CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY, BEIJING'S MILITARY MODERNIZATION

AND AMERICAN POLICY ALTERNATIVES

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China's Foreign Policy, Beijing's Military Modernization, and American Policy Alternatives

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Early September 1986 marked the tenth anniversary of Mao Tse-tung's demise as well as the end of an extraordinary ten years of very rapid Chinese modernization under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. That decade, perhaps the most hopeful and surely the most progressive since 1949, definitely set the country on the road to full modernization by the middle of the next century. For a nation that had more or less been wasting its time, since 1842, over the question whether to modernize or not and, since 1927, how, that was no mean achievement. Surely there would be slowdowns and deviations from the exceedingly rapid pace of the post-1976 decade. But it was highly unlikely that a post-Deng leadership would derail the engine of economic modernization as it pulled ahead its trainload of improvements in every sphere of Chinese life.¹

Changes were also apparent in Chinese foreign policy, many of them the result of the economic surge forward and the attendant modifications in administration, attitudes, Party policy and composition, and popular perceptions. In particular, the determinants of Beijing's approach to the world during the now-classical Maoist period differed from those that came to dominate the later period. A comparison was in order, for once the shift in foreign policy attention upon the new domestic situation (as well as the altered international environment) was understood, it would be possible to consider how military force modernization--conventional and nuclear--would
influence China's capability to play an increasingly important role in the Asian and global security situations; how the country would likely project its forces abroad; and in general the degree to which Beijing would seek to use its new martial strength as a means to obtain its policy goals.

I. Determinants of Chinese Foreign Policy Under Mao

The historic (e.g., 1949-1976) sources of Chinese foreign policy were well known. Six factors—three domestic and three international—combined to determine the details of Beijing's approach to specific issues and states. The domestic component—the primacy of politics, weight of the past, and the importance of ideology—most of the time was sufficiently important to explain most of the variation in foreign policy outputs. The reason was the newness of the Chinese revolution and the role of Mao. Indeed, it was revolutionary politics, as structured and symbolized by Mao, that so strongly set the direction and informed much of the content of China's approach to its international environment. The facts that the Chinese Communist Party had long since become a Leninist institution and possessed a strong leadership group with a well thought-out set of goals were, together with the then pliable nature of the Chinese population, chiefly responsible for setting the country from the beginning on the course of national unity, socialist revolution, export of Maoist ideology, anti-Americanism and pro-Sovietism, and restoration of Chinese primacy in Asia. It was the Mao-induced domestic political cycle that induced so many of the swings in foreign policy—from the excessive closeness to Moscow during the early revolutionary years to calling a crisis in the Taiwan Straits during the Great Leap Forward to the over-reaction to alleged Soviet perfidy during the 1959-1962 "lean years" to the isolationism of the Cultural Revolution itself. And it was Mao's own
personality--his campaign style, his insistence on revolution \textit{uber alles}, his megalomania, his paranoia--that informed much of the foreign policy decisionmaking of the pre-1977 era.\textsuperscript{4} Economic development did count for something, obviously, but it was politics and Mao that occupied center stage. Only at certain times--mostly when economic opportunity beckoned (or necessity threatened) and when Chou En-lai was at the foreign policy helm (as in the Geneva Talks in 1954, the Bandung Conference of 1955, the post-Great Leap recovery years of the early 1960s, or the negotiations with Henry Kissinger a decade later--did one perceive a different style and another, more rational and deliberate, foreign policy orientation.\textsuperscript{5}

Politics was "where it was at" during Mao's time. In addition (indeed, as part of the dominance of domestic political elements over Chinese foreign policy), the weight of the past exerted considerable pull. Mostly this meant the formative experience of the 1921-1949 period of the Party's formulation, experimentation, and application of its basic policies and its discovery through trial and error of the "correct" path to revolutionary power.\textsuperscript{6} Two aspects of this maturation process were important for foreign relations after 1949. One was the reification of the Maoist strategy for revolutionary success into a formula that could be applied to the international, as well as the domestic, environment. Set forth in definitive form in the Lin Piao pronunciamento on people's war in 1965 (and not renounced since, the only one of Lin's putative writings to continue in Party favor), this formula drew a parallel between the Chinese revolution and the \textit{dramatis personae} of the time (the Party, the Kuomintang domestic enemy, the Japanese external enemy, the masses, the correct [Maoist] strategy, etc.), on the one hand, and the characters later met on the world stage (China, the Soviet Union, the United
States, the Third World, militant Maoism, etc.), on the other.\textsuperscript{7} It formed the basic Chinese approach to the "Third World" and lasted, with modifications, to be sure, much into the post-Mao era.\textsuperscript{8}

The other formative element in the Party's revolutionary past was even more important. It involved the Party's early discovery, and bitter experience when it violated the rules, of the balance of power. The most elementary and vicious form of the balance is a three-element game in which the constantly weakest member must continually move to ally and then re-ally itself to the second strongest member in order to avoid destruction at the hands of the strongest or a combination of the other two.\textsuperscript{9} The Party was successful when it pursued such a strategy--in the early 1920s with the Kuomintang and against the warlords, during the anti-Japanese War of the 1930s and 1940s, and again immediately after the end of World War II, when it sought to use the Soviet Union and (principally) the United States against the Nationalists. When it had to face an enemy with no intervening player, it suffered disaster, as in the aftermath of the Northern Expedition in 1927.\textsuperscript{10} The Party learned the lesson well enough by 1949 that Mao's first foreign policy act was to sign an alliance with the Soviet Union against the United States, thus guaranteeing Beijing's security for more than a decade.\textsuperscript{11} And when it forgot the lesson of triangular international relations, as it did in 1969, it found it had no choice but to seek security in the only quarter it could find such, in Washington, D.C.\textsuperscript{12} As a result of two-thirds of a century of participation in a three-sided balance of power, then, China became a firm believer in security as a function of power, alliance, and manipulation of friends and enemies.
The influence of the more distant past also counted in Maoist policy. Thus, the fact that China was economically backward, that it had suffered from Western imperialist overlordship, and that it had historically a very different history in Asia of cultural supremacy and political centrality all stood at the base of several post-1949 goals: development, anti-imperialism, and national assertion. One could even proceed farther back into Chinese history to find origins of more recent foreign policy orientations. Thus, not only did the Maoist military component of revolutionary export owe much to the influence of ancient Chinese military strategists such as Sun Tzu and to the heroics exhibited in such writings as the Romance of the Three Kingdoms and Water Margin, but the general direction, and some of the employment details, of Chinese nuclear weapons strategy found their origins in the entire corpus of Chinese military history over two and a half millennia.\(^1\)

The third domestic determinant of Chinese foreign policy was ideology. Although at times difficult to evaluate in terms of its contribution to the whole, it was clear that Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought informed the general direction of policy, at times carried matters to extremes, and delayed or quickened (depending on where Chinese was in the domestic politics-induced foreign policy cycle) changes that stemmed more directly from other quarters. Thus, China carried its adulation of the Soviet Union during the early 1950s far beyond what was required for reasons of security within the strategic triangle; made total its rejection of Moscow after the break in 1960; went to anti-American extremes early on and never became as friendly toward Washington during the 1970s as policy necessities would have dictated; and declared ideology to be an important constituent of several important policy departures, including the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1958, the isolationism of the Cultural Revolution, and the attempt to overthrow several African
governments during the early 1960s. Ideological blinders also caused Mao to badly misjudge other states foreign policies and domestic developments. Thus, Mao once figured that Japan, South Korea, and the United States were planning an attack on China, despite total lack of factual substantiation, while during the civil rights crisis of the mid-1960s Mao pronounced that the Watts riots showed that blacks and workers had united against their white capitalist masters, against completely agains: the facts.14

These three domestic determinants of Chinese foreign policy--the primacy of politics, weight of the past, and ideology--when combined explained much, and often most, of the direction, timing, and specifics of foreign policies under Mao. It provided, moreover, a reasonably sure test and a useful shortcut to understanding Beijing's international orientation. If one could first understand what the Party was attempting at home, many aspects of foreign relations would become clear and the analyst would possess a sure instrument for understanding what was at time completely rational, but on other occasions, rather bizarre, international behavior.

Still, other causitive elements remained outside this framework, for China existed as a nation in an international system, was constrained to obey the "laws" of foreign policy behavior common to all nation-states, and was inordinately influenced by the power and policies of the two superpowers. Of these, perhaps the most influential was the combination of power and interest of the United States and the Soviet Union, which dominated the post-War system and configured, both in their bilateral relations and within the strategic triangle (China being the third member) an important portion of Beijing's orientation to the external world. Thus, when the American-Soviet Cold War was at its height and China was comparatively weak, Mao had to incline steeply toward Moscow. When Moscow threatened China's territorial security, as in the
1968-1978 decade, an even weaker China—in relative terms—had no choice but to make its peace with Washington and add its power to that of the Americans against Moscow. And when America and Russia were, in Chinese eyes, "contending" among themselves—as in the Cuban missile crisis, the several Berlin crises proceeding that, and in Vietnam—Beijing felt it had the necessary maneuvering room to escape, if only for the while, from the American-Russian grip.15 China's first forays into the Third World (after 1960 and before the Cultural Revolution) followed, as did the plague-on-both-your-houses isolationist policy of the early Cultural Revolution years itself.16

So long as Chinese policy focussed primarily on the United States and the Soviet Union, most other aspects of Beijing's foreign relations tended to follow. In fact, one could derive, nearly on a one-to-one basis, Chinese policy toward states outside the triangle, international institutions, global issues, and revolutionary movements once it was apparent where China stood at any given moment on the spectrum of extreme pro-Sovietism, rejection of both superpowers, balance between them, and reasonably warm relations with the United States. Thus, China supported the Thai Communist Party when America was the named enemy before and during the Vietnam War but buttressed the Thai government and dropped its bankrolling and training of the Thai communists once Vietnam, allied with Moscow, became the opponent and Washington was made China's superpower protector; NATO was in the enemy "camp" during the heyday of the Sino-Soviet alliance and into the 1960 era of joint anti-Sovietism and anti-Americanism but was treated in a totally opposite manner once the Russians threatened China and the Americans played the role of protector; the post-Selassie Ethiopian communist rulers were initially treated with friendship since they had overthrown an American ally, while their pro-
American Somali allies were regarded disdainfully as a bunch of corrupt generals—but when Mengestu signed up with the Kremlin and the Soviet Union became a threat to China, Beijing declared its disinterest in Ethiopia and quickly restored relations with Djibouti. The list was easily, and nearly infinitely, expandable into all areas of China's foreign relations and provided a convenience shortcut to figuring out—even without detailed knowledge of the local situation—China's foreign policy in diverse arenas.
In addition, China was constrained to conduct its foreign relations in manners that were not entirely within the confines of, or derivable from, the strategic triangle, for like all other entities on the planet, China was a member of the international system and, like all other Asian states, was a constituent of the Asian regional system. As such, Beijing had to conform itself to the structure and processes of those systems. Thus, if nuclear weapons were the key to national security and international prestige, China was constrained to acquire them. The decision to do so was made early in the 1950s and—after an early go-around with the Russians on nuclear weapons assistance—by the early 1960s an initial capacity was in hand. Indeed, for a time, an extraordinary percentage of China's gross national product and of its heavy industry and technology were given over to this sphere, while China's relations not only with the superpowers but also with many of its Asian neighbors were markedly affected by its heightening stockpile and its increasingly sophisticated missile delivery capability.18 Thus also, the international system greatly altered its shape after World War II through the diffusion of power laterally across the globe at first and then more toward the "South." China had to alter its approach accordingly. Although it could afford to pay little attention to Europe and Japan for two decades after 1949, Beijing was constrained to focus on Washington and Moscow and took the opportunity of massive de-colonization during the 1960s to try to escape from the strict confines of the strategic triangle. And if the "South" (however designated—the Group of 77 or the Neutral and Non-Aligned Nations or the Newly Emerging Countries) tended to caucus and vote together in the United Nations but excluded Beijing as not unaligned, China would have to grin and
bear it until such time as it could prove its Third World credentials and give substance to its declaration that it too was really a Third World state and that it was their natural leader against further superpower dominance. 19

In Asia, China had to face the fact that the region had become a place dominated not by the militarily strong communist states, such as North Korea and Vietnam, but by the economically dynamic export-oriented capitalist countries of the "Gang of Four"--South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore--together with Japan and the United States. China had fallen even farther behind, as a result of socialist economic policies and Maoist political dominance, than it had been when the Party first came to power. 20 Moreover, in each of the Asian sub-regions, a balance of power was in place in which China played only a relatively small role and where either the United States or the Soviet Union was the security guarantor through alliance with the major regional powers--Japan, Vietnam, and India--none of whom were overly friendly to Beijing. By 1976, although China was geographically in Asia, it was hardly a part of Asia. Asia was led by those at its periphery, while China, literally its center, had excluded itself. But whatever the details, China became a member of the Asian regional system and had to conform to the structure and the "rules" of that system, which generally were made by others. 21

The final determinant of Chinese foreign policy stemmed from the interaction of Chinese domestically-generated national power with the structure of national interests the product of the country's international interactions. In 1949, merely by reunifying itself under a strong government, China restored much of the power it had denied itself since the nineteenth century. It went on, during the next quarter century of Maoist rule, to invest in the sinews of military and economic power as well as ally itself
directly with one of the superpowers and later, albeit in a tacit manner, with
the other. These additions to state power, subtracted from to be sure by the
major steps backward of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution,
allowed Beijing to become a major force in Asia and within the strategic
triangle.\textsuperscript{22}

The normal and inevitable consequence of such a rapid growth in power was
a corresponding increase in the range of Party and state interests, such that
Beijing found it using that new power to involve itself in situations and
disputes at places ever-farther from China's national boundaries. Thus, the
country became militarily involved on the territory of all of its
neighbors—for the first time in Chinese history. It participated actively in
the diplomacy of Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and the strategic triangle.
It moved to the center of the international communist movement and then
struggled with Moscow for control over it. It traded with, and sent foreign
aid to, distant nations. It attempted, for a while, to exert cultural control
over Chinese communities in Asia and elsewhere. In short, it used its new
power to pursue the expanded list of national and Party goals which that power
permitted. As such, China was acting no differently than any other state in
history that, upon significant power augmentation, discovered new interests
and loci wherein to apply that power.\textsuperscript{23}

As China, obeying this Iron Law of International Relations\textsuperscript{24} linking
interest to power, thus expanded its foreign policy horizons, Beijing's
international environment reacted correspondingly. In a word, changes were
made in Asia and elsewhere that, while accommodating to a much more activist
and interventionist China, set up barriers to unacceptable modifications in
Beijing's favor. Mostly these were carried out first by the United States—
fighting the Korean War, establishing an anti-China treaty system in Asia,
justifying the entire containment system partly on anti-Chinese grounds, and entering both Vietnam conflicts partly for reasons of keeping alleged Chinese expansionism within bounds. Later it was done by the Soviet Union—breaking off close economic, military, and ideological relations with Beijing during the later 1950s and early 1960s, then competing for the favor of communist parties and non-aligned states across the globe, girding for war after 1969 with China through massive force buildup along the Sino-Soviet frontier, and finally attempting to establish an anti-Chinese alliance system of its own. Moreover, secular changes in China's Asian environment stemming from the rapid growth of the export-oriented market economies, together with the rising military power of many Asian states (ranging from India through Southeast Asia to the two Koreas) all summed to create additional obstacles to untoward Chinese interference. Thus, with sufficient time, international political leadership, and a plentitude of resources, a balance of power was established in Asia and beyond that kept Chinese power and policy within acceptable limits.

II. Foreign Policy Changes Under Deng

This was the situation up to the end of the Maoist era. During the Deng decade, most of these six determinants remained more or less in place, so that it was still possible to analyze Chinese foreign policy as their joint product. However, in every instance, modifications were made and new trends established such that significantly different conclusions emerged. By the mid-1980s, in fact, it was clear that a new era had opened, that its duration could be at least as lengthy as the three and a half decades of Maoist rule, and that—trends and forces continuing more or less in well-established
directions—the upshot could be transformation both of Chinese policy and Beijing's international environment. Let us consider what those modifications were.

In domestic politics, the most important and obvious change was the replacement of left Maoist radicalism by Dengist pragmatic moderation and the corresponding shift from the primacy of politics to that of economics. Whatever appeared good for China's economic development became Beijing's policy, and since the path to material betterment was judged to lie via de-collectivization, return of the profit incentive, price as well as plan as allocative mechanism, and access to markets, technology, and goods wherever they might be found, China rapidly turned into a mixed economy.25 Internationally, this meant a policy of opening the door to foreign economic investment, technology transfer, and trade. It followed that Beijing's foreign policy became one of peace and security, since such an atmosphere would be most conducive to rapid growth and modernization while their opposites, war and threat, would destroy the Party's last and best chance to catch up with the developed world. And the best way to that end, in a situation of American-Japanese-European economic-technological leadership and Soviet military threat, was to do what was necessary to gain access to the markets, goods, training, and know-how which only the West could offer and to take out security insurance in Washington against Soviet military threats. These became the twin cornerstones of China's new foreign policy.26

Deng Xiaoping also went about the business of deradicalizing Chinese politics by gradually retiring the revolutionary generation, ousting the Maoist radicals, bringing into the leadership those with higher education and technical qualifications, and easing out the Cultural Revolution entrants whose only hallmark was Maoist phraseology. He also attempted to install the
next two generations of successors, composed of like-thinking people who would—to the extent possible—guarantee continuity of his counter-revolution for another decade or two. Finally, he moved so fast in instituting his reforms and demonstrating their benefits to large percentages of the population that he was able to proceed quite far in building up a support base of technocrats within the Party and beneficiaries (including most peasants and increasing numbers of urban dwellers) among the people as a whole. This managed, at least during his term in office, at least to hold at bay the leftover radicals (and others who remained either unconvinced of the veracity of the new course or who had been injured by its effects]. This, he hoped, would suffice to stem the anti-pragmatic reaction that was sure to come after his departure.  

