fraught with 'spiritual pollution' is worrisome to those concerned for the future of independent thinking in China." Ibid., p. 31.
- (25) Robert Delfs, "Cool gusts menace the warm mood of liberalism," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 26, 1985, p. 45.
- (26) Ibid., pp. 45-46. Deng stated: "Our writers and artists should try harder to portray and help foster the new socialist man and achieve greater successes in doing so. We must portray the new features of the pioneers in the modernization drive, their revolutionary ideals and scientific approach, their lofty sentiments and creative ability, and their broad and realistic vision . . . We must adhere to the principle put forward by Comrade Mao Zedong — that literature and art should serve the broadest masses and, first of all, the workers, peasants and soldiers . . . Writers and artists should conscientiously study Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought so as to enhance their own ability to understand and analyse life and to see through appearances to the essence . . . Party committees at all levels should give good leadership to literary and art work." See "Speech Greeting the Fourth Congress of Chinese Writers," October 30, 1979, in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975-1982)*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1983, pp. 200-207.
- (27) Ibid., p. 45.
- (28) George J. Church, "China: Deng Xiaoping leads a far-reaching, audacious but risky Second Revolution," *Time*, January 6, 1986, p. 32. *Time* gave this assess-

ment of Deng in naming him "Man of the Year" in 1979 noting that vengeance remained one of his goals as he freed thousands from the perils of the Cultural Revolution (e.g., prison, forced labor): "But at the same time, thousands of radical officials, former Red Guards and Teng's personal enemies have been purged. Teng will not tolerate anyone or anything that stands in his way, nor does he need to in a state that remains as authoritarian as China is today." "Little Man in a Big Hurry," *Time*, January 1, 1979, p. 25.

(29) Mary Lee, "Happy holidays and busy killing fields," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 20, 1986, p. 47.

(30) *Ibid.*, p. 48.

(31) Daniel Southerland, "Cadres' Sons Executed in China," *The Washington Post*, February 21, 1986, pp. A21, A-31; Daniel Southerland, "China Presses Drive Against Corruption," *The Washington Post*, April 15, 1986, p. A11.

(32) Daniel Southerland, "Chinese Official Warns Students," *The Washington Post*, December 9, 1985, p. A19.

(33) Deng Xiaoping, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," March 30, 1979, in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975-1982)*, pp. 166-191.

(34) *Ibid.*, p. 178.

(35) "The Constitution of the People's Republic of China," in *People's Republic of China Yearbook 1985*, pp. 8-9.

(36) "Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Reform of the Economic Structure," in *People's Republic of China Yearbook 1985*, pp. 84-85. This document is reprinted and a discussion of the Deng Xiaoping's "Four Modernizations" is contained in Donald J. Senese, *Sweet and Sour Capitalism: An Analysis of 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics'*, Washington, D.C.: The Council for Social and Economic Studies, 1985.

(37) David Bonavia and Mary Lee, "Chen's last stand," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 3, 1985, pp. 10-12.

(38) Mary Lee and David Bonavia, "Socialist balancing act," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 10, 1985, p. 38. See also in same issue Mary Lee, "Four rising stars in the new politburo," pp. 38-39, and Robert Delfs, "Chen Yun: a chilling speech," pp. 39-41. For a comparison of the Deng group and the remnants of the Mao supporters see "Where They Stand: 'Reformists' & 'Conservatives' Express Their Attitudes," *Inside China Mainland*, Institute of Current China Studies, Taipei, Republic of China on Taiwan (May, 1986), pp. 1-7. Also Ying Ching-yao, Chang Chen-pang, and Hung Yu-chiao, *An Analysis of Communist China's National Party Conference*, Taipei, Taiwan: World Anti-Communist League (China Chapter) and Asian Pacific Anti-Communist League, 1985.

(39) Deng Xiaoping, "Opening Speech at the Twelfth National Congress of the CPC," in Robert Maxwell (General Editor), *Deng Xiaoping: Speeches and Writings*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1985, pp. 86-87.

