

## Chinese Communist Revisionism in Comparative Perspective

“Whither China?” asked a renowned Chinese radical manifesto over a decade ago,<sup>1</sup> and the time now seems appropriate to raise the same question again. Although the succession crisis has resolved itself at least tentatively, a certain amount of controversy has arisen over how to characterize the political disposition of the current regime. Most commentators have termed it “moderate,” but some have called it “neo-Stalinist,” whereas others have denied any significant change at all.<sup>2</sup> Closely related to this question, given the teleological assumptions inherent in Marxist systems (and often adopted by those who study them), is that of the system’s prospective developmental thrust.

In answer to these questions, this article will argue that the current regime may be most accurately categorized as a form of “institutionalized revisionism.”<sup>3</sup> The argument will proceed in three stages: the

1. Reprinted in Klaus Mehnert, *Peking and the New Left: At Home and Abroad* (Berkeley: University of California, Center for Chinese Studies, 1969).

2. Ross Munro sounds the neo-Stalinist theme in his series in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, October 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 1977; the *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* verdict is rendered by Andrew Nathan, “Continuity and Change in Chinese Policy,” *Contemporary China*, II, 1 (Spring 1978), pp. 9–116.

3. Ludz coined the term to refer to those revisionists having a firm institutional base, as

first attempts to demonstrate that, notwithstanding the polemical exaggeration and distortion of the Cultural Revolution, there is a distinguishable pattern of ideological and policy tendencies that may be categorized as "revisionist." The second seeks to demonstrate that this pattern is a recurrent one among incumbent socialist regimes and not unique to the Chinese political scene. The third section argues that if one leaves aside the pejorative connotations the term has accumulated during half a century of Marxist polemics, the current Chinese regime may also be described as revisionist. Finally, the conclusion will explore the infrastructure of Chinese revisionism and the dynamics of alternation between revisionist and radical "lines."

### *The Chinese Paradigm: Liu Shao-ch'i*

The revisionist "line" as it was evoked at great length and detail in the Cultural Revolution polemics, albeit a grotesque exaggeration of subtle policy differences, nevertheless bears a discernible similarity to the picture of Liu Shao-ch'i that emerges from a more impartial examination of the available contemporaneous materials. This is not to say that Liu's line was always the touchstone of evil that it subsequently became, of course; though he was a consistent exponent of a pragmatic elitist position among Chinese Communist thinkers, his approach was never clearly defined as illegitimate until the Cultural Revolution. How Liu became politically culpable is a story in itself, perhaps having as much to do with the need for a scapegoat during a major social crisis as with the substance of his previous policy preferences.<sup>4</sup> In any case, our purpose here is neither to blame nor to absolve, but to delineate as succinctly as possible the distinctive political perspective that Liu Shao-ch'i came to personify. Of particular interest in this regard are Liu's approaches to mass mobilization, to conflict and cooperation, and to organization and policy formation.

### *Mass Mobilization*

Liu significantly influenced the evolution of the distinctive Chinese Communist approach to mass mobilization known as the "mass line." To say that Mao contributed the "democratic" and Liu the

distinct from such intellectual revisionists as Schaff and Kolakowski in Poland, Kosik in Czechoslovakia, Havemann in East Germany, or Lukacs in Hungary. See Peter C. Ludz, *The Changing Party Elite in East Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1972).

4. See my article, "'Line Struggle' in Theory and Practice: The Origins of the Cultural Revolution Reconsidered," *China Quarterly*, No. 72 (December 1977), pp. 675-713.

“centralist” aspects to the Chinese concept of democratic centralism would surely be an oversimplification, but it does seem that Mao’s major emphasis was on “learning from the masses,” leaving Liu to devise the specific organizational arrangements for the concrete realization of this ideal. In so doing Liu introduced three specific innovations: (1) by maintaining a clear functional distinction between open, legal work and clandestine, illegal work Liu multiplied the Party’s options and enhanced its capacity to survive behind enemy lines; (2) by correlating political slogans with appeals to economic and other residual motives Liu managed to conflate self-interest and the public interest in an effective and comprehensive way; (3) by ordering the mass movement in a processional, queue-like sequence, Liu succeeded in combining widespread mass participation with a high degree of organizational discipline.

Liu’s organizational techniques featured a combination of open, legal tactics in “front” organizations with clandestine subversive tactics by secret Party cells; though legal and illegal organizations were functionally indispensable to one another, a strict division of labor and personnel was necessary to preserve the integrity of the former and the secrecy of the latter. Legal front organizations, such as choir groups, study societies, and cheap dining halls could serve as a pool for the recruitment of promising activists, as well as providing an innocuous cover for illegal activities (of which the front organizations should be kept oblivious). Thus Communists who worked in these legal organizations should not use radical slogans or obviously violate the nominal purposes of these organizations, but should rather aid in the expansion of the organizations in order to broaden their legitimate contacts with the masses.<sup>5</sup>

This was for example the way Liu reorganized Communist participation in the December 9 student protest movement in Peking when he took charge of it in 1936. Liu criticized the previous handling of the campaign for having focused appeals on a leftist minority, whose radical activities only invited official repression, without considering the attitudes of the moderate majority. Rather than pursue an ever-forward strategy, Liu suggested focusing on the organization of defense and retreat in times of relative vulnerability, raising the level of struggle gradually according to issues and circumstances. Inasmuch as the peasant and labor movements in North China were in Liu’s view in a defensive position, the task was to conserve strength

5. Liu Shao-ch’i, “Lun kung-k’ ai kung-tso yü pi-mi kung-tso” [On open and secret work] in *Liu Shao-ch’i wen-t’i tzu-liao chuan-chi* [A special collection of materials on Liu Shao-ch’i], (Taipei: Chung-kung wen-t’i yen-chiu so, 1970), pp. 69–77. Hereafter *LSWTC*.

until more favorable circumstances arose. Distinctions must be made between the Party and the mass organizations, between secret and open work; nor should the principles of the one be applied to the other. It was unnecessary to fear that to use reformist slogans and to work from the masses' low level of consciousness would serve the interests of the reformers to the disadvantage of the Party, so long as the Party remained prepared to raise mass consciousness gradually to higher levels.<sup>6</sup> Thus Liu concentrated on legal organizational activities, broadening the base of the "Peip'ing Federation of Students" and ultimately changing its name to the "National Salvation Federation of Students" (NSFS), with branches in all major cities.<sup>7</sup> Under Liu's directives, the NSFS shifted its propaganda emphasis from an anti-Kuomintang (KMT) to an anti-Japanese (and pro-united front) stance, organizing a boycott of Japanese products and staging demonstrations against selected incidents of Japanese brutality. Abandoning its prior tendency to incite friction between students and their teachers, the NSFS solicited student-teacher cooperation against Japanese imperialism.<sup>8</sup> Special societies were set up to appeal to students with diverse special interests:

Among the masses, there are various kinds of people (workers, peasants, merchants, small craftsmen, teachers, students, etc.) and thus also various different demands. For organizing the masses, various methods and forms shall be applied based on the masses' various demands. For instance, we will organize political parties for the masses who have political demands, organize study societies, libraries, singing teams, athletic clubs, etc., for those with cultural demands, organize economic units for those with economic demands, such as labor unions, peasant associations, etc.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, secret activities could be carried on by using these legal organizations as a base. Secret libraries were established for the

6. Liu, "Su-ch'ing kuan-men chu-i yü mu-hsien chu-i" [Eradicate closed-doorism and adventurism] (1936), as quoted in Mao Tse-tung, "Appendix: Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party" (April 20, 1945), *Selected Works* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), Vol. III, pp. 202-204. Hereafter *SW*.

7. Wang Chien-min, *Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang shih-k'ao* [A draft history of the CCP] (Taipei, 1965), Vol. III, pp. 74-75.

8. Li Ch'ang, "Hui-i min-hsien tui" [Remembering the National Liberation Vanguard] in *I-erh-chiu hui-i lu* [Recollections of the December 9th Movement] (Peking: China Youth Publishers, 1961), p. 11; cf. also P'eng Yüan-li, "I Huang Cheng" [Thinking of Huang Cheng], *ibid.*, p. 188.

9. Liu, "Work Experiences in the North China War Zone" (1938), trans. in Henry Schwarz, *Liu Shao-ch'i and People's War: A Report on the Creation of Base Areas in 1938* (Lawrence: Center for East Asian Studies, University of Kansas, 1969), pp. 51-52.

circulation of Marxist-Leninist writings, for example; radical newspapers and pamphlets were published and guerrilla training was provided under the pretext of picnics in the countryside.<sup>10</sup>

When the CCP entered a truce in June 1936 with Yen Hsi-shan, the former warlord then in command of KMT forces in Shansi, Liu also pursued a systematically deceptive strategy, taking advantage of Yen's own social reform program. In recruiting new cadres for carrying out his programs, Yen liked to recruit leftists or even ex-Communists, provided they were Shansi natives and had no demonstrable connection with the CCP: he found them more idealistic and less corrupt than his regular cadres. Thus in August 1936 Liu obtained Central Committee (CC) authorization to have Party members in KMT jails in Peking renounce their Party memberships in order to secure release, whereupon some of these who were Shansi natives, such as Po I-po and Sung Shao-wen, returned to Shansi and joined Yen's organization. In the fall of 1936 Liu repeated the same maneuver in Shansi, resulting in the release of about 300 penitent "ex-Communists," who then proceeded to infiltrate Yen's forces.<sup>11</sup> After his administration had disintegrated under Japanese assault, Yen sought to reconstitute it behind Japanese lines with CCP cooperation. There he set up several "special areas," each under its own commissioner; because the commissioners were chosen from among the most energetic members of the Communist-infiltrated NSFS, at least four of them were Communists. Each special area organized its own guerrilla corps, and each county organized its own self-defense corps, comprising a total guerrilla force of several ten thousands. Liu arranged for Red military districts to be given operating radiuses to coincide with the special areas that had been successfully infiltrated. This arrangement facilitated the initiation of mass mobilization by special area commissioners under legitimate KMT auspices, sparing the Red Army this task and thereby minimizing friction between the CCP and the KMT. It also meant that the pattern of CCP expansion in North China during the war to a considerable degree coincided with the disposition of existing KMT forces—thus the entire Chin-ch'achi border region was established as early as January 1938 with Yen Hsi-shan's approval and Chiang Kai-shek's formal authorization! When Po and his counterparts broke away from Yen Hsi-shan one

10. Li Ch'ang, "Hui-i," pp. 15–16.

11. 'Liu Shao-ch'i wei p'an-tu pien-hü' [Liu Shao-ch'i defends the traitors], Red Guard pamphlet published in Ting Wang (ed.), *Chung-kung wen-hua ta ko-ming tzu-liao hui-pien* [Compendium of materials on the Chinese Communist Cultural Revolution] (Hong Kong: Ming Pao Yüeh-k'an, 1967), Vol. I, pp. 274–277.

after another beginning in 1940 to join the Eighth Route Army, they brought with them at least forty regular regiments.<sup>12</sup>

Liu became so accustomed to working simultaneously through open and clandestine organizations and enjoying the enhanced flexibility and access to information this offered that he continued to use undercover organizational and investigative measures even after the Party had gained control of the legal system and mass communications media. During the Socialist Education Movement of 1962–1965, for instance, he infiltrated higher-echelon cadres into basic-level units under pseudonyms in order to investigate and report on the local leadership, much to the ire of Mao Tse-tung. Although security was the original reason for maintaining a strict distinction between open and secret work, Liu proceeded to generalize the principle of a formal division of spheres of competence to much of his organizational work. In contrast to Mao's apparent preference for a relatively informal, vertically decentralized but horizontally integrated administrative system, Liu has consistently favored a relatively formal, vertically centralized system that was horizontally segmented on the basis of a functional division of labor. The "socialist trusts" that were experimentally introduced in 1963 embodied these organizational principles, for example.

