



CANBERRA PAPERS
on STRATEGY and DEFENCE
No. 13

W. A. C. ADIE

Chinese Strategic Thinking under Mao Tse-tung

This paper traces the development of the military and political strategies of the Chinese Communist Party, as systematised in Mao Tse-tung's *Works* and other writings attributed to him and as carried out in practice during the struggle for power in China. It shows how these strategies and tactics are applied, in suitably modified form and at different levels of sophistication, to the conduct of foreign relations by the Chinese People's Republic. The author argues that, regardless of changes in the hierarchy, the Peking government's actions abroad will continue to reflect the politico-military approach ascribed to Mao Tse-tung, although much of its past policy has now been repudiated as due to distortion of Maoism by deviationist subordinate leaders.

This is a welcome addition to the literature on contemporary China by an author with a wide knowledge of Asian affairs.

CANBERRA PAPERS ON STRATEGY AND DEFENCE

13

Strategic & Defence
Studies Centre,
RSPaCS,
The Australian National University,
P.O. Box 4,
Canberra A.C.T. 2600
AUSTRALIA.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC AND DEFENCE STUDIES CENTRE

Chinese Strategic Thinking
under
Mao Tse-tung

W. A. C. ADIE

*A publication of
The Strategic and Defence Studies Centre*

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY PRESS

CANBERRA 1972

© William Andrew Charles Adie 1972

This work is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by any process without the written permission of the publisher.

Text set in Times Roman.

Printed in Australia by RIALL PRINT PTY LTD
282 Bay Street, Port Melbourne, Vic. 3207

*National Library of Australia Card no.
and ISBN 0 7081 0036 8*

Library of Congress Catalog Card no. 72-85441

CHINESE STRATEGIC THINKING UNDER MAO TSE-TUNG

THE 'MAO TSE-TUNG's thought' we have all heard about is essentially *all* military thought—that is, it applies essentially military thinking to all sorts of problems, from industrialisation of a large backward country to the conduct of international affairs. It is, of course, military thinking of a special kind.

In Mao's thought military and political affairs form a continuum. Among western leaders, perhaps only General de Gaulle was in a similar position to master both.¹ Mao likes to quote Lenin's saying that 'War is the continuation of politics', and Mao himself adds, 'war is the politics of bloodshed and *politics is war without bloodshed*';² in the course of his quarter-century of revolutionary struggles he and his comrades learnt many lessons on the art of survival, which were paid for in a great deal of blood. Mao also quotes Marx's idea that the 'cell' or unit of capitalist society is a cash transaction; Clausewitz too writes that war may be compared to commerce and battles to a transaction.³ Mao often expresses a similar idea; although he does not

¹ The introduction to General de Gaulle's book *Le Fil de L'épée* contains passages which could have been written by Mao; so do several of his other works, especially his memoirs — of war.

² *Little Red Book*, 2nd ed., Peking, Foreign Language Press (PFLP), 1968, pp. 58-9.

³ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. J. J. Graham, London, 1949, Vol. I, p. 121.

expressly say so, he seems to feel that the experience or life of an individual, the history of a group, etc. is to be understood as a series of encounters or transactions, that is to say, the concrete expressions of latent 'contradictions' (*Maodun*). In Chinese the word literally means spear and shield or offence and defence—as Mao says, all warfare is based on developments of these two elements, and if you think of them as stimulus and response or action and reaction there is evidently the germ of an intelligible theory here, at least in the sphere of human relations and social science. Generalising rather broadly, one can say that the tendency in traditional Chinese thought has been to try and apply social thinking to the sphere of natural science, while since the Greeks our western thought has tried to apply the rigid categories of mathematics and the natural sciences to social problems.⁴

For Mao, then, life and warfare are the same thing—a series of transactions, encounters, or bouts between unequal quantities; 'peace and war are characterised by identity under certain conditions'. This is perhaps why Mao calls his doctrine the algebra of revolution: it brings an unknown quantity into correlation or balance (temporary balance) and therefore makes it known. (Knowledge can only be acquired through struggle; 'if you want to know the taste of a pear, eat it, if you want to know how to make revolution, make revolution'. The Chinese people obtained their 'knowledge of imperialism' through struggle, and so on.)

Some writers, both Chinese and foreign, have argued there is a particularly Chinese logic or way of thinking, in some mysterious way different from what westerners and others accept as normal reasoning.⁵ Whether or not it may be characterised as 'pre-scientific' thought, Mao's thought evidently works. It is based not only on the long experience of the 'warring kingdoms' and 'three kingdoms' summed up in Chinese history, but also on his own quarter-century of revolutionary experience. The thinking behind the game of Chinese 'encircle-

⁴ In fact the *Thought of Mao Tse-tung* has much in common with the pre-Socratic (or rather pre-Platonic) philosophers, especially Heraclitus. In his poem 'Swimming' Mao quotes a tag from Confucius about how 'all things are in perpetual motion'. In his book mentioned above, de Gaulle quotes the identical saying of Heraclitus in the original Greek: 'à la guerre comme à la vie, on pourrait appliquer le "panta rhei" du philosophe grec', op. cit., p. 16. Cf. H. Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Berlin, 1952, p. 171: Heraclitus, Fragment 91.

⁵ See for example I. A. Richards, *Mencius on the Mind*, London, Kegan Paul, 1932, pp. 3 and 128; Chang Tung-Hsun, 'A Chinese Philosopher's Theory of Knowledge' in *Yenching Journal of Social Studies*, Peiping, Vol. I, No. 2, January 1939, pp. 155-91.

ment chess' (Japanese gō) is also an important element in Mao's approach, and he refers to it explicitly in his works.⁶

Mao's 'military thought'—or rather his unified politico-military approach—is important not only because of its role as a model for people's wars or Chinese-style insurgencies in individual countries (especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America) but also because the same approach applies to the handling of China's affairs on the world scale. Mao has a genius for simplification, and his 'thought' applies a few extremely simple, commonsense ideas to problems of various levels of complication. At most of these levels, it does seem to have worked. To take one of his phrases, then, 'where did his correct ideas come from?'

First, we have to remember that Mao Tse-tung is not just an all-purpose inflatable cult object as he seems to be in some of the pictures in the Chinese newspapers; he is a human being and his individual cast of mind or mentality is very important. Jerome Chen's excellent biography does not discuss his psychology. The book on his political thought by Stuart Schram partly remedies this, and works by Robert J. Lifton, Lucian Pye, Richard Solomons and others should be borne in mind in considering the origins of Mao's thinking.⁷ The consensus of opinion among such writers is that Mao is fired with the idea of military heroism, and that he identifies himself with 'Robin Hood' figures in literature. But some other, Chinese, writers see things from a slightly different angle. Professor Tang Tsou says that the Maoists' mentality is 'the paradoxical combination of a deep sense of insecurity and a tremendous confidence in ultimate victory'. A similar pattern emerges from a perceptive book written by a refugee from Mao's China over the signature of 'Mu Fu-sheng'.⁸ This ambivalent outlook is expressed clearly in Mao's famous theory that imperialists and his other enemies are 'paper tigers' who should be feared tactically but despised strategically. Others would say that the fanaticism shown by low-grade Maoists is the kind which overcompensates for

⁶ See Scott A. Boorman, *The Protracted Game—A Wei-ch'i Interpretation of Maoist Revolutionary Strategy*, New York, O.U.P., 1969; Arthur Smith, *The Game of Go*, Rutland, Vt, Charles E. Tuttle, 1956 (first published 1908).

