



U.S. Air Force in West Germany. Peking's call for strengthening U.S. military triggers new discussion of Chinese foreign policy.

'Guardian' opens China discussion

By Dick Roberts

The *Guardian* newspaper has opened up an important discussion on one of the central issues in world politics today: the character of Chinese foreign policy.

This is a discussion to be welcomed by serious-minded revolutionaries everywhere. Readers of the *Militant* will want to follow it closely.

For some time the *Guardian* has expressed disagreements with various aspects of Peking's foreign policy. During the recent war in Angola, for instance, the *Guardian* called for victory to the MPLA while Peking campaigned primarily for the withdrawal of USSR and Cuban support to the MPLA.

A significant new development has put Peking's foreign policy into even further question, the *Guardian* believes. This is Peking's open declaration that between the two "superpowers," the United States and the USSR, *the Soviet Union is the main danger*.

The boldest statement of this turn in Peking's foreign-policy declarations appears in an interview with William Hinton that the *Guardian* reprinted May 5. Hinton is national chairman of the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association. The interview resulted from Hinton's recent visit to China. It is safe to assume as the *Guardian* does that Hinton accurately expresses official Chinese policy.

'Main danger'

"Do the Chinese consider the two superpowers to be equal dangers to the people of the world?" Hinton was asked.

"Not any more," he replied. "There was a period when the superpowers were seen as more or less equal enemies threatening not only the emerging nations of the third world, but also the independence of the lesser industrial nations of the second world. What China called for then was a worldwide united front against the two superpowers. . . .

"Today," Hinton continued, "there is still a major contradiction between the people of the world and the two superpowers, but as between the two superpowers, one—the Soviet Union—is more dangerous than the other. It is, in fact the *main danger* confronting the whole world today." (Emphasis in the original.)

Such a posture has been implicit in Peking's world strategy at least since 1972 when Mao Tsetung welcomed Richard Nixon to China at the height of Nixon's bombing of Vietnam. Further,

Peking's propaganda about "superpower rivalry" was often clearly directed more at Moscow than Washington.

But it is one thing to warn against the supposed "Soviet danger." It is quite another thing to advocate *supporting imperialism against the Soviet Union*. This is Peking's position.

It is difficult to overestimate the profound impact that this naked justification of Chinese foreign policy will have on revolutionary-minded people the world over, many of whom look to Peking as "more revolutionary than Moscow."

According to Hinton, Peking's slogan in the previous period was "Mobilize the third world, unite with all those forces of the second world willing to struggle and oppose the two superpowers."

The slogan corresponding to Peking's present line is "Mobilize the third world, unite all the forces of the second world willing to struggle, neutralize the United States and strike the main blow at the Soviet Union."

'Heath against Wilson'

Hinton leaves no doubt about the meaning of this slogan. "China," he says, "judges world leaders by how well they understand this new relationship of forces. Thus they prefer Heath to Wilson, Strauss to Brandt and Schlesinger to Kissinger."

The comparisons hinge on attitudes toward arming the countries against Moscow.

- Britain's Tory leader Edward Heath has a public stance of being more anti-Soviet, and more in favor of the imperialists' NATO military alliance against the Soviet Union, than Labour party leader Harold Wilson.

- West German right-winger Franz Josef Strauss (who was warmly greeted in Peking last year) is a more outspoken critic of Moscow and supporter of NATO than Social Democratic party leader Helmut Schmidt.

- Former U.S. war secretary Arthur Schlesinger, critical of the Pentagon's arsenal as inadequate to compete with Moscow, is publicly anti-détente, while Secretary of State Kissinger is the main architect of the détente.

Hinton stresses China's concern with increasing the military strength of the capitalist countries allied with Washington against Moscow. He is asked on what basis "unity" between Peking and Washington is possible. Hinton answers, "[On] such issues as the defense of Japan, the Philippines and Europe." He elaborates:

"Japan does not have adequate defense forces today. Japan is dangerously vulnerable to Soviet attack. The Soviet navy and air force are constantly maneuvering in the Sea of Japan. Until Japan is able to build up adequate defense forces, it is necessary for the Japanese people to continue to rely on the alliance with the United States. . . .

"The same thing holds true for Europe. There is no European country that can stand alone against overt and covert pressure from the Soviet Union. Even if the European countries united, their collective strength would not today be sufficient to hold off a Russian attack. Therefore it is necessary for them to maintain their NATO alliance with the United States. And this will remain a necessity until their own forces have been developed to an adequate level.

"The Philippines are demanding that the U.S. vacate its bases one by one. This is a prudent policy. Complete withdrawal would leave the islands vulnerable to Soviet incursion."

Bolster NATO

Peking's insistence that the imperialists bolster their military forces against Moscow was underlined May 6 when British Foreign Secretary Anthony Crosland met with the highest Chinese officials in Peking, including newly appointed Prime Minister Hua Kuo-feng and Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua.

Immediately following the meeting Crosland held a news conference clearly designed to call attention to the top-level agreement between Britain and China. According to Reuters, Crosland said "that he had been questioned about the reliability of the American commitment to use a nuclear deterrent. . . .

"Peking's leaders had hammered home their concern about the Soviet military threat to Europe and the need for West European unity, Mr. Crosland said. . . .

"Mr. Crosland added there was agreement on the need for a strong NATO and for the United States to 'remain committed and determined.'"

Peking's stand raises far-reaching questions involving virtually every arena of political struggle. Should American revolutionaries, for example, support Reagan? Should they campaign for greater military spending, more bombers and tanks, and to keep American forces stationed around the world?

Should European revolutionaries give up the campaign against NATO? Should they support the most outspoken capitalist politicians who favor NATO?

The fact is this switch is already being carried out by West German Maoists. The Maoist KPD (Communist party of Germany) calls for an end to the struggle against NATO bases as sites for military maneuvers. "No protest actions against the construction of sites for NATO troop maneuvers; strengthening the independent West European defenses is the correct military-political line for today," the KPD states.

The Japanese people have conducted a long and massive struggle against the U.S. nuclear forces that occupy Japan. But Peking calls on Japanese workers to ally with those who dropped the A-bombs and to fight for continued U.S. occupation of their country.

In the Philippines, Peking had previously supported the rebels who fight the dictatorship of President Ferdinand Marcos as a puppet of "American imperialism." But last June Marcos established diplomatic relations with Peking, where he met Mao and Chou En-lai. Apparently Peking now favors Marcos against the anti-imperialist fighters in the Philippines.

Discussion

The editors of the *Guardian* raise these and other questions: "Is the Soviet Union the 'main danger?'" they ask. "Is the united front against superpower hegemony to be scrapped in favor of a front against the Soviet Union? . . . Are American Marxist-Leninists to agitate for a U.S., China et al alliance against Moscow, doing their best to convince the American and all peoples of the world that they have to direct their main blow against the USSR and, apparently its allies?"

The *Guardian* editors promise to write further on these questions, and the May 19 issue carries initial contributions from *Guardian* readers. Such an open presentation of divergent views on this important question can only be of help to serious revolutionaries.

The *Militant* also plans to pursue this discussion. In future articles we will take a closer look at the recent course of Chinese foreign policy, examine Soviet foreign policy, and discuss the governments in Peking and Moscow that lie behind these policies.