A second characteristic of Liu's mass mobilizational technique was his tendency to build on existing motives, demonstrating how cooperation with the Party facilitated attainment of these aims and thereby inducing further cooperation, rather than trying to transform motives at the outset. Motives could most effectively be transformed as the result of a long process of "raising the level" of consciousness: people would be induced to cooperate for egoistic reasons, they would soon become engaged in an expanding range of satisfying cooperative activities, and eventually the secondary motive of cooperation would become primary. Thus while the "highest" form of organization was the political organization, the most "important" was the economic organization. "Why? The reason is that the masses—workers, peasants, students, women, and merchants—all have economic demands." Though it was highest, the political organization could "never" be the most extensive form of mass organization, because "only people with a high political consciousness can join a political party." Therefore, "all the economic demands of the masses must be integrated with political or cultural demands. When

12. Kua Hua-lun, "Kung-chün tsai Hua-pei chih fa-chan yü tso-ta" [The development and expansion of the Communist Army in North China], *Fei-ch'ing yüeh-pao*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (May 1969), pp. 93–94.

the masses begin to take action on one simple demand, we must lead the masses in fields related to their action on this simple demand so that they can better understand a series of problems and further push their actions to a still higher stage." Thus by "raising the economic demands to political demands, raising partial and temporary demands to whole and permanent demands, and raising local demands to state and national demands," the masses are brought to a higher conception of their interest.<sup>13</sup> As he put it in Shantung in 1942, "Only after the masses have become enthusiastic about protecting their personal interests, would and could they become equally enthusiastic about safeguarding their country."<sup>14</sup>

Attitudes were to be transformed not so much by various quasi-psychotherapeutic efforts (e.g., thought reform) as by manipulating the material environment in such a way as to facilitate the formation of more favorable attitudes; only at some vague future date would a more direct approach be appropriate. "Fundamental changes of ideologies and their like can come only with changes of the social substructure," he said in the context of a 1960 discussion of Confucius' influence in Shantung. "After we have undergone a series of movements and struggles such as the campaigns for rent and interest reduction, for production, and for nation-building, we can then have a cultural-educational movement at a suitable time gradually to change the thoughts of the masses."<sup>15</sup>

Third, whereas Mao had ever since his early "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan" evinced considerable sympathy for the spontaneous, synchronic aspects of the mass movement, Liu had just as consistently tended to prefer a sequential order of movement to simultaneity, and control to spontaneity. And while Mao conceived of the movement as a natural phenomenon with its own inherent laws of development to which the leadership should submit, Liu conceived of it as a social phenomenon requiring elaborate organization and vigorous leadership. Because the non-Party masses were not subject to the same rules and sanctions as Party members, Liu relied more extensively on modeling and mass emulation. The mass movement should make its way forward not so much like a "wave" (one of Mao's favorite metaphors) as like a train, in which those with a more highly cultivated political consciousness

13. Liu, "Lun tsu-chih min-chung ti chi-ko chi-pen yüan-tzu" [Several basic principles for organizing the masses] (May 1, 1939), *LSWTC*, pp. 10-15.

14. Liu, "Yench'eng nung-ch'iu kung-tso ti ching-yen" [Experiences from the Agricultural Salvation Work in Yench'eng] (April 5, 1942), *LSWTC*, pp. 127-129.

15. Lu Chen-yu and Chiang Ming in *Chung-kuo ch'ing-nien*, Vol. 290, No. 27 (September 16, 1960).

supplied the requisite momentum and direction to those with less.

Because of Liu's faith in the power of Marxist ideology to guide human affairs along the historically correct route, his instructions to Party members to "respect the opinions of the masses" were perhaps less candid than Mao's similar admonitions, more an exercise in diplomacy than a genuine expectation of learning significant new information from those less steeped in doctrine than their leaders. Hence Liu was ever at pains to correct the primitive ideological conceptions of the masses, based as they were on "conditions of darkness, folly and backwardness." Once, when asked what should be done about mass excesses, Liu replied that it was necessary to keep Party policy tight and intact (i. e., not to accede to excessive demands) but that excesses were natural and inevitable and that the Party should not directly suppress them at the risk of "putting down their fighting spirit."<sup>16</sup> "Both unable and unwilling to do so [viz., restrain mass excesses], Liu and the other leaders just endorsed, if sometimes only passively, every activity of the workers regardless of the amount of apprehension it might cause."<sup>17</sup> But whenever he assumed direction of a mass movement Liu usually moved first to establish firm organizational control, proceeding to work for the satisfaction of mass demands only after this prerequisite had been achieved.

To avoid leftist anarchism in the course of the movement Liu tended to initiate campaigns in only one or two places, having the Party concentrate its efforts on putting things on the right track there in order to produce a model for other places to follow. He explained this processional order of movement in a speech to model workers in 1956:

The broad masses of people are the creators of history. The history of human society is at base a history of production, a history of the workers in production. Production is always in a state of constant development and change, and new production techniques are always replacing the old ones. Therefore in all times and in all departments there . . . [is] always a minority of pioneer workers who adopt comparatively more advanced working norms. Following them more and more workers will come to learn their techniques and reach those working norms until, at last, the production level of a few advanced workers becomes the level of the whole society.<sup>18</sup>

16. *Ibid.*

17. Michael Yanlung Luk, "The Career of Liu Shao-ch'i with Special Reference to the Growth of his Power and the Development of his Political Thought, 1921-1949," M.A. Thesis, University of Hong Kong, Department of History, June 1974, pp. 46-47. The Luk thesis is the most penetrating treatment of Liu's early development I have found, and I rely extensively on it throughout this section.

18. Liu, "Message to Outstanding Workers" (April 30, 1956), *Collected Works of Liu Shao-ch'i* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1969), Vol. II, p. 330. Hereafter *CW*.

capital, a socialist euphemism for interest widely used in Eastern Europe.<sup>32</sup>

In cultural policy, Liuist revisionism emphasized functional specialization and professionalization at the expense of political commitment, and institution building at the expense of the more egalitarian dispersal of services. This entailed "bourgeois liberalization" among China's intellectual and cultural elites, an emphasis on an educational policy that resulted in a double-tracked, pyramidal school system that fostered intense student competition to enroll in elite schools; a Westernized medical system centered on modern urban hospitals and apparently neglecting rural health care; and an independent news agency staffed by professionally qualified journalists who would adopt a "style of objective reporting."<sup>33</sup>

### *Revisionism in Comparative Perspective*

The cleavage between Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-ch'i was not only said to have recurred at every crucial decisionmaking juncture in the history of the Chinese Communist movement, but to recapitulate earlier cleavages in the Marxist tradition, placing Liu at the end of a long train of thinkers that includes Bernstein, Kautsky, Trotsky, Bukharin, Khrushchev, Ch'en Tu-hsiu, Wang Ming, Kao Kang, and P'eng Te-huai. The only thing these men seem to have in common is that they were all excommunicated from the Communist movement, lending plausibility to Hook's remark that revisionism's "connotations of disparagement, deviation, incipient betrayal, and apostasy are the only common elements one can find in the wide variety of

32. "Two Diametrically Opposed Lines in Building the Economy," *Chieh-fang jih-pao* (August 25, 1967) in *SCMP*, No. 4012 (August 31, 1967), p. 19; Fan Hsiu-ping, "Criticize and Repudiate China's Khrushchev's Economics," *Jen-min jih-pao*, (September 14, 1967) in *SCMP*, No. 4040 (October 12, 1967), pp. 1-7. Hereinafter *JMJP*. "Thorough Criticism of the 'Three-Self, One-Guarantee' System Geared to the Restoration of Capitalism," *Hung-ch'i*, No. 13 (August 17, 1967), in *SCMP*, No. 591 (September 5, 1967), pp. 4-10. Hereinafter *HC*. Cf. also Wen-shun Chi, "Sun Yeh-fang and his Revisionist Economics," *Asian Survey*, XII, 10 (October 1972), pp. 887-890.

33. "Bring to the Light of Day China's Khrushchev's Bourgeois Program of Journalism," *JMJP*, September 2, 1967, in *SCMP*, No. 4015 (September 6, 1967), pp. 23-24; Wu Leng-hsi, "Confession," in *Chinese Law and Government*, I, 4 (Winter 1968-1969), p. 38; "Repudiate the Counterrevolutionary Revisionist Line on Scientific Research for National Defense of China's Khrushchev," NCNA, Peking, August 27, 1967, in *SCMP*, No. 4013 (September 1, 1967), p. 19; and Marianne Bastid, "Economic Necessity and Political Ideals in Education Reform During the Cultural Revolution," *China Quarterly*, No. 42 (April-June 1970), pp. 16-46.

ress, he began to regard Liu's elaborate preparations as a brake on the movement. When in 1950 Liu seemed willing to postpone transition from a "rich peasant economy" until Chinese industry was in a position to mechanize 50 percent of agriculture and thereby create the appropriate material preconditions for collective farming, Mao overruled him. And in 1955, when Liu approved the disbandment of 200,000 cooperatives on the grounds that they had not yet met the material preconditions for successful operation, Mao reacted with considerable pique. Again in the 1960s, Liu's approach to agricultural mechanization was to sponsor systematic state-organized introduction of machinery at experimental points under the control of agricultural machinery stations, selecting "a hundred key *hsien* for full-scale mechanization in a "war of annihilation," then consolidating these key points and extending the campaign. The Maoists objected that this would entail a departure from self-reliance, uneven economic growth, and too slow a pace.<sup>21</sup>

Subsequent events could often be construed as having vindicated Mao's greater confidence in mass spontaneity, certainly in the first two cases. Whenever Mao countermanded his decisions, Liu promptly reversed himself, and he did go along with the Great Leap Forward although this campaign was conducted according to organizational principles quite foreign to him. But during the Cultural Revolution, Liu's inherent predisposition to give instrumental, materialistic objectives priority over the expressive, ideological aspects of the movement and to proceed at a measured pace and in an ordered sequence brought him into a direct clash with Mao's more populist notions, which became public before it could be amicably resolved. The ensuing mass criticism campaign then brought Liu's entire career into disrepute.