⁷ R. J. Lifton, *Revolutionary Immortality*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969; Lucian Pye, *The Spirit of Chinese Politics*, London, MIT Press, 1968; R. Solomon, 'Communication Patterns and the Chinese Revolution', *China Quarterly*, No. 32, 1967.

⁸ Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China 1941-50*, Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 578; Mu Fu-sheng, *The Wilting of the Hundred Flowers*, London Heinemann, 1962.

doubts and anxiety; reading some of the material, one gets the mental picture of the archetypal Maoist as a man swimming desperately because he has been thrown in the water. The aim of swimming is, after all, usually to reach dry land. Mao always says people are *forced* to struggle, but sometimes one has the impression that the struggle (and the swimming) can become an end in itself and the ultimate aim of restored peace and security drops out of sight.⁹

If Mao has a heroic and activist turn of mind, what then, is the object of his exercise? We must remember that Mao comes from Hunan province, the 'civil war belt' of China, where the population was afflicted with experiences similar to those of Germany, say, in the Thirty Years' War. Furthermore, there was an unusually positive outlook among the elite of the province which had produced famous writers and politico-military leaders, as a result of which the idea was in the air that something can be done, that people and society can be changed¹⁰ and foreigners can be dealt with.

In the days of Mao's youth *self strengthening* of China was the order of the day, and for Mao this was to be achieved by activity, not passivity—as it were by sweating out the alien or polluting elements which were held responsible for the disaggregated, weak condition both of China and of the units of Chinese society right down to the individuals—the malady diagnosed by Sun Yat-sen as disintegration 'like a sheet of sand'. The cure sought was a 'cement' such as nationalism.

The first known published work of chairman Mao is his essay of 1917 *On Physical Training* in which he recommended that the Chinese people toughen themselves with a set of gymnastic exercises. In this essay he already foreshadowed what was to become the central idea

⁹ I care not that the wind blows and waves beat.

It is better than idly strolling in a courtyard.

Today I am free! It was on a river that the Master said

Thus is the whole of nature flowing.

(From Mao's poem, 'Swimming' [in the Yangtze], PFLP, 1958, p. 28.)

¹⁰ The famous Hunanese philosopher Wang Fu-Chih (1616-92) expounded the ancient *Book of Changes* (Chou I) and argued that 'There is not a single part of human nature already shaped that cannot be modified': see Jerome Chen, *Mao*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1969, p. 2. Mao himself has written: 'Although we are determined by nature, we are also a part of nature. Hence, if Nature has the power to determine us, we also have the power to determine Nature.' This is the idea underlying the *Book of Changes* as well as the *Little Red Book*. See Hellmut Wilhelm, *Change: Eight Lectures on the I Ching*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1960 [1961], p. 22.

of his thought, the importance of physical and mental remoulding through 'struggles'. 'If our bodies are not strong' he says,

we will be afraid as soon as we see enemy soldiers, and then how can we make ourselves respected? If we wish to make physical education effective we must influence people's subjective attitudes and stimulate them to become conscious of physical education . . . physical education really occupies the first place in our lives . . . the principal aim of physical education is military heroism;

but it also enhances knowledge and harmonises the feelings. There is no contradiction between robust health and mental capacity, says Mao; on the contrary, his essay concludes, Confucius and Buddha lived to a ripe old age and 'as for Mohammed, he subjugated the world holding the Koran in his left hand and a sword in his right'.

Mao's thinking gradually evolved, perhaps more unconsciously than consciously, from the concept of strengthening and perfecting himself to that of securing autonomy for his native province Hunan, and then of liberating China, and the world, by getting rid of whatever it is that somehow pollutes and weakens them. The Chinese started to evolve nationalist thought by blaming the Manchu dynasty for their problems but, once the Manchus had been overthrown in 1911, things were no better and it was necessary to find other scapegoats such as 'alien class elements' to be expelled or purged. Running through Mao's thought there is also a feeling of *anxiety* that if you stop pushing on the wheel of history and getting rid of the dangerous thoughts, ghosts and demons, the wheel will turn back; the bourgeoisie is trying to remould the world, and ultimately you, in its own image; so we ('the people') must continue to remould the world in our own image. Here you have the idea of an anti-world of outlaws or a counter-culture which starts off in a small way but one day will become dominant.

I have dwelt on these psychological aspects because the so-called thought of Mao is more an attitude of mind or a spirit than a formal doctrine. As such it cannot really be taught—you can be converted to it or absorb it by a sort of induction, by dint of going through the motions; as Mao says, we learn to swim by swimming. This is a development on to a higher level of the original idea of movement or exercise as drill; the famous *Little Red Book* bears about as much relation to real Maoism as shouting 'down, crawl, observe, fire' does to fighting a real battle. In the ritualised 'battle drill' of World War II, soldiers in training were taught to shout these phrases rather in the same manner as the Red Guards shout 'dare to act, dare to win' etc.

and wave the *Little Red Book*. They do so to internalise a pattern of behaviour.

Incidentally, there are *two* different Little Red Books already—one contains favourable references to Liu Shao-ch'i and the later one omits them. This may serve to remind us that Chinese military and political thinking in the era of Mao Tse-tung has not, after all, all been done by Mao and there have been divergent strands in it. The so-called 'erroneous military line' or bourgeois military line was imputed to successive senior officers, including Chiefs of Staff, who remained close to military affairs while the other leaders of the Chinese Communist Party moved on to apply their guerrilla experience to civilian tasks. In this paper I shall have to concentrate on Lin Piao's version of chairman Mao's thinking as expressed in the doctrine of people's war.¹¹

A case can be made out that during the sixties the application of Mao's thought was distorted (1) according to the line attributed to Liu Shao-ch'i, by the attempt to turn China not into a Mecca of world revolution but another Moscow, complete with international front organisations, pro-Peking communist parties and all the rest of Moscow's Comintern-originated apparatus, modified for Chinese use, and (2) by the erroneous militaristic line, which will probably have been attributed to Marshal Lin Piao by the time this goes to press. This may be summed up as the application of an oversimplified, drill sergeant's Maoism to foreign as to internal affairs, especially after the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, reflecting the takeover of functions normally performed by civilian specialists in many fields by an uneasy combination of ultra-leftist activists and more pragmatic military and security personnel. The facts are obscured by the habit of those in power of combining under one opprobrious term such as 'charlatans like Liu Shao-ch'i' groups whose deviations were quite different (see below, pp. 23 ff.). But even those purged for these alleged errors actually shared the basic assumptions and outlook summed up in the accepted canons of Mao's thought, the differences having arisen over technical and personal issues.

ORIGINS OF THE TECHNIQUE OF PEOPLE'S WAR

THE origins of the people's war may be traced back to the period of the first and second revolutionary wars in China (1927-35). There

¹¹ Since this was written, I have heard that, after the fall of Lin Piao, all the Little Red Books were withdrawn and a new version put out, minus the introduction in his handwriting.

are two main elements: social revolution and nationalist resistance, in that order.

