

BEHIND THE SINO-SOVIET TREATY

By **FREDERICK V. FIELD**

THE most obvious thing that can be said about the Chinese-Soviet Treaty is also the most important thing about it: China and the Soviet Union, the two greatest nations of the Asiatic continent, have pledged friendship and assistance to each other for a thirty-year period. If you will look at a map of the continent a simple point stares you in the face. These two countries share a land boundary of no less than 5,000 miles. A situation in which no mutual arrangement existed would spell insecurity—if not disaster. The negotiation of the present treaty was therefore a plain necessity of the postwar period. That it was possible to bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion is of the utmost significance.

The obstacles to successful treaty negotiations between China and the Soviet Union were tremendous. No one would claim that the victory of the negotiators marks the elimination of these obstacles. They still exist. The point to be underscored is that this treaty, as in the case of the United Nations Charter or the Potsdam Agreement, indicates that the need for harmonious relations and a broad unity among the leading United Nations is prevailing over the multitude of contradictions which tend to keep them apart.

There were, and are, very powerful forces opposed to any kind of friendly relations between China and the Soviet Union. Chief among them are the Kuomintang feudalists who, ironically, control the government which ratified the treaty. Their power and wealth rests upon feudal landlord relationships, deals with foreign imperialists, and functions through a reactionary dictatorship which represents their collective political interests. Their bitter enemy is democracy, in any and all forms. The Soviet Union, as the most powerful anti-feudal force in the world and as the guarantor of democratic progress in Asia is, of course, the influence which they most dread.

The Chungking government agreed to the Soviet treaty as the price for continued existence—or, to put it more accurately, for a chance at continued existence. There is no doubt that the influence of the United States was great. President Roosevelt had pressed Chiang Kai-shek consistently on this point. Friendly relations between China and the Soviet Union were, in his view, a

condition to American assistance in the political and economic spheres. There is no reason to suppose that even with all the vacillations, errors, blunders, even betrayals of the American interest in China by our own diplomatic representatives this pressure was relaxed. Dispatches attending the ratification of the treaty inform us that the American ambassador to the Soviet Union played an active part in the Moscow negotiations between the Russians and Chinese and that the Chinese Premier, T. V. Soong, kept in touch with Mr. Harriman.

In saying that American influence was great in this matter I do not mean to overlook the role played by Chinese public opinion. The pro-Soviet friendship policy of the non-Kuomintang elements, principally the Communists and the members of the Democratic League, has been clear and insistent. Within the Kuomintang itself, even in its ruling circles, there are outstanding individuals like Sun Fo and General Feng Yuhsiang who have been outspoken advocates of closer ties with the Soviet neighbor. The treaty, therefore, represents a victory for China's democratic forces.

WE HAVE been sharply critical of the role of American policy in China and events indicate that we must continue to be so. For with respect to China's internal situation the State Department and its ambassador to Chungking have been selling the Chinese people down the river. On the surface this statement may not seem to jibe with the previous remark that the American government has played an important role in persuading Chungking to establish friendly relations with the Soviet Union. This, however, is only a superficial view. At present the dominant forces of American capitalism tend to work for world security in the form of diplomatic understandings among the Big Powers while at the same time pursuing reactionary policies with respect to these and other powers separately. Thus in the Far East, sections of American capitalism realize that their own immediate interests require cooperation between the Soviet Union and China, but simultaneously pursue policies toward China internally which tend to destroy the security which Sino-Soviet amity is designed to promote.

There is nothing unusual about such

a situation. On the contrary it is the very essence of capitalism that it should operate simultaneously in contradictory directions. This confusion is of course enhanced by the conflicts among capitalist circles within the United States. While I believe it to be true that the dominant forces of American capitalism at this time support the policy which has resulted in the Chinese-Soviet Treaty, there is no question but that an important sector of American capitalism is strenuously opposed to that policy. This group, whose spokesmen are to be found in the most reactionary section of the Republican Party, among the Southern bourgeois, in the National Association of Manufacturers and among the fascist and semi-fascist gentlemen in the newspaper and magazine business has been closely allied with the Chungking feudalists. It has fought against Chinese rapprochement with the Soviet Union as fiercely and for much the same reasons as have the Kuomintang feudalists.

The differences between these two sectors of American imperialism are a matter of timing and tactics. Both, however, adhere to a common strategy which in the long run is anti-democratic and, of course, anti-Soviet. The more realistic group, knowing that imperialism is not now prepared to do battle with the USSR, sees the necessity of dealing with it in order to delimit Soviet influence and to keep its hand in all international affairs in which the Russians are involved. But meanwhile this group also seeks to maintain and strengthen reaction wherever it has the opportunity—for example, in the case of China's domestic politics. The more fanatic imperialists openly challenge the Soviet Union today. They do not wait as do their more restrained brethren.

Contrary to the thoroughly dishonest headline ("SOVIET-CHINA TREATY REBUFFS REDS") with which the *New York Times* announced the treaty, it is evident that the Sino-Soviet accord opens the door to democratic reform within China and blocks the formation of a Far Eastern anti-Soviet coalition.