### *Conflict and Cooperation*

The Maoists accused Liu of perpetuating the Confucian tendency to avoid conflict: he allegedly supported a capitulationist version of the United Front during the War of National Resistance, was willing to join a coalition government with the KMT after the war and forfeit resort to force in hopes of rising to power through parliamentary means, sought to extinguish class struggle and inner-Party struggle in post-Liberation China, and supported a foreign policy that abandoned national liberation struggles and capitulated to imperialism. Al-

21. *Nung-yeh chi-hsieh chi-shu* [Agricultural Mechanization Technique], Nos. 2-3 (May 23, 1967), trans. in *Selections from China Mainland Magazines* (Hong Kong: U.S. Consulate General), No. 585 (July 24, 1967), 10-14. Hereafter *SCMM*.

though these accusations are overdrawn, the kernel of truth in them that can be extracted points to an interesting aspect of Liu's approach to violence, i.e., his consistent tendency to engage in conflict under a cooperative façade. We have already drawn attention to his tendency to divide organizational work into legal and illegal spheres, arranging the former to comply with the norms of nonviolent civil society while authorizing violations of these norms in the latter (thus Red Guard critics of Liu's pacificism tended selectively to cull quotations from his pronouncements about the former while ignoring his undercover activities, about which much less was publicly known).

The first case in which Liu's alleged aversion to violence may have played some role involved the inner-Party debate over how much compliance the Party should render the Nationalist government in the Second United Front. Even after Sian, Mao Tse-tung, almost alone among his colleagues, seemed inclined to pursue a more forthrightly independent stance even if it risked alienating the KMT. For example, at a meeting in August 1937 in Lochüan, Mao argued that "democracy and resistance are interdependent," the implication being that if the CCP were not given a fair share of government power through the democratization of the Nationalist regime, the KMT would still be practicing a policy of nonresistance, leaving the Party under no obligation to support it. And after the fall of Shanghai and T'aiyüan in November 1937 he wrote an inner-Party circular in which he argued that the CCP should assume leadership in the war and draw over the left KMT and the national bourgeoisie rather than simply follow the KMT. Mao's proposals drew opposition from Wang Ming [Ch'en Shao-yü], who returned from Moscow in early December with Stalin's instruction that the KMT and CCP should cooperate at least until the end of the war so that Japan would be tied down in China. Wang's objections were seconded by Chou En-lai, who was concerned lest open insubordination tarnish the Party's patriotic image in the eyes of the uncommitted middle classes, and by Chang Kuo-t'ao, who pointed to the danger of forcing the KMT into the anti-Comintern pact. Wang Ming's position temporarily prevailed, and in December 1937 the Party adopted a policy of "resistance above everything" and "everything through the united front."<sup>22</sup>

Liu did not participate in this decision, but, to judge from his contemporaneous writings, he attempted to straddle the issue, anticipating the eventual compromise posture of "unity and independence" adopted by the CC. On the one hand, Liu indicated that he, like

22. See Gregor Benton, "The 'Second Wang Ming Line' (1935-38)," *China Quarterly*, No. 61 (March 1975), pp. 61-94.

Chou and Chang, valued the KMT as an important ally in the War of National Resistance. This support was not based on any naïve assumptions about the KMT, but on a shrewd assessment of the military balance of power. Regular positional warfare, to be fought mainly by KMT troops, would continue to be China's chief form of resistance, he argued, first in the North and then in South and Central China. As the central theater of positional warfare shifted to South and Central China, the CCP in the North would adopt guerrilla operations behind Japanese lines, but KMT participation would still be necessary to tie down Japanese troops and provide the CCP with a power vacuum in which to expand. Liu's conciliatory inclinations were thus based on the desire to bolster KMT opposition to Japan, which enhanced CCP prospects for open work without KMT restrictions.<sup>23</sup> Although the CCP should cooperate with the KMT only insofar as it was in the Party's interest to do so, there was no need to accentuate points of disagreement unnecessarily: it was quite sufficient to continue to render lip service and quietly ignore any inconvenient directives. Liu's united front policy made allowance for so many exceptions and qualifications that Mao could cite him in 1938 in support of his own position:

Comrade Liu Shao-ch'i has rightly said that if "everything through" were to mean "through" Chiang Kai-shek and Yen Hsi-shan, then that will only mean unilateral submission, and not "through the united front" at all. Behind the enemy lines, the idea of "everything through" is impossible, for there we have to act independently and with the initiative in our own hands while keeping to the agreements that the KMT has approved.<sup>24</sup>

In his own work behind enemy lines during this period, Liu complied with united front policy whenever he found it expedient to do so and violated KMT directives whenever he found them inconvenient. As secretary of the North China Bureau in 1937–1938, he found that the absence of large-scale battles after 1938 and the advances of Japanese forces in Central China provided the Communists with good opportunities to expand by exploiting open, legal channels. But with his transfer to Central China in the spring of 1938

23. Liu, "K'ang-Jih yu-chi chan-cheng chung ko-chung chi-pen cheng-ts'e wen-t'i" [Various basic problems in the anti-Japanese guerrilla war], in Chinese Communist Party (ed.), *K'ang-chan yi lai chung-yao wen-chien hui-pien* [Important collected documents since the outbreak of the National Resistance War] (N.P., 1942), pp. 19–33.

24. "The Question of Independence and Initiative Within the United Front" (November 5, 1938), *SW*, Vol. II, pp. 213–217.

he found the going more difficult. Unlike the situation in North China, in Central China the KMT left its regular troops behind and organized its own guerrillas in the countryside after the retreat of regular troops; the Japanese also initiated “mop-up” operations, appealing to the KMT for cooperation against the Communist base areas. Hence Liu shifted to a more covert, combative stance vis-à-vis the KMT. While he emphasized that to be a KMT member was no crime and that killing them should generally be avoided, he sanctioned the execution of the more dangerous among them for the sake of security. In their propaganda, the Party should also undermine the prestige of the KMT by questioning its sincerity in applying the Three People’s Principles and in fighting Japan. In his memoirs, T’an Hsi-lin, a former division commander in the New Fourth Army, recalls a conversation with Liu during the battle for Tingyüan in March 1940:

I asked comrade Liu Shao-ch’i, “When we drive out Wu Tzu-chang, will the Nationalists appoint a good magistrate in his stead?” “We shall appoint our man,” said comrade Liu, “and we have the right to appoint even a provincial governor. We shall appoint a magistrate for any county we occupy; when several counties are under our occupation, a special district commissioner will be appointed. We need approval from nobody so long as approval is given by our Party and by the People.”<sup>25</sup>

Another instance of Liu’s allegedly irenic approach to revolution was his willingness to cooperate with the KMT in a coalition government at the conclusion of the War of National Resistance in 1945. It may be true as charged that Liu was the leader of a Politburo faction that supported a peace strategy—certainly such a strategy would have more amply accommodated his skills in organization and propaganda than a resort to open violence—but the evidence at hand is inconclusive, giving equally plausible grounds to assume that Mao himself supported such a strategy.<sup>26</sup> Moscow was promoting this strategy at the time, and Communist parties in both Western and Eastern Europe were adopting it. Liu’s endorsement of a coalition government was extensively qualified, stipulating that the CCP must possess veto

25. Quoted in Warren Kuo, *Analytical History of the Chinese Communist Party* (Taipei: Institute of International Relations, 1971), Vol. IV, pp. 231–232.

26. Liu drafted a compromising “Report on the Current Situation” on February 1, 1946 (*LSWTC*, pp. 182–185). But in a report on the constitutional congress written by Mao the same day, the chairman made the same concessions. Cf. Takeuchi Minoru (ed.), *Mao Tse-tung chi* [Collected works of Mao Tse-tung] (Tokyo: Mō Takutō bunken shiryō Kenkyūkai, 1970), Vol. X, p. 27–28.

power, that the CCP should retain control of its original liberated areas while acquiring the freedom to campaign in open electoral competition with the KMT in Nationalist areas, that military reorganization should take place only after the formation of the coalition government, and that officers should remain attached to their original units. When armed conflict erupted in Manchuria and negotiations broke down, Liu evidently concurred in the Party's decision to fight.

The attempt by Red Guards to document Liu's "theory of the extinction of class struggle" relies largely on statements made in 1956–1957, at a time when Mao was also making prematurely optimistic predictions of an imminent "victory of socialism," and is therefore invalid—both men readjusted their perspectives following the collapse of the Leap. But the emphasis on accommodation, on the reconciliation of contradictions, is so pervasive in Liu's life and works that one can accept the substance of this accusation while rejecting nearly all of the particulars cited to support it. Although the allegation that Liu supported "inner-Party peace" would seem on the face of it to be refuted by his essay "On Inner-Party Struggle," for example, closer examination of this essay indicates that, despite his endorsement of the functional utility of struggle, Liu's chief concern was with its regulation and circumscription.<sup>27</sup> The internal dynamics of the foreign policymaking process are still too little understood to determine to what extent Liu was responsible for the period of relative moderation that prevailed in certain theaters of Chinese foreign affairs in the early 1960s, but it seems more plausible to attribute responsibility for this to Chou En-lai.

It seems fair to conclude, not that Liu eschewed the use of violence, but that he did tend to limit it to covert and instrumental purposes and to regulate its expression. In his speeches and theoretical writings Liu also subscribed to the classic Marxist hope ultimately to eliminate violence from the human condition. Mao, in contrast, conceived of violence as having cathartic and integrative as well as instrumental functions and was therefore prepared to assign it a permanent central role in socialist development.

### *Organization and Policy*

Liu was every inch an organization man, determined to regulate and institutionalize all manner of human relationships. On one occasion he promised a group of young workers that there was room for them at the top as "district leaders, *hsien* leaders, provincial secretaries, ministers in the government," but that "if you want to have an

27. Liu, "On Inner-Party Struggle" (July 2, 1941), *CW*, Vol. 1, pp. 330–367.

important duty, you have to be able to do a big job, to manage a big office."<sup>28</sup> Liu's approach to organization was to set up autonomous, self-regulating subsystems, each operating in accord with a logic dictated by its specific functions. This contrasts with Mao's inclination, on those occasions when he sought to intervene in organization building, to subordinate all organizational considerations to ideological principles, but then to be fairly informal and latitudinarian about enforcing compliance to those principles. Liu's approach to organization and policymaking may be illustrated by a series of examples from the political, economic, and cultural subsectors.