The weight of the past, a heavy influence during the Maoist period, continued in importance but evaluation changed. Because Mao's proclivities had come under a cloud, stress on revolutionary tradition was dampened considerably. The pre-1949 period of formative Party history became almost pre-history. Anti-Westernism, the product of the reaction to 19th-20th century imperialism, was de-emphasized, relaced by underlining China's own responsibility for its late start on modernization. Perhaps most importantly, China went through a period of rapid re-traditionalization. Customs, habits, and practices that had been suppressed under Mao—particularly during the Cultural Revolution—made a strong comeback, under the rubric of modernization to be sure. China thus began to look and act like it had, say, in the 1930s—variegated, lively, differentiated, a bewildering mixture of the traditional, the transitional, and the modern. The Party, in a word, attempted to come to terms with the entirety of China's past so as to continue in popular favor and to utilize the massive energies (and sometimes efficiencies) of traditional
practices for purposes of modernization. Nowhere was that trend more apparent than in the agricultural sphere, where de-collectivization led not only to a massive upsurge in production but also to restoration of traditional modes of social organization.²⁸

Of equal importance to these changes was the Party's decision to revise how it viewed its Marxist-Leninist ideological heritage. It had long been clear that the Party possessed only a truncated understanding of Marxism and had been attracted to it chiefly because of its anti-imperialist content and the anti-Westernism of the Russian Revolution. The ideational-conceptual base remained mostly a mystery; very few Party members could, for instance, tell the difference between a force and a relation of production or essay on the relationship between economic base and political-social superstructure. Under Deng, the view of Marxism changed. Marx's legacy as a whole was studied, to be sure, but its pragmatic-"scientific" sector was emphasized ("seek truth from facts"), Maoism was criticised and no longer widely studied (where once Mao's writing's dominated bookstores, now one had to hunt for a set of his writings, which in any case stood alongside those of Chou Enlai, Lui Xiaochi, and Deng Xiaoping), and Marxism was downgraded to only one--albeit still allegedly the most important--ideological determinant of modern thought ("Marxism cannot resolve all of our problems").²⁹ On the other hand, Leninism--as a philosophy of Party organization and modern-day Machiavellianism--was retained as the Party's lietmotif. Even it suffered in practice, however, in terms of internal Party organization (ideological criteria for membership were relaxed, contested elections held at lower levels, decisionmaking on many important subjects shifted to governmental ministries, the raw capacity of the Party to affect everyday life and carry out campaigns declined, and the pragmatic aspects of Leninism supplanted the
dogmatic.) These allowed the Party to justify strong relations with capitalist states, foreign investment and even ownership of enterprises within China, and a host of economic, administrative, and legal changes that made it easier to do business with China and to penetrate the Chinese polity and economy. 30

These domestic changes were crucial, obviously, in propelling China onto an entirely new international course. But international determinants of Beijing's foreign policy also changed during the Deng decade and thus helped as well to configure the country's new direction. The change in China's position within the strategic triangle was the first of these. Perhaps most importantly, Beijing downgraded the Soviet threat after 1978, even though the objective facts of the Sino-Soviet military balance had not changed at all in China's favor—if anything, the Russians were more powerful, absolutely and relatively, than ever before. But by adding an evaluation of Soviet intentions (why, when Moscow had had every opportunity for over a decade to deal a decisive blow to China, had it not done so?) to the traditional assessment of Soviet capabilities, the Chinese leadership concluded that prospects for conflict with the Kremlin were significantly less than previous estimated had stated. 31
Implications and policy changes followed immediately. First, dependence on the United States could be lessened. A gradual political distancing from the United States was therefore put into effect, even while many of the details of Sino-American relations—trade, investment, tourism, training, etc.—were constantly thickening the overall relationship and even though security ties were allowed to move from their Maoist-era tacit basis to the explicit level of delegation exchanges, staff talks, military production center tours, direct cooperation in some areas against the Kremlin, parallel policies in several countries, and transfer and/or sale to China of military or dual-use technology and equipment. Beijing's relations with Washington hence became both complex and contradictory. On the one hand, China spoke and voted against America in the United Nations, inveighed against the United States as similar to the Soviet Union on grounds that both were superpowers, and called at least one crisis in bilateral relations over Taiwan. On the other hand, China realized that America held the key, in terms of trade, technology, and training, to the success of the Four Modernizations and that it was therefore imperative to maintain good relations with the White House. Indeed, the same went for Washington's friends and allies in Asia and Europe, all of whom could supply China with more of the same kinds of assets. Thus, 20,000 students per year were enrolled at American universities; trade shot up to between $5 and $10 billion per annum; technology delegations on both sides traversed the Pacific in such numbers that both capitals stopped counting; American investment in China, although still in its initial stages, soon surpassed the $1 billion mark; and tourism flourished, with several hundred thousand Americans travelling to China every year. Economic benefits thus placed rather severe limits on how far China could go in separating itself in
policy terms from the United States. Beijing constantly tested those limits, talking the line of independence, but its actions propelled it in the direction of interdependence.32

A second implication was a gradual turn toward Moscow, at least to test the waters of Sino-Soviet détente, if not actual rapprochement. As in the American case, rhetoric and reality stood mutually opposed. On the one hand, Beijing lumped the Kremlin with the White House as a superpower baddie, inveighed against the Russian Polar Bear as a military threat, and refused to admit the possibility of any lasting improvement in Sino-Soviet relations unless Moscow would give way on the so-called three obstacles (Vietnam, Afghanistan, and the Soviet border regions military buildup). Moscow was, of course, not about to retreat on any of the latter, since to do so would exclude the Russians from Asia; and since Beijing knew there was no possibility of that, its rhetoric was not to be taken completely seriously. In fact, just as in the American case, China went about improving practical relations with Moscow at the same time as it blasted the Russians verbally. Thus, trade expanded from near zero to about $1 billion per annum, technological transfer (albeit on an initially small scale) resumed, students and researchers moved back and forth, and various government delegations appeared in the other's capital city. While not as fulsome by any means as the relationship with the United States, this movement at the margin counted, for such changes constituted the stuff of Chinese foreign policy and pointed the way to the future.33

On the twin basis of "relative equidistance" between Washington and Moscow (although with a perceptible leaning to the American side), then, along with loud cries against alleged superpower attempts at world domination, China constructed a "new" policy of "independence".34 Such a policy was, of course,
neither new—since it had been tried in the 1961-1966 period—nor
independent—since China could not escape the strategic triangle and was
moving, if anything, toward interdependence. Nonetheless, a rough balance
between Washington and Moscow provided a solid enough basis for the other
major variation in China's foreign policy under Deng: a definitive turn
toward the Third World. This was, to be sure, a continuation of the Maoist
policy and, as before, had solid Leninist and anti-Western roots. The
differences this time were two. First, the Third World had taken definite
shape, substance, and organization (the Group of 77, the Neutral and Non-
Aligned Nations Movement, OPEC, etc.). And, second, Beijing's leadership
potential was lower than previously. In the first instance, the self-
appointed Third World leaders either rejected Chinese overtures to join them
(despite Beijing's possession of some of the objective qualifications),
fearing Chinese overlordship, or were persuaded by Moscow to keep the Chinese
away. In the second, China's own policies had sufficiently alienated enough
Third World states (Angola, Ethiopia, Cuba, India, Syria, to name a few) by
cooperating with their regional opponents or fostering domestic opposition
groups as to cause them to wish Beijing to keep out of their respective
neighborhoods.

Despite these shortcomings, China's Third World policy appeared to be
reasonably well established under Deng and would probably continue as a
cornerstone of its foreign policy. After all, Beijing could convince itself
that the "masses" of the downtrodden nations held the key to the future of the
international system and that China would sooner or later be accepted as their
natural leader. Moreover, the Third World was still the locus classicus of
the application of people's war, which remained a viable, although
considerably shrunken, aspect of overall policy. Further, developing
countries were also economic entities, places where China could market its
goods or where the tool of foreign economic (and military) assistance could be
used to purchase influence. Besides that, the United Nations and many other
international organizations were dominated by Third World voting majorities;
if China wished to make headway in those assemblies, it would have to learn
how to deal with the Indias and the Yugoslavias of the world, on their terms,
not China's. Finally, if Beijing were ever to put substance behind its anti-
superpower rhetoric, it would have to find some means to add the emerging power
potential of those nations to its own in order to confront Washington and
Moscow with an opponent that could not be set aside lightly.

The second international determinant of Chinese policy, the international
system and its regional Asian component, also exerted a changing influence,
since new elements rose to prominence. Perhaps the most important was the
enormous changes imposed by the explosion of international trade, the mutual
interpenetration of domestic economies, the three post-1974 oil crises, the
dollar recycling phenomenon, and the tremendous increase in global debt. In
a word, excluding the generally autarchic Soviet-oriented centrally planned
economies, the world had become economically interdependent. Any developing
nation would have to order its economy according to the rules already laid
down by that mutually dependent system. Moreover, the engines of production,
invention, finance, and technology were more or less concentrated in the three
Western centers: Europe, North America, and Japan. If China wanted what they
had to offer, it would have to buy from them and, largely, on their terms.
This meant, of course, that Beijing would have to sell to them in equal
amounts (failing a reversal of the long-standing policy not to take on a
massive international debt load) and that in turn implied that China would have to become a major earner of hard currency through exports. In sum, the country would have to become interdependent if it wanted to modernize.38

Another global shift was in the military sphere. A second revolution in weaponry occurred on the heels of the nuclear-missile overturn of the pre-1945 order. If strategic weaponry had brought into being weapons of infinite accuracy, almost no flight time at long distances, and total destructive power, now conventional weapons experienced many of the same kinds of changes. Precision-guided munitions meant that it was now possible to assure destruction in a single shot. High technology radars, television, and other electronic equipment enabled pilots and ship captains to destroy targets without even visually sighting them. Satellite technology and electronic listening devices enabled the well-equipped national command authority to know precisely what the enemy had and where it was located. Conventional (including chemical and biological) explosives so increased their destructive power that they began to approach nuclear levels in lethality. These and many other changes in the nature of warfare— including the enormous speeding up of the pace of conflict and the rapidity of destruction—meant that only those with the proper technological base could hope to win wars or successfully deter conflict with opponents so armed.39

This new revolution threw China into a military dilemma. Beijing wisely chose, under Deng, to place military modernization last among the Four Modernizations, reasoning that the industrial-scientific-technological-training base must be built up first, lest the attempt to field a military (in all three services, it should be noted) equipped with such weapons might bankrupt the nation. Portions of available military production were even converted to non-military purposes so as to speed up the construction of the
broad base of high technology industry. But so long as the country lacked the funds from outside to purchase the new equipment in the requisite (e.g., massive) amounts, and the decision was sustained to continue in a self-reliant mode, it would take an inordinate time to lay down that base, design and produce the proper weaponry, field them in the required numbers, and re-train the military in their use. That would in itself require several decades during which the Soviet threat would necessarily remain unanswered and the need continue to depend on American martial assistance and good will.\textsuperscript{40}

As if that were not enough, it was likely that, when the process were completed, the Soviets and the Americans would have moved ahead to at least the next generation--and perhaps the next two or three--of weaponry, thus obsoleting the new Chinese equipment even before it was in place. Indeed, China's security very much depended, among many other factors and unknowns, on whether the American-Soviet arms competition were speeding up or slowing down--that is, whether the curves of weapons development sloped upwards at increasing angles or evidenced a tendency to flatten out with time--and on whether China could "leapfrog" stages in weapons development, thus asymptotically approaching the levels of the superpowers, perhaps after 20 to 30 years. The history of post-World War II technologically-determined weapons changes may have been too short to make a judgment, but the evidence for the first four decades appeared to support the conclusion that it was the infinity curve and not the logistics curve that dominated.\textsuperscript{41} If so, what was bad for China under Mao could not be fixed by Deng and not even by his successors.

The final post-Mao determinant of Chinese foreign policy, the relation between interest and power, with changes in the latter as the driving element, became even clearer in operation under Deng than during Mao's rule. A useful
way to analyze these changes after 1976 is to inspect variations in the four means of national power and how China's interests varied accordingly. The first of these was diplomacy—defined not just as negotiating capability but also as steersmanship of the ship of state through the difficult waters of international relations. Included in that definition is the capability of the nation's leaders to make efficient use of national resources and plan wisely for the future.42

The Dengist leadership did exceedingly well in all these departments. It stayed out of war (with the perhaps significant exception of the unwise Vietnam incursion, which, it could be argued, was forced on Beijing by Hanoi's Cambodian invasion). It managed the transition away from Maoist modes of rule to a much more modern and solid base. It entirely revamped the economy. It kept the Americans as residual security guarantors while at the same time not knuckling under to Washington, and extracted from the United States and its allies a goodly portion of their technology. It began the process of opening to Moscow, thus re-capturing its independence within the strategic triangle and re-introducing itself to the Third World. It "learned the ropes" of how the international system worked and made a good start at penetrating to its very center. All in all, China's diplomatic record was not bad under Deng. Accordingly, its national power was augmented to a not inconsiderable degree.

The level and pace of economic development is the second element of national power. It is here that China excelled under Deng. The statistics of the Dengist period are not all in, but already it was clear by the mid-1980s that a breakthrough had been made.43 As domestic administrative reforms began, one after another, to take hold and as the open door international economic policy began to return dividends, rates of growth accelerated, technology spread, confidence grew (along with popular support for Deng's
economic pragmatism), the agricultural problem was largely solved (which, if nothing else, will inscribe Deng in the history books), and large increases in industrial production and consumer goods—the product of a very rapid expansion of capacity—were enjoyed. In foreign economic relations, Beijing's enhanced presence and influence was noticed in many quarters. It became a major trading nation, an importer of technology and an exporter of raw materials and machinery, a force in international economic institutions, and a center of regional commerce. These changes obviously worked their influence on overall Chinese power and made it correspondingly easier for the country to make its way in the world. China's economic interests, accordingly, enlarged. It wanted freer trade, more careful integration among the economic policies of the major states, and liberal flow of technology and its carriers—scientists, specialists, and students. It took an interest in economic developments in heretofore far-away places such as the Middle East and Latin America. It used trade as a device to approach states, such as South Korea, with which it had little or no contact. The same was true of Taiwan. Finally, Beijing continued a foreign aid program that, although hardly fulsome, in terms of available funds and expected political outcomes, still was a useful device to show China's wares and move into new regions.

Cultural policy, backed by relative cultural attractiveness, is the third element of national power. Most states have an ineffectual cultural policy to serve foreign policy goals, but they may nonetheless be culturally influential if, through the media of communications, travel, and trade, they are culturally dynamic and attractive. China under Mao hid its culture under a bushel. Under Deng, it was brought out again, refurbished, and shown around. The result—in terms of tourism, printed and visual media, the performing arts—while still mixed, was a major improvement over the previous era,
particularly as concerns peoples. Beijing wished to impress--Overseas Chinese, Taiwanese, Americans, and Europeans--those important for broader policy purposes. The mere fact that the Party permitted such a wholesale restoration of traditional Chinese culture and that it allowed the foreigner to come in to observe served such purposes. The world could enjoy China qua China for the first time without having to worry too much about the Marxist-Leninist overlay that had troubled so many. In a generally conservative age in the West, further, some comfort was to be derived from China's renewed emphasis on the traditional and the old, even in the midst of modernist transformation. Finally, many saw hope in the Chinese tendency under Deng to go in--perhaps too quickly and surely superficially--for some of the latest fads and fashions of the West. That was read as a sign that China had at last decided, definitively, to join the world and not to fight it or to isolate itself.²⁶ It was too early, of course, to decide that, upon listening to Beethoven or putting on jeans and dark glasses, Chinese had finally made the move not merely to emulate the West but to become truly "Western," i.e., modern. But a country with such a mixture of tradition and modernity was much more likely to remain at peace with its neighbors than one--say like North Korea--that refused out of fear all cultural contact with the outside. Culture thus greatly enhanced Chinese national power.
The military is the final element of national power. Under Deng, changes were made that enabled Beijing to field a more potent force, defend the country with greater surety, and at least begin the process of building a modern force that could not only fend off the Russians but also project Chinese power at ever greater distances from its borders. It was true that military modernization was the last of the Four Modernizations in terms of emphasis; that military budgets stagnated; that the People's Liberation Army had gone under a cloud because of its supposed Cultural Revolution-Lin Piao errors; that its leadership was superannuated and tradition-encrusted; that its ranks were poorly trained and equipped for modern conflict; and that its manpower and production base was allowed to shrink. But it was also true that China's military budget was the world's third largest; that it possessed a large, growing, diverse, dispersed, and rapidly modernizing strategic missile force; that its officer and enlisted corps was younger, more highly trained and educated, and probably more well-led than at any time since the 1950s; that it was ingesting new tactics (under the general rubric of combined arms); that its people's war strategy itself had undergone significant modernization (making its doctrine and training not greatly at variance from other contemporary militaries in Asia and elsewhere); and that it was already receiving a flow of new equipment (ranging from F-7 aircraft to nuclear submarines to sophisticated radars to conventional missiles to new tank weapons, to name a few). With such assets, and with the promise for serial improvements as modernization in other areas more and more began to return dividends to the military directly, it was clear that China was already on the road to signal force augmentation and that the military component ought in time to contribute to a major increase in overall Chinese national power.
Already changes were apparent. Nobody, not even the Russians, thought seriously about initiating war against China. China became, even more than before, a central constituent in the balances of power in Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia, respectively by deterring North Korean attack against the South, Vietnamese invasion of Thailand, and Indian temptations to strike Pakistan. China thus was a security guarantor of regional peace in Asia. Beijing became an element in the global nuclear equation, with enhanced capacity to strike all of Soviet territory and an initial capability against the United States. Its views were taken seriously at the American-Soviet arms control talks, Beijing becoming a virtual third party at the various Geneva negotiations. Its navy emerged onto the open ocean and into non-Asian waters for the first time since the early Ming and cooperated, however tacitly, with the Americans against the Soviet Far East Fleet. It used some of its spare military production capacity to assist distant states, purchase influence, and earn hard currency. It cooperated with Pakistan in developing the latter's nuclear weapons capacity, at least until Washington raised the diplomatic temperature high enough to force cessation.48 In sum, for a nation that allegedly had military problems of manifold character, in reality China was in reasonable military shape and was rapidly setting the stage for major expansion a decade or so hence.