Recall the situation which attended the Japanese surrender. Chiang Kai-shek with open American diplomatic and military support set about to defeat, through civil war if necessary, the Chinese people and their patriotic Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies and

guerrillas which had borne the brunt of the war against the invader. In order to accomplish this it was necessary for him to find allies, for his own power and authority had been severely cut down by the unpopularity of his reactionary wartime policies. He sought them among the Chinese puppet quislings and among the Japanese troops themselves. The United States government encouraged this outrageous internal policy.

Meanwhile American imperialists for whom former Under Secretary of State Joseph Grew had been the main publicist were encouraged by the way in which the war against Japan had ended. Their dangerous plans for betraying the war in the application of the peace had a strong chance of succeeding because it was allied with a wily Japanese government determined to snatch a partial victory out of total defeat. We faced a new coalition of forces in the Far East composed of the Chungking dictatorship, the Japanese fascists and American (and British and Dutch and French) imperialists.

The Chinese-Soviet Treaty, let me repeat, has not eliminated this coalition or any section of it. It has, however, accomplished two things. It has again demonstrated that among the contradictory forces of capitalism those temporarily looking to world security can, when associated with the democratic elements of their own countries and with the Soviet Union, prevail over those allied with the remnants of fascism. Second, it balances the scales against the most reactionary forces in China, in Japan and in the United States, and in favor of a big power arrangement which provides a framework for democratic progress and therefore security.

What was needed to alter the relationship of forces in the Far East in a progressive direction was, first, the defeat of Japan, and, second, the inclusion of the Soviet Union as a leading factor in the Far Eastern situation. The Chinese-Soviet Treaty, following upon the brilliant Soviet military campaign in Manchuria, has accomplished the second of these requirements. It may well be that, from the Soviet point of view, this was one of the compelling motives for the treaty. How important this factor is may be judged when we recall that

during the entire pre-war period the Soviet Union was virtually excluded from participation in Far Eastern affairs. The Washington Treaties of 1921-22 were negotiated and concluded without the Soviet Union. Therein lay one of their principal weaknesses. Throughout the period of Japanese preparation for Pearl Harbor the Soviet Union was given a deaf ear in its appeals for collective security against Japan. In spite of its isolation it made a large contribution to the defense of China and to the eventual defeat of Japan.

This period of isolation is now ended. The Soviet Union is now thoroughly



Mao Tze-Tung.

involved in the whole Far Eastern scene. The relationship of forces in that vital sector is thereby favorably altered.

An examination of the treaty itself—the whole Chinese-Soviet arrangement involves a treaty and six supplementary agreements—bears out these general points. The treaty proper is directed to three problems: mutual guarantees against the resurgence of Japanese aggression; mutual agreement not to join any coalition directed against the other; agreement regarding mutual economic assistance in the postwar period. The supplementary documents provide for joint control of the Manchurian railways, joint use of the ports of Port Arthur and Dairen, detailed arrangements regarding Soviet forces of occupation in Manchuria and their early withdrawal after the war, reaffirmation of Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria

and Sinkiang, and an exchange of notes regarding the independence of Outer Mongolia following a plebiscite.

As far as offering mutual protection against the resurgence of fascist aggression is concerned the treaty does not differ from those drawn up by the Soviet Union with neighboring states in Europe. In other important respects, however, it does differ. The conclusion is inescapable that the treaty with China is characteristic of an arrangement made with an insecure, unstable and unreliable government. It is not the type of treaty that any nation, and especially a socialist nation, concludes with a strong and friendly state. The nature of the Chinese-Soviet Treaty, and especially of the supplementary agreements regarding Manchurian railways and ports, as well as the necessity of reconfirming China's sovereignty over Manchuria and Sinkiang has all the earmarks of an arrangement made with a government which is not master in its own house. On the other hand, however, the Soviet attitude as exemplified in the treaty with China is a model of how a non-imperialist power deals with a semi-colonial country. The USSR, for example, shares in the control and administration of the Manchurian railways, with control and all equipment reverting back to the Chinese after thirty years without cost. Everything that is Chinese remains Chinese, unlike China's agreements with imperialist states which have used their understandings to gain commercial overlordship.

THE absurd inference has been drawn by several American newspaper editors that the Chinese-Soviet Treaty represents the lining up of Soviet policy with that of the United States in backing the Chungking clique. As I have already noted, the *New York Times* played up the story in such a way as to suggest that the Soviet Union had publicly repudiated China's democratic forces as led by the Chinese Communists in favor of the discredited Kuomintang dictatorship. No interpretation could be more deliberately false.

There is a wide gulf between the present American policy of subsidizing the Chungking gang to the exclusion of all other elements in China and the Soviet policy of establishing a framework of friendship with the Chinese people through their recognized government. The latter opens the way to democratic internal developments; the United States policy obstructs such developments. The contrast in the two policies is well illustrated by authoritative state-

ments on the internal situation made within a few days of each other.