In politics, Liu sought to construct a system that was vertically centralized but horizontally segmented along lines of functional specialization, creating a number of parallel hierarchies. He advocated establishment of a "perfect legal system" to dispense "equal justice," even "protecting the legal rights of counterrevolutionaries" (i.e., granting them a "fair trial"). He also supported an expansion of the Procuratorate as a parallel control network: "The Procuratorate must see to it that the rights due to offenders are guaranteed," he said in 1957. "The Party must abide by the law. If the Party acts unlawfully, are you going to bring up the matter?"<sup>29</sup> Implicit is Liu's assumption that these parallel hierarchies should continuously check and balance one another, which contrasts with the post-Cultural Revolution trend toward a proletarian dictatorship in which the Party has paramountcy under a "unified rule" at each horizontal level in a vertically decentralized system.

Within the Party, Liu advocated collegiality at each horizontal level as mediated through free discussion and debate and disciplined by criticism and self-criticism, and "democratic centralism" between vertical levels. The "centralized" aspect referred to the obligation to render "absolute obedience" to the consensus of the majority or of the higher echelon once a decision had been made, regardless of the ideological "correctness" of a directive.<sup>30</sup> The "democratic" aspect was effectuated through a delegate election system at the various levels of the organization, through regular report meetings of

28. Liu, "Tsai Hua-pei chih-kung tai-piao hui i-shang kuan-yü kung-hui kung-tso wen-t'i ti pao-kao" [A report delivered before the North China Workers' Representatives Meeting on Problems in Labor Union Work], *LSWTC*, p. 207.

29. "Drag Out Liu Shao-ch'i," trans. in *Survey of the Chinese Mainland Press* (Hong Kong: U.S. Consulate General), No. 3946 (May 25, 1967), pp. 1-16. Hereafter *SCMP*.

30. "It is wrong for them to put up such a condition [viz., ideological correctness], for it destroys the system of democratic centralism," Liu stipulated. "Once a decision is made by the majority, the higher-level leadership, or the CC, it must be carried out even if the decision is wrong." *CW*, I, 327-369.

the leading units with the representative bodies at the various levels, and through the guarantee of certain rights to individual Party members: the right to elect and be elected to representative organs; the right to make proposals or statements to all Party organizations, including the right to criticize any other member at Party meetings; the right to preserve minority opinions even after a decision had been reached; and the right to defense before and appeal after any organizational penalty.<sup>31</sup>

In the economic sector, Liu was a vigorous proponent of the role of specialized knowledge (both technical and managerial) and of advanced technology in the modernization of China and was inclined to endorse a fairly conventional capital-intensive approach that borrowed recent innovations from both Eastern Europe and the West for adaptation to the Chinese environment, in contrast to the Maoist preference for labor-intensive, indigenous techniques. Without forsaking the central plan, Liu tended to set up autonomous self-regulating economic subsystems, condemning unwarranted political interference as "feudalism." In agriculture, this meant "work points in command" (rather than remuneration according to need or political attitudes), a steady reduction in the size of the unit of accountability in order more accurately to correlate incentives with work, extension of private plots, and in some areas (as an emergency response to the post-Leap recession) the fixing of output quotas based on individual households—an arrangement similar to a sharecropping arrangement in "capitalist" agriculture. In industry, revisionism entailed somewhat more emphasis on profit as an index of enterprise efficiency, the devolution of managerial authority to the enterprise, the introduction of "socialist trusts" operating parallel to government ministries to promote "rationalization on the principle of economic management" in the various industrial trades (e.g., pharmaceutical, rubber, aluminum, and so on), and the introduction of a system of bonuses and piece-work incentives to boost labor productivity. Reviving discussion among professional economists (e.g., Sun Yeh-fang) of the "law of value" (defined as equivalent exchange and pay according to the social value of work performed), Liu permitted a revival of quasi-market systems in labor allocation (in addition to unionized permanent workers, he authorized the formation of migratory bands of contract "peasant-workers") and in agriculture and wholesaling, with relatively wide freedom of action at the enterprise level in contracting. He also allegedly endorsed a tax on

31. *Ibid.*

capital, a socialist euphemism for interest widely used in Eastern Europe.<sup>32</sup>

In cultural policy, Liuist revisionism emphasized functional specialization and professionalization at the expense of political commitment, and institution building at the expense of the more egalitarian dispersal of services. This entailed "bourgeois liberalization" among China's intellectual and cultural elites, an emphasis on an educational policy that resulted in a double-tracked, pyramidal school system that fostered intense student competition to enroll in elite schools; a Westernized medical system centered on modern urban hospitals and apparently neglecting rural health care; and an independent news agency staffed by professionally qualified journalists who would adopt a "style of objective reporting."<sup>33</sup>

### *Revisionism in Comparative Perspective*

The cleavage between Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-ch'i was not only said to have recurred at every crucial decisionmaking juncture in the history of the Chinese Communist movement, but to recapitulate earlier cleavages in the Marxist tradition, placing Liu at the end of a long train of thinkers that includes Bernstein, Kautsky, Trotsky, Bukharin, Khrushchev, Ch'en Tu-hsiu, Wang Ming, Kao Kang, and P'eng Te-huai. The only thing these men seem to have in common is that they were all excommunicated from the Communist movement, lending plausibility to Hook's remark that revisionism's "connotations of disparagement, deviation, incipient betrayal, and apostasy are the only common elements one can find in the wide variety of

32. "Two Diametrically Opposed Lines in Building the Economy," *Chieh-fang jih-pao* (August 25, 1967) in *SCMP*, No. 4012 (August 31, 1967), p. 19; Fan Hsiu-ping, "Criticize and Repudiate China's Khrushchev's Economics," *Jen-min jih-pao*, (September 14, 1967) in *SCMP*, No. 4040 (October 12, 1967), pp. 1-7. Hereinafter *JMJP*. "Thorough Criticism of the 'Three-Self, One-Guarantee' System Geared to the Restoration of Capitalism," *Hung-ch'i*, No. 13 (August 17, 1967), in *SCMP*, No. 591 (September 5, 1967), pp. 4-10. Hereinafter *HC*. Cf. also Wen-shun Chi, "Sun Yeh-fang and his Revisionist Economics," *Asian Survey*, XII, 10 (October 1972), pp. 887-890.

33. "Bring to the Light of Day China's Khrushchev's Bourgeois Program of Journalism," *JMJP*, September 2, 1967, in *SCMP*, No. 4015 (September 6, 1967), pp. 23-24; Wu Leng-hsi, "Confession," in *Chinese Law and Government*, I, 4 (Winter 1968-1969), p. 38; "Repudiate the Counterrevolutionary Revisionist Line on Scientific Research for National Defense of China's Khrushchev," NCNA, Peking, August 27, 1967, in *SCMP*, No. 4013 (September 1, 1967), p. 19; and Marianne Bastid, "Economic Necessity and Political Ideals in Education Reform During the Cultural Revolution," *China Quarterly*, No. 42 (April-June 1970), pp. 16-46.

meanings the term has in the literature of Marxism."<sup>34</sup> Bernstein and Kautsky were actually on opposite sides in the famous debates that split the German Social Democrats, for instance, just as Trotsky and Bukharin took opposing sides in the controversies leading to Trotsky's purge. Yet if we narrow our comparison to those who by general polemical consensus are agreed to be revisionists (*viz.*, Bernstein, Bukharin, Dubcek, and to some extent Khrushchev),<sup>35</sup> distilling out the objective elements of a definition often used *pari passu*, beneath the many obvious differences there seem to be some rather striking underlying parallels in social background, ideology, and method.

### *Social Background*

Revisionists tend to be intellectuals and to rely upon the intellectual community as a primary base of support.<sup>36</sup> Eduard Bernstein, Conrad Schmidt, Eduard David, Paul Kampffmayer, and other German revisionists were articulate and widely read (and widely published) intellectuals, many of whom had an academic base (which may have inclined them to integrate Marxism with the neo-Kantianism then prevalent in German universities). Although Leon Trotsky does not qualify by our other criteria of revisionism, he, too, was an intellectual and a leading defender of the cultural diversity of the NEP. Nikolai Bukharin was in Lenin's estimation the most brilliant theoretician among his potential Bolshevik successors. Nikita Khrushchev, though by no means an intellectual, did attempt to mobilize the intellectual community on behalf of his economic and administrative reforms, enticing them with the famous "thaw." In Eastern Europe as well, revisionism was particularly strong in countries such as Poland and Hungary where prewar Communist Parties were small and/or decimated by Stalinist purges, inducing them to absorb a rapid

34. Sidney Hook, "Introduction" in Eduard Bernstein, *Evolutionary Socialism: A Criticism and Affirmation* (New York: Schocken, 1968), p. vii.

35. Khrushchev is a mixed type whose policies and tactics were in some respects more radical than revisionist. Like Mao, he flouted the bureaucracy and sought to mobilize extrabureaucratic constituencies. Whereas Stalin promoted a differentiated incentive scale to spur productivity, Khrushchev pressed for a reduction of wage differentials and for a broadening of educational opportunities. Cf. Henry W. Morton, "The Structure of Decision-Making in the USSR: A Comparative Introduction" in Peter H. Juviler and H.W. Morton (eds.), *Soviet Policy-Making* (New York: Praeger, 1967); and Barrington Moore, Jr., *Soviet Politics: The Dilemma of Power* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 239.