There was, in fact, a kind of hiatus during the last years of Deng's rule, for with the huge augmentation in Chinese power of all kinds, including the military, by rights (i.e., obedient to the Iron Law of International Relations), Beijing ought to have pursued its already extant interests with greater vigor and "discovered" a whole new list. That would surely come--the most obvious example being a more direct and threatening posture toward Taiwan--, but meanwhile two factors melded together to produce a Chinese
foreign policy that, while dynamic and participatory, was also non-threatening and oriented toward maintenance of the status quo. One of these was the need, felt by all in China, whatever their motive, to develop the country as fast as possible. Various groups might differ over the proper means (although a return to strict Maoist voluntarism was quite unlikely), but all agreed that rapid forward movement must be maintained. Since Dengist pragmatism was working so well, few wished to rock the boat. That meant, in turn, most tended to support the opening to the West, which carried so many tangible and immediate benefits. So long, therefore, as the Deng program remained more or less intact, it was improbable that China would revise the priorities of the Four Modernizations and begin, through military adventurism and other evidences of a "hard" line, to make trouble for its neighbors.

The other was the international environment, Asian and global. Particularly in Asia, China had to run fast just to keep up. Most regional states were "on the move"--modernizing even faster in many cases than China and increasing their national power at a correspondingly more rapid pace. Their range of interests expanded accordingly, making it more difficult for Beijing to insert itself into arenas, situations, and disputes in which it had not previously maintained an interest. Japan was perhaps the best example. Shorn of a strong military by defeat, occupation, and constitutional arrangement, it put all of its energies into the economic sphere. By the 1980s, as a result, Tokyo had become an economic superpower and expanded its economic interests everywhere. No country in Asia, save perhaps North Korea, was not greatly affected by the Japanese drive to export, invest, and obtain raw materials. Although China might like to use its new-found economic power to penetrate new regions--say Southeast Asia--, Chinese salesmen and negotiators constantly found that the Japanese had gotten there first and were
well established with products against which China could not compete. Price reductions did little good against goods of the highest quality and the most advanced technology. Even at the low end of the scale, China found the going rough, for here Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, India, and many other nations were tough competition and were thus just as well situated as was China.

China could involve itself in manners in which it had a comparative advantage, such as the military, despite its assumed weakness. But in order to preserve the military balance in Asia's three regions, it had to stand on the side of the weak, and hence against the strong communist military power or, in South Asia, against the strong non-communist state allied with Moscow. Thus, until China continued its modernization drive for quite a number of years, amassing the requisite comparative, as well as absolute, increments of power, it would find it difficult to penetrate, much less dominate, Asia's three regions. In fact, Asia marched to a somewhat different drummer than China. Its most dynamic nations were much taken up with the more advanced issues of interdependence: tariffs and protectionism, marketing agreements, large-scale joint ventures or wholly-owned plant investments, comparative exchange rates and interest rates, and the like. China was just beginning to enter this arena.

In other regions, much the same obtained, but for somewhat different reasons. Although weak states abounded in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin American, and hence China ought to have been able to have used its new-found power, several factors combined to minimize Chinese influence. Regional issues--Israel versus the Arab countries, the South African question, and terrorism, for example--were often too difficult for Beijing to address or fell entirely outside its experience. The Americans and the Russians between
them often took up most of the policy space which outside powers could occupy. Certain policy instruments, such as culture, were of little use to China in such regions. And China still lacked the means—ships, aircraft, banks, broadcast facilities, tourists, etc.—, to project its power to decisively distant places. Only occasionally did Beijing become a significant factor, as in the Iran-Iraq war, where China either sold weaponry to both sides or assisted in the transport of North Korean material. (Even in that instance, China's motives were as much financial—earning hard currency—as diplomatic—maintenance of the status quo against possible Soviet expansion.

Latter-day augmentation in Chinese power under the Four Modernizations program did place China in an excellent position eventually to project its influence into distant quarters and new situations, as well as to pursue its traditional interests with heightened vigor. But its greater concern with keeping the development momentum high, combined with the rapidly changing international environment, prevented Beijing from expending an increasing portion of its new power for foreign policy purposes. How long that resultant hiatus would last was not clear, for most of the six determinants of Chinese policy could change during the post-Deng years. If, however, one were to extrapolate Deng-era trends down, say, to close to the turn of the century, the gains in power ascribed both to China and its international environment would be truely enormous. A transformation in Asian and global international relations would have occurred. Where the balance would lie was not clear, but the very fact that the increment to Chinese power would be under that nation's control and not, as in the case of the environment, scattered among many nations, could argue in favor of a tipping of the balance gradually in Beijing's favor. If that were the case, China would likely turn more activist and interventionist in its foreign policy. That would particularly be the
case as concerned critical capabilities for power projection. One either
would have, or would not have, the requisite aircraft, sealift, global-reach
nuclear missiles, etc., in the case of military power, or banks, available
capital, know-how, and technology, etc., in the case of economic power. By
the year 2000, China could have a capability in all these, and other, relevant
departments. It would then look for motives to use it.51

III. The Outcome: Chinese Foreign Policy in the Mid-1980s

The latter-day configuration of the six determinants of Chinese foreign
policy made possible a reasonably succinct exposition of Beijing's role in the
three arenas of importance for Deng's group and their successors: the
strategic triangle, Asia, and the Third World.

1. The Strategic Triangle

The center of Deng's policy had to be the strategic triangle. Once that
was in order, China's role in other sectors would fall into place. By 1986,
China's policy of maximizing security and independence within the over-all
framework of development was clearly directed to reconfiguring the triangle
into a relatively harmonious, equilateral, and less dangerous form. The means
thereof was addressing, on their merits, the more important bilateral issues
with Washington and Moscow and to take advantage of Soviet and American
willingness to play China's game. The major reasons to expect success were,
first, the recognition in both Washington and Moscow that their respective
domestic orders required increasing attention and that it would take a con-
siderable period to address them;52 and second, the large increment to Chinese
power as noted previously. Accordingly, the White House and the Kremlin would
have less room for engaging in confrontational, aggressive tactics toward each
other or, in Moscow's case, toward China. Thus, each would wish to maintain (in the American instance) or improve (in the Soviet) their relations with China.

In the case of Sino-Soviet relations, the direction and intensity of the Moscow-Beijing dispute for long had been set by China. For its part, Moscow merely desired settlement of differences. Its policies were therefore designed to enhance that eventuality and, meanwhile, to discipline Beijing for its transgressions (in Russian eyes) and protect itself from presumably predatory Chinese ambitions. With a superiority in power, the Kremlin's natural short-term policy was to keep Chinese excesses in bounds through threat of force, making alliances around China's periphery, withholding economic benefits, and setting things right through negotiations from positions of strength. But these devices could not assist Moscow's long-run goal until Beijing decided, for its own reasons, to open up to Moscow. That China did not need to do so long as the Americans provided military insurance and supplied the goods and technology required for the modernization drive. However, once Sino-American normalization was in hand, the Taiwan question adjudicated more carefully, and Beijing convinced that the Russians would not attack, Deng found the way clear to move ahead with Moscow. These pieces were in place by later 1982, with the signing of the Sino-American communique on Taiwan in August, after which both sides slowly and carefully (so as not to alarm the Americans and not to appear to be too eager in the ensuing talks) began to move toward détente.

The actual course of negotiations and signals down through late 1987 need not detain us, except to note that tacit and directly cooperative steps were taken by both sides, that both offered concessions (the Soviets on the border question, the Chinese on not insisting on satisfaction over the "Three
Obstacles before basic improvement in state relations), and that the way was slowed by domestic political conditions in both capitals (in Moscow by the triple succession and the two inter-regnums, 1982-1985, and in Beijing by indecision forced on Deng by perturbations in leadership succession politics).53 By 1986, however, the results were clear. Trade--always a barometer of inter-communist relations--turned sharply upwards, heading toward the several billion dollar per annum mark by the turn of the decade; delegations, exchange personnel, and Soviet technicians returned (although in nowhere near the numbers characteristic of this aspect of Sino-American relations); agreements were signed in many fields, ranging from factory repair and upgrading to civil aviation to border trade to language training; and negotiations proceeded over the border issue. China even began to give way on the second of the Three Obstacles--Soviet assistance to Vietnam, enabling the latter to fasten its rule over Cambodia, in return for Soviet military facilities in Vietnam.54 So in the space of four years Chinese-Soviet relations proceeded from moderately bad to reasonably good, a trend that would probably continue after Deng.

This was done at the same time as China, with America's tacit cooperation, distanced itself a bit from Washington politically while at the same time thickened enormously ties with America in trade, technology transfer, exchanges and training, delegation travel, transport, and tourism. Sino-American relations had become so close as a result of these practical developments that the Deng leadership felt compelled to try to counterbalance it with at least verbal statements that Beijing had not moved entirely into the Washington-led camp. Deng himself came under political pressure, especially after Taiwan was removed (however temporarily) from the American-Chinese agenda, for allowing things to go too far with the Americans. With
two-way trade already approaching the $10 billion mark per annum, 20,000
Chinese students in American schools, hundreds of delegations moving back and
forth every month, over 5000 American businesspeople representing hundreds of
corporations established in Beijing and other Chinese cities, major
development of air routes, tourism, and hotel facilities, and budding military
ties, relations had gone far indeed--too far, in all probability, to reverse
course.\textsuperscript{55} So Beijing adopted a mild but general anti-American stance in the
United Nations and other international fora, and pulled out the stops, a bit,
of its domestic propaganda apparatus. Washington tolerated such verbal
thrusts so long as they remained within limits. And if such statements went
too far, Beijing was reminded of America's displeasure, usually with the
desired result.\textsuperscript{56} Washington in fact was counting, rightly or wrongly, on
modernization, internationalization, and interdependence, all wrought with
American help, to ameliorate Chinese policy over the longer term.

The upshot of these changes was a strategic triangle of generally reduced
tensions, in which China could have reasonably good relations with both the
Americans and the Russians, in which neither superpower need worry overly much
about the extent or the effects of China's ties with the other, and in which
the threat of Sino-Soviet conflict all but disappeared. Together with
American and Soviet propensities to devote more resources and policy attention
to domestic problems (which mounted steeply in both countries as the 1980s
wore on), a "soft landing" among the three became a distinct possibility. It
was still quite possible that American-Soviet relations might go critical at
some point around the Soviet periphery or in the Third World (the supply of
potential confrontation spots included Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria,
Southern Africa, and Nicaragua, to name a few). But both Washington and
Moscow wanted very much to avoid that kind of meeting, preferring instead to
engage in summit talks and stepped-up arms talks. The important question in all three capitals was whether tension reduction and conflict management among any two, but particularly between Beijing and Moscow, could be coupled with eschewing the temptation to make trouble for the third. Moscow could, after all, use the incremental forces freed from a troop reduction agreement with China to raise the military temperature in Southwest Asia, the Middle East, or Africa. And Beijing could do the same vis-a-vis Taiwan once the Soviet threat had declined. China's interest, at least during the period of intense devotion to the requisites of economic modernization, was to do what it could to make sure Moscow did not undermine its relations with Washington unduly. In that regard, the Sino-Soviet border talks and the American-Soviet strategic arms talks came to be even more closely linked, in substance as well as timing, and a tacitly cooperative game was played between Washington and Beijing to assure outcomes satisfactory to all three parties.

2. Asia

The trouble for Beijing was that it would lose its leverage within the triangle once relations among the three had settled into the kind of stability that all could count on. Moreover, China's policy in Asia and farther afield was hostage to the shape of the triangle and movement within it. Since Beijing required regional peace and security for success of its modernization program, as well as a non-threatening shape of the strategic triangle, Deng and his colleagues found it mandatory to play a central role (to the extent that Chinese power would permit, of course) in the politics of the three regions of Asia surrounding China. In each region, one state threatened to upset the balance of power and thus had the potential to drag China into a conflict it wished at all costs to avoid. All three of these states—North Korea, Vietnam, and India—happen to be allied with Moscow (North Korea and
Vietnam directly and India less so). That fact, together with the Chinese decision in the mid-1970s to cooperate strategically with the United States against the Soviet Union, tightly linked the politics of the strategic triangle with the situations in Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia. Conversely, any major change in the politics of the triangle *ipso facto* would vitally affect the balance of power in these regions and, with it, China's own position and policy. Finally, war in any of these regions induced by the three named states could in turn greatly distort the shape of the triangle and the entire basis of Chinese foreign policy after Mao. Any conflict in these regions in which China would, perforce, have to participate, would be disastrous to Beijing. Extreme measures would then have to be taken.
China thus was constrained to go about the task of helping to construct a stable security situation in each region. In all of them, this meant cooperating with the United States and its local allies against Moscow and its regional associate. By the early 1980s, a reasonably solid balance had been built. In Northeast Asia, the task reduced to deterring North Korea from attacking the South. Fortunately, that required no major material diversion of resources, since Beijing and Seoul had no diplomatic ties and China was not physically contiguous with that part of the Peninsula. It did mean, however, a gradual distancing from Pyongyang as Kim Il Sung built his war machine to ever-more threatening levels, competing with Moscow for political and economic influence in the North Korean capital, silently establishing a range of practical ties with the South, and tacitly cooperating with the Americans in the diplomatic realm.57

China had to be careful in its direct relations with Kim, for the North Korean leader had twice before swung away from Beijing and toward Moscow in his successful post-1950 attempt to win policy independence within the confines of the Moscow-Beijing-Pyongyang triangle. Given the closeness between China and the North (and the Moscow-Pyongyang estrangement) during the 1970s, he had the room to carry out a similar maneuver again. Since Kim's only purpose internationally was to establish conditions enabling him to conquer the South, and since he wished above all to fulfill that dream during his lifetime (now almost at its end), the North Korean buildup could only mean trouble for China. Indeed, the matter became so threatening by the early 1980s that it was possible for the North not merely to initiate conflict on very short notice (less than a day's warning time) but to conduct high intensity war in the South for at least three months without having to call for help (if, indeed, he would then need it: his war plan assumed the South
could be conquered within two weeks, presuming the Americans did not use nuclear weapons). Given the extreme volatility of politics in South Korea, which could fracture the base of South Korean military capabilities to resist the Northern onslaught, and the tendency of the United States to become preoccupied with security events elsewhere in the globe, Kim might move at any time. If he did, prospects for Chinese involvement would rise through the roof (since if Kim did not succeed, the Americans and South Koreans would repeat their performance of the early 1950s) and with it the prospect of Sino-American war. Such a war would, of course, wreck the most important component of the economic modernization strategy—peace, trade, technology transfer, and foreign investment in China—and therefore represent a disaster.

So Beijing felt it had no choice but to back away from Pyongyang to the extent that the latter's threat to Seoul grew. Thus, China first put emphasis on the defensive nature of its security treaty with North Korea, later (when the inter-Korean military balance tilted further in Pyongyang's favor) told Kim China would not support invasion of the South, and finally (when the situation became extreme, by 1984, after the Rangoon bombing) notified the North that China would actively oppose a southern expedition. Thereby China became, along with America, a security guarantor of South Korea, a non-communist state. Its actions were instrumental in keeping the peace on the Korean peninsula.

That, of course, precipitated North Korean movement back toward Moscow, of which the Russians were quick to take advantage. It was a classic operation on Kim's part: keep China from abrogating its security treaty with Pyongyang (or, worse, recognizing Seoul diplomatically), get Beijing in turn to recognize Kim's son, Chung Il, as his successor, take from China whatever economic and military assistance he could obtain, and at the same time repair
relations with Moscow by restoring the whole range of state-to-state ties (trade, exchanges, economic assistance, and military support) and procuring Soviet assent to the legitimacy of the impending monarchical succession. These tasks were accomplished by 1986, following Kim's first visit to Moscow in 23 years in 1984 and a series of hurried, tense, and sometimes secret meetings between Kim and the Chinese leadership. The Kremlin did succeed in significant movement toward some of its own goals on the Peninsula: overflight rights for spy planes against China and incipient naval base rights at Najin on the North Korean East Coast. Their payment was a dangerous departure: transfer to Pyongyang of a significant number of MiG-23 aircraft and a range of other modern military equipment hitherto denied Kim. The Soviets also made known that their SS-20 missiles were trained on American airbases in South Korea. The upshot of these several moves was to drive Beijing even further into the arms of the South Koreans (which was just what the latter desired; they responded with a high level of unannounced trade—up to $1 billion per annum—, cooperation in return to China of passengers and equipment brought to Seoul by defecting pilots and boatmen, and an open door for sports teams, newsmen, and travellers). 61

Although these maneuvers may appear confusing, they represented solid evidence of detailed Chinese participation in the politics of the Korean Peninsula in an effort to maintain the balance of power there. The situation centered around the North Korean military threat to the South. So long as a rough balance existed between the South and Seoul's American backer, on the one hand, and the North and Pyongyang's Soviet supporter, on the other, China did not need to take a direct hand. It could claim to be Kim's good friend, even as Beijing departed farther and farther from the kind of extreme orthodoxy in ideology and economic direction so distressingly apparent in the
Northern capital. That was the situation down to the end of the 1970s. But when the balance began to tilt dangerously toward Pyongyang (for the first time, it should be noted, since the end of the Korean War three decades earlier), Beijing did not hesitate to disassociate itself from Kim, lean ever-farther toward the South, and cooperate with the Americans.

In Southeast Asia, a similar structural situation prevailed since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Once Hanoi's troops were in Saigon, the North Vietnamese became hungry for more territory. The immediately fastened their rule on Laos and began to plan how to expand into Cambodia. They were aided considerably by the Kampuchean communists under Pol Pot, who carried out one of history's most infamous genocides and then unwisely picked a fight with Vietnam over location of the border. For their part, the Chinese parted company politically with Hanoi as soon as the war with the Americans had finished. The reasons were unclear, but apparently were the product of differences over how to deal with the Americans from as far back as the 1950s, differential dealings with the Russians, concern in Beijing over Hanoi's imperial ambitions in Southeast Asia (which would have cut the Chinese out of the one area they might someday want to regard as "theirs"), and charges by Hanoi of political interference in Vietnamese Communist Party affairs.