Mao at first began to develop into a student or intellectual revolutionary, alienated from the common people. In the tradition of the intellectuals of his time he began by despising manual labour and those who performed it, but he was converted by the experience of a peasant uprising in his native province of Hunan. The experience of identification with an overwhelming outburst of collective wrath convinced him that he had found the source of strength that China needed.

A psychologist might explain Mao's success in terms of the fact that the problems of his personal life somehow coincided with those of the Chinese people as a whole, most of whom, of course, were and still are peasants; it is known that Mao preferred his mother to his father and sided with the local poorer peasants whom the latter had dealt with unjustly. The young Mao read voraciously, especially the traditional romances about heroic generals and Robin Hood-type bandits which form the subject-matter of so many Chinese operas and picture books. But after he joined the Chinese Communist Party, started by such intellectuals as Li Ta-chao and Chen Tu-hsiu, his imprecise feelings of revolt against injustice began to change. In the 1917 essay he had praised Germany and Japan for their militarism; now he began to write about workers and peasants; but in the early twenties, under the influence of Li Ta-chao, he tended to consider that the Chinese were a proletarian nation, and the real class struggle was on a national scale, between the Chinese and other non-white peoples and the white oppressors. The corollary of this line was that even merchants could be a leading force in the national revolution, and Mao in fact collaborated actively with the Kuomintang in this period.

It was in 1925 that Mao began to realise that the peasantry must provide the motive force of China's revolution, and in 1927 he wrote his famous *Report on the Peasant Movement* in the province of Hunan, which showed that he had discovered the answer to the feeling of impotence which had for so long afflicted the intelligentsia of the country. Ch'en Po-ta's authoritative commentary on Mao's Report calls it 'one of the best expressions of the essential ideology of the finest people ever known in Chinese history'. Mao himself called the peasants' revolt 'a marvellous feat which has never been achieved in the last forty or even thousands of years'; the force of their attack was like a hurricane; those who submitted to it survived, and those who resisted it perished. It was an excellent thing, said Mao, that the peasants should 'go too far to right a wrong'. 'To put it bluntly,

it was necessary to bring about a brief reign of terror in every rural area', in order to overthrow the political authority of the gentry and local bullies, and of the county magistrate and his bailiffs, and the clan authority of the elders and ancestral temples, the theocratic authority of the city gods and local deities, and the masculine authority of husbands over women. 'A revolution is not the same as inviting people to dinner or writing an essay, or painting a picture or doing fancy needlework . . . if the peasants do not use the maximum of their strength, they can never overthrow the authority of the landlords which has been rooted for thousands of years'. The Hunan peasant revolt of March 1927 was soon to be followed by the autumn harvest uprising of September the same year in which Mao was involved. The failure of this operation made Mao realise the major mistakes in the policy of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party at that time: (1) they expected that there would be a countrywide uprising which would be over in a fairly short time; (2) the fighting would be carried on by the 'armed masses', whatever that may mean, and not by organised military units; and (3) the urban proletariat would be the decisive element although they constituted a minute proportion of the Chinese population.

The lessons Mao derived from the experience of the initial defeat were that the fighting had to be carried on by organised units; the Red Army, the countryside and the peasantry would play the main role; and the war would be of a protracted nature, carried on from relatively firm bases, avoiding the 'mentality of the roving insurgents' which had hitherto characterised peasant revolts throughout Chinese history. These ideas arose naturally from historical accidents and the logic of the situation and were generalised into a principle later; for example, the original band which took refuge on the Chingkan mountain consisted largely of troops, from units defeated in the attack on the city of Changsha, along with a number of miners, bandits, and other uprooted people, *éléments déclassés* or *lumpenproletariat* in the Marxist jargon. It was this very factor that favoured their 'remoulding' into indoctrinated military units. Mao summed up the lessons of this period in his famous 16-character formula, underlined in the following citation from a work he wrote in 1930.

Ours are guerrilla tactics. They consist mainly of the following points: 'Divide our forces to arouse the masses, concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy.'

'The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue.'

'To extend stable base areas, employ the policy of advancing in

waves; when pursued by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of circling around.'

'Arouse the largest numbers of the masses in the shortest possible time and by the best possible methods.' These tactics are just like casting a net; at any moment we should be able to cast it or draw it in. We cast it wide to win over the masses and draw it in to deal with the enemy.¹²

With the outbreak of the anti-Japanese war (1937-45) and the establishment of the united front with Chiang Kai-shek's nationalists (KMT), Mao developed his doctrines of mobile and positional warfare and the theory of the three stages, developing on a larger scale the original 16-character formula.¹³

Before studying this development we must first consider the special environment of the Chu-Mao insurgents and the special logic of the situation which made these tactics possible and indeed obligatory. Mao himself was aware of this unique situation. Why could the 'Red Power' survive? Briefly, his answer was because of the incessant wars between the warlords backed by different outside powers and the fragmented state of China's economy and political system in general.

The phenomenon that within a country one or several small areas under Red political power should exist for a long time amid the encirclement of White political power is one that has never been found elsewhere in the world.

There are peculiar reasons for this unusual phenomenon. It can exist and develop only under certain conditions. First, it cannot occur in any imperialist country or in any colony under direct imperialist rule, but can occur only in such an economically backward, semi-colonial country as China which is under indirect imperialist rule. For this unusual phenomenon can occur only in conjunction with another unusual phenomenon, namely, the warfare

¹²'A Single Spark can Start a Prairie Fire' in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, PFLP, 1965, Vol. I, p. 124.

¹³ For further details of Mao's theoretical work on guerrilla warfare, see Mao Tse-tung, *Basic Tactics*, transl. with an introduction by Stuart R. Schram, London, Pall Mall Press, 1966. Mao's other major works on the subject include 'On the Rectification of Incorrect Ideas in the Party', 'Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War' (December 1936), 'Strategic Problems of the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla War' (part of a collective work, 1938) and 'On the Protracted War', May 1938, based on a course of lectures at Yen-an. Revised texts of these are to be found in the *Selected Works of Mao* published from 1961 onwards in Peking. The first reproduces part of the 'Kut'ien Resolution' of 1929, a basic document on military affairs. This paper has used the first English-language translations of Mao's works, where available, since the earlier texts are more complete and authentic.

within the White regime. A characteristic of semi-colonial China is that, since the first year of the Republic, the various cliques of old and new warlords, supported by imperialism from abroad and by the comprador class and the landed gentry at home, have waged incessant wars against one another. Such a phenomenon is found neither in any of the imperialist countries of the world, nor in any colony under direct imperialist rule, but only in a country like China which is under indirect imperialist rule. Two things account for its occurrence, namely, localised agricultural economy (instead of unified capitalist economy) and the imperialist policy of division and exploitation by marking off spheres of influence. The prolonged splits and wars within the White regime provide the condition that one or several small Red areas under the leadership of the Communist Party can emerge and hold out amid the encirclement of the White political power.¹⁴

In fact the insurgent forces which had moved from the mountains to set up a small Soviet in Kiangsi did not manage to survive the succession of encirclement campaigns mounted against them by Chiang Kai-shek with his German advisers, but the 16-character formula was mainly evolved from their success in resisting the first three. In his work on strategy in China's revolutionary war Mao summed up the experience of these campaigns as follows:

The Red Army's operations take the form of counter-campaigns against 'encirclement and suppression'. For us victory means chiefly victory in combating 'encirclement and suppression', that is, strategic victory and victory in campaigns. The fight against each 'encirclement and suppression' campaign constitutes a counter-campaign, which usually comprises several or even scores of battles, big and small. Until an 'encirclement and suppression' campaign has been basically smashed, one cannot speak of strategic victory or of victory in the counter-campaign as a whole, even though many battles may have been won . . .