36. Herbert Schack, *Die Revision des Marxismus-Leninismus: Chancen und Grenzen einer Ideologie* (Berlin: Duncker u. Humblot, 1965), pp. 43, 112-113.

influx of young intellectuals.<sup>37</sup> Alexander Dubcek's reform movement relied heavily on the support of intellectuals, particularly economists such as Ota Sik, Selucky, Loeb, Kosta, Goldman, and Korda. In China, a large proportion of the original Party leadership consisted of humanistic literati such as Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Li Ta-chao, but they were either crushed when Chiang Kai-shek destroyed the urban Party apparatus in 1927 or purged in subsequent inner-Party recriminations. A second wave of urban intellectuals, however, entered the Party during the "December 9th" (1935) anti-Japanese protest movement in the coastal cities, which was surreptitiously manipulated by Liu Shao-ch'i and P'eng Chen. They seem to have become part of Liu's organization in the enemy-occupied areas during the Sino-Japanese War and to have remained beholden to him subsequently.<sup>38</sup>

The intellectuals found natural allies among the emerging stratum of white-collar workers. The social status and life-styles of this "new middle class" placed them among the bourgeoisie, but their incomes placed them among the proletariat: the universal characteristic of this stratum was its *dependency*.<sup>39</sup> German revisionism batted on an influx into the Social-Democratic Party (SPD) of government employees, office workers, technical personnel, and other clerks. In Bukharin's Soviet Union as well as in post-Liberation China and modern Eastern Europe, the Party quickly mushroomed in size to assume the responsibilities of state administration, placing Party and military veterans in a minority relative to postrevolutionary civil servants whose formative experiences are family life, school, and orderly bureaucratic careers.<sup>40</sup> Thus, in his struggle with Stalin, Bukharin found his greatest support in the commissariats (particularly Agriculture, Finance, Labor, and Trade) and other state organs (the Supreme Economic Council, State Bank, and Gosplan) responsible for preparing and administering economic policy, which were staffed largely by members of the former anti-Bolshevik intelligent-

37. Peter Gay, *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism: Eduard Bernstein's Challenge to Marx* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 255.

38. An improbably high proportion of the December 9 cadres were hence purged during the Cultural Revolution. Cf. Parris H. Chang, "Mao's Great Purge: A Political Balance Sheet," *Problems of Communism*, XVIII, 2 (March-April 1969), pp. 1-11; cf. also John Israel and Donald W. Klein, *Rebels and Bureaucrats: China's December 9ers* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976).

39. Gay, *Dilemma*, pp. 200-216.

40. See Ezra F. Vogel, "From Revolutionary to Semi-Bureaucrat: The 'Regularization' of Cadres," *China Quarterly*, No. 29 (January-March 1967), pp. 36-61.

sia, the so-called non-Party specialists.<sup>41</sup> Dubcek also received strong support from the ministries, from the universities, and from the Czech Academy of Sciences. Chinese revisionism tended to be concentrated in the technical ministries of the State Council and in the propaganda and cultural departments of the Central Committee. Though it also cultivated a popular base by responding to the interests of the middle peasants in higher living standards, revisionism appealed essentially to an urban middle class meritocratic constituency.

By contrast, the radicals have typically cultivated their mass base among the idealistic or disprivileged. Under state socialism, these comprise no distinct class, but a motley and shifting assortment of groups and strata. The idealists consist of those who have been indoctrinated in regime values but have not yet had sufficient experience to reconcile themselves to the discrepancies between ideals and reality—usually students or intellectuals. The relatively disprivileged consist of those to whom fate has for one reason or another—the gap in living standards between countryside and city, the ossification of the bureaucratic career ladder, the luck of the draw in job assignments—allotted inferior life-chances. The only thing these groups have in common is that they are all creatures of government policy, hence tend to bear grievances against the leadership. But when permitted to mobilize and organize freely (as during China's Cultural Revolution), their differing interests precipitate internecine conflict.

Several policy consequences follow from the middle-class intellectual social backgrounds and constituencies of the revisionists. First, their cultural policies have typically been liberal, fostering the proliferation of quality cultural, scholarly, journalistic and scientific communication. Bukharin, for example, asserted that socialism demanded a "powerful, rich, and variegated art" whose animating spirit was a "humanism" enveloping the "entire world of emotions—love, happiness, fear, anguish, anger, and so on to infinity—the entire world of desire and passion." This could prosper only given a "wide freedom of competition in creative questing."<sup>42</sup> Khrushchev relaxed controls over public opinion to the extent that political controversy began to emerge in the public arena: although of course the Party retained hegemony over decisionmaking, issues were debated widely in the press and in professional journals, and

41. Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888–1938* (New York: Knopf, 1973), p. 233.

42. Cf. Edward J. Brown, *The Proletarian Episode in Russian Literature, 1928–1932* (New York: Praeger, 1953), pp. 235–250.

outsiders even had access for the first time to stenographic transcripts of the plenary sessions of the Central Committee. The Khrushchev era also witnessed the rise of academic economics to a socially influential position: the theories of Western economists such as Wassily Leontief were imported, Oskar Lange's work was translated in 1957, and in 1959 Leonid Kantorovich's major work on mathematical economics was published.<sup>43</sup> During the 1968 "spring of freedom" in Prague, the Czech Party Presidium rescinded its directive for prior political censorship and removed the Central Publications Board from the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior; as a result, the press, radio, and television rapidly became forums for the exchange of ideas and even bold criticism, while the intellectual community continually expanded the boundaries within which they could publish.<sup>44</sup> According to the Red Guards and other critics, Liu Shao-ch'i was more liberal in his dealings with the intellectual community than his previous reputation might lead one to infer; he apparently advocated the republication of old books without censorship (but with commentary notes added), the importation of Western films ("all cinema films of the world, as long as they are either progressive or harmless, may be imported," he said in March 1958), a more independent and professional press (accusing the NCNA in the spring of 1961 of "habitual lying," he issued a challenge: "If the policies are wrong, you should report the errors and dig out the material proof"), and a "small Hundred Flowers" in 1961–1962 for academic notables to hold scholarly symposia and publish their findings.<sup>45</sup>

Revisionist liberalism consisted not merely of a relative tolerance for the free play of the intellect but of a cosmopolitan interest in new ideas among the revisionists and an eclectic adoption of these to deal with concrete political problems. Bernstein for example tried to amalgamate the labor theory of value with prevailing academic theories of marginal utility, opening the way to a theoretical justification of market allocation of commodities and labor and commercial pricing. Bukharin replaced the dialectic with an "equilibrium theory" derived from neoclassical economics.<sup>46</sup> Liu Shao-ch'i apparently adopted the "socialist trust" from the East German VVBs (*Ver-*

43. Abraham Katz, *The Politics of Economic Reform in the Soviet Union* (New York: Praeger, 1972), p. 88.

44. Galia Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia: The Dubcek Era, 1968–1969* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 7–16.

45. Lowell Dittmer, *Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution: The Politics of Mass Criticism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 268–284.

46. Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 147.

*einigungen volkseigener Betriebe*, or state enterprise associations) and recommended the study of managerial systems from the Soviet Union, Japan, and even Western monopoly corporations.

As intellectuals, the revisionists tend to be put off by simplification and intrigued by complexity. Thus Bukharin remarked condescendingly that the "paraphrasing of newspaper articles" and "rhymed slogans" that characterized Stalinist attempts to engender new art forms "is, of course, not art at all"; and Liu Shao-ch'i is said to have ridiculed the popularization of Mao Tse-tung Thought as "over-simplification, dogmatism, and Philistinism." Given their penchant for complexity and abhorrence of *simplificateurs terribles*, it is hardly surprising that the revisionists generally prefer the construction of elaborate organizations and complex marketing systems to the direct mobilization of the masses on the basis of a few simplistic slogans. Nor is it surprising that their educational policies tend to stress "expertise" over "redness" and to preserve at all costs the "quality" full-time academic "track" even while expanding the self-funding half-work, half-study track for vocational training.<sup>47</sup> The revisionist assumption seems to be that science and technology have replaced labor as the most important independent source of surplus value, and that the school system has therefore displaced revolutionary class struggle as the major avenue to upward mobility.

### *Ideology*

Perhaps the key ideological innovation leading to revisionism is the abandonment of the dialectic. Explicitly dismissing the dialectic as a Hegelian "survival," Bernstein declared: "I am not of the opinion that the struggle of opposites is the basis of all development. The cooperation of related forces is of great significance as well."<sup>48</sup> Bernstein even went so far as to question the inexorability of the Marxist sequence of historical stages, resuscitating the Kantian distinction between fact and value and placing "socialism" in the latter category. Without so explicitly disavowing the dialectic, Bukharin contended that dialectics and social change generally could be explained by "equilibrium theory," according to which "any system, material or social, tends toward a state of equilibrium (analogous to adaptation in biology)."<sup>49</sup>

47. Cf. Donald J. Munro, "Egalitarian Ideal and Educational Fact in Communist China" in John M. H. Lindbeck (ed.), *China: Management of a Revolutionary Society* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1971), pp. 255-301.

48. Bernstein, *Zur Geschichte u. Theorie des Sozialismus*, p. 347, as quoted in Gay, *Dilemma*, p. 137.

49. Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 116.

With the possible exception of Bernstein, most revisionists nonetheless retained the Marxist conception of a determinate sequence of historical development, resulting in a unilinear evolutionism not dissimilar to that implicit in many Western theories of economic and political development. Again, Bernstein was most explicit in embracing “evolutionism,” but Bukharin also advanced a theory of “growing into socialism” along an “*evolutionary path*” [emphasis in the original]:

For many decades we will slowly be growing into socialism: through the growth of our state industry, through cooperation, through an increasing influence of our banking system, through a thousand and one intermediate forms.<sup>50</sup>

When the dialectic falls, the tight logic of the Marxist idea system leads this to topple a series of related ideas “like dominoes.” Abandonment of the dialectic entails first of all a serious undermining of the doctrine of the inevitability of class struggle. This was not explicitly admitted but usually emerged in the form of a redefinition of “struggle” in nonviolent terms. “Here we see a class struggle which is not fought in the streets but in parliament and press,” wrote Bernstein approvingly. “But struggle remains struggle.”<sup>51</sup> Bukharin concurred that class struggle had not ended, but that its more violent forms—the “mechanical ‘knocking out of teeth’—were no longer necessary, for class struggle now manifested itself in peaceful market competition between socialist economies and private economies, and on the ideological and cultural fronts.<sup>52</sup> Khrushchev disavowed the “class struggle” that Stalin had used to justify the permanent purge, declaring that coercive organizations should give way as part of a “withering away of the state.” According to the Czech reformers, socialist society had eliminated the existence of classes with the socialization of the means of production and now consisted of various “strata” or groups, each with its own (nonantagonistic) interests. Liu Shao-ch’i tended to redefine struggle as labor:

Labor is the foundation on which human society exists and develops. Workers are the creators of civilization. Therefore, labor must command the highest respect in the world.<sup>53</sup>

50. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

51. Bernstein, *Der Sozialismus einst und jetzt*, p. 66, as cited in Gay, pp. 200–201.

52. Bukharin, *Nekotorye voprosy*, p. 48; *Put’ k sotsializmu*, p. 68; *Imprecor*, Vol. V (1926), p. 921; all as cited in Cohen, p. 199.

53. Liu, “May Day Address,” *CW*, Vol. II, p. 192.

Second, the absence of class struggle in turn compromises the rationale for the vanguard Party and the proletarian dictatorship, both of which assume the implacable *revanchisme* of the former exploiting classes and the persistence of internal warfare.