For its part, Vietnam sought the proverbial powerful but distant protector from potential Chinese aggression and also attempted to arrange the diplomatic and security landscape to maximize the probability of successful conquest of Indo-China. Moscow provided the ideal instrument for both purposes: the Kremlin was willing and able to bankroll the Vietnamese economy as well as supply both the necessary hardware and the security guarantorship against China. The price was high, of course — a naval and air base at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang, partial control of the Vietnamese economy, and
supervision over the general direction of Hanoi's foreign policy. Vietnam was made to join Comecon. But Ho Chi Minh's successor's also got what they wanted--Kampuchea, Laos, money, arms, and an alliance ("Friendship Treaty") with the Russians--, all of which proved their worth not only in China's so-called Pedagogical War in early 1979 but also in protecting Indo-Chinese territorial integrity from that time forward.62

The Vietnamese conquest, the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance, and the American withdrawal from Indo-China upset the balance of power in Southeast Asia, to say the least. China could only react by further changing its regional policy: it had to move strongly against Hanoi, link up with the United States, and stand behind Thailand. As concerns the United States, China elected to speed up the recognition process and give way (however temporarily) on the Taiwan issue. Part of the new range of agreements between Washington and Beijing, albeit unwritten in the formal documents, was American-Chinese policy coordination toward Vietnam including, in particular, American commitment not to recognize Hanoi and joint diplomatic and (later) material support for the Kampuchean opposition forces. Washington would also look the other way during China's military campaign of punishment and retribution against Vietnam. These elements were in place in late 1978, so that the early 1979 thirty-days Chinese incursion into northern Vietnam could take place with reasonable surety against Soviet counter-attack against China through Mongolia or Sinkiang. Sino-American strategic cooperation, the product of the proto-coalition that had formed in 1972 against Moscow, thus successfully withstood its first major operational test.63

As concerned Vietnam, the early 1979 push into the mountains adjacent to the Chinese border was a modified success. To be sure, the Chinese army was shown to be grossly ill-prepared and -equipped for modern combat: at least
20,000 casualties were suffered and probably many more; some of the best Chinese units were fought to a standstill by a smaller number of regional Vietnamese reserves; and China could not use its air force and navy, since it had no experience with combined forces warfare and because it feared Soviet-Vietnamese destruction. But Deng and his associates did succeed in convincing Hanoi that no change in the political and military landscape of Southeast Asia could be made without Chinese participation; the Chinese army did inflict large casualties and wreak much destruction upon Vietnam; and Vietnam felt constrained to pull enough regular forces out of Kampuchea over the next several years as to provide the three groups of resistance forces in that country an extended lease on life. One effect of the war was to push Hanoi even further into Moscow's hands. Correspondingly, Beijing solidified its tie with Washington against Moscow for the next few years, and the Kremlin's relationship with Hanoi became one of the "three obstacles" to improvement of Sino-Soviet relations. 64

At the same time, however, the Chinese leadership noticed that, although the Kremlin threatened war with China as a means of defense of Vietnam, it did not actually carry out that threat. This caused them to wonder why the Soviets had not attacked during the entire decade after 1969, when the Central Kingdom had been so vulnerable and the Russians so strong and highly motivated. The answer: Russian intentions were defensive at base. Prospects for war could thus be drastically downgraded and China's independence from its too-close security ties with the United States restored. The seeds of the Chinese move within the strategic triangle to a position of rough equidistance, as well as of Sino-Soviet rapprochement, date therefore from the 1979 crisis, although the fruit did not ripen until after Gorbachev's accession to power in 1985.
As for Thailand, it became a security protectorate of the United States (under the 1959 Manila Pact, which survived the demise of SEATO) and China (which declared that a Vietnamese invasion of Thailand would be followed by Chinese invasion of both Vietnam and Laos). Beijing thereafter repaired its ties with Bangkok by ceasing to support the Thai Communist Party, increasing its trade with Thailand, and establishing good diplomatic relations with Bangkok (including several state visits between the two capitals). Moreover, a useful division of labor was worked out between Washington, Beijing, and Bangkok concerning support of the resistance forces in Kampuchea. Washington would supply money, humanitarian assistance, and some arms, Beijing would send more arms, and Bangkok would allow its territory to be used for refugee camps, rear base guerrilla supply and recuperation, and secretion of American and Chinese arms into Kampuchea. Beijing and Washington also agreed to try to bring together the various factions into an anti-Vietnamese united front (although the United States would have nothing to do with the Khmer Rouge and, especially, Pol Pot). The upshot of these moves was to provide for the security of Thailand, keep the Kampuchean resistance at least alive, and put pressure on Vietnam (China timed artillery barrages across the Vietnamese border with the latter's dry-season offensives in Kampuchea; the United States refused all talk of economic assistance to Hanoi and used the MIA issue to deflect Vietnamese overtures for recognition).65 A new and stable balance of power therefore was established in Southeast Asia, the product of American and Chinese adjustments within the strategic triangle and in the region to Soviet-supported Vietnamese imperial pretentions. The structure was remarkably similar to that of the Korean Peninsula: Moscow was in league with the
regional communist hegemony-seeking state; Washington stood behind the threatened non-communist nation; and Beijing swung its support to the side that needed shoring up to assure international stability.

A very similar strategic situation prevailed in South Asia. There, the hegemony-threatening state, India, was not Marxist-Leninist, to be sure, but it did display a security tie with the Soviet Union. The threatened non-communist nation, Pakistan, had (like South Korea and Thailand), long been associated with the United States first as member of a collective defense treaty (CENTO) and then as recipient of American unilateral guarantee against Soviet (but not necessarily Indian) aggression. That commitment was periodically reiterated and, in 1986, substantially strengthened. China also supported Pakistan from 1960 by supplying military hardware and providing an informal security guarantorship against India. Islamabad's security was thus more or less assured, at least so far as West Pakistan was concerned.

As for New Delhi, it first needed to see to its defense against the obvious Chinese threat from the north after 1959 and, subsidiarily, against Pakistan on the west. At first India depended for these purposes on the United States, but when in 1965 Washington washed its hands of South Asian security concerns, New Delhi turned to Moscow. The Kremlin gladly and quickly responded first by mediating the Indo-Pakistan dispute at Tashkent and then, in 1971, by signing a Friendship Treaty (read alliance) directed against China. Moscow followed that up with a steady flow of military hardware assistance, whole production lines of modern military equipment, and high levels of trade and economic assistance. The South Asian security equation was thus reasonably firm: Pakistan was buttressed by the United States and China on the one side, and India was backed by the Soviet Union on the other.66
The balance of power was upset in 1979 by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. What had been the South Asian buffer state for over a century was transformed into a Soviet satellite. Russian troops appeared on Pakistan's western border. Neither China nor the United States could reverse the Soviet occupation, although the two cooperated, as in Southeast Asia, with a flow of arms, training, and money to the Afghan resistance fighters. Pakistan became the new buffer state, whose security Washington and Beijing sought to maintain. India took fright at the Soviet advance and gradually began to diversify its arms suppliers to West Europe and the United States. It also warmed up, a bit, to China. The latter sought to break through to a solution of the Sino-Indian border issue by offering to return those portions of the Northeast Frontier Agency, which it had seized in 1962, if New Delhi would allow Beijing to retain the Ladakh—much more important to China as the sole Chinese-controlled route between Sinkiang and Tibet. Although the Indians refused the bargain pro tems, a partial relaxation between the two did occur, allowing New Delhi to devote increasing attention to the Pakistan problem and to dealing with the Russian advance.67

Washington re-entered the arena by extending its security commitment to Pakistan (Soviet incursion would meet with rapid American response), upping its security assistance, increasing trade and economic transfers, and expanding the range and quality of state relations. It then moved to restore good ties with New Delhi through enhanced trade and re-opening the door to military sales. These changes largely restored the status quo in South Asia. As in Southeast Asia, America and China cooperated not only in shoring up Pakistan's security but also in materially opposing the Soviet conquest of Afghanistan. Washington supplied the money, humanitarian and economic assistance, and some weapons, while China provided other weapons.68
Afghanistan became the third of the obstacles to improving Sino-Soviet relations, while the United States, for the first time, vowed to prevent further Soviet territorial expansion anywhere and even began to provide itself the means to assure that end.

In all three regions of Asia, therefore, China sought to construct a stable balance of power on the basis of participation in regional security affairs according to its own reading of the politics of the strategic triangle. Since the Soviet Union was (at least into the mid-1980s) the principal threat and since the United States was the only alternative source of military support, China stood with the Americans, and hence with its allies, throughout Asia. A stronger contrast with Beijing's policies of the 1950s and 1960s could not be imagined. While the details of its Asian regional policy depended on the changing local balances of power, which road China took followed more generally from where it stood, in terms of security relations, within the triangle. The need, after Mao, for Western, particularly American, technical transfers, investments, and trade to buttress Deng's economic modernization program merely accentuated the new direction of Chinese foreign policy.

In the mid-1980s, however, stability within the strategic triangle, and hence in China's Asian policy, permitted Beijing to consider, for the first time, greatly reducing tensions with Moscow at the same time as maintaining good relations with Washington. Would that cause changes in Chinese policy in the three regions of Asia? In Northeast Asia, these changes within the triangle could increase pressure on Kim Il Sung to refrain from invading the South, for he could no longer easily play Moscow off against Beijing to his own advantage. Nor, with presumably much reduced Soviet military presence in the region the product of Sino-Soviet agreement, could Kim rely to the same
degree as before on Soviet military backing. Indeed, the Kremlin's motivation for paying North Korea in military hardware for anti-Chinese intelligence flights over the Yellow Sea or military port facilities would deline as well. Pyongyang would still possess the capability to begin a war on its own volition, however, and Beijing would probably want to continue to oppose such a North Korean adventure. Thus, so long as the balance of military power on the Korean Peninsula itself remained heavily in the North's favor, China would want to continue the policies noted previously toward North and South Korea.

In the South, with some additional luck (i.e., no massive political outbreak or Soviet-American confrontation on which Kim could seize as his last chance to invade), a smooth transition of power in Seoul to a new government and to democratic form of rule could occur in 1988. That in turn could lead to Chinese (and even Soviet) recognition of the South (even prior American recognition of the North), and eventually to the convening of a six-party international conference on the future of Korea (participants would be the two Koreas, the three members of the strategic triangle, and Japan). Thus, even in 1986 it was possible to envisage a felicitous turn of events in Northeast Asia stemming from reconfiguration of the strategic triangle in conjunction with impending political changes in South Korea. Given that the Kim Il Sung succession would probably occur around the same time and that the South Korean economy had long since decisively outdistanced that of the North, the Peninsular military balance (sans the American, Chinese, and Soviet contributions) would even out and the prospects for a stable peace in Korea would be enhanced.

Much would, of course, depend on the fallout from changes along the American-Soviet leg of the triangle, especially as concerned strategic and theatre nuclear weapons arms reduction. If, for instance, significant
reductions in both areas could be agreed on, prospects for stability in Korea and in Northeast Asia in general could be enhanced. China could therefore look forward to worrying less about the threat of lateral escalation into Asia of Soviet-American crises or confrontations elsewhere. On the other hand, arms control failures could well lead to redoubled superpower competition in many regions, including the Korean Peninsula. In an era of more-than-normal Soviet attempts to expand Kremlin influence into new locations, such a development could be threatening, even disasterous, for all, including China. Fortunately, the prospects for that turn of events seemed to be significantly lower that further progress toward American-Soviet arms limitations.

A somewhat similar conclusion could be reached regarding China's position in Southeast Asia. There, intra-triangular stability, improved Sino-Soviet relations, and continued good American-Chinese ties all would add to Vietnamese inhibitions against invading Thailand. Indeed, Hanoi would be motivated even further to improve relations with Washington, since better Soviet-Chinese ties would undoubtedly cause Vietnam to hedge against Soviet-Chinese agreements worked out at its expense. China's main purpose would remain dual: to weaken and eventually destroy Hanoi's grip over Cambodia and to break the Vietnamese-Soviet alliance. A Soviet Union less capable of militarily defending Vietnam (by threatening China along its Russian and Mongolian borders) would be a Soviet Union on which Vietnam could depend correspondingly less for its security against China. Hanoi might therefore be forced into meliorating its differences with Beijing. China, of course, could attempt to drive a hard bargain --advocating removal of the Soviets from Camn Ranh Bay, sundering the Moscow-Hanoi security tie, and withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. But it would be unlikely to achieve all those ambitions and probably would be foolish to try, since in the end that
could push Vietnam even further into Soviet hands. Better to adopt a policy of improving ties with Hanoi through trade, offering to cease support from the Kampuchean resistance forces, and, perhaps, a Sino-Vietnamese border regions arms control agreement--all in exchange for abrogation of Hanoi's Moscow connection. That would, of course, in turn require Soviet assent, which meant that Indo-China would have to remain on the Moscow-Beijing agenda of talks to improve their own relations.

On balance, however, improvement in relations between China and the Soviet Union would loosen lines of division between Vietnam and the Soviet Union, on the one side, and Thailand (plus ASEAN) supported by the United States and China, on the other. The upshot could be a general, but not upsetting, restructuring of the balance of power in Southeast Asia. Some political distances would be lessened: Hanoi from Beijing, Washington, and perhaps Bangkok. Others would be elongated: Moscow from Hanoi, and Beijing from Bangkok and Washington. The overall threat to regional peace, however, would be reduced. That would not mean, on the other hand, that China would relax about Southeast Asia. Its ultimate goals of excluding all other external powers and of dividing the region against itself so as to maximize Beijing's own influence would not have been fully met. The Americans and the Russians could not but retain a measure of influence in Southeast Asia. But the seeds of eventual Vietnamese-Soviet divorce would have been sown and the groundwork laid for a diplomacy of movement and competition mostly in non-military realms (e.g., economic and political). There, Chinese policy means, and with them Beijing's influence, could only grow as economic-political modernization proceeded apace at home. The long term consequence would be the
rise of China to a level of influence in Southeast Asia at least equal to that of the United States and the Soviet Union and therefore a reproduction, in that region, of the structure of the strategic triangle.

In South Asia, changes in Chinese policy were more difficult to analyze, since the most important variable, Pakistan's internal situation, was trending in an unclear direction through the Zia regime's decision to move (once again) toward a more democratic political system. A weakening of the Pakistani socio-political fabric, which could occur as a result, along class or ethnic lines could jeopardize Islamabad's capability to resist Soviet subversion as well as its overall defensability against direct Soviet attack through Afghanistan. Chinese capabilities to assist Pakistan in such circumstances, as well as those of the United States, might be impaired, since a nation divided against itself is not only a temptation to Soviet meddling but is much more difficult to defend through rendering the normal kinds of external assistance. On the other hand, Soviet-Chinese detente would generally lessen the motivations of the two communist giants to battle each other indirectly in Afghanistan, and to that extent would meliorate the Soviet threat to Pakistan. Although Moscow-Beijing detente would not necessarily extend to the Afghan question, the very fact that it was one of the "Three Obstacles" indicated that any major improvement in relations would have to address that matter. All things considered, the Russians were likely to have their way in Afghanistan whatever happened in Sino-Soviet relations (that despite Gorbachev's pledge to evacuate Afghanistan eventually), and the only question was whether Beijing could fund part of its continued security protection of Pakistan convincing the Soviets to pay for improved ties with Beijing partially through taking pressure off Islamabad. That would require extensive
negotiations, which could involve the United States, at least indirectly, and which certainly would affect the nature and extent of the American program of support for Pakistan.

With regard to India, Sino-Soviet detente (once again, in the context of continued good American-Chinese ties) would cause concern in New Delhi, at least initially, over possible loss of Soviet security guarantorship against Chinese attack. India ought to be driven to seek further diversification in its arms suppliers, to try once again to negotiate a settlement of the Sino-Indian border conflict, and to go easier on Pakistan. If so, the solidity of South Asian security could actually improve upon upgrading Soviet-Chinese ties: India would be more circumspect in its dealings with Moscow, Beijing, and Islamabad, while the United States, finding greater receptivity in New Dehli, would more easily counter Soviet influence there. Already in 1986 it was possible to discern such movement: Indian decision-makers openly stated that they had "outgrown" the Soviet Union in economic and (to a somewhat lesser degree) security relations, they displayed more interest in solving the border problem with China, and they took no direct action against Pakistan despite unrest in border areas between the two countries.

The major potential problem for India-related security issues were in fact neither China nor the Soviet Union but the prospect of a Pakistani nuclear test. If Islamabad were to be able to demonstrate a nuclear capability, India would either have to go ahead and acquire its own bomb (which it would do quickly), move to physically destroy the Pakistani production facilities (which could mean war between the two and possible involvement of all three strategic triangle members), or reconstitute a strong security relationship with Moscow (thus undoing all the restructuring of the South Asian security equation stemming from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan
in 1979). The most likely option was the first, which would transform the South Asian military equation as well as work economic hardships on both India and Pakistan. China's response would need to be minimal. After all, Beijing already possessed a large number of nuclear warheads and sophisticated delivery vehicles and could relatively easily procure and additional increment to balance Indian production and deployment. In addition, an emerging Indian nuclear capability would perhaps help persuade both parties to negotiate more seriously their border differences.