In the enemy's 'encirclement and suppression' campaigns and the Red Army's counter-campaigns against them, the two forms of fighting, offensive and defensive, are both employed, and here there is no difference from any other war, ancient or modern, in China or elsewhere. The special characteristic of China's civil war, however, is the repeated alternation of the two forms over a long period of time. In each 'encirclement and suppression' campaign, the enemy employs the offensive against the Red Army's defensive, and the

¹⁴ Mao's *Why Can China's Red Political Power Exist*, PFLP, 1953, pp. 4-7. Editions of Mao's *Selected Works* give this same text but with slightly different wording.

Red Army employs the defensive against his offensive; this is the first stage of a counter-campaign against 'encirclement and suppression'. Then the enemy employs the defensive against the Red Army's offensive, and the Red Army employs the offensive against his defensive; this is the second stage of the counter-campaign.¹⁵

In the first campaigns the communists successfully employed the tactic of 'luring the enemy in deep', into areas where the population was on their side and the enemy's communications were strained. But the fifth campaign successfully drove the communists out. They were forced to undertake the 'long march', reducing their numbers from 300,000 to 30,000 on their arrival at the new base of Yen-an in north-west China. Mao commented:

What constitutes a defeat for the Red Army? Strategically speaking, there is a defeat only when a counter-campaign against 'encirclement and suppression' fails completely, but even then the defeat is only partial and temporary. For *only the total destruction of the Red Army would constitute complete defeat* in the civil war; but this has never happened. The loss of extensive base areas and the shift of the Red Army constituted a temporary and partial defeat, not a final and complete one, even though this partial defeat entailed losing 90 per cent of the Party membership, of the armed forces and of the base areas. We call this shift the continuation of our defensive and the enemy's pursuit the continuation of his offensive . . . The Red Army's strategic retreat (the Long March) was a continuation of its strategic defensive.¹⁶ (My emphasis)

One must say that the concept of luring the enemy in deep and of the strategic retreat contained an element of rationalisation, since on leaving its base areas the Red Army had greater difficulty in 'casting the net wide to win over the masses'. Before studying the later development of this idea, we should dwell for a moment on the importance of the political infrastructure of the Red Army or what is called mass work—the water for the fish to swim in. In the early days of the movement it had consisted mainly, in effect, in promoting artificial Hunan revolts—distributing land to the peasants, etc. But this policy ran into problems. In the first period of KMT/Communist collaboration (in the northern expedition to overthrow the warlords, 1927) the policy of mobilising the masses by encouraging agrarian uprisings against the landlords was in contradiction with the fact that a lot of officers in the Nationalist Army were of landlord origin and this led

¹⁵ Mao's *Selected Military Writings*, PFLP, 1963, pp. 96-7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

to a dangerous split with the KMT, the nationalists. Later there was the problem that, as Mao put it, China's society was big in the middle and small at the ends; that is to say the number of truly revolutionary elements was very small, the number of middle-of-the-road elements such as well-off peasants etc. was extremely large, and the number of genuine reactionaries and extremely rich people was also very small; the problem thus was to win over the vast majority of middle-of-the-road elements, most of whom were peasants. It proved impossible to arouse the majority of them under the banner of social revolution, setting up of Soviets and redistribution of land. In his work, *Problems of War and Strategy*, Mao explained why the Japanese aggression against China provided the conditions for finally solving this problem. Only after the Japanese invasion was it possible to build a broad united front and 'raise the banner of nationalism' to mobilise the masses. The Japanese had invaded north-east China in 1931 and the communist regime had already declared war on Japan in 1932. The retreat from their original Soviet area to the north-west was rationalised as moving northwards to fight Japan and, after Mao gained a commanding position over the depleted force in 1935, he proceeded to change the Party's line of strategy, as Lin Piao explained years later in his famous article of 1965, *Long Live the Victories of the People's War*. At the time, foreign sympathisers such as Edgar Snow and his wife 'Nym Wales', visiting the Red areas, did not quite understand why the policy was changing. The Yen-an Notebooks written by the latter show that as early as August 1935 Mao Tse-tung was reorganising the Party line for a war against Japan. Peng Teh-huai told her: 'only by a war against Japan can China be unified' and Po Ku, another leader, told her

for nine years we have struggled under the Soviet slogan and have had no success in the whole of China . . . the petty bourgeois masses did not support [it] but they can support the nationalist and democratic slogan.¹⁷

This idea in fact goes back to 1927, when a proposal by the Secretariat to the Shanghai committee of the Chinese Communist Party proposed in effect to provoke the Japanese into occupying major cities so as to make possible a people's war against them and also against the nationalists, led by the Communist Party.¹⁸ At the time this plan was rejected by Stalin's envoy M. N. Roy as a 'tactic of the purest

¹⁷ Nym Wales, *My Yen-an Notebooks*, Madison, Conn., H. Snow, 1961, and see *China Quarterly*, No. 22, 1965, p. 197.

¹⁸ R. C. North and X. J. Eudin, *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1963.

opportunism' but in the event it was the Japanese who drove Chiang Kai-shek out of the key areas and enabled Mao to organise therein a joint battle line or united front for resistance against them, and also covertly against the nationalists, under his own aegis. As Lin Piao later explained:

Comrade Mao Tse-tung analysed, first, the mutual transformation of China's principal and non-principal contradictions following the invasion of China by Japanese imperialism, second, the consequent changes in class relations within China and in international relations, and, third, the balance of forces as between China and Japan . . . As a result of its invasion, Japanese imperialism sharpened its contradiction with the Chinese nation to an extreme degree and brought about changes in class relations within China. To end the civil war and to unite against Japanese aggression became the pressing nationwide demand of the people. Changes of varying degrees also occurred in the political attitudes of the national bourgeoisie and the various factions within the Kuomintang . . . China's internal class contradictions—such as those between the masses of the people and feudalism, between the peasantry and the landlord class, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and between the peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie on the one hand and the bourgeoisie on the other—still remained, but that they had all been relegated to a secondary or subordinate position as a result of the war of aggression unleashed by Japan . . . Similarly, as the contradiction between China and Japan ascended and became the principal one, the contradiction between China and the imperialist countries such as Britain and the United States descended to a secondary or subordinate position . . . This rendered it possible for China to make use of these contradictions to isolate and oppose Japanese imperialism.

In the face of Japanese imperialist aggression, was the Party to continue with the civil war and the Agrarian Revolution? Or was it to hold aloft the banner of national liberation, unite with all the forces that could be united to form a broad national united front and concentrate on fighting the Japanese aggressors? . . . In order to turn the anti-Japanese war into a genuine people's war, our Party firmly relied on the broadest masses of the people, united with all the anti-Japanese forces that could be united, and consolidated and expanded the Anti-Japanese National United Front. The basic line of our Party was: boldly to arouse the masses of the people and to expand the people's forces so that, under the leadership of the Party, they could defeat the aggressors and build a new China.¹⁹

¹⁹ Lin Piao, *Long Live the Victories of the People's War*, PFLP, 1965, pp. 5-10.