### *Method*

Whether as a logical implication of their abandonment of the dialectic or because both this abandonment and its implications follow from some other underlying causal factor, such as middle-class intellectual social backgrounds, the revisionists have tended to avoid the use of open violence whenever possible in favor of more accommodative methods. These include the following:

First, inasmuch as the extinction of class struggle entails a weakening of normative and coercive constraints, revisionists are inclined to resort to material incentives to motivate mass compliance. Having lost or dismissed as impractical the vision (implicit in the class struggle perspective) of up-ending the stratification pyramid and repressing former exploiters permanently, the major social objective of revisionism becomes a universal raising of living standards. Thus Bernstein advocated "the greatest possible economic, political, and moral well-being of everyone."<sup>54</sup> Bukharin put it even more bluntly: "We must say to the whole peasantry, to all its strata: enrich yourselves, accumulate, develop your economy."<sup>55</sup> And Khrushchev, who introduced "goulash Communism" to the Soviet Union, noted in 1964: "If the socialist system gives a person fewer economic and spiritual goods than the capitalist system, certain people are going to think it over and say: 'Why the devil did we substitute one for the other?'"<sup>56</sup> Thus Khrushchev sought to increase the production of consumer goods and introduced new welfare legislation: minimum wages were raised in 1956 and again in 1965; old age and disability pensions were increased, and income taxes revised in favor of lower income brackets.<sup>57</sup> Application of this notion of classless prosperity

54. Bernstein, *Zur Frage: Sozialliberalismus oder Kollektivismus?* p. 7; as cited in Gay, p. 242.

55. Bukharin, *Tekushchii moment i osnovy*, pp. 13, 16; *Pur' k sotsializmu*, p. 45; as cited in Cohen, pp. 177-179.

56. Harry Schwartz, *The Soviet Economy Since Stalin* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1965), p. 232; see also N.S. Khrushchev, *Raising the Soviet Standard of Living, Report to the USSR Supreme Soviet (May 5, 1960)* (New York: Crosscurrents Press, 1960), pp. 4, 41.

57. Carl A. Linden, *Khrushchev and the Soviet Leadership, 1957-1964* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), pp. 209-212; T.H. Rigby, "The Democratic Impulse in the Communist Party" in D. Richard Little (ed.), *Liberalization in the USSR: Facade or Reality?* (Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1968), pp. 25-30.

entailed distribution according to universalistic achievement criteria rather than political considerations or egalitarianism. In practice this permitted a new stratification structure to emerge on the basis of these criteria.

Second, the theoretical undermining of "proletarian dictatorship" leads to increased revisionist reliance on rational-legal or formal democratic legitimations. The "mass movement" *qua* military campaign under heroic commanders against various iniquities receives less elite encouragement or is overadministered, reducing the distinction between movement and routine administration. Participation becomes voluntary rather than leadership-elicited and is mediated through elaborate representative institutions. Bernstein decreed that "democracy is at the same time means and ends,"<sup>58</sup> recommending active SPD participation in Reichstag politics. Bukharin averred that the State was no longer "an instrument of repression" but rather devoted to "peaceful organizational" work to promote "collaboration" and "social unity."<sup>59</sup> As head of the Electoral Law Drafting Committee of the formative First National People's Congress (NPC), Liu Shao-ch'i introduced the system of people's congresses to represent China's non-Party masses, and in 1962 he reportedly went so far as to advocate that "there should be an open opposition among the people and within the Party." In place of the proletarian dictatorship and vanguard Party Khrushchev introduced the notion of a Party and state "of the whole people"; he also endorsed Communist Party participation in parliamentary "popular front" regimes in Western democracies. The Czech reformers demanded democratic discussion and secret voting for all important questions and appointments within the Party, a freeing of the mass organizations from elite supervision so that they could represent their constituents' interests, the introduction of elective workers' councils in the factories, and the establishment of a National Assembly composed of persons truly representative of the people and of the conflicting interests in society.<sup>60</sup>

These representative institutions would be legitimated not merely by their popularity but by their legality. And "socialist legality" generally received favorable mention, not only in the attention given to the increasingly elaborate Party and state constitutions but in the emphasis on the rule of law in reforms of the court system, procuracy, and police. Thus Khrushchev abolished the blood purge of high-level political rivals, restricted the powers of the secret police, and dis-

58. Bernstein, *Voraussetzungen*, p. 301, as cited in Gay, p. 301.

59. Quoted in Cohen, p. 202.

60. Golan, *Reform Rule*, *passim*.

banded most of the Siberian labor camps. He also announced a comprehensive revision of the criminal code, resulting in the liberalization of both procedural and substantive norms (for example, only those who had actually committed a crime were henceforth to be sentenced); a rationalization of the legal system, and a decentralization and democratization of judicial decisionmaking.<sup>61</sup> Reforms were also introduced in the Czech legal and judicial systems designed to give defendants greater rights and protection. Whereas Mao Tse-tung once remarked that "it seems that it wouldn't do if there were no public security organs, procuracy and courts; [but] if they should collapse, I would be happy," Liu indicated at the Eighth National Party Congress that the creation of a "complete legal system," including the appropriate legal codes, was "an absolute necessity."<sup>62</sup> When the attempt to draft legal codes was disrupted by the anti-Rightist campaign in 1957, a second such attempt was initiated in 1962, but this, too, was frustrated, this time by Mao's call for "class struggle."

Third, denial of a necessarily antagonistic relationship between socialism and capitalism leads to the replacement of warfare (cold or hot) with "peaceful coexistence," and thence to intensified intellectual and commercial exchanges between the two systems. Bernstein first denied the inevitable decline of capitalism, and Khrushchev's rejection of the inevitability of war and his espousal of peaceful coexistence implicitly endorsed this denial, in effect reducing the contradiction between socialist and capitalist systems to a contest of growth rates. Khrushchev also extended his tolerance to the original revisionists in 1956 when he sought to welcome Tito back into the fold with the doctrine of "many roads to socialism." Liu Shao-ch'i is alleged to have advocated the "three reconciliations and one reduction" [san ho yi shao]: reconciliation with capitalism, social imperialism, and reactionary forces everywhere, and reduction of aid to national liberation movements.

The implications of the denial of an antagonistic contradiction between socialism and capitalism not only paved the way for a realignment of the international power balance (viz., détente between the two superpowers and disintegrative tendencies within both the Communist bloc and the Western containment structure) but facilitated diverse forms of commerce between the two systems. This led

61. "Introduction" in Little, *Liberalization*, pp. -2; N.S. Khrushchev, *The Great Mission of Literature and Art* (Moscow: Progress, 1964); Howard J. Berman, "The Dilemma of Soviet Law Reform," *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 76, No. 5 (March 1963), pp. 929-951.

62. Liu, "A Political Report to the CCP 8th National Congress on Behalf of the Central Committee" (September 15, 1956), *LSWTC*, pp. 266-292.

inter alia to the introduction of various elements of the capitalist economic system, particularly the market, in order to enhance economic efficiency and quality control. Again, Bernstein was first to accept private ownership and continued market competition in sectors of the socialist economy: "Where the state operates less efficiently than private industry it would be unsocialist to give preference to the state over private management."<sup>63</sup> Bukharin scorned a "Genghis Khan plan" and projected an indefinite future for NEP-style market socialism: collectivized agriculture was at best a distant prospect, whose realization depended on the capability of mechanized collective farms to prove their economic superiority over private agriculture in the open market.<sup>64</sup> The state should raise capital not from forced expropriations but from the growing profitability of state industry, from progressive taxation of the residual capitalist sector, and from voluntary savings deposited by kulaks and capitalists in Soviet bank and credit institutions.<sup>65</sup> Khrushchev's economic reforms enhanced the role of money and price as instruments of planning and control, allowing them to supersede such natural exchange elements as compulsory delivery of farm produce, payments in kind for the services of machine and tractor stations, and so forth. In 1962 Evsei Liberman published his famous article advocating the reintroduction of the profit index, letting factory directors decide how to meet targets independently, and permitting them to allocate firm profits in the form of bonuses; this triggered a series of proposals by economists (e.g., Sergei P. Trapeznikov, Viktor A. Volkov) calling for similar reforms. Khrushchev seemed to support these proposals, taking care to point out that profit was only an index of efficiency and not a motive for production.<sup>66</sup> The Czech economic reform program also proposed to place the economy on a market-determined, profit basis as distinct from the former plan-directed, volume-oriented system. Enterprises would be independent from state support and dependent on gross income to cover wages and other expenses; the state would limit itself to long-term plans, providing overall coordination to the economy as a whole.<sup>67</sup> As already noted, Liu Shao-ch'i

63. Quoted in Gay, p. 242.

64. Bukharin, *Krasnaia nov'*, No. 4 (1925), pp. 266–268; *Chetyrnadsataia konferentsiia*, pp. 186–188; as cited in Cohen, p. 199.

65. Bukharin, *Tekushchii moment i osnovy*, pp. 13, 16; *Pu' k sotsializmu*, p. 45; in Cohen, p. 423, fn. 53.

66. Jan Marczewski, *Crisis in Socialist Planning: Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R.* (New York: Praeger, 1974), pp. 59, 111ff.; Gilles Martinet, *Les Cinq Communismes* (Paris: Seuil, 1971), pp. 159–161.

67. Golan, *op. cit.*; cf. also Radoslav Selucky, *Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe: Political Background and Economic Significance* (New York: Praeger, 1972); and B. Wilczynski, *Socialist Economic Development and Reforms: From Extensive to Intensive Growth Under Central Planning in the U.S.S.R., Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia* (New York: Praeger, 1972).

also gave hitherto unprecedented scope to market forces in 1960–1964. In each case the revisionist reform wave encompassed two trends: a movement of concentration at the bottom of the scale (i.e., combinations of enterprises into trusts, associations, combinats, etc.) and a movement toward deconcentration at the top of the scale, as authority devolved from the ministries and central agencies to groups of enterprises with independent accounting.<sup>68</sup>

In sum, there are a number of striking similarities in the social backgrounds, ideologies, and methods of Marxist revisionists of diverse origins. These similarities may be attributed to the tendency of practicing politicians to adapt to prevailing realities, in this case to two of the strongest and most persistent currents in modern politics: nationalism and modernization. Realization of nationalist aspirations is prerequisite to full membership in the international power game, and modernization is absolutely *sine qua non* for the attainment of those aspirations. Wherever it has hitherto succeeded, economic modernization has imposed specific functional requirements on the political and social systems—requirements not entirely consistent with the Marxist vision of socialism. Among revisionists, economic growth tends to usurp the priority that radicals assign to the realization of distributive justice. This may be justified in theoretical terms by arguing that a more egalitarian social order will inevitably *follow* modernization in accord with the logic of historical determinism, but that equal distribution requires first that there be sufficient surplus to redistribute, and the accumulation of a surplus in turn depends upon industrialization. With such arguments, policies at odds with long-term socialist objectives may be so casually countenanced as expedient concessions to short-term system exigencies that long-term goals must seem at times to have been altogether forsaken.