3. The Third World

China's policy further afield—in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the United Nations—was a resultant of its relations with the United States and the Soviet Union as principally worked out in Asia. When China leaned heavily to one side or other within the triangle, as in the 1950s and 1970s, its policies toward all other states and issues were a strict function of its position within that system. When Beijing attempted to escape altogether from the triangle, as during the 1960s, or when it assumed a position roughly equidistant between the superpowers, as in the 1980s, the situation was more difficult to analyze. Then China could sometimes take a position favoring the American side, at other times one that inclined toward the Soviets, and at still other times one that would permit maximum Chinese into the region or issue in question. Since China during the early and middle 1980s spent much of its policy energies adjusting its position toward the center of the Washington-Moscow spectrum, thereby repurchasing its "independence" in foreign policy, what relations with Third World countries China did have was directed to that end. Hence the earlier policy statements of Chinese opposition to both superpowers without distinction, Beijing's claim
that it would never become a superpower and carry out imperialist policies, and its declaration that China was the natural ally (read leader) of the "South" against the "North."
But China had little available power capable of being projected to the great distances required for non-Asian Third World influence. Moreover, the United States and the Soviet Union had for long established themselves as the principal external powers in most regions—leaving comparatively little room for China as the latecomer. Even further, the politics of most regions was both complicated and unfamiliar to China. For these reasons, Beijing had difficulty entering new areas and situations and playing the game once it did succeed in getting in the door. Another "rule" of Chinese behavior in these areas was: the farther from central aspects of the strategic triangle, the more likely China could deal with the countries or issues in question on the "merits" (i.e., in terms of such non-superpower related interests as trade, ideology, and expansion of Beijing’s influence for its own sake). A final regularity was that the farther away geographically from China's borders a region was, and hence the more likely that China's power projection capability of all kinds would be minimal, the greater propensity for Beijing to utilize policy instruments that could overcome such disadvantages more easily and at not terribly high cost. That meant, once again, trade and ideology, as well as military training and arms transfers, establishment of diplomatic relations, party-to-party ties, state visits, international law, and multilateral institutions rather than alliances, military deployments, and threats.

China had ignored the Third World during the second half of the Cultural Revolution decade ending in 1976 and did not actively reassert itself in those areas until after the Sino-Vietnamese conflict in 1979. By the mid-1980s, however, Beijing had repositioned itself within the strategic triangle and had centered its non-triangular foreign policy on support for domestic economic modernization. It therefore found increasing room for Third World policies
not totally dependent on relations with Washington and Moscow. Accordingly, it spent correspondingly greater policy attention and state resources on upgrading its presence in those areas, partly for power expansion purposes per se but mostly in service of the Four Modernizations. A few examples in each area will suffice to illustrate general trends.

An excellent instance was Chinese arms sales to both Iran and Iraq. Those two countries, at war since 1980, desperately needed military equipment to carry out their sides of the conflict. The United States, hitherto Iran's chief supplier, had long since ceased to play that role, and the Soviet Union, Iraq's supplier, had partly cut off Baghdad. Both countries, moreover, possessed a surfeit of petrodollars. Beijing saw its opportunity for increasing its influence in the Middle East, making a good deal of hard currency in the transaction, and having a say about Middle Eastern politics as well. Accordingly, China worked out a secret arms sales agreement in 1981 for a considerable amount of equipment to be sent to Iraq and followed it up with further sales periodically thereafter. Total cash amounts apparently were in the several billion dollar range. China then turned around and sold additional equipment to Iran (and, reportedly, delivered North Korean equipment for a fee). Once again, hard currency was "earned," which Beijing used to purchase technology and other economic goods from the West.

Strategically, through arms sales to both sides Beijing hoped to help set the stage for a negotiated settlement by establishing a balance of power between Iran and Iraq, preventing Iraq from falling to superior Iranian numbers on the battlefield, and keeping Iran sufficiently strong that, after Khomeni, that country would not slip into civil war and become a tempting target for
possible Soviet invasion (and thus also American-Soviet confrontation). Thus, China attained a greater degree of influence in the area and made money in the process.70

North Africa provided little opportunity for Beijing (except for Egypt, which supplied China copies of later model Soviet military equipment useful in modernization of the People's Liberation Army in exchange for Chinese-manufactured parts for Soviet-supplied aircraft; the deal was godfathered by the United States), and so efforts were concentrated on nations south of the Sahara. However, conditions there were different from those in the Middle East. Countries were much poorer, Soviet influence tended to crowd the Chinese out of important states (Ethiopia, Angola, and Mozambique, to name three), and distance and comparative unfamiliarity with local conditions rendered Chinese policy instruments less effective. Moreover, China had learned during the 1960s that sending arms to Marxist revolutionary groups attempting to overthrow their governments was counterproductive, just as it had discovered that foreign aid was a costly and not very policy-effective way of trying to purchase influence. Additionally, inviting African leaders to visit Beijing, while good prestige diplomacy for the first time or two, rapidly declined in effectiveness if material assistance (which was what African statesmen wanted from China) was not forthcoming. Of that, China had comparatively little. Beijing was reduced, therefore, to spreading what aid it had around too thinly to capture much political loyalty in Africa (although Beijing continued to maintain an excellent reputation for fairness and competence in what assistance it did render).71

It also felt it had to support those states (Somalia, for example) which were opposed to Soviet clients in the region (for instance, Ethiopia) and those revolutionary movements (such as UNITA in Angola) which opposed their
Soviet-oriented governments. It tried to climb on the anti-South African
bandwagon as well by providing economic and military assistance to the "Front
Line" African states, SWAPO in Namibia, and (serreptitiously) the African
National Congress in South Africa itself. Since there were so many African
states, all "Third World" and all with United Nations votes, China made
efforts to appeal to them as another Third World, anti-superpower developing
country. This did not carry Beijing very far, however, since much of its Sub-
Saharan African actions did stem from the need to oppose the Soviet Union
there but not the United States (Washington did not appreciate Chinese-led
attacks on its presence and policies in that region, and told Beijing so). 72

In sum, Chinese influence slowly seeped back into Africa during the 1980s
but with little consequence. Chinese policy means were still short of
Beijing's pretentions and most of what could be spared for African purposes
had to be earmarked for anti-Soviet purposes. Finally, China's African policy
was a victim of the country's own economic success at home. Beijing ran
increasing trade deficits with the industrial countries, as import of
technology and purchases of industrial goods and services abroad far outran
the nation's level of exports to those countries. China had to make up that
deficit by selling its own industrial products and primary produce to other
developing nations, especially those in Africa. Foreign and military aid
could not close the gap, of course, nor was it intended to do so; China had
to, and did, make a "profit," as it were, in the Third World in order to
finance its "losses" in the developed West. The problem was exacerbated in
the mid-1980s by China's agricultural success stemming from the family
responsibility system. That made China a net exporter of food and also of such
cash crops as cotton. African countries needed food but did not want Chinese
cotton competing on world markets with their own. The market price for such
crops thus dropped drastically, exacerbating already severe balance of payments problems for such countries as Nigeria. It was therefore difficult for them to become "friends of China" and followers of the Chinese verbal policy that Third World states should stand together against the threats--economic as well as military--of the superpowers.

Once beyond the Middle East and Africa, Chinese capabilities to project its influence declined precipitously. What was left was verbal declaration, for the most part, and a bundle of contradictions, which summed up Beijing's Latin American policy. On the one hand, China wanted to establish and maintain its Third World credentials, which meant acting in unison with what was supposed to be a united front against the "North," e.g., the capitalist West and the Soviet-dominated socialist East. On the other hand, Latin America was hardly united against America nor were all of that region's states anti-Soviet (witness Cuba and Nicaragua). Further, Taiwan, Beijing's still-active diplomatic nemesis, hung on in Central America with about ten embassies still functioning (some countries recognized both Taipei and Beijing). With the Russians increasingly active in Latin America, China chose at times to break its own own verbal policy of Third World solidarity to side with the United States on some issues (opposition to Soviet-Cuban infiltration), waffle on others (the Falklands, Granada, and Nicaragua), and stand squarely with Latin American states on still others (Latin American nuclear-free zone, and law of the sea). China did carry on an increasing volume of trade with Latin American nations and was especially interested in Brazil, which had industrial goods and technology for sale at low prices, as well as Argentina. Two-way trade with those countries thus increased from $410 million in 1979 to $1.48 billion in 1983. Beijing also rendered a bit of economic assistance, for instance to Nicaragua (c. $19 million in 1986), but in general replaced aid
with trade as its principal policy means in the region. And while trade picked up considerably—although at still modest absolute levels—China provided no military assistance to Latin America. While Beijing would no doubt grow as an economic, if not a politico-military, factor in the region, that would take time, probably another decade and a half. 73

That left the United Nations as the final arena for Chinese Third World policy. Beijing came late to the principal international organization, having been kept out for over two decades by the United States and its own rejectionist attitude during the Cultural Revolution. In 1972, however, China not only gained membership but by the mid-1980s had already associated itself with over 300 other international organizations. The latter included not merely small and specialized groups but such major institutions as the World Bank, the GATT, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Beijing’s goals were the same as with its more general policies: security, development, and influence. Thus, China quickly perked up its ears when it learned that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund would loan it large sums on easy terms and that the GATT was the gateway to lower tariffs with the industrial world. It therefore changed its mind about these American- and West European-dominated groups and about not taking loans at interest, as it did also concerning access to nuclear power technology if it would only submit to the rules of the IAEA. 74

In the United Nations itself, after attempting without success to turn the General Assembly into a forum for attacking the Soviet Union in the 1970s and then the Americans as well in the early 1980s, Beijing concentrated on making itself personal grata with the Group of 77 (i.e., the c. 125 Third World nations that caucused together). The problem, however, was that despite China’s every effort to convince them of its Third World credentials, the
others did not believe that a large communist country could be genuinely Third World in orientation, especially one that had been at war with India (the quintessential developing nation) and that had maintained alliances with the Soviet Union and (in unwritten form) the United States. Thus, China was specifically not asked to join the Group of 77, and Beijing could only try, as best it could, to put a good face on the rebuff. Further, China's own "independent" foreign policy, along with the constant anti-Soviet plank (until the mid-1980s) in its international dealings (to say nothing of its permanent Security Council status), all caused Beijing occasionally to vote with the United States or against Third World states. So China pursued a rather lonely course at the United Nations, although it made much of its Third World status and trumpeted its presumed unity of interests with other developing nations.75

Outside the United Nations, China was also differentially successful. It moved to the leadership ranks of some organizations (such as those noted above but also including the Asian Development Bank) where economic development was the main concern. And it joined others (the International Olympic Committee was the most obvious) where prestige and supplanting Taiwan were important. But it was not successful in establishing ties with exclusively Third World organizations such as the Neutral and Non-Aligned Nations Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement (which were dominated, respectively, by India, China's chief rival in the Third World, and by Cuba, Moscow's surrogate there).76

In general, Beijing's attitude toward global, transnational, and international organization issues was a strict function of its foreign policy orientation. When China was excluded from the United Nations, Beijing called for its abolition or severe modification. When China gained admittance, it dropped that and used the General Assembly as a platform for opposing the Russians and then the Americans as well. When development became paramount,
Beijing placed stress on international economic institutions. And when Beijing moved back toward the center of the Washington-Moscow spectrum within the strategic triangle, its stress on policy independence extended to the Third World as well. Thus, China's Third World policy in international organizations continued, as it had been in the more distant past, to be of secondary importance, dependent for specific content on the country's domestic course and the changing directions of Beijing's foreign policy.

IV. The Influence of Military Modernization on Chinese Foreign Policy and on Washington-Beijing Relations

Any consideration of China's military modernization program would have to be placed squarely in the context of the complexities of China's domestic and international situation, as described above. No variable operated independently, and in the case of military development the influence of extramilitary factors was higher than in most others, given the comparatively low priority accorded to that sphere and the sensitivity of other states to utilization of military means for policy purposes. This said, however, it paid to inspect several litmus paper military-related questions, in the context of Chinese foreign policy and of Beijing's relations with the United States.

The first was how transfer of military or dual-use technology from the United States and elsewhere would affect the pace and direction of Chinese force modernization, its resultant power projection capability, and the general course of Chinese foreign policy. By the close of the Deng era, preliminary answers were reasonably apparent. First, an indeterminant but probably reasonably high proportion of all technology coming to China from the United States and perhaps elsewhere was finding its way, directly or
indirectly, into the military sphere. There was no way to measure that flow, since it involved not merely hardware but patents, licences, training (in China and abroad), spin-offs from joint ventures, theft and intelligence operations, and many other conduits. But because so much of the total was contributant to China's general industrial growth and enhanced labor and managerial sophistication, the payoff to strictly military capacity would probably be high, even though in the short run most would have been earmarked for non-military sectors. If one were to consider only direct hardware transfers to the Chinese military, however, it was clear that the volume was low and would probably remain so. The reasons were well-known: lack of hard currency, unwillingness to become dependent on foreign suppliers for equipment in volume, lack of knowledge of up-to-date equipment, inability to use the hardware without prior investment in the proper logistical and manpower base, competing demands for facilities and funds from higher priorities projects elsewhere in the economy, and a calculation that sufficient time was available to produce the equipment in question at home since the Russian threat had been downgraded. This was borne out during the Deng years, when window shopping was done, samples inspected, and sometimes small quantities procured, but no massive orders made, no turnkey plants procured, and no assembly lines purchased from abroad. Know-how and hardware would have to seep into the military sphere from other sectors of the economy and, to a lesser extent, from abroad, rather than flood it directly. Moreover, the Chinese were not unmindful of the debate in the United States over the wisdom of direct military transfers and did not wish to jeopardize the more massive and more important flow of knowledge and material into other sectors. And since the military appeared to go along with the revised priorities, and as China had no enemy other than the Soviet Union against
whom (at least until the overall modernization program were considerably more advanced) to use new high-technology military hardware, there was no visible pressure to change those priorities. In sum, even though Chinese force modernization was probably considerably enhanced by foreign, principally American, military technology inputs, the pace was still relaxed, the changes in terms of military potential still relatively small, the role of actual hardware inputs still limited, and the prospects for continuation of the established pattern rather high.

It followed, second, that Chinese power projection capability would not change significantly over the following half-decade or more. Again, several reasons presented themselves. Unless China were pulled into a Korean or a Vietnamese conflict (possibly one over the Pakistan, but less likely due to joint American-Chinese-Indian deterrence of Soviet attack), or unless China decided to break the economic-security arrangement with the United States so essential to Beijing's future and attack Taiwan, no significant targets of opportunity were likely to present themselves before the end of the century. And there was no sign of a anti-Taiwan buildup, no propensity to have another go at Vietnam, and no desire to become involved in another disastrous Korean War. It was true that Korea, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union could initiate conflict in the three Asian regions in question and it was true that Taiwanese independence could trigger Chinese intervention, even if at enormous political, economic, and military cost. But since China's diplomatic position was already strong, partially making up for its lack of a potent projection force and for its disinclination to use violence in most instances, the likelihood of such conflicts was as small as Beijing could make. And since China did not appear to be constructing a force for Asian arena power projection, it was nearly impossible to conceive of one for use at longer
distances (except in the nuclear deterrent sense, discussed below). In that instance, however, other instruments of power, particularly the economic, were more serviceable. Finally, the power available to China's putative opponents would remain too great, for the rest of the century, for Beijing to be tempted to fill a power vacuum. And a switch to a threatening military posture would only serve to draw the Russians and the Americans further into Asia—a counterproductive policy, since it was Beijing's long-term purpose to gradually push them out—and to frighten Japan enough to go in for full-scale rearmament. Such a development, by itself, would be a disaster to China.

Given this conclusion, the third question—how a meaningful power projection capacity would affect Chinese foreign policy—would answer itself. If such a capability were absent, foreign policy proclivities evident under Deng would not be susceptible to variation due to that factor. Perhaps a post-Deng regime, finding itself with no such capacity, would try to reverse course and work hard to acquire one in as short a time as possible. But it would have to pay a very high price at home and abroad. Domestically, the Four Modernizations would have to be reversed, with disastrous consequences. Internationally, China's repute, so high under Deng, would fall peremptuously, and the acceptance Beijing found so broadly in the post-Mao decade would be replaced with suspicion and opposition. In a word, China's overall power would actually decline as its military power grew. If China's new rulers were rational, therefore, they would avoid such perilous changes and adhere to the course so successfully pursued under Deng. That way, eventually they could build—year by year—a projection force worthy of the name while at the same time modernize their economy and society (perhaps even their policy), and maximize their international influence.
In the United States and elsewhere, much attention was paid to the specifics of military and military-related technology transfer. Two American Administrations put themselves through contortions deciding if, when, and how much military technology and hardware to transfer, through patents, licencing, purchase, training, joint ventures, turnkey plants, assembly line setup, or sample; what bureaucratic procedures to follow--COCOM, red-light-green light, Commerce versus State versus Defense Departments as authorizing agencies; in what category China belonged (ally, non-allied, friendly but non-allied, etc.); what constituted military or dual-use technology and hardware; how to control Chinese access to American universities, research facilities, laboratories, and production facilities; what the process of technological diffusion was in China (so that, presumably, it would be "safe" to transfer civilian or non-military technology and forbidden or controlled through policy channels to transfer military technology); and what constituted "offensive" or "defensive" weapons systems. While it was wise to undertake such a debate, if only to demonstrate how broad the category "technology" was and the seamless webb nature of military versus civilian, offensive versus defensive, single versus dual-use, etc., technology, in the end it was decided that, with certain obvious limitations (strategic-nuclear weaponry, for instance), practically anything the Chinese wanted and could pay for could be exported and that the way would be smoothed for Chinese purchasing agents to make their choices and arrange delivery with reasonable speed. The door having been opened, however, the Chinese during Deng's rule did not rush through it to pick up the array of military goods laid out before them, for reasons just indicated. Perhaps Deng's successors would, but such a change would have to come as part of a wholesale reversal of policy--deliberately depending on the outside instead of continuing a posture of general self-reliance. Indeed, if
policy were to change after Deng, it would more likely be in the direction of even greater self-reliance than before,\textsuperscript{83} thus pushing shut the door once again.