As Mao put it, the advantages of this change could be summed up in the following eighteen points:

1. Reducing the areas occupied by the enemy.
2. Expanding the base areas of our own forces.
3. In a stage of defence, pinning down the enemy by fighting in co-ordination with the operations on the main front.
4. In the stage of stalemate facilitating the rehabilitation of the troops on the main front by firmly holding the base areas in the enemy's rear.
5. In a stage of the counter offensive, taking co-ordinated actions with the main front to recover the lost territory.
6. Expanding our forces in the most speedy and effective manner.
7. Expanding the Communist party most extensively so that a party branch can be organised in every village.
8. Spreading the mass movements most extensively so that all the people behind the enemy lines, except those in his strongholds, can be organised.
9. Creating organs of the anti-Japanese democratic political power on as large a territory as possible.
10. Developing most extensively the anti-Japanese cultural and educational work.
11. Improving the people's living conditions over the widest possible area.
12. Accelerating most effectively the disintegration of the enemy troops.
13. Keeping up the courage of the people and heightening the morale of the troops of the country over the widest areas and with the most enduring effect.
14. Promoting the progress of as many friendly armies and parties as possible.
15. Adapting ourselves to the condition that the enemy is strong and we are weak so as to reduce our losses to a minimum and win all possible victories.
16. Adapting ourselves to the condition that ours is a big country and the enemy's is small, so as to inflict the maximum losses on the enemy and reduce his victories to a minimum.
17. Training large numbers of leading Cadres in the most speedy and effective manner.
18. Solving the problem of provisions in the most convenient way.²⁰

Among the important points which should be developed in the above we may note the disintegration of the enemy troops, No. 12, and the question of friendly armies, No. 14.

²⁰ Mao's *Problems of War and Strategy*, PFLP, 1954, pp. 27-8.

Disintegration of the enemy forces is evidently as good as adding to one's own, and may be easier. Even better is to disintegrate the enemy forces and reincorporate their troops into your own. This concept, as we shall see, can also be applied in the non-military sphere. It is an old idea going back to Sun Tzu in his famous classic, *The Art of War*, which is mandatory reading for anyone who wishes to understand Chinese strategy. The classic says:

When in chariot fighting more than ten chariots are captured . . . Replace the enemy's flags and banners with your own, mix the captured chariots with yours, and mount them. Treat the captives well, and care for them. *Commentary*: All the soldiers taken must be cared for with magnanimity and sincerity so that they may be used by us.

Sun Tzu also says: All warfare is based on deception . . . offer the enemy bait to lure him; feign disorder and strike him. When he concentrates, prepare against him: where he is strong, avoid him. Anger his general and confuse him. Keep him under a strain and wear him down. When he is united, divide him. *Commentary*: Sometimes drive a wedge between the sovereign and his ministers; on other occasions separate his allies from him. Make them mutually suspicious so that they drift apart. Then you can plot against them.²¹

Such principles, put into modern terms, were used not only to disintegrate the enemy and pro-Japanese forces, but also the 'friendly armies' themselves, starting with those of Chiang Kai-shek and going down to various warlord units. For example, Mao says in his *Strategy for Second Year of the Liberation War*:

Replenish our strength with all the arms and most of the soldiers captured from the enemy (80-90 per cent of the men and a small number of the junior officers). Seek replenishment chiefly from the enemy and from the Kuomintang areas and only partly from the old Liberated Areas; this applies especially to the armies on the southern front.²²

And he says in *On Coalition Government*:

this army has a correct policy for winning over enemy officers and men and for dealing with prisoners of war. Without exception all members of the enemy forces who surrender, who come over to our side or who, after laying down their arms, wish to join in fighting

²¹ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. S. B. Griffith, London, O.U.P., 1963, pp. 76, 66-9.

²² *Selected Military Writings*, p. 331.

the common foe, are welcomed and given proper education. It is forbidden to kill, maltreat or insult any prisoners of war.²³

Mao does not say so much about the work of 'friendly armies' but an American scholar, who has studied the concept and application of the united front technique, quotes part of a treatise on Mao's 'friendly army' work as follows:

The central purpose of friendly army work is the same as that of our work generally, an offensive against the weakest links under Kuomintang political leadership . . . those links that are dissatisfied with current conditions, with the government, and with the KMT, for these forces will most easily abandon the leadership of the government and the KMT . . . Forces that have a local character, forces that are discriminated against by the Central Government, forces that are not trusted by the Central Government . . .

The author explains:

Until 1939, relations between the CCP and many KMT forces were relatively friendly. When this was the case, the CCP sought contact with commanders and other influential officers (especially those responsible for training, intelligence and political affairs) as an avenue to the common soldier. This approach was coordinated with work at lower levels. As the environment became more hostile to the CCP, the balance gradually shifted towards secret work. From 1939 on, consolidation and protection of the slender CCP resources in KMT armies were called for. Therefore, instead of trying to widen the scope of action, Party members were instructed to seek promotion, more strategic placement, etc., without undertaking anything that would compromise their true affiliation . . . It was otherwise in poorly trained armies, the 'troops of miscellaneous brands'. There, the CCP promoted work at all levels. In the case of officers, and higher-ranking officers in particular, social contacts were used. Higher cadres were sent to serve with them, become a part of their staff, and work conscientiously to gain their trust. Once this had been done, influence was exerted to bring in CCP members at the middle and lower levels. When the lower levels had been suitably influenced, it was time to consider bringing the whole army over to the Communist side. At this point, the original officer corps had lost control, either submitting or being isolated.²⁴

The extension of this technique to work with civilians and later to international affairs should be obvious and in fact it formed the basis

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

²⁴ L. P. van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, Stanford, Stanford Univ. Press, 1967, pp. 124-5.

of the concept of the international united front developed by the Chinese communists from 1955 onwards, with anti-imperialist 'national bourgeois' leaders of the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America or leaders of freedom fighters, guerrillas etc. taking the place of the commanders of 'friendly troops'.

To return for a moment to the micro-cosmic level of guerrilla tactics, one should remember that in the extension to the civilian sphere of mass work, 'armed propaganda' or intimidation also had its part, as well as positive actions to improve the livelihood etc. of the population. In his work *On Basic Tactics* Mao explicitly states 'By methods of intimidation we warn the local population, we arrest and detain people'.²⁵

The anti-Japanese war had enabled Mao and his forces to develop the policy of 'casting the net wide to mobilise the masses' on a vast scale. Here again, Mao was aware that he was operating in a very special environment; China was big but weak, Japan strong but small, and there was a triangular or 'three kingdoms' situation with the nationalists as the third side of the triangle. In this situation the original 16-character formula developed into the doctrine of three stages of the revolutionary war and political mobilisation for a war of resistance could be carried on, ostensibly against the Japanese, really against the nationalists as well. As Mao pointed out in his basic work *On the Protracted War*:

Such a gigantic national revolutionary war as ours cannot succeed without universal and thoroughgoing political mobilisation . . . News about the war reached the great majority of the people through the medium of the enemy's shelling and bombing from the air. That also constituted a kind of mobilisation, but it was done by the enemy and not by ourselves . . . This situation must be changed . . . With the common people of the whole country mobilised, we shall create a vast sea of humanity to get the enemy drowned therein, obtain remedies for our shortage in arms and other things and secure the prerequisites to overcome every difficulty in the war . . . To aim at attaining victory while neglecting political mobilisation means 'trying to drive one's chariot southward by heading northward' . . .