### *China after Mao*

By dramatically alluding to the dangers inherent in an unrestricted continuation of revisionist tendencies in Chinese politics, the “Maoists” in the course of the Cultural Revolution succeeded in mobilizing a broad constituency in support of a radical departure from revisionist programs in the cultural, political, and economic arenas. But although this transformation was accompanied by polemical attacks on the revisionist “line” of such intense and sustained vehemence that one was tempted to preclude the survival of any policies so identified, there has in fact been a considerable renaissance of revi-

68. *Ibid.*

sionist policies, beginning with the early phase of the anti-Lin Piao campaign in 1972 and then, after a three-year radical resurgence, following the death of Mao and the purge of the "Gang of Four" in 1976. In the first year of his succession Hua Kuo-feng went to considerable lengths to emphasize ideological continuity—although he announced the victorious conclusion of the Cultural Revolution at the Eleventh Party Congress in 1977, for example, he asserted that such upheavals would occur many times in the future and maintained the persistence and centrality of class struggle in socialist society—but revisionist policies have been pursued with increasing overtress since the rehabilitation of Teng Hsiao-p'ing at the Third Plenum of the Tenth Central Committee in July 1977.

Politically, the emphasis has been on restoring the organizational integrity of the Party and the other leading organizations, now basing this less on the correctness of a central ideological line than on disciplined adherence to procedural rules. The latter have been rationalized and legitimated in a series of constitutions, of a scope and detail unparalleled since the founding documents of the 1950s; the rule of "socialist legality" was further extended when the Second Session of the Fifth NPC ratified the P.R.C.'s first law codes in June 1979. A number of parallel hierarchies have been established to ensure discipline within this reinforced organizational structure: The Public Security Bureau had already been revitalized under Hua's stewardship in the mid-1970s (and reportedly played some role in facilitating his seizure of the Party chairmanship), but the new regime has also revived the Procuratorate and the "commissions for inspecting discipline" (based on the pattern of the 1950s rather than that of the control committees of the early 1960s, with responsibility to the local Party committees that appoint them but no direct relationship between commissions at different levels). To train upward-mobile cadres, the old Party schools have also been resuscitated, letting the "May 7 Cadre Schools" fall into desuetude. To encourage inner-Party democracy and the more forthright consideration of policy alternatives, a distinction has been drawn between legitimate inner-Party debate and "line struggle," distinguishing even the latter from "counterrevolutionary" activities. Collective leadership has also been endorsed (after an abortive early bid to foster a cult of Hua), notably by the announcement in late 1978 that Party leaders would no longer be addressed by their official titles, that no leader's personal views should henceforth be referred to as an "instruction," and that all leaders were open to criticism. The Revolutionary Committee, the last organizational relict of the Cultural Revolution, was disbanded by the Fifth NPC; in November 1979 a proposal was even floated to

abolish the governmental role of the commune and allow its administrative functions to revert to the *hsien* or the old *hsiang* levels.

With respect to participation/mobilization, although the successor regime no longer maintains the Party's exclusive competence to mediate mass-elite relationships and sanctioned the expression of Cultural Revolution-style spontaneity in the Tienanmen Incident and in the big-character poster campaign that facilitated Teng Hsiao-p'ing's consolidation of power in late 1978-early 1979, its central concern has been with the procedural regularization of mass participation, not with its revolutionary vitality. According to the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee, "the large-scale turbulent class struggles of a mass character have in the main come to an end," and although classes persist under socialism they are now defined more flexibly and with greater concern for current economic function than family origin (as in the case of the intellectuals, now deemed members of the working class).<sup>69</sup> The campaign against the "Gang of Four" was pursued vigorously for awhile (particularly from September 1977 to December 1978), but the Third Plenum announced its conclusion and called for a discontinuation of all mass political movements that tended to disrupt production or undermine the autonomy of production units. Mass political activity should henceforth be institutionalized in the three major mass organizations (the Youth League, the Women's Federation, and the Trade Unions) and through the electoral system (now acknowledged to have been a "hollow form" during the prior decade). It is now recommended that nominees for elective posts outnumber the available slots in order to offer voters some degree of choice, and in the elections to the NPC in the fall of 1979, non-Party candidates were for the first time permitted to run. Effective in January 1980, the right to elect officials directly has been extended up to the county level. Electoral democracy has also been broadened somewhat within the work unit: whereas previously only shift or section heads were directly elected, now all shop heads shall be as well; peasants are to have the right to select brigade leaders as well as team leaders, and the powers of commune leaders to intervene in the affairs of subordinate units have been curtailed. Citizens are encouraged to make their demands known directly, through newspaper letter columns or letter offices of government units.

Although initial plans to implement the "Four Modernizations" were somewhat redolent of the Great Leap Forward—in their ambi-

69. Teng Hsiao-p'ing, "Speech at the National Science Conference" (March 18, 1978), trans. in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Daily Report* (China), March 21, 1978, p. E5.

tious scale, not in their method—these have since been scaled down, and since the restoration of Ch'en Yün at the end of 1978, "revisionism" may be said to have fully consolidated its hegemony over the economy. Moral incentives have been deemphasized, and are now in any case correlated with economic productivity rather than with political performance [*piao-hsien*];<sup>70</sup> to supplement them there have been three wage adjustments from 1976 to the fall of 1979, affecting an estimated 60 percent of the work force. But the major forum for the ideologically rehabilitated "material incentive" is not the wage scale but the bonus: whereas such incentives added no more than 12 percent to the basic wage in the years before the Cultural Revolution, bonuses for the overfulfilment of work quotas may now double the basic wage, reportedly averaging 20 percent of monthly salaries; if the work quota is not fulfilled, wages may also be cut. Workers who had been adjured to practice self-abnegation for the past decade were suddenly told that "it is glorious to receive more pay for more work and become rich."<sup>71</sup> As much as possible, politics (and the Party) has been retracted from the economic sphere, permitting those experts who have mastered "objective" economic laws to hold sway there. New "specialized enterprises" [*chuan-yeh kung-tzu*] are being organized in all spheres of production, along the lines of the aluminum, rubber, pharmaceutical and tobacco "trusts" of the early 1960s. These require an end to the separation of production from marketing, and the State Council has announced that some prices will no longer be fixed but adjusted to market supply and demand. Capital construction funds will be allocated in the form of bank loans rather than outright grants, with interest and principal payable on a bank-monitored schedule; those enterprises that make the highest profits may retain a proportionately larger fund for bonuses. As a *People's Daily* editorial put it:

Running an enterprise or a factory for a year without making a profit is not glorious even though forgivable. Running an enterprise or factory for two years without a profit is cause for criticism. If an enterprise or factory has failed to show a profit for three years without other objective causes, its leaders are guilty of serious negligence.<sup>72</sup>

70. "In socialist labor emulation," said Hua Kuo-feng at the Fifth National People's Congress, "moral encouragement and material reward must go hand in hand, with emphasis on the former." Hua Kuo-feng, "Report on the Work of the Government, 1st Session, 5th NPC" (February 26, 1968), trans. in FBIS, *Daily Report* (China), March 16, 1978, pp. E30–E40.

71. Fuchou Radio, March 13, 1979, in FBIS, *Daily Report* (China), March 13, 1979, p. E13.

72. "For the Rapid Accumulation of Still More Funds," *JMJP* editorial, February 22, 1978, p. 2.

The campaign to restore the authority of managerial and technical cadres antedates the fall of the "Gang" (e.g., one-man management was revived during the first wave of restoration in 1972) but has been proceeding more explicitly. The regime has made "scientific management methods"—including Taylorism, which provided the basis for serial production in the U.S.—a top priority during the current three-year "adjustment" period, hoping thereby to enhance productivity even while cutting down capital investment. The Party has been ardently attempting to recruit experts and to induce its own cadres to acquire technical or managerial training, brightening their career prospects by foreclosing the possibility of manual labor (let alone sojourns in the countryside) while encouraging the "professionalization" of these occupations.

Whereas agriculture is still given first priority among developmental objectives, change seems to have been somewhat less dramatic there. In his report to the Fifth NPC, Hua Kuo-feng reaffirmed support for those elements of the market system that the radicals have consistently (but unsuccessfully) tried to overcome: private plots and subsidiary sideline occupations, the products of which may be exchanged at local free markets (now for the first time permitted in suburbs as well as in rural areas). Supervision and coordination of agricultural machinery repair has been shifted to the county level, in an arrangement reminiscent of Liu's tractor stations. At the conclusion to the Fifth NPC it was made clear that learning from Tachai entails only learning from Tachai's "revolutionary spirit," and indeed, work point allocation has reverted to the fixing of specific norms for every task and their correlation with an exact equivalent in work points, ensuring "pay according to work." As a rural counterpart of the urban wage raises, prices paid to farmers for agricultural commodities were increased in March 1979.

The cultural sector, a former radical stronghold, has witnessed some rather sweeping reversals. In education, Mao Tse-tung Thought propaganda teams and other political agents have been withdrawn and leadership returned to educators, under the nominal supervision of school Party committees. The old "double-track" system has reappeared in the form of special "keypoint" [*chung-tien*] universities, secondary and primary schools, featuring academic training for the talented "at least" five days out of six; the emerging investment priority is to concentrate resources on these elite institutions while working gradually to raise standards in the others.<sup>73</sup> Unified academic

73. See Suzanne Pepper, "Education and Revolution: The 'Chinese Model' Revised," *Asian Survey*, XVIII, 9 (September 1978), pp. 847-891.

entrance examinations were reinstated beginning with the winter semester of 1978. The best 20-30 percent of the secondary school class (as of 1977—a gradual increase is planned), explicitly including children of “bad” class backgrounds, may proceed directly to college without undergoing a period of manual labor. The *hsia-hsiang shang-shan* program is still officially in effect, now functioning as a downward mobility chute for the academically unqualified; those studying to take exams are once again warned to have “one red heart and two preparations”—preparations for an intellectual career if they pass, preparations for life in the countryside if they fail. Graduate training was resumed in the fall of 1978 after a twelve-year hiatus; from 1978 to the end of 1979 China also sent 2,700 postgraduates to forty foreign countries for more advanced training. In medicine, the radical reforms have not been altogether rescinded, though there has been a shift of emphasis—the skills of the barefoot doctors are to be upgraded, and the research focus seems to have shifted from Chinese to Western medicine. In the arts, the central thrust has been to expand the range of permissible expression, in the third incarnation of the “double hundred” (hundred flowers bloom, hundred schools of thought contend). This policy has allowed publication or performance of previously suppressed novels and plays (e.g., classic pre-Liberation dramas by Mao Tun, Ts’ao Yü, Pa Chin, et al.), hundreds of pre-Cultural Revolution scholarly journals, Western literature, and classical music (e.g., Shakespeare, Einstein, Chopin), and a fecund “blooming” of the creative spirit among China’s literati. Science has been given strong organizational backing in the form of a re-centralized and enlarged Academy of Science (and a now independent Academy of Social Science), with a Central Committee Commission on Science and Technology to provide overall planning and coordination.