The strategic missile and nuclear weapons areas were, for good reasons, generally regarded as special, and sensitive, cases, which bore separate, and careful, consideration. All kinds of materials—gyroscopes, supercomputers, certain explosion devices, and reactor components, to name a very few—, obvious resources such as enriched uranium, and much of the associated technology—warhead design and critical testing equipment, for instance—, were proscribed from transfer, in whatever manner, to China, as was the training of Chinese students and others in these fields.\textsuperscript{84} The presumption was that such prohibition would at least slow the Chinese momentum and thus postpone the emergence or the heightening of a direct nuclear threat from China. At best, it would give the United States a chance to remain ahead sufficiently far such that Beijing would presumably remain deterred from using what capacity it possessed, even if large. It was well that barriers were set up, for Beijing was indeed in the business of acquiring a nuclear force capable of reaching American territory (to say nothing of that of American allies in Asia and American bases near China) and of perfecting that force quantitatively and qualitatively (solid-state boosters, nuclear-driven submarines for sea launch, higher yield warheads and multiple warhead missiles, and much more accurate guidance systems to allow a counter-force strategy).\textsuperscript{85} It had also demonstrated that it was no respector of the logic of non-proliferation, both in declaratory policy under MAO and actual assistance to Pakistan under Deng.\textsuperscript{86}
But many problems arose in trying to divorce this area from all other aspects of technology transfer. Most importantly, the whole idea of insulation was fallacious, since the construction and deployment of such systems entailed the melding together of a large array of systems and the general talents of a wide variety of trained personnel. One could not compartmentalize the training of a Chinese physicist into nuclear weapon-related and non-nuclear fields, nor could one rest assured that the myriad forms of high technology built into a modern jet transport could not be inspected, learned from, and eventually duplicated if needed by the Chinese. The line between nuclear-strategic and other technologies and systems was, and would remain, artificial, drawn in a constantly shifting manner, and used for variant political purposes.

American insistence on inspection of the actual employment of "dual-use" technologies would not alleviate the problem. Beijing might not permit such a thing (witness the resistance to placing yet-to-be-built Chinese nuclear power generating facilities under international rules otherwise almost universally accepted), nor would the task be possible, given its enormity, even were China to agree. Further, the picture was muddied by the transferral of some types of technology to China in the strategic, if not the nuclear, area. Instances already in hand under Deng were satellite data and hardware for use against Soviet missile attack and computers first used for the 1982 census but capable of making important weapons design and missile decision calculations. It was argued that such transferred technologies were essentially "defensive" and that, on balance, American national security was enhanced, not threatened. The same was given as reason why permissive action link technology to assure the safety of nuclear weapons should be transferred to China, although that did not take place in Deng's time.87
One had to understand, moreover, that the vaunted distinction between
defensive and offensive weapons systems was a slippery one. What might be
judged "defensive" at one level of combat or in one scenario could be
"offensive" in another, and vice versa. Military history abounds in such
false distinctions. Thus, justifications given for the sale of diesel
destroyer engines, certain kinds of artillery tubes, and ground-to-air
missiles—-to say nothing of advanced avionics packages for F-8 fighter
aircraft—-as "defensive" were no more than rationalizations. The larger
purpose was to establish a solid arms supply relationship with Beijing in the
hope that that would buttress and prolong the anti-Soviet stance of the
Chinese and become a major element in the unsigned American-Chinese coalition.
At the discussion above on the roots and elements of Chinese foreign policy
indicated, there were few signs under Deng that such sales and the promise of
more would cause Beijing to adopt a stance toward Moscow that was, in any way,
at variance with Chinese interests in freeing the country from the grips of
the strategic triangle.

V. Future American-Chinese Relations

1. Costs and Benefits

As the Deng era drew to a close, it was time to ask, more pointedly, what
were the actual risks and benefits to the United States of Chinese military
modernization in the context of an accepted American military policy of
transfer to China of many kinds of military systems and association
technologies and of reasonably rapid Chinese acquisition of them, either alone
or with Western assistance. Certainly it was true that, as China grew in
national power, broadly defined, the risks rose that Beijing would act in
manners inimical to American interests.
A good example was arms exports. With a history of arms sales already evident under Deng, clearly more would come. China would surely attempt to earn more hard currency in that manner and not limit its sales out of regard for American interests. And, in contrast with Deng's policy, Beijing might use arms sales to upset local power balances and aggrieve regional disputes. American contributions to Chinese military modernization would merely accelerate Chinese capabilities in the arena. The question was how much farther Beijing would be able to proceed with American inputs. While the answer depended, obviously, on the magnitude and the pace of American military and technological assistance, it was noteworthy that China already possessed a large conventional arms manufacturing industry quite capable of supplying large quantities of arms at reasonable prices. It was true that the weapons in question were at the lower end of the scale of sophistication, whereas most buyers preferred more up-to-date systems. But a potential market existed throughout the Third World for China, which would undoubtedly take advantage of it. American sales would probably not suffer unduly, at least at first, since the United States' comparative advantage was in high technology systems. Nonetheless, with time China would become a competitor in sales and a thorn in the American side to the extent that Washington depended on arms sales to influence regional situations in the direction of stability, to project American influence, and to counter the Russians. (Not that the situation in the long run was entirely bleak; a China willing and able to sell an ever-wider range of military equipment and know-how would make life as difficult for Moscow as it would for Washington, perhaps even more so.) Everything depended on the political situation, within China and in the strategic triangle, both of which would in the nature of things remain indeterminate.
On balance, then, a militarily modernizing China could be of use to the United States under certain circumstances. Indeed, so long as Beijing's foreign policy emphasis was more anti-Soviet than anti-American; so long as the Soviet threat continued; so long as China were devoting its energies mostly to internal economic development and social change for the better; so long as China felt it could use several of the available instruments of power (and not, as in the Soviet case, be reduced to the military alone); and so long as China's regional and global environments were not conducive to the rapid penetration of Chinese power (e.g., balances of power existed on both levels that would not easily be upset), a militarily modernizing China would probably not become a "threat" to the United States. The one exception was in the nuclear-strategic realm, but even there it was not clear that Washington could, or should, do anything other than continue its long-standing policy of disallowing direct transfer of whole systems.

As China rose to become a strategic threat to the United States—and it was China's policy to do so, even if gradually—Washington would surely have to rethink its whole military relationship with Beijing. But when that assessment was completed, in all probability the conclusion would remain that continuation of a moderate (if not massive) military relationship with Beijing would be in America's interest. After all, Washington was already well down the road in its quest for an interdependent relationship with Beijing in as many areas as possible. China had, under Deng, become militarily interdependent with the United States, as demonstrated by joint security guarantorship (however unwritten in the formal sense) of South Korea, Thailand, Pakistan, and through parallel strategic policies to deter Soviet nuclear threats. But the equation worked both ways: Washington was also partially dependent on Beijing for its own security, globally and in
Asia. Even before Deng, in 1969, Washington deliberately had moved from a 2 1/2 to a 1 1/2 conflict planning and force structuring base under the explicit presumption (among others) that China was no longer a security threat to the United States and its allies. And since then, the entire American defense strategy, from planning to budgets to procurements to training to deployments, depended equally explicitly on the presumption of a China not hostile to Washington nor cooperative with Moscow in security matters. It was true that, after Deng, China probably would grow more competitive with the United States across the spectrum of instruments of national power, that China would discover new interests to pursue as its raw power burgeoned, and that China would in time even threaten American territory with nuclear destruction. American strategic presumptions would thereby progressively be undermined. But that was still better than a China solidly allied with Moscow, a China going it entirely alone in Asia and elsewhere, or a China once more turned inward in a self-destructive mood. Thus, the policy of military cooperation with China was one means among several to help ensure not only a hopefully positive long term outcome in American-Chinese relations but also to cushion the impact of a negative turn in Chinese policy, were it to come.

2. Principles

Thus, the military element, positive and negative, would remain one aspect of a multi-faceted relationship that, with time, would undoubtedly grow and become far more complex even than it was under Deng. It was the intersection of American and Chinese interests and power, on the one hand, with the resultant policies and instruments of power, on the other, that would continue to produce specific policy issues between the two countries. They included such bilateral matters as trade, technology transfer, military sales, student and other exchanges, and official visits, to name a few; policies
toward third countries, especially the Soviet Union; and questions concerning the nature and evolution of the international system (nuclear proliferation, reform and use of the United Nations system, global and regional balances of power, economic interdependence versus self-reliance, and other such questions). Given the size and ambitions of both states, any topic in any of these arenas was candidate to become a policy issue between Washington and Beijing. Consideration of a representative sample in the military area, as well as the Taiwan question, are taken up below, albeit in outline form only.

When addressing any question in American-Chinese relations at whatever level of analysis, it would always pay to keep in mind some general considerations as first approximation guidelines to formulation of American policy toward Beijing. These are five. First, both the United States and China would, and should, persist in pursuing their separate, parallel, and coterminous interests, all of which would change in character as their absolute and relative power varied. That complex of interests, and the policies made in their name, would no doubt become more variegated with time. Therefore, clashes as well as agreements would have to be expected. For the United States, it would be best to maximize areas of harmony and agreement and downplay differences, to the extent possible. In the military arena, similar opinions about the Soviet threat would need to be played up, while differences over arms export problems might be de-emphasized, although not forgotten. The time would no doubt come, as it did under Deng, for Washington to be quite firm. American decisionmakers would then have to consider what could not be traded away and what could be sacrificed in favor of another interest. In the military sphere, past examples in the former column included objection to continued Chinese transfer of nuclear technology to Pakistan and prolongation of American military sales to Taiwan, in both of which cases Washington
successfully argued its case to Beijing. In the latter column, a military example was the decision to allow Chinese military personnel access in China to American high technology equipment placed there to monitor Soviet missile and nuclear weapons tests, on grounds that the data so gathered was valuable enough to justify possible compromise of the technology involved and exclusive domain over the data obtained.

Second, no double standards should be allowed to play a large role over an extended period in American-Chinese relations unless explicit trade-offs in interests were involved. Washington would probably have to tolerate continued and unnecessary public criticism from Beijing, but should not allow day-to-day differences to proceed to the point where Beijing was always acting as if the basic relationship was at stake. If a tendency toward such one-sided criticism were to become the norm—as did happen at times under Deng—Beijing would have to be notified that Washington would not further tolerate such normally reprehensible behavior. In general, reasonable reciprocity should be the order of the day. An example during the Deng era was the decision to allow visiting Chinese military delegations to see many normally closed military sites, military systems, and high-ranking American officials. The Chinese did not reciprocate to a similarly broad extent. That disjunction was noted but accepted pro tems as still meeting the American interest in maintaining an anti-Soviet Chinese military posture. Later, however, when it was clear that China had in mind not joint deterrence of Soviet expansionism but learning—as cheaply as possible—about American military strategy, tactics, and equipment, the argument for more nearly strict reciprocity gained ground. Subsequent delegations and visits were thus exchanged more or less on a one-for-one basis. Much inequity remained, however, especially in terms of comparative exchange of information and technology.
Third, response to changes in Chinese policy—which could be rapid—ought to be appropriate to those changes. Chinese behavior that accorded with American interests ought to be rewarded, and vice versa. Moreover, "rewards" rather than "punishments" should receive emphasis. So long as Beijing configured its military to confront the Russians and the Vietnamese, the United States was wise to assist Chinese military modernization. Were China to build up its forces against Taiwan, on the other hand, or materially slacken its pace of preparations and deployments against the two first-mentioned foes, Washington would probably be best advised to decrease the pace and quality of military-technological-economic assistance to China. The question would be: how quick a reaction to obvious indicators of detrimental policy changes would be appropriate. The answer would, of course, depend on a multitude of factors as outlined earlier. As a general rule, however, probably it would be best to cool off relations slowly but steadily under such circumstances, but let Beijing know what was occurring, and why.

Fourth, certain limits existed, and would always exist, in American-Chinese relations beyond which it was improper for China to proceed. These should be specified carefully in order to prevent misunderstanding. Conversely, areas where China was welcome also ought to be clearly indicated. In the military area, an absolute prohibition ought to exist against theft of military systems and information, as well as against Chinese attempts to convert dual use technology directly into nuclear-strategic weaponry. (Modification of oil exploration explosion devices for use as nuclear warhead triggers would be an excellent example.) The specification of 400 military end-use items approved for export to China was a good instance of providing areas wherein China was welcome. Such limit-defining operations, positive and negative, should be encouraged in the post-Deng era.
Last, it would be well were the United States to seek new departures, i.e., to act creatively in American-Chinese military relations. That would continue momentum and assist in avoiding situations wherein each side felt it would have to make a principled stand and be unable to retreat or compromise. For instance, as Washington and Beijing come into a posture of mutual nuclear deterrence, it would be wise to engage in arms control talks, defined in the broadest manner. Perhaps agreements would be forthcoming that would alleviate or avoid altogether tensions arising from the actuality of Chinese nuclear weapons targeted against American territory and the gradual restoration of Chinese targets, in response, to the American strategic war plan. Another example might be the joint development of new military technology for deterring Soviet conventional attack, or the deployment to China for testing purposes of non-nuclear American systems just emerging from the research and development stage. In response, China might share with the United States newly perfected tactics for handling a Soviet ground offensive.

3. **Some Specific American-Chinese Military Issues**

Whether or not the United States adhered to these (or other) principals in dealing with China in the military sphere, policy differences would surely arise. They would be of two sorts: specific issues that could emerge at any time and that could be addressed and presumably solved on their merits; and more general questions that would tend to infuse specific questions with undifferentiated tensions but be capable of being solved by more or less marginal policy changes. Specific issues tend to be short term while general problems stretch over extended period of time. At the end of the Deng era, three specific issues were visible and were candidates for solution. Three
others occupied the general issues category and were already causing trouble for American policymakers. One problem -- Taiwan -- straddled the two categories, being specific but long term.

One specific issue was Chinese nuclear assistance to Pakistan. This had been going on for many years, surreptitiously, and in the 1980s in contravention to repeated Chinese assurances to the United States (in the context of negotiations over transfer to Beijing of American nuclear power technology) that no such shift had occurred or would. By the close of the Deng era, and with the nuclear power question off the agenda of American-Chinese differences, the issue had receded somewhat. It could emerge again, however, once Pakistan made it known that it had obtained such a capability, that India would then acquire its own nuclear weapon, and the non-proliferation barrier decisively broken. Because the entire structure of South Asian security relations would continue to depend on American-Chinese security guarantorship of Pakistan, and because the American component was predicated (among other things) on a non-nuclear Pakistan, an "Islamic bomb" could sunder the Washington-Beijing partnership in South Asia. The issue might in fact be defined more sharply: would Beijing join Washington in putting pressure on Islamabad to remain non-nuclear and would China be willing to take action (such as withholding military supplies to Pakistan and telling the Pakistanis that Chinese security guarantorship depended on that country's continued non-nuclear status)? The issue for Washington thus was whether the Administration would not merely consult with the Chinese about the matter but raise the issue to the highest priority level. The matter could also be seen in the context of maintenance of a strong American-Chinese working relationship in the security realm. It would be better to address and solve the question than let it slip along until events had gotten out of hand.
The other two specific issues, arms sales and reciprocity, were broached earlier. Chinese arms sales would probably become increasingly disturbing to the United States, merely because Beijing would become a strong competitor for available markets as higher technology Chinese goods were produced in exportable quantity and as China's need for hard currency grew. The American program of sale to China of a wide range of military technology itself carried the implication of Chinese entrance into markets previously dominated by Western and Soviet arms. And Chinese competitiveness would no doubt rise, if only because Beijing would be able to provide reasonable products at low prices. The question for policy purposes was whether Beijing could be induced to work in parallel with Washington in critical markets or whether China would attempt to disrupt regional balances either to amass hard currency or to gain influence.

Under Deng, parallel arms sales and transfer programs existed for Egypt, Sudan, and Somalia (the last three also recipients of American military assistance), and to resistance fighters in Afghanistan, Angola, and Kampuchea (these not only in parallel but in fact in cooperation with American military assistance programs). Moreover, China apparently did not send arms to Granada or Nicaragua, probably out of consideration of American policy in Central America, or to Libya in North Africa. The problems, aside from Iran and Iraq, concerned North Korea, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and anti-South African militants. Chinese military assistance to Pyongyang continued into the 1980s, obviously as a means to influence North Korean policy in general and to counter Soviet arms assistance in particular. The upshot, however, was augmentation of North Korean capabilities against the South and hence greater threat to the peace on the Korean Peninsula, as well as North Korean capability to export arms of its own to states and groups opposed to
Washington. China also transferred substantial military equipment, and
provided training for, the PLO, the Southwest African People's Organization,
and the African National Conference. The latter two were not enormously
disturbing to American policy, especially after the turn during 1986 of
American policy toward South Africa. The former was, since it showed (like
the Iran-Iraq military equipment sales) that China would use whatever
instruments of policy it could to insert itself into regional power equations.
On the other hand, Beijing realized that the PLO and other anti-Israeli
organizations lacked the capability to alter the Middle Eastern situation
decisively, that Israel would remain a major regional power, and that China's
capability to compete with American and Soviet military assistance programs in
the region was strictly limited. Accordingly, China progressively de-
emphasized its relations with such organizations. And, to its credit, Beijing
refused to endorse terrorism as a means of policy. In strong contrast to
Moscow and Pyongyang, little evidence existed supporting Chinese training or
supply of terrorist groups in the Middle East or elsewhere. 92

Beijing forgot, however, that its attempt to insert itself into Persian
Gulf affairs would not come without cost. When in 1987 the United States sent
a strong naval task force into the Gulf, it was faced, among other threats,
with Chinese-supplied Silkworm missiles in Iranian hands. Beijing unwisely
denied selling them to Teheran, although the evidence in American hands was
incontrovertible. The episode caused many in the American defense
establishment to have second thoughts about the wisdom of such a liberal arms
transfer relationship with China. It appeared likely, in fact, that forward
movement in that area had ceased and that permanent damage to the overall
American-Chinese security relationship had resulted.