What is political mobilisation? First it means telling the army and the people about the political objective of the war . . . The political objective of the Anti-Japanese War is 'the ousting of Japanese imperialism and the building up of a new China of freedom and equality' . . . it is not enough simply to explain the objective; the steps and policies to attain this objective must also be made clear . . .²⁶

²⁵ Mao's *Basic Tactics*, p. 119.

²⁶ Mao's *On the Protracted War*, PFLP, 1954, pp. 75-7.

It may be noted that the objective of 'building socialism' after the nationalist objective has been achieved is already there. The three stages that emerged from the experience of the anti-Japanese war were again imposed by the nature of the situation, the geography and resources of China and Japan etc.

Stage I: Enemy's strategic offensive and our strategic defensive (which we carry out by a series of small, quick-decision offensive actions; 'attack is primary');²⁷ the war plan is one of protracted war and the chief form of fighting mobile warfare, supplemented by guerrilla and positional warfare.

Stage II: Strategic stalemate—enemy's strategic defensive and our preparation for the counter-offensive. Enemy is fully stretched—his territory falls into three categories: his base areas, our guerrilla bases, and the *Intermediate Zone* (contested by both sides). We switch a large proportion of our troops from the front to the enemy's rear to build up the guerrilla units. Enemy is worn down by (1) fighting, (2) spread of anti-war sentiment.

Stage III: After the turning point, the 'final act' begins—our counter-offensive in the form of strategic offensive; back to mobile and positional warfare.²⁸ Mao summed up the principles evolved in the campaign under eight or ten headings. In 'On Coalition Government' (1945) Mao developed the theory of *People's War*. Of special interest is the attention given to disintegration of enemy troops and remustering and remoulding them into the communist forces, and 'United Front Work' in general. The basic principle of the 'United Front' is to maintain one's own 'independence and autonomy' within it and so win over the 'friendly troops' and even the pro-Japanese, by pursuing the dual policy of struggle and unity with them. The means are provided by the 'Three magic wands'—the Armed Struggle, the United Front, the Communist Party.²⁹

²⁷ 'attack . . . is primary . . . War is the politics of bloodshed, which exacts a price, sometimes an extremely high price. Partial and temporary sacrifice . . . is made for the sake of general and permanent preservation', *On the Protracted War*, p. 79.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 43 ff.

²⁹ Mao's *The Question of Independence and Autonomy Within the United Front*, PFLP, 1954, p. 5. See also *Selected Military Writings*, p. 289. On the 'magic wands' see Li Wei-han, 'The Characteristics of the Chinese People's Democratic United Front', *Red Flag*, No. 12, 16 June 1961, trans. in *Selections from China Mainland Magazines* (S.C.M.M.), U.S. Cons.-Gen. in Hong Kong, No. 268, 3 July 1961; also 'The United Front is a Magic Wand with which the Chinese People can win Victory', *Red Flag*, No. 11, 1 June 1961, trans. in S.C.M.M. No. 266, 19 June 1961.

In the middle stage, which is of great relevance to the recent international situation, as we shall see, the important ideas are those of the intermediate or contested zone and that of the multiplication of communist base areas to disperse the enemy forces. In this stage actual warfare is combined with psychological warfare in the enemy occupied and contested areas and great attention is given to disintegration of the enemy forces. As Mao says in *On the Protracted War*:

The three major principles for the army's political work are: first, unity between officers and men; second, unity between the army and the people; and third, the *disintegration of the enemy force*.³⁰ (My emphasis.)

As there is no permanent or rigid distinction between peace and war, the distinction between friends and enemies is also blurred, and the best way to beat the majority of the enemy is to have them join you against a minority, identified as the main enemy, with whom the 'principal contradiction' is said to exist. Though expressed in Marxist terms this is simply an old commonsense idea expressed by Mao in one passage in the form of a quotation from the Chinese classical romance 'Monkey' or 'The Journey to the West', in which the hero overcomes the 'iron fan princess' by turning himself into a creeping thing which gets inside her to bring about her undoing.³¹ Mao often refers to strategems like the Trojan Horse and this topic was later developed in the revolutionary Peking opera, 'Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy', enormously publicised in the post-Cultural-Revolution period.

The Second Civil War against Chiang Kai-shek followed naturally from the anti-Japanese war, with Chiang slipping into position as the agent of a foreign power, in this case America, just as the Chinese Quisling Wang Ching-wei was a Japanese puppet. The increasing war-weariness of the population made psychological warfare and clandestine work in the 'white areas' such as the cities occupied by the nationalists even more important. On the military side, during the anti-Japanese war, by following the principles outlined above, Mao Tse-tung had built up his troops to about 900,000 plus two million militia in the 'liberated areas'. The principles, as developed for the Second Civil War, are summarised in the *Little Red Book* of 'chairman Mao Tse-tung on people's war' issued under Lin Piao's auspices and with a view to increasing his prestige, in 1967:

³⁰ Mao's *On the Protracted War*, p. 135.

³¹ Mao's *Selected Works*, Chinese edition, 1961, Vol. III, p. 883.

Our principles of operation are:

1. Attack dispersed, isolated enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces later.
2. Take small and medium cities and extensive rural areas first; take big cities later.
3. Make wiping out the enemy's effective strength our main objective; do not make holding or seizing a city or place our main objective. Holding or seizing a city or place is the outcome of wiping out the enemy's effective strength, and often a city or place can be held or seized for good only after it has changed hands a number of times.
4. In every battle, concentrate an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), encircle the enemy forces completely, strive to wipe them out thoroughly and do not let any escape from the net. In special circumstances, use the method of dealing the enemy crushing blows, that is, concentrate all our strength to make a frontal attack and an attack on one or both of his flanks, with the aim of wiping out one part and routing another so that our army can swiftly move its troops to smash other enemy forces. Strive to avoid battles of attrition in which we lose more than we gain or only break even. In this way, although inferior as a whole (in terms of numbers), we shall be absolutely superior in every part and every specific campaign, and this ensures victory in the campaign. As time goes on, we shall become superior as a whole and eventually wipe out all the enemy.
5. Fight no battle unprepared, fight no battle you are not sure of winning; make every effort to be well prepared for each battle, make every effort to ensure victory in the given set of conditions as between the enemy and ourselves.
6. Give full play to our style of fighting—courage in battle, no fear of sacrifice, no fear of fatigue, and continuous fighting (that is, fighting successive battles in a short time without rest).
7. Strive to wipe out the enemy when he is on the move. At the same time, pay attention to the tactics of positional attack and capture enemy fortified points and cities.
8. With regard to attacking cities, resolutely seize all enemy fortified points and cities which are weakly defended. At opportune moments, seize all enemy fortified points and cities defended with moderate strength, provided circumstances permit. As for all strongly defended enemy fortified points and cities, wait till conditions are ripe and then take them.
9. Replenish our strength with all the arms and most of the personnel captured from the enemy. Our army's main sources of manpower and *matériel* are at the front.