(40) Most scholars decline to express an opinion as to whether specific Marxist authors are sincere when they use the term 'democracy' in the context of 'totalitarian democracy' or whether some of them are exploiting the favorable connotations associated with the term 'democracy' in contemporary usage.

(41) "Mao Zedong Thought Must Be Correctly Understood As An Integral Whole," July 21, 1977, in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975-1982)*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1984, p. 58.

(42) Jürgen Domes, *The Government and Politics of the PRC: A Time of Transition*, Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985, p. 68.

(43) *Ibid.*, p. 69.

(44) J.L. Talmon, *The Rise of Totalitarian Democracy*, Boston: The Beacon Press, 1952, p. 249.

(45) *Ibid.*, pp. 249-250.

(46) *Ibid.*, pp. 250-251.

(47) *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2, 6.

(48) Ludwig von Mises, *Omnipotent Government: The Rise of the Total State and Total War*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944, pp. 51-53.

(49) Talmon, *The Rise of Totalitarian Democracy*, p. 253. The full thought deserves quotation: "This is the curse on salvationist creeds: to be born out of the noblest impulses of man, and to degenerate into weapons of tyranny. An exclusive creed cannot admit opposition. It is bound to feel itself surrounded by innumerable enemies. Its believers can never settle down to a normal existence. From this sense of peril arise their continual demands for the protection of orthodoxy by recourse to terror. Those who are not enemies must be made to appear as fervent believers with the help of emotional manifestations and engineered unanimity at public meetings or at the polls. Political Messianism is bound to replace empirical thinking and free criticism with reasoning by definition, based on a *a priori* collective concepts which must be accepted whatever the evidence of the senses: however selfish or evil the men who happen to come to the top, they must be good and infallible, since they embody the pure doctrine and are the people's government: in a people's democracy the ordinary competitive, self-assertive and anti-social instincts cease as it were to exist: a Workers' State cannot be imperialist by definition." Ibid.

(50) Morton A. Kaplan (editor), *The Many Faces of Marxism*, New York: The Free Press, 1978, p. 2.

(51) Ibid., p. 3. Lenin believed in full submission of Party members to Party rules and decisions: "The leadership role of the party also excluded democracy within it; unity was too precious and too fragile." See Robert G. Wesson, *Why Marxism: The Continuing Success of a Failed Theory*, New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975, pp. 52-53.

(52) Edmund Wilson, *To the Finland Station: A Study in the Writing and Acting of History*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1972, pp. 451-452.

(53) Stefan T. Possony, *The Lenin Reader: The Outstanding Works of V.I. Lenin*, Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1966, pp. 189, 201-202.

(54) Ibid.

(55) Ibid., p. 170. Lenin adds: "What is control? . . . In order to control, one must have power." Ibid.

(56) Ibid., p. 177.

(57) Ibid., pp. 177-178. Lenin used the "right of assembly" as an example. The right of assembly constituted an important feature of Western style or liberal democracy. To Lenin the right of assembly only gave power to the exploiters who would use the Assembly (legislative body) formed to protect their own interests and were the only ones who had the leisure time to attend the assembly meetings. Thus the right of assembly as an element of "pure democracy" was a sham and hypocritical. Lenin justified the abolition of the right of assembly as a blow against liberal democracy in favor of his "new democracy." The "new democracy" would give real meaning to the right of assembly when real equality was achieved, the exploiters had been deprived of their property, and the toilers given leisure and protection by the armed forces. Ibid., pp. 178-179.

(58) Ibid., p. 240.

(59) Stuart R. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969, pp. 35, 37, 134.