In rum, with the exception of the Persian Gulf situation, under Deng
China appeared to configure its arms sales, supply, and military training
reasonably closely to American policy goals in most regions, despite a spate
of strong verbal attacks on Washington for alleged attempts to dominate (along
with the Russians) regional balances through its own program of security
assistance. But were Chinese power were to grow to where Beijing could
decisively assert its autonomy within the strategic triangle and where
security assistance would provide an efficient tool to take an independent
line in fact as well as declaration, Deng's successors would, like most other
states with ambition and power, use this means to project China into regional
affairs with increasing regularity and weight. Indeed, the magnitude of
China's security assistance program and the degree of its congruence with
American policy goals in distant regions would become one of the most
important tests of the closeness or separation of the two countries' foreign
policies in general. Security assistance would become an additional area
where power would drive policy. Augmented Chinese means in this sector could
become a factor in driving the two countries progressively apart.

As for reciprocity, to the extent a problem existed during the early Deng
years, it was gradually so'ved later on, as the two countries gained in
experience with each other and as American officials realized that the most
productive manner to deal with the Chinese was through more or less strict
equality. The earlier willingness to countenance closed Chinese facilities in
the face of deliberately opened American sites, etc., was replaced by a
program on the American side indicating the virtues of reciprocity and on the
Chinese side by a progressive opening of previously off-limit sites. If anything, both sides exhibited a tendency to pay too much attention to matters of form and protocol. The slow-down in development of American-Chinese military ties that took place in the middle 1980s was partly attributable to such excessive caution. A degree of inequality of reciprocity would continue, however, by the very nature of the military relationship. America was, essentially, the provider of goods and services, China the consumer, with payment being rendered partly in tangible assets (money), partly in policy coordination (or, negatively, in a lower level of policy dispute), and partly in respective interests served. Strict reciprocity was, therefore, neither to be expected nor desired; and if ever such a state was attained, further development of military ties would probably cease. Thus, in this area, a high volume of interaction was a sign of health, but so was a measurable degree of inequality. The issue was whether the two sides' decisionmakers would possess the wisdom to perceive that, and then to relax as much as possible, given the very different cultures involved and the propensity of military leaders in general to look on such matters too narrowly.

Long term issues in American-Chinese military relations were also three: differing assumptions as to the character and evolution of such ties; different purposes in mind as to why the relationship was entered into in the first place; and different assessments as to what China would do with the vast military power being amassed through economic modernization. In the first instance, ten years after Mao's demise it had become quite clear--to observers
at least—that Washington and Beijing did not share the same assumptions concerning the security tie. American officials presumed that joint planning, deployments, talks, visits, transfers, training, etc., were all done with deterrence of the Soviet Union in mind, in Asia and across the globe. American and Chinese power were to be added together and their policies coordinated over the long run, since the Soviet threat was vast, increasing, pervasive, and continuous. Americans presumed that China, because it was under explicit Russian threat, because it was so weak vis-a-vis Moscow, and because it would take a very long time to escape that threat (which, it was additionally presumed, would not voluntarily subside), would have no choice but to remain strongly anti-Soviet for as far ahead as one could see. Chinese officials, on the other hand, did not appear to perceive matters that way at all. They knew of the Soviet threat, obviously, and were properly cautious about treating it lightly. But they did not believe it would extend into the indefinite future, they believed that the Russians would not attack at all except as a follow-on to a successfully prosecuted Third World War (which was exceedingly unlikely), they knew that Chinese nuclear weapons had already deterred the Soviets and would continue to do so, and (most importantly) they were not adverse to eventual compromise with the Kremlin on basic issues. China was thus using American resources (strategy, anti-Soviet policy, technology, military systems, and hardware) to strengthen China sufficiently to where it could move to improve relations with Moscow through striking a bargain on the level and location of Russian and Chinese forces along their common border. By that means, China would become independent of the United States as well as the Soviet Union and, eventually, escape the confines of the strategic triangle.
The situation had thus changed dramatically since America and China first re-discovered each other in the late 1960s. Then, Beijing needed Washington the more, as the Soviet threat was immediate and undeterrable without American help. By the end of the Deng era, America needed China more, since the Soviet threat to the United States had grown considerably, while China had managed to stave off the Kremlin and improve its own relative power position as well. A classic bargaining situation was thus in the making: Beijing could continually raise the price of the American connection, because American officials seemed oblivious of the different assumptions with which the two capitals entered into the relationship in the first place and apparently had not yet calculated the change in relative power within the strategic triangle. Moreover, China could bargain with Moscow at the same time in a similar manner: "we Chinese will sign an all-encompassing agreement with you Russians, and dampen considerably our ties with those Americans in the process, if only you will conform to a list of conditions"--which although quite costly to the Kremlin also, might be saleable. The future was therefore likely to be full of surprises for the United States. Not only would China become ever more difficult to deal with in terms of increasing demands just to continue what had been the past norm but the likelihood rose that, one morning, Washington would wake up to find the news of a comprehensive Sino-Soviet agreement worked out at America's expense.

The second long term issue followed from the first. The United States entered into a strong working relationship with China not only as an anti-Soviet measure but to effectuate a permanent improvement in ties. America, caught up with the ideal of a modernizing, trading China, took on with missionary zeal the goal of helping to bring that country into a state of permanent friendship, to be effectuated through making Beijing interdependent
with Washington. Close security ties would be one element in that program. China, on the other hand, conceived of the situation as one of a necessary but temporary diminution of certain aspects of its independence—including short-term dependence on the United States for some portions of its national security—but with the goal over the long run of recapturing independence in every department. The means to that end were, for the while, the same as those used by the United States: trade, technology transfer, formal visits, and some military assistance. But the goals were antithetical—interdependence and permanent participation in the international community for the sake of mutual advantage versus independence and temporary participation in the international community for the sake of Chinese interests alone. It followed that American-Chinese military cooperation could prove ephemeral, depending on Chinese evaluation of how far they were down the road toward deterring the Russians through their own means and making their own way in Asia. The Chinese leadership might be wrong in its evaluation, and the Americans right; that is, the Soviet threat might require extended security cooperation, and the world as a whole might not permit even such a large nation like China the luxury of "independence." Time would obviously tell. But a mindset in Beijing would persist in favor of trying to escape from the American embrace—precisely the opposite of that in Washington, it should be noted—with the consequence that China could not be counted on as a steady "friend" of the United States. The road ahead in American-Chinese security relations would thus be bumpy at the least and might even come to a dead end.

The third long-term issue was what the United States should do once China began to convert a sufficient portion of its newly-obtained economic power into more direct military means. Beijing would seek to project that power into arenas, both geographic and substantive, where the American security (and
other) presence had already been well established. A series of confrontations would then have to be expected, with Beijing appearing to take a different and challenging position for no other reason than to make things difficult for Washington. Any of the regional or substantive security issues examined in Part III could become candidates for such standoffs. If enough such instances occurred, a point would be reached wherein American-Chinese relations would become so tension-laden that a crisis would occur. The danger would then be that China would swing over to the "unfriendly" column and finally be regarded as an "enemy." With the exception of Taiwan, no single issue during the immediate post-Deng period would bring matters to such a pass. The concatenation of several, however, could. (That presumes also that no startling and threatening improvement were to take place in Sino-Soviet relations.)

The question for Washington would be how to recognize, avoid, approach, and deal with the progressive separation of the two countries. Would there be some way to "measure" the situation, to evaluate how much augmented Chinese power, especially military might, would perciptate a fundamental shift in attitudes on both sides? Could the United States help configure China's regional environment in Asia to prepare for such an eventuality? Presuming that the future was problematic at best, would it not be wiser for the United States to try to slow down Chinese modernization by cutting back severely on trade, technology transfer and the like, as well as severing the security tie at an early date? Or should not Washington try to last it out with Beijing by acting as positive and as helpful as possible, thus placing any ensuing "blame" on Chinese shoulders and hoping that the separation, if it were to come, would be less disruptive and possibly even temporary? Should not America use the immediate post-Deng period to try as fully as possible to
convince Beijing's new rulers of the virtues of interdependence and of full and continuous participation in the international diplomatic and economic systems? Should not Washington thus redouble efforts to increase trade rapidly, educate even more Chinese students, open up American technology even further (i.e., forget about reciprocity and other niceties), and pull China as quickly as possible into such a high degree of interdependence that Beijing could never again retreat? Why not demonstrate that China's drive toward "independence" would not only prove anachronistic in the modern world but that "independence" would turn out to be self-imposed isolation, as dangerous to China as to its neighbors?

No ready and easy answers exist to these questions. But they would have to be posed. Indeed, the post-Deng stage in American-Chinese relations would center not only on whether and to what degree to continue the gains made during the post-Mao decade but how to address these issues and how to prepare for the inevitable transformation stemming from the emergence of China as a true superpower. In the security sphere, that meant, in all probability, adjustment downward of American expectations. China would not purchase the kinds or amounts of military equipment previously expected. Beijing would choose which to continue of the existing range of security arrangements it maintained with the United States in Asia, against the Soviet Union, and in other arenas. China might be convinced of the need to cooperate in broadened arms control talks, but that would take some work. Beijing would surely try to continue to obtain as much military technology as possible from the United States, but not at the price of further American-induced anti-Soviet security cooperation.
In sum, Washington would have to address, frontally, what its basic goals were vis-a-vis China and what kind of long-term Asian security equation it would want to construct. If American decisionmakers were to perform those two tasks, they would be well enough prepared for the new and dynamic era of relations with China that Deng's retirement or death would bring forth.

VI. Taiwan

The future status of Taiwan remained the one serious issue separating America and China, for despite three agreements on the matter during the Mao and Deng eras, Washington remained Taipei's security guarantor against Beijing and thus the only obstacle to forcible reunification. The question had not come up again because China had decided, pro tempus, to put it on the back burner in favor of obtaining large-scale American economic assistance during the modernization drive, because China did not have the force necessary to overcome Nationalist resistance at relatively low cost, and because the Soviet threat required pullback from the Fukien front and redirection of Chinese military attention inward toward Siberia and southward toward Vietnam. If any one or more of these variables were to change, the Taiwan issue could again advance to the center of American-Chinese concerns. Moreover, an additional wild card lay hidden in the deck: the political situation on Taiwan, since World War II a constant, had become a variable during the 1980s as both the government and its opposition in Taipei prepared to move the island toward democracy. If Taiwan were to become a viable, working democracy, a formal declaration of independence might be around the next turn, given that the vast majority of inhabitants were local Taiwanese. Needless to say, a democratic, independence-seeking Taiwan would be even more difficult for the United States to shuck off were the Mainland to launch an attack.
Moreover, the post-1982 quietude between Washington and Beijing over the issue was not to be construed as disinterest on China's part. Rather, China took a calculated decision that since the island could be conquered only at too high a military, economic, and political price, it was best to leave the matter alone until circumstances argued for a more favorable outcome. That assumed, of course, that the course of events would not trend away from Beijing, i.e., that Taiwan independence was highly unlikely politically and that the island would not be defensible militarily. But the emergence of political dynamism in Taipei, coupled with American manipulation even of the August 1982 Communiqué (so favorable to Washington in the first place\textsuperscript{94}), threatened to falsify that assumption. It was likely, therefore, that the post-Deng Chinese leadership would feel constrained to bring the Taiwan question forward once again. That possibility was enhanced by Beijing's propensity to test the waters with the Americans periodically, as it had done so many times before. The most likely time in the later 1980s was during the last months of the Reagan Administration, the interregnum between his and the successor American government, or the early days of the new presidency, i.e., between later 1988 and early 1989.
The situation was thus fraught with danger. In fact, China's posture was subject to change on an additional count: the general character of the post-Deng domestic situation, political and economic. If, for instance, Deng's successor turned out to be more interested in ideological correctness than he, and hence probably more prone to compromise differences with Moscow and to allow the American security connection to wither away, the likelihood would increase of Sino-Soviet compromise on the border security question while the probability of continued strong security ties with Washington would decline. Both would auger poorly for Taiwan's safety. If, further (as seems likely to this observer), the post-Deng leadership were to draw back from his total emphasis on economic pragmatism and re-establish a more nearly Soviet-style economy with priority on heavy industry and the military, the economic connection with America could only decline in relative importance. In that case, Beijing would feel comparatively less inhibited in mounting a direct threat to Taiwan. Thus, the two most important variables in Chinese foreign policy, the political situation at home (including the personality of the new ruler in the Jang-nan Hai) and the configuration of the strategic triangle, under both Mao and Deng favorable to Taiwan's continued autonomous existence, could well become factors supporting a more forward, militant policy toward Taipei.
Such a pessimistic conclusion would have to be modified, however, by the concatenation of factors inhibiting Beijing from taking direct action. China was not militarily prepared for such a venture, lacking the requisite equipment and training, nor at the end of the Deng era could signs be found of initial activities underway. Moreover, both the United States and the Nationalist Chinese were confident they could spot changes quickly were they to be initiated. The American response also appeared reasonably predictable: the Taiwan Relations Act mandated continuation of American intents and capabilities to defend Taiwan, and although the Act was not as strong or as direct as the alliance with Taiwan which it replaced, it did assure (to the extent the Congress was willing) extended security guarantorship of the island, beyond agreements signed later with the Mainland. And there was no indication that Congress was slackening in its interest in Taiwan; indeed, with the process of democratization in Taipei well underway, and with the need felt to serve all American defense commitments, indirect as well as direct (e.g., Israel), motivation was present to keep the commitment to Taiwan. Thus, if China were to move against Taiwan, or even to make the necessary
preparations, the Beijing leadership would have to break the entire American connection, from trade to security cooperation. That would be very costly, to say the least.

Further, girding for war and then launching an attack would spell the end to Deng's program of economic modernization, with all the detrimental domestic and international consequence that would follow for China and the Chinese Communist Party's standing among the Chinese people. The longer Deng's system continued in place, and thus the more China reaped the benefits of rapid growth and other consequences of the Open Door policy, the more reluctant Beijing would be to give it all up just for a highly risky attack on Taiwan. Going over to a configuration of militancy would also spell the end to Beijing's foreign policy of peace, which had been so beneficial in terms of international acceptability and support for the modernization program. Proof would be had, for all time, that China was not to be trusted, and all the old attitudes, learned so well during the Maoist era and which Deng had striven so hard to undo, would return with a vengeance. To attack Taiwan would be a policy disaster for China.

Finally, even were an attack to be successful, it would be a high cost operation in terms of men and equipment lost. Whereas there was no doubt that an attack would prove victorious in the sense that the flag of the People's Republic of China would fly over Taipei, China would have to countenance the expenditure of much of its front-line air force (estimates ranged up to 40 per cent), a significant number of ships, and certainly casualties in the hundreds of thousands. Moreover, the Nationalists had laid careful plans for defense, were bending their entire military purchase policy from the United States, and configuring their domestic production activities to throw up a
hard shell air and sea defense around the island. The United States also
would continue to take care to sell or transfer to Beijing only "defensive"
weaponry and technology (although remarks entered earlier concerning the
disutility of that distinction bear repeating; the point being that if
Washington perceived China using American equipment, training, and technology
to gird for an attack on Taiwan, it would cease such transfers). And at the
end of a presumably successful operation, the Mainland would still have to
garrison an island thoroughly resentful of the conquest, rule a people prone
at every point to rebellion, restore an economy in shambles, and overcome a
culture, a lifestyle, and a political tradition (despite all that has been
said of the assumed similarity between the Communist and Nationalist parties)
strongly at variance with that of the Mainland. From every point of view,
therefore, Taiwan would be difficult to swallow.

A "net assessment" of the probability of a change for the worse in
Beijing's approach to Taipei was difficult to make. If Deng's successors were
"rational", i.e., if they were to make the same cost-benefits analysis as that
offered here, a policy of militancy would remain unlikely. Too many things
could go wrong and the cost would be too high in any case. (It should also be
noted that, if the military operation did fail, the Mainland would forever
have lost its chance to take back the island, since upon successful defense
Taipei could approach the world as an independent state in every sense of the
term). On the other hand, rationality since 1949 was at times (in non-
Chinese eyes) in short supply in Beijing, and it would always be possible for
a successor Chinese leadership to change its approach, cast caution to the
winds, and make a try for the island. Even if that did occur, however, it was highly improbable that a "bolt out of the blue" would take place. Policy changes and military preparations would take place over an extended period, allowing the United States and Taiwan time to act accordingly. It would seem, therefore, that even an "irrational" turn in Chinese policy could be dealt with: sufficient time, resources, and (presumably) will were present to deflect any direct attack.

There was no doubt that Chinese economic modernization, including military modernization, would eventually provide Beijing the means to force the issue if it so chose. It was also clear that, to the extent the United States assisted China in developing itself, and especially to the extent that transfer of military resources took place from American to China, the Mainland would be able to accelerate its capabilities against Taiwan. But it did not follow that Taiwan was the more endangered thereby nor that the United States should slow down or cease its economic and military sales and transfers to China. For one, Washington's central strategy toward China appeared to be a winning one: encourage Beijing to remain on the path of economic modernization as the central element in its domestic and foreign policies, and therefore over time not only demonstrate the virtues of peaceful relations with all countries but actually integrate China into a new structure--in Asia and globally--of interdependence. In the end, Beijing would neither wish nor be capable of conducting a policy of threat and aggression against its neighbors, including Taiwan. For another, the new Asian international order which Washington was helping to construct would eventually be strong enough of its own accord to resist possible Chinese threats. A rapidly modernizing Asia was the best deterrent to coming Chinese attempts to project its new power into new areas. Third, Taiwan itself was accumulating the means to defend its
own territory. The Mainland would thus find Taiwan as difficult to conquer during the longer term future as it had down through the Deng era. And the United States would probably continue to assist Taipei in providing that capability. Finally, the very character of Chinese civilization militated against an attempt to destroy a whole portion of the country merely to replace a local political authority. While Beijing's policy of peaceful reunification with Taipei could indeed change at any time, the costs of actually carrying out the conquest would always be too high, in the moral as well as the physical sense. The best Mainland policy was therefore a prolongation of that worked out under Deng: continual offers at reconciliation, construction of "models" (such as Hong Kong) to demonstrate how reunification might work in practice, and improvement of the economic and the political situation in China itself to where Mainland China resumed its practical appeal to Nationalist and Taiwanese alike.