10. Make good use of the intervals between campaigns to rest, train and consolidate our troops. Periods of rest, training and consolidation should not in general be very long, and the enemy should so far as possible be permitted no breathing space.

These are the main methods the People's Liberation Army has employed in defeating Chiang Kai-shek. They are the result of the tempering of the People's Liberation Army in long years of fighting against domestic and foreign enemies and are completely suited to our present situation . . . our strategy and tactics are based on a people's war; no army opposed to the people can use our strategy and tactics.³²

In effect the same principles of stages one, two and three were used and they went much quicker than Mao originally expected. The purely military side of the war has been adequately dealt with by Chassin;³³ the most interesting point at the present time is the emergence of the three patterns at the end of the campaign for dealing with the remnant enemy troops once the turning point has been reached and superiority is on the communist side.³⁴ The other interesting point is application of the principles to the world scene when Mao Tse-tung's fourth volume, which deals with this period, came out in 1961. It was obvious from the attendant publicity that the point of publishing it at that time was to claim universal validity for the lessons included in it and to put forward the theory, later clearly enunciated in 1965, of a world guerrilla led by the international united front under Chinese guidance. In the sixties, however, things began to go wrong in China and two lines emerged, both proceeding from the same basic assumptions but reaching different conclusions on the tactics and strategy to be followed. It may never be known for certain what the exact differences were—they merged finally into the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution—but even by studying openly published speeches and articles by important leaders during the period 1961-5 the basis can be found at least for educated guesses on the subject. It is significant that the first succinct Chinese enunciation of the concept of the world countryside surrounding the world cities was made by the former mayor of Peking, P'eng

³² 'The Present Situation and Our Tasks' (25 December, 1947), *Selected Military Writings*, 2nd ed., pp. 349-50.

³³ Lionel Chassin, *The Communist Conquest of China*, Camb., Mass., Harvard Univ. Press, 1965.

³⁴ See description of the Tientsin Pattern, Peiping Pattern, and Suiyuan Pattern in Mao's *Report to the Central Committee*, 5 March 1949 (*Selected Works*, Vol. IV, PFLP, 1961, pp. 361 ff.).

Chen, at Djakarta in May 1965.³⁵ He quoted a passage from D. N. Aidit's 'Set afire the banteng spirit! Ever forward, no retreat':

On a world scale, Asia, Africa and Latin America are the village of the world, while Europe and North America are the town of the world. If the world revolution is to be victorious, there is no other way than for the world proletariat to give prominence to the revolutions in Asia, Africa and Latin America, that is to say revolutions in the village of the world.³⁶

What is significant in this speech by P'eng Chen at Djakarta is the fact that he compares the United States to Hitler's Germany:

the path US imperialism is taking now is the same path Hitler took in his day. Its aggressive ambition far surpasses Hitler's, but it is weaker than Hitler, the disparity between strength and ambition being greater. Today it finds itself in an ever worsening strategic position . . . US imperialism has overreached itself. It has deployed its armed forces in every continent and nation of the world . . . with its shortage of troops, its far flung battle fronts, its remote rear and the disbursement of its forces it is . . . unable to attend to everything at once. Its position is becoming very passive and strategically it is already receiving blows on all sides.

The oft-quoted article on apparently similar lines published over the signature of Lin Piao in September of the same year in fact differed significantly from this in that it pointed the analogy not with the Nazi-Soviet war but with the Japanese war. The esoteric point in this is illustrated by the fact that Marshal Lo, the former Chief of Staff deposed during the Cultural Revolution, had also written an article in 1965 drawing analogies between the situation at the time and the Nazi-Soviet war rather than the Japanese war. There is some evidence for the following supposition; faced with the choice between conducting a cold war and perhaps a hot war on two fronts against both the super powers and with the increasingly doubtful support of the 'third force' Asian, African, and Latin American countries, the Chinese leaders were divided over the question of concluding a sort of 'Nazi-Soviet pact'

³⁵ *Speech at the Aliarcham Academy of Social Sciences, Indonesia, PFLP, 1965.* The idea can be found as early as 1928 in the program of the Communist International (O. E. Clubb, *Twentieth Century China*, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1964, p. 346). It had already been under discussion in the PKI for some time.

³⁶ D. N. Aidit was then leader of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) and his piece on the Banteng (wild buffalo) spirit — a play on the usual cliché Bandung Spirit — was published by PFLP in 1964.

with the United States, or uniting with the USSR to oppose American imperialism in a new war.³⁷

An article of 27 August 1971 in the *Peking Review* explicitly points out that Mao's essay 'On Policy' of 1940 applied to the present *international* situation; some of the relevant passages in Mao's essay read as follows:

In a struggle against the anti-Communist die-hards, we must take advantage of the contradictions among them in order to win over the majority to oppose the minority and crush our opponents separately, and follow the line of justifiability, expediency and restraint. The policy in the enemy occupied . . . areas is the maximum development of the united front, while at the same time concealing our identity and simplifying our structure in organisation and struggle, which includes also lying low for a long period, building up our strength and biding our time.

The basic policy as regards class relations at home is to strengthen the progressives, win over the middle of the roaders and isolate the anti-Communist die-hards.

A dual revolutionary policy towards the anti-Communist die-hards is uniting with them insofar as they are still willing to resist Japan and of isolating them insofar as they are determined to oppose Communism . . . even among the collaborators and pro-Japanese elements there are people who have a dual character, and we should adopt towards them also a dual revolutionary policy: we fight and isolate them insofar as they are pro-Japanese and, insofar as they waver, we try to draw them nearer to us and win them over . . . We deal with imperialism in the same way . . . the principle of our tactics is the same, to take advantage of the contradictions among them in order to win over the majority to oppose the minority and crush our opponents separately.³⁸

Though the contemporary article and the original 1940 essay seem to indicate that the 'principal contradiction' is now supposedly with Japan instead of with the United States, other evidence suggests that this line is put forward to facilitate mobilisation of other forces ostensibly against Japan, really against the USSR.

Other points in this article are, for example, that the main danger to the party comes from the *left*—which may be related to the propaganda campaign in mid-1971 against ultra-leftists (so-called), who

³⁷ See my article 'The PLA and the Debate on Foreign Policy in Peking 1965-66' in *The Role of the People's Liberation Army*, Centre d'étude du Sud-est Asiatique et de l'extrême orient, University of Brussels, June 1969.

³⁸ Mao's *On Policy* PFLP, 1954, pp. 3-5.

appear in fact to represent what was taken to be the genuine line of chairman Mao during the last few years. The group assailed under this 'hat' included chairman Mao's closest ideological collaborator Chen Po-ta, the editor of *Red Flag* magazine (organ of the Central Committee) and even his wife Chiang Ch'ing, both identified, without being named, by citing for criticism remarks they were known to have made. In the usual Chinese manner, this campaign subtly merged into another campaign, this time against military supporters of Lin Piao, also identified by quotations from his speeches and reports and suddenly changing from closest comrade in arms of the chairman and his chosen successor to a 'political swindler like Liu Shao-ch'i'. After the still unexplained events of September 1971, Marshal Lin and many senior military officers disappeared, a number of personages of whom little had been seen since the Cultural Revolution reappeared, and the stage was set for the reception in Peking of Professor Kissinger, then the Nixons.