### *Conclusion*

This paper has argued that there has been an internally coherent set of assumptions and policy preferences within the Chinese Communist elite for the past two decades that may accurately be characterized as “institutionalized revisionism.” This is a construal of Marxist ideology that generally emphasizes its scientific, materialist, reductionist aspects at the expense of its romantic, voluntarist, dialectical aspects. In terms of policy, revisionists have implicit faith in formal bureaucratic procedure and tend to tailor policy accordingly, limiting mass participation to those strata with bureaucratic access capable of conforming to such procedure. Ideological appeals lose pride of place to

material incentives and legal sanctions, and the "grasping" [*chua-chin*] of dogmatic certitudes yields to mastery of specialized competence as a criterion for upward mobility. Among elites, a degree of pluralism is permitted to develop in policymaking forums and within functionally specific bounds; among the masses, considerable social autonomy is allowed provided production quotas are met and potentially destabilizing activities curbed. Institutionalized revisionism has a built-in constituency of career bureaucrats and professionals whose social origins are typically middle-class urban intellectual; it also appeals to a mass base of middle peasants, unionized workers, and other established groups equipped to prosper under achievement (*qua* productivity) criteria of mobility and distributive justice. Because it draws on a tenable interpretation of Marxist ideology and appeals to a strong natural constituency, revisionism seems to be endemic to socialist movements once they seize power and become wedded to the spirit of nationalism and the social dynamic of industrialization. In China, revisionism has survived a sustained and determined radical assault to emerge as the dominant tendency in the successor regime.

What of the future? Does the current tendency represent but yet another swing of the ideological pendulum in China, or does succession constitute a more definitive watershed in Chinese political development? Economic development does seem to have certain objective functional requisites: enough social stability to allow for increasingly extended periods of pregnancy between investment and large-scale production; mass literacy and an education system capable of producing the scientists, engineers, and managers needed by the modernizing sector; enough material incentives to motivate the work force amid the secularization of ideology and the "demonstration effect" of material abundance abroad; sufficient play to the market to cushion the rigidities of the planned economy, and so forth. Yet the political constraints imposed on revisionist tendencies in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since 1968 are sufficient to demonstrate that such tendencies, though real, are hardly inexorable. The Chinese Communist revolutionary experience differs from that of either the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe, and the national political culture in which Communism has embedded itself is altogether distinctive. To extrapolate from the modernizing experience of the more advanced socialist states without taking these differences into account would be rash and potentially misleading.

There are three more specific factors in the Chinese equation that lead one to expect a radical alternative to survive in some form: first, among the legacies of the Cultural Revolution was the creation of a

constituency for a more radical "line," both in society at large and in the Party. According to CCP statistics, whereas there were only 17 million Party members in 1961 (and this figure is not believed to have grown substantially from then until 1966), by 1973 there were 28 million members, and by 1977 membership had reached 35 million. A large proportion of this doubled Party membership may be assumed to have been initiated to politics in the "fiery crucible" of the Cultural Revolution. According to Nationalist sources, no less than 8.6 million Party members were recruited and promoted contrary to normal procedures from 1967 to the fall of the Gang of Four (including the so-called political guides of various occupations who attended Mao Thought study classes and were hence listed as "activists"); some 1.2 million cadres were illegally instated between June and October 1976 alone.<sup>74</sup> The fall of the Four was followed by a criticism campaign against their followers that has varied from relatively mild in its first year to relatively intense in the October 1977-November 1978 period, but those cadres recruited or promoted during and after the Cultural Revolution are too numerous (and in some cases, too highly placed) to have been completely eradicated. The pattern of previous purges was to concentrate fire on a few scapegoats while permitting their followers to reform their thoughts and switch allegiance; evidence from the Central Committee level in the current purge suggests that the revisionists did not go to even these lengths, but rather permitted their opponents to remain formal members of the elite while forcing them into inactive minority status via new functional assignments and the rehabilitation of veteran cadres with greater seniority (for example, during the Third Plenum the so-called whatever faction [*fan-shih p'ai*] lost control of the Central Committee Propaganda Department and the Secretariat, but neither Wu Teh nor Wang Tung-hsing was purged from the Politburo). This would imply that there is an inactive, sidelined minority scattered throughout the bureaucracy (but probably concentrated at the lower echelons) whose support for the Four Modernizations must have evoked some cognitive dissonance in the first place and whose chances for upward mobility are once again blocked by more senior cadres. Should the revisionist modernization program falter, they would have both motive and occasion to attempt a counterattack. The magnitude of the most recent *volte-face*, ten years after an equally radical upheaval of personnel and policy, cannot help but contribute to a general assumption that such reversals are always a possibility.

Second, in addition to subdued opponents still hoping for a reversal

74. *China News Agency* (Taipei), December 22, 1977.

of verdicts, there is reason to believe that certain aspects inherent in the revisionist program may generate their own opposition. The experience of Eastern Europe indicates that the extensive use of material incentives and the wider ambit permitted to market forces does indeed give rise to an increasingly stratified distribution of incomes and tends to benefit the middle classes disproportionately, as Mao warned that it would.<sup>75</sup> New and alien problems have already begun to make their appearance, such as urban unemployment (a symptom of the disintegration of *hsia-hsiang shang-shan*, and the generally wider latitude given to labor mobility) and consumer price inflation (because of the increase in prices paid to farmers for food, and the greater discretion given to enterprises to set prices and stronger inducement to show profits). The Chinese economy has in the past displayed marked cyclical fluctuations, in part because of political interference but also partly because of China's extremely conservative fiscal and monetary policies. Thus periods of rapid economic growth have heretofore tended to coincide with expansionary investment and redistribution policies and periods of recession with retrenchment and laissez-faire policies.<sup>76</sup> This logic of resource availability would imply that, *ceteris paribus*, periods of rapid growth will continue to tempt bureaucratic entrepreneurs to "leap forward" toward unrealistic objectives, whereas the adverse impact of cyclical downturns will be exacerbated by the tendency of the authorities to "chop down" unprofitable ventures. In sum, even an optimally successful revisionist modernization program must be expected to encounter sizable difficulties and to leave pockets of relative deprivation and mobilizable discontent.

Third, although the successor regime has now gone to some lengths to rationalize its new policies in terms of a coherent interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, its ideological position remains tenuous at best. To maintain that class struggle has ended and that the exploiting classes no longer exist as such, that increasing productivity is a prerequisite to revolution rather than vice versa, that the "parliamentary road" to socialism is legitimate, that the pursuit of profit and material incentives is not selfish but praiseworthy, that the extensive importation of not only foreign technology but foreign loans and investment does not necessarily imply Chinese dependency, that the

75. Frank Parkin, *Class Inequality and Political Order: Social Stratification in Capitalist and Communist Societies* (New York: Praeger, 1975), pp. 172-176.

76. Paul Hiniker and Jolanta J. Perstein, "Alternation of Charismatic and Bureaucratic Styles of Leadership in Postrevolutionary China," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (January 1978), pp. 529-555.

Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution may have been catastrophic mistakes—these ideological positions, all endorsed by the new leadership, fly directly in the face of the central tenets of Mao Tse-tung Thought as it was propagated during the height of its influence. In fact, although Mao's Thought is rich enough to sustain diverse interpretations, it is inherently more difficult to support a consistently revisionist construal of his thinking than it is to support a radical interpretation, even if one confines oneself to his pre-1959 writings.<sup>77</sup> This is significant because, despite current attempts to draw attention to Mao's fallibility and to place his contribution to the Chinese revolution in its proper perspective, Mao Tse-tung has not yet been exposed to the sort of devastating critique to which Khrushchev subjected Stalin in 1956—and there is good reason to doubt that he will be. His role is so focal to the entire 1935–1976 period that it would be difficult to gainsay it without seriously undermining the legitimacy of the regime (as the unsettling consequences of Khrushchev's exposé also bear out). Notwithstanding all reservations and qualifications, the ideological foundations of the successor regime remain “Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought,” and this means that that regime may be built upon a time bomb.

The successor regime has sought to minimize its ideological vulnerability by reducing the relative importance of ideological justifications altogether, maintaining that “the sole criterion of truth is practice” and that any type of theory without direct relevance to the immediate needs of economic construction is what Teng calls “empty talk.” This ideologically agnostic, almost cynical defense will be perfectly acceptable to the great majority of the population as long as the pragmatism on which it is premised is economically successful. But it is conceivable that it will be found wanting among those strata to whom ideological legitimacy has historically been most important: the intellectuals and the students. Although these strata stand to benefit disproportionately from revisionist modernization, as indicated above, the experience of other socialist systems suggests that at least some of them—probably a minority, but often a vocal, determined, and resourceful one—will not long rest content with either a pragmatic legitimation of proletarian dictatorship nor with a circumscribed “thaw” toward their own sector, but will rather attempt continuously to expand their freedoms and enhance their influence.

77. John Bryan Starr, *Continuing the Revolution: The Political Thought of Mao* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

In conclusion, it seems likely that a subterranean "two-line struggle" will continue for some time despite all claims of unity. The crucial difference is that it is now the revisionists rather than the radicals who are in a position of dominance. They seem to have a stronger and more stable organizational base than the radicals ever had, and Teng Hsiao-p'ing has shown great political acumen in consolidating that base and less ambivalence than Mao about providing for his own succession. Though ideologically vulnerable, the revisionists can make a strong claim to nationalistic support on the basis of their promise to make China a major advanced industrial power by the end of this century. They have foregone further attacks on their radical opposition in the interest of stability, and it is conceivable under certain circumstances that the radicals may be able to mount a counterattack; but for the time being the latter have lost the initiative due to their economic incompetence and are in a weak and passive position. The future of revisionism is clouded perhaps less by renascent Maoism than by contradictions within its own program, notably by the tension between a reintegrated Leninist organizational structure and the imponderable consequences of liberalization in the economic and intellectual realms.