So far as the details of the American programs of military assistance to Beijing and Taipei were concerned, it appeared that, at the levels and directions contemplated, the increment to Beijing's power provided thereby would continue to be marginal to Taiwan's security. Not even the avionics packages for 50 F-8 fighter aircraft would affect the Taiwan-Mainland balance. (That balance would continue, as in the past, to be heavily in favor of the Mainland; it was not so much the raw numbers that counted as the cost of conquest, the possibility of American intervention, and the post-invasion political consequences that kept Beijing's forces out of Taipei.) Of perhaps equal importance was the kinds and levels of American military sales to Taiwan and Taipei's increasing capability to provide for its defense through its own efforts. During the 1980s, the slow decline in the level of American military sales, from the $850 million peak at the beginning of the 1980s, would not
materially constrain Taiwanese defense capabilities. Even during the 1990s a sufficiency of funds ought to be available, and were Beijing to evince unpeaceful intentions, the August 1982 Communique, to say nothing of the Taiwan Relations Act, itself provided for a break in the dollar decline. Moreover, Taiwan was providing itself with a modern, domestically designed (at least partly) fighter and an ever-higher portion of its other defense needs. (And, it should be noted, the United States had even gone beyond the August Communique in allowing private American firms to contract with Taiwan in defense modernization.) The most important items to Taiwan's defense were air defense and anti-ship munitions; both were being provided, over the foreseeable future, in reasonable quantities and qualities.

The more important question was the role of the United States in assisting China in the general sphere of economic modernization, for in the long run an economically modernized China would supply itself with the military means to overcome Taiwan with increasing ease. No way existed for the United States to escape the dilemma of helping Beijing produce the industrial capacity which the Mainland could eventually convert for military use against Taiwan, so long as Washington considered its interest in retaining a close relationship with China to be paramount. The United States could pretend to sell "defensive" only arms to Beijing, and it could hope that establishing strong working ties with Chinese enterprises at all levels of the economy would convert Beijing into an interdependent, peace-loving, free-trade nation like others in the Pacific Basin. Eventually, however, China would make itself more nearly independent of America economically (in the sense that it would have, at home, the industrial capacity, the financial strength, the
markets, and the up-to-date technology to decrease its relative dependence on
the outside). That would probably not come until the turn of the century, to
be sure, and until then Taiwan would, therefore, be relatively safe.

The question was thus not, at base, military or even economic. Rather,
it was political policies and attitudes that counted. Taiwan's safety
depended on the strength of the support it could muster in the American
Congress, on the attitudes of post-Reagan American Administrations, on the
length and swiftness of Sino-Soviet rapprochement, on the character of
political alignments in the regions around China, on the speed of
democratization in Taiwan, and other such factors. The best the United States
could do was to help provide a stable security situation in the Taiwan
Straits--that national interest was already written into American law--and to
encourage Nationalist and Communist to work out their differences in a
peaceful manner without outside pressure. This latter task was difficult, to
say the least, as neither Washington nor the two Chinese capitals favored
another round of American mediation. But a negotiated solution, with or
(preferably) without American participation, would remain the only way to put
an end to the Taiwan problem (aside from Chinese acquiescence in Taiwan's
independence, an impossibility for the foreseeable future) in a peaceful
manner. Until then, the United States would have to continue its central
involvement in this last expression of the Chinese civil war and continue its
role as Taiwan's security guarantor.

2For Chinese foreign policy under Mao, see *Inter alia* A. Doak Barnett, *Communist China and Asia* (New York: Harper, 1960); Harold C. Hinton, *China's Turbulent Quest* (New York: Macmillan, 1972); John Gittings, *The World and China, 1922-1972* (London: Methuen, 1974); and Ishwar C. Ojha, *Chinese Foreign Policy in an Age of Transition* (Boston: Beacon, 1969). Many interpretations of Chinese foreign policy exist, each usually explaining the whole by reference to one or another part of the picture—often a single factor. No integrated "model" of Chinese foreign policy yet exists that meets the two essential tests of any theory: capability of explaining most facets and developments on the basis of a small number of carefully defined variables each meaningfully related to the others; and general acceptance by scholars in the field.


9All analyses of triangular international relations meet with grave difficulties. Theoretical models must depend, in the last analysis, on some agreed measure of national power, which is unavailable despite its being one of the central concepts of international relations. Practical analyses, on the other hand, necessarily suffer in addition from the need to base conclusions on "inside" data (e.g., details of decision-making) generally not available, plus assessments of policy-maker attitudes mostly impossible to make with accuracy. That is to say nothing of the innate difficulty of dealing with different cultural norms and linguistic diversity represented by English, Russian, and Chinese. For representative theoretical work, see Theodore Caplow, Two Against One: Coalitions in Triads (Englewood-Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968); Scott Boorman, The Protracted Game: A Wei-ch'i Interpretation of Maoist Revolutionary Strategy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969); Peter Kien-hong Yu, A Strategic Model of Chinese Checkers: Power and Exchange in Beijing's Interactions with Washington and Moscow (New York: Peter Lang, 1984); Thomas W. Robinson, China in a Tripolar World (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1974), and Lowell Dittmer, "The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game-Theoretic Analysis, World Politics, July 1981, pp. 488-515. Renditions of Sino-Soviet-American relations include Richard Ashley, The Political Economy of War and Peace: The Sino-Soviet-American


We discuss this in detail below, pp. 28-39. Following are the author's sketch of some of the "rules of the Asian International system:

1. No active military participation by either superpower in Asian regional conflicts. (The exceptions, Vietnam and Afghanistan, prove the rule: both were -- or are being--overcome by combined military action of the offended parties and the assistance of the other superpower;)

2. No direct superpower conflict in Asia. The exceptions--Korea, Vietnam, and the Sino-Soviet border conflict--demonstrate the rule again: each proved too costly in terms of domestic...
economic disorders, military redeployments, and diplomatic realignments.

3. Local balances are established and maintained in Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia, with the relevant communist and non-communist powers backed as needed by the three members of the strategic triange. Therefore, no regional conflicts must be allowed. (The exception, Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea, proves the rule: that act brought on a Chinese punitive campaign and American-Chinese supply to the Kampuchean resistance in attempts to restore the status quo.)

4. Asia is bifurcated economically into Island Asia and Continental Asia, with greatly difference characteristics and with Island Asia leading the way.

22Whereas the "measurement" of national power is impossible to undertake in any reasonably accurate gross or, more importantly, situationally relevant manner, it is clear that restoration of peace, in 1949, national unity under a strong central government, and rapid economic and military growth all placed China in the front line of major powers. Otherwise, China would not have carried out military actions against nearly all of its neighbors and against both superpowers, to say nothing of pursuing a policy of participation, intervention, and expansion of influence throughout Asia and beyond. See, in this regard, the author's "Hans J. Morgenthau's Theory of International Relations" revised version, January 1976, 72 pages.

23There is no exception to this. Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union (to mention only the major modern powers) have all acted in this manner, as did the Roman Empire, the Greek city-states, various Chinese dynasties, and many others. One has only to peruse Toynbee's A Study in History to grasp this central fact of international relations—which, it should be noted, is invariant of regime-type, economic system, or ideological outlook.


26Harry Harding (ed.), China's Foreign Relations in the 1980s (New Haven: Yale
28 Organization  


36The cause, always, was comparative attitudes toward the Soviet Union. In Angola, Beijing sided with the UNITA opposition forces led by Jonas Savimbi and supplied him with arms after the MPLA government elected to bet its future on good relations with Moscow. Toward Ethiopia, China went over to its regional opponent, Somalia, after the Mengistu government decided to link Addas Abba closely with Moscow. China early on broke sharply with Cuba after Fidel Castro decided to ally itself with Moscow. With regard to India, Beijing already had very bad relations with New Delhi as a result of the two Chinese invasions of 1959 and 1962. But things got worse once the latter elected in 1965 and 1971 to establish a strong security tie with the Kremlin. India, one of the original convenors of the "non-aligned" conferences, regarded China as a competitor for Third World leadership once the short-lived "India and China are brothers" period of the mid-1950s had passed. So far as Syria was concerned, the only question for Damascus was who would provide it with the military supplies necessary to do battle with Israel. Moscow could, Beijing could not. Therefore, Syria chose the former.

37Victor Argy, The Postwar International Money Crisis: An Analysis (London:


The evidence concerning the relationship between technological change and military strategy is unclear, and it is also not readily apparent whether technological change in military affairs is speeding up in all fields. The sources listed in footnote 39 stand on both sides of these issues. In the case of China, however, it seems reasonably apparent that a lag exists in the reception of military technology from abroad and changes in strategy are consequence upon the diffusion within the country of modern weapons systems. The SPS engine case is an important illustration of the former and the relative slowness of the Chinese military to move away from the obvious anachronisms of the Maoist military style bears witness to the latter.

Diplomacy is thus the efficiency with which a nation's leadership manages the country's foreign affairs. The range can be quite wide: an otherwise powerful state can through poor management squander its resources, leading to needless failures or even defeat in war. Examples abound: Germany in the years leading to 1914; Britain between 1935 and 1939; America during the Vietnam era, to name a few. It is also possible for a state with relatively few material assets to maximize their utility through superior diplomacy. Usually such a propensity is found among small states, such as the Netherlands, Israel, Thailand, and Taiwan, to name some obvious instances.

For further thinking on this, see the author's "Diplomacy as Political Steersmanship," appendix to his "China in a Tripolar World", ms., The Council on Foreign Relations, 1971. Even such principal writers as Hans Morgenthau miss this essential point, about which much more work is needed.

44China's Economy Looks Toward the Year 2000, op. cit., Vol. II, Economic
Openness in Modernizing China.
45John F. Copper, "China's Foreign Aid Program: An Analysis and Update," in
China's Economy Looks Toward the Year 2000, op. cit., pp. 499-518; C. I.
Eugene Kim, "South Korea in 1985," and Chae-jin Lee, South Korea in 1984",-
Asian Survey, January 1986 and January 1985, pp. 66-77 and 80-89 respectively;
and James C. Hsiung, "Taiwan in 1985" and "Taiwan in 1984," Asian Survey,
January 1985 and January 1984, pp. 93-101 and 90-96, respectively.
46Roger Garside, Coming Alive: China After the Cultural Revolution (New York:
McGraw-Hill, 1981); Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, Son of the Revolution (New
York: Random House, 1984); Perry Link (ed.), Stubborn Weeds: Popular and
Controversial Literature After the Cultural Revolution (Bloomington: Indiana
University Press, 1983); Fox Butterfield, China: Alive in a Bitter Sea (New
York: Times Books, 1982).
47Thomas C. Roberts, The Chinese People's Militia and the Doctrine of People's
War (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1983); Harlan W.
Jencks, From Muskets to Missiles: Politics and Professionalism in the Chinese
Army, 1945-1981 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982); Ellis Joffe and Gerald
Segal, "The PLA Under Modern Conditions", Survival, July/August 1985, pp. 146-
157; Thomas W. Robinson, "Military Modernization in China in the 1980s," The
48These developments are detailed below, Part III.
49Various descriptions of recent factional differences in China have been
advanced. See Kenneth Lieberthal, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy," in
Harry Harding (ed.), China's Foreign Relations in the 1980s, op. cit., pp. 43-
70; Carol Lee Hamrin, "Competing 'Policy Packages' in post-Mao China," Asian
Survey, May 1984, pp. 487-515; Michel Oksenberg and Kenneth Lieberthal,
Bureaucratic Politics and Chinese Energy Development (Washington, DC: Department of Commerce, 1986); David Michael Lampton, "Chinese Politics: The
Bargaining Treadmill," paper presented to the Fifteenth Sino-American
Conference on Mainland China, Taipei, June 8-14, 1986: and Dorothy J.
Solinger, "The Fifth National People's Congress and the Process of
Policy-making: Reform, Readjustment, and the Opposition," in King-yu Chang
(ed.), The Emerging Teng System: Orientation, Policies, and Implications
(Taipei: Institute of International Relations, 1982).
Press, 1983); J.W.M. Chapmen et. al., Japan's Quest for Comprehensive
51A nation becomes a global power--perhaps even a superpower--once it has the
requisite means of power in enough quantity. But "how much" is a relative
question, for in the case of China its Asian neighbors also would be expanding
their own national power as well. The net "balance of power," presuming other
Asian states saw the need to counteract China's potential and actually come
together for the purpose, might not be in China's favor at all. And this says
nothing of the continuing roles and presence in Asia of the United States and
the Soviet Union.
52See Robinson, "Triple Detente? The Strategic Triangle in the Late Twentieth
53For details, see Thomas P. Thornton, "The USSR and Asia in 1983: Staying
the Brezhnev Course", Asian Survey, January 1984, pp. 1-17; Donald S.
Zagoria, "The USSR and Asia in 1985: The First Year of Gorbachev," Asian


58Charles Wolf, Jr. et. al., The Changing Balance: South and North Korean Capabilities for Long-Term Military Competition (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1985); Asian Security (Tokyo: Research Institute for Peace and Security, 1980-, yearly). The American strategy was indeed to use nuclear weapons, and American forces in and around Korea were configured to employ such weapons in territorial defense of the South and offensively against North Korean military and population targets.


60These Chinese sentiments have been conveyed privately to the Americans by Tai Bingwei, Head of Asian and Pacific Studies, Institute of International Studies in Beijing, at a Professors World Peace Academy conference in Los Angeles, February 16, 1985, and by Ding Shinghao, at the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Region of the Association for Asian Studies, Princeton University, November 10, 1984, as noted by the author on both occasions.


69See Lillian C. Harris, China's Foreign Policy Toward the Third World, op. cit., pp. 50-87.
71These trends and developments may be followed by consulting the Foreign Relations section of the "Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation" in The China Quarterly for the post-1979 period.


77 This appears to be the weighted observations of the papers submitted to the Office of Technology Assessment project on technology transfer to China, 1985-1986, by Fred Denis Simon, William Tow, Kim Woodard, Richard P. Suttmeier, Jonathan Pollock, and Wendy Frieman, as well as much of the literature referred to below.


81 A "projection force" would have to have several components: naval air, presumably using aircraft carriers; a marine landing force, together with ships to transport them and their equipment; a large air transport capability, along with refueling aircraft and protective fighter cover; sea control warships in sufficient numbers; and bases in allied foreign countries for supply. China had none of these in the 1980s and was not providing itself with any. It could not even project force 90 miles across the Taiwan Straits.


83 The political pendulum was already moving to the more conservative side in 1986-1987, with the removal of Party Secretary Hu Yaobang and a wide range of other "liberal" officials as well as the return to authority of a group of elderly party chiefs led by Peng Zhen. If the pendulum theory of Chinese politics is accurate, as I believe it is, the conservative reaction would be extensive in time and across issues. However, it would probably not go so far as in 1958 and 1965: a Mao Tse-tung was not present; the momentum for modernization was very strong; and the gaping jaws of another Cultural
Revolution would prompt any Chinese leadership to draw back.


For official American statements since the August 18, 1982 U.S.-China Joint Communique, see Department of State, Current Policy, nos. 413, 444, 459, 460, 574, 729, 895, and 930 for the years 1982-1986.


According to Mark S. Roth in "United States-China Military Relations, 1979-1985", op. cit., there is a 2-3 year cycle in American-Chinese military relations, depending on the overall character of ties between the two nations. Thus, 1979-1980 was a time of optimism, 1981-1983 a period of strain, and
1983-1985 years of "reinvigoration." In 1986 and 1987, with the Chinese policy of distancing itself from the United States and detente with Moscow in effect, a period of quiescence in military relations set in.

The Communists were favorable to the United States in the following regards: (1) the initial point from which arms sales to Taiwan was measured was very high, c. $850 million per annum; (2) the yearly declination in sales was quite small, c. $20 million, and thus the endpoint was some 35 years from 1982; (3) sales were inflation-discounted, so that the dollar amount could actually rise in some years; (4) the entire matter depended on American evaluation of the peaceful content of Chinese policy. If Washington judged Beijing to be acting in a non-peaceful manner, the agreement could be abrogated; (5) the agreement could be abrogated in any case (by China as well as the United States) merely by declaring it so, since it was a policy declaration of two sets of decision makers. Their successors did not have to accept the terms of the agreement, since it was not a treaty; (6) no definition of "qualitative" and "quantitative" limits was set. Thus, the United States could vary definitions to suit its policy purposes, as was in fact the case; and (7) a major loophole (self-defined by the United States) emerged: private technological assistance in military areas by American companies.

The case "for" such a development rested on several propositions. First, Western students of socialist economies, and of the Chinese economy in particular, argued that it is not possible to maintain a mixed capitalist-socialist economy. Once China moved away from the standard centrally-planned Stalinist model, it would have no choice but to move most all the way to the other, capitalist, extreme. The Chinese leadership, understanding this also, would halt such movement before it got out of hand. Second, the relatively "easy" gains of the early 1980s in agriculture would not be replicated in the later 1980s in industry, not would agricultural productivity continue to make such large gains as before. Third, imported technology and associated economic systems could not be cleansed of the foreign political/cultural baggage that accompanied it. Seeing that, Deng and his successors would draw back. And fourth, the Soviet offer of major economic assistance was too attractive to miss.

The Taiwan Relations Act declared that "any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means [would be] a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States"; and that America would not only supply arms to Taiwan but be ready of its own to "resist any resort to force or other form of coercion [e.g., boycotts or embargoes] that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of ... Taiwan." (Emphasis added.) That is the language of a unilateral security guarantee. Moreover, although future American Administrations might argue that agreements with Beijing could modify or overturn that American domestic law, it is a clear principle of international law as practiced by the United States for many decades to regard domestic laws as superior to policy declarations or executive agreements when they conflict. Only in the case of treaties (i.e., as ratified by the Senate) would the Taiwan Relations Act stand in danger. Thus, the United States remained in the middle of the Chinese civil war. See, in these regards, Martin L. Lasater, The Taiwan Issue in Sino-American Strategic Relations (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984; Lester L. Wolff and David L. Simon (eds.), Legislative History of the Taiwan Relations Act (Jamaica, NY: American Association for Chinese Studies, 1982); and Louis Henkin, Foreign Affairs and the Constitution (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975).

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