The significance of this internal conflict is beyond the scope of this paper, but the contemporary relevance of Mao Tse-tung's paper *On Policy* and other evidence from key joint editorials from the *Red Flag*, *People's Daily*, and *Liberation Army Daily* show that the present military/political line is based on Mao Tse-tung's strategic thinking and recommends a policy of splitting the opposition, lying low when necessary, waiting for the time to strike, fighting for the intermediate zones, and so forth. Comparing the series of articles published over the last few years on Army Day (1 August) one may note that in 1969 the joint editorial said flatly: 'This Army founded the People's Republic of China'. This and many other articles hammered home the point that the Party was merely an emanation of the Army, thereby justifying the practical control by seconded Army personnel of all civilian organs, from Ministries down to schools, symbolised at the top by the obvious ascendancy of Lin Piao. The article commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Communist Party stressed Lin Piao slogans and the need for persistence in following 'the road of seizing political power by armed force'.³⁹ In contrast to the article about Mao's *On Policy* cited above, the Army Day article for 1971 mentioned the 'great victories' attributed to 'Chairman Mao's revolutionary diplomatic line' but went on to stress the role of the Army and the need for vigilance:

³⁹ *Peking Review*, No. 27/1971, 2 July 1971, p. 6. An article by Lin Piao's wife published in 1962, the significance of which has only now become apparent, hinted by the use of historical analogy that the real military genius was not Mao at all, but Lin Piao. See Yeh Chün on Mao's tactics, *China News Analysis*, No. 829, 22 January 1971, pp. 4 ff.

'Imperialism means war. So long as Imperialism exists, the world will have no peace.' Significantly, this editorial began with the words: 'The Chinese People's Liberation Army founded and led by our great leader Chairman Mao and commanded by Vice-Chairman Lin . . .'. The same passage in 1968, 1969 and 1970 read: 'The C.P.L.A. founded and led *personally* by Mao and *directly* commanded by Vice-Chairman Lin . . .'. Briefly, the material still emerging from the demise of Lin and his followers, accused of trying to set up a centralising power of their own in Peking and opposing Mao's foreign policy, suggests that the trouble arose from such factors as the rivalry of regional commanders and dissension over allocation of resources to R and D for sophisticated weaponry required for the Navy and Air Force (implying anti-American preparations) or to long-term socio-economic construction, mechanisation of agriculture and development of light industry etc., implying defence by diplomacy rather than hardware, thus an ultimately anti-Soviet position bringing America into play. The original scenario worked out by Chou En-lai, Mao (or whoever) and opposed by Lin has, of course, been modified by the unexpectedly rapid entry of China into the United Nations.

While rival factions and bureaucracies in China may have interpreted Mao's strategy differently and even obstructed each other's work in the field (as happens to other large powers), broadly speaking they differed only in emphasis, retaining the basic premise that in the initial period of military weakness, political strength must be built up and public opinion created for conversion into military or coercive power later, while dividing and embroiling the opposition. As a basis for building up the political strength, enough defensive strength must first be acquired to ensure survival—everything else grows out of the gun-barrel. Once secure in his 'base area', the Maoist should not attack the encircling enemy on his own ground of military strength, but where he is weak—in psychological, social, and political spheres and all areas where 'contradictions' await exploitation. A recent visitor to China pointed out that

Of course, as China grows in power, her ambitions will increase. She will go, when she is able to, from a 'strategic defence' to 'counter-offensive'. China will not always be in a condition of relative weakness . . . having 'stood up', China is likely to 'stretch out'.⁴⁰

In this connection, the future importance of Africa must be taken into account as well as the more obvious guerrilla areas such as the Middle

⁴⁰ Ross Terrill in *Bulletin* (Sydney), 5 February 1972, p. 26.

East and Asia. As part of its 'diplomatic offensive' to disperse the hostile forces in the world and break out of their encirclement, the People's Republic of China has now overtaken the USSR and Eastern Europe together in the volume of aid offered to Africa. Over the long term, winning the trust of friendly leaders by such diplomatic means may pay off in military, geopolitical terms; just as in the past military and paramilitary success has paid off in political terms. Entry into the UN will not necessarily mean abandonment of the two-legged approach, but may well facilitate its implementation.⁴¹

⁴¹ Since the above was written, the development of the situation in Rhodesia, South-West Africa and other parts of the continent has allowed Peking to derive great propaganda advantage from such phenomena as the special session of the UN Security Council, of which it is now a member, in Addis Ababa. From the viewpoint of Mao's 'revolutionary diplomatic line', not only the Organisation of African Unity but the UN itself is evidently becoming to an increasing extent something akin to the Afro-Asian or world-wide Front organisation, comprising countries and militant groups aligned with Peking on certain 'platforms', which Mao has been hoping to set up for so long. See Edgar Snow's interview with Mao Tse-tung, *New Republic*, 27 February 1965, pp. 17 ff., especially p. 20. Apart from 'national liberation struggles', the 'platforms' include recovery of mineral rights from United States and other firms, extension of territorial waters, browbeating oil monopolies, and opposition to 'cultural imperialism'.

Details of this development will be found in my article 'Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary diplomatic line', based on a paper given at the First New Zealand Conference on Chinese Studies, University of Waikato, May 1972.

W. A. C. Adie, M.A. (Oxon.), formerly worked for the British Foreign Office, serving in East Asia, 1953-9. He was a Research Fellow in Far Eastern Studies, St Anthony's College, Oxford, 1960-70. He is at present a Senior Research Fellow in International Relations, Australian National University. He is the author of numerous journal articles, a contributor to a number of books on Chinese and Soviet affairs, and a consultant and lecturer to armed and diplomatic services and other institutions concerned with international and strategic studies.

Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence

These papers arise out of the work of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre of The Australian National University. The Centre neither holds nor promotes any particular viewpoint, nor is its work limited to affairs of a purely military character. It provides opportunities for research on a wide range of related subjects, and thus tries to contribute to a fuller understanding of issues and events of contemporary importance.

The following papers have been published:

1. Alex Hunter *Oil Supply in Australia's Defence Strategy*
2. Geoffrey Jukes *The Strategic Situation in the 1980s*
3. J. L. Richardson *Australia and the Non-proliferation Treaty*
4. Ian Bellany *An Australian Nuclear Force*
5. P. H. Partridge *Educating for the Profession of Arms*
6. Robert J. O'Neill *The Strategy of General Giap since 1964*
7. T. B. Millar *Soviet Policies in the Indian Ocean Area*
8. Ian Bellany and James L. Richardson
Australian Defence Procurement
9. John Welfield *Japan and Nuclear China*
10. Robert J. O'Neill *The Army in Papua-New Guinea*
11. Darcy McGaurr *Conscription and Australian Military Capability*
12. Peter King *The Strategy of Total Withholding*

Information about future papers may be obtained from

Australian National University Press
Box 4, P.O.
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600