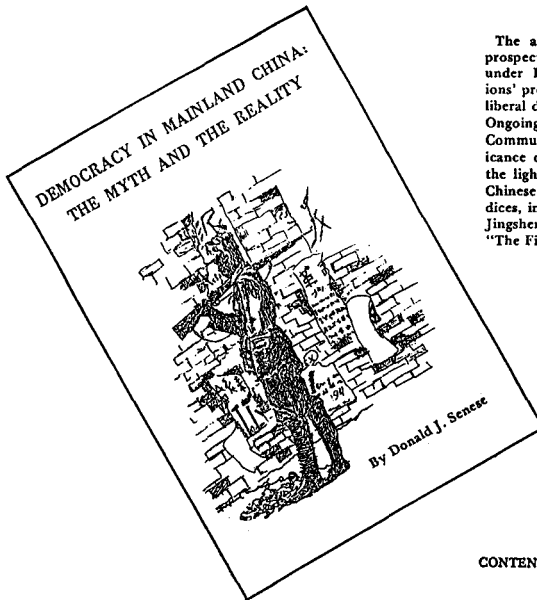
(60) Ibid., pp. 96-98. Mao devoted a speech to the problem of democratic centralism — how to realize it and how to promote democracy within and outside of the Communist Party in his "Talk at an Enlarged Central Work Conference," January 30, 1962. See Stuart R. Schram, *Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters, 1956-1971*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1974, pp. 158-187.

(61) "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," March 30, 1979, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* (1975-1982),] ; 172.

(62) Ibid., p. 183.

(63) Domes, *The Government and Politics of the PRC: A Time of Transition*, pp. 91-92, 101.

DEMOCRACY IN MAINLAND CHINA: THE MYTH AND THE REALITY



The author focuses on the questionable prospects for democracy in Mainland China under Deng Xiaoping's 'Four Modernizations' program, showing the contrast between liberal democracy and 'socialist democracy'. Ongoing developments within the Chinese Communist Party are traced, and the significance of "Democracy Wall" is analysed in the light of subsequent events. Three major Chinese documents are printed as appendices, including the revealing treatise by Wei Jingsheng (of Democracy Wall fame) entitled "The Fifth Modernization".

By DONALD J. SENESE

Introduction by Trent Lott, M.C.

CONTENTS

Introduction by Trent Lott, M.C.

Chapter

- I The Structure of the Communist System in China
- II The Other "Democracies" – Totalitarian Democracy and Democratic Centralism
- III Movements Against Democratic Reform

Appendices:

- I "The Fifth Modernization" by Wei Jingsheng
- II Speech by Peng Zhen entitled "Strive to Study Basic Marxist Theories"
- III Article by Zhang Xianyang and Wang Guixiu: "Master Marxist Theory in Light of New Realities"

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THE ISLAMIC BANKING SYSTEM IN IRAN AND PAKISTAN

By Mohsin S. Khan and Abbas Mirakhor

The resurgence of fundamental Islamic values in many parts of the world has manifested itself on the economic front as well, with a number of Muslim countries moving toward the transformation of the economic systems — especially the banking systems — to conform more closely with the precepts of Islam. Developments in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have been particularly intensive and have attracted wide interest, both in other Muslim countries and elsewhere.

The popular conception of the Islamic economic and financial system is that it differs from other systems only in that it proscribes interest. Since the elimination of interest has generally been the first step in the Islamization of the economy, it is perhaps only natural that the institution of interest-free banking has received the most attention. While the abolition of interest-based transactions is a central tenet of the Islamic economic system, it is by no means an adequate description of the system as a whole.

Broadly speaking, “Islamic economics” defines a complete system that prescribes specific patterns of economic behavior for all individuals and society within an Islamic way of life.

At the core of the Islamic economic system lies a collection of immutable and universal rules that affect economic behavior and relationships. These rules are specified by the *Shariah*, namely, the codification of injunctions given in the Quran, and the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed. On the periphery there are also rules and institutions which affect economic behavior, but which are subject to change depending on circumstances. Economic policy, designed by legitimate authorities, may vary from one Muslim society to another only with respect to the periphery of the system. Such policies must be compatible with the *Shariah*.

Some of the key elements of the core of the Islamic economic system are the following:

- *Individual rights.* In Islam individual rights are a consequence of human obligations and not an antecedent to them. When these obligations are fulfilled, certain rights are gained. Islam stresses the need to respect the obligations as well as the