On August 30 Lieut. General Albert C. Wedemeyer, commander of the United States forces in China, reaffirmed the fact that American airplanes and personnel were engaged in moving Chungking troops to points in Japanese occupied China which had been defended not by Chungking but by the Eighth and New Fourth Armies. He revealed that Chungking depended ninety-nine percent on the Americans for transportation in this operation. The United States is thus officially and openly aiding the reactionary, pro-fascist minority to seize by force, with the aid of Chinese quislings and the Japanese themselves, key points from China's own democratic forces.

On the previous day Moscow dispatches quoted an article appearing in *Red Star*, Soviet Army newspaper. After praising the Chinese-Soviet Treaty as being "of tremendous importance, showing the determination of the two countries to fight for peace and the security, progress and well-being of their peoples," the article continues with this significant passage:

"China can no longer be a backward, semi-feudal country; she has great tasks before her. Any attempts to lead China along a path of reaction will be opposed by the democratic forces of China. The only path for her is that of progressive, democratic development in close cooperation with the other great democratic powers."

The signing of these treaties between the Soviet Union and China should not relax the pressure of the American people upon their own government for the abandonment of a reactionary policy toward China and the adoption of a distinctly democratic one. Nor should it influence us to be less critical of the ruinous policies of the present Chiang Kai-shek government. The world, it is true, is hopeful of a successful outcome to the Chiang Kai-shek-Mao Tze-tung negotiations. Hope, however, should not lead to complacency. Until these or later negotiations, or some other method of solving China's internal crisis, produce results, and until such results are translated from words into substantial deeds, it is in the American people's interest to exert all possible influence against the present Chinese dictatorship. This is a job which begins at home. For without the political and military assistance of the United States government the Chungking feudalists would soon pass out of the Chinese scene.

LET MY PEOPLE WORK

By **THYRA EDWARDS**

"**T**HEY gave us Wednesday and Thursday to celebrate, said our faithful work won the war—then when we came back Friday everything went out like a light! They said, 'Go home. We'll send for you when we need you.'"

That's how it hit Dorothy Nash two days after V-J Day at the Matam plant in Long Island City where she inspected shells produced for the Navy. Dorothy is one of that new generation that went into war plants as the home guard backing up the fighting front with guns and material. In 1940 she graduated from high school and went to work in a beauty shop. She liked it a lot until, two and a half years ago, her brother joined up with the Navy and shipped out to the South Pacific. A few weeks later her brother Henderson, in the Army, was on his way to Bataan.

Dorothy quit the shop and went to the Matam plant. A lot of her girl friends went too.

Until V-J Day she worked forty-eight to fifty-four hours a week earning eighty-five cents an hour. In two and a half years she never missed a day on the job, never was late and didn't miss a meeting of her union, Local 1227—United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers-CIO.

"All I thought about was bringing my brothers home and licking Japan," she says. "I bought bonds every bond drive and, believe it or not, I didn't cash one. I don't plan to either."

At union meetings they talked a lot about full employment after the war and about a permanent Fair Employment Practice Commission. Dorothy was interested, passed petitions around, and wrote letters, but she wasn't really worried personally.

"I wrote President Truman the day we were laid off," she said, waiting her turn for a job interview at the US Employment office on East 59th Street. "I haven't heard from him yet. It didn't worry me at first. I thought sure I'd have another job by now. But I've been here every day since they laid us off.

And all they do is send you out to these low-wage jobs—twenty-two dollars a week, nine hours a day. They say take these till industry straightens out."

She hasn't taken any of the low-priced jobs, she says, because she's getting suspicious it's a trick to help the big plants cut wages when they open up. She hasn't filed for her unemployment insurance, either. She nor her friends, two of whom were waiting with her. "We deserve more than that," they say. "We deserve a job at the wages we were getting."

THAT sums up the spirit of the young Negro war workers who got pink slips. The crowd that came into industry when the depression was already forgotten and FEPC established to stop discrimination against Negroes in war industries. With them it's full employment and no wage cuts and they're counting on their union and President Truman to get it done quickly—not six months from now.

Dorothy, who is twenty-one, wasn't here for World War I. She doesn't know that wars have always been followed by unemployment—depressions. She doesn't know the bloody truth—that wars have been the crowbars prying open doors through which Negro workers got into industry. Successive wars have been the bitter yeast fomenting successive waves of Negro migration from weather-beaten plantation cabins to crowded tenements and cash wages in Northern industrial centers.

After the Civil War Mose moved off old Massa's land to hire out his hands on anybody's plantation. In World War I, 2,000,000 Negroes made the revolutionary shift from Southern peasant to Northern industrial laborer in Detroit, Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh. Since Pearl Harbor, another 1,500,000 have left the Texas, Alabama, Mississippi area, this time going as far as the West Coast. California estimates that 60,000 Negroes have come to shipyards and airplane plants there. A gang of Negro men and a lot of Negro women, about